

**TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY (USA)**

DANIEL KABUYA NTUMBA, M.Afr

**CHRISTIAN WITNESS AS A TOOL FOR
EVANGELISATION AMIDST RELIGIOUS PLURALITY:
CASE STUDY OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE
PARISH-SOUTH B/NAIROBI**

Supervisor

Rev. Prof. Patrick Mwanja, Cssp

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for the
Requirements for Master's Degree (M.A) in Theology**

NAIROBI 2016

DEDICATION

In Memory of my late father Cyprian Mwenya who taught me the art of non-violence and non-retaliation and to all who are faced with challenges of religious animosity and violence, I dedicate this work so that all these can appreciate their contribution to the evangelising work of the Church especially in the context of religious plurality.

EPIGRAPHS

“It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognise you as my disciples.”

(Jn. 13:35)

“People today put more trust in witness than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission: Christ, whose mission we continue, is the ‘witness’ *par excellence* (Rev. 1:5; 3:14) and the model of all Christian witness.”

(*RM*, 42).

“There will be no peace among the peoples of this world without peace among the world religions. There will be no peace among the world religions without peace among the Christian churches.” (Hans Kung)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The word “thank you” is a human expression that shows one’s gratitude. In this way, I would like to express my gratitude to the contributions and supports of all those who have assisted me in the completion of this long essay.

First, I thank the Almighty God who had given me life, strength, knowledge, and inspiration in the completion of this work. It is through Him that I was able to think, reflect, and write it down so that the public may find nourishments.

Second, I thank the Society of the Missionaries of Africa. Through the support and prayers of its members, my dream became today a reality. This Society supported me in various ways. In all its supports and contributions, I sincerely thank the Society and its members especially the formators and the students of Balozi Formation House of Nairobi.

Third, I thank my family, relatives, brothers and sisters, friends and all the people whom I met in my apostolate and ministry. Special gratitude goes to Reginald (from Saint Paul chapel), Father Manuel Gordejuela, Father Kevin Kraft, Lucy Maina (Former Secretary of OLQP), Susan Mayienge, Lydia Macaria, Jacinta and all those who provided me with various resources.

Fourth, special gratitude goes to Tangaza’s people especially Fathers George Kocholickal and Patrick Mwanja for their contribution and guidance in various ways. Finally, to all friends and classmates of Tangaza, I address my gratitude for collaboration and friendship throughout all the academic years.

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method, and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor in Sacred 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 the Student: **KABUYA DANIEL NTUMBA**

Date:

.....

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

Signed:

.....

Name of the Supervisor: Rev. Prof. **PATRICK MWANIA**

Date:

.....

Table of Content

DEDICATION	i
EPIGRAPHS	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
STUDENT'S DECLARATION	iv
ABBREVIATIONS	vii
GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....	1
1. General Background	1
2. Motivations	4
3. Aims (Objectives)	5
4. Methods.....	6
5. Constitution of the Long Essay.....	6
EXPLORING THE BACKGROUND OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS	8
1. Introduction.....	8
2. Definitions of the Key-concepts	9
2.1 Christian Witness	9
2.2 Evangelisation.....	10
2.3 Religious Plurality	11
3. Methods or Models of Evangelisation	15
3.1 Traditional Methods or Models.....	16
3.2 Modern or Contemporary Methods/Models.....	26
4. Conclusion	36
UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN WITNESS FROM HISTORICAL, BIBLICAL AND ECCLESIAL PERSPECTIVE	38
1. Introduction.....	38
2. Historical Understanding of Christian Witness.....	39
3. Biblical Understanding of Christian Witness.....	42
3.1 Roots of Christian Witness in the Old Testament.....	43
3.2 Christian Witness in the New Testament	51
3.3 Christian Witness in the History of the Church	67
3.4 Christian Witness in the Lives of Some Saints	71
4. Conclusion	76
CHRISTIAN WITNESS AMIDST RELIGIOUS PLURALITY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD.....	78
1. Introduction.....	78
2. Characteristics of a Globalised World	78
3. The Language of the World Today	79
4. Challenges of Religious Accommodation.....	82

4.1 Religious Awareness and Openness to Others.....	84
4.2 New Form of Witness: Dialogue (Interreligious)	85
5. Mission as Testimony of Life amidst Religious Plurality.....	90
6. Conclusion	91
A CONTEXTUAL CASE OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN KENYA DURING THE BURNING OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE IN SOUTH B	92
1. Introduction.....	92
2. Background of Our Lady Queen of Peace	92
3. Relationship with the Neighbourhood	94
4. The Burning of Our Lady Queen of Peace.....	96
A. Never try to get revenge: leave that to the retribution	98
B. Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing	100
5. Conclusion	101
GENERAL CONCLUSION	102
BIBLIOGRAPHY	106

ABBREVIATIONS

AM	Africae Munus
Cf.	Confer
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CL	Code of Canon Law
Cor.	Corinthians
Cssp.	Congrégation du saint Esprit
Deut.	Deuteronomy
DE	Dialogue and Evangelisation
DCE	Deus Caritas Est
DP	Dialogue and Proclamation
EG	Evangelii Gaudium
EN	Evangelii Nuntiandi
Gal.	Galatians
Gen.	Genesis
GS	Gaudium et Spes
Heb.	Hebrews
ID	Inter Religious Dialogue
Is.	Isaiah
Jn.	John
Lk.	Luke
Lev.	Leviticus
LG	Lumen Gentium
Macc.	Maccabees
Mafr.	Missionaries of Africa
Mat	Mathew

Mk.	Mark
NA	Nostra Aetate
OLQP	Our Lady Queen of Peace
Phil.	Philippians
Ps.	Psalms
Pt.	Peter
Rev.	Revelation
RM	Redemptoris Missio
Rom.	Romans
Tim.	Timothy
UR	Unitatis Redintegratio
Wis.	Wisdom
Zech.	Zechariah

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. General Background

One of the successes of Vatican II was that of exciting awareness on the changes that occur in the modern world. The changes affect every area of human life. Realities such as technology, modernity, communication, and religious pluralism make people close to one another. The world has become a global village. People are no longer “isolated” from one another as they were some few years before. This marks a new epoch in the history of the world.

Due to these changes, we observe an unbelieving tendency in the modern man. This unbelieving tendency engages man into circumstances where he forgets completely his primordial vocation that is love. On the one hand, we witness to realities of religious wars, violence, and religious hostility in which some Christians act contrary to the law of love: “You must love the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself” (Mk 12:30-31; Lk 10:27). On the other hand, others misuse religions to justify their actions against others. What can we say about religious pluralism?

Today, none dares to deny the phenomenon of globalisation.¹ The latter enhances the possibility of a community-world. We do not need to travel to China or to India to meet Hinduism, Buddhism, or Judaism. Rather, we live with them and share the neighbourhood together. In fact, we are the next-door neighbours to people of other faiths. Moreover, migration, technology, and even travel contribute largely to the knowledge of various cultures and beliefs.

Due to neighbourhood, some people find it difficult to practice freely their faith. In countries such as Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Iran, Iraq, and India, Christians feel “persecuted” and “denied” of their right of religious freedom. Again, some states do not give way to “religious tolerance”. This gives rise to tendency to embrace *fundamentalism* and *secularization*. To that, we add modernisation that offers new values and meanings to man. As noted in *Gaudium et Spes*, the modern change brings much worries and anxieties to man: “Torn by a welter of anxieties he is compelled to choose between them and repudiate some among them. Worse still, feeble and sinful as he is, he often does the very thing he hates and does not do what he wants” (GS, 10). This situation compels the researcher to assess the divine commission that says, “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And look, I am with you always; yes, to the end of time” (Mt. 28:19-20).

¹ The understanding of Globalisation depends on a variety of people and approaches. For us, we define Globalisation in relation to modernisation as “the word used to express the process of the increasing integration of the world of economies, financial systems, political ideals and cultural practices and beliefs, aided by information technology, market forces, and multinational agencies” (C. MCGARRY, “The Impact of Globalisation on African Culture and Society: Dangers and Opportunities”, in *New Strategies for A New Evangelisation in Africa*, 13).

To assess the divine commission is to scrutinize Christian witness² and its effectiveness within the modern world. Christians are invited to reflect upon the methods and ways used in the fulfilment of the command of the Lord. The fulfilment of the divine command is a matter of witness. Christian witness does not consist of proclamation through words only. It is beyond that. Christian witness is rather a combination of words and actions. This means that Christians are instruments through which God brings salvation to people: “Go, for this man is my chosen instrument to bring my name to Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel” (Acts 9:15).

We realise that Christian witness uses more the person of the preacher as God’s ways to reach out to people. Thus, to evangelize³ today is to establish correspondence between words and actions. It is only in this way that Christians may identify themselves as Disciples of Christ: “It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognise you as my disciples” (Jn 13:35). In this sense, Christian witness becomes effective for evangelisation.

The effectiveness of Christian witness lies in reflecting the person of Christ in one’s life. Paul states that, “I have been crucified with Christ, and yet I am alive; yet it is no longer I, but Christ living in me” (Gal. 2:20).

² By Christian witness, we mean, “a story of God’s action in one’s personal life or a description of what being a Christian means in a personal way” (J. NEVILLE, *How to Share Your Faith without Being Offensive*, 10).

³ According to Paul VI, Evangelisation is “in fact the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelize, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection” (*EN*, 14). Benedict XVI defines evangelization as “the *missio ad gentes*, directed to those who do not know Christ. In a wider sense, it is used to describe ordinary pastoral work (*AM*, 160). For Oborji, evangelization is “that activity through which, in obedience to Christ’s command and moved by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit, the Church makes itself fully present to all persons and peoples in order to lead them to the faith, freedom and peace of Christ by example of its life and teaching, and also by the sacraments and other means of grace” (*AG*, 5) (F.A. OBORJI, *Concepts of Mission*, 5).

Having explored some of the changes of the modern world, the researcher intends to propose Christian witness as a powerful tool for evangelisation. This entails that Christians must not engage themselves in a wrestling with the unbelieving world as far as evangelisation is concerned. Rather, they are called to witness to the person of Jesus through both words and actions and surrender the outcome to God. They are called to, as Barth says, “let God be God”.

2. Motivations

Challenged by the situation of hostility, misrepresentation, relativism, indifferentism, suspicion, and religious pluralism that characterised the modern world, the researcher intends to deepen the understanding of Christian witness as a response to the modern world. This means that peace in a pluralistic world depends on religious accommodation or tolerance. In this line, Hans K ng states that, “There will be no peace among the peoples of this world without peace among the world religions. There will be no peace among the world religions without peace among the Christian churches”.⁴ This shows that conflicts among religions affect as well the world in its dimensions. For Hans Kung, Jews, Christians, Muslims and other religious people must cooperate to the world peace by being witnesses of their religious values such as love of neighbour, non-violence, reconciliation, and forgiveness. This is what makes a religion to be true. A true religion is that which attracts and interrogates others because of one’s testimony of life: “Simply proclaim the Lord Christ holy in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Pt. 3:15).

⁴ H. KUNG, *Christianity and the World Religions*, 443.

In addition, the reading of the *Encyclical Letter "Redemptoris Missio"* of John Paul II attracted my attention when he says that, "People today put more trust in witness than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission: Christ, whose mission we continue, is the 'witness' *par excellence* (Rev. 1:5; 3:14) and the model of all Christian witness. The Holy Spirit accompanies the Church along her way and associates her with the witness he gives to Christ (cf. Jn 15:26-27)" (*RM*, 42). Christian witness is what that motivates the researcher to deepen its understanding.

3. Aims (Objectives)

The current situation of the modern world that is characterised of interreligious rivalry, suspicions, hostility, and strife calls us to investigate the question of witness in the Christian missionary context. The modern world comprises of things that confuse the modern person and make him sometimes "unbeliever". Realities such as technology, science, and communication are at the roots of all that affect man.

The exploration of the intellectual ability attempts the modern man to equal sometimes with the creator. It becomes worse when the modern man asks religious people to prove all religious truths. He wants intellectual explanation of religion. This attitude brings about crisis in the modern man such as indifferentism, relativism, religious intolerance, and secularism.

As a response, the researcher proposes Christian witness as a tool for evangelisation. The tool consists of the combination of words and actions in the task

of evangelisation. To witness to Christ is to live a life according to the Gospel values. This is possible in all times despite religious rivalry or hostility.

Considering the above realities, the researcher will study the traditional methods of evangelisation of the Church and give reasons that made the Church to opt for Christian witness. Then, the researcher will study Christian witness from Scriptures, Traditions and Magisterium point of view; then he will propose Christian witness as a powerful tool for evangelization in today's world that is characterised by religious pluralism.

4. Methods

First, the researcher will develop the topic of Christian witness through literature-research. This means that the researcher shall collect and borrow insights from other scholars that are in connection with the topic of Christian witness.

Second, the researcher will use interview as another mode of collection of information in view of making the research accurate and relevant to the world of today. The interviews (individual) will consist of selected information from people who are actively engaged in ecumenism and dialogue with other religions. Finally, the research will develop and deepen personal insights and knowledge. This will assign to the research its value of being personal.

5. Structure of the Long Essay

This long essay comprises of four chapters. The first chapter explores the concept of Christian witness and various methods used by the Church to carry out her mission of evangelisation. The second chapter deals with the understanding of Christian witness from the historical, biblical, and ecclesial perspective. In the third

chapter, the researcher treats Christian witness amidst religious pluralism in a globalised world. Finally, the fourth chapter makes Christian witness practical through the event of the burning of the parish of Our Lady Queen of Peace. The researcher finishes the essay with a general conclusion in which he expresses his stand and the stand of the Church through the choice of Christian witness as an important tool for evangelisation especially amidst religious plurality.

Chapter I

EXPLORING THE BACKGROUND OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS

1. Introduction

The concept of witness is not new to the twentieth century times. It has existed since the time of the apostles and of the first Christian communities. In fact, the first Christians experienced the presence of the Risen Lord as witnesses of the Paschal event. The latter is the reason that drove the first Christians to respond to the command of the Risen Lord: “[...] but you will receive the power of the Holy Spirit which will come on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judea and Samaria, and indeed to earth’s remotest end” (Acts 1:8).

In this chapter, we intend to define some of the key-concepts: *witness*, *evangelisation*, and *religious plurality* that are relevant to the topic. Moreover, we realise that a clarification of these key-concepts compels us to define also other related terms such as *secularization*, *globalisation*, *fundamentalism*, *dialogue*, *ecumenism*, and *modernism*. Clarification will help us avoid confusion and equivocation among our readers.

2. Definitions of the key-concepts

2.1 Christian Witness

We define witness in both legal and religious perspectives. In the legal sense, witness relates to *testimony* and *martyrdom*. The relation that exists between witness and martyrdom lies in the concreteness of the verbal testimony that is commitment in action: “When witnesses thus die in support of their testimony, they become *martyrs*, i.e., ‘witness’. This kind of commitment that endangers life reflects back on the verbal testimony, which then ceases to be a mere narrative of things seen or heard and becomes an action and a tragic death.”⁵ In this sense, witness and martyrdom are used interchangeably.

We need to clarify the concept of witness. When used as a noun, witness refers to persons. As a verb, it refers to actions. It follows that there is a difference between witness as a noun and as a verb. As a noun, witness is “a story of God’s action in one’s personal life or a description of what being a Christian means in a personal way.”⁶ This perspective establishes a connection between a person and God. The sharing of God’s touch in one’s life is Christian witness: “When a person shares verbally with another person something about this ongoing interaction with God in Christ, relating some way in which God’s power has been manifested in his life or God’s nature has been revealed to him, he is giving a Christian witness.”⁷

As a verb, witness gives rise to witnesses. In this sense, it signifies the tellers of Jesus’ life in them. As a fact, witnesses become joy to the Lord! Consequently, witnesses do not force people for any reason to listen to whatever they tell about

⁵ R. LATOURELLE, “Testimony”, in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, 1045-1060.

⁶ J. NEVILLE, *How to Share your Faith Without Being Offensive*, 10.

⁷ J. NEVILLE, *How to Share your Faith Without Being Offensive*, 10.

Jesus. Rather, good witnesses overcome all that prevent people from using their freedom: “A *good* Christian witness is always told in honesty, humility, and love. It may have sad or humorous aspects, but is never overemotional or offensive in any way, and is never forced on anyone for any reason. It leaves the listener free to accept or reject it as applicable to one’s life. A *good* witness is a joy to the Lord!”⁸ The absence of violence and coercion in witnessing to Christ identifies a witness to Jesus as the incarnation of God’s love: “It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognise you as my disciples” (John 13:35).

2.2 Evangelisation

It has a protestant origin. The protestant conceived evangelisation as “the attempt to re-proclaim the gospel to the Catholic population of southern Europe, that is, to convert them to the Protestant faith.”⁹ Catholics started the use of evangelisation after the promulgation of the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* by Pope Paul VI.

In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI defines “evangelisation” as “the grace and vocation proper to the Church, her deepest identity. She exists in order to evangelise, that is to say, in order to preach, and teach, to be the channel of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ’s sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of his death and glorious resurrection” (*EN*, 14). In this sense, the Church carries on the mission of Christ as shepherd of souls in the world.

Moreover, the Social Doctrine of the Church defines “evangelization” as “the comprehensive process in which the gospel is announced, the message is accepted,

⁸ J. NEVILLE, *How to Share your Faith Without Being Offensive*, 11.

⁹ K. MULLER, “Missiology: An Introduction”, 29.

and the recipient becomes a member of the believing community.”¹⁰ However, there is need to distinguish *evangelisation* from *new-evangelisation*.

The two terms differ from one another in the practice of the Christian faith. Henceforth, evangelisation is the mission that is directed to those who do not know Christ. On the contrary, new-evangelisation designates pastoral outreach to those who no longer practise the Christian faith (AM, 160).

2.3 Religious Plurality

The current world speaks of plurality of religions and beliefs. In this sense, “plurality” refers to “a situation in which a variety of systems of thought, worldviews, or explanations of reality coexist without any one of these having gained hegemony over the others.”¹¹

It follows that there is need to acknowledge that despite variety of thoughts and systems, “all men and women are capable of coming into communion because of the one Being” as said Ratzinger.¹² Because of the one Being who brings about communion of all men and women, Ratzinger¹³ proposes the replacement of “inclusivism” with “plurality” in order to ground tolerance among religions. This makes contemporaries to deny all that confines salvation to one religion. Rather, salvation is universal: “There is a wide acceptance today of the idea that people are saved not only in spite of, but in and through their religions, because God has reached out to them in the context of their life, community, and history.”¹⁴ Acceptance of difference and diversity gives rise to encounter others in their differences. This shapes the idea of plurality of religions.

¹⁰ R. SCHREITER, “Evangelization”, 363.

¹¹ W. HENN, “Pluralism, Theological”, 783.

¹² J. RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance*, 81.

¹³ J. RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance*, 83-84.

¹⁴ M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 83.

2.4 Secularisation

There is need to slightly distinguish *secularisation* from *secularity* (*secularism*). The former is “understood as the process whereby various elements of human life (such as opinions, customs, social forms and even things and persons) or the whole of human life cease to be determined by religion”.¹⁵ It follows that *secularity* means “independence or adulthood with regard to religion”.¹⁶

Secularism is “a form of religiosity, for which the present and the immanent are invested with the attributes of the eternal and the transcendent. It is an expropriation of religion, not for the sake of shaking off tyranny of its supernaturalism as it is claimed, but really for the sake of another mystique and another fundamentalism or fanaticism.”¹⁷

In the Indian perspective, *secularism* becomes “the freedom from discrimination on the basis of religion and, also, the promotion of renascent and reform movements in religions, especially those aimed at the liberation of the downtrodden sections of society.”¹⁸

2.5 Globalization

This term is recent. It embraces all the changes that the current world is undergoing due to technology; bringing people close. Henceforth, Globalization is “the word used to express the process of the increasing integration of the world economies, financial systems, political ideals and cultural practices and beliefs, aided by information technology, market forces, and multinational agencies.”¹⁹

¹⁵ A. KELLER, “Secularization”, 1554.

¹⁶ A. KELLER, “Secularization”, 1554.

¹⁷ VAHANIAN, G., *The Death of God*, 67.

¹⁸ J. M. ATHYAL, “Relevant patterns of Christian Witness”, 209.

¹⁹ C. MCGARRY, “The Impact of Globalization on African Culture and Society”, 13.

Today, people find it easy to communicate and transmit messages to one another. This easiness of time and epoch makes people close to one another. In other words, the system globalises everybody; linking them into a single system that has proximity as its landmark.

2.6 Fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is “a modern version of Christianity that stresses biblical literalism, premillennialism, and absolute moral rules. In a wider understanding, fundamentalism is a “historical recurring tendency within the Judeo-Christian-Muslim religious traditions that periodically happens as a search for meaning in the midst of rapid culture change. Fundamentalists are anti-intellectual and thoroughly intolerant of people who differ from them. At times, as is the case of the followers of Ayatollah Khomeini, violence is used to impose what they consider to be orthodoxy.”²⁰

Today, we experience religious violence in the world while most of these violent people belong to one of the great religions of the world. In countries such as Nigeria, Somalia and Kenya, there is a tendency of looking at anyone who wears traditional Muslim dress as a terrorist; thus, fundamentalist. This fact is not true because all Muslims are not fundamentalists or terrorists. Daily encounter with some Muslims shows that not all Muslims are terrorists. Many among them are good people.

2.7 Dialogue

One of the successes of Vatican II was to excite awareness on the changes that occur in the modern world. Henceforth, openness towards others was one of the

²⁰ G.A.ARBUCKLE, *Earthing the Gospel*, 124.

elements of emphasis. In this sense, Vatican II opted for dialogue as a means to reach out to others.

In *Dialogue and Proclamation*, the Church defines dialogue in three different ways: “*Dialogue* can be understood in different ways. Firstly, at the purely human level, it means reciprocal communication, leading to a common goal or, at a deeper level, to interpersonal communion. Secondly, dialogue can be taken as an attitude of respect and friendship, which permeates or should permeate all those activities constituting the evangelizing mission of the Church. This can appropriately be called “the spirit of dialogue”. Thirdly, in the context of religious plurality, dialogue means “all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment”(6), in obedience to truth and respect for freedom. It includes both witness and the exploration of respective religious convictions. It is in this third sense that the present document uses the term dialogue for one of the integral elements of the Church's evangelizing mission” (*DP*, 9). Today, dialogue has become another way to witness to Christ. Through dialogue, people live their faith in reflecting the Gospel values by which they witness to Christ.

2.8 Ecumenism

From the *Decree on Ecumenism*, Vatican II defines “ecumenical movement” as follows: “the term ‘ecumenical movement’ indicates the initiatives and activities encouraged and organised, according to the various needs of the Church and as opportunities offer, to promote Christian unity” (*UR*, 2).

Promotion of Christian unity gives rise to the theology of dialogue and encounter: *ecumenism*. The latter is “a theology of fellowship, a theology which has

discovered that what is common is proportionally much greater than differences and divergencies, these being only properly known and estimated in the perspective of the common faith”.²¹ Thus, ecumenism and dialogue are closely related. However, they are not identical.

2.9 Modernism

In the protestant world, *modernism* designates “the anti-Christian tendencies of the modern world and the radicalism of liberal theology”.²² These tendencies also show themselves in the Catholic community in two forms. On the one hand, they are as an effort to change the traditional discipline of the Church. On the other hand, they are as a claim of almost absolute freedom for catholic scholars with regard to the Magisterium.²³

Modernism is “the name given to an intellectual crisis within the Catholicism that came into the open at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth.”²⁴ For Provencher, one of the characteristics of modernism lies in the human autonomy by freeing himself from traditions and even from God. One of the ways in which modernism manifests itself is through “secularism”.

After this brief clarification of the key-concepts, we feel ready to get into the matter of the research. If the researcher uses new words or concepts, he will mind to define them accordingly.

3. Methods or Models of Evangelisation

Today, we dare look at the Church with reference to its past endeavours and missionary works. From Jesus and his apostles until our epoch, many years have

²¹ H. BECK, “Ecumenism”, 424.

²² R. AUBERT, “Modernism”, 969.

²³ R. AUBERT, “Modernism”, 970.

²⁴ N. PROVENCHER, “Modernism”, in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, 719-720.

passed. However, history teaches that each period has its characteristics and priorities. Despite all differences and divergencies in the course of the Church's life, one thing is still common to today: the Church is a community of people who are witnessing to Christ in every circumstance.

Witnessing to Christ requires a combination of strategies and methods that assist one to bear fruits that testify and give meaning to it. This was the reason that drove the Church to define goals and strategies in her fulfilment of her mission as a community of believers that aimed at witnessing to the truth: "I was born for this, I came into the world for this, to bear witness to the truth; and all who are on the side of truth listen to my voice" (Jn. 18:37).

Following the footsteps of her master, the Church has the mission of witnessing to the truth. Therefore, she discovered the necessity of defining strategies and goals in order to witness to the truth. The so-called "strategies and goals" are "methods or modes" of evangelisation.

3.1 Traditional Methods or Models

In John's Gospel, Jesus focuses the Father's mission on life. On life, Jesus establishes friendship between God and humankind. A relationship binds a shepherd to the sheep in such a way that love becomes the focus of it. In his dialogue with Peter, Jesus reminds him of the mission of love towards the sheep (Jn. 21: 15-17). This gives rise to the Church's understanding that God's mission is to take care of the sheep in the world. In this sense, the Church developed a theology of salvation of souls as a way to reach out to all people in the world.

To take care of people's souls drove both missionaries and explorers to leave their countries and families in order to spread God's word all over the world. It

followed that explorers, kings and missionaries were understood as being appointed by God to “Christianize” the entire world especially the primitive peoples. In his book *God and Revelation in African Context*, Samuel Kibicho states, “Through a combination of the two (cultural-racialist prejudice and religious prejudgment), the peoples of European origin saw themselves as the divinely appointed possessors of both the highest humanity and the highest religion, the former deriving from the latter. Thus, providence had placed upon them the mission to civilize and Christianize the lower, primitive, and pagan races of the world”²⁵.

Consequently, missionaries, kings, and explorers identified themselves with God’s senders in order to save the souls of pagan peoples all over the world. To achieve this mission, missionaries used various methods such as baptism (Matthew 28:19-20) that followed upon to conversion. This gives rise to *conversion* as one of the traditional models of entry into the Church.

A. Conversion Model

The model derived from the School of Münster. For Münster’s school, preaching of the good news drives people to conversion as Paul underlines, “How then are they to call on him if they have not come to believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard of him? And how will they hear of him unless there is a preacher for them?” (Romans 10:14).

The school of Münster emphasised that preaching God’s word was primordial and was the gateway for conversion²⁶ of all people. According to Locheng,

²⁵ S. G. KIBICHO, *God and Revelation in an African Context*, 46.

²⁶ We had various types of conversion depending on peoples, places, and missionary mentality or spirit. The conversion model practised in the Americas differed from the one practised in Africa or elsewhere.

preaching God's word establishes the Church as God's visible activity. The visibility of the Church becomes effective through conversion, baptism, and local clergy.²⁷

With the conversion model, the Church was successful in her missionary endeavours. However, the Church did not fulfil her mission alone. The Church benefited from the assistance of some of the political powers such as Spain, France, and Portugal. Emperors, kings, and explorers offered ample time and energies in order to assist the Church in her missionary tasks.

However, history teaches that both the Church and States did not work unanimously. This means that some monarchs, kings, explorers, and even missionaries had personal interests apart from the salvation of souls. In this way, Thomson observes,

Both countries had the same aims. Portugal and Spain were both looking for a new way to Asia, both were interested in trade, and both desired to carry the Gospel through all the world. These two people both thought of their explorations as crusades: crusades against Islam. They had both just finished the 'reconquest' of their own lands by driving out the Arab invaders who had crossed from North Africa and dominated most of the Iberian Peninsula for centuries.²⁸

The aim of the conversion model was to establish a community of believers among the non-Christians: the Church, in order to spread God's gospel values to other peoples especially heathen. Gospel values became a way that would bring people to faith especially primitive societies. The question was as follows: was it enough to preach Gospel's values and conversion will come without any effort? To this question, the answer was negative. Because some of the primitive peoples found it difficult to abandon their beliefs in order to embrace the Christian faith due to various reasons.

²⁷ C. LOCHENG, *Missiology: Introduction to the Roots of the Great Commission*, 45-46.

²⁸ A. THOMSON, *Church History 3: New Movements*, 80.

Because the Church and some of the monarchs and explorers believed that they had God's appointment to educate the entire world –especially the pagan world – it followed that any means had to be used to bring people to conversion. Actually, the Church of the time came across various types of conversion, depending on places, circumstances, and political powers of the time. Hastings mentioned three types of conversion that the Church used in the past. There was *attraction*, *education*, and *authority* or *supremacy*. Let us understand these strategies of the Church in view of conversion.

On attraction, the Church made use of all that could attract people to embrace the Christian faith especially through schools and hospitals. Schools and hospitals were ways to preach to the people on God's liberation from all that was evil. By building schools and hospitals, missionaries were convinced of achieving their mission as God's senders or messengers. What mattered was to draw people to faith by any attractive thing: "Doubtless many different factors have assisted conversion to Christianity in Africa during the last hundred years. The missionary has made use of everything that he could bring with him from the West to draw men into the Church, but the school and the hospital have been his two most widely effective instruments of conversion".²⁹

On education, illiteracy was the work of the Devil. Thus, Christianity had to liberate people from the work of the Devil in all dimensions. Because of the lack of knowledge and education, the souls of people were unable to access the truth. Towards such a conception, missionaries intended to educate people in order to liberate them from the works of the Devil. By doing so, primitive people – especially Africans hoped for life's improvement and liberation as Samuel Kibicho

²⁹ A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 119.

states: “The one most important thing, the key to the best opportunities any African could hope for in the new order, was education (*Githomo*)-and, the only way to get it was to go to the missions”.³⁰

On authority or supremacy, some of the missionaries made use of coercion to bring people to conversion. The collaboration that existed between the Church and some of the political powers enhanced the process of conversion by the use of coercion. This means that people were forced to embrace Christianity by some monarchs or kings. In this way, Douglas reported this scene of Lele that took place in the Kasai of Congo:

At first, the mission attracted very few converts. Lele told me that they resorted to capturing village children by force, threatening their protesting parents with prison if they stopped them. The mission fathers told me that this may have been substantially true as they had no other way to start the ball rolling ... Once the initial stage of coercion was over, the ball began indeed to roll along of itself.³¹

The use of coercion could also be based on the conversion of some kings and monarchs. This means that the conversion of kings or monarchs implied *de facto* the conversion of the entire village or country. This was the case in some of the African countries where kings embraced the Christian faith in view of favours or benefits such weapons, and even protection against the enemies. In this sense, Hastings states this, “Stanley, the master of guns, curiously taught King Mutesa the ten commandments, but it was the guns, not the commandments, which Mutesa was most interested in”.³²

Coercion was both material and psychological. At times, political powers used offers of social status to people in order to bring about mass conversion, as was the case in Burundi or Buganda. In most cases, the offer was given unequally.

³⁰ S. G. KIBICHO, *God and Revelation in an African Context*, 104.

³¹ M. DOUGLAS, *The Lele of the Kasai*, 264.

³² A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 119.

Sometimes, offers were given to one among the tribes in order to “force” as many as possible to come to faith. Hastings states that, “One tribe perceived the social advantages of schooling and welcomed missionaries, another saw no gain and cold-shouldered them”.³³

The conversion model was not immoral. The painful result of this was the use of coercion and other means by which people came to the faith because of advantages or social status. This was the case during a certain period of the Church. On the one hand, should we hold that the Church failed to be a Christian witness to Christ? On the other hand, should we hold that the conversion model was a failure to Christian witness? At this stage, we say that coercion is unchristian as Bartolomé de Las Casas³⁴ condemned the Dominicans in the Americas. God’s action reaches out to all people in a spirit of freedom. Everybody has the right to embrace one’s faith freely without coercion (CCC, 2106).

B. Implantation of the Church Model³⁵

This second model is the extension of conversion model. Because of mass conversion, missionaries established places of prayer and adoration. This marked the existence of churches as communities of believers who tried to practise some of the Gospel values as brothers and sisters in Christ. In their day-to-day living, the converts copied the life of the first Christian community based on prayers and adoration: “These remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers” (Acts 2:42). Most

³³A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 122.

³⁴S. B. BEVANS – R. P. SCHROEDER, *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, 176.

³⁵ This second model of evangelization is fruit of the school of Louvain. Accordingly, mission consists of the way God deals with the world and people. It follows that the Church becomes a place of adoration and prayers: “the aim of mission is ‘to extend the borders of the visible Church, to complete this work of expansion, to cover the whole world with prayers and adoration, to give back to the Saviour all of his inheritance” (G. BUONO, *Missiology: Theology and Praxis*, 63).

missionaries considered establishing a given community of believers as a success of the mission. A community of believers became a visible sign of God's presence and salvation among the people:

The most important criterion affirming the Church's implantation in a territory is that it is solidly rooted; it is a permanent institution of salvation; it has its own hierarchy and clergy. When the preaching of salvation and the means of implementing it, the sacraments, are morally and in a permanent way offered to everybody, then the Church has truly been implanted.³⁶

In this way, the Church saw herself as God's instrument of salvation among people through sacraments and charitable work. At this stage, the Church realised that God's dealing with people was to renew things and situations in the world. This assigned a new understanding of the Church in the world. The Church identified herself with God's kingdom in the world. This gave rise to the understanding of the Church as a community that witnessed to Christ:

The view-point of mission, in fact, is exhausted in the Church-kingdom relationship, and there is the identification of the kingdom with the Church; then the Church-world relationship, where the world is seen only as a reality to be saved. The Church is not only a means of saving souls, but is also an *end* because, by it being the society of the Word made flesh, it represents the divine form in the world".³⁷ Consequently, we confined salvation only within the boundaries of the Church. Outside it, there is no salvation³⁸.

Implantation of the churches was a way to accommodate the converts and keep them accordingly as a community of believers. For missionaries, it was a sign of success in the mission; because most of them were evaluating their missionary success through the number of baptisms and conversions written or kept in books or parochial documents. Implantation of churches was the fulfilment of God's

³⁶ C. LOCHENG, *Missiology: Introduction to the Roots of the Great Commission*, 46.

³⁷ G. BUONO, *Missiology: Theology and Praxis*, 63.

³⁸ Out of such conception of salvation, a new way of dealing with pagans took place. Some preachers, kings, and missionaries became harsh and violent towards pagans and heathens. In matters of salvation, coercion and force became new ways to bring people to faith. The slogan became as follows: "Ought Infidels to be compelled to believe?" In reference to Luke 14:23, the Church compelled pagans to embrace the Christian faith with coercion and force (Cf. N. E. THOMAS, *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, 24-25).

command: “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you” (Matthew 28:19-20). In this way, the Church witnessed to Christ through sacraments such as baptism and mass conversions in view of having a number to establish a community of believers.

Due to mass conversion³⁹ and lack of genuine motives on the side of some converts⁴⁰, the individual future commitment became disastrous and difficult. This means that some converts were lost in the practice of their faith. Hastings mentions some of the causes of failure in the practice of Christian faith such as initial motives, lack of priests to support new converts in the catechumenate, catechetical methodology, culture, and language. On initial motives, many converted because of social status or privileges such as schools and medicine. Experience teaches that future commitment of some converts was disastrous due to wrong motives of becoming Christians: “Evidence of this is that it is quite common occurrence for newly baptised Christians to fall away from regular religious practice almost immediately after completing their course of instruction. Clearly too often our catechumenate fails to achieve a real commitment to Christ, the beginning of a new personal life, a conversion in the spiritual and not merely in the bare ecclesiastical sense”.⁴¹

On the lack of priests, there was incompatibility between the numbers of priests compared to the numbers of catechumens. Very often, we found one priest teaching large numbers of catechumens. As a result, memorisation became the method of instruction. Instead of understanding, people memorised for a while and

³⁹ Mass conversion was fruit of kingly conversion. This means that the conversion of a king was the catalyst of mass conversion such as Clovis (Cf. N. E. THOMAS, *Classic Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, 8).

⁴⁰ A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 126-128.

⁴¹ A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 126.

after, all disappeared completely leaving the converts as they were before joining catechetical instruction.

In this perspective, the Church faced various difficulties in the fulfilment of her mission as a witnessing community. Difficulties such as fake motives to become Christian, limited numbers of priests compared with large numbers of catechumens, poor methodology, culture and language, were some of the causes of failure of the Church in her fulfilment of God's mission. As a fact, the Church made up her mind and rethought her methods of evangelisation for the future. This paves way for the Historico-Salvific Mission Model.

C. The Historico-Salvific Mission Model

From the previous models, theologians argued on the difference between God and human actions in evangelisation. Such views came about due to some of the attitudes of missionaries, kings, and explorers in the field of mission. Some behaved as if they were the masters of mission and even mistreated others as less human. Such scandalous behaviour provoked a revolution in the understanding of mission. It followed that the Church came to understand mission as twofold: supernatural and natural. Quoting Congar, Buono states, "In the subject of mission he distinguishes *judicial mission* (or *ex officio*) and the *missione ex Spiritu* that is the multiplicity and variety of Charisms. In these reflections there is 'the natural and the supernatural; the final end and the earthly end; eschatology and history; the kingdom of God and the kingdom of man; the absoluteness of the truth and historical contingency; the unity of faith and the plurality of experiences; the Church's authority and Christians' freedom'"⁴².

⁴² G. BUONO, *Missiology: Theology and Praxis*, 66.

This new approach and understanding of mission reached its climax with the publication of *Evangelii Nuntiandi* in which Pope Paul VI focuses mission on God's action through the guidance of the Holy Spirit:

Evangelization will never be possible without the action of the Holy Spirit. Techniques of evangelization are good, but even the most advanced ones could not replace the gentle action of the Spirit. The most perfect preparation of the evangelizer has no effect without the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, the most convincing dialectic has no power over the heart of man. Without Him, the most highly developed schemas resting on a sociological or psychological basis are quickly seen to be quite valueless (*EN*, 75).

Consequently, missionaries and all baptized are mere servants in the field of mission: "So with you: when you have done all you have been told to do, say, 'we are useless servants: we have done no more than our duty'" (Luke 17:10). The understanding of mission as God's actions in the Holy Spirit drastically brings a change in the realm of mission and opens the doors for human promotion and liberation. In a continent such as Latin America, we have theology of liberation as a way to value and promote human dignity.

Thus, human promotion becomes the gateway for Christian witness in the field of evangelisation. This advocates that true conversion comes as a fruit of preaching, good example, and holy living. Pope Paul VI emphasises Christian "witness" as a new model for the Church to evangelise the world of today:

Without repeating everything that we have already mentioned, it is appropriate first of all to emphasize the following point: for the Church, the first means of evangelisation is the witness of an authentically Christian life, given over to God in a communion that nothing should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbour with limitless zeal. As we said recently to a group of lay people, 'Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses' (*EN*, 41).

Acceptance of such a statement needs validation in day-to-day living where people express, show, and live their lives as a combination of words and deeds.

Christian witness is beyond proclamation. Christian witness is really a combination of preaching and implementation of it.

This combination is what makes a religion to be true. A true religion is that which attracts and interrogates others because of one's testimony of life: "Simply proclaim the Lord Christ holy in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15). Because of its importance and the urgency of the current time, Pope Paul VI numbers in the first place Christian witness as a new way to evangelise today's world. This paves way for the new methods of evangelisation.

3.2 Modern or Contemporary Methods/Models

Today, modernity is a challenge to the Church. Modernity has compelled the Church to scrutinise and improve some of her methods in the field of evangelisation in order to make the Lord's commands relevant to people of the time. This means that the Church remains faithful to the Lord's commands. Her faithfulness makes her teaching relevant to both people and to the changes of times.

However, the Church does not reject her traditional methods of evangelisation. Rather, she improves some and adds new ones in order to respond relevantly to the needs of the people despite changes of times, circumstances and places. This paves way for the new methods namely, the modern or contemporary methods (models).

A. The Witness of Life

One of the challenges of modernity is the question of relevance to the people of the time. Today's people are more practical than idealistic. Praxis is the landmark of

today's people. Ideas are good when they lead to actions. Otherwise, none pays heed to an idealistic person. Consequently, today's inclination is praxis, not ideas. Thus, the Church should avail herself to assist the world in its search for praxis.

In this way, Vatican II realises that the mission of the Church is to bear witness to the world of today, torn by various changes that engender anxieties and fears of his destiny (*GS*, 10). To respond to man and woman anxieties, the Church plays her role of being a witness to Christ. Through her witness, she brings meaning to human questions.

This becomes possible through her witnessing role to Christ as the Lord and Master of human history. Vatican II states: "The Church likewise believes that the key, the center and the purpose of the whole of man's history is to be found in its Lord and Master. She also maintains that beneath all that changes there is much that is unchanging, much that has its ultimate foundation in Christ, who is the same yesterday and today, and forever" (*GS*, 10).

A question arises, how does the Church become relevant to the world of today that is characterised by praxis? The answer is simple and clear: truly Christian and truly witness to Christ: "Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers [...]" (*EN*, 41). As truly Christian, the Church fulfils the Lord's commands as witness to Christ:

Now being a Christian simply means giving our assent to this movement and putting ourselves at its service. Becoming a Christian is not taking out an individual insurance policy; it is not the private booking of an entry ticket for heaven, so that we can look across at other people and say, 'I have got something the others haven't got; I've got salvation arranged for me that they don't possess.' Becoming a Christian is not at all something given to us so that we, each individual for himself, can pocket it and keep our distance from those others who are going off empty-handed. No: in a certain sense, one does not become a Christian for oneself at all; rather, one does so for the sake of the whole, for others, for everyone.⁴³

⁴³ J. RATZINGER, *What It Means to Be a Christian*, 54.

To be Christian is the other face of witness. It follows that a Christian life well lived is always relevant and attractive to all people who live in the surrounding context. It follows that Christians are Christ's reflection (Galatians. 2:20). The effectiveness of God's message lies in the message and the messenger⁴⁴.

B. Living Preaching

Preaching is the first mission of the Church: "Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation" (Mark 16:15). By proclaiming the Good News, the Church accomplishes the mission of the Lord.

However, proclamation leads to faith and then conversion takes place. This means that the absence of proclamation implies the absence of faith: "But it is in that way faith comes, from hearing, and that means hearing the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). This is the case in the scene of the disciples of Emmaus in Luke 24:32; the eunuch in Acts 8:26-40; and the Samaritan woman in John 4:42.

This reveals that God's power gives light and transforms the human mind. God speaks and encounters us, and imparts the knowledge of his word in us. The imparting action that aims at transformation is the action of God through the Holy Spirit: "It must be recognised that communication entails more than simply making the message of faith intelligible. It means making the message knowable, and only the Holy Spirit does that. Communication consists therefore not merely in the imparting of information but in the transmission of meaning and power".⁴⁵

⁴⁴ In the understanding of the Lord's commands, Søgaard states, "The commission given by Jesus was a person-based commission: "When the Holy Spirit has come upon you, you shall be my witness ..." (Acts 1:8). Jesus gave us the example by becoming a real human being, participating in our affairs (Phil. 2:7; Jn 1:14). In him, the message and the medium became one. What gives communication its character is not only the message but the messenger" (v. SØGAARD, "Go and Communicate Good News" in *Paradigm shifts in Christian Witness*, 62).

⁴⁵ D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 127.

The truth is that without God's power, we are unable to both proclaim and transmit properly the message of God. This reveals that proclamation of God's message does not need only human intellectual effort. Rather, it needs more human surrendering to God's actions through them. To grasp this truth is to replace apologetics⁴⁶ with Christian witness because the message of God does not only inform but transforms⁴⁷. Therefore, to succeed in the task of proclamation, the Church needs to combine both words and actions. This means that a certain Christian style of life is needed in view of powerfully supporting the proclamation of God's message:

This Christian style of life cannot be a substitute for the evangelical proclamation, but it can be a powerful support for this proclamation, for the Holy Spirit acts not only through the word of preaching but also through deeds of mercy (Cf. Matt. 5:16; Rom. 15:18; 2 Cor. 3:2-3; 1 Peter 2:12; 3:1-2). In a time when the demons are venting their fury against the Church of Jesus Christ, the Christian needs to put on the whole armour of God, including the shield of a holy life as well as the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God.⁴⁸

Despite all, we realise that the aim of proclamation is human transformation. The latter is seen in the eyes of the world as witness to Christ. Therefore, communication of God's message that leads to one's transformation is really a powerful tool for today's evangelisation. Consequently, hearing the Word of God transforms us into its witnesses: "Our hearers have not heard the Word of God unless they have been transformed from spectators into participators".⁴⁹

⁴⁶ Bloesch places apologetics under the terminology of religious imperialism. For Bloesch, apologetics is "the attempt to compel a man by rational means to assent to the truth of faith. It is a discipline by which one seeks to persuade or move men by one's own intellectual and moral powers". The other face of religious imperialism is proselytism that is "the attempt to win people over to a particular theological position or denominational loyalty" (D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 129-130)

⁴⁷ Cf. D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 125.

⁴⁸ D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 135.

⁴⁹ D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 127.

C. Liturgy of the Word

The first Christian community treasured the liturgy of the Word that was always associated with the breaking of bread and with prayers (Acts 2:42). This means that the liturgy of the word is an important moment in the life of the Church. Through the liturgy of the word, the Church continues to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour in the Eucharistic celebration.

The association of word and bread bring life to people as it was in the scene of the disciples of Emmaus (Lk. 24:30-31). We also as Christians are receiving Christ in our bodies and are called to reflect Christ in our lives. This is the meaning of the dismissal words at each Eucharistic celebration: “Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life”. We are invited to let Christ live through, with and in us in our day-to-day living (Galatians 2:20).

D. Catechesis

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines *Catechesis* as “an education in the faith of children, young people and adults which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life” (CCC, 5). It is a way to prepare people for the Christian life.

Such a preparation is important for the Church to ensure that catechumens are able to grasp the truths of the Church and can implement them in day-to-day living. However, even nowadays, the Church is facing serious problems in this field: the lack of trained catechists, large numbers of catechumens compared to the number of priests or catechists, and lack of serious commitment. These problems are

contributing enormously to the failure of most catechumens shortly after the reception of sacraments:

It derives from the large numbers often involved and the lack of priests to cope with them adequately, from the consequent leaving of the catechumens very largely in the hands of poorly trained catechists, from the expression of doctrine in a dry scholastic way, and too much reliance on the memorization of certain formulas. [...] Our weakness here has simply been the common weakness of the whole Church in the period prior to the new catechetical movement, but made much worse in practice by the huge number of catechumens and the tiny number of ministers.⁵⁰

Due to past failures, the Church thought of the betterment of catechetical instruction. Today, there is a way of forming catechumens adapted to various realities such as typed work, urban areas, and ages of the person. Still, the Church needs to improve more catechesis. Christians, sponsors and the whole Church should feel part of the preparation of catechumens. This is true because the future of the Church depends on today's preparation and involvement of the entire Church in the teaching of faith.

Thus, there is always room for improvement for the betterment of the future of the Church. Consequently, preparation of pastoral agents is an urgent need and task of the entire Church (*EN*, 44). Catechesis contributes to the expansion of the Church and thus, enhances the quality of faith among the Christian faithful in order to commit more and more to the task of evangelisation. In this sense, Christian faithful are ready to witness to Christ at any time and circumstance without fear and hesitation because they are sure of the victory of Christ over all the evil forces such as persecutions, and death (Jn. 16:33).

⁵⁰ A. HASTINGS, *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, 126-127.

E. Utilisation of the Mass Media

Communication is one of the challenges that the Church is facing today. The world of today is a non-reading⁵¹ world. This means that among the people of today some are digital and some illiterate. Today again, gadgets such as phones, smart phones, computers, and tablets are the fashion of the century. To lack them means illiteracy. It follows that the world has become a global village in which circulation and communication are much easier than before.

The rapid change of the world today compels the Church to improve her skills of communicating God's message. To reach out to people today, the Church makes use of means of social communication, Mass Media. Congregations such the Daughters of Saint Paul are helpful in this field of evangelisation. Books, journals, and others are one of the ways to reach out to large numbers of people in view of evangelisation: "[...] they enable the Good News to reach millions of people. The Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfect. [...] In them, she finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit. Thanks to them she succeeds in speaking to the multitudes" (*EN*, 45).

In spite of all the services, the Church encourages personal encounter with the Lord through the Word of God that leads one to personal commitment in life. This personal commitment is the fruit of the Holy Spirit and key to Christian witness. In this sense, the Church can use technology to evangelise the world in order to witness to it through its day-to-day living.

⁵¹ V. SØGAARD, "Go and Communicate Good News" in *Paradigm shifts in Christian Witness*, 65.

F. Indispensible Personal Contact

The whole world has the right to be in touch with the Gospel: “Go out to the whole world; proclaim the gospel to all creation” (Mk.16:15). This means that God’s will is to reach out to people individually. As a fact, Jesus chooses personal contact for the proclamation of God’s message in various instances such as in his dialogue with Nicodemus (John 3:1-21), the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-26); Zacchaeus (Lk 19:1-10) and Simon the Pharisee (Lk.7:36-49). Personal contact was one of the best methods of Jesus in proclamation.

Today again, the Church makes use of these methods because of various challenges: “There is also an increasing number of poor people in the world, people who to a large extent are outside our reach, and who are also non-readers. Our bibles are not relevant for them, and their economic situation makes most Christian communication products and programs outside their reach. Yet, the call of Christ was to communicate good news to the poor (Lk. 4:18)”.⁵²

Today, many people are deprived of God’s message because of their state of life: deaf, crippled, and so-called “social rejects”. To all these, the Church encourages priests, religious, catechists, and the entire Christian community to respond to God’s cry of pity: “And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd” (Mat. 9:36). In this way, we value contacts that aim at witnessing to Christ: “Where there are contacts there is witness to Christianity, and where there is witness to Christianity there is implicitly missionary activity”.⁵³

⁵² V. SØGAARD, “Go and Communicate Good News”, in *Paradigm shifts in Christian Witness*, 65.

⁵³ P. TILLICH, “The Theology of Missions”, *Witness to A Generation: Significant writings from Christianity and Crisis (1941-1966)*, 87

It follows that the great desire of the Church is to care for souls: “In cases of transfer the prescripts of canon 1747 are to be applied, canonical equity is to be observed and salvation of souls, which must always be the supreme law in the Church, is to be kept before one’s eyes” (*CL*, 1752). This transliterates the mission of Christ: “I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full” (Jn.10:10). To witness is to give life to people.

G. Role of the Sacraments

Sacraments are visible signs of God’s grace in people’s lives (*CCC*, 774). The visibility of the presence of the Church is effective through her sacramental tasks. By performing the sacraments, the Church brings salvation to all people. Through the sacraments, the Church exercises the healing power of Jesus and heals people in the name of Christ.

Sacraments participate in the work of evangelisation because of their intimate relationship to it. The latter is expressive in the Christian life through good works⁵⁴ of charity, love, and faith: “This supernatural life finds its living expression in the seven sacraments and in the admirable radiation of grace and holiness which they possess” (*EN*, 47). It follows that our lives are a reflection of Christ (Gal. 2:20). Therefore, to witness is to express God’s life in us and live accordingly.

H. Popular Piety

Piety is the extension of the liturgical life of the Christian (*CCC*, 1675). Piety expresses the search for God that people experience in day-to-day living. Psalm 63

⁵⁴ In the Catholic circle, the good works are the twelve gifts of the Holy Spirit. They are as follows: Charity, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Generosity, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Modesty, Self-control, and Chastity (Cf. *CCC*, 736; Gal. 5:22-23).

expresses the human thirst for God: “God, you are my God, I pine for you; my heart thirsts for you, my body longs for you, as a land parched, dreary, and waterless”.

Piety participates in the task of evangelisation in such a way that it makes people capable of generosity and sacrifice (*EN*, 48). Surrounding people learn a lot from popular piety and feel challenged when they are unable to perform good works of generosity towards others.

However, popular piety can become a barrier for evangelisation when it confuses people and leads them to form sects and other ecclesial communities. Therefore, bishops and pastors are invited to guide people so that corrections and clarifications are made to distortions of popular piety.

In practice, popular piety is a way to witness to Christ when it draws people to the Gospel values of goodness and sacrifice: “No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me” (Jn 6:44). In this way, Christian witness consists of drawing people to the source of goodness and sacrifice; the heavenly Father. This is possible because the Father has implanted goodness in each creature at creation: “God saw all he had made, and indeed it was very good” (Gen.1:31).

Thus, witness in a context of religious plurality takes the form of drawing all people to goodness and sacrifice for others. In a Muslim context (such as in Pakistan) in which people are afraid of evil spirits and look always for protective power and blessing (*Baraka*), witness to Christ consists of drawing people to God as the source of power especially in the healing ministry:

This is often not the case since folk Muslims just want healing and usually do not care from where it comes. In Mindanao, the sick may go to the Muslim shaman, the Catholic priest, the government hospital, and the Protestant missionary. Thus, as has been noted, ministries of healing and exorcism must be accompanied by teaching about God as the source of healing, and comfort and grace when he does not give physical healing.⁵⁵

⁵⁵ J. D. WOODBERRY, “Power and Blessing”, in *Paradigm shifts in Christian Witness*, 103-104.

Witnessing to Christ is to invite people to turn to God rather than to divination, and to believe in the healing power of God as the Creator of all that exists. This is the mission of the Church as witness in a pluralistic milieu such as Pakistan or any other Arabic country.

To emphasise more the aspect of witnessing in a Muslim milieu, Woodberry states, “God then is seen as the source of power, healing, and the grace to endure suffering. Rather than turn to divination, one can trust in the wisdom of God; instead of consulting the zodiac one looks to the Creator of the planets. Christ is understood not only as Saviour and Lord but also as the healer, the exorciser, the blessing, and the authority concerned with the issues peoples face in their worldviews”.⁵⁶ Thus, witness to Christ consists of drawing people to God as the source of all powers of the world.

4. Conclusion

There is need to appreciate the effort of the Church in terms of evangelisation. God’s message comprises of both the messenger and message. This implies that the weakness of the messenger distorts the message of God. The distortion of God’s message had impact on evangelisation. Self-interest and ambitions of some missionaries were the causes for the change of methodology. Despite this, time and technology have compelled the Church to review her methodology of evangelisation. Thus, the Church has opted for Christian witness as the new methodology for evangelisation without undermining proclamation. Christian witness is the outward of proclamation. Such approach establishes a relationship between the message and the messenger. Consequently, the messenger should reflect

⁵⁶ J. D. WOODBERRY, “Power and Blessing”, in *Paradigm shifts in Christian Witness*, 105.

and live the message accordingly. By living truly the message, the messenger becomes relevant to his time. The messenger witnesses to God's presence in his/her life.

Chapter II

UNDERSTANDING CHRISTIAN WITNESS FROM HISTORICAL, BIBLICAL AND ECCLESIAL PERSPECTIVE

1. Introduction

In the first chapter, we have explored the concept of Christian witness and various methods used by the Church in the completion of God's commands. This exploration climaxes in the emphasis of Christian witness in evangelisation: "Without repeating everything that we have already mentioned, it is appropriate first of all to emphasise the following point: for the Church, the first means of evangelisation is the witness of an authentically Christian life, given over to God in communion that nothing should destroy and at the same time given to one's neighbour with limitless zeal" (*EN*, 41). With this emphasis, we opt to evaluate the concept of Christian witness from its historical, biblical, and ecclesial background in this second chapter.

Our task in this second chapter is threefold. First, we shall analyse Christian witness from its historical point of view. This entails that we find out its origin and application in the course of history. Second, we shall look at Christian witness in its biblical perspective. This entails the study of Christian witness in the scriptures

(both Old and New Testament). Third, we shall explore how Christian witness is lived in the life of the Church through various ways. This entails looking at the lives of the Fathers of the Church and Church's saints.

Bearing this in mind, we are intending to proceed with the historical background of Christian witness; then follow the biblical and the ecclesial usage of Christian witness in the field of evangelisation.

2. Historical understanding of Christian witness

The use of “witness” depends on either contexts or circumstances of the time. Some used it with reference to court of law⁵⁷ such as the Greek; others used it with reference to Deity or solving disputes⁵⁸ in society such as the Jews.⁵⁹ We realise that in both the Greek or Jewish world, “witness” was used with reference to Justice.

In the Greek world, we had several ways to use the word “witness”. First, it was used in courts of law; secondly, in the writings and implemented in life's commitments of some historians, writers and philosophers. In courts of law, the Greeks viewed witness as “a means to solve societal problems in term of justice”. In this way, a witness was somebody who stands for the cause of the accuser in view of solving the dispute of which the person is accused. From this basis, some terminologies came about. There are namely, *martyrein*, *martyria* and *martyrion*.

⁵⁷ Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 14.

⁵⁸ We have different cases of disputes in Israel such as in the following readings: Genesis 13:7ff (Disputes between Abraham and Lot); Genesis 21:25-32 (Abraham and Abimelech); Genesis 26:18-22 (Disputes between the herdsmen of Isaac and the herdsmen of Gerar over the wells); Genesis 31:25-55 (Jacob and Laban); Numbers 11:1-6 and Deuteronomy 1:12. Other readings are Deuteronomy 22:13-21 (Disputes over the virginity of a young woman); Judges 8:1-3; 12:1-6; I Samuel 15:10-35; 25:39; II Samuel 12:1-15; I Kings 21:17-19; Nehemiah 5:7; 13:11; 17:25.

⁵⁹ Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 24.

They signify respectively, to witness (the verb); the act or the content of witnessing (the noun) and the testimony or proof (in an objective sense).⁶⁰

Such was the approach of witness in the Greek world. Later, further development went on and ancient teachers and writers took on and assigned to “witness” a new understanding in relation to their tasks as philosophers. From this, witness advocated to sacrifice one’s life for the sake of personal writings. This climaxed with Plato and associated witness with his own life: “In fidelity to his convictions, the Stoic-Cynic philosopher bears witness not only with his lips, but also with his life, accepting all kinds of difficulty and suffering as the divine will. He patiently endures, for he believes that God has called him into this very situation. In his behaviour, his *martyria* consists (*Discourses*, III.26.28).⁶¹

With Plato, witness goes beyond mere attestation and opinion. Witness is to death because of defending one’s writings and thoughts especially as writers and thinkers. A writer or a thinker is the one who is able to show ways to people in standing for the truth that is in his writings or books. Consequently, a thinker or a writer who is unable to stand for his writings or teachings is a coward and does not deserve such a task.

This entails that suffering and death are two faces of the same medal of a thinker or writer. It follows that one’s suffers and dies for his writings as a testimony of truth. Thus, a writer deserves the title of “witness” because he shows his capability of defending the truth that is in his writings and teachings. Here, we realise that Plato associated death with truth. This means that because of the truth, one decides to die.

⁶⁰ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 8.

⁶¹ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 13.

As a result, the Church witnessed to the truth with one's death and encouraged all those who showed readiness and determination to defend the Truth who is Jesus Christ: "I am the Way; I am Truth and Life" (Jn. 14:6). Consequently, the Church developed a theology of martyrdom⁶² with Tertullian as the forerunner with his famous words: "The blood of the martyrs is seed of Christians". None can testify to Truth if he is not himself convinced of it. This conveys that first a witness is the one who is convinced⁶³ by what he is about to testify namely the Truth.

Such understanding of witness brought about problems especially when one lacked factual events or historical proofs. This drove some of the writers and teachers to make a step forward by defining rules that give weight to the truth. Writers and teachers insisted that a witness must be based upon exact knowledge of facts⁶⁴ rather than on mere hearsay. As proponents, we have Herodotus (c. 484-425); Thucydides (c. 460-395); Polybius (c. 200-118).

We have realised that Plato was the bridge from the Greek to the Jewish or scriptural understanding of witness. Plato understood witness in reference to suffering and death. For Plato, a writer or better a philosopher is a person who brings truth to people. To have truth is to be convinced first by it oneself. A philosopher shows self-conviction only by living according to the teachings that are in his personal writings.

Otherwise, none can get inspiration from truth if the bearer does not live accordingly. A life according to truth is a life of commitment that leads one to

⁶² The concepts of martyrdom and witness are used interchangeably. However, Trites defines martyrdom threefold. Firstly, martyrdom as *martys* is a witness in court of law without commitment to death by doing so. Secondly, a witness is a disciple of John who testifies his faith in a court of law and dies because of it. Furthermore, a witness was a prophetic figure who knew that his words in a court of law would cost his life. Thirdly, a martyr is someone who dies for his faith (Cf. A. A. TRITES, "Martus and Martyrdom in the Apocalypse: A Semantic Study" in *Novum Testamentum* 15 (1973), 72-75).

⁶³ Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 12.

⁶⁴ Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 14.

suffering and death. Such understanding does not differ from the scriptural understanding: “If anyone wants to be a follower of mine, let him renounce himself and take up his cross and follow me. Anyone who wants to save his life will lose it; but anyone who loses his life for my sake will find it” (Mat. 16:24-25). This paves the way for the scriptural understanding of witness.

3. Biblical understanding of Christian witness

To approach witness in Scriptures, one must bear in mind that Israel organises its society around three pillars namely, *Torah*, *Temple* and *righteousness*.⁶⁵ Such societal setting allows us to discover its call as a witnessing nation among other nations. In 43:9-13, Isaiah declares it beautifully as follows:

Let all the nations assemble, let the peoples gather here! Which of them has proclaimed this and revealed things to us in the past? Let them bring their witnesses to justify themselves, let others hear and say, ‘It is true’. You yourselves are my witnesses, declares Yahweh, and the servant whom I have chosen, so that you may know and believe me and understand that it is I. No god was formed before me, nor will be after me. I, I am Yahweh, and there is no other Saviour but me. I have revealed, have saved, and have proclaimed, not some foreigner among you. You are my witnesses, declares Yahweh, I am God, yes, and from eternity, I am. No one can deliver from my hand; when I act, who can thwart me?

Based on this above, we realise that the choice of Israel among many nations has a purpose (Deut. 7:7-16). The latter is not other than being God’s witness amongst all the nations on earth. Thus, Israel must play its role as God’s witness (Acts 1:8). The biblical understanding of witness lies in the choice of Israel by God and its mission among all the nations on earth. Therefore, to grasp Israel’s journey

⁶⁵ For Israel, the three elements balance human life. Observance of them leads to success and God’s blessings (Deut. 30:15-20). In other words, the three elements are the criteria that differentiate people: God’s people observe and practise what God tells them. On contrary, wicked people disobey God’s instructions and adore idols (Ps. 1: 1-6). It follows that the righteous are blessed and the wicked are doomed to Sheol (Is.26:1-19; 55:7; 57:1; 66:24; Mat. 25:31-46).

and witnessing role, one must start with the Old Testament in view of having light from the New Testament.

3.1 Roots of Christian witness in the Old Testament

Israel used the term witness in solving disputes and quarrels among its members. This suggests that the word witness was a societal term used for justice. The latter supposes two parties namely, the accuser versus the accused. The two must confront one another in either public or in front of some societal leaders.

However, one must know that division is one of the characteristics of Israel. In all dimensions, one can feel division of Israel. There was separation between people in all the areas both socially, politically, economically and religiously. For instance, a leper cannot share a public pool with others due to leprosy; a blind was considered “cursed” by God and consequently, he was victim of rejection; a prostitute was not allowed to appear in public with others because considered impure and defiled as well as women who are in menstruation; slaves cannot share meals with masters. All this shows that Israel faces division at each societal level.

However, such division brought problems in the realm of justice in Israel especially the case of women, children, and slaves who were considered not mature lawfully. This gave rise to reinforce the term of witness. People such as women, children, and slaves need assistance in justice because they cannot speak for themselves lawfully. Consequently, Israel established that the validity of facts required two witnesses at least, excepting children, women and slaves (Deut. 19:15). With this background, one may ask the application of witness in ancient Israel.

In ancient Israel, the idea of witness appears “absent”. However, this does not suggest that we do not have traces of witnesses in the Old Testament. Rather,

one must bear in mind that the theology of the Old Testament is full of images, insights, and symbolisms that give rise to witness. The mostly used terminology is *martyrdom* that explains one's stand for righteousness and purity in the presence of ritual transgression and purity. When one shows resistance and opposition because of his beliefs, surely suffering and death are the next steps to follow.

In this way, we see the scene of the seven Maccabean brothers (2 Mac.7:1), a righteous person (Wis. 2:6-15), the figure of Eleazar (2 Mac. 6:19) and finally, the suffering servant of Isaiah (Is. 53). In all of these scenes, we realise that to witness is to suffer, to die for a specific cause. This assigns to witness a new stamp of personal commitment that becomes manifest in one's faith or confession: "A martyr is anyone who confesses his or her faith openly and dies as direct result of that confession".⁶⁶ Let us dare to grasp the theology of bloodshed in some of the martyrs in the Old Testament.

A. Witness of the seven Maccabean Brothers

With the seven Maccabean brothers, the Old Testament appraises their courage and stamina to resist Antiochus' order to break the law through the taste of some pork that the law forbids (2 Mac.7:1). Their refusal and steadfastness to keep the law rather than to obey Antiochus brought them to tortures and severe death. The young son was even inspired by the words of the mother: "[...] Do not fear this executioner, but prove yourself worthy of your brothers and accept death, so that I may receive you back with them in the day of mercy" (2 Mac.7:29).

The courage shown by the seven brothers is the driving force that is at the core of the teaching of witness to other people. The stamina of the seven brothers is

⁶⁶ L. CUNNINGHAM, "Christian Martyrdom: A Theological Perspective" in *Witness of the Body: Past, Present, and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, 14.

a sign that God operates within every human being and makes him/her instrument to witness to his presence in his/her life: “This love of God does not tolerate the co-existence of human weakness, but drives it away as an enemy alien from the whole soul. And this weakness has become powerless in the case of one who can say, *The Lord is my strength and my praise, and I can do all things in Him who strengthened me, Christ Jesus, Our Lord*”.⁶⁷

In this way, witness in second Maccabees means to endure suffering and death due to higher values in life. The seven brothers chose higher values by embracing obedience to the Law of God that teaches avoidance of godless worship which brings about defilement and impurity. They stood for and died for the sake of God’s high values in life instead of defilement. Thus, witness signifies a choice of higher values in life instead of a life of impurity and defilement.

B. The figure of Eleazar (2 Mac. 6:19)

Eleazar suffered tortures and death because he resolved to die with honour rather than to live with disgrace (2 Mac. 6:19). The attitude of Eleazar echoes in Ecclesiastes 4:2 in which the author praises his wonderful attitude of death than life with disgrace: “So, rather than the living that still has lives to live, I congratulate the dead who have already met death”. This suggests that better to die with honour than to live with disgrace because of breaking the law of God. In other words, it suggests that better to witness to God regardless of the fate than living a life of disgrace and shame.

⁶⁷ ORIGEN, *Prayer: Exhortation to Martyrdom*, 167.

C. Witness in the book of Wisdom: a righteous person

In Israel, a righteous person stands always as a model for the people within the societal framework. A righteous person teaches and instructs through both words and actions in life: “Thus the very sight of the righteous wise one is a reproach to the evil ones ‘because the manner of his life is unlike that of others and his ways are strange’ (Wis. 2:6-15)”.⁶⁸

The life of a righteous person challenges always others’ lives in every dimension. The challenge reaches its climax in the fight against injustices in some of the systems of the society. This is what makes the righteous person relevant to both society and people. Here, the righteous person becomes a witness to his contemporaries. This assigns to witness its true character namely, public testimony: “Witness, then, is public testimony designed to confront and eventually overcome the sinful structures that keep us collectively imprisoned by evil. It is addressed to people who live an organised life in this world”.⁶⁹

On the contrary, wicked ones are not happy because of the challenges that righteous ones demonstrate to them in their lives: “Let us lay traps for the upright man, since he annoys us and opposes our way of life, reproaches us for our sins against the Law, and accuses us of sins against our upbringing” (Wis. 2:12). This will eventually engender hatred in the heart of the wicked. It results that the wicked will assail and take away the life of the righteous: “Let us test him with cruelty and with torture, and thus explore this gentleness of his and put his patience to the test. Let us condemn him to a shameful death since God will rescue him – or so he claims” (Wis. 2:19-20).

⁶⁸ S. FREYNE, “Jesus the Martyr” in *Rethinking Martyrdom*, 53.

⁶⁹ J. COMBLIN, *The Meaning of Mission: Jesus, Christians and the Wayfaring Church*, 90.

In the face of hatred and jealousy, the Old Testament holds onto God's intervention as a reward for the righteous. This takes place in the end of time: "But the upright live forever, their recompense is with the Lord, and the Most High takes care of them. So they will receive the glorious crown and the diadem of beauty from the Lord's hand; for he will shelter them with his right hand and with his arm he will shield them" (Wis. 5:15-16). The vindication of the righteous becomes the teaching to living ones of being faithful to societal rites and practices as a source of life instead of death.

Thus, the Old Testament approaches witness as God's reward to those who stand for the goodness that is in the Torah. In this way, a witness is the one who practises the Law of God. He is the one who has chosen life instead of death (Deut. 30:15-20). Wisdom⁷⁰ assigns the title of witness to the person who keeps and practises the Law of God as a challenge to the wicked ones.

D. The Book of Consolation (Isaiah): the Suffering Servant

The picture of the suffering servant is in the book of Isaiah 53. Israel understood the mission of the suffering servant in the light of its feast of atonement (Levit.16). During this feast, the priest performs the rite of purification through the blood of animals. Israel purifies its sins yearly in view of obtaining God's mercy. This repeatable rite was not able to cleanse all the sins of Israel.

⁷⁰ In Wisdom of Solomon, three elements are basic characteristics of witness. On the one hand, we have God who testifies as wisdom (Wis. 1:6) and the other hand; we have both human testimony (Wis. 4:6) and the Word (Wis. 10:7). This sometimes assigns to a person both the quality of judge and witness at the same time. Trites underscores that "It illustrates what has already been observed in the Old Testament, namely, the fact that one person can serve as judge and witness in the same legal assembly. In Susanna the two roles are virtually synonymous" (A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 50).

The person of Jesus is the true priest who enables the cleansing of sins as Paul underscores it (Rom. 3:21-26). Therefore, Jesus replaces the Day of Atonement with his person that facilitates reconciliation between God and the suffering Israel. In this sense, Benedict XVI underscores the purpose of this encounter of God with humanity at large: “He brings the world’s anguished cry at God’s absence before the heart of God himself. He identifies himself with suffering Israel, with all who suffer under ‘God’s darkness’; he takes their cry, their anguish, all their helplessness upon himself-and in so doing he transforms it”.⁷¹

What becomes relevant to the people of Israel is the fact that the death of a prophet or a wise person is highly valued and appraised as a teaching to the living people: “One such figure, familiar within Jewish circles of the period, was the prophet or wise one, whose deaths were intimately related to their lives and the values which had informed them”.⁷² As source of teaching, Israel applies the Suffering Servant in the caring for the poor and widows at the social level: “These consisted in living sumptuous and arrogant lives, in the process ignoring the basic tenets of Jewish piety of caring for the poor and widows”⁷³.

Besides the books of Maccabees, Isaiah and Wisdom, the Old Testament makes use of witness as teaching in Psalms.⁷⁴

⁷¹ J. RATZINGER, *Jesus of Nazareth, Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, 163.

⁷² S. FREYNE, “Jesus the Martyr” in *Rethinking Martyrdom*, 53.

⁷³ S. FREYNE, “Jesus the Martyr” in *Rethinking Martyrdom*, 53.

⁷⁴ The narrative story of the seven Maccabean brothers is in 2 Maccabees 7:1-42; the story of Eleazar is in Ecclesiastes 4:2 and finally the psalmist shows the witnessing side in Psalms 116:12. All of these texts are teachings of how being witnesses to God through the channel of testimony of life.

E. The Book of Psalms: 116:12-13

The psalmist expresses an attitude of wonderment and awe. He is at the crossroad and does not know what to do in relation to God's actions in his/her life. From this surprising attitude of the psalmist, the Old Testament takes up and draws some teachings that can assist people for improving their relationship with God through the channel of gratitude.

The psalmist decides that the only thing to render to God in terms of gratitude is to witness to God's actions and deeds in day-to-day living. This becomes a reminder for all of us who are called to holiness as God's children: "Death, then, comes precious for us, if we are saints of God, and if we are not unworthy to die – not the ordinary, so to speak, and fruitless death in religion, but that very special death, death for the sake of Christianity, piety, and holiness".⁷⁵

We have realised that the use of witness/martyrdom in the Old Testament aimed at educating people in view of improving their lives. This conveys that human beings are not islands. Rather, they are social and created for interaction with others. We should live our religion, our Christianity in relation to others. We are Christians not for ourselves. Rather, we are Christians for others: "Being a Christian is not exactly the same in different centuries. We are not Christians all by ourselves; we are not Christians outside time. We all undertake our witness within a particular historical era. We are not just numbers in the human race; we are part of an evolutionary process. Being a human today is not the same as it was centuries ago".⁷⁶

⁷⁵ ORIGEN, *Prayer: Exhortation to Martyrdom*, 170-171.

⁷⁶ J. COMBLIN, *The Meaning of Mission: Jesus, Christians and the Wayfaring Church*, 94.

Benedict XVI also gives emphasis to the being of Christians today as relational or communicational. We are not Christians by ourselves. We are Christians because of other people who surround us in various ways: “Thus, becoming a Christian does not mean grabbing something for oneself alone; on the contrary, it means moving out of that selfishness which only knows about itself and only refers to itself and passing into the new form of existence of someone who lives for others”.⁷⁷

The move that Benedict XVI suggests here means that Christians are people of communication. They are called to communicate their experience of the Risen Christ to others. Christians must therefore make the message of Christ available and relevant to the public: “[...] the fact remains that the Christian message is not meant to stay peacefully ensconced in people’s souls. It is to make its way into public life”. [...] witness is grounded on the belief that it is possible to change and that only human beings can change structures and force the powers of oppression into submission”.⁷⁸ This is what Jesus meant through the channel of his commission to the disciples (Mat. 28:19-20).

Such a perspective changes drastically the whole way of understanding witness. Witness⁷⁹ becomes therefore the preaching of God’s mystery of suffering and love: “Our method of witnessing should be not simply preaching but a ministry of suffering love, a life lived under the cross.”⁸⁰ This is the reason John Paul II linked the kingdom of God to the person of Jesus Christ. He wrote, “the kingdom of God is

⁷⁷ J. RATZINGER, *What It means to Be a Christian*, 55.

⁷⁸ J. COMBLIN, *The Meaning of Mission: Jesus, Christians and the Wayfaring Church*, 93-94.

⁷⁹ Apart from the Old Testament understanding of witness, we have also some of the Jewish documents that speak of witness. There are the Dead Sea scrolls in which witness was used as a disciplinary measure in view of brotherly correction: “[...] the idea of witness in the Dead Sea Scrolls appears mainly in real situations, usually in correction with community disputes. Because of this fact, the Scrolls furnish some interesting parallels to similar disputes in the Christian community where witnesses are involved (Mt. 18:15ff; Cf. I Cor. 5:1-8)” (A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 54)

⁸⁰ D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 34.

not a concept, a doctrine, or a programme subject to free interpretation, but it is before all else *a person* with the face and name of Jesus of Nazareth, the image of the invisible God” (*RM*, 18).

This explains that only the one who lives in touch with God’s suffering and love can be witness to him in day-to-day living. This brings about the Johanne picture of vine and branches: “Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). This sheds light upon the understanding of witness in the New Testament.

3.2 Christian witness in the New Testament

Witness is not something new in the history of the Church. Rather, witness had been one of the main features of the early Church. Christians were used to witnessing to Christ through the channel of martyrdom. Primarily, martyrdom and witness are seen as two faces of the same medal.

To relate martyrdom to witness was typically the tendency of the early Church. However, the theology of martyrdom took root in the Person of Jesus through his question to his disciples: “Can you drink the cup that I shall drink, or be baptized with the baptism with which I shall be baptized?” (Mk. 10:38). Thereupon, the Church has always understood martyrdom in relation to witness to the person of Christ as a visible sign that testifies the commitment and attachment that one has through the channel of faith.

The early Christians understood themselves as the people who had a special vocation towards the Roman world. This entailed that Christians must follow the steps of their master Jesus-Christ. To follow the footsteps of Jesus means to be relevant and ready to attack everything that is not compatible with the spirit of Jesus:

evil deeds and actions such as injustice, violence, and oppression. They have to be martyrs because of the goodness that they witness to Christ. They have to challenge the established system that encourages things such as oppression, injustice and violence as Jesus did in the context of the Roman Empire:

Christians were no longer asked to bear witness in the law-courts of the empire; their task now was to continue to challenge the imperial value systems as Jesus had done when he first encountered these in Galilee. The fact that the memory of this challenge and resistance was still available in the gospel narratives ensured that some, at least, refused to accept the blandishments of empire, even when they came in a Christian dress. It is that memory that continues to inspire countless nameless ones to resist imperial structures in our world today, no matter how innocently these may appear. In doing so, the *martyrs/witness* may easily become *martyrs/martyr*, without ever receiving the recognition of a formal trial.⁸¹

Regarding this, the Roman authorities looked at the Christians as threat that would comprise the social order of the Roman Empire in the future. To counter the threat, the Roman authorities signed decrees to compel Christians to worship the Roman gods. If Christians refused, they would be accursed of disobedience meriting severe punishments: “Any Christian leaders maintaining their practice of religion were to be imprisoned and tortured until they sacrificed to the Roman gods”.⁸²

This brought about persecutions under the ruling of Nero, Diocletian, and Trajan. This time was one of the horrible times for the Christians. It was a time of tortures, cruelties, and violence towards the Christians. The only way to escape was to recant the Christian faith and embrace the Roman cult of gods.

Consequently, the Christians who stood firm in their faith were severely tortured and some killed. They shed blood because they refused to recant the faith in the person of Jesus. They kept their faith and accepted to face death instead of complying the Roman laws such as worshipping the Roman gods or joining the

⁸¹ S. FREYNE, “Jesus the Martyr” in *Rethinking Martyrdom*, 57-58.

⁸² T. YORK, “Early Church Martyrdom: Witnessing For or Against the Empire?” in *Witness of the Body: The past, Present and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, 21.

military service. Figures such as Maximilian of Tebessa, Ignatius of Antioch, and Polycarp of Smyrna stood firm for their faith in Jesus.

The Church praised the courage shown by some of the early Christians. As a result, the Church established teachings in order to instruct her Christians to adopt the attitudes and stands of some of the figures recognised as martyrs or witnesses. Through persecutions, witness took root and became familiar with the life of the Church. Then, the Church related witness to martyrdom.

The New Testament writings are full of joys and actions. This means that a witness is a man of joy and actions. He is the person who has life that comes from the Risen Lord. These constitute the opening words of Pope Francis in his *Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium*, “The joy of the Gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept his offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness, and loneliness. With Christ joy is constantly born anew” (EG, 1). These words assign newness in both the person and the message of Christ. The newness lies in both the person and the message: “Look, I am making the whole of creation new” (Rev. 21:5). This newness implies simplicity, joy, and respect in the preaching of Christians.

A witness should radiate always Christ in simplicity and honesty wherever he is and in whatever he does. A good witness never thinks of persuasion or coercion in the matters of faith. A true witness respects people’s freedom and lives a life that inspires people to question about the driving power that moves him or her. A good witness shines Christ in whatever he or she does. A good witness follows the channel of the Good News: “sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ in relation to

our understanding and our obedience to that Good News”.⁸³ A witness walks in the light of Jesus through the guidance of the Good News. This is the identity of God’s witnesses in the world.

In light of the New Testament, we shall approach the topic of Christian witness from various books starting from the synoptic Gospels, the two books of Luke (Gospel and Acts of the Apostles), then follows the Gospel of John and other epistles such as first Peter, Letters to Titus, Timothy, Hebrews, James, Jude, and the book of Revelation.

A. Synoptic Gospels: Matthew and Mark

One may think that there are not traces of witness in the synoptic Gospels apart from Luke. This does not convey that there is not witness in Matthew and Mark. The idea of witness in Matthew and Mark (sometimes in Luke) takes the form of debates⁸⁴, discussions and controversies that occurred between Jesus and some of the religious leaders namely, the Pharisees and the Scribes. The latter intended to trap Jesus through hostile discussions and debates in view of arresting him. Various scenes are present in Matthew and Mark such as Matthew 12:10; 22:15; Mark 3:2; Luke 6:7; 14:1 and Luke 20:20.

Moreover, Jesus witnessed to God’s mighty⁸⁵ and power in other realities such as exorcisms, personality, and testimony of life. In exorcisms, demons recognised the Sonship of Jesus and saw Jesus as their enemies: “What do you want

⁸³ Cf. WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES SIXTH ASSEMBLY, *New Directions in Mission & Evangelisation*, 56.

⁸⁴ Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 176.

⁸⁵ Trites states, “Nevertheless, the Synoptic Gospels see Christ’s mighty works performed against a background of hostility in which his opponents are constantly observing (Mk 3:2; cf. Lk. 6:7; 14:1), sometimes even employing spies (Lk. 20:20)” (A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 176).

with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are the Holy One of God” (Mk. 1:24; Lk. 4:34). The response of the demons conveys that they recognised the mighty power of God at work in Jesus.

Furthermore, confessions of some express that one recognises God’s power at work in Jesus such as Peter’s confession, “But you, he said to them, ‘who do you say I am? Peter spoke up: ‘The Christ of God,’ he said. But he gave them strict orders and charged them not to say this to anyone” (Lk. 9:20). Confession signifies that one witnesses to God’s power at work in Jesus.

We shall notice that witness takes effectively root in both Jesus and his disciples especially in times of persecutions. For them, persecution is one of the moments in which one takes courage to stand for the truth: “Christians were not to fear these times of persecutions, for the Spirit would give them the wisdom and courage needed to bear witness to their faith (cf. Mt. 10:19f.; Acts 6:10)”.⁸⁶ For the disciples, witnessing to Christ aims at being victorious at the final judgment at the end of times. The end of times is the exact time at which God will reward them because of their courage and faithfulness. In this way, Trites observes,

Hated by all men for the sake of the Name (Mk 13:13; Lk. 21:17; Mt. 10:22; cf. Jn 15:18-19), they would often be condemned in earthly law courts, but in the heavenly law court the Son of Man would acknowledge them and reverse the unjust judgments pronounced against them by earthly judges (Mt. 10:32; Lk. 12:8f). Their main concern was to watch and be faithful to, in order that they might stand before the Son of Man (Lk. 21:36; cf. Psa. 1:5; Mal. 3:2; Mk. 13:3-7).⁸⁷

The Day of Judgment (Mat. 25:31-46) is the celebration of the victory⁸⁸ of Jesus and his witnesses over the hostility of the Pharisees and Scribes. On that day,

⁸⁶ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 185.

⁸⁷ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 185.

⁸⁸ On the victory of Jesus and his witnesses, Caird states, “The vision is prophetic: the exorcisms of Jesus and his disciples were not themselves the decisive victory over Satan, but only tokens of a victory to be won through the Cross. Up to this point, it should be noted, Satan is still in heaven. He owes his place there partly to his original office of prosecuting counsel in the divine law court (Job 1; Zech. 3:1-5), the ruthless accuser who misrepresents God’s purpose by pressing the

Jesus will witness to his Sonship as both Son of God and Judge: “[...] for he sees the Son of Man ‘standing’ not only as a witness (Acts 7:56) but also as a judge (Lk. 21:36)”.⁸⁹ This day constitutes the apex of witness because it will consist of personal judgment on how faithful and courageous one has been in witnessing to Jesus Christ as the Son of God here on earth among hostile people and opponents of Jesus namely, Pharisees and Scribes.

To understand well the idea of witness in the synoptic, one must have in mind this schema. On the one hand, we have Jesus has a witness of God’s power at work within the hostility of the Pharisees and Scribes; on the other hand, the disciples as the eyewitnesses of Jesus. This becomes effective in the Day of Judgment in which Jesus as judge and the Son of Man stands and judges everyone according to his faithfulness and courage shown on earth as true witnesses against the worldly hostility and enmity.

B. The Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles

The New Testament seems to have various aspects of witnesses. This implies that the Gospels are the narrations of the life of Jesus: “In general sense, of course, the Gospels themselves are witnesses to Christ, and whole books have been devoted to treating them from that perspective”.⁹⁰ The similarities and dissimilarities that the Gospels present to us are authentic sources of inspiration and understanding the

claims of his Justice to the complete exclusion of his mercy; partly to the commonly accepted idea that all earthly realities and events have their counterpart in heaven, so that even the sum total of earthly evil must have its heavenly representative (cf. Hebrews 9:23...). The ejection of Satan means that God’s redemptive mercy has delivered men both from the sentence that hung over them and from the guilt and power of sin that held them captive (Rev. 12:7-12)” (G. B. CAIRD, *The Gospel of Saint Luke*, 143).

⁸⁹ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 195.

⁹⁰ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 175.

concept of Christian witness. In this sense, we shall explore Christian witness from the Lucan perspective.

We shall realise that mission and witness are integrally related⁹¹ in the Lukan writings than elsewhere. The relation that exists between mission and witness lies in the driving power that makes the mission possible. This sheds light that the mission is the work of God through the sending of his Son Jesus Christ too the Jews, Gentiles and other nations as well. For Bosch, mission and witness are in a profound relationship due to the driving power that is beyond them. This driving power is simply the action of the Holy Spirit. He observes, “The idea of being led by the Spirit into mission is then, however, applied in a far more comprehensive manner to the ministry of the *disciples*. They will turn into Jesus’ witnesses as soon as they are clothed with the power from on high (Lk. 24:49; Acts 1:8)”.⁹²

Such observation makes Bosch to conclude that witness in Luke lays down on these two biblical references: Luke 24:49 and Acts 1:18. This designates that the two readings are the playground to understand mission in the New Testament theology. However, such an assertion does not confine the theme of witness to Luke only. Rather, the assertion affirms the use of witness in the New Testament. If we analyse well the Synoptic Gospels especially Matthew and Mark, we shall realise that the key-concept of witness lies in the proclamation of the word of God as the gateway to conversion (See Mat. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15). It follows that Luke portrays Jesus as the prophet of justice and care for the poor (Lk. 4:16ff).

Consequently, witness fits the disciples of Jesus because they were witnessing to Jesus’ deeds and actions as true followers within the Christian community: “In terms of our discussion of the appropriateness of using the term

⁹¹ P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 195.

⁹² P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 113.

martys to Jesus, it is surely significant that although, as we have seen, Luke has a preference for the term in relation to the early Christian mission, he does not apply it to Jesus himself, but reserves it for his followers”.⁹³ Concretely, the Holy Spirit and the Church are channels or agents through which the mission of the Father is accomplished in the world. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, the disciples witness to Jesus as Lord and Saviour. In this way, one may conclude that they all fulfil the mission of the Father: “In fact, from the Father to him and from him to them, it is one and the same mission that flows and, in consequence, also the powers belonging to the mission (cf. Jn. 17:18; 22-23; 20-21) – the same mission which is, in the same degree, a mission of love.”⁹⁴ The mission of the Church is the continuation of Christ’s incarnation. In this sense, we dare to assign to the disciples a place of privilege in the fulfilment of Christ’s mission. Bearing all this in mind, we intend to analyse the witnessing task of the disciples following the scheme of Bolt⁹⁵.

1. The twelve witnesses

Bolt realises that Luke gives an important place to the disciples in the role of witnessing to Christ. He shows the importance in Luke 24. He divides it into three sections⁹⁶ and links them respectively. The keyword in all the sections is the reliability on the community of the apostles of Jesus. This implies that the twelve are reference to whatever goes outside the community. From the discovery of the empty tomb by the women through the Emmaus event to the apparition of the risen Lord to

⁹³ S. FREYNE, “Jesus the Martyr” in *Rethinking Martyrdom*, 54.

⁹⁴ Y. CONGAR, “The Holy Spirit, and the Apostolic Body, Continuers of the Work of the Church” in *Mission and Witness: The Life of the church*, 278.

⁹⁵ In the witnessing act of the twelve and others, we shall follow the schema given by Bolt in his article “Mission and Witness” found in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, 191-214.

⁹⁶ The first section goes from verse 1 to 12. The second section continues from verse 13 to 32 and the third section goes from verse 33 to 49 (Cf. P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 196-197).

the twelve, the reliability of the twelve is the pivotal point to understand Luke's writings.

In the Gospel of Luke, the twelve play an important role in terms of witness to Christ. They are the pillar of faith to the newly born community of Jesus' followers. Bolt states that, "These three provide the occasion and also the content of their witness ('these things'). Because they had accompanied Jesus up to the crucifixion, and eaten with him after he arose, they could testify to both his suffering and his physical resurrection".⁹⁷ Consequently, the twelve are the custodian of Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection. The twelve are genuine source of Jesus' life here on earth. They are the foundation of the new community of the followers of Jesus. Whoever claims to be Christ's follower must be at the school of the twelve:

They are witnesses solely as ministers of the Gospel, in their function of proclaiming the good news of salvation in Christ. Consequently their testimony is, in part, a narrative of the events in the life of Christ all the time they were with him, what they themselves had seen and heard and also, as was Christ's own preaching, an appeal to the prophecies and the fulfilment of all that was declared about Christ and of the preparation for his coming in the Old Testament.⁹⁸

The life of the twelve gives relevance to their witnessing call of the Person of Jesus. As a fact, the new community should always refer to the twelve because they are the custodians of the mystery of Christ. In this sense, the condition of witnessing to Christ should base on personal experience with the earthly Christ (Acts 1:21-22).

In the book of Acts⁹⁹, similar patterns are present. The opening of the book portrays the message of witnesses: "[...] but you will receive the power of the Holy

⁹⁷ P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 197.

⁹⁸ Y. CONGAR, "The Holy Spirit, and the Apostolic Body, continuators of the Work of the Church" in *Mission and Witness: The Life of the church*, 293.

⁹⁹ The Book of Acts holds some important features in line with the witnessing character of the apostles. In this way, two features are relevant and important to understand the theology of Luke. The first is the validity or credibility of witness that requires two or more people as known in the Old Testament (Deut. 19:15). This explains the use of pairs in both books (the Gospel and the Acts). The second feature is the boldness of the apostles' witness due to the driving force that is the Holy Spirit.

Spirit which will come on you, and then you will be my witnesses not only in Jerusalem but throughout Judaea and Samaria, and indeed to earth's remotest end" (Acts 1:8).

The call to witness to Jesus assigns to the twelve a new characteristic in their lives. It finds explanation within the history of Israel. The number twelve suggests symbolically the restoration of Israel in reference to the choice of the apostles by Jesus (Lk. 6:12-16). In this sense, Bolt realises that the keeping of the number twelve could be understood as the continuation¹⁰⁰ of the witnessing mission before and after the earthly Jesus by the chosen ones. Lastly, the presence of the Holy Spirit gives the identity to the first groups of believers. This is the characteristic of the newly born community of the followers of Jesus. To become witnesses¹⁰¹ requires the assistance of the power of the Holy Spirit.

2. Their witnesses

This point is a response to the question about the content of the witness of the twelve. Jesus chose the twelve for a specific mission. Mark gives us the purpose of the choice of the twelve: "He now went up onto the mountain and summoned those

The latter is the strength of God that assists the apostles to deliver the message of salvation to all nations. Together with them, God's message becomes credible and valid. Apart from the two main features, a third feature is the scriptural witness. This means that the apostolic enterprise has confirmation from scriptural background. The apostles understood that the coming of Jesus was God's plan for salvation to the entire humanity (Acts 10:34). This conviction made them zealous and tireless witnesses to the Messiahship of Jesus. This justifies the threefold of apostolic witness namely, juridical, religious and Messianic. In the former type, the apostles witnessed to Christ in tribunal, in front of kings and political leaders and governors such as Pilates, Felix, Festus, and Agrippa. In the following one, the apostles witnessed to Christ in front of religious leaders such as the Sanhedrin. In the latter, the apostles witnessed to Christ in front of the Jews, the Gentiles and finally, all earthly nations (cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 144-153).

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 198.

¹⁰¹ Especially in Acts, Luke gives too much emphasis on witnessing to Christ. For Luke, the Apostles are the ones to bear witness to Christ at least in ways: witness to facts of the public ministry of Jesus (see Acts 1,2 and 10); witness to character (see 3 Jn. 12 and Acts 10:38) in view of testifying to the holiness and righteousness of the life of Jesus and finally, witness to the Christian faith in order to draw the Jews and the Gentiles to the Christian faith (cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 144).

he wanted. So they came to him and he appointed twelve; they were to be with his companions and to be sent out to proclaim the message, with power to drive out devils” (Mk. 3:13-14). This signifies that the choice of the twelve was double. First, they should be the companions of Jesus and secondly, to be sent for proclamation.

We realise that the task of proclamation is secondary to the one of companionship. Companionship remains at the heart of the choice. This denotes that the base of proclamation is the earthly Jesus. So to say, the twelve should experience first Jesus in various ways in order to witness to him to the world. Consequently, the content of witness is the person of Jesus: “To proclaim the forgiveness of sins is to proclaim at the same time a share in the resurrection. Because Jesus’ resurrection was understood in connection with the general resurrection (cf. 26:23), to proclaim is resurrection was also to proclaim that resurrection life had arrived, for he was the ‘founder of life’.¹⁰²

3. The thirteenth witness chosen

Paul is the thirteen chosen. He first appears in the approval of the death of Stephen (Acts 8:1). The appointment of Paul as apostle differs from the twelve. He became one of the chosen after the conversion that occurred on the road to Damascus as the one persecuting the Church of Jesus: “He fell to the ground, and then he heard a voice saying, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting’” (Acts 9:4-5). From this personal experience, the Lord chose Paul and introduced him to Ananias as “my chosen instrument to bring my name before the gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel” (Acts 9:15).

¹⁰² P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 201.

The significance of this choice is that God appointed Paul apostle beyond the boundaries of Israel. As a fact, Paul understood that God has entrusted him a mission to carry out his name to the Gentiles. This understanding shifts from hostility and persecution to witness and apostle. The witness of Paul became possible only after his personal encounter with the Risen Lord. From the encounter, Paul testifies to Christ: “The God of our ancestors has chosen you to know his will, to see the Upright One and hear his own voice speaking, because you are to be his witness before all humanity, testifying to what you have seen and heard”(Acts 22:14-15).

Thus, the pattern of witnessing to Christ remains identical to the one of the twelve. The only different here is that Paul did not live with the earthly Jesus. Regardless of that, Paul is also one of the accredited apostles because of his personal experience of the Risen Lord and his commission to be his witness to the entire humanity. Bolt concludes that the message of salvation reaches the nations without hindrances and they listened: “Boldly and without hindrance, the message of salvation is going to the nations. And they will listen”.¹⁰³

However, Luke makes an appeal to the reader of the book of Acts. For Luke, the book of Acts speaks to the reader. It invites the reader not only to listen to the message of salvation, but also to bring it to the others. This invites the reader to become witness of his/her epoch: “Being members of the nations, the readers are called to listen to the word of the witnesses and to respond with repentance and faith.

Since the word is the message to which all must hear, the task of the believer is to evangelize others, and invite them to rely on the power of the risen Lord. It results

¹⁰³ P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 211.

that readers have the task to bring salvation to the ends of the earth”.¹⁰⁴ This assigns to witness a common responsibility of all people not only confined to the chosen ones. This gives rise to analyse the Gospel of John.

C. The Gospel of John

The fourth Gospel makes use of witness many times compared to other biblical writings. One may conclude that John understood well the word “witness” than other biblical writers. This makes Barrett observe this,

Witness holds an important place in the thought of the Gospel. The Baptist (I: 7f; 15:32-34; 3:26; 5:33), the Samaritan woman (4:39), the works of Jesus (5:36; 10:25), the Old Testament (5:39), the multitude (12:17), the Holy Spirit and the apostles (15:26f), God the Father himself (5:32-37; 8:18), all bear witness to Jesus. Jesus himself...bears witness to the truth (8:37; cf. 3:11), in conjunction with the Father (8:13-18) whose consented testimony validates his own. Witnesses in turn testify to the truth of the gospel record (19:35; 21:24). In 18:23, the accusers of Jesus are invited to bear witness regarding the evil he is alleged to have done, that is, to establish by their testimony the fact alleged. This is normal Greek usage, it corresponds sufficiently to the use of the root ‘*wǵ*’ in the Old Testament (which also supplies the notion of God’s testifying to, or against, his people), and is the common meaning of the words in John.¹⁰⁵

John prefers the terminology of witness because of his aim at writing the gospel. For John, the writing of the Gospel is apologetic. This substantiates the ending of chapter twenty that says, “There were many other signs that Jesus worked in the sight of the disciples, but they are not recorded in this book. These are recorded so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing this you may have life through his name” (Jn. 20:30-31).

In this way, John intended in writing the Gospel to “convince” his opponents about the Messiahship of and Sonship of Jesus. It follows that such enterprise requires some patterns in view of credibility and reliability on the side of the

¹⁰⁴ P. G. BOLT, *Mission and Witness*, 214.

¹⁰⁵ C. K. BARRETT, *The Gospel according to Saint John* (London: 1962). Cf. A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 80.

opponents. Actually, John follows the following patterns: the Old Testament law of evidence (Deut. 19:15); signs to witness to Jesus, Jesus witnesses to the truth and testified by the Father, the Holy Spirit and the works of the apostles. All this aims at witnessing to the sonship and Messiahship of Jesus.

Witness in the fourth Gospel is a task that takes place within a setting of hostility and confusion whereby Jesus' opponents need tangible proofs of his divine claim. John views hostility as conflicts that exist between two worlds. On the one hand, we have Jesus who represents God's world and on the other hand, we have the Jews who represent the world that is against the witnesses.¹⁰⁶ In this way, the task of witnesses is to stand for the truth that is Jesus. This is not an easy task because the people of this world are afraid of the light. Their fear makes them hostile to all those who are denouncing their evil deeds: "And the judgment is this: though the light has come to into the world people have preferred darkness to the light because their deeds were evil" (Jn. 3:19). It follows that the hostile world is angry and becomes aggressive to all those who claim to be witnesses. The violence of the world is expressive in hatred and persecutions: "And indeed, everybody who does wrong hates the light and avoids it, to prevent his actions from being shown up" (Jn. 3:20).

Knowing the out coming and the cost of discipleship, Jesus prepares his disciples and encourages them in bearing witness to him. He told them, "Do not let your hearts be troubled. You trust in God, trust also in me" (Jn. 14:1). This gives hints to the fact that the witnessing task requires confidence, perseverance, and trust in the person of Jesus. Because he is the Lord and Master of the world, witnesses must believe that at the end of time, victory belongs to those who will persevere in the difficult task of witness. Despite the hostility of the world, witnesses are the

¹⁰⁶ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 112.

bearers of this message: “I have told you all this so that you may find peace in me. In the world, you will have hardship, but be courageous: I have conquered the world” (Jn. 16:33).

The required courage is a human attitude that benefits God’s assistance because of the Holy Spirit. Trites states, “Now the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, pleads Christ’s case and calls John and other human witnesses to substantiate it. The apostles, like the witnesses in the Old Testament lawsuit, have a two-fold role; they are both witnesses to the facts of the life of Jesus, for they have been with him ‘from the beginning’ (15:27f; cf. I Jn I: I), and they are also advocates, defending him, commending him and trying to convince his opponents that he is Messiah and Son of God”.¹⁰⁷

In John’s Gospel, witness consists of defending Jesus’ Messiahship and divine Sonship in front of his opponents. This gives rise to counter-reaction of the opponents that consists of suffering, persecuting and finally killing whoever chooses to witness to Christ. Because of human weakness, God assists his witness through his Holy Spirit as driving force that strengthens witnesses in their difficult task. This points out to persecutions and sufferings in some of the letters of John.

D. Other books: First Peter; Revelation; Timothy and Titus; Hebrews, James, Jude and second Peter

Witness is also present in other books of the New Testament. It is one of the characteristic of the newly communities in some of the letter of Peter. Differently from Luke’s Gospel and Acts, witness in these books takes a form of exhortation and encouragement. Witness becomes a way to teach people – especially the hostile

¹⁰⁷ A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, 114.

world in which Christians find themselves- through the channel of commitment, integrity, goods behaviours and perseverance in all sort of trials. In most of these books, Christians find themselves in situations of trial and difficulties. The choice that one makes toward pagan practices gives rise to witness.

In the first letter of Peter, Christians are in a situation of oppression and domination. They are slaves and subject to corrupt society. In this indecisive context, the author of the first Peter encourages the Christians to witness to hope through goods actions: “Despite the threat posed by the majority culture, the Christians must be actively involved in society and offer it witness. The substance of this witness is the goods deeds of thee Christians and their sense of hope. [...] Since this witness must be visible, the Christian should ‘submit’ or become involved in the created institutions of human society (1 Pt. 2:13)”.¹⁰⁸

In the book of Revelation, the same patterns of witness are present. Nevertheless, the appeal made to the Christians is to live a prophetic life of witness. This means that Christians must withdraw themselves from the solidarity with the Roman Empire in the eating of meat offered to Balaam (Rev. 2:14). The main concern of the author is to strengthen the Christians to avoid some of the teachers who preach solidarity with the Roman gods. The Christians must recognise their identity as the chosen people who worship the only God. They should show this recognition in their day-to-day today living. They have to withdraw from the solidarity with the Romans Greek in the eating of meat offered to idols and immorality: “The Christians’ withdrawal from society is a prophetic act of witness to and on behalf of society. The Christians are to proclaim the good news of

¹⁰⁸ D. SENIOR – C. STUHLMUELLER, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 300.

universal salvation to the world, and their pulpit is a heroic refusal to compromise with a system they see as aligned with the forces of sin and death”.¹⁰⁹

In the pastoral letters of Timothy and Titus, the main concern is to inspire fidelity and good behaviour with the setting of the community. Here, the Christians should witness to Christ within their community as the chosen people. The author exhorts that the leaders of the community live an exemplary life for the sake of the community and the outside world: “Good conduct is to be maintained so that the community will be well thought of and can live in peace, an essentially defensive posture”.¹¹⁰

Finally, in the letters¹¹¹ to Hebrews, James, Jude, and 2 Peter, the focus is on different matters. Regardless of the addresses, each of the writers advocates his community to live a life worthy of witness. James urges his community to witness to integrity that should translate the faith into active good deeds of justice and mutual respect. Jude addresses the problems of internal immorality of ungodly persons. The letter to the Hebrews gives hints to the redemptive work of the exalted Jesus and its implication for the Christian perseverance especially in line with the sacrificial priesthood of Jesus.

3.3 Christian witness in the history of the Church

Witness has always been present in the history of the Church. Through its members and actions, the Church witnesses always to the salvific presence of Christ in its history. From century to century, the Church stands as God’s instrument that

¹⁰⁹ D. SENIOR – C. STUHLMUELLER, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 305.

¹¹⁰ D. SENIOR – C. STUHLMUELLER, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 308.

¹¹¹ D. SENIOR – C. STUHLMUELLER, *The Biblical Foundations for Mission*, 309.

witness to the active actions of God in the salvation of the world. Such assertion is true for both the past and the present as well.

A. The Fathers of the Church

The Fathers give impression that from the very outset, the saving action of God is still present in the members of the Church. As we know that, the Church is both human and divine. This implies that God acts upon the Church through the channel of its members in view of reaching out to the world. Consequently, the first people through which the Church witness to God's touch are the Fathers¹¹² of the Church. The Fathers of the Church are one of the ways the Church experiences its witness to God's actions in the world. Bennett states that, "The Fathers are primarily to be considered as *witnesses*, not as *authorities*. They are witnesses of an existing state of things, and their treatises are, as it were, *histories* – teaching us, in the first instance, matters of facts, not of opinion. Whatever they themselves might be, whether deeply or poorly taught in Christian faith and love, they speak, not their own thoughts, but the received views of their respective ages".¹¹³

The Fathers of the Church defended the Christian faith against controversies, heresies, and schisms. They gave light and understanding of some of the mysteries of the Lord both in teachings and in ways of living. Those who were bishops or leaders fought for the sake of their Christians such as Ignatius of Antioch and Polycarp of Smyrna. In times of persecutions, the two bishops faced death and

¹¹² We want to clarify the origin of martyrdom in connection with confessor. Coined by Tertullian, confessor was used interchangeably with martyrdom. However, clarification came about with Cyprian. For Cyprian, confessors are imprisoned due to their confessions. If they come back alive, he calls them confessors. However, martyrs are those who are imprisoned and are executed in prison. These are called martyrs because they have consumed their testimony of faith (Cf. T. YORK, "Early Church Martyrdom: Witnessing For or Against the Empire?" in *Witness of the Body: The Past, Present and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, 28).

¹¹³ R. BENNETT, *Four Witnesses; The Early Church in her own Words*, 5.

martyrdom¹¹⁴ that witnessed their faith in Jesus. In a dialogical way, Ignatius witnessed to Christ in the presence of Trajan: “He who has Christ within his breast”¹¹⁵.

Because he witnessed to Christ and refused to comply with the Roman laws to adore the gods, Trajan decided to put Ignatius to death. The latter did not show any resistance. Rather, he prayed for the Church and commended it to the Lord with tears.¹¹⁶ He surrendered to the will of God and chose to die than to disgrace God by adoring the Roman gods.

Similar fate happened to Polycarp. In front of a hostile crowd, the Roman official told him to recant his faith publicly. Grounded in his faith, Polycarp did not show any resistance. Rather, he witnessed to Christ and replied that, “Away with the godless!”¹¹⁷ Consequently, the steadfastness of such figures in the Church makes the Church grow in faith, conviction, and witness regardless of situations or trials. As Tertullian states that, “the blood of martyrs is the seed of Christians”.

¹¹⁴ Brian K. Blount distinguishes three cases of martyrdom. There are mainly, tortured witness, triumphant witness and finally, victorious witness. According to him, *tortured witness* consists of witnessing to the Lordship of Christ as a transformative action: “So were African American Christians in the Black Church tradition. Their worship, even in the direst of circumstances, was a witness to the contrary and transformative lordship of Christ” (B. K. BLOUNT, *Can I get a witness*, 54). As a fact, the dress became a form of transformative power compared to the white robe: “Hence, in the Black Church, clothing was not a sign of one’s value for others as their objects; rather, it was a sign of one’s value for oneself, one’s community, and one’s God. The dress became a form of witness. [...] Dressing up became an active form of protest and transformative challenge” (B. K. BLOUNT, *Can I get a witness*, 56). The *triumphant witness* consists of personal commitment to the word of God that is the witness bore by Jesus. This translates that witness to Christ is obedience to God and refusal to human foolishness: “That is to say, their obedience to the word of God and refusal to worship the beast are the ways they witness to Jesus” (B. K. BLOUNT, *Can I get a witness*, 59). *Triumphant witness* is the theology of John in his chapters 6:9 and 20:4 in which faith is the driving force to believe in God. Lastly, *victorious witness* consists of the victory of Jesus over all devilish forces (John 12:10-12). Christians are partaking in the messianic state of Jesus as victorious over all sorts of forces: “Jesus, not the emperor, is the cosmic and historical Lord who defeats the force of evil and establishes order and Justice. Even in his storytelling, John is a defiant witness!” (B. K. BLOUNT, *Can I get a witness*, 61).

¹¹⁵ R. BENNETT, *Four Witnesses; The Early Church in her own Words*, 114.

¹¹⁶ Cf. R. BENNETT, *Four Witnesses; The Early Church in her own Words*, 116.

¹¹⁷ T. YORK, “Early Church Martyrdom: Witnessing For or Against the Empire” in *Witness of the Body: The Past, Present, and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, 35.

B. Religious life¹¹⁸

Religious life is another way through which the Church witnesses to God's touch in people. Religious life is one of the amazing realities that go beyond human understanding. Today as well yesterday, people wonder at people's commitment to leave all kind of privileges and decide to live a life of poverty, chastity, and obedience. Henri Holstein expresses the wonderment of contemporaries in this way:

Is not it a paradox that out of two and a half billion human beings and out of five hundred million Catholics, one million of women have renounced forever – and in most cases even before personal experience in the matter – the pleasures and the servitudes of the flesh, and that they have stripped themselves of everything, even their own will, either to follow publicly the strict and minute obligations which impose a common life on them or to free themselves for a more or less hidden apostolate in their milieu and profession, an apostolate which makes of their life an oblation without reserve? What they have pledged themselves to is directly opposed to the liberties claimed by our independent, self-centred, sensual ages.¹¹⁹

To contemporaries, religious life is a scandal. They fail to understand the drive that moves people to strip of and embrace a life of witnessing to Christ through suffering, poverty, and dependence on God's grace. However, the Church finds that religious life is one of the best ways to witness to the joy of heaven. The happiness and the joy that religious people witness to the world are the reason of the surprise of people. How is it possible that religious who live a life of sacrifice can

¹¹⁸ There was also a tendency in the history of the Church to live a life worthy of the Gospel messages. In the Middle Ages, the Church experienced a time of spiritual desire that people expressed especially among the lay. Laypeople preferred to live a life based on the Gospels. It was a time of spiritual desire in the Church in which various movements took place such as brotherhoods, Rural Penitents, Beguines, hospitalliers and charitable bodies. The members of these movements dedicated mostly their lives to prayers, works, and total deprivation that aimed at imitating Christ in his suffering: "Most often they lived in community, under the direction of one of their number, without pronouncing perpetual vows but combining manual work and help for the poor with a life of prayer. Among some of them, constant meditation on the sufferings of Christ ended up in a voluntary quest for suffering and the aspiration to total deprivation, as we can see in the case of Marie d'Oignies" (A. VAUCHEZ, "Lay Religious Movements in the Middle Ages" in *Movements in the Church*, 53).

¹¹⁹ H. HOLSTEIN, "The Mystery of Religious Life" in *Mission and Witness: The life of the Church*, 329.

still be joyful and happy? This is the challenge that contemporaries fail to understand.

The Church has understood that God's touch is beyond human understanding. God speaks and touches people in various ways. In times of trial and sufferings, God is still present in the lives of peoples and uses these people to witness to himself. Despite a life of sacrifices, religious people witness to Christ through joy and happiness. This makes the Church to assert that, "The joy of religious life is perhaps the most constant and the most efficacious trait of its witness. This is so precisely because it manifests itself spontaneously without being conscious of itself and without imposing itself upon those it meets".¹²⁰ Thus, witness is something that no one can empty of God's presence. It remains a fact that conveys messages in a very touching way to people from generation to generation. Witness is the powerful tool for evangelisation today.

3.4 Christian Witness in the Lives of Some Saints

Saints are the exemplary figures of love that the Church proposes to its members as ways of faithfulness and witness to Christ. They are the witnesses to Christ in various ways especially in times of trial and difficult moments. Their endurance and perseverance are the keywords that amaze the world.

Today, their struggles in life has become the welling spring from which the Church draws teaching of fidelity and witness to Christ. They are God's instruments to bring salvation to the suffering humanity. They are the people of hope who brings that hope to the desperate and hopeless one.

¹²⁰ H. HOLSTEIN, "The Mystery of Religious Life" in *Mission and Witness: The life of the Church*, 344.

Benedict XVI states that, “the figures of saints [...] stand out as lasting models of social charity for all people of good will. The saints are the true bearers of light within history, for they are men and women of faith, hope, and love” (*DCE*, 40). They witness to the love of God through the practice of virtues such as charity, justice and love. In this sense, we intend to mention saints Theresa of Lisieux, Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta, Francis of Assisi, John of the Cross, Vincent de Paul and others. In this research, we have chosen only three saints as models of witness: Theresa of Lisieux, Mother Teresa of Calcutta and Maximilian Kolbe.

A. Theresa of Lisieux

Born 1873 in a family of five girls, Teresa was the youngest. She suffered from the death of her mother at the age of four and a half. This situation compelled the father to take the responsibilities of raising the children. Perfectionist the character, Theresa suffered from her personal weaknesses: “Therese suffered much during her life in her interactions with others, in the aridity of her prayer, and with her own inner struggles”.¹²¹

The discovery of her personal imperfections made Therese to be attentive to both others and herself. This brings her to live a life of surrender and abandonment. She calls it, the science of love. She taught to her sisters to become patient and kind with themselves and others: “I must bear with myself such as I am with all my imperfections”.¹²²

Such living attitude of patience and kindness towards others and self was the way that Theresa witnessed to the people that one could attain holiness by ordinary means: “She has ‘democratized’ holiness, making it clear that holiness is within the

¹²¹ J. F. SCHMIDT, *Walking the Little Way of Therese of Lisieux*, 25.

¹²² J. F. SCHMIDT, *Walking the Little Way of Therese of Lisieux*, 149.

reach of anyone willing to do God's will in love at each successive moment as life unfolds. Not everyone will be a canonized saint, certainly – not even a recognized saint; but everyone is called to holiness and everyone can become a saint".¹²³ In this sense, Therese witnessed to Christ in her ordinary life of simplicity and kindness. Consequently, she is inspiring many people around the world on her simple way of life and kindness.

B. Mother Teresa of Calcutta

Born in 1910 in a catholic family, Agnes lost her father at 8 years old. Inspired by Therese of Lisieux, Agnes showed her willingness to live a simple life after Therese of Lisieux: "Therese was a simple nun in an obscure convent who exemplified the 'little way' – achieving goodness by performing the humblest tasks and carrying out the most trivial actions".¹²⁴ Taught by her mother to be charitable, Agnes was motivated to perform charitable tasks of charity towards other peoples. In 1928, Agnes decided to become a nun. She took the name of Mary Teresa after Therese of Lisieux.

The love of God was present in the life of Mother Teresa. God makes Teresa attentive to the needs of the suffering and the marginalised. Her dedication to the service of the poor and the rejected witnessed to the faith of Mother Teresa in Christ. Touched by the misery of the people of the slums *Moti Jheel*, Mother Teresa understood that God called her to serve the poor and the miserable. This became her way of witnessing to Christ throughout her life as missionary among the poor.

She understood that God's love and compassion is to be close to the suffering and serve them as well: "we are missionaries to bring God's love and compassion

¹²³ J. F. SCHMIDT, *Walking the Little Way of Therese of Lisieux*, 22.

¹²⁴ J. MCGOVERN, *To Give the Love of Christ*, 22.

into the world of today”.¹²⁵ Consequently, Mother Teresa connected it with the message of the Gospel of Matthew 25. She took it as a point of reference on which the world will be judged at the end of life. She names it the mission of everybody: “Each of us has a mission to fulfil: a mission of love. At the hour of death, when we come face-to-face with God, we are going to be judged on love; not on how much we have done, but how much love we have put into actions”.¹²⁶

She witnessed to the love of Jesus in her entire life. Today, Mother Teresa has become one of the exemplary figures in the world. Her style of life and her dedication to the service of the poor and marginalised are source of inspiration to many contemporaries. This asserts that witness of life remains a powerful tool for evangelisation today. We witness to the love of Christ as suggested by Bloesch, “Our method of witnessing should be not simply preaching but a ministry of suffering love, a life lived under the cross.”¹²⁷

This assigns to today’s witnesses new patterns that is love. Christ himself reminds his disciples that the being of discipleship lies in dying daily for the sake of others: “No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13). This implies that today’s witness consists of dying daily in order to give life to others. This is the meaning of the Lord’s command, “It is by your love for one another, that everyone will recognise you as my disciples” (Jn. 13:35). The readiness to die out of God’s love is the new way to witness to the Crucified Jesus.

¹²⁵ J. MCGOVERN, *To Give the Love of Christ*, 25.

¹²⁶ P.M. K., *Blessed Teresa of Kolkata: Quotes & Anecdotes*, 47. Other spiritual figures have similar thoughts such as John of the Cross who holds, “To suffer for the sake of God is the true characteristic of his love, as we see in Christ and in the martyrs. And persecutions are the means to enter into the depth, or attain to the knowledge, of the mystery of the cross, a necessary condition for comprehending the depth of the wisdom of God, and his love” (A. BUTLER, *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saints*, 386).

¹²⁷ D. G. BLOESCH, *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age*, 34.

C. Maximilian Kolbe

Born in Poland on January 8, 1894, Raymond was second in a family of five children¹²⁸. His parents were respectively Julius Kolbe and Maria. They had not enough financial means to educate their children. Maria taught something to Raymond. Later on, a pharmacist admired Raymond while at the pharmacy to buy something that his mother sent him to assist a certain woman in giving birth. This admiration inspired the pharmacist to teach science and mathematics to Raymond. This basis helped Raymond to advance one-step more in life.

Devoted person, Maximilian lived a discipline life. Born in a Christian family, Maximilian learnt prayer and Marian devotion. From this Marian devotion, Maximilian learnt obedience to the will of God despite situations of conflicts or despair. One-day in a vision, the Virgin Mary presented him two different flowers and asked him to choose: “Our Lady was holding out two crowns. One was white, the other red. She gazed at me lovingly and asked, ‘which of these crowns do you desire? Then the Virgin told me that if I chose the white crown I would remain pure for life. The red one was a martyr’s crown’”.¹²⁹ This was already a remote preparation for a life of sacrifice for the sake of Christ.

Tragedies started during the Nazis occupation in Poland in 1941. Accused of publishing “little journals” against the German rule, Father Kolbe was arrested and brought to the camp of concentration in Auschwitz. In this camp, suffering was one of the characteristics of it: starvation, hard labour, and bad treatment of prisoners. In this situation of suffering, Father Kolbe witnessed to his faith in Jesus-Christ. Doctor

¹²⁸ The names of other children are Francis, Joseph, Walenty, and Antony. Anthony and Walenty passed away shortly after their birth. The loss of these two children brought deep suffering to the family of Kolbe (cf. E. M. STONE, *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, 16-17).

¹²⁹ E. M. STONE, *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, 22.

Diem asked him, “After living in this wretchedness, and seeing torture and death, do you still believe in God?”¹³⁰ He replied positively that he still believed. The courage and endurance that sustained Father Kolbe in his time of suffering witnessed to his faith in Christ as the one who has the last word over everything including death.

Kolbe witnessed to Christ in offering his life for the sake of a man who was on the list of prisoners chosen for death. The incident took place due to the missing of one prisoner. As a rule for the prison, the missing of a prisoner gives rise to death of innocent peoples. Living in such a situation, Father Kolbe accepted death for the sake of one prisoner whose name was Francis. He offered his love for the sake of Francis in this way, “I wish to take this man’s place. I have no family. I am old and sick. He can do more work”.¹³¹

This is effectively the meaning of Jesus’ words that, “No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends” (Jn. 15:13). Father Kolbe understood the meaning of dying for the sake of others. In this way, his death testifies truly his faith in Jesus as the Lord of life. This example becomes for many of us one of the ways for living truly our life of faith and testimony despite life’s difficulties and tragedies.

4. Conclusion

At the close of the second chapter, we have explored various scriptural features of Christian witness. The commonality lies in the willingness of most witnesses proved in their heroic life to testify to the Crucified Jesus in accepting death beyond expectation. Really, their heroic act is seed for the growth of Christianity both today and tomorrow. Both apostles, martyrs, saints and blessed are both example and

¹³⁰ E. M. STONE, *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, 109.

¹³¹ E. M. STONE, *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, 113.

inspiration from generation to generation. Their lives witnessed to their faith in Jesus Christ as the Master and Saviour. This is an invitation to all of us to deepen personal commitment and intimacy with the Lord. Our future life depends on the meaning that we give to it presently. Such understanding has implications in the future as far as the Church is concerned. The Church of tomorrow depends on the type of people and theology of today. Because the future is in the now and here, let us live truly and confidently our faith as true Christians in preparation of tomorrow.

Chapter III

CHRISTIAN WITNESS AMIDST RELIGIOUS PLURALITY IN A GLOBALISED WORLD

1. Introduction

This chapter will treat the issue of religious plurality as fundamental¹³² to the arising of Church's awareness. Today, the world is experiencing newness in every corner (*EG*, 52). The focus of the awareness lies in emancipation. The latter signifies that each nation searches or fights for its own autonomy. This entails that realities such as domination and supremacy do not exist anymore.

2. Characteristics of a Globalised World

The search for autonomy is one of the characteristics of the world today. Autonomy consists of people who want freedom and recognition of their human rights. In a competitive world, autonomy has taken various forms such as

¹³² In his article, Athyal draws our attention onto three crucial changes to which Christians are called to witness. There are respectively, communal tension and religious fundamentalism, awakening of marginalised people and lastly, the phenomenon of globalisation of the economy (cf. J. M., ATHYAL, "Relevant Patterns of Christian Witness in Pluralistic Societies", 201-202).

resistance¹³³ to dominion and self-recognition. The latter is at the crossroad of the desire of everybody.

Today, none can dare step on others as it was some decades back in history. We are all aware of realities that surround us. The Church too is facing new realities and there is need to consider. These realities include terrorism, human trafficking, ecological dilemmas, gender equality, and religious pluralism. This means that our Christianity has an impact on others who do not profess the same faith. In all of this, the question remains, how does the Church witness to Christ in a world of changes, technology, and religious plurality? This gives rise to the language of the world of today.

3. The Language of the World today

From history, we dare say that technology and modernism are catalysts to some changes. This entails that some decades back, people had great difficulties to communicate and talk as we do currently. To pass information, one needed to write a letter and its expedition took time to reach its destination. This slowness of time contributed deeply to the process of spreading the Good News. It followed that some preachers and missionaries found difficult moving from one place to another in view of evangelisation because of lack of transport, fear of diseases and insecurity. Consequently, some of the areas remained not evangelised, a factor that opposes the command of the Lord (Mat 28:19-20).

¹³³ In a global world, people from every corner express the need of freedom and autonomy. This makes the world to be one and global. It brings people close to one another: “Women, men, children, unemployed people, excluded and oppressed people, workers, the landless, communities suffering from racism, impoverished city dwellers, indigenous peoples, students, intellectuals, migrants, small business people, declining middle-classes- all are beginning to assert their dignity, demanding respect for their human rights and natural heritages and practising solidarity” (C. MCGARRY, “The Impact of Globalisation on African Culture and Society”, 19).

Nevertheless, non-evangelisation of a place equated with non-existence. This entailed that those who were not evangelised did not exist in the mind of some preachers and missionaries. Situations became clear with the movements of explorations and navigations in which some passionate people discovered the world and its confinements. This passion brought about changes in both mentality and knowledge of the time.

The breakthrough had a strong impact on the Church, the world and the mentality of the time, of which we shall mention only two: *opening out of the Churches* and a sense of *belonging*. On the opening out of the Churches, awareness on other religions became an invitation to Christianity to dialogue, discuss, and confront others. This made a strong shift on the understanding of salvation. Salvation became possible outside the boundaries of the Church:

For the first time in world history, it is possible today for any one religion to exist in splendid isolation and ignore the others. Today more than ever, Christianity too is brought into contact, discussion, and confrontation with other religions. To the extension of the geographical horizon of religion at the beginning of modern times there has been added in our own time an enormous extension of the historical horizon.¹³⁴

Openness to others should consist of meeting the world in its interrogation, worries, anxieties in order to find out genuine answers together with the Church (GS, 10). To feel and journey with the world, changes the style of the Church and makes her ready to fight for the betterment of the world. The change of style compels the Church to become more progressive than conservative. For Kung, the Church today witnesses to Christ in her struggles for the betterment of men and women as is seen in protection of human rights and religious freedom, in removal of economic, social and racial injustices, promotion of international understanding, limitation of armaments, restoration and maintenance of peace, removal of illiteracy

¹³⁴ H. KUNG, *On Being A Christian*, 89.

and hunger, alcoholism, prostitution, and drug traffic.¹³⁵ This understanding of the Church is today's witness to Christ because the Church fights for the development of all men and women.

On the sense of *belonging*, the contribution of the Church is unavoidable. Some past events such as slavery, marginalisation, racism, and discrimination are expression of shame and disgrace today. Contemporaries look at them with pity and regret because they distorted God's images in creation (Gen. 1:31). To come to such an approach, Christianity has highly assisted people to cultivate human values, norms, and virtues in order to regain the purity of humanity. It echoes in what Kung observes,

And what is really human, and humane – as recent history with all its cruelty shows – is not always easy to define without the Christian element in the background. And so too only very frivolous humanists will question the fact that modern post-Christian humanism, in addition to its debt to all the other sources (particularly the Greeks and the Enlightenment), owes an enormous amount to Christianity, whose human values, norms, interpretations have often been more or less tacitly adopted and assimilated, not always with due acknowledgment. Christianity is everywhere present in Western (and thus largely also global) civilisation and culture, its men and institutions, needs and ideals. It is part of the air we breathe. These are no chemically pure secular humanisms.¹³⁶

So far, the two above factors are still catalysts of today's changes of mentality and new ways to witnessing to Christ among peoples. However, religious encounter and confrontation show that there is more to do in terms of changes. Today, we have divisions among Christians, religious hostility, hatred, fundamentalism, terrorisms, and religious insecurity. Their presence is scandalous to the world and somehow weakens religious witness. In this sense, one easily associates terrorism to religions such as Islam because of its counter-witness to its essence. The world of today is a victim of such misconceptions and needs liberation,

¹³⁵ H. KUNG, *On Being A Christian*, 28.

¹³⁶ H. KUNG, *On Being A Christian*, 31.

peace, and security. Nevertheless, terrorism¹³⁷ and its components are challenges of religious pluralism in the world of today.

4. Challenges of Religious Accommodation

Today's reality is far from past realities. In fact, it was easier in the past to avoid religious encounter than it is nowadays. Realities such as globalisation, secularism, technology, and modernism are obvious and compel people to embrace available and current means in every sector. In the realm of the Church, there is need too to update her theology in order to face today's realities and challenges. People are no longer scattered, as it was some decades back. Rather, the situation of today makes people closer to one another. Consequently, competition is the language of today. Concretely, lacking a computer, a Smartphone, or a tablet are signs of illiteracy. As a fact, everybody fights for new identity that the competitive world gives to her people. Competition has swiftly entered into the sphere of the Church.

To the more, each religion claims custodians of the truth. Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity are in war over the truth. Some of them become suspicious about others because of some unhappy past events such as the sad history of the crusades (*DP*, 52). The searching for the truth has led some of them to develop an attitude of violence and hostility for God's sake. For instance, today, there is a wrong understanding of Islam. There is a widespread misconception of Islam that it is a religion of violence and terrorism. One may easily conclude that all Muslims are fundamentalists and terrorists. This is a pure distortion of Islam. Consequently, such misconception scandalises the world and weakens the credibility of their witness.

¹³⁷ "Islamic terrorism is a serious problem for the United States because of the threat to national security, innocent civilians, and the foundations of democratic societies throughout the world (1997 Global Terrorism: NP)" (<http://www.digitaltermpapers.com/b2713.htm>, accessed on 7/11/2015).

This misconception has affected the world and has created a situation of doubt and indifference in the world. Needless, people are tired of some of the behaviours of some pastors such as paedophilia, sexual abuses, homosexuality, and corruption. It follows that both the message and the messenger are prey to interrogations. In such situations, Christian witness needs restoration.

Restoration of Christian witness in religious plurality consists of identification of a new form of witness that is fitting to our time of modernism and technology. This new form of witness is *dialogue* and *ecumenism*. The two concepts are paths in order to bring unity and peace among religions for the betterment of humanity, which lives with worries and anxieties due to insecurity, hostility, and sinful forces at any stage. Dialogue and ecumenism are invitations to peace, justice, and reconciliation. Hans Kung observes, “There will be no peace among the peoples of this world without peace among the world religions. There will be no peace among the world religions without peace among the Christian churches”.¹³⁸ This awareness appeals for cooperation and collaboration in the abdication of all destructive forces such as wars, violence, division, hostility, and hatred in the world. This constitutes the task of all religions in the world as the response to God’s command stated in Matthew 28:19-20. If religions fail to work together, who will witness in a world torn by division, hatred, hostility, and wars? Regardless of differences, dialogue is our common heritage as one people: “Dialogue among Christians, Muslims, and Jews reminds us of a common heritage of belief in the one God who created us, who shows us his will, and who calls us to be happy with him in eternity” (*ID*, 714). Dialogue then enriches our being as people who adorn the same God with others as stated in *Lumen Gentium* (*LG*, 15).

¹³⁸ H. KUNG, *Christianity and the World Religions*, 443.

4.1 Religious Awareness and Openness to Others

Vatican II is the model of awareness and openness to the world and other religions. This is one of the characteristics of this Council. The Church felt the need to dialogue, discuss, and share with the world. This openness consists of giving and receiving from one another in order to journey together with the suffering world. This gives rise to the type of witness in a world of religious plurality¹³⁹.

To witness in a hostile and violent world signifies opposition to all that dehumanize peoples (AM, 30). One must promote human values such as peace, reconciliation, and justice in view of human development. Such behaviours challenge some people of the world among them politicians and money-minded people who gain from the detriment of innocent ones. Consequently, a witness should be ready for any type of “*martyria* in today’s world that consists of engaging in dialogue even with the recent forms of a militant atheism or an extreme secularism, whose purpose is to eliminate the subject of God from human life” (L, 7).

To understand this type of *martyria* consists of engaging oneself in today’s prophetic and transforming power of God’s message that requires dying for the sake of the truth (Jn. 16:33; AM, 30). This implies that the Church must update her theology of Christian witness in accordance with today’s rhythm of the world. However, to update theology should take into consideration some attitudes such as respect of human dignity in order to avoid any type of coercion while dealing with others. In this context, those engaged in dialogue should strive to embody qualities

¹³⁹ The environmental aspect of today gives rise to the understanding of dialogue. The question of the meaning of dialogue does not have place here anymore because of the spirit of the time: “When one encounters faith, no other way but dialogue is possible if one respects the other’s conviction. [...] Besides one cannot hold on to an absolute commitment of faith without relativizing the other from one’s own point of view” (M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 59).

among them respect of others and acceptance of differences (*DP*, 41) in witnessing to Christ among religious plurality. Therefore, the Church forbids all attitudes that use coercion or unworthy tactics to spread the Gospel: “For this reason, ‘the Church severely prohibits forcing people to embrace the faith or leading or enticing them by improper techniques; by the same token, she also strongly defends the right that no one be deterred from the faith by deplorable ill treatment’ (*DE*, 8).

The Church proposes the style of Jesus as relevant and crucial in the proclamation of God’s message. For the Church, persecution is one of the outcomes of one who witnesses to Christ. The Lord himself told his disciples in this way: “If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you” (Jn. 15:20). Bearing this in mind, we want to say that true witnesses should be ready for martyrdom: “It is precisely martyrdom that gives credibility to witnesses, who seek neither power nor advantage, but instead lay down their lives for Christ. Before the world, they display an unarmed strength brimming with love for all people, which is bestowed on those who follow Christ unto the total gift of their existence” (*DE*, 8). This readiness is foundational to dialogue as a way to witness to Christ in a world of religious plurality.

4.2 New Form of Witness: Dialogue (Interreligious)

This new form of witnessing to Christ takes root in the understanding of the world today by the Church. The latter sees the world as God’s place in which she must bring salvation. The world is the beneficiary of God’s command (Mk. 16:15). It shows that failure to that equates with hindrance to God’s salvific work in the world (1 Tim 2:4; Rom 11:26).

From this perspective, one should understand that no religion has the right to confine and define salvation within its boundaries. This is to say that all depends on God's grace. Such logic humbles people to build up structures and systems that will facilitate collaboration. Christians should witness to Christ in promoting good values available in other religions: "The Christians, therefore, are exhorted, through dialogue and collaboration and in witness of Christian faith and life, to 'acknowledge, preserve, and promote the spiritual and moral goods found among these men, as well as the values in their society and culture'" (NA, 2).

This is an invitation to accept and make use of some elements that come from others as significant and positive¹⁴⁰ in the economy of salvation. The practicability of this new form of witness lies in the following factors: *the uniqueness of Christ*, the Church as both *community and mystery*, and the *wholeness of evangelisation*. Let us analyse these factors in order to grasp the essence of this new form of witness.

A. The Uniqueness of Christ

One should look at religious plurality as a gift to the world-religions. The world shares its religious values from various perspectives and this sharing enriches people differently. However, one must be careful in doing so. This implies that one can immerse deeply in the values of others to the detriment of one's faith. Christians are part of this world-religions sharing and participating passionately in it. Christianity should understand that it differs from other religions because of *Christ*. Christ does not stand at the same level with other figures in other religions. One should differentiate Christ from other religious figures. This is a Christian task.

In the Christian Creed, we find, "Christ died for all". What does this convey to other religions? We know that the death of Christ is a historical event. Although

¹⁴⁰ Cf. M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 45.

historical, the event continues unceasingly to have an impact on the present life of people. This entails that one should grasp the meaning of the two natures of Christ. Christ died in his 'human nature' (historical event) but he continues to live in spirit in the present (mystery). This is the uniqueness of Christ compared to other religious figures such as Buddha and Confucius. Their death is historical and remained in the history. Consequently, they can only witness to the values that Buddha or Confucius offered to humanity. Compared to Jesus, Christians witness to something beyond death: the mysterious presence of Christ here and now both in the world and lives of peoples:

This is the meaning of the contemporary talk of inculturation as a new incarnation of Christ in every culture. This implicitly accepts that the first incarnation was culturally limited. When Paul spoke of the *pleroma* of Christ, he spoke of something eschatological – a process which has started, but which will be achieved only on the last day. Any serious thought of salvation of people who lived before the passion and death of Christ would also rethink, not the historicity of that event, but the universal significance, not of the event, but of its historicity.¹⁴¹

In this sense, Christians witness to Christ in the world mysteriously. The life of Christ is present in all those who are promoting and living good values such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness, and self-control even if they are not Christians. For the Christians, such values are fruits of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-3). The uniqueness of Christ is that Christ, who lived in history, continues to live in people today (Mat.18:20; 28:20). Contrarily, Buddha and Confucius lived in history and are not living in the present as Christ does live mysteriously. This signifies that one experiences the presence of the living Christ both in a believing Christian community and in the world.

¹⁴¹ M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 54.

B. Church as both Community and Mystery

One of the definitions of the Church is a community that celebrates the Paschal mystery and makes it present. This assigns to it its visible character in the world (EN, 15). *Lumen Gentium* acknowledges the role of Christ between God and humanity in the World through Jesus (LG, 8). Christ is the mediator who communicates God's graces to humanity through the Church. Communication takes various forms such as celebration of the sacraments especially the Eucharist (LG, 12). In the celebration, the community of believers witness to Christ's presence in various channels such as the paschal mystery¹⁴².

Nevertheless, the Church should not boast of being the only one that has the paschal mystery. Contrarily, she should believe that other religions are also related to the paschal mystery in ways known to God alone.¹⁴³ In this context, one may newly define *dialogue* as the new form to witness to Christ. Dialogue signifies collaboration for human development: "In this context of the plan of God for the whole off the human race, the Church is called not only to witness and to proclaim for God's salvation but also to collaborate with all persons of goodwill, humble and respectful of the divine mystery that is operative in the whole world".¹⁴⁴

In some of the African countries, the Church witnesses to the paschal mystery in the forms of small Christian communities. In them, people experience God's presence in coming close to one another:

The existence of a Christian community, where previously people had no relationship and interest in one another, is itself a witness to the power of Christ present and active among them. [...] They had no joint action together. After Fr. Stetter established SCCs, the people not only pray together in their homes, but are involved in apostolic and social works which they organise through their own initiative, inspired by their faith in Jesus.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴² Cf. M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 55.

¹⁴³ Cf. M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 55.

¹⁴⁴ M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 55-56.

¹⁴⁵ T. J. ZEMALE, *Christian Witness through Small Christian Communities*, 41.

Collaboration aims at establishing peace in the world (*EG*, 250). Peace is the factor that brings religions together regardless of their differences. This denotes that churches should work for an integral development of humanity: “Whatever may be their absolute faith positions, the different religions can and do find a common perspective in the area of human values. Differences in their historico-cultural roots also make their approaches complementary in regard to the promotion of integral humanism”.¹⁴⁶

Collaboration in evangelisation gives rise to the building up of the kingdom of God. The latter consists of human development and liberation (Lk. 4:18-19). Jesus witnessed to God’s presence among the poor through deeds and actions of liberation. Casting out demons, offering God’s forgiveness, relieving people from the chains of laws and regulations were signs of God’s kingdom (Mk 3:1-6; Lk 14:1-6). Today, the kingdom of God requires a deep understanding of the world in which we live: *a globalised world*.

This globalisation brings time-to-time hostility and hatred among people. Consequently, we fight against one another. We set resistance and opposition in order to prevent human growth and development. We block purposely dialogue and ecumenism. Thus, to witness in a pluralistic world presupposes seriously restoration of the value of dialogue and ecumenism. It is by accepting our differences that the world will understand collaboration as witness. Amaladoss observes,

This means in practice that a group of people, though belonging to different religions, can live together in one civil society. They could pursue common human and spiritual values on which they all agree and which they find meaningful, each with reference to his or her own religious traditions. Dialogue at a religious level could enrich and enlarge the religious basis for such commonly agreed values. In the light of what I have said above with regard to broader perspectives of salvation which includes development and liberation, the pursuit of these common human and

¹⁴⁶ M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 57.

spiritual values in the areas of social, cultural and political life is neither a strictly religious activity nor is it purely 'secular' in the sense of being a-religious.¹⁴⁷

It derives that dialogue is of great consideration today. Through dialogue, we come to know others and ourselves¹⁴⁸. Such an attitude makes us face realities of the world and invites us to work for peace and security. Thus, dialogue is witnessing to Christ in the world because it awakes people to get involved in matters that concern the world.

One cannot forget dialogue and ecumenism while talking about mission. The mission of the Church has its roots in dialogue and ecumenism. Thus, to witness to Christ signifies to dialogue with the world and the world of religions.

5. Mission as Testimony of Life amidst Religious Plurality

Mission consists of both proclamation and testimony of life. The two wings are the two faces of the same medal. Testimony of life gives substance to proclamation. One believes in proclamation because of testimony of people's life. Nevertheless, one should not replace proclamation with testimony of life.

Proclamation is the mission entrusted to the disciples (Mk. 6:7-13; Mk. 16:15). This means that we should not replace proclamation with testimony of life. Instead, understand that testimony of life is the visibility of proclamation and ratifies one's faith in Christ: "The task before the Church is an all-embracing one, and, therefore, word cannot be separated from deed. There is but a single integral reality, which is the presence of our Lord in our world and history, and the task of the Church to bear

¹⁴⁷ M. AMALADOSS, *Making All Things New*, 77.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. H. KUNG, *Christianity and the World Religions*, 441.

witness to God's saving action in human history".¹⁴⁹ This is one of the reasons to hold onto witness of life in some hostile regions.

In *Dialogue and Proclamation*, the Church underscores some of the difficulties or obstacles to proclamation (*DP*, 73-74). In this research, we shall focus more on religious plurality. In some countries such as Saudi Arabia, proclamation is very difficult. In them, Christians are facing violence and death. The Church is facing controversies and limitations to proclamation. Instead, the Church accepts that Christians evangelise through testimonies of life. All this aims to avoid violence, hatred, and hostility among religions that scandalises the world (*EG*, 253).

6. Conclusion

There is need to define new methods that fit our epoch of modernism and technology. With Vatican II, The Church has opted for openness and dialogue with the world in order to respond to human anxieties and worries. This step defines the new methodology for evangelisation: dialogue and ecumenism. The two methods aim at collaboration with the entire universe in the promotion of human values. In this sense, churches can witness to God's salvific presence in the world through dialogue and ecumenism for the betterment of the world especially peace and security among its people. Witness is the other face of dialogue and ecumenism especially in the world of technology, modernism, and plurality of religions.

¹⁴⁹ J. M. ATHYAL, "Relevant Patterns of Christian Witness in Pluralistic Societies, 205.

Chapter IV

A CONTEXTUAL CASE OF CHRISTIAN WITNESS IN KENYA DURING THE BURNING OF OUR LADY QUEEN OF PEACE IN SOUTH B

1. Introduction

This chapter aims at identifying a practical example that pictures Christian witness here in Kenya. This real example took place in the parish of OLQP¹⁵⁰. The parish church is surrounded by various denominations and religions; among them, Islam and some Pentecostal churches. For the Christians of OLQP, the burning of their parish was a painful time in which they struggled to live and act according to the catholic teaching especially the law of non-violence or retaliation. Before further steps ahead, let us give the background of OLQP.

2. Background of Our Lady Queen of Peace

OLQP was one of the parishes of the Holy Ghost Fathers in the Eastern Africa especially Kenya. In the sixties and seventies, it was one of the outstations of the Holy Family Basilica. It comprised of several people, among them, the Gohans

¹⁵⁰ Throughout this Long Essay, we will use this abbreviation “OLQP” to signify “Our Lady Queen of Peace as a parish of the Missionaries of Africa here in Nairobi.

(Indians from Goha, the former Portuguese colony); Mariakani residents; city council people and those from the railway school. They were many Christians mainly the Gohans. They used to go to church at OLQP for worship and prayers. At this period, the parish priest of OLQP was a Holy Ghost Father whose name was Father Peter Kelly. He was the only priest residing in the parish. According to the archives, the building of the church and the room of the priest were completed on 13th March 1972. Before Father Peter Kelly, there was Father G. Whelan, a Holy Ghost Father. Father Kelly began his mission the parish in early 1975.

The question that one should ask is “how the Missionaries of Africa succeeded to get the parish from the Holy Ghost Fathers”; as there any official handing over of the parish to them? The answer is straightforward. In the sixties and seventies, some Missionaries of Africa were already present in Nairobi for personal projects. Among them, were Fathers Anton Specht, Joseph Donders, Reginald Carriere, and Arnold Grol.¹⁵¹ It is important to note that the Society of the Missionaries did not have any project of establishing parishes. Rather, it based her apostolate on slums (zone de fracture). As a result, the Society officially appointed Father John Slinger to work in the slum of Nairobi in 1978. Slinger lived in Saint Teresa’s parish together with Father Brady (Cssp); Benoit Cloutier (Mafr) and Arnold Grol.

The Missionaries of Africa received the parish from the Holy Ghost Fathers in a friendly way. It began with Father Benoit Cloutier who was a golfer player. He used to go to Limuru with the Holy Ghost Fathers for golf. In this way, Father Cloutier

¹⁵¹ One should know that these Missionaries of Africa Fathers came to Nairobi for their personal projects. For instance, Father Anton Specht was from Germany. He was the chaplain of the German Community of East Africa. He came to Nairobi in the early 1972. He had a personal plane and residence. The second was Father Joseph Donders who was a lecturer at the University of Nairobi in the department of Philosophy and Religion. He was known as the “great preacher”. The third was Father Arnold Grol. Touched by the miserable life of the street boys in Nairobi, he began an association for street boys known as “*Undugu* Society of Kenya”. Finally, Father Reginald Carriere who was a Canadian. He was involved in schools such as Starehe Boys Centre.

was requested by Father Peter Kelly to assist, from time to time, in the parish OLQP. In times of holidays, Father Cloutier used to run the parish in the absence of Father Peter Kelly. In 1979, Father Peter Kelly gave up the parish and retired to Limuru. He left the parish in the hands of Father Benoit Cloutier. The latter worked alone in the parish up to 1980. From 1980, the Missionaries of Africa run the parish to today.

3. Relationship with the Neighbourhood

Since its inception, OLQP has comprised of various people. These are mainly Christians. This means that the phenomenon of slums was not present in these earlier times. The parish had only two masses on Sundays¹⁵² which were sufficient for the parishioners. Regardless of parish masses, the priests¹⁵³ rendered services also to the Mater Hospital and to the community of Sisters of Mercy especially offering masses and visiting the sick people. They also had an outstation at Wilson Airport. They used to go there for evening mass. The community was generally English speaking.

In the late eighties, there was a population growth. Buildings emerged among them Golden gate estate; South B and Madaraka. With the existence of these buildings, an increase in numbers of the residents of the neighbourhood of OLQP was noticed. With this growth, middle class people came to live in the

¹⁵² Sunday, the parish had two masses: the first was at 8h00 am and the second at 10 h 00 am. The first mass was mainly for the Gohans. The second mass was a mixture of population. Sometimes, they had mass in the evening. Nevertheless, the evening mass was very rare (Cf. F. M. GORDEJUELA, personal notes).

¹⁵³ Already in 1980, the parish was under the Missionaries of Africa. The community comprised of Father Benoit Cloutier and Father Manuel Gordejuela. However, one should know that in 1980, there was Father John-Paul Saint Martin who joined Father Benoit Cloutier in the parish. Father John-Paul came from Tanzania. He did not live for long. He was found died in bed by Father Benoit Cloutier in the morning of 28th March 1980. At his death, the Society of the Missionaries of Africa appointed officially Father Manuel Gordejuela as curate of Our Lady Queen of Peace.

neighbourhood. Some middle class residents began building informal rental building houses, a factor that marked the beginning of the slum of Kayaba.

This rapid growth compelled the priests to provide the parish with more facilities. The increased number of people had an impact on the parish. For instance, instead of having two masses on Sundays, the parish increased to three masses. There was mass at 8h am; 9h 30 and 11h 00 am. The parish thought of penetrating the slums in order to reach out to the Christians. This dream was difficult to realise. At this period, the people of the slums resisted¹⁵⁴ the services from the parish. With the existence of the slums of Kayaba, the community had to make use of two languages: English and Kiswahili. The 9h 30 mass was in Kiswahili.

It appears that the growth of the slums was quite rapid. In 1983, there was an increased number of the faithful in the neighbourhood of the parish. Such a growth compelled the parish to think of expanding its walls in order to accommodate more worshippers. Consequently, the parish decided to raise money for the purpose. As a result, in 1984, there was the erection of the centre of the parish. Furthermore, a commissioner introduced by Sister Mary Killen (Sisters of Mercy) gave a plot to the parish for the building of the primary school. The aim of this school was to access the slum. In 1985, the parish built offices for the priests and some rooms in order to accommodate more priests. In 1986, the parish built also the hall. Due to these several facilities, the Society of the Missionaries of Africa appointed a third priest to OLQP. This was Father Pierre Proulx.

Observing the rapid growth and the increased number of people, there was a need to understand the relationship between these various people who lived in the

¹⁵⁴ In the interview, Father Manuel testified that several times I received stones from the slum people as a sign of resistance (Cf. F. M. GORDEJUELA, "The history of Our Lady Queen of Peace", personal notes).

neighbourhood of the parish. The relationship between these people was harmonious. The notable problem however was the refusal of the slums of the services offered by the priests such as masses, sacraments, and educations. Therefore, it remained difficult to penetrate the slums of Kayaba. The people of the slums were not yet ready to communicate or relate with other people. Nevertheless, the mission of the parish OLQP was to promote a harmonious and communicative relationship among the people.

4. The Burning of Our Lady Queen of Peace

The Christians of OLQP encountered Muslim violence and animosity on Friday 1st December 2000. At this moment, the parish comprised of three priests namely Father Georges Smith¹⁵⁵ (in charge); Father Frank Gieringer and Father Jesus Marie San Juan. The three priests did their best to enhance the relationship between parishioners and the neighbourhood. Through various services such as social welfare, the visibility of enhancing this relationship had reached its maturation.

Regardless of the endeavours of the priests in promoting the harmonious relationship, the terrible event that occurred in the year 2000: the burning of OLQP by the Muslims took place. One may choose to look at the event as one of the ways offered to Christians to truly live the law of love especially towards the enemies: “But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you; so that you may be children of your Father in heaven” (Mat. 5:44).

The burning of the parish was unthinkable for such a well-established community that had a harmonious relationship with its neighbourhood. However,

¹⁵⁵ His Grace Maurice Michael Cardinal Otunga appointed Father Georges Smith as “Priest in charge” of OLQP on 29th December 1995 (cf. The Archives of OLQP at Otunga Plaza; accessed on Thursday 3rd March 2016).

the burning of the parish had no connection with the issue at stake; the dispute over the ownership of a piece of land: “What is at issue is not faith but, rather, a piece of land whose true ownership or tenancy can be established beyond a shadow of doubt without loss or injury. Certainly, there ought to be questions about why there has been no attempt to solve this problem, which the provincial administration says has been simmering for the past 10 years”.¹⁵⁶ From this explanation, one may conclude that the Christians of OLQP were innocent victims of the tragic situation that occurred on Friday 1st December 2000. Suppose that this hypothesis is true, the question is to find the real cause of the fire.

The researcher collected data from the people who were eyewitnesses and from written documents such as archives at Otunga Plaza, concerning the parish of OLQP. From the collected data, it came out that the real cause of arson was the dispute over the ownership of a piece of land; a dispute between the Muslims and some business people. Lucy, the former secretary of OLQP, observes:

It all started with the Muslims in South B mosque who wanted to remove the small business people who had set some shade along the fence of the mosque. Early Wednesday night of 29th November 2000, business shades plus a restaurant known as Makuti that was across the road were burnt. The business people believed it was the Muslim community of the above mosque who were involved as they always had issues with the business vendors and the noise in the Makuti restaurant”.¹⁵⁷

This above interview testifies that the burning of OLQP was far from religious violence. It was a dispute over a piece of land that lasted at least ten years. As a result, the vendors retaliated by burning the mosque: “The business people were annoyed and the whole of Thursday there was a fight between the Muslims and the business people. That Thursday was full of stones in the air and unrest in the

¹⁵⁶ NATION TEAM, “Violence must not escalate into war”, 4.

¹⁵⁷ L. MAINA, “The burning of the parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes.

neighbourhood. I want to believe that the business people retaliated by burning the mosque on Thursday night. So on Friday, the mosque was no more”.¹⁵⁸

As we know that retaliation does solve problems. Rather, it complicates it even the more. Jesus knew of this outcome. He avoided the circle of violence. He embraced love that does not create animosity and hostility. He summed it in the law of love and assigned to it a special and distinctive mark, “It is by your love for one another that everyone will recognise you as my disciples” (Jn. 13:35). This scriptural text guided the actions of the Christians of OLQP to avoid retaliation.

As Christians, the law of love prevails and guides us throughout our life here on earth. Regardless of our human struggle to retaliate, love is a driving force that brings new hope to Christians. In this perspective, let us analyse the attitude of the Christians of OLQP vis-a-vis violence.

A. Never try to get revenge: leave that to the retribution

From scriptures, we know how vengeance is at stake in solving societal issues. In the book of Exodus, we read this: “eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, stroke for stroke” (Exod. 21:24-25). Such a rule implies retaliation¹⁵⁹ according to the damage. The law of retaliation was in use until the coming of Jesus.

For Jesus, life is God’s gift. This means that his coming aims at increasing life in people (Jn. 10:10). This implies forgiveness and love geared especially towards our enemies. As a result, Jesus invites all humanity to cultivate love because all are God’s children: “[...] But I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who

¹⁵⁸ L. MAINA, “The burning of the parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes.

¹⁵⁹ Retaliation was one of the ways one could solve personal issues in society: “Verses 23-25 enunciate the law of talion. This law intends to curb unbridled revenge by insisting on proportionate compensation. Slaves, however, do not enjoy this right because they receive only their freedom in compensation for the injury inflicted on them (verses 26-27)” (J. F. CRAGHAN, “Exodus”, *The International Bible Commentary*, 431).

persecute you; so that you may be children of your Father in heaven” (Mat. 5:44). This teaching of non-retaliation and non-violence is one of the visible ways of expressing the law of love. This is the attitude that the Christians of OLQP embraced while facing with the burning of their parish. Surely, one cannot deny the existence of the struggle that exists always between human emotions and practice of love especially toward enemies. In the same way, the Christians of OLQP faced the same struggle.¹⁶⁰

Humanly speaking, to love enemies is one of the most difficult acts that one can perform. Among the Christians of OLQP, the law of love was painfully embraced and implemented. This means that Christian witness is not as easy as one may conceive it. Christian witness is a heroic act that requires personal conviction and trust. Its realisation often needs encouragement as shown throughout the history of the Church by some prominent figures such as martyrs and saints. In the case of OLQP, Father George Smith witnessed to Christ through his heroic act of forgiveness and non-retaliation: “This is craziness, this is stupidity. This is blasphemous and has nothing to do with God”.¹⁶¹

The words of non-retaliation¹⁶² and non-violence from Father George Smith invited the Christians of OLQP to practise the law of love in that current moment. It was therefore a crucial moment of martyrdom and dying in the self in order to give life to others. As a result, the avoidance of retaliation and violence by the Christians

¹⁶⁰ Christians strived and embraced the law of love (of enemies) with much pain. The Christian youth encountered serious difficulty to embrace the law of love. This means that some youth retaliated in one way or the other. Lucy observes that, “But unfortunately, some of the Christian youth from Mukuru Kayaba burnt a dispensary belonging to the Muslims in Kayaba” (L. MAINA, “The burning of the Parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes).

¹⁶¹ <http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2000/12/muslim-and-christian-youthss-clash-in-kenyan-capital.aspx>, accessed on 12th March 2016.

¹⁶² Lucy observes that, “The same evening when the church was burned, a group of Christians came to see the parish priest for a blessing and they wanted to go and burn the south C Mosque and school. I was a witness that the parish priest told them; ‘whoever will be involved in the act of revenge is not one of us’” (L. MAINA, “The burning of the parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes).

contributed to the decrease of damage between Our Lady Queen of Peace and the Mosque. Despite the painful embrace of the law of love by the Christians, their attitude of non-retaliation consisted in witnessing to Christ. In doing so, the Christians of Our Lady Queen of Peace witnessed to Christ through non-retaliation and non-violence in 2000. After this, there was need for healing the personal wounds. This brings about the next point.

B. Father, forgive them; they do not know what they are doing

Forgiveness is one of the ways to heal our interior wounds. Pope Benedict XVI observes that, “It is by granting and receiving forgiveness that the traumatised memories of individuals and communities have found healing and families formerly divided have rediscovered harmony. ‘ Reconciliation overcomes crises, restores the dignity of individuals, and opens up the path to development and lasting peace between peoples at every level’” (AM, 21).

The event of 1st December 2000 touched and affected many of our Christians. To embrace the language of Benedict XVI, we may say that many of our Christians were traumatised by the event. Trauma distorts relationship among people of the same families and societies. It creates violence or tribalism. Father George Smith and parishioners felt the need for healing as a parish and as individuals. This paved the way for seminars and talks to help both individuals and parish to overcome animosity and hostility among people of the same country Kenya. In this way, Lucy observes, “The parish organised seminars and talks to help Christians heal from this hatred”.¹⁶³ Consequently, this act of witnessing to Christ touched some of the Muslims and made them contribute to the building of the new church. Lucy states, “Few Muslims secretly contributed for the construction but I remember them saying

¹⁶³ L. MAINA, “The burning of the parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes.

they are not allowed to build a church but because of our good neighbourliness they feel obliged to assist”.¹⁶⁴ Therefore, Christian witness is always an action that provokes and questions others on someone’s being or way of living their conviction. As Peter acknowledges, “Simply proclaim the Lord Christ holy in your hearts, and always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason for the hope that you have” (1 Pt. 3:15).

5. Conclusion

By the end of this chapter, we realise that Christian witness is contrary to retaliation and violence. The two latter are contrary to the law of love that is the basic characteristic of the followers of Jesus (Jn 13:35). In connection with the burning of OLQP, we realise that the Christians strived to witness to Christ through denial of violence and retaliation; an attitude that was nurtured and nourished by the words of their parish priest. The Church exists and continues to live regardless of violence and persecutions because of some prominent figures such as martyrs and saints. As Tertullian observes, “The blood of the martyrs is seed for Christianity”. Therefore, Christian witness is an important tool that the Church utilises for evangelisation. Christian witness does not force people to adhere to faith; rather, it lets God act upon them.

¹⁶⁴ L. MAINA, “The burning of the parish Our Lady Queen of Peace”, personal notes.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The concept of Christian witness is not a new concept in the vocabulary of the Church. In the light of scripture and tradition, Christianity as well as other religions strives to practise and actualise her teachings. Christianity is not a mere collection of thoughts and doctrines without implementation. Rather, Christianity teaches and actualises her teachings and doctrines. In this perspective, the concept of Christian witness arises as one of the fundamental questions of the time.

In its analysis, one should realise that Christian witness consists of an important element that is faith. The latter is so strong and enables one to offer one's life for the sake of a higher cost: Jesus Christ. Such examples are plenty in the history of the Church with prominent figures of Martyrs and Saints. The latter constitutes one of the foundational pillars of the Church. This means that the future of the Church depends largely on the faith of the Martyrs and Saints as source of inspiration and model of faith to young generations. Martyrs and Saints are the people who truly believed and lived their faith exemplarily especially in times of trials and persecutions. Their steadfastness played an important role in the life of the believers and continues to nourish the faith of the Church today.

In this long essay, we have mentioned only three Martyrs and three Saints. This does not confine the concept of Christian witness to specific figures. Rather, our selection shows that martyrs and saints are numerous in the Church and this long essay cannot present each one of them due to its limited pages. Thus, the selection depended on their roles played in the history of the Church as exemplary to the believers of today especially those who are facing with religious animosity and hostility. In this perspective, we propose the factual analysis of the sad and painful event that took place in OLQP parish on Friday 1st, 2000.

In the eyes of many, the burning of OLQP was something unthinkable. Findings show that the cause was far from being religious. Christians then became victims of prejudices and of the misrepresentations of Muslims. Today, the world is victim of misrepresentations¹⁶⁵ and prejudices from others especially in terms of religion. The latter bring about religious violence and animosity. At times, we realise that misrepresentations and prejudices confuse both the leaders and the adherents. They reach their apex when they become scandalous to some adherents and discourage intensely them in their profession of faith. The situation today makes this reality so vibrant especially with the phenomenon of religious pluralism.

¹⁶⁵ Today, the common label given to “all Muslims” is terrorists. Terrorism is one of the images that the modern world assigns to “every” Muslim. This does not mean that every Muslim is a terrorist. To cultivate such an image is equated to a misrepresentation and prejudice regarding Muslims. As a result, Muslims experience tough moments in their lives. In some public places even in public transport, people are afraid of sitting beside Muslims or to befriend them. This is a misrepresentation and prejudice that the world has regarding Muslims. Concretely, one told me that after the sad event of the burning of OLQP, a certain fear was among the Christians toward Muslims. In some public areas today, when a Muslim enters, Christians do leave because of the assimilation existing between Muslims and terrorism (cf. Jacinta, “The burning of OLQP”, Personal Notes). On the same notes, Kahumbi Maina observes, “Not every Muslim is a terrorist, but every terrorist is a Muslim” has become a cliché that has brought much tension between Muslims and people of other faiths. Many Muslims however feel that this notion should be corrected. They argue that Islam is a “peaceful” religion that should not be used as a scapegoat to justify partisan political ambitions and interests and unjust acts of terrorism” (MAINA, K., “Phenomenon of Religio-Political Terrorism in the contemporary world, 2).

This phenomenon compels the Church to review some of her methods of evangelisation that had some coercive attitudes. Today, realities that involve coercion are neither acceptable nor tolerable; the trend is to struggle for freedom and rights. As a result of this struggle, adherence to faith is a matter of personal conviction and freedom; it is the free will of a person. Coercion and force are no more the norm today in terms of adhesion to faith. These are seen as enemies of true faith. One adheres to faith because of personal decision after some living testimonies of certain people. This entails that faith is invisible. It becomes visible when it is incarnated, practised and lived in people's lives. It becomes visible through charitable and loving completions. In this way, one may deduce that Christian witness is a combination of something that is invisible (faith) and something visible (deeds or actions). The visible face of faith testifies to God's presence and actions in one's life through exemplary gestures and behaviour. Therefore, Christian witness plays an important role in the work of evangelisation especially in places where religious practices are forbidden by some states (confer the case of Saudi Arabia, Sudan and Gambia). In this perspective, the Church endures limitations and suffering and encourages Christians of these countries to testify Christ through their day-to-day life among other people. In other words, the Church continues her task of proclamation using a non-violent method that is Christian witness.

As a result, Christians are witnessing to Christ in their beings and doings, and through this, the surrounding people feel challenged and experience a strong attraction to adhere to the Christian faith freely in order to discover more and more the driving force that makes these Christians so zealous and courageous despite sufferings, persecutions and violence. The Christian testimony of life is a proof that explains their identity as disciples of the Crucified and Risen Lord: "It is by your

love for one another, that everyone will recognise you as my disciples” (Jn 13:35). Thus, Christian witness is a life that testifies God’s presence and actions in someone. This divine presence speaks and challenges neighbours in a personal way. Mostly, it uses one’s testimony of life as lights to question, and drastically challenges other lives that do not respect some of the societal and Gospel values such as non-violence, reverence to sacredness and love of enemies.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- **Selected Texts and Books**

AMALADOSS, M., *Making All Things New: Dialogue, Pluralism & Evangelization in Asia*, New York: Orbis Books 1990, 43-178.

ARBUCKLE, G. A., *Earning the Gospel: An Inculturation Handbook for the Pastoral Workers*, New York: Orbis Books 1990, 119-129.

BARRETT, C. K., *The Gospel According to Saint John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press 1978, 149-592.

BENNETT, R., *Four Witnesses: The Early Church in Her Own Works*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press 2002, 95-152.

BEVANS, S. B., - SCHROEDER, R. P., *Constants in Context: A Theology of Mission for Today*, New York: Orbis Books 2009, 100-205.

BLOESCH, D., *The Christian Witness in a Secular Age: An Evaluation of Nine Contemporary Theologians*, Mimeoapolis: Augsburg Publishing House 1968.

BLOUNT, B. K., *Can I get A Witness: Reading Revelation Through African American Culture*, Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press 2005, 37-67.

BOSCH, D. J., *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, New York: Orbis Books 1993, 181-189; 214-238.

BUTLER, A., *The Lives of the Fathers, Martyrs and Other Principal Saint*, Vol. XI, Dublin: James Duffy and Sons 1854, 381-396.

BUONO, G., *Missiology: Theology and Praxis*, Nairobi: Paulines 2002, 55-73.

CAIRD, G. B., *The Gospel of Saint Luke*, New York: Seabury Press 1963, 139-211.

COMBLIN, J., *The Meaning of Mission: Jesus, Christians and the Wayfaring Church*, New York: Orbis Books 1978, 88-97.

DOUGLAS, M., *The Lele of the Kasai*, Oxford University Press 1963.

HASTING, A., *Church and Mission in Modern Africa*, London: Burns & Oates 1967, 52-101; 117-187.

KIBICHO, S. G., *God and Revelation in An African Context*, Nairobi: Acton 2006.

KUNG, H., *Christ Sein*, English trans. *On Being A Christian*, London: Collins 1977, 25-116 & 554-602.

....., *Christianity and the World Religions: Paths to Dialogue*, USA: Doubleday 1985,

-----, *Christentum und Weltreligionen*, English trans. *Christianity and the World Religions: Paths to Dialogue with Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism*, London: Collins 1987, 440-443.

LOCHENG, C., *Missiology: Introduction to the Roots of the Great Commission*, Nairobi: CUE Press 2011, 45-106.

NEVILLE, J., *How To Share Your Faith Without Being Offensive*, New York: The Seabury Press 1979.

OBORJI, F. A., *Concept of Mission: The Evolution of Contemporary Missiology*, New York: Orbis Books 2006, 3-40.

ORIGEN, *Prayer; Exhortation to Martyrdom*, (translat. By J. J. O'MEARA), London: 1954, 162-196.

PAUL, M.K., *Blessed Teresa of Kolkata: Quotes & Anecdotes*, Bombay: Mumbai 2004.

RATZINGER, J., *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week: From the Entrance into Jerusalem to the Resurrection*, Nairobi: Paulines 2011.

-----, *What It Means to Be a Christian*, San Francisco: Ignatius Press 2005.

....., *Truth and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, San Francisco: Ignatius 2003.

SENIOR, D. – STUHLMUELLER, C., *The Biblical Foundation for Mission*, New York: Orbis Books 1983, 297-310.

THOMSON, A., *Church History 3: New Movements*, London: S.P.C.K. 1978, 80-91.

THOMAS, N. E., ed., *Classics Texts in Mission and World Christianity*, New York: Orbis Books 1995, 16-31.

TRITES, A. A., *The New Testament Concept of Witness*, London: Cambridge University Press 1977.

VAHARIAN, G., *The Death of God: The Culture of Our Post-Christian Era*, New York: George Braziller 1961, 60-78.

WORLD COUNCIL CHURCHES SIXTH ASSEMBLY, *New Directions in Mission & Evangelisation I: Basic Statements*, ed. SCHERER, J. A., - BEVANS, S. B. New York: Orbis Books 1992, 54-56.

- **Magisterial Documents**

BENEDICT XVI, *Encyclical Letter "Deus Caritas Est": God is Love* (25 December 2005), Nairobi: Paulines 2005.

....., *Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Africae Munus"* (19 November 2011), Nairobi: Paulines 2001.

Catechism of the Catholic Church: Revised Edition, Nairobi: Paulines 2001.

CONGREGATION FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES, *Dialogue and Proclamation*, Nairobi: Paulines 1996.

FLANNERY, A., ed., *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents, I-II*, Bombay: Saint Paul's Publication 2010.

FRANCIS, *Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium"* (24 November 2013), Nairobi: Paulines 2013.

FRANCESCO, G., ed., *Interreligious Dialogue: The Official Teaching of the Catholic Church (1963-1995)*, Boston: Paulines 1994.

JOHN PAUL II, *Encyclical Letter Redemptoris Missio: The Mission of the Church*, Nairobi: Paulines 1991.

PAUL VI, *Apostolic Exhortation: Evangelii Nuntiandi: on Evangelization in the Modern World*, Nairobi: Paulines 1992.

- **Selected Articles**

ATHYAL, J., "Relevant Patterns of Christian witness in pluralistic Societies: An Indian perspective", in *International Review of Mission* 91, Geneva: The World Council of Churches 2002, 199-210.

AUBET, R., "Modernism", in *Encyclopaedia of Theology: Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. K. Rahner, London: Burns & Oates, 969-974.

BECK, H., "Ecumenism", in *Encyclopaedia of Theology: Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. K. Rahner, London: Burns & Oates, 419-424.

BOLT, P. G., "Mission and Witness" in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts*, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 1998, 191-214.

CONGAR, Y., "The Holy Spirit, and the Apostolic Body, Continuers of the Work of the Church" in *Mission and Witness: The Life of the Church*, Westminster: The Newman Press 1964, 275-310.

CUNNINGHAM, L., "Christian Martyrdom: A Theological Perspective" in *Witness of the Body: The Past, Present, and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 2011, 3-19.

FREYNE, S., "Jesus the Martyr", in *Rethinking Martyrdom* (Concilium), London: SCM Press 2003, 49-58.

HENN, W., "Pluralism, Theological", in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, ed. R. LATOURELLE, New York: Crossroad 1994, 783-785.

HOLSTEIN, H., "The Mystery of Religious Life", in *Mission and Witness: The Life of the Church*, Westminster: The Newman Press 1964, 327-344.

KAHUMBI M., "Phenomenon of Religio-Political terrorism in contemporary period", Nairobi: class notes 2014, 1-3.

KELLER, A., "Secularization", in *Encyclopaedia of Theology: Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, ed. K. Rahner, London: Burns & Oates, 1554-1561.

LATOURELLE, R., "Testimony", in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, ed. R. LATOURELLE, New York: Crossroad 1994, 1045-1060.

MCCGARRY, C., "The Impact of Globalisation on Africa Culture and Society: Dangers and Opportunities", in *New Strategies For A New Evangelisation in Africa*, ed. Patrick Ryan, LIMURU: Kolbe Press 2002, 13-22.

PROVENCHER, N., "Modernism", in *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, ed. R. LATOURELLE, New York: Crossroad 1994, 719-723.

SCHREITER, R., "Evangelisation", in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. Judith A. Dwyer, Minnesota: The Liturgical Press 1994, 363-366.

SOGAARD, V., “Go and Communicate Good News” in *Paradigm Shifts in Christian Witness: Insights from Anthropology, Communication, and Spiritual Power*, ed. C. E. Engen – D. Whiteman – J. D. Woodberry, New York: Orbis Books 2008, 57-65.

TEAM DAILY, “Over city violence”, Nairobi: *Daily Nations* (2 December 2000) 1-4.

TILLICH, P., “The Theology of Missions”, in *Witness to A Generation: Significant Writings from Christianity and Crisis (1941-1966)*, New York: The Bobbs-Merrij Company, inc 1966, 79-126.

VAUCHEZ, A., “Lay Religious Movements in the Middle Ages” in *Movements in the Church (Concilium)*, London: SCM Press 2003, 49-56.

WOODBERRY, J. D., “Power and Blessing”, in *Paradigm Shifts in Christian Witness: Insights from Anthropology, Communication, and Spiritual Power*, ed. C. E. Engen – D. Whiteman – J. D. Woodberry, New York: Orbis Books 2008, 98-105.

YORK, T., “Early Church Martyrdom: Witnessing For or Against the Empire?” in *Witness of the Body: The Past, Present and Future of Christian Martyrdom*, Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company 2011, 20-42.

ZEMALE, T. J., *Christian Witness Through Small Christian Communities*, Eldoret (Kenya): AMECEA Gaba Publications 1992.

- **Spiritual Books**

MCGOVERN, J., *To Give The Love of Christ: A Portrait of Mother Teresa and the Missionaries of Charity*, New York: Emmaus Books (Pauline Press) 1978.

SCHIMIDT, J. F., *Walking the Little Way of Therese of Lisieux: Discovering the Path of Love*, Maryland: the Word among us Press 2012.

STONE, E. M., *Saint Maximilian Kolbe: Saint of Auschwitz*, USA: Paulist Press 1997.

- **Internet Resources**

<http://www.digitaltermpapers.com/b2713.htm>, accessed on 7/11/ 2015

<http://www.anglicannews.org/news/2000/12/muslim-and-christian-youthss-clash-in-kenyan-capital.aspx>, accessed on 12th March 2016.