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CHRIST THE TEACHER INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION

TANGAZA COLLEGE

*THE CONTRIBUTION OF CATHOLIC WOMEN ASSOCIATION IN THE
CHURCH, KENYA*

A Case Study in Kahawa West Parish, Nairobi

*A project Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirement for a Bachelor of Science in Education*

By
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this work is my original work, achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It has never been previously submitted to any other institution for academic credit. The information and material used from other sources has been duly and fully acknowledged.

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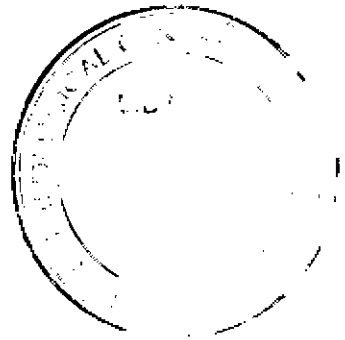
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ABSTRACT

This study was carried out in Kahawa West Parish, located about 25 kilometres from the City Square. It began by giving a brief background on the situation concern of acknowledging and appreciating women's contribution in the church and society as a whole.

The study was guided by the following objectives: To investigate the contribution of C.W.A to the church of Kenya, and also to establish the effects of C.W.A to the growth of the church, materially and spiritually.

The instruments used to carry out the study were questionnaires, interview and observation. The questionnaires were designed according to the objectives of the study.

It was observed that C.W.A contributes materially and spiritually to the church. However, it was also confirmed that women, sometimes, are not given enough room in the church to explore their potential due to lack of support and proper guidance from the church leaders, especially the Bishop, Parish Priest and church council.

Finally, the study suggests that since in the church of Kenya majority of the congregation are women, there is a need to incorporate more women in church matters, including pastoral planning at diocese level, since women participate more in church life. It also needs to encourage and empower women by offering them seminars to create awareness on their responsibilities in the building of the church and the society as whole.

According to the findings, it is important to involve more women in this type of investigation in different parishes, diocese and national level so that women would be able to solve problems they may encounter in their daily activities. Nevertheless, there is a great need to investigate the problems that hinder the participation of C.W.A. and the effects of their activities in the Catholic Church in Kenya.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my beloved late father Michael Malile, together with Esterina Lihawa and the entire Malile's family for their care love and especially for faith, which they have shared with me.

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I am grateful to the almighty God for the inspirations, good health and guidance throughout this exercise. Special thanks go to the Institute of Consolata Missionary Sisters where I belong and feel at home.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Through the centuries, African women have played major roles in the social, economic, political, cultural and religious development of society. Traditionally, women played the role of providing food for subsistence. They were the primary agents of socialization, of passing on values, aspirations and moral foundation to their children. They were therefore the pillars for the construction of balanced societies.

According to Campbell (56-58), women produced surplus food for barter trade and maintained the families when men were out, either hunting, gathering, trading or raiding neighbouring ethnic communities for animals and more women.

Today, there has been a great social change: women's situation and their roles are greatly changing as they become more and more involved in different activities. This change, found at different levels, creates new needs and challenges, which require to be met. The role of women in the society and in the church deserves special attention. It is this reality that prompted the carrying out of the present study, that is, giving special attention to the contribution of the Catholic Women Association (C.W.A) to the church in Kenya and in particular, Kahawa West Parish.

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

According to the Old Testament, women in ancient times were not recognised in their active political and religious roles in the line of the chosen people. However, in Judges 4:4-5 (NJB), a wise woman, and courageous one was a prophetess, like the wife of Laipidoth, who acted as judge for the Israelites. Also, in Exodus 15:20-21, Miriam was free to lead the group of women to dance, which shows her great authority and responsibility in leading the Israelite women to express their joy. In the book of Proverbs 31:1-24, women were portrayed as loving and carrying out all household chores. This shows that women had a special role to play in the society and church, though it was not always openly described.

The New Testament demonstrates that women made a special contribution in the ministry of Jesus. In Luke 4:18-19, besides the twelve apostles, women accompanied and cared for Jesus. In Matthew 28:1-10, we read that women were present at the death and burial of Jesus. It is clear that women placed themselves at the service of Jesus during his entire ministry.

During Jesus' life, and even afterwards, many women served the master in the church (synagogues) and in his ministry. Romans 16:1-2 indicates that a woman named Tabitha, who was full of good works and acts of charity made tunics and other garments, which she gave away to the needy and to the apostles. Moreover, Acts 9:36 states that women such as Mary, mother of John Mark, opened her house for the gathering of the Christian community of Jerusalem. Thus women were hospitable and open to the needs of the others.

Pope John XXIII (8-10) confirms that the dignity of women should be recognised and respected in the church. It is obvious that women are now participating in church functions and public life. Vatican Council II (266-267) further recognised the tremendous contribution of women in social life and argued that their roles should be officially recognised in the church. In our times, women have a more active share in the whole life of society, and it is very important that they participate fully in the church. Today in the church, women support the life of the people and work for the Christians, as one way of helping the church grow.

Butengwa (12-15) says that women might bring their feminine insights or special expertise as a means of sharing their gifts. Women have special gifts of compassion and understanding which greatly contribute to the civilization of society. In the Synod of Africa (20-25), Bishops identified a proper place for women in the church. Pope John Paul II (78-79), recognised women's role and their contribution in the church by setting apart the International Women's Day.

A report by Malone (17-18), in the United States stressed that in some areas women are refused any active participation in the church. About 70% of the women participate in liturgies as acolytes, readers, leaders of songs and commentators. On the other hand, women have been included, called, graced, inspired and canonised by Christianity throughout the centuries. Women play important roles in the development and growth of society and the church. The church should suggest ways in which women's participation can be better appreciated.

In today's world, women are becoming ever more conscious of their responsibilities and their commitments. If women are given chances of full participation in the Church, their contribution will have positive effects that will lead to the development of society, and the nation as a whole. A fuller contribution of the Catholic Women Association (C.W.A) to the growth of the church is needed.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

This research attempts to establish the contribution of the C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish. According to statistics given by the United Nations (28-30, 50), 60% of Kenyan women play multiple roles in the development process as economic producers and managers of households, with all its necessities. A report on the Human Development Index by Butengwa (23-25) confirms that women's contribution in many areas of development has often been described as invisible. Also, it states that women play important roles in the society. This becomes important as we discuss about the contribution of C.W.A in the church of Kenya, specifically Kahawa West Parish.

A report by Pope John Paul II (24-30) says that the role of women is crucial in all social activities, "Without the contribution of women, society is less active, culture impoverished and peace less stable." In the article of the meeting of Pope John Paul II (16-20) in the Fourth World Conference on Women, he argued that the Church was concerned with the equal rights of women in participating in all realms of social life as well as the importance of women's responsibilities in the society and church. Furthermore, Onayekan (3-4), in his article states that, about 80% of the women in Africa participate in subsistence farming and food production.

According to Nyerere (338-342), women play an important social and economic role in society. Women can bring about changes if they are given opportunities to explore their potential of being mothers in the society. A report on the Synod of Africa (64-66) states that women have full responsibility to be involved in all areas of public life and this right must be affirmed and granted.

Furthermore, Turshen (80-81) says that women need to be given more space in the nation and society so that they can bring about changes in the family. He added that there is a need to improve the social setting and status of women in the world today. This research will focus mainly on women's contribution (C.W.A.) in the Church and in the developmental dimensions of the society and country.

Hubbard (19-21) says that the Church, both consciously and unconsciously, has been guilty of prejudicial action, practises and policies against women. Sometimes, women felt patronized and undervalued by some of the Church leaders. On the other hand, this study focuses on how women feel appreciated within the Church, and their effect on family life, and faithfulness to the growth of the Church.

According to Pope John Paul II (157-158), women have big roles to contribute in the development of any nation and the church as a whole. It is thought that this has been spread profoundly through women silently, and sometimes through open participation of women. Women are considered to be active and prayerful, which can be seen by the participation of women and their attendance at prayer services in church and liturgies.

Today, the church in Africa, especially in Kenya, is well supported by women, both in prayer and in community participation. It is from this point of understanding that the study aims to explore the responsibilities of women, other than spiritual, which is often openly addressed.

According to Matthew 5:13, Christians are called to be the salt of the earth. Therefore, Christian women must be the salt of the earth in the church and society. As Christian women, it is their duty to carry the good news to their neighbours and those who are weaker in faith, or those who have problems, thereby giving them the necessary advice to edify them. Thus, this research explores all the social activities that the C.W.A undertakes in order to contribute to the growth of the church in Kahawa West Parish.

This research focused mainly on the contribution of women, especially the C.W.A group in Kahawa West Parish, while Roka's (19-20) focused on women in AMECEA local churches and Wanjiru (11-12) wrote on women's oppression. Therefore, the participation of women in the mission of the church is very crucial and enriching for the good of the whole church.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This research attempted to achieve the following objectives

- To identify the responsibilities of the C.W.A. in Kahawa West Parish
- To evaluate the spiritual, and material contribution of C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish.
- To establish the effects of C.W.A in the growth of the church.
- To create awareness of the advantages and disadvantages of C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish.
- To suggest the ways in which women's participation can be encouraged in the church.

1.4 HYPOTHESES

The study had the following hypotheses:

- Christians are aware of the contribution of the C.W.A.
- C.W.A. has an effect on the growth of the Church in Kenya.
- C.W.A. contributes spiritually and materially in the Church.
- Christians are aware of the advantages and disadvantages of the C.W.A.

1.5 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Women are important in building the society and church as a whole. The study aimed at establishing the contribution of the C.W.A. in the church, through investigating and evaluating the spiritual and material contribution of the C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish. It

is believed that it will help the women to realize their position and responsibility in the church. Also, it will be useful especially for the leaders of the church to recognize women, acknowledge and appreciate their gifts in order to encourage and allow them to share their gifts for the growth of the church.

Furthermore, this may involve giving them a greater role in the church as well as different responsibilities, such as leadership, and Eucharistic ministry. Thus, it is believed that this study helps in opening up ways in which the Church can create awareness and appreciation of women in the church. It is necessary to suggest ways to encourage women to participate more in the growth and establishment of the society and the Church.

1.6 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Research on women has been carried out in different areas, such as oppression of women, empowering women through mass media, and AMECEA local churches. However, research on the contribution of women in the church of Kenya has not adequately been done, especially in Kahawa West Parish. It suggests that by appreciating this study, it will be an opportunity to identify the contribution and responsibilities of the C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish, and the rest of the churches. Furthermore, this research will help other Christians be aware of the spiritual and material contribution of women in the church. Thus, the study suggested ways that will help the C.W.A participate more in church activities.

1.7 ASSUMPTIONS

This research is based on the following assumptions:

- Women do not have special roles to play in the building up of the church.
- Women have responsibilities in the church although they are not given a chance to express and explore their gifts to the full.
- The contributions of women have an effect in the growth of the church.
- The church should look for ways through which women can be appreciated so that they may contribute to the growth of the church.

1.8 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study was carried out in Kahawa West Parish, where the Consolata Missionary Sisters work with women. It will be of interest to obtain respondents from other Parishes of the Archdiocese of Nairobi. This study will be applied to the Roman Catholic Church especially for women, and those who will later want to study on women's contribution. However, the study will not be applicable in the government, neither in other Christian churches.

1.9 ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAWORD – Association of African Women for Research and Development.

(Yaneko, 106)

AIDS – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. (Sweet, B. R, 176)

C.W.A. – Catholic Women Association

C.M.A - Catholic Men Association

Church –The Lords house, where Christians meet to worship. (Downey, 164)

Diocese – The territorial area administered by a Bishop. (Downey, 273)

D.C – Dogmatic Constitution. (Flannery, 17)

HIV – Human Immune Virus (Sweet, B.R. 217)

HDI – Human Development Index (Campbell, 11)

Kahawa – Kiswahili word for Coffee, in this study the name of an area located 25 Kilometres from Nairobi city square.

NJB- The New Jerusalem Bible

Parish - The unit through which the Christian Church does its pastoral work.
(Downey, 718)

UN – United Nations (Jonathan, C. 1292)

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Ampofo (329-341) states that the majority of people responsible for the development and growth of the African church in the past century and even now have been women. Since the beginning of Christianity in the Gold Coast (Ghana), women have acted as agents of change. However, because of the patriarchal orientation of mission, the women's role has been largely supportive in nature.

Ampofo (329-341) further says that the development and growth of the church in Ghana has been influenced by political, cultural and economic circumstances in which the congregation finds itself. She further explains how different stages have influenced the role and contribution of women in the church. The common ones are as follows:

a) Stage I: Early Mission in the Colonial Era

Outreach model, characterized by challenges and changes. Men took on roles as catechists or teachers in schools, and later as ministers of religion, while women's roles were to sustain and secure the family by providing their husbands with all other necessities. For instance when the Consolata Missionaries came in 1902 in Kenya the Kikuyu women were doing all the household works like cooking, caring for children and digging.

b) Stage II: Mission from Inter war to Pre- Independence

There is further growth and stabilization, with the involvement of women by exercising leadership in organizing people. Today in Kenya and other places in the Africa, women are leaders of parish and small Christian communities while some are

involved in the government leadership. For example, women did outstanding work with young people, as Preachers, Ministers of the Eucharist and visiting the sick. Their visibility was still limited.

c) **Stage III: Mission in Post- Independence**

The involvement of women in church development and community life is very much recognised in Ghana. For instance, in Kenya, women run schools, hospitals, while others minister in the church as readers, and conducting church services as catechists. She concludes by saying that both men and women have a responsibility to God's church. It is important for the church to look at the ways in which it has encouraged and employed the talents of its women and how it can improve upon them.

Phiri (223-225) says there is need for the church to explore ways of affirming women's faith by promoting justice for all people across cultural, racial, economic, political and social boundaries. Kofi (120-126) adds that missionaries who came to sub-Saharan Africa brought to the continent a church that was ministerial and structurally male dominated. These evangelisers failed to recognise the significant roles played by women in African Religious Tradition, where women participated in various leadership roles, as healers and counsellors.

Mwaura (67-72) noted that women's participation in all areas have made distinctions between the utilization of social indicators for determining equity and their utilization for social accounting and development. Therefore, women can play a great role in building and developing the church in Africa, particularly in Kenya. According to the Gardiner in

Eastern Africa (24-25), the Presbyterian Church has ordained women clergy who participate in the ministry. In the Roman Catholic Church, women are catechists, leaders, theologians and teachers.

Kabaji (19-20) says that women have an important economic role in society, where about 60-80% of them are involved in food production. Baumann (43-50) in his research found that in 140 African societies, 40% of women participate in most of the work compared to only 15% of the men. Furthermore, he argued that women were economically dependent and incapable of supporting themselves because of traditional culture, which suppressed the power of women.

In Kenya's elections, (1985) women contested for the Parliamentary and civic seats, and won. During the Kenyan Mau Mau war (1945), women participated in protesting against the exploitations and injustices of their labour by colonialists.

According to Pope John XXIII (15-22) the dignity of women should be recognised and respected. He adds that it is obvious to every one that women are now taking part in social and public life. Vatican II Council (60-68) added that since women are now employed in almost every area of life, it is appropriate that they should be able to assume their full role in accordance with their own nature.

Pope John Paul II (10-16) said that women contribute greatly towards nourishing the faith of Christians. He adds that without discrimination women should be participants in the life of the church. He concludes by saying that women should be given quality formation to prepare them for different responsibilities in society.

Kiura (19-24) added that women have special gifts in the family and society. Therefore the church should look for the ways that will enable women to participate fully in the building of the church. Okure (86-92) wrote that women are said to have no identity of their own, but to derive their being from men and exist only for men, to serve men's personal and domestic needs. She added that women are called to co-operate with the church in order to promote Christ's message in all its fullness. Nbuy-Beya (220-223) also added that women have the special mandate and privilege of being the light of faith in all life's situations. She adds that in the church, the oppression towards women is seen most clearly in decision making, especially in what concerns religious life.

Furthermore, Nbuy-Beya (240-242) stresses that women play multiple roles in the development process as economic producers, managers, and caring for their neighbour. Katongo stressed that an impressive number of research studies demonstrate that woman in her social roles shows clearly that she participates fully in development of the society.

In the synoptic Gospels, Jesus' attitude towards women is very clearly documented. Jesus bears the message of liberation for all, women and men and especially for the disadvantaged. Fabella and Oduyoye (23-24) added that according to Jewish society,

women were not given full chances of participation in the society, but Jesus emphasised their equal status to men. Jesus empowered women since some women participated in his ministry. He empowered them to realize their dignity and worth as persons. From Jesus' teaching in acts 1:8, He did not discriminate against women but rather considered them as important as men. Thus women can be involved in the building of the community as members of the family of God.

Brown (158-159) observed that some statements in the Bible appear to promote equality and mutuality between male and female, while others speak of subordination and submission of women to men. Jesus' teaching clearly shows that He valued women and affirmed them as fully human, as He mixed freely with them. Some joined his ministry, while others received important miracles. He concludes by saying that women are visible and full participants in the Gospel records, for instance in Luke 8:1-3, three women, Magdalene, Chuza, and Susanna rendered service in the mission of Jesus.

Brown (160-161) adds that women assisted in the spread of the Gospel in various ways, some formed church congregations, others assisted in the actual propagation of the gospel, and some provided for the Apostles' accommodations while others held official ministries in the church. For example, in the letter of Paul to the Romans, women such as, Phoebe and Lydia assisted the apostles in their ministry. Brown (160-161) confirms that women provided places for believers in order to meet and pray. These women were involved in the ministry of Jesus and helped in spreading the Gospel. Fabella and Oduyoye (23-24) state that women are playing leadership roles in the church while others

command women to remain silent and not to have authority over men. They portrayed women as having played active roles in the early church. Some of the women could have been involved in leadership. Paul mentioned Phoebe in Romans 16:1-2 presented as a deacon, thus a person of authority, who had been at the forefront of missionary work and leadership in the churches. Priscilla appeared to be one of the noticeable women partners of Paul whose ministry was important for the growth of the church.

Some passages in the Gospel confirm that participation of women in the church has been downplayed in many churches in preaching, teaching and exercising authority as they use this passage of Timothy 2:11-12 to support their position. Johnson (67-68) also investigated women in the Bible such as Mary mother of Jesus and Mary Magdalene played active roles in the ministry of Jesus and also in the church. He also noted that there are some passages that appear to stop women from church participation and contribution. He concludes by saying that the women in the Bible as seen in Luke 8:1-3 were not passive spectators but active participants in the church.

The letter of Saint Paul to the Romans 16:1-6, shows that women did outstanding work in the growth of the church in Rome. In areas where synagogues had not yet been built, the gatherings were held in homes of some prominent women. This shows clearly that the contribution of women was significant and the references imply that they verbally took part in explaining the Gospel to the other believers.

Brown (169-170) wrote that women participated in animating the liturgy such as choir, reading scriptures, and teaching catechesis. Brown concludes by saying that the church should look for ways which will encourage women's participation in order to implore and use their gifts in different ministries in the church.

In the Gospel of John 20:11, women were trusted to bear witness in the society by witnessing to resurrection of Jesus. It shows clear that women played active role in spreading the Good News as they were the first to witness to the resurrection of the Lord. This affirms the strong faith of women as the Gospel states in Luke 10:38-42. Thus women are the messengers of Good News in the family and church as whole.

Furthermore, Brown (172-173) confirms that women's position in indigenous African Christian churches is an important indicator of their prominence and capabilities in all aspects of life. He further emphasized that men and women perform different roles by order and nature. Brown's research aimed at recognizing that women's status has advanced in some important respects in the past decade, but that progress has been uneven. He concludes by saying that some studies have been done in recognizing women's roles and participation in national development.

Mboya (115-116) observes that women are the majority in participation in many churches of Africa, but they are rarely in positions of direct authority except in their *Manyano*, which means small group. He added that there are few cases where women are part of the formal hierarchies of their churches. His study analyses that women play an important role in Indigenous African Christian Churches. He further adds that women participate in the church since some women are leaders, others founders of the congregations and while others spiritual healers.

According to Rokani study (32-33) women, as well as men, have equal mandate from Christ to proclaim the Good News Matthew 28: 19-20. He continues by saying that women are heads of families and they participate fully to make Christ present and alive in their midst. His study aimed at challenging the church to improve and encourage women's participation in the church.

According to the letter of Pope John Paul II to the Synod of Africa (32-33) the Bishops of argued that women should be given quality formation to prepare them to take responsibilities as wife and mother. Also, they stated that to "educate a woman is to educate a people." The bishops acknowledged that the quality of the church depends on the folk, whether they are married or members of consecrated life. This states clearly that empowerment of women is important in the church especially for bringing about full human development. Therefore women are capable of taking responsibilities in the church and society. Onayekan (8-10) added that the church since the beginning recognised or upheld the dignity of women and womanhood. The position of women was that of security/ stability, which was quite naturally the teaching of scripture and sacred tradition.

The bible goes on praising the virtues and contributions of women by unfolding their salvation in the Old Testament. These women include Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Hannah, Deborah, Ruth, Judith and Esther, among many others. Furthermore, in the New Testament, several women were numbered among the disciples of Jesus. Among them were the sisters Martha and Mary of Bethany, Mary of Magdala, Mary mother of James, Salome and Mary mother of Jesus. Women can be good messengers of God if they are given the opportunities to do so. Therefore women need to be encouraged and empowered in the different activities they perform in the church and society as whole.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SAMPLE AND SAMPLING PROCEDURES.

This research aimed at establishing the contribution of C.W.A in the church of Kenya. It further aimed at finding out how the women in C.W.A have contributed materially and spiritually towards the growth of the church.

The method used to carry out this study was pure random sampling, which allowed the collection of data from few people who represented the whole population. This method provided reliable, valid and meaningful information since it relied on self-report of the respondents. The study further focused on churchgoers, Catholic Women Association (C.W.A), Catholic Men Association (C.M.A), religious and lay people.

The research was carried out at Kahawa West Parish, located about 25 Kilometres from the city square, and run by the Consolata Sisters and Consolata Fathers. See in the figure VII. It had 50 questionnaires, which were designed for Catholic Women Association (C.W.A) to answer, then 40 questionnaires to Catholic Men Association (C.M.A).

Furthermore, 6 questionnaires were administered given to religious and 20 to lay people. The study used a research guide in order to facilitate the data collection process. The sample was drawn from 60 people who are involved in catholic faith and promoting the church values.

3.2 TARGET POPULATION

The target population included the members of C.W.A, C.M.A, Religious and lay people. The questionnaires were given to C.W.A members to write down the contributions that are made by women in Kahawa West Parish. For the C.M.A, the questionnaires were given in order to know the attitudes of men towards the C.W.A. The lay people's the questionnaires aimed at inquiring if the lay people are aware of the work and the effect of the C.W.A in the growth of the church in Kenya.

3.3 DESCRIPTION OF THE INSTRUMENT

Questionnaire: The questionnaire was used to collect data from the target population. This method was used because of its effectiveness, especially when seeking clarification on unclear responses, through interview. One questionnaire was designed for religious and lay people, which had questions concerning the contribution of C.W.A to the church of Kenya. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire in the space provided.

Interviews: An interview guide was prepared to guide the study in this area. The researcher had direct contact with the respondent and this helped to estimate the accuracy of responses. An interview was conducted with C.W.A leaders, religious and parish councils to find out their views of the area being studied.



Observation: The observation was used to observe some of the activities carried out by the C.W.A in the parish which included the readings during the mass, leading the songs, dancing the offertory dance, giving seminars to the senior youth, retreats and prayer meeting.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES.

A pilot testing of questions was carried out, after which the questionnaire was revised. The data was then collected by way of administering questionnaires. The questionnaires had different questions concerning Catholic Women Association's contribution to the church in Kenya. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires in the spaces provided.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

The information that was obtained from the questionnaire, interviews and observations was organized according to the objectives given in the research. Every question was further analysed in a descriptive way using charts and frequencies. Each was tallied against its corresponding alternative chosen by the respondent to obtain frequencies and percentages. The data was analysed as per each research question and presented in tabular format.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This chapter aims at presenting and analyzing the findings of the data collected from the field study. Frequency and percentages were used to present the findings.

4.1 DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF 'CHURCHGOERS'

Table 4.1.1. Demographic Distribution

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	15	37.5
Female	25	62.5
TOTAL	40	100

The table above shows that in Kahawa West Parish majority of the members are women (62.5%) while (37.5%) are men. This confirms that women participate more in church life. Furthermore, women take the responsibilities in the family and church as whole. It is also a reality that since the Vatican II Council of 1963, the church has opened the door to allow women to participate in matters concerning church building since each person is part and parcel of it.

In addition to this, women are becoming more responsible not only in family roles but also in the church and society as whole. Furthermore the church needs to encourage the participation of women so that they can be able to share their potentialities of motherhood.

4.2 BACKGROUND INFORMATION OF CHRISTIANS IN KAHAWA WEST PARISH

Table 4.1.2 Information of Christians in Kahawa West Parish

RESPONDENTS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Lay	34	85
Religious	6	15
TOTAL	40	100

The above table 4.1.2 shows that majority of the Christians in Kahawa West parish are lay people, which accounts for 85% of the respondents. However, 15% of the respondents were religious. Therefore it is clear that Kahawa West Parish has more lay people than religious.

4.3 CATHOLIC WOMEN ASSOCIATION (C.W.A.)

Table 4.1.3. Catholic Women Association

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Association for Catholic Women	20	50
Strong in faith to assist in evangelization	13	32.5
Organization of women	3	7.5
Baptized according to Catholic faith	2	5
A backbone of Christianity	1	2.5
An arm of the church	1	2.5
TOTAL	40	100

From the above table it is clear that C.W.A is an Association for the Catholic Women. This further confirmed that C.W.A. is a group of women who are strong in faith and assist in evangelization to their home families and in the church. Most Christians confirmed that women play a vital role in the life of the Christians and church as a whole since women participate in the small groups of Christian communities at Parish level. This makes it easy for the women to actively participate in providing the study with the needed information on the project.

It is also clear that these women evangelize in large numbers although some of them do not perform much due to lack of education. Women need to be encouraged as well in matters of education so they can stand in the forefront in the church and society.

In addition, women participate more in the church in Kahawa Parish and the whole church. This has been shown on many occasions where women are the majority in participation in the church and also society in general. Furthermore in Kahawa Parish the C.W.A, the pioneer group, started in 1984. This group, as a result, has brought other organizations to the parish, which includes Marriage Encounter, Charismatic movement and assisting of the poor.

4.4 BACKGROUND OF C.W.A. IN MERU AND NAIROBI DIOCESE

Table 4.1.4. CW.A. in Meru and Nairobi Diocese

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1967 Meru Diocese	5	12.5
1968 as Marry go round	10	37.5
1982 Nairobi Diocese	5	12.5
1984 Kahawa West	20	50

The above table shows that C.W.A. was introduced in Kahawa West Parish in 1984. Some of the respondents stated that in 1968 in some places such as St. Austin's, C.W.A began as a "merry go round" among the women. Also, C.W.A in some parishes in Kenya started in 1967, such as in Meru. The C.W.A started in a small parish called Gitoro. Initially the idea came from Geneva, Switzerland and its motto was "Strong in Faith", to assist in Evangelization.

In Nairobi, the C.W.A. was officially introduced during the preparation of welcoming Pope John Paul II in 1982. It began as a group, which was called to entertain the Pope. The women suggested beginning an association, which would help them meet and discuss different issues concerning their faith. From then on, the group went on increasing until today. The association is very strong in various parishes, such as St. Teresa Eastleigh, at Riruta, and Upper Hill, among others. Moreover C.W.A has been introduced in different Parishes in Kenya and Christians are aware of the work done by them. Therefore the existence of C.W.A has impact in the growth of the church.

Furthermore, the findings show the relationship of C.W.A to the growth of the church, since women are available in the matter of building the church. In addition, the study confirmed that the C.W.A is very much established in the church and at the same time needs to be encouraged, at different levels in the small Christian communities, parishes, dioceses and national level as a whole.

4.5 THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF C.W.A.

Table 4.1.5. The responsibilities of C.W.A

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
To give seminars, retreats, teach Sunday school, counselling and Guidance	15	37.5
To visit the sick	10	25
Liturgy animation	6	15
To advice women and youth	4	10
To assist the less privileged	3	7.5
Caring for priests	2	5
Decoration and cooking during feasts	2	5
TOTAL	40	100

Table 4.1.5 shows that 37.5% of the respondents are aware that C.W.A. have formative programme for the spiritual and human formation to different groups in the parishes. This includes seminars, retreats, teaching catechism, Sunday school, counselling and guidance. This shows that C.W.A. has responsibilities in the formation of the Christian. This is clearly shown in the figure 1 and 3.

Furthermore, C.W.A. visit those who are sick in the hospitals as well as at home. From these reasons C.W.A. are concerned not only with the spiritual matters but also with the growth of the whole person. In addition C.W.A. are involved in several activities such as animation of the Liturgy, assisting the less privileged children and decorating of the church during special occasions. This further established that the

C.W.A participate fully in the church. Besides, these women are the ones who take care of priests in the material contribution done in the church during the offertory. This is due to the hierarchy in the church that women were not involved in various activities concerning the church and society as a whole. It was also confirmed by several people in the interview that today women do a lot in the building of the church.

Fifteen percent (15%) of respondents observed that C.W.A carries out liturgical animation in the Sunday Mass. Many Christians confirmed that the work of women helps the Mass to be lively. This is true in the sense that when women are not there, the Mass or feasts becomes very dull. Looking at the role of the women in the church they are the core of the church, without them the church will not be strong as it is.

It was observed that C.W.A as a group is a great challenge in the Catholic Church, which is still holding on to the hierarchy of the church. At the present time the church needs to read the signs of the times because women are strongly coming up as actual models in participating as fully, in the church activities, as men do. There is need to empower women so that they may be able to participate more fully in the church.

4.6. SELF-HELP PROGRAMME AMONG THE C.W.A

Table 4.1.6. Self-Help programme among the C.W.A.

RESPONSE	MALE	FEMALE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	15	21	36	90
NO	2	2	4	10
TOTAL	17	23	40	100

As shown in the above table, 90% of the respondents answered positively when asked whether the C.W.A. has self-help projects. This implies that C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish is well organized association for women, which is a well coordinated at Parish level and extends to the Diocese. Only 10% of the respondents were not aware of the C.W.A. in the Parish. The study was able to confirm that many of the churchgoers are aware of the self-help programmes, apart from the few who do not know due to lack of information and knowledge.

Apart from being structured as a group C.W.A, from time to time, conducts seminars for the Junior and Senior youth. It also organizes Bible studies for its members in order to be well informed in the matter of spiritual growth. Sometimes, C.W.A organizes feasts with street children. This shows clearly that as an organization it thinks of others who are less privileged. Further, it shows that the women are fully committed to their association and this is important in attracting other women to the organization. Furthermore it was observed that the Christians need to be given education on the C.W.A self help programme. This will help to enlighten their minds to get a clear understanding of C.W.A and at the same time support them. See in the figure 2.

4.7 AWARENESS OF WOMEN RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE CHURCH

Table 4.1.7. Women responsibilities in the church

RESPONSE	MALE	FEMALE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
YES	15	23	38	95
NO	1	1	2	5
TOTAL	16	24	40	100

Table 4.1.7 shows that 95% of the respondents had competent knowledge about the responsibilities of C.W.A in Kahawa West Parish. This could be the reason behind women's commitment in church matters, such as the church's contribution towards construction, offertory, singing during the mass, reading and others. The church is aware that a woman has a great role to play. It is confirmed by the Christians in Kahawa West Parish that C.W.A is the vision of the church. This means that C.W.A is open and available for the needs of the church, which includes assisting in wedding feasts, ordinations, cleaning the church. Members of C.W.A also act as counsellors in families. It is a great challenge for the church leaders to allow them to take part in the church responsibility. This is clear indicated in figure 4.

Apart from this, 5% of the respondents, who included men and women, do not know about the responsibilities of C.W.A. This calls for more education and seminars in the parish in order to create awareness of the responsibility done by the women. The findings revealed that the women make a lot of contribution in the church in Kahawa Parish and Kenya in general.

4.8 ADVANTAGES OF C.W.A IN THE CHURCH

Table 4.1.8. Advantages of C.W.A in the church

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Spiritual and material development	10	25
Unity among members	10	25
It defines the role of women in family and church	5	12.5
To grow spiritually	4	10
Role model of St. Monica	3	7.5
It strengthens women	2	5
Harambee spirit	2	5
Solidarity	2	5
Challenges men to be committed	1	2.5
Moral behavior	1	2.5
TOTAL	40	100

The above table shows that C.W.A. has several advantages in the church. The majority of the respondents show clearly that one of the C.W.A'S responsibilities is the spiritual, material, development and unity among the members. This is clearly illustrated in figure 3.

These form 50% of the respondents. It also shows that the association defines the role of women in the family and church. Furthermore, it unites the members not only within the Parish but also at the diocesan level. It supports the women and strengthens them in their Christian commitments.

In addition, C.W.A is very strong in the “Harambee Spirit” as themselves put their material and spiritual gifts at the disposal of the church. On other occasions, C.W.A assists the poor within and outside the group. Therefore C.W.A members are very committed in such way that C.W.A challenges C.M.A to be committed in their organization. Furthermore, it was observed that C.W.A is one of the groups in the church that is full of enrichment not only for its members but also for the benefit of the whole church. Thus it helps them to grow in the “Harambee Spirit” of being in solidarity with those in need. The women’s commitment challenges the men in their faith.

The C.W.A allows women to come together and share their gifts, and talents with one another. Through sharing their gifts, women are able to enrich the entire church. It also empowers the rest of the catholic women to stand firm in their Christian faith. The association helps the members in the dissemination of information among the women. This is indicated in the figure 3.

Furthermore C.W.A helps to bring unity among the members that are within the parish, diocese and at national level. It also encourages members to support each other in moments of sorrow and joy. This solidarity is very important since C.W.A members meet often to share their progress in matters of faith as they follow the role of St. Monica their patroness. The C.W.A gives members the forum to evangelize others. As members meet, they help others study the Bible so that they may in turn be

able to evangelize other Christians in the small Christian communities. Studying the bible challenges most of the Christians to change their behaviour and to grow spiritually. These advantages allow women to be responsible and united in the church and to attract other women to join the association.

4. 9. CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY C.W.A.

Table 4.1.9. Challenges encountered by C.W.A.

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
It is a commitment	20	50
Other groups have affected C.W.A	10	25
M.E has helped to reduce members of C.W.A	5	12.5
Time consuming	5	12.5
TOTAL	40	100

From the above table, twenty respondents out of forty found that C.W.A calls for a special sacrifice. The C.W.A calls for faithfulness to all its members, especially to the baptized women. Furthermore, membership in C.W.A demands that the individual sacrifice time so that the organization can be more effective in giving services to the church. Furthermore, respondents argued that many groups in the parish have affected the C.W.A group including Marriage Encounter, Legio Maria, Single Mothers and Charismatic. C. W. A was a pioneer group in Kahawa West Parish and as the parish grew other needs arose and several groups were introduced.

On the other hand, the beginning of the groups is a sign of Christian maturity in the church. In addition C.W.A is an organization, which brings its members together. This is very helpful because C.W.A comes to interact with women in the parish. It also enables members to be in solidarity with the people who are facing difficulties whether in marriage or in the church in general. Another advantage of C.W.A is to try to create the mutual understanding between the poor and the rich. This has been very effective in the association because each person feels part and parcel of the organization. Kiswahili and Kikuyu have used as liking languages, which attract and promote understanding among the C.W.A. Therefore, further it is observed that C.W.A has great advantages for the women and in the church.

Moreover, some of the respondents saw that C.W.A has difficulties in the sense that it does not cater for all personal needs. This might be due to lack of understanding of the initial meaning of the C.W.A. It is thus important for the leaders to offer seminars or workshops concerning the purposes of each group in the parish. This helps to clarify the misunderstanding among the Christians. Thus it could also be concluded that the C.W.A group has challenges, which prevent the women to joining the association

4.10. WAYS IN WHICH CHRISTIANS EXPLORE GIFTS/TALENTS

Table 4.1.10. Ways in which Christians explore gifts/talents

RESPONSE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
To encourage Christians from the grassroots	15	37.5
Retreats	2	6.5
Seminars	3	7.5
Freedom to participate	12	30
Good leadership	3	5
Priests need to educate Christians	5	12.5
TOTAL	40	100

From the above table, the majority, 37.5% of respondents confirmed that women are encouraged from the grass roots to participate in sharing their talents in the church. It is clear that the church continues to promote Christian potentials to be explored so that the church may be supported in building unity among family members. This encouragement helps the women to participate freely in the church as well as to offer seminars and retreats for young girls and boys. The church is involving C.W.A in preparing the boys and girls for marriages so as to make them aware of the commitment they make in life. This is very encouraging and in this way C.W.A is involved fully in propagation of good moral values that give meaning to Christian living.

In addition, there is good leadership in the parish because it gives/offers space to other Christians to share their gifts in the larger family. On the other hand, 12.5% of the respondents felt the need to be educated on how they can participate fully in the church. Furthermore, C.W.A encourages mothers to bring up their children in more genuine ways so that they may be committed in their life. It also gives freedom to catholic women to

uphold intensive counselling and guidance, and guard against cultural practices, which are not appropriate to catholic teachings. It is therefore observed that the church needs to train more leaders who are able to encourage Christians to participate fully in building up the church. This will enable the Christians to enrich each other and to acknowledge the richness each has in the church

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The study was conducted in Kahawa West Parish and the main aim of the study was to investigate the contribution of the C.W.A to the growth of the Catholic Church in Kenya (materially and spiritually). It is also aimed at establishing the advantages and challenges facing the C.W.A association.

In order to obtain sufficient information on the C. W.A, the researcher consulted various sources in the church, for instance, written materials and observed different activities carried out by women. These resources show how women have played a great role in the building of the family, church and society as a whole. The contributions include; money for construction, assisting in ordination, singing during mass, reading, counselling and guidance, teaching and others.

The research was carried out in Kahawa West Parish, which is located about 25 kilometres from the city square of Nairobi. The research involved respondents from lay people and religious. For data collection different instruments were used, such as questionnaires and interviews. These methods were used so as not to limit the answers or views of the respondents.

Data was interpreted using tables and frequencies, which showed different kinds of contributions made by the C.W.A. in the church and their relationships to the growth of the Church in Kenya. The results showed that there are great responsibilities carried out by women in the church, but due to hierarchy in the church, little is said about them.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion the study observed that C.W.A in Kenya, particularly in Kahawa West Parish contributes materially and spiritually in the church. However, some of the churchgoers do not understand the role of the women in the church due to lack of awareness. In order to create awareness among the Christians, there is need to combine efforts among the church leaders including bishops, priests, religious, lay people and the congregation as a whole. It was suggested that women's efforts should be acknowledged since women play a vital role in development in the church and society at large.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The church should allow C.W.A to have representatives in decision making in the parish and in the dioceses.
- The C.W.A needs to be given education, seminars on their duties and responsibilities in the church by the church leaders.
- A chairlady of a deanery needs to be involved in the Pastoral Council in the Diocese.

- The church and the society must learn to look at women as persons with great potential and to encourage, support and appreciate their role in the Church.
- Ladies above 18 years old could be encouraged to join the C.W.A. Association.
- Programmes and activities of C.W.A need to enhance interaction among women in different Parishes.
- In order to minimize the gap between rich and poor, educated and uneducated, the Church should encourage these groups to work together as a family regardless of social *status quo*.

5.4 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Similar researches /studies can be conducted in different parishes and would involve many parishes in diocese of Nairobi and Kenya as whole. Further research can be carried out on the time spent by women in the church activities and its effect on the growth in the church.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRES

For the C. W.A, Parish councils, Sisters and Fathers

Dear Christians,

I am Restituta Devota Malile a Fourth Year Student at Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Tangaza College (CTIE) Christ the Teacher Institute of Education. I am carrying out an investigation on the contribution of Catholic Women Association (C.W.A) to the Church in Kenya. You are kindly requested to respond to the questionnaire below. The answers given should express your personal views and opinions. I assure you that your answers will be confidential. Your co-operation is appreciated. Please write in the space provided.

Thank you.

Section A

1. Name (optional).....
2. Sex:MaleFemale.....
3. Status: Lay.....Religious.....

Section B

1. Considering that women are the main participants in the church, there is a need for acknowledging the contribution of women in the church.

Is there any formative programme on C.W.A on your Parish?

Yes /No

Please give your explanation

.....

2. Are there any activities women take responsibility for in the church?

Yes /No

Please explain your answer

.....

3. Does the church give opportunities to Christians to explore their gifts for the growth of the church?

Yes /No

Please explain your answer

.....

4. Are the leaders aware and do they involve different groups in the Parish in order to enrich the Parish by their contribution?

Yes /No

Please explain your answer

.....

5. How can the church enable the gifts and potential of women to be fully shared in the church?

.....

6. Do you have an idea what C.W.A is?

.....

7. Which, according to you, are the advantages and challenges of the C.W.A as you see it ?

Please name them.

.....

8. What can be done in order to make the C.W.A more effective in the church?

.....

9. When and how did the C.W.A start in the Parish and what are its main responsibilities?

.....

10. Are the Parish and Christians giving enough room for C.W.A to give it Spiritual and material contributions?

.....

Thank you for answering the questions.

May God bless you

APPENDIX II

The interview guide for C.W.A officials

1. What is the C.W.A and why was it founded in the church?
2. How is the C.W.A group organized?
3. How is the C.W.A involved in Parish?
4. How many C.W.A members do you have in your Parish?
5. Is the C.W.A active in the Parish?
6. What are the major contributions of the C.W.A in the church?
7. What are the advantages and challenges of C.W.A?

Thank you, may God bless

APPENDIX III

Figure 1

C.W.A socializing before the celebration begin



Figure 2

C.W. A pose for a group photo after the day of prayer

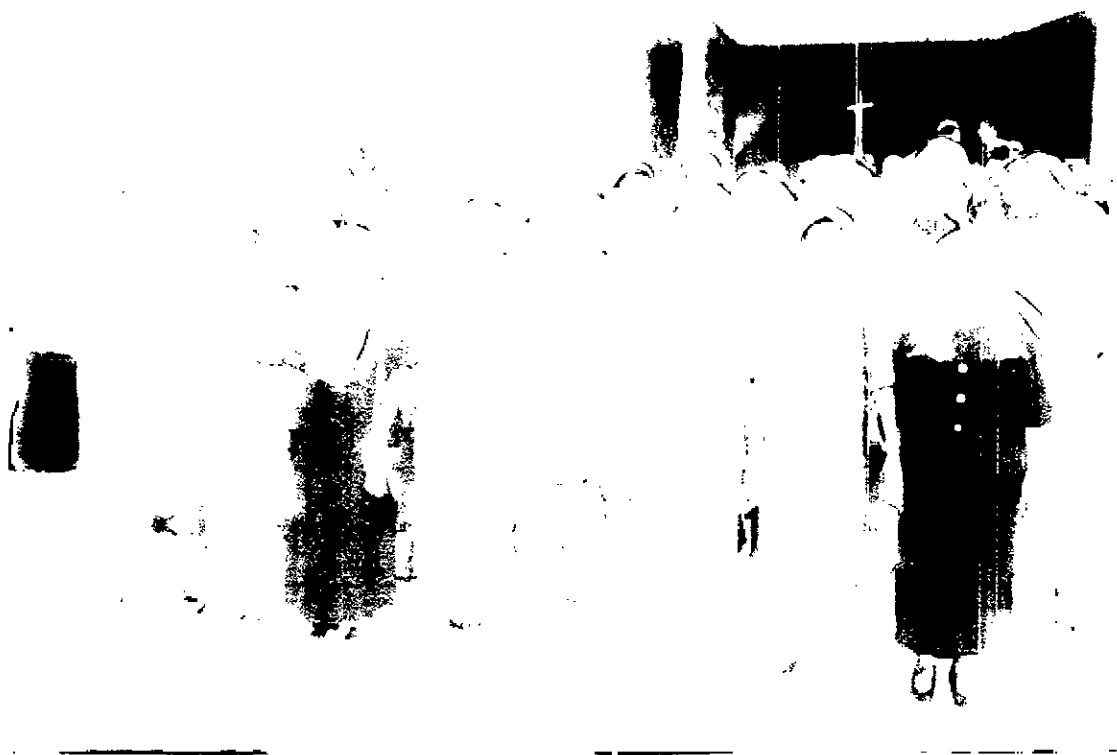


Figure 3

C.W.A express their joys and hopes in songs and dance

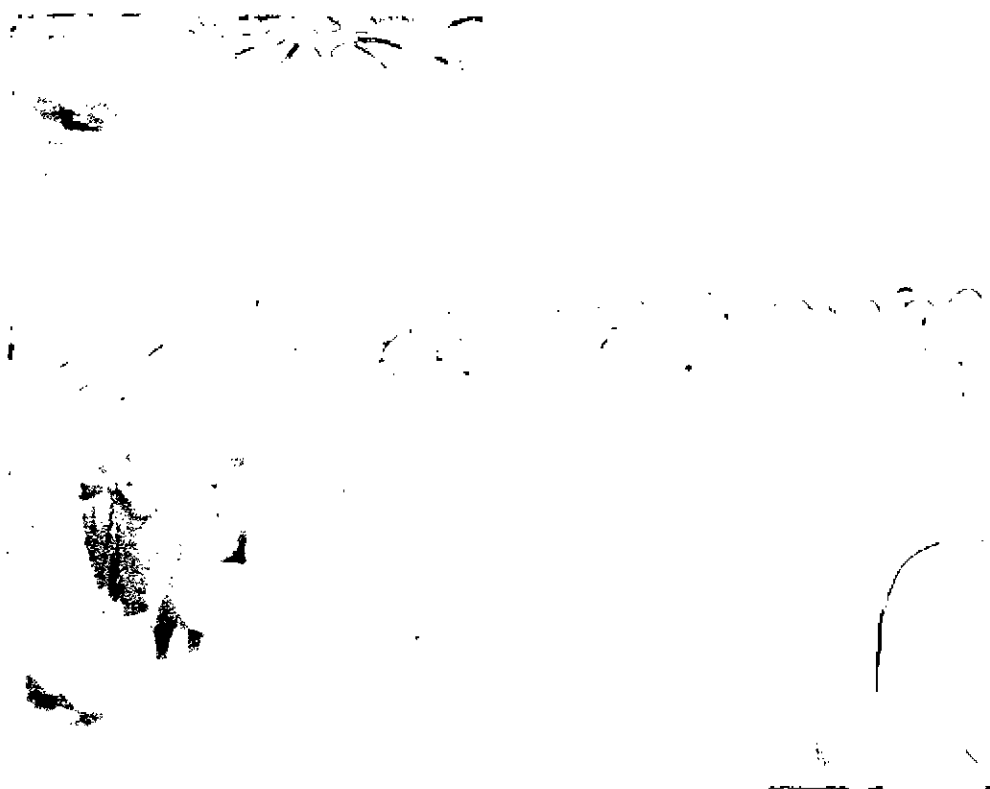


Figure 4

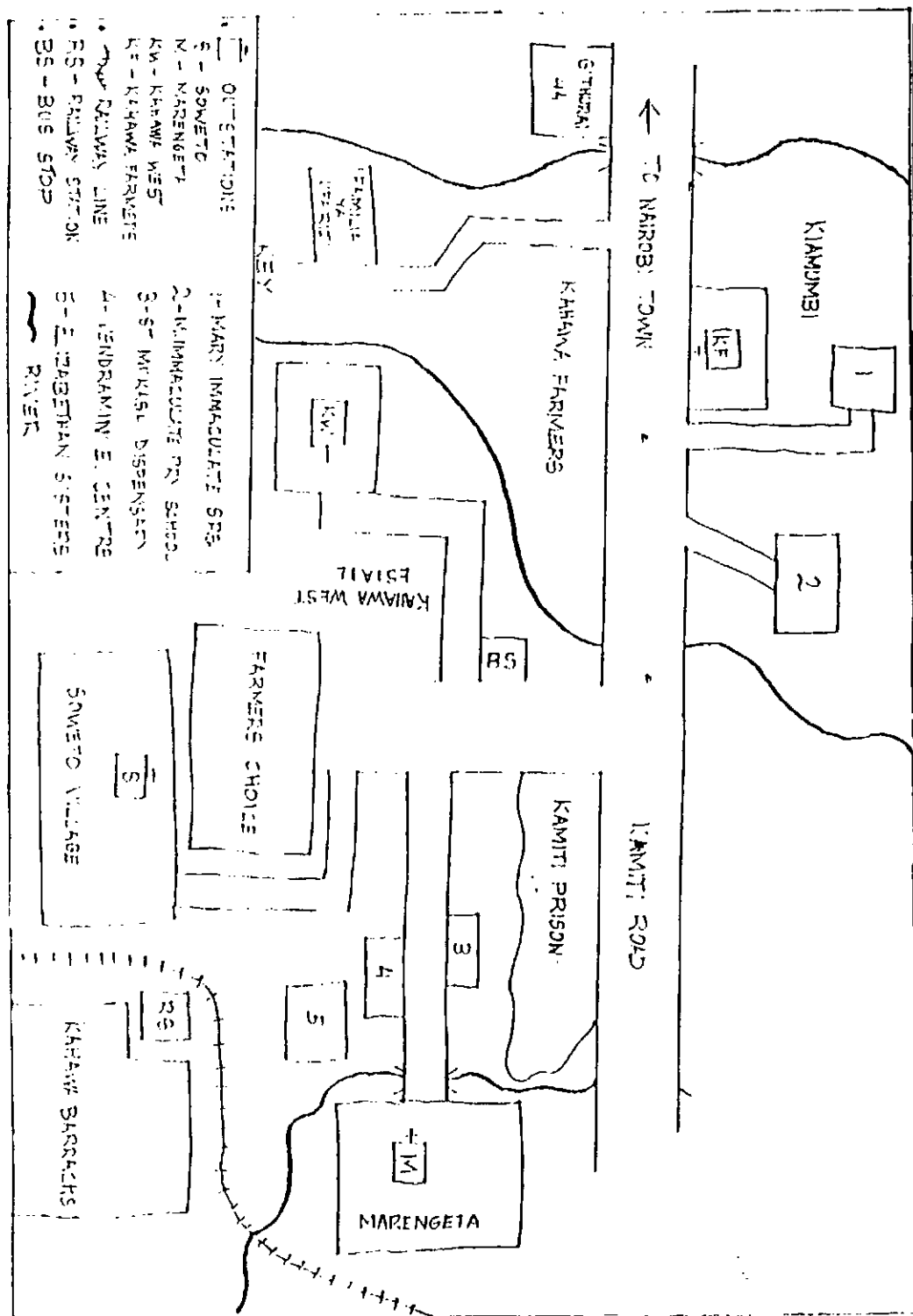
Members of C.W.A present a sack of potatoes as their offering during the Mass



APPENDIX IV

Figure 4

Sketch Map of Kahawa West Parish



Saint Mary's University of Minnesota/USA Nairobi Campus

Christ the Teacher Institute for Education
Tangaza College
P.O. Box 15055
P.C. 00509 Langata
Nairobi, Kenya

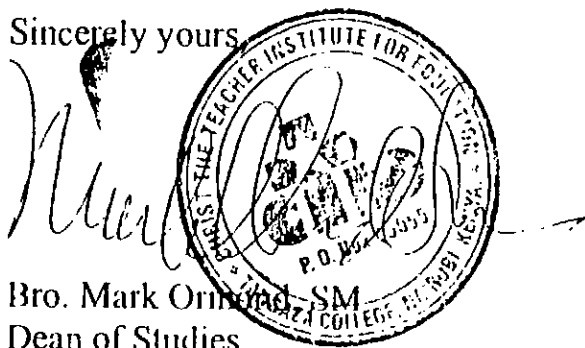
011-254-2-89-0339 (Office)
011-254-2-89-1407 (Messages)
011-254-2-89-0018 (Fax)
xteach@kenyaweb.com (email)

8 December 2003

To Whom It May Concern:

This document will serve as evidence that Sr. Restituta Devota Malile, MC, is a student of geography at Christ the Teacher Institute for Education. As part of her studies, she is investigating the contribution of Catholic Women Association to the Church in Kenya. Any and all assistance that you can give her would be most appreciated.

Sincerely yours,



Bro. Mark Orin, SM
Dean of Studies