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**TOPIC:**

**THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AS AN EFFECTIVE  
INSTRUMENT OF EVANGELIZATION FOR THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF CHRIST THE  
KING PARISH IN PYA-KARA IN TOGO**

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## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this Integration Paper 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 a Certificate in Spirituality and Religious Formation. It has never been submitted to any college or university for academic credit. All sources have been cited and acknowledged.

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This Integration Paper has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college's supervisor.

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## INTRODUCTION

In this paper, we shall explore the importance of the ‘Catechism of the Catholic Church’ in the lives of the faithful, and the challenges young Catholics face in Pya (Kara-Togo). Firstly, we shall look at the location of Pya in the West African country of Togo. Secondly, we shall concentrate on the role and necessity of catechesis in the Church, following the recommendation of Jesus Christ, who urged the disciples to go into the whole world, to baptise in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; and to teach them to observe all that Jesus Christ had commanded them (Mt. 28: 19-20a). The third part will examine what catechesis is all about, and how the disciples preached the message of Jesus Christ, how through the history of the Church, the Fathers of the Church carried out this command of Jesus Christ. Finally, we shall look at how the Church, particularly the Councils of the Church instructed the faithful to preach and teach the message of Jesus Christ. And lastly, we shall look at how the missionaries carried out this message among the people of Togo in West Africa. We shall look at catechesis as a Baptismal responsibility and duty of every Baptised Christian. We shall look critically at this responsibility of preaching the Gospel, showing specific objectives and priorities.

In addition, the paper will examine the methodological and research questions which could help in the effective evangelisation and teaching of the Faith to young Christians. Finally, the question of effective catechesis will be examined, followed by specific and general recommendations, which will be made, along with the general conclusion and bibliography.

## **Young People at Christ the King Parish in Pya, Kara-Togo**

Nowadays, Young People in general are in need of formation, especially at the King Parish in Pya, Togo. Catechism appears as one of the tools of formation; Catechism is important in the process of the formation of young people and the entire Christians because catechism is part and parcel of the life of the Church. The different challenges this process of formation is encountering, appear as evil news in many parishes, particularly at Christ the King Parish in Pya. Christ the King Parish in Pya, Kara-Togo has young people who are in need of formation.

## **Historical Background of Pya, Kara-Togo**

Kara is a city in Northern Togo, situated in Kara Region, 413 km north of the capital Lomé. Situated in the country of Togo, near the other western African countries of Ghana, Burkina Faso and Benin. Kara is the capital of the Kara Region and has a population of 94,878 as per the 2010 Census. The Kara River flows through the city and it is its main source of water. It is near the village of Pya, the native village of the president of Togo Republic. Kara Region is one of the five regions of Togo. It has an area of 11,625 square kilometers. It is one of the five administrative regions in Togo and takes its name from the Kara River, which runs through the region. The region itself is subdivided into seven prefectures, namely, Keran, Kozah, Bassar, Doufelgou, Dankpen, Binah and Assoli, but the principle town in the region is Kara City. Kozah is a prefecture located in the Kara Region, which has 14 cantons: Koumea, Landa, Tchitchao, Yade, Bohou, Lama, Soumdina, Tchare, Iassa, Djamde; Wakkede, Boundou, Koumerida et Pya. Pya est un canton de la Préfecture de la Kozah au centre-nord du Togo. Pya est situé à environ 14 km de Kara, dans la région de la Kara.

Pya, is a Canton formed by the Kabyé ethnic group, in the Kozah prefecture, in the Kara region. The distance from Pya Togo to Lome Togo is 435.07 km. Pya, therefore, is in the Diocese of Kara,

which is a particular Church of the Catholic Church of Tokyo, whose seat is in Kara, the center of the country, near the locality of Pya in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul. It was created on July 1st, 1994, by removing it from the diocese of Sokodé. It includes the entire Kara region, of which Pya is one of the Parishes.

### **Who are the Kabyé?**

The kabyé are located in the interland of Togo, which is divided into three; the relief and the dialect, the North massif with the localities like Farende, Pouda, Boufale and Tchioukawa and the South massif.

The Kabye has long remained on the fringes of explorers, traders, missionaries and researchers. They remained in contact with the Occidents. They suffered some slavery raids from some neighboring Kingdoms of Glidji, Abomey and Ashanti. The Kabyé people were submissive to settlers around January 1898. The last resistance dates back to 1900 in Chitchao.

### **Organization of the Kabyé**

Kabyé is a social organization based on age classes; the kabyé are led by a wise chcho known for his ability to meditate; the kabyé have no chief but are guided by a Chocho.

### **Economic activities of the Kabyé**

The Kabyés are mainly known for their terraced farming in the Kabyé mountains (Atacora range). Kabyé means "peasant of the stone" in reference to the land they cultivate from where the peasants extract many stones used to making the walls of the terraces.

### **The Kabyé culture**

The kabyé culture is very rich, still today, through its traditional habitat, its rites of passage of the different age groups (struggles, feast of chicottes, Waa, dance of virgins, ... etc).

## **Young People at Christ the King Parish in Pya, Kara-Togo**

### **The concept of Youth**

The concept of youth varies according to the context to which it refers. According to the United Nations (UN) system, a youth refers to a person aged between 15 and 24 years old. In practice, the definition used to develop a national youth policy varies from country to country. For the purposes of this National Youth Policy, any person whose age is between 15 and 35 years old is considered to be young.

Youth stage is a passage. It is a social reality: It does not exist in itself, in a stable and timeless way. ... In this perspective, the youthful stage appears to be a category of age which is inserted between adolescence and adulthood. It does not exist in itself, in a stable and timeless way. It is part of an age stratification of society that sets schedules and dictates how to move from one age to another, and organizes status and social roles by age. Therefore, the youthful stage can be defined as the phase of preparation for the exercise of professional and family, but also citizen roles, as adults, through socialization; there is a gradual learning of roles: the departure from the family of origin, access to independent housing, entry into professional life, the formation of a couple and the arrival of the first child. In this perspective, the youthful appears to be a category of age which is inserted between adolescence and adulthood.

However, today, the youthful stage does not form a period of life clearly separate and distinct from the phases which frame it. The youthful stage is characterized rather by a gradual transition, by the establishment of continuities between the above mentioned two phases, especially since the attributes of adulthood are gathered in stages over several years. The main thresholds of entry into adulthood are no longer realized, as before, simultaneously and

definitively. Complementary, these thresholds are not necessarily cumulative or inseparable; they are spread over a long period of time, they are gradual, discontinuous and sometimes reversible.

### **The Youthful Age in Kaby, especially in Pya**

Can we specify the age limits that frame the youthful stage? The age group of between 15 and 39 years is selected as the age of the youth in Kaby. The arrival of the first child or the first marriage is marked as the end of the youthful stage in Kaby. Indeed, today the youth of Pya are much more influenced by the benefits of the school of the whites, through the advent of the Churches spreading the good news. Churches teach and employ pya youth; in a way, they have become the consciousness of the youth.

### **The Youth of Pya**

The youth of Pya are marked by the transition from adolescence to adulthood; it is the age of possibilities and experiments, commitments and choices, period of learning responsibilities, access to material independence and identity construction. The youth of Pya are no exception. The youthful stage forms social classifications with social inequalities, particularly inequalities in educational attainment. The youth have been interrupted in their growth, often by political events. Pya is rich of multi-youth who have been trained in several areas. Most of the young people of Pya live in rural areas. There are only few of them who live in urban centers. Nearly three-quarters of the young people in urban centers live in the outlying areas of Lomé.

### **The organization of the Youth**

During the colonial period, the youth movement was mainly run by the Scout Association of Togo, faith-based youth organizations and political parties. The Scout Association of Togo was the first youth movement in Togo around the 1920s. It is an educational movement for young

people based on volunteering; it aims at contributing, with the support of adults, to the development of young people by helping them to fully realize their physical, intellectual, social and spiritual potential.

### **The role of Youth in society**

The youth are the future of tomorrow. As young people, they are the preferred actors of the socio-economic, cultural and political changes in the country. On the economic level, rural youth contribute to the production of food crops (cereals, tubers, legumes, etc.) and cash crops. On the political front, the youth of Pya play a major and leading role in the process of democratization. They participate in the activities of political parties and youth associations or youth movements and make outstanding contributions to the mobilization of the population and strengthening of the democratic process. They are the builders and beneficiaries of today's and tomorrow's society.

### **Pastoral challenges in the announcing of the Good News to the Youth in Pya**

#### **(a) Education and Training**

Education and vocational training are the essential determinants of the quality of human life. They condition the insertion of individuals into social life through access to employment opportunities.

#### **(b) Health**

Youth constitute an age group with specific needs which must be taken into account in the management of their health. Health care facilities for young people are inadequate in the country and are supplemented by health centers. Health problems of young people stem from their high vulnerability, as they are an age group with specific needs that must be taken into account in the management of their health.

### **(c) Unemployment and Underemployment**

Today's youth are marked by the problem of unemployment and underemployment. These phenomena have increased in the last twenty years, and particularly affect young graduates. They result from the combination of several endogenous and exogenous factors; the most important of which are the lack of a coherent employment policy, the increasing entry of young graduates into an increasingly small labour market, the exodus of rural youth to the cities in search of employment, slowing investment in the modern sector, which has had a negative impact on the informal economy sector, the slowdown of economic activities in the modern sector which has severely aggravated the unemployment rate in this sector, structural adjustment measures, which led to the limitation of hiring in the public service. In the face of numerous economic problems, there has been very little job creation, and young people in all categories find it difficult to find stable and profitable jobs. Most of them, to escape unemployment, which is very high, are obliged to devote themselves to precarious occupations in order to meet their needs. On the social level, many young people live in unhealthy homes and in promiscuity, which does not promote their full development.

Prostitution, which has become an easy means of subsistence for many girls, is growing. It is the same for the consumption of narcotics and great banditry with armed robberies, which take considerable proportions. All these practices contribute to a deprivation of morals and a deterioration of the health of young people. It results in the increase of young prostitutes, young drug addicts, street youth, and working children find it difficult to get their daily bread; these include young people and adolescents separated from their families, young people in conflict with the law, abandoned children and young victims of abuse and immoral practices. These young people face several risks such as: abuse, use and exposure to dangerous products, sexual

exploitation, sexually transmitted infections, HIV / AIDS and trauma. There is very little information about these young people and adolescents who are also exposed to child trafficking.

Thus, the tradition of placement of young people and adolescents in a relative or friend to offer him or her a better education has turned away from its original purpose and has been transformed into economic exploitation. The causes of this phenomenon are: poverty and unemployment, the breakdown of the traditional self-help system, family dislocation by (death or divorce), abandonment or repetition of schooling and finally rapid urbanization.

Young people in Togo are an important layer of the population, but they have been facing enormous difficulties over the last twenty years, whereas if they were well supervised, they could be the privileged actors of the socio-economic and cultural and political transformations underway in the country. Although the youth have played a major role and preponderant in the process of democratization in progress in the country since the 1990s and paid a heavy price in the various socio-political troubles that the country has known for fifteen years, they face enormous challenges in many areas. The education which should ensure and promote the socio-economic integration of the youth is not adapted to the realities of the country and no longer constitutes, for many young people, a tool for individual or collective promotion. The current health context, for its part, does not allow adequate care for young people who have enormous health problems.

The crisis in the sector of culture, recreation and art in Togo is not a lack of creativity on the part of young people, but it is due to the lack of resources and poor infrastructure organization of the sector. Although young Togolese love sports, the lack of infrastructure, supervision and the relatively high costs of equipment and sports' equipment hamper the popularization of sport and the emergence of elite sport.

Catechism of the Catholic Church as an Instrument of Evangelization for the Young **People at  
Christ the King Parish in Pya, Kara-Togo**

In the Apostolic Constitution; *Fidei Depositum* of October 11<sup>th</sup>, 1992, accompanying the publication of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, John Paul II declares: "A catechism must present faithfully and organically the teaching of Holy Scripture, of the Tradition living in the world. It must take into account the doctrinal explanations that the Holy Spirit has suggested to the Church in the course of time. It must also help to illuminate the light of faith with new situations and problems which had not yet arisen in the past. " Thus catechesis has deep roots from the Old Testament to the New Testament; faith in God through Jesus is at the center of its teaching. Becoming a Christian is to be in contact with Jesus Christ, it is He who initiates, it is He who makes grow in faith. So Catechesis is the path proposed by the Church to discover the richness of being a Christian and to grow in faith: "Catechesis is what the Christian community offers to those who freely wish to participate in its experience and knowledge. faith." National Text p.27

**The Catechism of the Catholic Church as mission of the Church**

John Paul II, in his apostolic exhortation on catechesis in 1979 affirmed that "the definitive goal of catechesis is to put someone not only in contact but in communion, in intimacy with Jesus Christ." One of the missions of the Church is to teach catechesis and propose ways of coming closer to Jesus Christ, through the word of God, sacraments, liturgy and prayer. Catechesis opens the way to the many experiences of Christians, those of yesterday and those of today. The Christian community becomes alive only through direct participation in the life of the Church and with the responsibility of the catechist to transmit the faith. Catechesis is really the responsibility of the transmission of faith

## **The Catechism of the Catholic Church as an Instrument of Evangelization for the Young People**

Faced with the many problems young people encounter in Pya, catechesis seems necessary in the education of young people who seem to lose hope for a better tomorrow. All these issues are challenges for the local Church, whose mission is to teach and educate the youth holistically; this is not only the role of the Church but of all Christians; To announce the Gospel is not the business of catechists alone. Every baptized person receives this mission. It is the first invitation to living the path of faith. The Lord gives us the grace to be renewed every day by the joy of the first announcement: Jesus is dead and risen, Jesus loves us personally! May He give us the strength to live and announce the commandment of love, going beyond the blindness of appearance, poverty, and worldly sorrows.

Evangelization does not stop only at the announcement of Jesus but also aims at the well-being and development of peoples. Nowadays young people need our witnesses of Christian life to grow spiritually, morally, emotionally and physically. They look at us a lot more than they let us know. They observe our authenticity or if we are only resounding cymbals. If adults slow down, young people will stop; if adults pray, young people will become saints. Taking some time to explain to young people the spiritual experience is certainly to bring them to a more spiritual depth. The pastoral ministry of the youth does not consist first in changing the world from one heart to the next, but beginning with one's own, then letting life spring between the different generations.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study has strengthened my faith and the academic process. Most of all, it has made me stronger in my commitment to my faith and to spreading it to others as Jesus Christ said in St.

Matthew's Gospel. It has encouraged me to help in the evangelisation of the people of Pya in Northern Togo.

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