

**TANGAZA COLLEGE**

**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA**

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**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND THE MAKING OF  
AN AFRICAN RELIGIOUS**

**A Case Study of Holy Cross in East Africa**

Moderator

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A Long Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the  
Requirements for the Bachelor Degree in Theology

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To,

The Religious of Holy Cross in East Africa, in our struggle in trying to catch up with the fast moving world of Information Technology in our work of Evangelization.  
We are not alone! Let's keep the faith and not propagate!

## **Acknowledgement**

In the difficult time of classes and trying to finish my class works, cover my credits and write examinations, My Moderator, Fr. Moses Hamungole worked hand in hand with me to come up with the proper topic for my long essay and helped me through the entire research work. I wish therefore to thank him very much for the time and energy he spent in helping to see me through this work.

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I wish to thank my friends and fellow students Ronald Kawooya CSC and Evelyne Kamunge for all the support and different ideas and encouragement they gave me in finishing this work.

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My fellow community members have been instrumental in giving me insights through their opinions, from the struggle they go through in this era of Information and Communication Technology, thanks to them all. This work is dedicated to you all.

## Student's Declaration

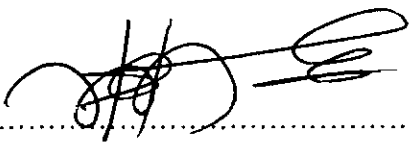
I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the Baccalaureate in Theology. It has never been submitted to any other college or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

Signed:  .....

Name of Student: DAVID C. ELIAONA, CSC .....

Date: June 23rd, 2005 .....

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

Signed:  .....

Name of Supervisor: Fr. Moses Hammigble .....

Date: 22/6/2005 .....

# **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

## **1. Background of the Study**

Information Technology has been a talk of the day for as long now as this generation can tell. It may be said to be a 'theory' that affects the world most in the current times. It touches almost all areas of life especially when it comes to its role as a servant to the media industry.

But apart from this societal influence, Information Technology has been part and parcel of the growing African Church and specifically in this work, in the formation and the general life of an African religious. Though not so much talked about in these circles, it still has so much influence, some of them being positive and negative. This study aims in going a little deeper than just the formation of an African religious and the use of Information Technology but also further to a religious who is in active ministry to see the effects of the same.

## **2. Description of this Study**

This study is centered on the effects of Information Technology in the formation and the life of Holy Cross religious in East Africa<sup>1</sup>. Almost all the African Religious of Holy Cross in East Africa have been through a formation where they were exposed much to Information Technology. Now as most are in active ministry, they still make use of Information Technology in most of their work, primarily evangelization. This study will go to them and ask of the effects that they have and are experiencing with this use, especially in the rapid change of the whole area of Information Technology.

## **3. Statement Of The Problem**

Not much has been researched on the use and effects of Information Technology in religious circles. There has been talk of the use of media and the church has written documents insisting on the use of media today in evangelization. The Church and religious circles though, seem to forget that, behind the use of media, there is a servant that by no means can be neglected, since, without this servant, the media would have no stepping stone to work. There is therefore a need to go and see what this servant here called Information Technology is made of, and how much this servant affects the whole life of a religious, specifically an African, specifically a Holy Cross today, before being a servant to the media.

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<sup>1</sup> The congregation of Holy Cross in East Africa is organized in a jurisdiction called "District" whereby "a District is a sector of a province outside its geographical boundaries but under its jurisdiction. It is erected by the provincial chapter with the approval of the superior general. It has the autonomy necessary to develop its common life and ministries and is governed under the norms set by the provincial chapter". [CONSTITUTION OF THE CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS, CONS. 7 # 90]

#### **4. Objectives Of The Study**

This study is aimed at:

- ◆ Making an African religious more aware of the rapid growth of Information Technology in today's society
- ◆ Providing more knowledge about Information Technology for a religious in active ministry.
- ◆ Creating awareness of the dangers that can be incurred with excessive use of Information Technology .
- ◆ Suggesting ways in which the use of Information Technology can be of importance and beneficial to the growing African church and the work and mission of Holy Cross in East Africa.

#### **5. Research Hypothesis**

African religious tomorrow and the future will be able to judge how much of their efforts and time should be put in the use of Information Technology if they manage to catch up with the fast growing world of the technologies. This will be useful since human relations will not be compromised with the use and replacement of human beings with machines and stuff.

#### **6. Research Methodology**

The study owing to its expansiveness used primarily the Tangaza Library, Strathmore University–Nairobi Library, Kenya School Of Professional Studies Library and the University Of Dar-Es-Salaam Library. There is a great deal of personal experience in using Information Technology by the researcher. The

researcher also carried out some interviews, both personal (face to face) and through the internet since all involved are literate enough in the use of the many arms of Information Technology. The interviews were 'semi-standardized'<sup>2</sup> and therefore followed the following procedures:

- ◆ More or less structured
- ◆ Questions may be re-ordered during the interview (with scheduled questions and unscheduled probes)
- ◆ Wording of questions flexible
- ◆ Level of language may be adjusted
- ◆ Interviewer may answer questions and make clarifications
- ◆ Interviewer may add or delete probes to interview between subsequent subjects

## **7. Limitation of the Study**

Where the researcher had to use the internet to get information from some religious who couldn't be reached in person, it took long to get replies from them for the compilation of the study to be done. There seemed to be a clear understanding that, majority of the religious didn't know much what Information Technology means and end up referring only to the use of computers. The researcher had to go in to great lengths at some points to give some key explanations in order to get through one or more of the guiding questions. Taking into consideration that the primary work of a religious is evangelization, there was a reluctance in providing information to the researcher about this study as it was deemed unfit, out of place.

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<sup>2</sup>BERG, B.L., *Qualitative Research Methods*, 79.

## **8. Significance of the Study**

There might seem to be a shortcut in doing things today, and that Information Technology might easily take root at the expense of human relationships, but still the society world over does not seem to escape from the reality that Information Technology is leading the world where it wants. The only way to limit the powers it has is to catch up with its rapid growth and make it a servant to humanity instead of it making humanity its slave. It will seem fit then especially for an African religious today, to study and get to know it in its entirety, and use it only when it deems fit.

## **9. Organization of the Study**

This Long Essay is arranged into three chapters, a General Introduction and a General Conclusion, whereby Chapter One talks of An African Religious, with his/her background and an Authentic African from a value-full person, time of the call into religious life and the clash of values that he/she encounters through formation and ending up in active ministry in Africa.

The second chapter talks purely of Information Technology, what it means, its ethics, how it affects the society today world over, and how it is a servant to the Media world.

This is followed by the third chapter that listens to the Holy Cross African religious and their experience of the effects of Information Technology through their time in formation to the present times of active ministry in the fast growing world of the technology.

The research ends with a general conclusion that carries some useful recommendations for the future use of Information Technology by an African religious.

## Chapter I

### An African Religious

#### 1. Historical Background and Values

##### *1.1 An African Before Religious Formation.*

It is over a century now since the continent of Africa has had its indigenous religious. And by the year 1990, there were over 11,000 indigenous priests working in Africa, and about 2000 of these belonged to religious orders [cf. Martin O'Reilly, *The Challenge of Being a Religious in Africa Today*]. This figure still doesn't give the number of religious sisters and brothers.

But history somehow shows that religious life in Africa is not a new thing. In fact Africa is known mythically to be the founder of religious life, with Anthony (c. 251-356) who was a Copt (Egyptian). Then followed by Pachomius (c. 290-345) in North Africa and many others who were monks/lived monastic life in the desert.

The element of having an organized brotherhood and subject to certain discipline that was practiced by these groups became an intrinsic element of religious life.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>O'REILLY, M., *Religious Life in Africa: A Sense of Direction*. 4

Today, religious life in Africa traces its history from the early 1800's beginning in West Africa and East Africa, and the cause of evangelization has now helped it to spread much to the sub-Sahara Africa. The good news is that, time came when Africa needed its own religious to evangelize its own.

The controversy comes with the recruitment and training of our own Africans as religious. From the time of the primary evangelization of Africa, the approach that was taken by the early missionaries made Christianity and religious life to look strange to Africans themselves.<sup>4</sup> It was more than a presentation of the "gift wrapper" than the 'gift' itself; of the culture that accompanied the good news, than the good news itself.

This made, those who came to embrace the faith wholesale (with the culture it came with) and more so those who embraced religious life to appear odd in the eyes of their own people. This is so because, they were expected by their faith or their religious communities to think and act similarly with their brothers and sisters abroad, same rules of life like in America or Europe.<sup>5</sup> This trend is now changing and the pace is a little slow but steady through the different formation programs that are established. Many religious communities have now indigenous African religious as directors/formators training young Africans who aspire to live religious life.

There seem to be a generation gap of cultural confusion here. There are African religious who were trained through a western and American culture, and it is in this group that there is more confusion. According to some people's views, this group is even worse in behavior than the westerners themselves. Somehow they have lost their pure identity, or they are in identity crisis. But also this group has

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<sup>4</sup> KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 41.

<sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 40.

produced some of the best indigenous religious in time and history. Some more comments that come with them are; challenging lifestyle, never reaching a point of saying 'it is OK'. The lifestyle that they encountered, ways of talking and thinking, ways of viewing things is all different from what they grew up with. Religious life in Africa employs western mentality and ideas most of the time to reach a point of seeing that, we are Africans in skin but white in ideas, mentality and spirituality.<sup>6</sup> On answering the question about cultural clashes, one had this to say,

Human values and Christian values are essentially the same. What really seem to clash are personal values. Clashes arise because we tend to take the natural human and Christian values on face value. If we were to live truly our family-human values, we would never find any difficulties with Christian values. Some of the personal clashes would be like; food minded, lack of sharing e.g; cars, common properties, insincerity, biases about Africa in general etc.

The following generation will be of interest, since they are experiencing a naivety kind of attitude in their approach to religious life as Africans. Most of them would not know what used to be the real African cultures and ways of expressions, and yet not knowing what is the real western culture that is packaging Christianity and religious life that they are now trying to embrace. Their naivety here is a strong point since with that, they are able to continue what they have lived since childhood, as from their African families and yet adapt to what they get from their formation programs termed as 'inculturation,' usually referred to as "the dynamic interaction of the gospel with specific culture."<sup>8</sup>

More confusion may be, comes when young men/women, are trained by a staff that has an African and a European/American as directors. There appears a

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<sup>6</sup> FRANCIS LOLEM CSC., A Holy Cross Seminarian (Interview)

<sup>7</sup> CLEOPHAS KYOMUHENDO CSC., A Holy Cross Brother (Interview)

<sup>8</sup> BURKE, J., *Towards the Inculturation of Religious Life in Africa*. 192

separation in values, and sometimes even a separation of the group. On interviewing Br. Joseph Tsiquaye, CSC, many insights came as to the formation program he went through, the changes that happened with time and so on. [Br. Joseph Tsiquaye is a Holy Cross brother from Ghana. He happened to be the first African Holy Cross brother to make final vows in the Congregation, the first West African Brother to be a Superior of a Major Religious Community, when he became District Superior of Holy Cross in West Africa in 1978, and the first African Holy Cross to serve in the General Council of the Congregation to this time.]<sup>9</sup>

Since there is kind of mixture in cultural values, there is a need in training African religious to instill in them the need to know their customs. Exposition to their positive cultural values, and values of their formation, may help them

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<sup>9</sup> TSQUAYE, J., The First African Holy Cross Brother (Interview through, 'e-chatting' in the internet)  
"I attended a School run by the Holy Cross Religious Congregation and liked the way they interacted with young people and was attracted to be part of the Congregation.

I did my novitiate training in the USA shortly after the end of Second Vatican Council and before all the changes in religious life proposed by the Council came to be implemented. The training program was clear cut and standardized. You knew what was expected of you and you behaved accordingly.

Initially there were clashes as to what it meant to be Authentically African and a religious at the same time. There was the unstated belief that Africans were not capable of 'the life.' These beliefs have changed over time as we learned to inculcate most of the values we had acquired.

There have been challenges in regard to inculturation for new personal self-understanding of the demands of Religious life and the local expression of it. How can I explain to my people that I vow poverty, yet I live a lifestyle above the average person? How do I live my life in such a way that I manifest the presence of the Kingdom of God here and now? I have in my own way tried to live out the Congregation of Holy Cross Mission priorities of preferential option for the poor and the proclamation of the truth of the Gospel, through teaching and also the outreach ministry of Evangelization within the Catholic Charismatic Renewal wherever I am.

Presently I am working as a member of the General Council of the Congregation of Holy Cross. I have been doing this for the past four years and I have another five years in this ministry. The only challenge I face is to keep my focus as an Ambassador of Christ in the Congregation, in whatever I do and wherever I find myself. In so doing I try to remain authentically African and congenially a member of Holy Cross. I cannot afford to lose the very core of my being as an African; this is the gift I bring to Holy Cross.

Bringing a consensus in values is a struggle and continues to be a struggle, but one that we cannot just ignore. It is part of the growing pains we have to go through as Holy Cross becomes truly international. Basically we have mutual gifts that need to be shared, and that no one culture is superior and has monopoly on truth. We work together collaboratively to bring about the Kingdom of God.

understand and embrace religious life within their own context [...] as Africans.<sup>10</sup> African values do not allow superficiality in doing things; it encourages deep and down to earth understanding and living of life's values. An authentic African religious therefore is one who "is in tune with the culture and traditions of his/her people [...] one who [...] should know the customs of his/her own people and live them daily"<sup>11</sup>

But the most important, even above this, should be 'one who knows how to live with people. Such a person does not study people but draws near them and communicates with them. His/her way of life is honest, sincere, humble and accepted by the local community.<sup>12</sup> A view from an interview again, on finding a consensus in values as per charism and spirituality,

"If we deeply understand and embrace the two, we would not even be talking of consensus. Jesus did not come to abolish anything! In the same way, not everybody is called to be religious, or to belong to a particular group. We are called to be human beings, Christians, and if need be, religious. There is no consensus in values, nothing is better than the other, no double-standards."<sup>13</sup>

A different but more or less same view comes from another interview;

"The basic path to reaching a consensus is to focus on the person of Christ and his invitation to leading a life analogous to his. This is the only conviction that leads me into finding a consensus between my community's charism – of service to women and men, bringing them to Christ and bringing Christ to them"<sup>14</sup>

The reason for this is that, as religious life expands now in Africa, communities receive varieties of people with a variety of cultural background across the continent. If every one of these people will stick properly to their cultural

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<sup>10</sup> KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 41.

<sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 41.

<sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 42.

<sup>13</sup> KYOMUHENDO, C., A Holy Cross Brother (Interview)

<sup>14</sup> SUPILA, A., A Holy Cross Seminarian (Interview)

practices with no regard or respect to others, there will be more harm than good, a situation that is happening already in some religious communities. But with the elements mentioned above, communities will bring a mutual understanding of each personality within and even in their outside expression and ministry. "Community life in Africa can be expressed through common concern for one another and mutual assistance during times of need. If some of these positive virtues/values of community life can be applied today, religious life in Africa can be different,<sup>15</sup> and evangelization will be more expressed in a self-expression.

### ***1.2 Formation:***

It (formation) is meant to prepare a religious for the work ahead of him/her. The ideal formation is that which gives the person the necessary tools for evangelization since that is singled out as the main profession of a religious.

Religious basically go through a number of institutions as they are undergoing their training/formation. This may range beginning from their respective religious institutions namely postulancies, novitiate and post-novitiate formation. While there, the young men and women also get to attend different institutions of studies, ranging from theology, education, natural and social sciences, business skills and so on.

The training of priests has always been referred to as the seminary training. "It is consequently assumed that such training cannot be acquired outside the seminary or its equivalent."<sup>16</sup> This training has changed today in its outlook in that,

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<sup>15</sup>KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 42.

<sup>16</sup>DOWNEY, J., *The Seminary Curriculum*. 23

more has been introduced into it, to make it cover all areas of life in the growing global society. It is attempting to

‘...offer a broad model of religious life which would be faithful to the gospel, as well as to the megatrends present Society and in the Church. This model is based on five elements, which seem most relevant at present. Religious must be gospel-people in all the manifestations of religious \life prophetic people vis-à-vis the institutional Church; eschatological people vis-à-vis the world; and kingdom oriented people in their mission and ministries.’<sup>17</sup>

As a theory that stands for the African reception of faith, it is the same with the founding of religious communities in Africa. It was through Europeans and Americans, and other nations outside Africa that brought us this message of the good news and the religious lifestyle. Now when we see that we have managed to embrace fully the lifestyle, NOT for what it is, but for what it means, we need to think of how to ‘indigenize’ the meaning of it, and make it our own, authentically. That it should ‘reach us as we are (as indigenous traditional Africans), in our own cultural settings, and capture and possess it. It should assimilate into us,<sup>18</sup> so we may be able to proclaim and communicate this message of the good news in our own cultures to our own people for a better reception.

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<sup>17</sup> BELLAGAMBA. A., *Religious Life and the Mission of the Church*. 29

<sup>18</sup> MAGESA. L., *Authentic African Christianity*, AFER. 213

### ***1.3 Active Ministry of An African Religious***

#### ***1.3.1 Post Formation and Living the Religiosity:***

From the constitutions of the Congregation of Holy Cross, this is what we come up with as regards active ministry;

“Our mission sends us across borders of every sort. Often we must make ourselves at home among more than one people or culture, reminding us again that the farther we go in giving, the more we stand to receive. Our broader experience allows both the appreciation and the critique of every culture and the disclosure that no culture of this world can be our abiding home” [Cons. 2 # 17]

Taking from this background, an African religious in the first instance is not expected to differ much from one community to the other. In practice they all go through formation programs. They all are needed to have knowledge of the histories of their communities, the founder and mostly the spirituality and charism of their communities. Those basic requirements are vital. They also have the same basic ‘job description’, though it differs when it comes to how they do it (charism) and the job is Evangelization. Religious people are also missionaries, in that they are ‘instruments’ of evangelization/spreading the good news. They therefore are persons who are expected to have received the good news as purely as it is supposed to, or if not, then be able to separate the message of the good news and other messages coming with it, the foundation underlying it, be it cultural or political.

On the other hand an authentic African religious of today is one who is deeply rooted in their cultural background and ways of living that are undoubtedly African. “Sometimes we African religious have the tendency to follow non-African cultures, and shun our own, hence losing our self-identity.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup>KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol. 21. No. 4. 42.

In matters of education, regardless of their charisms, African religious need just a little retrieval of their own education that was done in an African way. Though informal, the ways of our ancestors were deeply imbued in their day-to-day lives. Living with the teachings of the community, passing them from one generation to another through oral tradition, and growing older and wiser through them, made one a respected member of the society, an icon, and one that all the young will desire into. The same traditional formation can be adapted easily in these changing times too, however much science and technology takes the picture.

In transmitting education through Christian faith today as a mission and charism of many African religious, a person MUST know the good news of Christ; believe in it firmly to the extent of his/her faith becoming a way of life. Such a person won't have any difficulty in passing this message to others, as it really is meant. Their lives will be a perfect example and witness as the Constitution of Holy Cross says;

Our commitment is an invitation for our fellow Christians to fulfill their vocation, and for ourselves it is a concrete way of working with them for the spread of the gospel and with all for the development of a more just and human society.[cf. Cons. I #7].

It is only by going through or back to our African roots of culture<sup>20</sup> that we find these values that helps us with our mission.

African religious are trained and encouraged to go across borders and cultures, a premise that can work only if one knows his/her culture of origin. In many ways, we lack in our ways of understanding both the culture and of the message of the gospel, a factor that brings us to the unity of the community and the need for each other. Religious life won't have any meaning as religious, and in our

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<sup>20</sup>KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 42

African background, no one's cultural expression of religious life is complete, nor can it be normative for others, a standard that/against which all others are measured.<sup>21</sup> It is because we are all so different from each other, that we have so much to share, and this is very much of an African value.

The context of religious vows in the understanding of an African mind; may sometimes appear contrary in communitarian values. But we will see here of the values that cut across all African cultures.

Obedience in African cultures is a value. Young people beginning in early life are taught to be submissive to elders [...] that elders or people in authority are symbols of wisdom.<sup>22</sup> This value carried over to religious obedience becomes the same practice for willingness to submit oneself to the will of God and to what superiors ask us to do, with proper humility, but without naivety. Here it should be known that one gets to know when do they be submissive, and when do they get to know they are equals to their elders/superiors.

Chastity in an African understanding was not and still is not much of a perpetual practice. Seasonal practicing of chastity has been observed in many of the African cultures especially during hunting seasons, pregnancy for women and other seasons, and also to those performing special duties for the community. Perpetual celibacy therefore may not seem to be a value, but the understanding of the practice as a cleansing time for a person is what is carried as a value in Christian religiosity. The fact that it is made for life shows the importance of the mission ahead, a special duty for the community.

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<sup>21</sup>KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 42.

<sup>22</sup>KAPENDA, J., *Religious Life in Africa*. Human Development. Vol 21. No. 4. 44.

Poverty as a term in itself is a curse in African terminologies and so ceases to be a value right away. But being able to share in the communal life, working hard, being hospitable and generous is a virtue and a value that will disqualify one from poverty almost right away. A self-centered person will live and die poor in most of the African societies. Having no property of your own is what is taken as poverty, but absolute poverty is the state of not sharing, childlessness and living by yourself. Poverty is most of the time inscribed in 'laziness'. The better understanding of religious poverty is that of knowing that each religious has taken a vow of poverty that down the line has been seen as an expression of willingness to enter into a common life...for the building of God's Kingdom.<sup>23</sup>

As an African religious therefore, if I have properly received the message of the gospel, the good news, and I make a life long effort to integrate the many precious values that are accrued from understanding of the vows and made all this my life and faith, and gone to the level of giving this to others with utter conviction, then I must be a Holy Cross religious, 'an African one in that sense, since I carry by heart the charism of educating others in faith, with the above mentioned values.

#### ***1.4 As a Tool of Evangelization and Inculturation:***

The stressed points on a person who 'qualifies' for an Authentic African Holy Cross are that, he/she lives the charism of the community that is "Educator in the Faith"<sup>24</sup>, and living the vows properly, and doing all these with accepted African cultural values.

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<sup>23</sup> O'REILLY, M., *Religious Life in Africa: A Sense of Direction*. 62

<sup>24</sup> CONSTITUTIONS OF THE CONGREGATION OF HOLY CROSS. CONS. I #12

This person will be a tool of true evangelization first through what we call a “self-media” or “personal media.”

“Increasingly important to modern life are **personal media**. Like mass media, personal media depends on technology to help create and present messages. Unlike with mass media, with personal media most of the control over outcome of communication process resides in the hands of the user. Personal media include CD (compact discs) and cassette players, VCR (video cassette recorders), personal computers, video games, camcorders, cameras, mobile phones, and even calculators.”<sup>25</sup>

The values that we have talked about will be seen openly on the way the religious will carry themselves, through their behaviors, ways of life and commitment to their work, and today they are easily seen through the use of modern ways of communication and the way the person weighs their values and usage.

Though the fitting in the self-media here would not qualify for its definition, it fits well in the characteristics that, he/she in person will address the message of the good news lived by themselves to a simple restricted and motivated public life, but at the same time, through fulfilling the community charism. This person will present to the society they serve what is useful for their lives, and that is Education and strengthening their Faith.<sup>26</sup>

A religious of this nature will have gone through the two stages of evangelization, that is ‘through and within him/herself, *ad intra*’ and to the extent of ‘spreading to others, *ad extra*’. This is strengthening the faith-formation of oneself that comes through a more understanding of faith and putting it into practice.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> BLACK, J. – BRYANT, J., *Introduction to Media Communication: Understanding the Past, Experiencing the Present, Marvel the Future*. 3

<sup>26</sup> AMBROISE, R., *Social Communication at the Service of Evangelization*. 105

<sup>27</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Social Communication at the Service of Evangelization*. 105

The Inculturation aspect will not be a hurdle for such a person since his/her understanding of their religious life is already an inculturated one deeply rooted and understood in the very African cultural values and already viewed in a modern understanding.

## Chapter II

### Information Technology

#### 2. Society and Information Technology

“Consider the following short list of a few of the facilities that the new technologies have brought:

- Home computers
- Debit and credit cards
- Tele-banking
- Worldwide financial transactions
- Online holiday and hotel bookings
- Countrywide databases of houses and cars for sale
- Just-in-time ordering systems
- Barcode check out systems
- Internet discussion groups
- Radio-tagging to trace the whereabouts of animals, people or goods
- Distance learning
- Ceefax and oracle, information systems over the home to
- Mobile telephones
- Automatic surveillance and security systems.

And there are so many more.”<sup>28</sup>

Most of the time when mentioned, Information Technology only refers to the use of computer hardware and software.<sup>29</sup> For those who have been around the different ways Information Technology works would give better explanation, like, ‘the kind of expertise that would help one relay information better, faster and by use of modern methods.’<sup>30</sup> But in actual sense, Information Technology covers a large

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<sup>28</sup> HILL, M.W., *The Impact of Information on Society*. 3

<sup>29</sup> MAGEZI, D. – OKUMU, L., Holy Cross Brothers teaching in Fort Portal, Western Uganda (Interview)

<sup>30</sup> KYOMUHENDO, C., A Holy Cross Brother (Interview)

area of expertise. From the personal knowledge of the researcher, Information Technology has many arms covering from better communications (televisions and radios) to time management; the use of computers and softwares access worldwide; good habits in protecting systems (support and maintenance) and data in relation to one's health; web research, term papers writing, plagiarism, critical thinking tools; job seeking, distance learning and working, technographics (editing and publishing), and the ethics that goes with all these.

As much as talking of the benefits that are accrued from Information Technology, there is also a side that is not so much mentioned in its world, but is important to be mentioned here and this will be things like, Energy consumption, manipulation of truth in art and journalism, censorship, accuracy and privacy, crime, Artificial Intelligence and artificial lives.

Today, Information Technology<sup>31</sup> has come up to age, and basically, what was meant to be the slave to man has slowly turned to be the master of man. A sense of humanity, love of persons and personal relations have gone down or are completely disappearing.

It is true that computers and communications are the parents of the Information age as agreed by many writers. 'From the 1900's, most companies for the first time spent more on computing and communications gear [...] than on

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<sup>31</sup> Computer and communications are bringing about a revolution that will make – indeed is making now – profound changes in your life. This wrenching change in human history goes under many names: The Computer Revolution. The Information Revolution. The Communication Revolution. The Internet Revolution. The Multimedia Revolution. The Binary Age. The Information Age. The Information Society [...] We prefer to call it the Digital Age, but whatever its name, it is happening in all parts of society and in all parts of the world, and its consequences will reverberate throughout our life time. (WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications*, London 1999). 2

industrial, mining, farm and construction machines. The InfoTech-Information Technology – is changing conventional meanings of time, distance and space’.<sup>32</sup>

As a result of all these changes, the entire life is being re-defined here as distance is being shortened, time is being made ample, lives being improved or otherwise, and at the same time all this is happening at the cost of human relationships.

### ***2.1 Information Technology Today.***

Due to the fact that prices of up-to-date computers and software are rising up everyday, and it becomes a little difficult for persons to own them and get up-to-date information, there has risen a theory-made-practical called ‘Technological Convergence’ also known as ‘Digital Convergence’. This refers to “The technological merger of several industries through various devices that exchange information in the electronics or digital format used by computers. The industries are computer, communications, consumer electronics, entertainment and mass media.”<sup>33</sup>

What this does is basically making it simpler to access and communicate information. When it used to be every gadget doing its own function, say, computer monitors only for text display and TV screen only for pictures and graphics, newer technologies have made it simpler for same monitor or screen to do multiple activities. Now, one can easily, in the same workstation access the internet, view movies, read the newest version of the Hebrew Bible, learn languages, talk to

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<sup>32</sup> WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications.* 2

<sup>33</sup> \_\_\_\_\_, *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications.* 3

another person in a cellular phone, write examinations, complete a research work and so on.

Going hand in hand with this shift of technologies is the fact that we all have to keep up with the pace of change and interaction of other people and cultures, and readiness for evaluating these changes whether they are for the good or the destruction of the community/society.

## ***2.2 Ethics in Information Technology.***<sup>34</sup>

Some researches have shown that there have been massive foul ups as well as massive usage and help that Information Technology has brought up. The speed and scale of transfer of material and information in the changing world had by a large amount grown in ways that were not possible before. An issue to worry here is the security and privacy since technology can never be considered totally secure. A good example is that of the foul up done in the Safaricom Mobile Phone Operator in May 1st, 2002.<sup>35</sup>

Computer experts know how to find their ways in other operations, in what we call unauthorized access of data and operational material (Hacking).

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<sup>34</sup> Every computer user will have to wrestle with ethical issues related to the use of Information Technology. Ethics is defined as a set of moral values or principles that govern the conduct of an individual or a group. Indeed ethical questions arise often in connection with Information Technology. (WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications*. 33)

<sup>35</sup> On May 1<sup>st</sup> 2002, the Eve of Labour Day, there was a massive distribution of airtime value of Kshs. 400/- to every SAFARICOM Mobile Phone user who would make a call anywhere. This situation lasted for almost 8 hours beginning the midnight of that Eve to almost 8 O'Clock in the morning of Labor Day. Many who thought it was an offer given by SAFARICOM for the Labour Day were surprised too see this airtime value reduced or all taken later during the day (if they had not used it). No explanation has ever been given for this situation to date. This situation is easy to relate it to computer hacking that many young men and women are engaged in today. The possible explanation for this would be an intrusion to the Mobile Phone operator computer system and activate it in such a way that every caller can receive a direct amount of airtime value after making any one call.

With the unpredictability, there has been a worry all the time since computers, more than other pervasive technologies like electricity, automobiles, mobile phones and so on, has become a lot less predictable and reliable. One fact could be the complexity of the systems. Some of these systems are massively complex to the point of not being understood even by their own creators, it makes them completely unmanageable, producing massive foul-ups or unimaginably out-of-control costs.

### ***2.3 Replacements from People to Machines:***

With the emergence of Information Technology, there are now things like Telecommuting - Work at home with telecommunications between office and home; Home based workers/students - bringing work home. Information Technology can also be very advantageous to the society in that, it reduces traffic congestion, energy consumption and air pollution, employers increased productivity 20%, less distraction at home and working flexible hours, more money saving, etc.<sup>36</sup>

A theory called virtual office is another phenomena in the name of Information Technology, which is a non-permanent and mobile office run with computers and communication technology, whereby employers work not in a central office but from their home, cars and other new working sites, using pocket diaries, pagers, portable computers, fax machines, phones and network services to conduct business. One gets in the central office only when necessary and only after calling ahead of time to book for a room. This is popularly known as 'Hotelling' or

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<sup>36</sup> WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications*. 355

'Alternative Officing', where most of these offices have computerized office programs for availability of rooms/cubicles.<sup>37</sup>

#### ***2.4 Society and the Digital Age:***

Information Technology is driving the new world of jobs, leisure and services, and nothing seem to stop it. By 2010 as predicted by futurists, probably 90% of the workforce will be affected by the four principal information technologies namely, 'Computer Networks, Imaging Technology, Massive Data Storage and artificial Intelligence.'<sup>38</sup>

Many of these mutational machines are made to emulate human qualities in findings that will need human expertise. They include translations of themes of knowledge and understanding, where computer based applications will recognize, process and translate a said language into another. They include too replacing human beings in factory or even gardening works, where computer-based applications are set to operate heavy machines in running production machines or watering gardens.

Artificial Intelligence goes further to the point of reasoning "a section of human functionality in the brain) to probability and credibility. A good example is that of the elevators in buildings."<sup>39</sup>

A British Mathematician by name of Alan Turing (1912-1954) developed a test, popularly known as the "Turing Test" (Imitation Game), with the question,

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<sup>37</sup> WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications*. 356

<sup>38</sup> Artificial Intelligence refers to a group of related technologies that attempt to develop machines to emulate human-like qualities, such as learning, reasoning, communicating, seeing and hearing. The main areas being; Robotics, Perception Systems, Expert Systems, Natural Language Processing, Fuzzy Logic, Neural Networks and Genetic Algorithms.

<sup>39</sup> RUSSELL, S. · NORVIG, P., *Artificial Intelligence: A Modern Approach*. 582

“Can Machines Think? whereby a man (an interrogator) is trying to identify voices [...] at the end he says:

I believe that, in about fifty years' time, it will be possible to program computers [...] to make play the imitation game so well that an average interrogator will not have more than 70% chance of making identification after 5 minutes of questioning [...]. Nevertheless, I believe that at the end of the century, the use of words and general educated opinion will have altered so much that one will be able to speak of machines thinking without expecting to be contradicted. I believe further that no useful purpose is served by concealing these beliefs.<sup>40</sup>

Some contrary opinions of course came up even at his time. A theological objection has it that, “thinking is a function of the soul”, while the Mathematical objection by Godel's Theorem says, “...In any sufficiently powerful logical system, statements can be formulated which can neither be proved nor disproved within the system unless possibly the system itself is inconsistent.” From *Consciousness, (Thinking Humanly<sup>41</sup>)*, it says, “not until a machine can write a sonnet or compose a concerto because of thoughts and emotions felt, and not be a chance full of symbols, could we agree that machines equals brain, that is, not only write it but know that it had written it.”<sup>42</sup>

In another human replacement by computer-based application in May 1997, “the IBM Computer...played against world champion grandmaster Kasparov at Chess [...] when Kasparov lost, there was a sense that a milestone had been reached, the computer, it seemed, had finally triumphed in a contest that pitted it against

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<sup>40</sup> FIREBAUGH, M., *Artificial Intelligence: A Knowledge-Based Approach*. 7

<sup>41</sup> If we are going to say that a given program thinks like a human, we must have some way to determining how humans think. We need to get inside the actual workings of human minds. There are two ways to do this: through introspection trying to catch our own thoughts as they go by – and through psychological experiments. Once we have a sufficiently precise theory of the mind, it becomes possible to express the theory as a computer program. If the program's input/output and timing match corresponding human behaviors, that is evidence that some of the programs mechanisms could also be operating in humans. P.3

<sup>42</sup> FIREBAUGH, M., *Artificial Intelligence: A Knowledge-Based Approach*. 8-9

human power of thought.” Was this the triumph of man thought patterns implemented in machines, or the triumph of the machine per se?

A number of questions then follow us who are inhabitants of this society that is so much into technologies today, the main one being; What happens to society as computer takes over the more and more functions formerly requiring human insight, judgment and Intelligence? Other serious questions raised by the scenaric questions are:

- What happens to all misplaced middle managers?
- Will the number of real human experts decline?
- How will new knowledge be generated if human experts disappear?

Answers for these questions are yet to be found, but they will depend very much to one’s philosophical outlook. (Reasoning)<sup>43</sup>

### ***2.5 Information Technology at the Service of Mass Media***

Mass media covers from televisions, radios, and the general distribution of news world over. In Information Technology this section is called ICT – Information and Communication Technology, whereby Mass Media/Communication uses Information Technology as the playground in being active. This becomes so intense in that, any change in Information Technology especially in equipments that are used by Mass Media, directly affect the development of the whole area of Mass Media.

“Changes in communication technologies have forced a much more radical rethinking about communication than is represented by the above discussion of variant models. Mass communication itself is declining in its relative significance compared to other communication processes and is no longer

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<sup>43</sup> FIREBAUGH, M., *Artificial Intelligence: A Knowledge-Based Approach*. 439-445.

easy to demarcate. The main cause is the rise of new electronic or 'telematic' media, which have been defined as 'a set of services [...] which can be provided to the users...'<sup>44</sup>

There is the use of 'telematic'<sup>45</sup> here which has a long reference to a combined use of telecommunication and informatics.

This phenomena can easily be seen today in the different media houses, here in Kenya and in different countries, a good example is that of the recent changes in the Nation Media, the television division, that changed their outlook and name with all the attracting features. It can also be seen in the daily publications of Daily Nation and Taifa Leo papers in Kenya, the Mwananchi and The Citizen papers in Tanzania, and The Monitor in Uganda, all being publications under the Nation Media Group.

More and more changes are happening in the development of Information Technology and directly affect the media too, whether it is in trying to keep up with the technology, or in business competition. Information Technology is becoming increasingly important in the training in different fields of studies. The use of ICT for educational purposes has been described as a 'paradigm shift in education owing to the focus on learning, rather than on teaching. [...] With this, the learning path,

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<sup>44</sup> MCQUAIL, D., *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. 55

<sup>45</sup> The so-called *telematic* media ('telematic' because they combine telecommunications and informatics) have been heralded as the key component in the latest communication revolution, which will replace broadcast television as we know it. The term covers a set of developments at the core of which is a visual display unit (television screen) linked to a computer network. What are sometimes referred to as the 'new media', which have put in an appearance since the 1970s, are in fact a set of different electronic technologies with varied applications which have yet to be widely taken up as *mass* media or to acquire a clear definition of their function. Several kinds of technology are involved: of transmission (by cable or satellite); of miniaturization; of storage and retrieval; of display (using flexible combinations of text and graphics); and of control (by computer). The main features, by contrast with the 'old media' as described, are: decentralization. (MCQUAIL, D., *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. 20-21)

instructions, and feedback can all be geared to the individuals students, skills and error patterns.<sup>46</sup>

### ***2.6 Information Technology and Evangelization:***

Communication has been simply explained by the Church's authority as 'communication in and of human society. Such a definition refers to all ways and means of human communication in society, which also includes the mass media.'<sup>47</sup> Beginning with different publications to the high-tech means of communication, the Church has in time adopted the different means of communications that are used popularly world-wide. With the growth of technology in today's world, the older forms of communications as referred above has not changed much but more complimented. It means, the church still has the same mission of reaching out to the many and evangelize the good news while changing its approach in accordance with time and technology. In this way, communication is not seen only as a tool in the process of evangelization, but the core of the whole process.

Of course all this has a theological background of the Trinitarian communication that is within the three persons in the trinity, and the communication through revelation, in the way God communicates with humanity.

Religious in Africa today are faced with this challenge that is given by the rise in ICT and the acceptance of the Church in total usage of Information Technology for the core work of evangelization.

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<sup>46</sup> MOHAN, K. – BANERJI, M., *Developing Communication Skills*. 157.

<sup>47</sup> EILERS, F., *Evangelization and Communication* 28

## Chapter III

### African Religious and Information Technology

#### 3. An African Holy Cross Religious and the Impact of IT

The study of the impact of Information Technology in the making of an African religious brings us to a realization that, society, today can not do without the use of technological equipments.

“Suddenly, success in just about any field has become impossible without information technology. In farming, manufacture, education, policing, medicine, entertainment, banking or whatever. IT is apparently set to change everything that human beings do in advanced societies.”<sup>48</sup>

Information Technology had and still has a great impact in the society. Religious societies are in all aspects ‘societies’ like any other existing worldwide. When talking of religious formation, we talk of an organized system of life that exists within the world society. If the world society is in any way affected by changes around it, so will be the religious societies. In the formation of an African religious, and more so in the formation of a ‘Holy Cross religious and in his/her active ministry here in East Africa’<sup>49</sup>, the same is to be expected. Generally,

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<sup>48</sup> LYON, D., *The Information Society: Issues and Illusions*. 1

<sup>49</sup> HISTORICAL NOTES: Holy Cross in East Africa: Founding and Missions:

In the wake period of the French revolution, Basil Anthony Moreau, a priest of the Diocese of Le Mans founded the Congregation of Holy Cross. By August 1835, he had recruited priests for auxiliary works assisting diocesan clergy in preaching in parishes and missions, and also as educators. Fr. Moreau also accepted responsibility for the brothers of St. Joseph who had been founded fifteen years earlier by Fr. James Dujarie; zealous lay men who had been meeting the need for elementary education in villages. Fr. Moreau made a decision to unite the two groups in a

Information Technology has had impact in the society as a whole, as seen in the second chapter. An African living in this universe is in no doubt facing the same changes and challenges that everyone else is experiencing. Being a religious does not exclude one in facing the same thing, especially when it comes to evangelization as the key work of a religious.

### ***3.1 An African Holy Cross Religious Facing the IT Era***

As said before that we all face Information Technology the same way, there are a number of questions that were asked to lead to a kind of understanding and conclusion of the feelings of the many of us. After a couple of interviews, it was seen clearly that, until very late, many religious of Holy Cross have come face to face with some or full use of Information Technology after joining the formation program. One still could see the difficult that is there in differentiating between knowledge and information. 'Popular usage often treats 'knowledge' and

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fundamental act of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1837 into a single association to minister to the pastoral and educational needs of the French Church.

In 1838, he gave a rule of life to a small band of laywomen, whom later he directed to the work of education. He later formed the three groups into a single religious congregation composed of three autonomous societies known as the Salvatorists, the Josephites and the Marianites of Holy Cross. The congregation received pontifical approval and had the constitutions approved on 1856, with the men functioning separately from the women. [*Abridged Historical Note from the Constitution of the Congregation of Holy Cross*]

The continent of Africa was originally the first mission land for Holy Cross. Soon after the founding and establishment, the founder sent missionaries to Algeria (North Africa) in may 1844. This mission did not last for long due to health reasons and need for other missions.

In East Africa, the first Holy Cross missionaries arrived in Uganda at Entebbe on November 4<sup>th</sup>, 1958. They were three young priests and one older who later became the Bishop of the newly founded Diocese of Fort Portal in western Uganda - Bishop Vincent J. McCauley, CSC. [*Founding Member and first Secretary of AMECEA, and also mastermind of CHIEA/CUEA - Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa/Catholic University of Eastern Africa*]. They were joined later by the brothers who took over the running of schools in that area, the work they do up to date. The sisters of the Holy Cross also joined this group of Priests and Brothers and they too took the work of establishing and running schools that are operating to date. [CONNELLY, J., *Holy Cross in East Africa 1958-1980*. 27]

Both groups, of the men and women of Holy Cross have now established formation programs that are spread over the three east African countries, and are actually ministering fully in the three countries. The men of Holy Cross are now operating in a jurisdiction known as a 'District'. Cf. footnote #1.

‘information’ as synonymous words. The way the word ‘know’ is used adds this. ‘what do you know about...?’ quite often means, ‘what information can you give me about...?’<sup>50</sup> This in Information Technology will mean, the full knowledge (information) and use of computers, mobile phones, video and recording gadgets, publications and other ways of communication for evangelization.

The formation of Holy Cross in East Africa include, three years of candidacy, one year novitiate program, four years theological programs for priest candidates [one to four years of professional studies for brother candidates] and a year for pastoral experience. It also has for sisters, two years of postulancy, two years novitiate followed by six years in temporal vows where a proper professional program is pursued.<sup>51</sup>

In these different stages of formation, both the men and the women get to encounter fields that demands them to write school and class papers. They also get to be given different responsibilities both in the community and in their institutions, that demand their full knowledge and use of computers, phones, cameras of different calibers and many other Information Technology stuff. This seem very much part of the daily practice of people who live and work in the society. It goes a little edgy when we find that it crosses boundaries. ‘Information Technology is also beginning to affect many aspects of our personal lives outside of the workplace, and there are other, less visible, changes occurring. In some instances, these effects simply continue a long history of developments in labor-saving devices within the home,

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<sup>50</sup> HILL, M.W., *The Impact of Information on Society*.23

<sup>51</sup> SOURCES: *Handbooks for Holy Cross Formation Programs: Sisters of the Holy Cross, Holy Cross men in East Africa.*

while others have potentials to change the way as individuals communicate with others and carry on our daily lives.<sup>52</sup>

Information Technology still continue to affect our lives in different ways as religious. We talked of religious of Holy Cross in active ministry, a life that many begin slowly while in formation to get experience as they eventually move to full active work. In interviewing a number of them of the effects and the experience they go through where Information Technology is concerned, there are varied experiences both positive and negative. Francis Lolem, a seminarian from Karamoja in North Eastern Uganda realizes that ministry requires use of instruments of modern communication and technology if we have to work and evangelize the people who use Information Technology. We need to be familiar with Information Technology as religious. In his opinion, Information Technology is an instrument of Mass Media, which is an essential tool in the work of evangelization. You can not think of the modern media today minus technological advancement and ways of transmission.<sup>53</sup>

In the same way, Information Technology affects us negatively. Whereas Africans are by nature face to face people, it is becoming increasingly difficult to communicate with relatives or even people we work with that way now, instead, only phones, emails, radios communication and other technological communications are in place. Personal touches and care are exceedingly going down. Information Technology is spreading faster than we can catch it, and worse still, it is diverting people's attention to more of machinery. There is more investment in machinery

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<sup>52</sup> BURTON P.F., *Information Technology and Society: Implications for the Information Professions*. 77-78

<sup>53</sup> LOLEM, F., A Holy Cross Seminarian (Interview)

more than people and this can be disastrous in the future.<sup>54</sup> For those in active ministries, it is advised that advantage should be taken to catch up in whatever technology we can lay our hands on, in view of assisting our realization of the call to evangelization, while keeping the gospel values of knowing, loving and serving God through His people.<sup>55</sup>

In a different interview, there was a much critical view in defense of African values and how fast they are going down, since most people don't stop and ask the question WHY? and so end up doing many things without any conviction of their 'positivity.' There is a wholesale 'swallow' of the situation in that, 'in the name of Information Technology, the end result seem to be human enslavement' and many times, overspending (in phones/communication), commercial centered, less human, selfish, foolish and foreign behaviors, especially in the African mind, and this is bound to be so for decades, and does not do much in improving human lives. While this view seem to be radical, the opposite of it seem to be slim but radically good too; 'INSTANT communication and information than has ever been thought just a few years ago,'<sup>56</sup> though it is not something that we should really yearn for. These radical views that overlap the benefits, are seen by many in the society not just in Information Technology but all other areas of technologies;

"All technology has both intended and unintended effects, and Information Technology is no exception. Sometimes, the unintended effects are so damaging they cancel out the benefits. The areas of concern are, health, 'ergonomics' and environmental effects. [...] *While health and environmental effects can sometimes be very notable, ergonomics need some explanation:* It is a study of the physical relationship between people and their working environment. It is concerned with designing technology that is less stressful and more comfortable to use, that blends more smoothly with a

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<sup>54</sup> KAWOOYA, R., A Holy Cross Seminarian (Interview)

<sup>55</sup> LUKATI, W.F., A Holy Cross Priest (Interview)

<sup>56</sup> KYOMUHENDO, C., A Holy Cross Brother (Interview)

person's body or movements, e.g., tilting display screens, flat screens, detachable computer keyboards, flip modes mobile phone handsets, etc"<sup>57</sup>

The double-effect views are equally shared even among the academicians and writers in the society, that;

“The place of Information Technology in our lives can be divided into two broad areas. Information Technology applications which in general improve the quality of life and the convenience with which we carry out daily tasks, and applications which impinge upon us as citizens within the society, though there is considerable overlap between the two categories.”<sup>58</sup>

There is no doubt that Information Technology has greatly enhanced the transmission of information around the world faster than in any era of our world. Recent world events have been viewed simultaneously the whole world over. It is amazing to watch soccer matches live in some remote areas as they are being played in various parts of the globe. The transmission of the “death watch” of Pope John Paul II, his funeral, and the election and installation of Pope Benedict XVI, all live was a joy for all concerned. These events were no longer the concerns of the 1 billion Catholics in the world, but rather world events which encompassed all peoples of our world. Information Technology has really made the world a global village. Of course this is basically mass media but without the biggest role of Information Technology all this would be a dream.

In other interviews, it was seen that Information Technology in its many arms has helped much in reducing and easing work especially for those in high offices that have to contact many persons at a go. The possibility of instant communication has been a great help in getting into touch with others. “In my

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<sup>57</sup> WILLIAMS, B.K. – SAWYER, S.C. – HUTCHINSON, S.E., *Using Information Technology: A Practical Introduction to Computers and Communications*. 604 – 607 (words in italics are added)

<sup>58</sup> BURTON, P.F., *Information Technology and Society: Implications for the Information Professions*. 77-78

ministry I do work through the e-mails, text messages on mobile phones, and through telephone conversation. It makes for better coordination and better planning on use of precious time in ministry. Others know when and where they can reach you if need be.”<sup>59</sup> Those is formation work also have this to say in favor of Information Technology,

“As a formator, I very much used various videos as part of the class presentation and this would be followed by formative reflection on what has been seen. In this way the candidates are not just passive spectators waiting to be entertained by a nice movie and allowing themselves to be brainwashed by what they see. This review/reflection is an important dimension of life that has to be kept in mind in the use of IT gadgets, as most of are “thought-poor.”<sup>60</sup>

Personally as a seminarian of Holy Cross in East Africa for almost seven years now, I have come to experience the use of Information Technology before joining the formation program and throughout this process and journey, I have seen Information Technology touching almost all aspects of formation and ministry in one way or the other. As years go by, I have seen Information Technology growing in East Africa, and catches up with the speed of its growth worldwide, as it was prophesied some years back that ‘once introduced in Africa, electronic networking could grow rapidly and prove to be a major boost for the competitiveness of African countries. It will link not just the north and the south, but the rural and the urban as well.’<sup>61</sup>

This view comes with the fear that were developed some years back about Information Technology and Africa, that Africa might miss the opportunity to get connected with the rest of the world and whether catching up with the rest of the

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<sup>59</sup> TSQUAYE, J.K.B., A Holy Cross Brother, currently an Assistant to the Superior General in Rome. (Interview through e-chatting)

<sup>60</sup> TSQUAYE, J.K.B., A Holy Cross Brother (Interview through e-chatting)

<sup>61</sup> EVANS RUTH., BBC reports., [http://www.bbc.org.uk/worldservice/afr\\_nct.html](http://www.bbc.org.uk/worldservice/afr_nct.html)

world through Information Technology,<sup>62</sup> will actually help solve Africa's problem of development.

### ***3.2 Potential Developments in Information Technology***

Some ideas can be offered here on which way to go. But these will be very short term suggestions since nobody can even dream of what will happen next with Information Technology. Many had prophesied its coming years ago, but I am sure they did not know what to expect when technology reaches its full impact, and to what extent will it affect the society. All we know is that, the development of Information and Communication Technology is, and will very much determine the way forward in almost all aspects for the development of the world today.

In the opening session for the First Meeting of the United Nations Working Group of Informatics on Information and Communication Technology and Sustainable Developments in 1997, the UN Secretary General Mr. Koffi Annan had this to say:

“Recent developments in the fields of communications and information technology are indeed revolutionary in nature. Information and knowledge are expanding in quantity and accessibility. In many fields, future decision-makers will be presented with unprecedented new tools for development. In such fields as agriculture, health, education, human resources and environmental management, or transport and business developments, the consequences really could be revolutionary. Communications and Information Technology have enormous potential, especially for developing countries, and in furthering sustainable development.”<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> PFISTER, R., *Internet and for Africanists and Other Interested in Africa*.17.

<sup>63</sup> MANSELL, R., - WEHN, U., *Knowledge Societies: Information Technology for Sustainable Development*. 82.

These predictions were not the first ones nor will they be last. 'it is only by trying to catch up with whatever comes up in technology'<sup>64</sup>, that which is useful for sustainable developments of humanity, that Information Technology will be of help in the future. It is becoming increasingly difficult for any sector of the society to develop without taking the challenge of technological advancement. As said by Koffi Annan, that future decision-makers are faced by this challenge, we do not see in any way in the near future that Information Technology will not play even a single part in any decision to be made. It is therefore suggested here that, expertise in ICT is highly needed at the heart of every matter and strategy of planning and development, since Information Technology depend very largely upon the interaction between Information Science expertise and the knowledge controlled by the available personnel. This by all means does not exclude those in Church authority, and in the case of the growing Holy Cross in East Africa and Africa as a whole, all are faced with the dire need for this expertise. But it is also suggested that such interaction and need should not just be driven by the functional needs of the community, but more of the learning process that today's society is faced with. Otherwise, the community would not be able to compete in today's world society.

"It is increasingly apparent that many firms are finding it difficult to compete in today's business environment. Not only has competition increased and become more global, but its nature has changed-often fundamentally [...] more important is the ability to respond quickly to opportunities and threats, to reduce time-to-market, to improve customer service, and to enhance the quality of products and services."<sup>65</sup>

When we are talking of catching up with all aspect of technology and the different ways it has been predicted, we actually talk of a process that began in time

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<sup>64</sup> KAWOoya, R., A Holy Cross Seminarian. (Interview)

<sup>65</sup> GALLIERS, R.D., - BAETS, W.R.J., *Information Technology and Organizational Transformation: Innovation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Organization*. 246.

of creation and the evolution of the universe as said by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, who, as early as 1930's already predicted not only to scientific development and physical reaching across the globe, but a further development in the process of evolution which would lead eventually to the attainment by mankind of a greater unity of mind, body and spirit across the society.<sup>66</sup>

We saw in the first chapter, the need for religious in Africa to fully embrace religious life in what it means, make it really ours. The meaning of it comes with all that it goes with, common practices of the society and all that covers it. It is therefore necessary for religious who are commoners in the global society, to embrace the changes that come with it, NOT for what they are, but for what they mean to their lives and what they are doing. 'It can be argued that, since it would be quite impossible to live in modern society without a continual intake of large, undefinable amount of information, there must be a right to seek and receive essential information.' This right belongs to all persons the world over, and 'if we have a right or freedom to seek information, presumably we have a right to use any legally available means to do so, just like there is freedom to use the public library and to use the telephone.'<sup>67</sup> When Allan Turing was making his findings in 1950's on the Turing Test, he said "I believe further that no useful purpose is served by concealing these beliefs."<sup>68</sup> It is just right that this freedom be given for exploration, for the service of the good of persons.

It can be therefore concluded that, even with the negative aspects that we encounter with the usage of Information Technology and all its arms, the world over

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<sup>66</sup> JONSCHER, C., *The Evolution of Wired Life*. 247.

<sup>67</sup> HILL, M.W., *The Impact of Information on Society*. 114-116.

<sup>68</sup> FIREBAUGH, M., *Artificial Intelligence: A Knowledge-Based Approach*. 7

and/or the developments in the formation and the work of an African Holy Cross religious will be first of all fulfilling their part in the evolution and sustainable development of the society in which we live, and secondly and largely improve in ways and means of doing the primary task of evangelization to the people who live in the changing society. Failure in catching up with Information Technology will disastrously lead to failure in this primary work of evangelization.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

From the aim of the study provided at the general introduction, it would be difficult for the society to question the impact of Information Technology today, and even in the Church's work of evangelization of the masses. The work aimed at seeing the impact that Information Technology has in the formation and or the making of an African religious. An African growing up today has been seen to undergo through a crisis of trying to keep the values accrued from their traditional families and at the same time trying to capture up with the growing world of ICT.

Those who are joining religious life have it even a harder way, trying to keep both, and at the same time living their religiosity. This involves more of keeping their identity as Africans, and at the same time use this foreign knowledge that, to a great extent enhance the work of evangelization of their own people.

Society today does not seem to make any exceptions with who is to make a full use of the rapid change in Information Technology and who is not to. It is in fact insisting that everybody gets their hands on it, whether they can afford it or not. The fact still seem to show that only those who can afford can take the advantage of it,

but the demand goes to all persons. In the formation of an Authentic African religious, the need is there too, and even more since most religious organizations are quite capable to own all kinds of advanced gadgets to do with Information and Communication Technology.

There has been, and still is, a tendency of denying some African religious to possess or make use of some of the Information Technology equipments. This is seen in some religious communities, whether these type of possessions are for the benefit and use of the communities and the Church at large, or just for the persons interest in advancing their knowledge in Information Technology.

It should be noted that, however much a person tries to learn and expand their knowledge in Information Technology, there hardly will be a time when this knowledge will be just for personal interest and use. The growth of Information Technology worldwide has openly shown that, everyone who learns positively about it, the more they share it with others, especially by teaching it. With this in mind then, it should better be taken that, religious in Africa, especially those in the making/in formation, be given enough opportunities and time to expand their knowledge in matters concerning Information and Communication Technology, for a better society, especially a wider faith society that receives much service from the religious and the Church at large.

Times have changed and so are religious systems of formation. Information and Communication Technology is also growing at a speed that can not be judged. The two are becoming more and more inseparable. We are left with the challenge to look more into both and judge by our own, of the coming days of the growing era of Information and Communication Technology and work of evangelization. Pope

John Paul II had this to say about the Church's work of evangelization and the use of the Media Communication.

“Every Christian should be concerned with the communication media as a vehicle of evangelization. *Training* in the use of the mass media is a necessity for the preacher of the Gospel, who must master the media style of communication. It is equally necessary for the reader, the listener and the viewer who must be trained to understand modern communication with a sharp and critical mind.”<sup>69</sup>

It is highly recommended, that in the different stages of formation of religious in Africa, way is to be opened to the young men and women to explore in stages the importance of the different technological equipments, and how they can be of use to their primary work. It is suggested to be in stages, so that it can go hand in hand with their formation as Authentic Africans. African religious should not just end up using computers for typing class work and term papers, or just checking emails, but getting to know the whole realm of technological convergence, i.e., how different technological equipments can relate to each other, and can be of good use to the society. There is definitely more in computers than just typing of documents.

In the same way, other means of technological communications like mobile phones, musical systems, televisions, digital satellite televisions and DVD's, should not be viewed as luxuries in today's life, but rather, as necessities that help enhancing and simplifying daily tasks. This is more so especially when only a certain level of persons can use them, while other levels are denied access, and both belong to the same group. Society grows better when it is growing together, and so is the Church that needs religious who are open to the world.

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<sup>69</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 44.

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## **APPENDIX I**

1. How long have you been a religious?
2. Which African Society/Group do you come from?
3. How did you come to embrace religious life?
4. What would you say about the formation program you went through?
5. Were there any clashes of values that you experienced or you still are, as an African Religious working in Africa?
6. In the wake of Inculturation in the African Church and religious life as a whole, how do you encounter this?
7. In your present Ministry, Active/temporal, what are the challenges that you face as an African religious?
8. How do you reach a consensus in values as per the charism and spirituality of the community/congregation and those of your African/Society's background?

## **APPENDIX II**

1. What do you understand about Information Technology?
2. When was your first time in using computers, mobile phones, TV's Digital Music Systems and any other electronic gadget?
3. How do you take Information Technology as a servant to the Media and the Information world?
4. The fast growth of Information Technology today: How do you cope with this?
5. What is your view about this growth?
6. How did Information Technology influence your religious formation?
7. How does it affect your religious life and active ministry today?
8. How does it affect your values as an African?
9. What are your recommendations to the use of Information Technologies for those in formation and those in active ministries?

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