

TANGAZA COLLEGE

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN THE LOZI TRADITIONAL
MARRIAGE PRACTICES AND CHRISTIANITY: A PASTORAL
CONCERN

ESSAY SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL
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LAWRENCE MBAPOLO LIKULANO, SVD

Dedication

to

My Father, Leonard Likulano

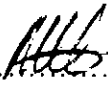
My Mother, Cecilia Biemba

and

to my brother and two sisters, Joseph, Lucy and Rosa who have helped me to experience the love and warmth of an authentic *Lozi* traditional family.

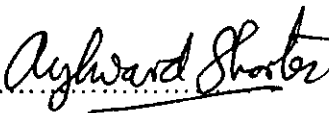
STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this essay is my original work achieved through personal reading, research and reflection. It has never been submitted in academic sphere for credit purposes.

Signed...  410.....

Date... 07/02/2007.....

Lawrence Mbapolo Likulano, SVD

Moderator: Signed... .....

Date... 7-2-07.....

Fr. Aylward Shorter, M. Afr.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CCC: The Catechism of the Catholic Church.

GS: *Gaudium et Spes* – Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the
Modern World.

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INTRODUCTION

For any culture, be it European, Asian, American or African such as the *Lozi* to have an authentic and meaningful Christian life, that culture should encounter Christ in the Gospel message and be transformed by Christ in the light of his passion and resurrection. For this reason, the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices are no exception. However, in the process of re-interpretation of the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices into Christianity and Christianity into the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices, both parties should be faithful to each other.

Our work, therefore, endeavours to discuss an encounter between the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices and Christianity. It is systematically divided into four chapters. In the first chapter, we discuss the origin of the *Lozi*, where they are found, how they trace their descent and their livelihood. We elaborate at length their practices of marriage and what is involved in it. Thereafter, we show how marriage has a socio-religious dimension and how it is linked to their belief in life after death. The approach we have taken in our work is deductive, inductive, descriptive as well as analytical. The purpose of our work is to discover how the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices can become means by which the *Lozi* can respond in faith to God's call. For this reason, in our conclusion we make some recommendations which the *Lozi* should adhere to in their manifestation of Christian life.

In the second chapter, we elaborate and explicate in depth the historical background of marriage. We start with *Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)* as an opener to the Christian understanding of marriage, then proceed to the Scriptures. Later on, we look at the theological and canonical concepts of Christian marriage. After that, we explain the view of the Magisterium on customary marriage. We show the stand of Vatican II on Marriage. Furthermore, we discuss the pastoral situation in *Loziland* and possible ways of giving pastoral care to couples involved in the *Lozi* traditional marriage.

Chapter three of our thesis examines the impact of Christianity on the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices from the time the missionaries arrived in *Loziland*. While in the fourth chapter, we discuss inculturation of the *Lozi* traditional marriage as a means of transforming it by the Gospel message. We have also made some suggestions pin pointing some *Lozi* traditional marriage practices which should be outlawed. Finally, we have proposed that in order for the *Lozi* to have an indigeneous *Lozi* Christian marriage rite, the *Lozi* themselves with the help of theologians and anthropologists conversant with the African culture should spearhead this research.

CHAPTER ONE

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF MARRIAGE AMONG THE LOZI OF WESTERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA

In this chapter, we discuss where the *Lozi* people are found, their origin and their livelihood. We elaborate at length their systems of marriage. Besides, we show how marriage has a socio-religious dimension and it is linked to their belief in life after death.

1.1.0. THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE *LOZI* PEOPLE

The *Lozi* kingdom is found in the western province of Zambia. It stretches on both sides of the Zambezi river banks. It covers “65000 square miles”¹. Loziland is now divided into six districts. These are “*Sesheke, Kalabo, Senanga, Kaoma, Lukulu and Mongu*”². The provincial headquarters of the Loziland is in Mongu, but the reigning *Lozi* king, *Ilute Yeta IV* has his palace in Lealui.

The *Lozi* People strongly believe that they are biologically related. They have a common ancestor. They trace their descent from,

*“Mboo, the founder of the Lozi kingdom, son of God and his daughter, Mbuyamwambwa, and from kings Inyambo, Numwa, Yeta, Ngalama, Mwanambinyi, Yeta II, Ngombala, Yubya, Mwanawina, Mwananyanda, Mulambwa, Silumelum, Mubukwanu, Sibitwane, Sipopa, Lewanika, and Ilute Yeta I-IV”*³.

It is this agnatic line which is the core of the whole nation. Those who do not identify themselves with this agnatic line are not considered to be true *Lozis*. Besides, all the *Lozi* have descent-names which imply kinship. This kinship or blood relationship is closely linked to the first inhabitants of the plains, who are regarded to have lived with Mboo. For this reason, all the *Lozis*, whether you are from the royal family or closely associated with the royal family

¹ Michael O’Shea, *Missionaries and Miners* (Ndola: Mission press, 1986), 115.

² O’Shea, *Missionaries*, 372-374.

³ Albert Jalla, *Litaba za sichaba sa Malozi, History of the Lozi* (Lusaka: Book world publishers, 1996), 8.

and trace your descent from the first inhabitants of the plains who lived with king Mboo, you are automatically linked to the kingship.

1.1.1. SOCIO-ECONOMIC STRUCTURE OF THE *LOZI* FAMILY

The *Lozi* kingdom is closely associated with the fertile plains along the upper Zambezi river. When dry, this well - defined area offers good grazing land for livestock, and its rich alluvial soil is ideal for cultivation. It contrasts with the sparse surrounding woodland, growing on poor soil typical of the rest of western Zambia. Almost all year round, these plains support a dense population of subsistence farmers. The *Lozis*, indeed are "*proficient gardeners and fishermen, planting and reaping crops and catching fish in various sites during almost every month of the year*"⁴. Apart from that, the *Lozi* weave traditional baskets, mats and carve canoes from wood. During the rainy season, they move their animals to higher grounds or mounds or to the margins of woodlands to graze around February and March when the river banks are flooded. When the waters recede, they go back to the river banks to plant vegetables, pumpkins, maize and sweet potatoes on the rich alluvial soils. The *Lozi* peoples' life is so dependent on the river. They catch a lot of fish and supplement their livelihood by selling fish. They rear livestock for use and for profit. They sell cattle and milk products. Agricultural products as well as their traditional baskets, mats, carved canoes and spears bring additional income to them.

The *Lozi* village set up is in such a way that each family builds its village on a mound. These villages, "*are inhabited by groups of kinsmen of a small core of agnates and other cognates with their wives and children, and possibly an occasional male affine or stranger as*

⁴ Max Gluckman, "Kinship and Marriage among the *Lozi* of Northern Rhodesia and the *Zulu* of Natal," in *African systems of kinship and marriage*, eds. Radcliffe-Brown, A. R and Daryll-Forde (London: Oxford university press, 1962),168.

well as *serfs*⁵ because a mould can accommodate only limited family members. For that reason, each family has exclusive rights to a specific fishing site.

1.2.0. THE *LOZI* TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

Among the patrilineal *Lozi*, “*marriages are temporarily uxorilocal. That is, the groom stays with his bride at the parents-in-law's village for sometime before permanently living in his village with his bride*”⁶. In these marriages, the main stress is laid on bearing children. Procreation is regarded as a great value, a gift from God which flows from the forefathers of one's clan to the individual families. It is vigilantly watched by these ancestors so that they and their descendants are furthered into the future. In this way, they too, live in the world of the living of their clan. For that reason, “*Procreation is thus a question not only of individual survival, but also of community survival*”⁷. The need for progeny overshadows often the value of love. That is far from saying that love is not recognized. It is acknowledged and it is also striven for, but where procreation is endangered, it sets its priority over love in the hierarchy of values.

1.2.1. SIGNIFICANCE OF BRIDEWEALTH/*LOBOLA* IN *LOZI* MARRIAGE

The legality of the lineage of the children in marriage is affirmed through the paying and receiving of *lobola*. *Lobola* is not given to purchase the woman but, “*Lobola is a complementary of marriage by handing over of some goods or of an agreed number of cattle (or money in lieu thereof) on the part of the bridegroom's people to the father of the bride or the guardian of the bride, in order to ensure the right of the bridegroom to any issue of*

⁵ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 168.

⁶ Chondoka A. Yizenge, *Traditional marriages in Zambia* (Ndola: Mission press, 1988), 29.

⁷ Benezet Bujo, *African Christian morality at the age of inculturation* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1997), 108.

marriage⁸. *Lobola* strengthens the relationship between the bride and groom's families. Besides, *Lobola* creates stability in marriage and forms a strong bond of relationship between the couple and their families, a relationship which was never before. It is after paying *lobola* that children become legally members of the mother or father's family. *Lobola* "legitimizes the children within the father's lineage, even if it does not transfer their mother to that lineage"⁹. Besides, "One of the important effects of the payment of bridewealth is that the children born of the union belong not to their mother's lineage but to the lineage of the father in a patrilineal society"¹⁰. However, among the *Lozi*, children belong to both patrilineal and matrilineal sides. The *Lozi* say, "children belong to both sides, and the courts will not constrain a young boy (or girl) to leave his mother's home to go to his father. In any case, when the child grows up, it will choose freely where it wants"¹¹.

1.2.2. MARRIAGE PROCEDURES:

Among the *Lozi*, like in many African societies, marriage is regarded as a communitarian affair than a private contract between two individuals. It involves the both bride's and the bridegroom's family communities or lineages. For instance, the pastor says to the bride,

"Mapule, you should bear in mind that though you are married in church, we Africans, according to our customs and tradition (consider) that you are married not to your husband Paul, but to his family, that means you have to identify completely with all his relatives, look after them, care for them, go out of your way to make them happy. If you do that, you will have no cause to regret. You, Paul will have to do like wise with Mapule's relatives. Her people are your people and vice versa. Both of you

⁸ Doke.C.M and Vilakazi.B.W, Compilers., *Zulu-English Dictionary* (Johannesburg: Witswatersrand university press, 1953), 460.

⁹ Aylward Shorter, *African Culture and the Christian church* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1973),168.

¹⁰ Shorter, *Culture*, 168.

¹¹ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 171-172.

*will notice that old people in the community will tend to visit you, even for a brief moment, not necessarily to drink tea, but to show their interest in your welfare*¹²

However, formal marriage proposals among the *Lozi* are done by the young man himself. The young man goes out looking for a girl to marry and when he finds one, with recommendations from other people he would approach her and present his intentions. According to *Lozi* custom, a woman is not supposed to accept proposal on the spot. Both the man and the woman were made to believe that if a woman accepts the proposal at first sight it means that such a woman is reckless, has not received much instructions from the elders. The woman also has to know how serious the man is. In such a situation, therefore, the man has to make three or four trips if the lady is interested as well. If the girl accepts the proposal, the man pays her "*buitamo or sepiso*", a gift to show how serious he is "*concerning marriage proposal*"¹³. The woman in turn will give him a bracelet or beads to show her commitment. This means that from the minute she accepts the present, she is his wife-to-be. Both would inform either their grandparents or paternal aunts, who in turn would inform their parents about the imminent marriage.

1.2.3. THE ROLE OF THE FAMILY IN THE LOZI MARRIAGE

At an appropriate date, when the man's family is ready, they would arrange when to meet the girl's parents. They would go to the house of the grandparents or paternal aunt, who in turn would report to the girl's parents. When the parents of the girl are ready for them, they would summon the delegation of the man to their house. This is the opportune time for the man's delegation to show their best behaviour at the girl's family to make impressions. The

¹² Benerezi Kisembo et al, African Christian Marriage (Nairobi: Pauline publications Africa, 1998), 202.

¹³ Yizenge, Marriages, 29.

son in law to be, is not allowed to contribute in the discussion although he is one of the delegates. Both parties will start discussing but not necessarily marital issues. After sometime, one of them who is prior appointed to lead marital transactions from the man's side would kneel down and clap thrice, put a token of money commonly known as "*Sipunya mulomo*", meaning "mouth opener", on the floor, and says, "*Bashemi, nitilo yaka mulilo*" meaning, my parents I have come to ask for fire. He once again claps thrice joined by the rest of his delegation while stooping down as a sign of respect to the in laws. The analogy of asking for fire automatically means the delegates are requesting to marry from the hosting family. There would be silence for sometime, pretending that the family of the girl is not aware about what they are talking about.

However, the "go-between" from the girl's delegation, would either request the man's delegation to add more *sipunya mulomo* if they are not satisfied with what had been offered earlier on. She would ask the name of the girl. Upon mentioning the name of the girl, that girl is summoned to come and confirm if she has been approached for marriage. When the girl confirms that she wants to be married by one of the members from the delegation, by clapping three times, she is sent out, because she is not supposed to be part of the discussion. It is a task of adults. The man's delegation show their happiness by ululating and clapping. After the girl has accepted publicly the marriage proposal, the discussion about "*lobola*" commences.

1.2.4. THE ROLE OF BRIDEWEALTH/LOBOLA

If the girl's party is not happy with their son in law to be, more especially when he is a thief, lazy or impolite, they can charge an exorbitant *lobola* to deter him from marrying their

daughter. *Lobola* was in “*form of cattle*”¹⁴. This is so because the *Lozi* are pastoralists. They keep many animals. They could ask for four or six cattle for marriage if the girl was a virgin. Nowadays, the number of cattle is usually converted into money. After the payment of *lobola* other small payments can be paid before the girl is finally taken to her husband. These are “*mukaba*” and “*mulelu*”. *Mukaba* simply means the cloth mothers tie on their tummies after giving birth so that the tummy returns to its original shape. This token is an appreciation of the mother of the girl for bearing him a beautiful wife. *Mulelu* means beard. This token is paid by the man to his father in law as an appreciation of the father for allowing his daughter to be married to him.

1.2.5. WEDDING ARRANGEMENTS

On the appropriate day, the man's wedding committee sets off either in the evening or afternoon, depending on the distance. They will announce their departure by ululating. When they arrive at the bride's village, they also announce their presence by ululating. Those who are involved in training the girl and other relatives would go out and meet them. Meanwhile, the girl is already hidden in one of the houses in the village. The man's delegation would be served with food and beer. This is a time for merry making. When the right time has come for the man's delegation to collect their bride, they would ask their host where the bride is. Everybody would express ignorance about where she is. It is the task of the bridegroom's delegation to search for her. When they find her, they would ululate to show their joy. Thereafter, they would force her to follow them, despite her resistance and cries, to go to one of the houses where her parents would give their final advise to both parties and bid them farewell.

¹⁴ Yizenge, Marriages, 30.

Payment would start each time they reach a junction or after walking for sometime. These payments are called *munyembu*, meaning, a token paid for the beauty of the bride. Payment depends on the female escorts as well as the man's status. Some men feel that following such a procedure is troubling his wife. He simply pays the escorts at once to avoid stopping many times on the way. The whole journey is full of fun. They will announce their arrival at the bridegroom's village by ululating. The whole village would come and meet them while ululating and dancing. They will continue drinking and eating. After a while, the female delegation too, would ask where the bridegroom is. Everybody would deny having seen him. For this reason, it is also the duty of the bride's escorts to look for him in other houses.

1.2.6. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FIRST NIGHT AS A COUPLE

While the celebration is still continuing, the bridegroom will leave for his house. Thereafter, the bride will be taken to the house of her husband by the female escorts. Before dawn, the female escorts would go to check on them. If the man is *“fully satisfied by his bride's performance they would find some money either by the door side, or on the bed, under the pillow or all corners of the house depending on how the man was instructed”*¹⁵. The female escorts would be very happy. They will start ululating and dancing again. Their daughter has been proved to be marriage worthy. Actually, the woman's escorts also gives the bride a mortar and a pestle in order to prove to them whether she is sexually satisfied with her husband or not. The number of times she pounds is the number of times they had made love in the night. But if they did not have sex, then she would not pound in the mortar. She will only cry. At times, the groom would also confirm his wife's virginity by piercing a tree with a spear. If he feels that his bride had had sexual relationships with other men, he would not

¹⁵ Yizenge, *Marriges*, 35.

pierce a tree with the spear but throws the spear on the ground. This would really be a disappointment to the female escorts and to the entire family of the bride. They can even decide to leave the village before everybody wakes up.

Early in the morning, however, the female escorts would warm water for the bride and bridegroom to bath together before everybody wakes up. But if accidentally the female escorts over-sleep and people wake up before the couple have had a bath, they will have to pay the bridegroom's delegation. It implies that the woman would not be taking care of her husband properly.

1.3.0. RITUALS / METHODS OF FEEDING THE COUPLE

Immediately after the couple finishes bathing, the bride is dressed in a traditional dress known as *Musisi* and the bridegroom is dressed in *siziba*. Then a meal will be prepared for them. This is their first meal together. It is usually, "*buhobe (thick porridge) with beef or fish or game meat, but not a chicken. They believe that a chicken is an unfortunate bird. It gets its food by scratching the ground the whole day*"¹⁶. So if a couple is given a chicken meal, they will be an unfortunate couple, very lazy and dependent on other people. Secondly, they believe that a chicken is undisciplined, it is a thief and lands its beak on any food it immediately sees. There is a fear that the couple will be undisciplined and it will resort to stealing from the family especially, from their in laws. A chicken is also associated with infidelity. The couple might not be faithful to their marital commitments.

Now when *buhobe* with meat or fish or game meat is ready, the bride's escorts who have prepared it would place amount of it on a stone. The couple is told to pick a piece of food from the stone, the first piece is to be spat in front, the second piece behind, third piece on the

¹⁶ Yizenge, Marriages, 35.

right hand side, the fourth piece on the left hand side and the fifth piece is swallowed without being chewed. The meaning for this ritual of feeding is as follows:

- (i) The Stone: The stone implies strength, perseverance, or endurance in marriage. Whenever there are problems in their marriage they should stand firm and stick together.
- (ii) Spitting of the Food: This ritual has two meanings. Firstly, the couple is reminded that they will be hearing some stories from their friends, relatives or even from other people who are not related to them, stories which either enrich or destroy their marriage. That being the case, they should swallow constructive ones and spit destructive ones, which might rock their marriage. Secondly, the couple should respect their marriage. They should keep marital secrets and even their problems (swallowing), and should know what to say to the outsiders, relatives or friends (pieces of food which are spat)

After this ritual, the couple can now eat the food which has been prepared for them. However, they are not required to finish everything. The couple should leave some food in case of impromptu visitors as well as for the ancestors. In case the couple has been served *buhobe* with fish, they are required to eat one side of the fish. The *Lozi* strongly believe that if the couple eats both sides of the fish, they will be greedy and will not be leaving any food for their children. After two days, the bride will be introduced to her kitchen and other things. An elderly woman will make the bride hold household goods one after the other such as, brooms and pots. The woman is given a hoe (*A hoe stands for dexterity in production through hard work*). The elderly woman tells the bride that “*Ima, yo yu munyezi muswanezi kuutwana ni yena. Halulati kuutwa wowowo*, meaning, mother, you should come to terms with your husband. We do not want to hear wowowo (sign of strife)”. The man is given a spear and an axe (both are emblems of *leadership, power* and the ability to stand up and *protect values*, especially one’s family. He will be told, “*Mutu kaufela ya kapunya ndu yamina, kize lilwaniso muitamulele*, meaning, whosoever will break your house (marriage), here are the weapons to defend your rights with”. After all this, the bride and the bridegroom are ready to take up their family responsibilities.

When the couple has stayed together for at least six months, they are required to go and visit the family of the wife for some few days, mainly for the wife to go and pick some of the clothes or some kitchen utensils she might have left behind. This aspect of going back to the family of the wife is called "*Ku kutisa mahutu*", meaning tracing one's feet.

1.4.0. OTHER WAYS OF MARRYING AMONG THE LOZI PEOPLE

(i)**Kutobisa/Elopment**: Simply means running away with the lady without her parents' consent. In most cases the man would even start with *kubatana*, the right channel of marrying, but because of anxiety to take his wife and thinking that the right procedure is slow, he would finally arrange with the girl that they run away. They would of course inform the elders after they had left. If they think that its better without informing anyone then they would simply write a letter and inform them where they have gone. Although this type of marriage is expensive some men prefer it to *kubatana*. For example the bridegroom foresees the obstacle of being rejected by the parents of the bride, he would therefore prefer to be charged more so long as he marries the woman. The extra charges can be an extra cow for showing no respect to the in laws, and another one for all the procedures like *mukaba*, *mulelu* and *munyembu*.

(ii)**Kubeeleza/Betrothal**: In *kubeeleza* way of marrying, the girl is first engaged before she reaches the initiation age. A fee is paid to the parents of the girl for engagement. The man becomes the future husband of the young girl. He will continue supporting her until she reaches a reasonable age. Thereafter, normal marriage procedures commence.

(iii)**Kuyanga/Eloping**: This means eloping with someone's wife. He removes her from her husband's home to his house. The parents of the eloped woman can refuse marriage through *kuyanga*. *Kuyanga* is the most expensive form of marriage. The eloper will be made

to pay the woman's husband and the woman's parents. However, if the husband loved his wife very much and feels much offended, he would even refuse to accept the payments. The husband can even murder the eloper so that he gets back his wife or murder both of them.

(iv) **LIBALI/POLYGAMY:** The *Lozi* patrilineal society allows the man to marry more than one wife. The husband should first consult the first wife if she could marry another wife. If the first wife agrees then he will marry. If she does not accept then the husband should not go ahead marrying another lady. Normally the husband marries a second or third wife if the first wife is sick, barren or too old to give birth or even when the first wife would like to demonstrate her seniority.

1.5.0. FAMILY VALUES CHERISHED, AS PORTRAYED IN WEDDING SONGS

The teachings and instructions regarding marital morality among the *Lozi* people is usually imparted to the bride and bridegroom mostly through songs by elderly men and women. Some of these songs are:

1. Mwalyanjo Naliyele

Cantor: Mwalyanjo Naliyele, Katumbwa Kanyina, Sizaniso	<i>Stupid bride Plays with the traditional basket in which her mother keeps her private things</i>
All: Mwalyanjo Naliyele Katumbwa Kanyina Sizaniso	<i>Stupid Bride Plays with the traditional basket in which her mother keeps her private things</i>
Cantor: Mwalyanjo	<i>The Bride</i>
All: Naliyele katumbwa kanyina Sizaniso	<i>Plays with the traditional basket in which her mother keeps her private things</i>

In this song, “*the counselling elderly women admonish the young bride not to fiddle with the traditional basket in which her mother keeps secret ornaments such as sex beads and love potion*”¹⁷. The girl is also ordered not to commit fornication or adultery.

¹⁷ Sitali Sikuka, Wedding songs among the Lozi (Lusaka: UNZA press Ltd, 1999), 68.

2. Aluye Aluye

Cantor: Aluye aluye aluye uyo nyalwa *Let's go, let's go, let's go so that you get married*
Chorus: Aluye aluye aluye uyo nyalwa *Let's go, let's go, let's go so that you get married*
Cantor: Aluye aluye aluye uyo kamwa *Let's go, let's go, let's go to be ill treated*
Chorus: Aluye aluye aluye uyo kamwa *Let's go, let's go, let's go to be ill treated*
Cantor: Aluye, uyo sebwa, pepa, Ikola *Let's go to be gossiped, make love, bear children*

This song “warns the bride that she must expect sweet moments and sour moments in marriage”¹⁸. She is being informed before hand that whenever such problems occur in marriage, she is fully aware and prepared to face them.

3. Muntinta ba Munatile

Cantor: Mutinta ba munatile eee *Mutinta has been beaten eee*
Chorus: Mutinta ba Munatile oye *Mutinta has been beaten oye*
Oye ba munatezi kutapa *She has been beaten because she spends most of her time bathing*
Ni ku sasoka twelufu *And she does not know how to prepare lunch (twelve)*
Mutinta hola *Mutinta learn*

Nisaikela mwa buse *Let me go across the river*
Niyobana yo munde *So that I go and see the beautiful one*
Mushelo ni muzamaelo *The way she walks and laughs*
Yo munde ya ya ya *She is indeed beautiful*
Mutinta uka shwa usina mwana *Mutinta, you will die without bearing a child*

This song uses a figurative language. *Kutapa ni twelufu* literally mean "bathing and not preparing lunch". The real meaning is that Mutinta has been beaten because she only takes care of herself. She does not satisfy her husband sexually. For that reason, her husband goes to look for other women across the river, who can satisfy him and bear him children. Mutinta will die without any children.

¹⁸ Sikuka, *Wedding*, 68.

1.6.0. SOCIO – RELIGIOUS FUNCTION OF THE LOZI MARRIAGE

Marriage among the Lozi has a highly socio-religious connotation. It is the focus of existence. It is through marital posterity that the living continue to remember the dead family members as well as anticipate those yet to be born. Actually it is through it that the dead or *Balimu* would like to be kept alive in the memories of their surviving relatives. For that reason, “*Therefore marriage is looked upon as a sacred duty which every normal person just perform. Failure to do so means in effect stopping the flow of life through the individual and hence diminishing of mankind upon the earth*”¹⁹. The kins try to fulfil such demands of their fore bearers. However, procreation and concomitant naming rites are the main ways through which the deceased are remembered and furthered into the future. Through their posterity (kins), the dead are sustained in the world of the living. This is a partial eschatology among the *Lozi*. That is why, when a *Lozi* dies childless, they will put a cold charcoal in his/her anus to signify that she has been cursed and she will not enter into the realm of the ancestors. The name of such a person will never be given to any child of the living. The name will be left to diminish from the family. However, the names of the *Lozis* in religious life are given to the children born in their families. The religious are considered to be parents. They take care of their own families and others too.

There is a strong belief among the *Lozi* that when the newly born babies receive names of the departed relatives, the departed relatives become their patrons (*Baemeli*). Each of their names sake is called “*Mukuti*” (nominal-reincarnation). That is far from meaning “physical” rebirth of the deceased who are already immortalized. Even though “*Mukuti*” may also be translated as the “*reborn or reincarnated*”, it does not signify, at all, that the departed descend and are reborn as new babies. It rather means that a certain dead person has chosen this

¹⁹ John S. Mbiti, *Introduction to African Religion* (Nairobi: Heimann Education Books Ltd, 1975). 107.

particular child to assume his name. In this way, he manifests his will to be remembered in a special way, through the name by this particular family. For these reasons, marriage indeed has a socio-religious function among the Lozi people.

1.7.0. MARRIAGE AND HEREAFTER

As we have already seen, names are also means of projecting the dead relatives into the future and also for commemorating the departed in the families. It is only those who die childless who are considered dead completely but those who had some children, are considered to be still alive though physically dead. Their lives are perpetuated in those of their relatives who are still alive. Actually, the *Lozi* categorically believe that those who were married before will continue living with their spouses in the land of the living dead. For that reason, if a couple dies one after the other, they are buried side by side, so that they would continue living their happy life wherever they are. Actually, "*Death does not alter or end marriage relationship*"²⁰. For this reason, the *Lozi* strongly believe in life after death.

We have traced the historical background of the *Lozi*. The socio-economic structure of their family. Besides, how the *Lozi* value marriage. It is in the marriage that a *Lozi* man and woman become legally a husband and wife. Children born out of this marriage are lawfully recognised and accepted by the society. But for the marriage to take place, the family of the man should pay *lobola* to that of the woman. *Lobola* unites both families. It is through marriage that the dead relatives are immortalized. They are remembered in the names of children born from the living relatives. Death is only a physical separation. The deceased continue to live happily wherever they are and still continue influencing the lives of their relatives. Now, let us look at the Christian understanding of marriage in the next chapter.

²⁰ Laurenti Magesa, African Religion, the moral traditions of abundant life (New York: Orbis books, 1997), 129.

CHAPTER TWO
THE CHURCH'S PASTORAL TEACHING ON MARRIAGE AND THE
PASTORAL SITUATION AMONG THE LOZI

2.1.0. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

According to the teaching of the church, marriage is a covenant of love established by the Lord our God from the time God created the world. This idea is affirmed by the Magisterium in the Vatican II documents,

“The intimate partnership of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the creator and endowed with its own proper laws; it is rooted in the contract of the partners, that is, in their irrevocable consent. It is an institution confirmed by the divine law and receiving its stability, even in the eyes of the society, from the human act by which the partners mutually surrender themselves to each other, for the good of the partners, of the children and of the society, this sacred bond no longer depends on human decision alone. For God himself is the author of marriage and has endowed it with various benefits and various ends in view...”²¹

John Marshall also affirms the words of *Gaudium et Spes* saying, “It is certainly true that marriage has existed for a long time. Adam and Eve married, and marriage has been a universal custom through out the centuries, among all races and creeds”²². However, the heart of the matter is that, marriage was performed and was taking a different form from one area to another. This is true even today, at least for non-sacramental marriages.

2.1.1. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Apart from *Gaudium et Spes* the historical background of marriage can easily be traced from the scriptures. In Genesis 2: 18, we are told that the Lord our God after creating Adam, said that, “It is not good that man should be alone. I will make a partner suitable for him”. This partner was Eve, the first woman. Adam and Eve made the first marriage. Surely “God

²¹ GS, 48.

²² John Marshall, *Preparing for Marriage* (London: Fletcher and Son Ltd, 1969), 9.

provided marriage as one of the ways which men and women by giving that service which is love could reach perfection"²³. God then mandated Adam and Eve to be productive. He said to them, "Be fertile and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1: 28). For this reason, as was in the case of Adam and Eve, man will leave his parents and will be joined to a woman as husband and wife and they will become one flesh. Actually, in "*Ancient Israel, marriage held a place of honour as God's appointed means for the creation of children and the increase of God's chosen people*"²⁴. The ancient Israelites valued marriage highly. For instance, in the book of Hosea, for the first time, we see the covenant relationship of God and his chosen people expressed in terms of a marriage. This marriage symbolism is likened to a relationship that exists between a man and his wife. The estranged woman then shall say, "I will go back to my first husband, for it was better with me then than now" (Hosea 2: 14-16). Hosea already points to the sacramental character of marriage.

2.1.2. NEW TESTAMENT

In the New Testament unlike in the Old Testament, the teaching on marriage is based mainly on what Jesus said regarding the institution of marriage as a sacred reality as well as on what St. Paul understood about the saying of Jesus on marriage. Jesus neither breaks with the Jewish tradition on matters regarding marriage nor does he perform any marriage. Jesus does not even directly instruct his disciples how to perform marriage. He only sets for them an example to follow which makes marriage a sacred reality. Jesus affirms marriage. For instance, in the Gospel according to John 2: 1-12, Jesus attends a marriage feast in *Cana* and there most importantly, he performs his first miracle of changing water into wine, so that the

²³ Marshall, *Marriage*, 25.

²⁴ Jack Dominian, *Christian Marriage. The challenge of change* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 1968), 20.

guests can have more wine to drink and continue with their celebrations. His intervention affirms a solemn safeguard and approbation of value and significance of marriage.

Furthermore, when wine was finished during the feast, Mary, the mother of Jesus asks him to intervene, Jesus responds that his hour has not yet come and calls her 'woman'. In this situation, 'woman' could mean Mary as the mother of the disciples (John 19: 26-27). 'Woman' could also be a symbolic representation of the church (Cf Revelation 12: 1-6). On the day when Jesus was crucified, when his hour had come 'woman' at the foot of the cross, implies the mother of the church (John 19: 25-27) as well as a bridal image of Jesus and the church. In this regard, therefore, Jesus affirms that his mother is intimately linked with his salvific mission as a woman (Cf Revelation 12: 1-6).

In the Gospel according to Mark 10: 2-12, Jesus introduces the sacramental character of marriage. When he was asked by the Pharisees whether it was right for a man to divorce his wife, his answer was an absolute prohibition as was the case in Malachi 2: 14-16. Jesus reiterated the divine hatred for divorce. He tells them that, from the beginning God made them male and female, and he said, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. So they are no longer two but one flesh. But what therefore God has joined together let no human being separate" (Mark 10: 7-9) In this way, Jesus somehow confirms that marriage is an institution of creation, in a way co-created with man and woman. Besides, Jesus affirms the natural equality of male and female and therefore of husband and wife in marriage. Our Lord thus restored marriage to its former and primal indissoluble unity

2.1.3. ST. PAUL

Paul in his letter to the Ephesians 5: 22-32, follows the prophetic imagery of the covenant between God and his people. He goes on to affirm that the union of a husband and wife is a union which parallels, imitates and participates in, so far as is possible, the closeness and love exchanged between Christ and his bride the church. The significance of this new relationship lifts marriage for all time into the realm where absolute love reigns, the love of Christ for his church. In so doing, Paul affirms the equality of male and female in the institution of marriage. Married couples therefore, have to love each other like the way Christ loved the church.

On the other hand, St. Paul's teaching on marriage is found in 1 Corinthians 7: 1ff. Paul affirms the legitimacy of marriage against ascetical movements such as Gnosticism and Manicheanism which regarded marriage as evil. Moreover, there was an undoubted influence from Greek thought, particularly Platonism and neo-platonism which saw the soul as imprisoned in the body. Life's goal for Greek thought was detachment from passion, and Epicurus declared that "*Nobody was ever the better for the carnal act and a man may be thankful if he was not definitely the worse*"²⁵. Paul furthermore teaches about the indissolubility of marriage (1Cor 7:10-11). Marriage of a believer and unbeliever can be broken only if the unbelieving spouse asks for it. Second marriage is condoned though better off if the widowed partner remains unmarried. Perfect chastity is ideal for any Christian.

²⁵ Pius XI, "Casti Connubii, *On Christian Marriage*," in Catholic Official Teaching, Love and Sexuality, ed. Liebard Odile. M (Carolina: McGraph Publication Company, 1978), 29.

2.2.0. THEOLOGICAL AND CANONICAL CONCEPTS OF CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

The Church documents also affirm that marriage was instituted by God and has a sacramental character. For instance, Pope Leo XIII in his Encyclical letter, *Arcanum Divine Sapientiae*, on Christian marriage, he says,

“The Origin of marriage, venerable brethren, is well known among all. When on the sixth day of creation God formed man out of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, it was his duty to give him a companion, whom he brought forth wonderfully from the side of man himself as he slept. And in this the design of God's providence was that this married pair should be the natural source of all mankind, and that from them the human race should be propagated, and, by uninterrupted course of procreation, be preserved to all time”²⁶.

In *Arcanum Divine Sapientiae*, Leo XIII re-emphasized the sacramental character of marriage which lies in monogamy. He even goes on to say, *“Marriage from its very institution was to be between two only, the husband and the wife, that of the two there was to be as it were one flesh; and that the nuptial bond was by the will of God so closely and strongly woven that it cannot be unloosed or broken by any among men”²⁷*. This concurs with Matthew 19:5-6, which says, “A man shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall be in one flesh. Therefore, now they are not two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no human being separate”. The Lord goes on to say, “Whoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, commits adultery, and he that marry her that is put away commits adultery” (Mt 19:9).

According to Leo XIII in *Arcanum Divine Sapientiae*, Christ our Lord raised matrimony to the dignity of a Christian sacrament. He ordained that married people guarded and protected by the celestial grace provided by His merits, should decree holiness from marriage

²⁶ Leo XIII, “*Arcanum Divine Sapientiae, On Christian Marriage*,” in *Catholic Official Teaching, Love and Sexuality*, ed. Liebard Odile. M (Carolina: McGraph Publication Company, 1978), 3.

²⁷ Leo XIII, *Arcanum*, 3.

itself, "and in it, in a manner wonderfully resembling the mystical union between Him and the church, he perfected the love which accords with nature and cemented the natural union of the man and woman more firmly in the bonds of Divine Charity"²⁸. This is in line with the letter of Paul to the Ephesians 5: 25, when he says, "Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church, and delivered himself up for it, that he may sanctify it".

As for Pope Pius XI, in his Encyclical letter, *Casti Connubi*, he talks about the blessings of marriage. He says, "Among the blessings of marriage, the child holds first place. And indeed the creator of human race Himself, who in his goodness wished to use men as his helpers in propagation of life, taught this when, instituting marriage in paradise, he said to our first parents, through them to all future spouses, "Increase and multiply, and through them fill the earth"²⁹. On the other hand, Pius XI challenges couples saying, the "blessing of offspring is not complete by the mere begetting of them, but something else must be added, the proper education of the offspring"³⁰. The second blessing of matrimony is the blessing of conjugal honour which consists in the mutual fidelity of the spouses in fulfilling the marriage contract. Pius XI also points to the sacramental character of marriage. Besides, he discourages divorce.

Pope Pius XI says,

*"Marriage as a sacrament, besides the firmness and indissolubility, there are also much higher emoluments as the word sacrament itself very aptly indicates, for the Christians this is not a meaningless and empty name. Christ the Lord, by the institutor and perfecter of the holy sacraments, by raising the matrimony of his faithful to the true sacrament of the new law, made it a sign and source of that peculiar interior grace by which it perfects natural love, it confirms an indissoluble union and sanctifies both man and wife"*³¹.

²⁸ Leo XIII, *Arcanum*, 3.

²⁹ Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, 27.

³⁰ Pius XI, *Connubii*, 28.

³¹ Pius XI, *Connubii*, 36.

2.2.1. VATICAN II AND MARRIAGE

Through the Second Vatican Council, “the Catholic theology of marriage has shifted from a contractual emphasis on marriage to understanding of marriage as a covenant”³² . It is a covenant between the bride and bridegroom which is centred on mutual love between the spouses. In mutual love, the spouses themselves, who are created in the image of the living God and constituted in an authentic personal dignity, are united in equal affection, agreement of mind, and mutual holiness. For this reason, though children are still very important in marriage, mutual love of the partners embraces all the fundamental aspects of marriage. *Gaudium et Spes* 50 states that,

*“...But marriage is not merely for the procreation of children: Its nature as an indissoluble compact between two people and the good of children demand that the mutual love of the partners be properly shown, that it should grow and mature. Even in cases where despite intense desire of the spouses, there are no children, marriage still retains its character of being a whole manner and communion of life and preserves its value and indissolubility”*³³

Actually, the Second Vatican council, in *Gaudium et Spes* 48-51, summarizes marriage as a community of love, and intimate partnership of life and marital love, a sacred bond, a marital covenant which is not breakable, and a Christian vocation.

2.2.2. CELEBRATION OF MARRIAGE

Sacramental marriage, unlike African customary marriage, is contracted by means of the word which is a sacramental sign by reason of its content: “I take you as my wife - as my husband- and I promise to be always faithful to you, in joy and in sorrow, in sickness and in health, and I love you and honour you all the days of my life”. However, this sacramental word, per se, is merely a sign of the coming into being of marriage. It is not

³² Kenneth W. Stevenson, To join together: The right of Marriage (New York: Pueblo Publication Company, 1987), 117.

³³ GS, 50.

yet consummated. (*Ratum - non consummatum*). It can only be fulfilled by means of conjugal intercourse. It is the couple themselves who administer the sacrament to one another by their mutual consent. However, consented marriage but not consummated, although sacramental, can be dissolved, but after consummation, sacramental marriage is absolutely indissoluble.

2.3.0. THE MAGISTERIUM AND CUSTOMARY MARRIAGE

The Church like any other institution has got many doctrines as regards issues concerning her organisation. It is no wonder then that the church has a stand regarding matrimony. In the Catechism of the catholic church, she teaches that, "*Since marriage establishes the couple in a public state of life in the church, it is fitting that its celebration be public, in the framework of liturgical celebration, before a priest (or a witness authorised by the church), the two witnesses and the assembly of the faithful*"³⁴.

2.3.1. PASTORAL PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM CHURCH MARRIAGES

The Church teaching on marriage though explicitly stated, poses a few pastoral problems to the understanding of marriage among the *Lozi* as much as it is in most African countries. The church recognises natural and mixed marriages to be valid and a means by which God channels his grace to married couples but she does not consider them as sacramental in a Christian sense. And that creates a parish pastoral problem of "exclusion" already. What is commonly seen in parishes is that, only parishioners whose marriages are blessed in the Church have a greater participation in church matters and feel at home. What implications has it on couples who are not married in the church, who are still undertaking their marriages in stages to allow it to progress and grow into perfection? What about polygamist who manifest

³⁴ CCC, 1663.

real faith and are faithful to church functions, contribute generously to the well being of the church, more zealous and serious in trying to live Christian life? However, what is true is that, in the churches, these Christians are excluded from receiving sacraments especially Holy communion, not necessarily by the church but by themselves. The heart of the matter is that, any baptized Christian either single, monogamist or polygamist is invited by the church to have a faith response in Christ through the teaching and demands of the Church. As a result, in some parishes, those who are not married in the church do not hold church positions such as Parish Coordinator, Parish Chairperson or even marriage counsellor although some of them have the skill and the talent to hold such kind of positions. For this reason, therefore, it is not the church who is excluding some members from the sacraments but it is themselves.

Besides, though the *“Concept of marriage coming about as a result of a single contractual expression of consent and the act of marital intercourse, reduced to one sole event, happening at a fixed moment, and accomplished once and for all (living happily thereafter) is extremely queer in many African minds”*³⁵, because in most of the African cultures, marriage has to undergo so many rituals such as the birth of the first child, completion of payment of *lobola* before it can finally be recognised as marriage, some African Christians should be catechised on the importance and seriousness of church marriage commitment. As long as they are members of the Catholic Church they should manifest their faith by also adhering to the teaching of the Church on marriage. Marriage is for life, therefore, they have to make a concrete decision either to marry or not to marry.

³⁵ Beatus A. Kitururu, “The excluded from the communion as a challenge to African community,” *AFER* 1-4 (1995): 20.

2.3.2. POSSIBLE SUGGESTIONS ON SACRAMENTAL MARRIAGES

However, the church can emphasise the seriousness of canon Law 1112: The marriage without the presence of a priest or a deacon. But the presence of delegated lay Christians or of the Christian community would be enough to signify the church's acceptance of their commitment. This goes well with the African value of community mindedness, "*I am because we are, and since we are therefore I am*"³⁶. For this reason, Christians who are not participating fully in church sacraments especially the Eucharist because their marriages are not blessed in the Church should be given a thorough catechism on marriage so that they can respond in faith to the demands of the Church. Eventually, they might find themselves through their faith response, participating fully like some of the fellow African Christians in the sacraments of the Church.

It is true that some believing Christians in the Catholic Church are unable to participate fully in a Christian worship. Surprisingly, the same Christians are allowed to offer gifts on Sundays, to make monthly financial contributions, to clean the Church and to do all sorts of manual work. In some cases, their children cannot be baptized and themselves cannot receive Holy Communion, which is the centre of the Eucharistic celebration. It is also true that in the Eucharistic celebration "*Christ gives himself to each individual believer as a whole. He is not giving something of himself but giving himself in the gift*"³⁷. For this reason, therefore, some Africans such as the *Lozi* as long as they are Christians should also have a faith response to the teaching and demands of the church especially on matters regarding marriage. This will enable them participate fully in church sacraments such as the Eucharist since for them,

³⁶ John S. Mbiti, African Religions and Philosophy (Nairobi: East Africa Education Press, 1999), 108.

³⁷ Mbiti, Religions, 18-19.

“everybody is included in a meal even the enemy, leave alone the question of the person we differ in opinions or points of view on fundamental issues”³⁸.

Besides, for many Africans like the *Lozi*, the Eucharist acts as a symbol of healing and reconciliation. As Fernando Domingues says, *“this reconciliation and community building includes the commitment to the transformation of the whole society, also at the economic and political levels, in the direction of that fullness of life and reconciliation Sacramentally anticipated in the Eucharist”³⁹*. That being the case, some African Christians should continue being catechised on the importance of Church marriage and they in turn through a faith response, should respond wholeheartedly to the teaching and demand of the church. In that way, they will be part of the covenantal communality of the Church.

2.4.0. PASTORAL SITUATION IN LOZILAND

The pastoral activities in *Loziland* are adversely limited by scarcity of both missionaries and lay evangelisers. For instance, in Livingstone diocese as of 1999, there were only “27 priests, of which 6 of them were diocesans, 4 Brothers, 40 Sisters and 15 Seminarians”⁴⁰, who were being assisted by lay coordinators in the pastoral field. How can such small number of ministers be effective in a vast area? To make the matters worse, even the few ministers who are involved in ministries such as marriage counselling are not permanent. They can be transferred from one parish to another by their superiors or the Bishop whenever a need arises, leaving the urgent pastoral care of the couples behind without anybody to take over or leaving it someone with scant knowledge of the ministry.

³⁸ Mbiti, *Religions*, 20.

³⁹ Fernando Domingues, *Christ our Healer, A theological dialogue with Aylward Shorter* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications, 2000), 102.

⁴⁰ Vincent Cichecki, *Zambia Catholic Directory* (Ndola: Mission Press, 1999), 116.

Moreover, due to the limited personnel, there is very little scriptural and catechetical teaching given for the Christians to have a good theological foundation of their faith. How can the church expect the Christians to understand their marriage in terms of a covenant relationship of Christ with the church? There are very few lay ministers who are trained to study the issues of inculturation, especially as regards marriage. These ministers or marriage counsellors could accompany couples from the time of their engagement, marriage and post marriage if trained well. But, what is seriously emphasized in our parishes is sacramental marriages and excluding those who cannot abide by it from the sacraments. But the sacramental marriages seem to be foreign to the *Lozi* as well as to most of the Africans. Christians fail to understand the relevance of church marriages to their own lives, “*as the woman in the evangelical church remarked: Christianity does not mean to marry in the church*”⁴¹. On the other hand, “*the contrast between church ceremony and customary marriage is striking. Nobody in the local community is likely to miss a customary marriage. Relatives and friends travel immense distance to be present*”⁴².

We believe therefore that the Church in *Loziland* like in most of the African societies should make a very big step to study, incorporate and ritualise stages such as, engagement of couples, payment of *lobola*, wedding day and the birth of the child in a customary marriage into sacramental marriage otherwise church marriage would still continue to be vague and irrelevant to most of the African couples. The church ministers should consider seriously that among the *Lozi* as is the case in most of the Africans societies that,

“The real celebration of marriage is the social celebration in the community itself, not the ritual conducted by the priest or the pastor in the church building. The church ceremony is conducted in unimpressive circumstances before a handful of people, and it apparently bears no relation to the customary celebration which follows it. Quite

⁴¹ Kisembo et al, Marriage, 215.

⁴² Kisembo et al, Marriage, 213.

*clearly, majority of African Christians regard the church ceremony as meaningless preliminary which must be gone through in order not to incur displeasure of the church authorities*⁴³.

2.5.0. POSSIBLE WAYS OF GIVING PASTORAL CARE TO COUPLES INVOLVED IN LOZI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGES

The couples involved in *Lozi* traditional marriages, as is the case in most of the African societies, should be considered by the church with greater love, respect and understanding. The church should strive at helping these couples in their journey of faith so that they could experience the love of God. Those practising polygamous should continue being treated with love and respect while they are under a thorough catechetical teaching on marriage.

The Church could also incorporate the public forms essential for the acceptance of customary marriage into her ritual. This “will consist such things as the consent not only of the parties but of the elders given in a meeting, the payment of a first instalment of bridewealth, the ceremony of transferring the bride. So long as those do not violate any basic human rights, do not contradict the nature of marriage as Christians understand it, and in the eyes of the local people are clearly sufficient to constitute the two man and wife, then they can and should be accepted by the church”⁴⁴. It is the onus of the church to give a blessing to the couples in each of the above stages and start seriously giving instructions to them as regards marriage.

Moreover, childless couples “*following the spirit of the New Testament teaching, they should be brought to understand that the childless union is a sign of authentic married love and it is creative in innumerable ways*”⁴⁵. They should stop blaming each other for lack of a

⁴³ Kisémbó et al, Marriage, 213.

⁴⁴ Adrian Hastings, Christian Marriage in Africa (London: SPCK, 1973), 71-72.

⁴⁵ Kisémbó et al, Marriage, 116.

child. Besides, “they must be encouraged to have a deeper prayer life, in which, through setting their minds on God’s kingdom, the problem of childlessness loses its overwhelming importance for them”⁴⁶. Children in marriage are very important but love and mutual understanding between the couples are fundamental in marriage.

We have been tracing the historical background of Christian marriage. Firstly, we tried to see what the magisterium says about marriage. Then we proceeded to the scriptures, mainly the Old Testament on creation stories, New Testament about what our Lord Jesus and Saint Paul say regarding marriage. After that, we have tried to find out the theological and canonical concepts of Christian marriage. This is taken from the encyclical letters, *Arcanum Divine Sapientiae* by Pope Leo XIII, and *Casti Connubii* by Pope Pius XI. Then we explained how the magisterium views customary marriage. In the Vatican II documents, *Gaudium et Spes*, we have realised how the magisterium has shifted her understanding of marriage from a contract to a covenant of love between the two partners. Marriage is now seen as community of love, marital love, a marital covenant which is not breakable, an intimate partnership of life, a mutual gift of two persons, a sacred bond and a Christian vocation. Finally, we have seen the pastoral situation in *Loziland*. And we have made some possible suggestions about how we can give pastoral care to couples involved in *Lozi* traditional marriage. Now, let us turn to the next chapter to discuss the impact of Christianity on *Lozi* traditional marriage system.

⁴⁶ Kisembo et al, Marriage, 116.

CHAPTER THREE
THE IMPACT OF CHRISTIANITY ON *LOZI* TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE
SYSTEM

3.1.0. MISSIONARIES AND *LOZI* TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE PRACTICES

When Missionaries arrived in *Loziland* around 1891, to preach the word of God, one of the issues they encountered was the *Lozi* traditional marriage system. They realised that monogamous marriage was practised, marriages involving both families of the bride and the bridegroom. Divorce was not common since families protected and respected the institution of marriage.

However, polygamy was practised. When a man realised that his wife was barren, he could get permission from her to marry another lady. In some cases, if the woman was barren, the husband could divorce her, and if she was a virgin at the time of marriage, then the husband would get back half of bridewealth/lobola. If a *Lozi* man dies his kinsmen have no rights to keep his wives. The wife or wives of the deceased husband are free either to stay within the family with their children or go back to their families and decide to marry whoever they wish to. On the hand, if the wife who decides to remain within the family of her late husband is hard working and respectful, and if she has some children with her late husband, she is free to marry his brother, or a resident uterine nephew, so as to prevent the children from being drawn from their paternal home. This marriage, however, is regarded as a new marriage, for which a new marriage payment must be given and the children born of it are of the new husband.

Though the *Lozi* do not practice sororate marriages, in certain instances, if someone's wife dies, "*the parents might of their own good heart, if they approved of him, give him another*

*sister to replace the dead wife or he might beg for one*⁴⁷. In this case, the man is not obliged to pay any cattle for this marriage. In a situation where a wife dies and she leaves a child, the man had no right to beg for one. If he wishes to marry her sister, *“he had to pay marriage cattle again”*⁴⁸. If the wife dies childless, no cattle or bridewealth for marriage is returned. Actually, even on divorce, *“the beast given for a non virgin does not return; one of the two beasts given for a virgin returns if she has not conceived, for instance, the husband loses the rights to it”*⁴⁹.

Among the *Lozi* as is the case in most of the African communities, *“the woman gets no rights of ownership of cattle and fields allotted her by her husband, save during her marriage, she has rights of holding which vest through her in her sons. She does not own property”*⁵⁰. Furthermore, *“as soon as the husband dies the widow loses rights to land at his home. She takes half the planted and reaped crops, but even if she has the children in the village and elects to remain with them, the general heir is not bound to give her land to cultivate herself”*⁵¹. This is the type of marriage environment which early missionaries encountered when they arrived in *Loziland*.

3.2.0. MISSIONARY MODEL OF EVANGELIZATION

When the missionaries arrived among the *Lozi*, they did not seek to apply the sound *Lozi* marriage practices in their evangelization of the gospel. The missionaries overlooked the *Lozi* cultural dimension of marriage in their proclamation of the Word of God and their teaching of marriage. The spirit of the church and missionaries around this time of primary evangelization

⁴⁷ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 188.

⁴⁸ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 188.

⁴⁹ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 188.

⁵⁰ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 196.

⁵¹ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 197.

in Africa, particularly in *Loziland*, was to differentiate what they considered to be civil from that what they considered to be religious. They even condemned some of the sound *Lozi* traditional practices. The Missionaries' sole ambition was to implant the Catholic Church in *Loziland*. However, they did all these things not in bad faith but out of pastoral concern for the church and converts.

The Christian Missionaries in their proclamation of the Word of God aimed at helping the *Lozi* live a coordinated and Christian life. For this reason, the Christian missionaries made immense efforts in putting up Catholic Institutions such as schools, health and social centres in the whole of *Loziland*, from which catechism was taught and Bible study was emphasized, aimed at conversion of its students and the local people to Christianity and particularly Catholicism. These catholic institutions became famous for both academic excellence and provision of spiritual growth in Christianity. Besides, a good number of these missionaries, for instance, *Albert Jalla*, wrote some books on the *Lozi* tradition as well as marriage.

From the time the missionaries came to *Zambia vis-à-vis Loziland*, Christianity has grown a lot due to the catholic institutions which they established from which they taught and preached catholicism. For instance, statistics show us that, "in 1980, 72% of Zambia's population was estimated to be Christian with a growth rate of 4.2% among Christian churches as compared with the overall population growth rate of 3.1%"⁵². As a result of Christianity, there is a steady increase of marriage in *Zambia, vis-à-vis Loziland*. For example, "in the research made in 1990, it shows that 26% of the people had their marriage blessed in the church. In a sub-sample, 45% of those between 20 and 35 stated that they were

⁵² Brendan Carmody, "The influence of the Catholic Church on Zambians," *AFER* 38 (1996): 341.

married in the church. Of those who were not married, 60% felt that they would like to marry in the church. 84% agreed that marriage is for life”⁵³

3.3.0. THE EXPERIENCES FROM OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS LOZI

In all the African societies, including the *Lozi*, a woman is seen as sacred vessel of life. The woman is a carrier of both male and female life. Actually, some of the proverbs of the Tshonga and Shangana of South Africa say that, “*to beget a woman is to beget a man*”⁵⁴. This implies that, a female child gives hope for the continuity of the family and clan because male and female children will be born from her. Besides, the same proverb indicates that a man and a woman are equal and are meant for each other.

Apart from the Tshonga and Shangana of South Africa who revere a woman, the Gikuyu ethnic group in Kenya, in one of their proverbs say that, “*a woman must not be killed*”⁵⁵. A woman is regarded as a mother of life, therefore, to kill her is to kill children, consequently to eradicate the whole humanity. For this reason, a woman should be given her due respect by the entire community since she is the mother of the whole humanity.

3.3.1. CONCEPT OF MARRIAGE IN SOME COMMUNITIES IN KENYA

Like the *Lozi*, the Maasai of Kenya, “understand marriage to be a life long partnership between a man and a woman, or women. The Maasai society is polygamous although monogamy is practised by individuals, at will. The purpose of marriage for the Maasai is generally for the continuity of the family, clan and society more than anything else. Both

⁵³ Carmody, *Catholic*, 358.

⁵⁴ Ann S. Nasimiyu, “The Church: Enabling and Empowering of Women in Africa,” *African Christian Studies*, 1-4 (1995): 4.

⁵⁵ Nasimiyu, *Women*, 4.

Christian and Maasai marriage involve a life long relationship, heterosexual in nature and outside bloodties”⁵⁶

For the Nandi of Kenya, as is the case in most of the African societies such as the *Lozi*, “Marriage is sacred, therefore, it is a life long partnership which is indissoluble, even in death. A Nandi widow can never re-marry”⁵⁷. But the Nandi on the other hand, practice polygamy on some special cases. The Nandi practice polygamy out of necessity because they believe that no woman will remain unmarried for her lifetime and every girl has the right to be married.

Furthermore, unlike the *Lozi*, for the Luo ethnic group in Kenya, “it was expected that men would marry more than one wife. A man with one wife is compared to mono-eyed man”⁵⁸. For the Luo, there is less equality between the man and woman in marriage. As we have already realised, polygamy is seen as the ideal form of marriage, which is generally permitted and even encouraged even by the women involved in the union themselves. One of the reasons why the Luo practice polygamy, they say, “is to control women. They think that one wife will be rude to her husband”⁵⁹. Apart from polygamy, the Luo practice wife inheritance. The woman continues to be part of the community to which she is married even after the death of her husband.

3.3.2. HOW SOME TRADITIONAL PROVERBS DEPICT WOMEN

Despite the fact that some proverbs in most of the African traditional societies depict women as sacred and custodians of the human race, in the same communities such as the *Lozi* consequently consider women to be untrustworthy or equivalent to children. For instance,

⁵⁶ Bryson J. Arthur, *A Theology of Sexuality and Marriage* (Nairobi: UZIMA Press, 1998), 43-45.

⁵⁷ Arthur, *Theology*, 47.

⁵⁸ Grace Wamue and Mary Getui, eds., *Violence against women* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 1996), 17.

⁵⁹ Wamue and Getui, *Women*, 17.

among the *Lozi* there is a proverb which says, “*Sakufa musali ki sa kusinya*”⁶⁰, which means that, if a man gives a gift to woman, he has wasted that gift. Among the Kipsigis of Kenya, they say that, “do not let a wife know about the cow that is kept by a friend”⁶¹. They believe that women cannot keep a secret. For that reason, men/husbands should not let their wives know some of the secret things which they are doing. Furthermore, the Gikuyu also say that, “Women have no upright words but crooked ones”⁶². They believe that women are not modest in their speech. That being the case, women cannot be trusted to keep secrets. They can easily reveal secrets to other people who are not supposed to know them. But for us, we believe that women can be trusted and relied upon. After all, both men and women are created in the image of God. Both men and women can think and make proper Judgement, unless they have mental problems, therefore sick.

3.4.0. CHRISTIAN IMAGE OF WOMAN AS MOTHER

According to Pope John II, “the Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the feminine genius, and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the ‘handmaid of the Lord’ (Lk1:38). Through obedience to the word of God, she accepted her lofty yet not easy vocation as wife and mother of the family of Nazareth”⁶³. It is therefore, an onus of all the women in African traditional societies such as the *Lozi* to draw inspiration from Mary as an ideal model of motherhood. But this inspiration can not be achieved only by the women themselves but by the entire society which should change its mentality on the way it views women, such as women are untrustworthy and are less equal to men as we have seen in some of the African traditional proverbs.

⁶⁰ Sikuka, *Wedding*, 88.

⁶¹ Wamue and Getui, *Women*, 16.

⁶² Wamue and Getui, *Women*, 16.

⁶³ John Paul II, *The Pope Speaks to Women* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 1996), 22.

Furthermore, in some of the African societies such as the *Lozi*, men are encouraged to marry as many women as they can. But in the same communities, specifically the *Lozi*, do not allow women to own property. Besides, in some societies, women are cleansed forcefully and inherited by the relatives of their diseased husbands.

Among the *Lozi* as well as in most of the African societies, “profound changes are needed in the attitudes and organization of society in order to facilitate the participation of women in public life, while at the same time providing for the special obligations of men and women with regard to families. In some cases, changes have also to be made to render it possible for women to have access to property and to the management of their assets”⁶⁴. The *Lozi* society should allow women to inherit and own property. Men and women in our parishes should cooperate with the Justice and peace coordinators in their efforts in making aware of the issues affecting women. In so doing, the *Lozi* community would indeed strengthen the woman’s role in the family while at the same time making it possible for her to maximize her talents and exercise all her rights in shaping up the *Lozi* community.

We have been examining the impact of Christianity on the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices from the time missionaries arrived in *Loziland*. We have realized that when missionaries arrived in *Loziland*, they concluded that some of the marriage practices of the *Lozi* were not compatible with Christianity. In their model of evangelization, the missionaries did not wish to incorporate the good aspects of the *Lozi* traditional marriage systems into that of Christianity. Inculturation in the church at this period of evangelization was unheard off. They even termed whatever *Lozi* marriage traditional practice as pagan. However, to make sure that Christianity reaches all the people, the missionaries built catholic institutions such as schools, health centres and churches where Catholic faith was taught and preached. The

⁶⁴ Paul II, *Women*, 22.

schools missionaries built provided education to the people. The local people understood the different aspects of Christian life that the missionaries brought through evangelization. Education rather facilitated the process of evangelization. For that reason, from 1980, statistics show that Christianity had grown numerically in Zambia especially *Loziland* and the Christians were more aware of the sacramental marriages and the rights of women.

We have also been looking at how other communities consider marriage, view and regard women as depicted in some of the African traditional proverbs. We have ended by looking at the Christian image of a woman as a mother. Now let us turn to our last chapter to see what should be inculturated in the *Lozi* traditional marriage systems.

CHAPTER IV

INCULTURATION OF THE LOZI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE PRACTICES

4.1.0. INCULTURATION: GOSPEL MODEL

Every culture, be it European, Asian or African such as *Lozi* has to have sound and meaningful Christian life. However, for that culture to achieve an authentic Christian life, it has to be transformed by the Gospel message in the light of the passion and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Cultural transformation can mainly be achieved through inculturation. Inculturation is a challenge in every culture. In this regard, inculturation means, “*precisely the insertion of the Gospel message into cultures, just as Jesus came among us and lived in a particular culture*”⁶⁵. What is really encouraging to us and to our cultures is that our Lord Jesus Christ set us a good example. Jesus “*challenged his culture wherever it was wrong and unjust. In the same way, a 'grain of wheat has to die to bear much fruit', some parts of our cultures have to die to come to new life*”⁶⁶. For this reason, as a challenge for inculturation to the Church in Africa, Pope Paul VI in Kampala, Uganda in 1969 said, “*you may and you must have an African Christianity*”⁶⁷. African Christianity can mainly be achieved by the Africans themselves with the help of anthropologists conversant with African cultures. Africans such as the *Lozi* should become protagonists of their own faith through active evangelization. Evangelization should liberate the African cultures like the *Lozi* from any evils inhibiting them to live an authentic Christian life.

For this reason, commenting on inculturation, Fr. Shorter says, “*Inculturation, therefore, is an inseparable aspect of evangelization. It means the presentation and re-expression of the Gospel in the forms and terms proper to a culture – processes which result in the re-interpretation of both, without being unfaithful to either*”⁶⁸.

⁶⁵ AMECEA, ed., The African Synod Comes Home (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 1995), 28.

⁶⁶ AMECEA, ed., Synod, 68.

⁶⁷ Paul VI, “Discourse at the close of the first plenary assembly of the symposium of the Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar” (SECAM), AAS 61 (1969): 575.

⁶⁸ Walter Von Holzen and Sean Fagan, eds, Africa: The Kairos of a Synod, Sedos Symposium on Africa (Rome: April-May, 1994), 10.

4.2.0. THE GOSPEL ENCOUNTERS THE LOZI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

If the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices should be a process by which the *Lozi* themselves respond to the saving word of God and the means by which they express their response to God in their own cultural forms of worship, then they should be inculturated.

Firstly, the *Lozi* like other African cultures, over-stress the need of child-bearing instead of emphasizing the significance of marital love in marriage. This stress is usually seen when a *Lozi* dies. When a *Lozi* dies childless, his/her relatives will put a cold charcoal in his/her anus to signify that he/has been cursed, therefore, he/she will not enter the realm of the ancestors. The aspect of bearing children becomes burdensome and even a source of divorce, especially to women who are barren. In this regard, "a woman is valued mainly as a bearer of children and in particular sons. Little girls are already viewed in terms of their future marriages"⁶⁹. As a result, "a girl can not be given enough education for her survival as an individual (not as a married person), for according to culture, she will soon be married"⁷⁰. This has led to so many illiterate women in *Loziland* as much as it is in most of the African countries. Furthermore, "at home, a daughter becomes subjected to the authority of the parents, the father in particular. Marriage arrangements may in some cases be made on her behalf.... She is not an asset for it is assumed that she will soon get married"⁷¹.

Secondly, the practice by which the man has to prove to his family and that of his bride that he is sexually satisfied by his bride's sexual performance. If the man is "fully satisfied by his bride's sexual performance, they would find some money either by door side, or on the

⁶⁹ Buti Tlhagale et al, Inculturation in the South African Context (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 2000), 70.

⁷⁰ Tlhagale, Inculturation, 66.

⁷¹ Tlhagale, Inculturation, 67.

bed, under the pillow or all corners of the house depending on how the man was instructed”⁷² has to be challenged by the Gospel. This practice and that by which a man proves her “bride’s virginity”⁷³, by piercing a tree have to be discarded because they both dehumanise and violate the rights of the bride as much as that of women.

Thirdly, the following marriage practices have to be challenged by the Gospel message too. (i) “*Kutobisa/ Elopement*”⁷⁴. The man runs away with the woman without her parents’ consent. Marriage as an institution in Africa involves families of both the man and the woman, therefore, there is no way a man and a woman can form a marriage without blessings from their families.

(ii) “*Kuyanga/Elopeing*”⁷⁵ with someone’s wife. This practice leads to many tensions and death in the community. It is an injustice done by a man to another man. Furthermore, adultery is a serious crime against marriage. The man whose wife has eloped with another man can easily kill the man who has eloped with his wife. This practice can also lead to the spread of AIDS.

(iii) “*Libali/Polygamy*”⁷⁶ has to continue being challenged by the Gospel. Polygamists have to be told that, though they think that polygamy is good, monogamy is better. The marital love of a polygamists is centred on more than one wife, therefore, he has divided attention. He cannot love both wives wholeheartedly at the same time. This has led to so many tensions among the wives. It is also very difficult for the man to fend properly for the needs of more than one wife in these hard economic times. Besides, if the husband is HIV positive, he might spread the virus to all his wives and they will all also die.

⁷² Yizenge, *Marriages*, 35.

⁷³ Mbiti, *Religions*, 141.

⁷⁴ Yizenge, *Marriages*, 39.

⁷⁵ Yizenge, *Marriages*, 39.

⁷⁶ Mbiti, *Religions*, 141.

(iv) Sororate marriage. In Sororate marriage practice, if the man's wife dies, *"the parents of their own good heart, if they approved of him, give him another sister to replace the dead wife or he might beg for one"*⁷⁷. Women either among the *Lozi* or in any African country, should be empowered to have much say on issues pertaining to them. They have the right to refuse sororate marriages. Besides, sororate marriages can greatly contribute to the spread of AIDS. If the elder sister died of AIDS, the younger sister can also get AIDS through the already infected husband. For this reason, sororate marriages, therefore, have to be outlawed.

Despite the fact that Christianity has been in *Loziland* for more than a hundred years, Christian message has not yet had much impact on the *Lozi* as regards the rights of women in marriage. The predicament of the *Lozi* women though slightly better is almost like those of their counterparts in the early centuries of christian era. As Mary Daly says,

*"Women in the early centuries of Christian era – had a girlhood of strict seclusion and of minimal education which prepared them for the life of mindless subordinates. This was followed by an early marriage, which effectively cut them off for the rest of their lives from the possibility of autonomous action. Valued chiefly for their reproductive organs, which also inspired horror, and despised for their ignorance, they were denied full personhood. Their inferiority was a fact, it appeared to be 'natural'"*⁷⁸.

For this reason, therefore, it is through inculturation that the Gospel message can challenge some of the marriage practices of the *Lozi* as well as those in some African countries that do not empower women to recognise their rights on matters of marriage and uphold those practice that are compatible with Christian message.

⁷⁷ Gluckman, *Marriage*, 188.

⁷⁸ Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex* (New York: Harper and Row, 1975), 87.

4.3.0. INCULTURATION: AN AUTHENTIC MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

The rite of marriage to be fully incarnated in the Church in Africa would most speedily and effectively be done by the production of an indigeneous African Christian Rite. This must be done by the Africans themselves since they are already inserted into their own cultures with the help of anthropologists and theologians conversant with the African culture. The *Lozi* should come up with their own inculturated marriage Rite through which human rights of women are respected. The families are enabled to realise the word of God and attain salvation. The *Lozi* marriage Rite should enable the *Lozi* couples to solemnize their marriages through it. This is in accordance with the directives given by the second Vatican Ecumenical Council, which states that,

*“Each conference of Bishops may draw its own marriage rite suited to the usage of the place and approved by the Apostolic See. A necessary condition, however, is that the Priest assisting at such marriages must ask and receive the consent of the contracting parties and the nuptial blessing should always be given”*⁷⁹.

Since the African church especially the church in *Loziland* is still searching through the *Lozi* protagonists for an authentic inculturated marriage rite, the “magisterial church must be led to go from the known to the unknown marriage patterns in Africa, amenable to Christianity, to the form of African Christian marriage of our dream”⁸⁰.

⁷⁹ Allan Bouley, ed., *Catholic Rites Today* (Minnesota: The Liturgical Year Press, 1985), no. 17, 434.

⁸⁰ Kris N. Owan, “African Marriage and Family Patterns: Towards Inculturative Evangelization,” in *African Christian studies* 11 (1995): 14.

4. 3. 1. FACTORS THAT NEED CONSIDERATION IN THE EVENT OF PRODUCING AN AFRICAN CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE RITE SUCH AS THE LOZI

Firstly, the new rite should incorporate all the stages which lead to marriage in an African traditional practice in order for it to be meaningful and well understood by the local people. This marriage rite should include stages such as Engagement and the exchange of gifts, payment of *bridewealth/lobola*, marriage consummation and the birth of the first child.

Secondly, an African Christian Rite that would involve actively monogamists and gives catechetical to polygamists on the importance of monogamous marriage in relation to their faith as Christians. Polygamists should continue being treated with much love and respect so that they can mature in their search for an authentic Christian faith.

Thirdly, the church should continue taking care of her polygamists, either baptized or not, so long as they claim to belong to the church and they actively participate in church functions. Those who are not yet baptised should be enrolled in catechumanate classes where they are taught the love of God, church sacraments and the good of monogamous marriages.

4.4.0. MISSION AND INCULTURATION OF LOZI TRADITIONAL MARRIAGE

The first missionaries to dedicate their time and lives to the evangelization of *Loziland* as well as Zambia as a whole were the Jesuits and the Capuchin Franciscans. Their first missionary attempt in 1880 to evangelize *Loziland* was marked by “refusal by the local kings to allow them to establish catholic churches, sickness, death, and mishap”⁸¹. For instance, when two Jesuits missionaries, Fr. Teroerde and Br. Vervenne, travelling from Pandamatenga south of the Victoria falls crossed and began to construct their first Catholic mission station in

⁸¹ Cichecki, *Zambia*, 83.

Loziland, even before the building was complete, they were struck by fever”⁸². Fr Teroerde died on the 15th September, 1880 while Br. Vervenne was rescued and taken back to Pandamatenga from *Loziland* while he was still suffering from severe fever.

Furthermore, Fr. Berghegge, Br. De Velder and Br. Simonis went to Lealui in *Loziland*. Unfortunately, Br De Velder was drowned in the Zambezi River at Katima Mulilo. Besides, King Lewanika influenced by Francois Coillard whose Paris Evangelical Missionaries were established in Lealui, refused a Catholic mission in his kingdom. Indeed, “the Jesuit mission was dogged by misfortune. By 1883, eight of the twenty two men involved had died and many more were sick”⁸³. However, the Jesuits managed to establish a mission in Livingstone within *Loziland* only in 1905. The arrival of the Capuchin Fathers in 1931 gave a new impetus to evangelization in *Loziland*.

Christianity developed mainly at first by establishing schools in which catechism was taught. Eventually Christianity flourished through education and pastoral work. The first converts were educated, baptized and married in the missions. At this time, there was not much inculturation in liturgical celebration. Evangelization of the Lozi culture and customs only came after Vatican II.

For the *Lozi* to have a well inculturated marriage rite, the *Lozi* communities should be catechised on the importance of the present day marriage rite. The *Lozi* have to understand that marriage is dynamic and requires a faith response by all Christians who undertake it. This wedding rite composed by the *Lozi* themselves, approved by the Zambia Episcopal Conference (ZEC) and the Holy See must show that a Christian marriage is a vehicle of salvation. The entire *Lozi* community should be well educated about the inculturated *Lozi*

⁸² O’Shea, *Missionaries*, 88.

⁸³ O’Shea, *Missionaries*, 89.

marriage Rite. Inculturation, as we have already mentioned, should be spearheaded by the *Lozi* themselves, especially those who are well versed in their customs and traditions and to the Episcopal conference to come up with “the marriage rite suited to the people”⁸⁴. Moreover, the Zambia Episcopal Conference can make use of the ‘**Marriage Encounter Movement**’ in the parishes in *Loziland*. The aim of the Marriage Encounter Movement is to “renew the church through a better and a deeper understanding of the sacrament of matrimony and the sacrament of the Holy Orders. To discover the joy of love and being loved. This is done through marriage encounter weekends, a unique-experience which prepares married couples for a better understanding of the church as a family”⁸⁵.

4.5.0. INCULTURATION OF MARRIAGE AND EDUCATION

In order to inculturate adequately the *Lozi* traditional marriage practice, the laity and the clergy have to collaborate to serve the whole community and the local church. In the African Synod documents we are told that, “such a model of being church, the hierarchical, clerical, institutional aspects of the church are organized and are seen as truly serving the community, empowering the laity to take up their roles in all aspects of the church – from decision making to implementation”⁸⁶.

The clergy with the help of the laity and theologians, should make use of their theological knowledge to come up with a comprehensive marriage catechism which can be taught in schools, Colleges, Universities, Small Christian Communities in the parishes and in Marriage Encounter groups. These groups should frequently evaluate the inculturated marriage rite and give feed back to the Zambia Episcopal Conference so that their suggestions and changes made to the marriage rite are incorporated into the new catechism of the Rite

⁸⁴ Bouley, *Rites*, 434.

⁸⁵ Cichecki, *Zambia*, 96.

⁸⁶ Browne Maura, ed., *The African Synod, Documents, Reflections, Perspectives* (New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 15.

regarding the *Lozi* marriage. The new marriage catechism should enable students, parishioners, engaged couples and married couples to discover Christ in it and be transformed by it. Besides, the new marriage rite should uphold the dignity of women in marriage.

The catechism on the inculturated *Lozi* marriage rite should be promoted by the Zambia Episcopal Conference so that it is incorporated into school curriculum starting from secondary schools, Colleges and Universities apart from parishes, so that this rite is well understood by every Christian in *Loziland*. Moreover, the task of inculturation should not only be left to the theologians. It is every *Lozi's* responsibility to have a true and African church boasting of a well inculturated marriage rite.

We have been discussing inculturation of the *Lozi* traditional marriage. Firstly, we said that, for culture to have a sound and meaningful Christian life, that culture should be transformed by the Gospel message in the light of the passion and resurrection of Jesus. Then, we mentioned that, if the *Lozi* traditional marriage should be a process by which the *Lozi* themselves respond to the saving Word of God. Some of the practices in it should be adapted and others outlawed. We have made some suggestions as regards some of the practices in the *Lozi* traditional marriage which should be abolished and outlawed. Thereafter, we mentioned that, for the church in Africa to have an indigeneous African Christian Marriage Rite, Africans themselves with the help of anthropologists and theologians conversant with the African culture should spearhead the research.

Furthermore, we mentioned some factors which need consideration in the event of producing an African Christian Marriage Rite such as *Lozi*. We went on to talk about Mission and inculturation of the *Lozi* traditional marriage. Finally, we talked about inculturation of marriage and education. Now, let us turn to the conclusion of our work.

CONCLUSION

Culture and faith form a special component in a person. They enable him/her to define his/her daily situations, make concrete decisions and give the person an identity, either she/he is a Christian or a non-Christian, a European or an African. Each person receives and manifests faith in his/her culture. Christians also receive and profess Christian faith in their own cultures after they encounter Christ in the word of God.

It is very important, therefore, that there should be an ongoing encounter between the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices and Christianity in order for the Church in *Loziland* to grow and mature. This encounter between the *Lozi* traditional marriage and Christianity should be mutual, enriching and beneficial to both religion and tradition. The Gospel message should be assimilated in the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices.

The *Lozi* like most of the African communities respect the institution of marriage. They consider marriage to be sacred because it is through marriage that the living and the dead unite and those yet to be born are anticipated. Although marriage is sacred among the *Lozi*, we would still like to suggest that the Gospel should continue challenging some practices such as *polygamy*, *sororate marriages*, *elopement* and forced marriages despite the fact that some *Lozi* might still find some of those marriage practices good. With the advent of Christianity, the *Lozi* should view marriage in a different vein. Marriages should be more liberating and empowering both husband and wife and centred on mutual love. In this way, the *Lozi* traditional marriages become the fountain of peace and the channels by which God imparts his Grace to the couples involved.

Furthermore, in order for the *Lozi* traditional marriages to become the means by which they respond to God's call, we suggest that Christians should manifest their faith by marrying

in the church and having their marriages blessed. It is not justifiable why most of the *Lozi* claim that they are Christians yet some of them do not participate fully in the sacraments of the Church. They still cling to some of the *Lozi* traditional marriage practices which are not compatible with Christianity. For this reason, all the *Lozi* are challenged to become agents of evangelization in their culture so that their culture may encounter Christ. We still suggest that it is the responsibility of each *Lozi* Christian to play an active role in the process of coming up with a *Lozi* Marriage Christian rite which each one of them would understand and can participate in it actively and wholeheartedly.

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