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THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

TANGAZA – DUQUESNE MA IN PASTORAL MINISTRY

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**COMPARING TWO MODELS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: SCC MODEL OF
CHURCH AND APOSTOLIC ASSOCIATION MODEL OF CHURCH. A CASE STUDY
AT OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE PARISH IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters in
Pastoral Ministry

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work achieved through my personal effort in class, scientific research based on pastoral cycle method and critical analysis.

It is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters in Pastoral Ministry. It has never been submitted to any other college or university for academic credit. All sources have been expressed in full and acknowledged.

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Name of Student: _____

Date: _____

This thesis has been submitted for examination with my approval as the college supervision.

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Name of Supervisor: _____

Date: _____

DEDICATION

With humility, I would like to dedicate this thesis to the Archdiocese of Mombasa, St. Mary's Catholic Church, Changamwe, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Lushangoni, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Nairobi and Family members, Small Christian communities are a "New Way of Being Church."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Therefore, since we have this ministry through the mercy shown us, we are not discouraged. Rather we have renounced shameful, hidden things, not acting deceitfully or falsifying the word of God, but by the open declaration of the truth we commend ourselves to everyone's conscience in the sight of God (2 Cor. 4: 1-2). May these words enlighten the mind and hearts of all who reflect upon the pastoral activities for SCCs and apostolic associations.

With mount joy I wish to express my thanks to the Almighty God who guided me in presenting these reflections. It was a journey full of hope. May I sincerely acknowledge the support from Archbishop Boniface, Bro. Frank, Ten Hoopen, Fr. Paul Miyani, Fr. Harrion Yaa and Fr. Mativo.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Student’s Declaration.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgement.....	iv
Table of contents.....	v
General Introduction.....	1
CHAPTER ONE.....	2
1.1 Introduction.....	2
1.2 Problem Statement.....	2
1.3 The Objective.....	3
1.4 The Significance of the Study.....	3
1.5 Methodology.....	3
1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study.....	4
1.7 The Establishment of the Small Christian Communities within the AMECEA Region.....	4
1.8 The Key Pastoral Priority in Evangelization within AMECEA is SCCs.....	8
1.9 The Face of Apostolic Associations in the Church.....	11
1.10 The Problems Posed By Two Models of the Church Today.....	14
1.11 Small Christian Communities as the Key Priority and the Leadership Dilemma.....	17
1.12 The Urban Culture and the Choice of SCCs.....	19
Conclusion.....	20
CHAPTER TWO.....	22
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	22
2.1 Building the Church as Family of God: Evaluation of Small Christian Communities in Eastern Africa, HEALEY, J.G., Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications, Double Spearhead, A 199-200, 2012.....	22
2.2 We are the Church: sharing in Small Christian Communities, Mejia, R, Nairobi, Paulines Publications Africa, 2009.....	24
2.3 Communities for the Kingdom: A handbook for Small Christian Community Leaders, Flynn. K, Edoret, AMECEA Gaba Publications, Double Spearhead No.181-182, 2007.....	25
2.4 Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing the New Moment, Healey J. G –Hinton. J, ed, Nairobi, Paulines Publication Africa, 2006, pp 97-114.....	27

2.5 To Honour Mary, Marial’s Cultus, Paul VI, Nairobi Paulines Publications Africa, 1974	29
2.6 Catholic Charismatic Renewal, www.catholiccharismaticrenewal.org- Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, Retrieved on 11-06-2012, 6.10pm	30
2.7 Neocatechumenal Way, www.necatechumenalway.org – Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, Retrieved on 11-06-2012, 6.22p.m.	35
CHAPTER THREE	37
3.0 Introduction.....	37
3.1.2 General Overview	38
3.1.3 Weekly Bible Sharing in St. Joseph Deaf Community	39
3.1.4 A Case Study of SCCs as Promoters of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in St. Theresa of Avila SCC at St Thomas Outstation	42
3.2.1 Social Cultural Analysis	49
3.2.2 Geographical Set Up.....	53
3.2.3 The Ethnic Factor.....	54
3.3.1 The Socio-Economic Factors	57
3.3.2 The Presence of the Church and the Kenyan Lenten Campaign	60
3.4.1 Pastoral Activities and Social Outreach.....	63
3.4.2 Faith Formation.....	66
3.4.3 Pastoral assessment.....	69
3.4.4 General Assessment on the Success of SCC Model of the Church	72
CHAPTER FOUR.....	75
4.1 Introduction.....	75
4.2 Small Christian Community Model of Church as the contexts of Acts 4:32-37	75
4.3 Prospects of Early Christian Community Acts 4:32-37.....	80
Conclusion	85
CHAPTER FIVE	86
PASTORAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TWO MODELS OF CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MOMBASA	86
5.0 Short Introduction	86
5.1.1 Major Challenges	87
5.1.2 Recommendations for SCC model of Church	90

5.1.3 Pastoral Recommendations for Apostolic Association Model of Church	93
5.1.4 The Way Forward	94
5.1.5 Conclusion	95
General Conclusion.....	96
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	98

ABBREVIATION

Acts	:	Acts of Apostles
Ez.	:	Ezekiel
CCC	:	Catechism of the Catholic Church
Cf.	:	Confer; Compare
CC.	:	Canon Law
Cor.	:	Corinthians
Jn	:	John
Lk.	:	Luke
Ed.	:	Edited by
Al.	:	Many authors
SCCs	:	Small Christian Communities

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The church is always faced with difficulties but has to keep focusing at its mission of proclaiming the Good News about the kingdom of God. In order for her to remain relevant, there is a need to re examine the tools which she uses to render services. It is in the context of these reflections that the AMECEA Bishops had to look for a suitable model of church which ought to respond very effectively to the complex situation. After the Second Vatican Council, two models of church in Africa have been visible namely SCC model of church and apostolic association model of church.

However in 1973 the Bishops within the AMECEA region preferred the SCC model of church and since 1976 have adopted SCCs as the key pastoral priority in evangelization. The researcher will elaborate the bishop's position and how they have been championing the progress in different conference. At the same time the active participation of priests, religious men and women plus the lay faithful will be discussed. On the other hand the importance of apostolic association will be sighted. At the end the researcher will give a theological reflection and suggest on the future plans.

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

In chapter one the researcher will illustrate explicitly Small Christian Communities are a key pastoral priority in evangelization within the AMECEA region. The Bishops of the region have held a number of plenary assemblies to deliberate on the same and their effort shall be verified in different reports. We shall at the same time discuss the major role played by the apostolic associations long before the establishment of SCCs. Nevertheless the rapid growth of the Catholic population in the region needs an urgent response of collaborative ministry which befits the SCC model of the church.

1.2 Problem Statement

As shown in the gathering of AMECEA Bishops, the key priority of evangelization in the region is SCCs. While it is true SCCs have been doing very well, there are some difficulties which need to be addressed immediately. This is the issue of two models of the church namely the SCC model of the church and the apostolic association model of the Church. The initiative taken by Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish can be of great help if adopted in other places which it is a simple way of doing things in a professional, rational and loving manner. We have also shown how SCCs are dealing with the issue of urban culture which is a threat to the growth of faith since more and more people are moving in towns in big numbers in search for employment and business opportunities. Yet we have to acknowledge that unless all parish priests support SCCs we shall continue to face obstacles and embarrassment in our churches occasioned by our own priests.

1.3 The Objective

- i) Comparing two models of the church, the SCC model and the apostolic association models.
- ii) Illustrate within the AMECEA regions the key priority to evangelization in SCCs.
- iii) Involvement of apostolic associations in the Church.
- iv) The techniques of handling the urban culture.
- v) The success of SCCs in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish
- vi) A call for priests to support SCCs
- vii) Setting up SCCs for the deaf
- viii) Reaching out to others through the internet
- ix) Recommendations and a way forward.

1.4 The Significance of the Study

Whereas the Bishop have clearly stated SCCs are the key priority to evangelization in the AMECEA region not all Christians are well informed, there is also some resistance among the priests and to be more specific parish priests. The research is highlighting in different sub-topics with examples the position of bishops while at the same time showing how SCCs are proving very effective as a new way of being church. Hence the research is going to be helpful and as a matter of fact a useful tool for pastoral activities in parishes.

1.5 Methodology

The methodology to be used is the pastoral cycle which is geared toward transformation. The methodology has four moments which are interconnected to each other namely insertion, social

analysis, theological reflection and pastoral plan. For research purposes we consider a more simple method of See, Judge and Act, which is simple understand by everybody. On the ground we shall use the Kiswahili words See (kuona), Judge (Kuamua) and Act (kutenda).

We shall also gather some information through group interviews. Other sources as indicated in the in the practicum plan include the internet, library and the student dossier.

1.6 The Scope and Limitations of the Study

The goal of the research is comparing two models of the church, the SCC model and the apostolic association model. While the two models are important in the church we shall limit ourselves to the decision of AMECEA region who are promoting SCCs as a key pastoral priority to evangelization. The basic of our study is Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Nairobi.

Since SCCs are a new way of being church, we shall also learn from other regions. We shall also offer practical examples on what is going on in SCCS and how people are reverting to embrace their belief in God.

1.7 The Establishment of the Small Christian Communities within the AMECEA Region

For centuries the African people have continued to live in Communities popularly known as clans. It is only after the emerging of the Western culture which has caused a shift from a community set up to a nuclear family set up. In Christianity we read about the first Communities established by the apostles in different regions. Some of these communities which are referred

also as churches include Jerusalem, Joppa, Antioch, Athens and Ephesians only to name a few. For example the Community in Jerusalem was made up of 120 people (Acts 1:15). However the Christian Communities had something peculiar which was not found in non Christian communities, they expressed the true identity of brotherly love rooted in socio-justice (Acts 2:43-47, 4: 32-37 and 11:26).

In African an interesting pastoral activity has been taking shape, in rare move the first SCCs were established in 1961 in the diocese of Kinshasa Zaire today known as the Democratic Republic of Congo. A year later Pope John XXXIII in 1962 opened the Vatican Council II which lasted up to 1965 and was closed by Pope Paul VI. To prepare for this very important Pastoral Council which was causing anxiety within the Church, Pope John XXXIII Composed the following prayer “Divine Spirit, renew your wonder in this our age as in a new Pentecost, and grant that your Church praying persevering and insistently with one heart and mind together with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and guided by blessed Peter, may increase the reign of the Divine Savior, the reign of truth and, justice, the reign of love and peace. Amen.”¹

Within the AMECEA region the Church was discussed as a communion of SCCs in 1973 meeting of Bishops in Nairobi, Kenya and official established in 1976 as a response to Vatican II which called upon the Church to re-examine its pastoral life both at the local and universal level. The Bishops in their plenary meeting held at St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary in Nairobi, Kenya adopted a systematic formation of SCCs. The association members include Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania, Malawi and Zambia. On 9/07/2011 another member South Sudan joined the association bringing the number to 9 countries. The Bishops came up with

¹ JOHN XXIII,prayer,<http://www.acc.us/j23theo.html>

their own strategic pastoral plans according to the needs of their dioceses. One of the outstanding figures is Bishop Christopher Mwoleka of the diocese of Rulenge in Western Tanzania. Joseph G. Healey who was present, reports that the way Mwoleka introduced himself at the first international gathering of SCCs at the University of Notre Dame in the United States in 1991 left the participants amazed. “I am Christopher Mwoleka, a member of the Small Christian in Bushangaro parish.”² His influence touched the hearts and minds of many Christians and echo’s the trust and willingness of AMECEA Bishops to move very fast in their respective Diocese and do the same.

In 1979 barely 3 years after the establishment of SCCs within the AMECEA region the very Bishops converged in Zomba, Malawi to assess the progress. The results were positive and by then good number of Bishops confessed that SCCs are a “New Way of Being Church”. In 1990 their efforts were taken to the heights by the encyclical letter “Redemptoris Missio” of John Paul II No. 51.³ The Pope talks about the evangelization through SCCs, which he refers to as ecclesial basic Communities.

In 1992 another evaluation conference was held by the AMECEA Bishops in Lusaka, Zambia. It was followed by the First African Synod in Rome called upon by Pope John Paul II and the theme was “The Church in Africa and Her Evangelizing Mission to the Year 2006.” The fruits of the Synod were availed to the entire people of Africa in three different cities, Johannesburg, yaunde, and Nairobi the AMECEA regional headquarters in 1995. Pope John Paul II talks about the vital Christian Communities in a very profound manner “Right from the

²Cf. J.G.HEALEY, “Introduction ” Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing the New Moment, 1.

³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, “Redemptoris Missio” No. 51

beginning the Synod fathers recognized that the Church as family cannot reach her full potential as Church unless she is divided into Communities small enough to foster close human relations, No. 89.”⁴

After the first Africa Synod, the AMECEA Bishops intensified their efforts in making sure SCCs were set up in the entire region. These efforts are captured by Joseph G Healey in his book, *Building the Church as family of God; Evaluating of Small Christian Communities in Eastern Africa*.

He gives the following records:

- 2002 AMECEA Conference in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania a “Deeper Evangelization in the Third Millennium.”
- 2005 Conference in Mukono, Uganda, on Responding to the Challenges of HIV/AIDS within the AMECEA Religion.
- 2008 study conference in Lusaka, Zambia on “Reconciliation through justice and Peace.”
- 2009 Synod delegates workshop in Nairobi, Kenya on Revitalization of Small Christian Communities. In the same year the Second African Synod was held in Rome from 4th – 25th October and the themes was “The Church in Africa in service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace.”
- 2011 AMECEA Plenary Assembly in Nairobi Kenya on celebration of the success of SCCs while at the same time reflected on its challenges.⁵ (P.18-26).

⁴ JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 89

⁵ Cf.J.G. HEALEY, *Historical Development of Small Christian Communities*, 18-26

By establishing SCCs the AMECEA Bishops have renewed the African Community set up with a Christian flavor leading to the bound of families in the neighborhood. And to crown the unity of the African church in new evangelization in the conference which will hold on July this year in Nairobi on SCCs.

1.8 The Key Pastoral Priority in Evangelization within AMECEA is SCCs

The success of the Synod on “Evangelization in the Modern World”, in Rome in 1975 contributed a lot in creating effective ways of spreading the good news. Two things which *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Pope Paul VI addressed were evangelization and the role of SCCs. The Bishops within AMECEA region decided to make SCCs as the key Pastoral Priority in evangelization. Kieran Flynn mentions four points which the AMECEA Bishops adopted in 1976 as the guiding tools.

- (i) An overall view of building Small Christian Communities
- (ii) Theological reflections on objectives of Christian Communities
- (iii) Worship, the source and fullest expression of Christian Communities
- (iv) The Church Communities in life situations.⁶

Joseph G. Healey puts it more simple “The Catholic Bishops in Eastern Africa chose this SCC Pastoral Priority as the best way to build up the local Churches to be truly self-ministering (self-governing) self propagating (self-spreading) and self-supporting, self-reliant and self-sustainable). The three self are essential characteristics of SCCs as the base/basic level of the Church, and by extension of the local Church.⁷

⁶ K.FLYNN, *Emergence of Small Christian Communities in AMECEA Region*, 56

⁷J.G. HEALEY, *Historical Development of Small Christian Communities*, 1.

A good example is our Lady of Guadalupe parish in Nairobi which has 43 SCCs. In all the 46 SCCs the three self are visible though in a varying degree.

- (i) Self-ministering:- the SCC members have different roles to play which are coordinate by the five executive leaders chairman, vice chairman, secretary, vice secretary and the treasure. Other leaders serve in different Church ministries such as justice and peace committee, health care ministry whereby the volunteer take medicine to those infected by HIV/AIDS in their homes once per week and extra ministers of the Eucharist who take Holy Communion to the elderly and the sick. The five executive leaders also act as a link between the members and the parish pastoral council or parish priest office.
- (ii) Self-propagating, every member in a SCC has the responsibility of helping one another to grow and mature in faith through Weekly Bible Sharing, visiting, concern for others in both spiritual and natural needs.
- (iii) Self-supporting, every Small Christian Community has to sustain itself both in manpower and finances.

The Weekly Action plan has to respond effectively to the entire requirement which arise from the neighborhood. These achievements further qualify Small Christian Communities as a “New Way of Being Church”.

In 1978 the diocese of Songea in Tanzania published its first booklet with guidelines in Small Christian Communities known in Kiswahili as “Mwongozo WA Jumuiya Ndogo Ndogo za

Kristu”. The campaign was led by Bishop Yakobo Komba, assisted by both the clergy and the laity.

Christopher Cieslikiewicz on Pastoral involvement of Parish – Based SCCs in Dar es Salaam points out that “By the end of 2004 there were 2,300 SCCs in the 48 parishes of the Archdiocese, and their number of SCCs increasing.”⁸ In order to reach the youth Joseph G. Healey started promoting SCCs through the internet. This was a fruitful avenue of involving the youth of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in SCCs as a new way of being.⁹

In the diocese of Kiyinda-Mityana, Uganda, something peculiar was taking place in making SCCs remain the key pastoral priority in evangelization and this was the formation of SCC diocesan training team. The decision to form this team was reached at the first diocesan synod in 1985. According to John Vianney Moweesi and Emmanuel Mwenekande over 2,815 SCCs benefited under the direction of Bishop Joseph Mukwaya.

The Archdiocese of Gulu under Archbishop John Baptist Odama held its second synod on the theme “called to build the Church rooted in Christ’s and love and truth.”¹⁰ Thus the key Pastoral Priority of SCCs in evangelization is shown by the involvement of both the clergy, religious and the laity as members. The July 2011 AMECEA Plenary Assembly in Nairobi at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa is also a clear indicator, as it celebrated the success of SCCs. The impact of SCCs is summarized by Joseph G. Healey reports that there are over 110,000 SCCs

⁸ CIESLIKIEWICZ, C., Pastoral Involvement of Parish-Based SCCs in Dar es Salaam, *Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing the New Moment*, 99

⁹ Cf. J.G. HEALEY, Promoting SCCs via the internet, *Small Christian Communities today: Capturing New Moment*, 177.

¹⁰ Cf. J.G HEALEY, *Historical Development of Small Christian Communities*, 25

within AMECEA region while Kenya alone has 40,000 SCCs.¹¹ these figures are very encouraging and everything possible ought to be done to keep the fire burning.

1.9 The Face of Apostolic Associations in the Church

For centuries devotions have been an integral part of evangelization in the Catholic Church. In some areas they were used as strategies to penetrate cultures, Communities and even influence families which could easily foster opportunity for the preaching of the good news. This method ultimately has led to the rapid growth of the Church. When commissioning the twelve apostles, Jesus had to remind them of the dangers ahead of them. “Behold I am sending you like sheep in the midst of wolves, so be shrewd as serpents and simple as doves.” (Mt. 10:16).

The Vatican Council II has facilitated the formation of devotions and outlined their importance in the work of evangelization. Pope Paul VI has been very instrumental and expressed his desire in his apostolic exhortation *Marialis Cultus*. He calls on the Bishops to enhance devotion to the Blessed Mary in relation to divine worship No.16.¹² Norbert Brokman and Umberto Pescantini states, “The Vatican II era has also seen a rebirth in popular devotions. At first as they were evaluated in terms of the criteria set by the Council, many devotions fell into disfavor. Slowly however, new expressions came along as well as a renewal of older form.”¹³

In Africa and especially within the AMECEA region there are a number of devotions. The very common ones are devotions to Blessed Virgin Mary such as Legion of Mary, Immaculate Heart of Mary, daughters of Mary-for girls only and live rosary. Other devotions include Sacred Heart

¹¹ Cf. J.G. HEALEY, Introduction, 1

¹² Cf. PAUL VI, *To Honour Mary, Marialis Cultus* No. 16

¹³N. BROKMAN –U.PESCANTINI, *A History of the Catholic Church*, 208.

of Jesus, St. Joseph for married men and St. Ann for married women and Vincent de Paul for charitable activities, Catholic Men Association (CMA), and Catholic Women Association (CWA) Catholic Charismatic renewal, Catholic action, Neocatechumenal way and the Focolarini. These apostolic associations are very strong in particular areas depending on a number of issues. John Lukwata states, “Some Ugandan ethnic groups had a tradition of honoring mothers of their kings, as well as dedicating building in honor of the monarch and their mothers. The Marian devotion in Uganda can be seen in the chapels dedicated to our lady built in most parishes. Most of them are built separately from the main Church building. Usually Christians make pilgrimages on Marian Feasts to these chapels or pray there on Saturdays.”¹⁴

In Guadalupe Parish in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya, Apostolic Association are doing commendable work and helping a lot in evangelization. Some of these associations are Legion of Mary, Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Neocatechumenal way and Catholic Women Association.

Legion of Mary: The members meet on weekly basis on Sunday and pray together hold a sharing after reading from a devotional book. However their apostolate resembles that of SSCs. They visit the sick, help the poor, instruct on matters of faith especial at home, encourage Christian to marry in the Church and participate actively on Sunday liturgy at the Parish Church.

Catholic Charismatic Renewal: The prayer group meets every Tuesday of the week. They praise God in a loud voice while clapping and dancing. Alternatively a member is chosen to give reflection on a bible passage, which is followed by individual testimonies. The weekly action

¹⁴J. LUKWATA, Devotions, 132.

plan includes door to door evangelization, intercessions for different needs of the Church, spiritual workshops, vigils popularly known in Kiswahili as Keshu.

Neocatechumenal way: - they are divided into groups which meet on Tuesday, Thursdays, and Saturdays in particular for the celebration of the Eucharist. They praise God using guitars, clapping in a loud voice. Normally the leaders give reflections, based on topics which are carefully researched; they prefer to call the teachings catechesis. The liturgical celebration of the Eucharist on Saturday evening is long; the members share the word before the priest gives the homily.

The weekly action plan is geared towards the members themselves and very rarely touch on other issues which do not concern them directly.

Catholic Women Association: Members meet every third Sunday of the month. They pray the rosary and reflect on a bible passage. Discuss their matters concerning families, business and church. Their major focus is to help others to stop drinking, smoking and roaming about in order to become good mothers.

Monthly action plan: - visit the sick, business strategies on how to make profit and succeed, collections of monthly payment and how to respond to Diocesan Programmers.

1.10 The Problems Posed By Two Models of the Church Today

Vatican II encourages all Christians to witness since by the virtue of baptism and confirmation God sent and empowered humankind. And this can only happen where there is relationship of respect and love for one another “Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”¹⁵ (Mt. 5: 16). We are sent to witness Christ and not ourselves.

Witnessing has to be conducted in a spirit of understanding our priorities and how to go about shaping the entire Community within the context of a particular social-cultural environment. We refer to this Community as the Parish Church where all Pastoral activities ought to be actualized in harmony.

Rodrigo Mejia gives the following definition, “The parish is a concrete Community of Catholics, usually sharing the same area but most important-sharing their own faith in worship and action, sharing in the core and same mission of the church in the world.”¹⁶ There is great need for all Christians to acknowledge how the members of a parish Community should co-exist with one another.

In spite of their importance devotions have the following challenges, static operational methods which are not accommodative, selective recruitments of new members, spiritualities which are prone to abuse, exaggeration of importance which result in confusion and frustrations, unnecessary financial burdens and parallel apostolate for personal gains. Matthew Bassah Shinkut states, “Devotional groups cannot be said to be micro units of the entire Church. Why?

¹⁵ VATICAN II, Missionary Activity No. 11

¹⁶ R.MEJIA, what is a Catholic Parish, 14.

These groups often concentrate on only a particular aspect or part of the church's life that might not capture the entire and the core element of the Christian faith"¹⁷. On the other hand Joseph G. Healey, who was among the key speakers in AMECEA plenary Assembly in Nairobi Kenya from 27 June to 6 July 2011, asserts "There were many references to the AMECEA pastoral priority of SCCs in the talks and discussions. One report stated: "Among the major achievements of the organization is the criterion of Small Christian Communities. "Another recommendation emphasized to strength SCCS by ensuring priests participation. SCCs were stressed as one of the important African models of the Church."¹⁸

Whereas the SCCs are very vital and the impact cannot be disputed, it is important also to acknowledge apostolic association model of the Church has been in existence from the moment the missionaries planted the seeds of faith within the AMECEA region and Africa in general. The apostolic associations have been very useful and supportive on their own way

They continue to play a major role in nurturing faith and in offering service to the society. However something has to be done in order to solve the problem. We can learn from "The African spirit of moving out" as narrated by Joseph G. Healey and Donald Sybertz, quoting African proverbs. In order to succeed one has to remove the mentality of know it all and listen to others. Likewise the contemporary missionary should keep moving ahead and begin a new place, by doing so one will learn new things.¹⁹

¹⁷ M.B. SHINKUT, Absence of SCCs and Active Presence of Devotional Groups in Nigeria, www.smallchristiancommunities.org/Africa, Retrieved on 12/06/2012.

¹⁸ J.G.HEALEY, Historical Development of Small Christian Communities, 17.

¹⁹ Cf.J.G. HEALEY-D. SYBERTZ, Towards an African Narrative Theology,337-340.

In order to put our things in order we need to appreciate one another instead of blames and mistrust. In our Lady of Guadalupe Nairobi, Kenya, the roles played by the two models of the Church are very clear. The SCCs which are a “New Way of Being Church,” have a clear mandate of forming the leadership of the Parish Pastoral Council. The five leaders of the executive of the Parish Pastoral Council are chosen among the leaders of SCCs. These procedures show exactly the place of SCCs in the Parish set up. Kieran Flynn gives us the preferred number of these Communities by asserting “A Small Christian Community is Manageable group of about ten to twenty adults (10-20) living within each other’s neighborhood.”²⁰

On the contrary the leaders of apostolic association are not part of the executive and they attend the parish pastoral council in attendance capacity. This approach is commendable in solving the challenges of two models of the Church. However the leaders of apostolic association are involved in different positions such as ministries like justice and peace, health-care, faith formation, development committee, finance committee and so on. While apostolic associations are good they are geared towards particular apostolate with different spiritual outlook which may not be admired by every parishioner.

Other approaches have to be brought on board to signify the Bishops positions and also help the Christians so that they may not be confused. This can happen on the Diocesan and national level whereby all parties are involved fully. A good example is given by Joseph G. Healey on the “year of Small Christian Communities (SCCs)²¹ held in the Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam,

²⁰ K.FLYNN, what is a Small Christian Community, 58.

²¹ J.G.HEALEY, Historical Development of Small Christina Communities, 20.

Tanzania in 200 – 2007 and which later was extended on the national level. Also about Kenya Lenten Campaign which is conducted every year for five weeks during lent in all SCCs using the famous process of ‘See, Judge, and Act.’”

Therefore belonging to the apostolic association is a personal choice, while belonging to the Small Christian Community is a response to the Church invitation into the spirit of communion.

1.11 Small Christian Communities as the Key Priority and the Leadership Dilemma

For progress to be realized in the Church, especially in the aspect of evangelization whereby SCCs ought to play the key role then there has to be a change of leadership mentality encircled with fear of losing power or personal gains. Robert Sarah says, “The human and spiritual life of priests, bishops, and people of office for service to the church ought to be exemplary. The qualities needed to be models for the flock assigned to them by the Holy Spirit are up to date now as they ever were.²² That is, the demand of giving good services is never decreasing but every time more is required. In his letter “I will give you shepherds” John Pau II stressed the need for human formation, which he considers as vital for priest and his ministry. The human formation will help relate well with others as a person called to be responsible for a community.²³ No. 43

Small Christian Communities are for both priest and the lay; all of us have to be part and parcel of “New Way of Being Church.” Priests have to set a good example by not only showing the way but leading from the front line.

²²R. SARAH, *A Living Image of Jesus Christ and a Sign of Communion* p. 44

²³ Cf JOHN PAULL II, *I will give you shepherds*, No. 43

Rodrigo Mejia when looking at hindrances of SCCs states “many priests, especially parish priests, are afraid that by establishing SCCs their authority will be diminished. They look at them as an improper way of democratizing the church. When the parish priest does not accept them, they cannot exist.”²⁴ It is upon each individual parish priests to make a thorough evaluation, on the pastoral implication; this kind of attitude would bring to the church. John Paul II vocation and mission of the lay faithful” states, it is now necessary to look closely at the communion and participation of the lay faithful in parish life. In this regard all lay men and women are called to give greater attention to a particularly meaningful, stirring and incisive passage from the Council. “Their activity within Church Communities is so necessary that without if the apostolate of the pastors is generally unable to achieve its full effectiveness.”²⁵

It is time to come together and work as one Community of believers helping one another to grow. The truth is no matter how good one is, in football game there has to be team of eleven players, even if the player is an international figure he/she cannot keep on running a lower the field chasing the ball, how boring would the game look. Likewise in the parish everybody has to be a player, bringing our heads together and sharing from the abundance of the gifts will enrich everybody. Small Christian Communities in fact will help priests reduce their busy schedule and will be of great help to Christians receive the services which are proper to them. Let us conclude with “Sukuma proverb says, a few goats hear the whistle of the herder.”²⁶

²⁴R. MEJIA, *Small Christian Communities, in Eastern Africa, 26 years on: lights and shadows* 69

²⁵ JOHN PAUL II, *Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful*, No. 27

²⁶J.G. HEALEY-D. Sybertz, *Theology of Small Christian Communities as a New Way of Being Church*, 137.

1.12 The Urban Culture and the Choice of SCCs

It is very interesting to see people gather in their respective SCCs contrary to what may be portrayed by the look of things in urban areas. Courage for those with faith knows no boundaries which enslave people and hinder them from practicing what they believe in. Paul uplifts the hearts of the Galatians by explaining the richness of faith. He states “But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a disciplinarian. For through faith you are all children of God in Christ Jesus (Gal. 3:26-27).” Small Christian Communities are given thousands of believers opportunity to renew their faith within their homes and places of work.

However there is a problem of culture which is causing a lot of harm and if not carefully handled could erode the gains made in setting up these Communities. According to Cecil McGarry “The new world culture is sweeping away many of the best traditions and ways of life of our people, especially in the towns and cities. It is affecting our youth everywhere. African traditions and ways of life are not only undermined; they are being presented as out of date, non-modern, anachronistic.”²⁷ Indeed the modern culture is a threat to human stability on an African perspective which cherished within its roots the gospel virtues. Commenting on the same Joseph G. Healey and Donald Sybertz explains the atmosphere of mistrust in African cities while sitting the example of Nairobi whereby strangers are suspect while most houses are highly guarded. Due to this many African practices of hospitality are vanishing daily.”²⁸ This kind of negative trend has to be corrected by bringing in a specific urban ministry in all SCCs. Daniel Moschetti asserts “The social, political and economic situation of the cities is an issue the church in Africa has to address urgently. Unlike the countryside where poverty and illiteracy are embedded in the

²⁷C. McGARRY, *The Impact of Globalization on African Culture and Society: Dangers and Opportunities* 18

²⁸ Cf. J.G. HEALEY, –D. SYBERTZ, *The Challenge of Hospitality in the Modern African World*, 196-197.

society, the cities breed a rich middle and upper class that seems to have nothing to do with the poor.”²⁹

We need to appreciate the role played by SCCs in defusing the tensions and penetrating the urban culture. In our lady of Guadalupe parish this situation is clearly tackled by bringing together both the youth and adults in special workshops where people discuss their challenges openly. Another approach is SCC A visits SCC B just for learning purposes. Also when selecting people to serve in ministries, members are taken from different SCCs and as they move together, the rich and the poor, the young and the elderly a sense of working and living together in harmony grows. Thus people are able to nurture the Christian values and are able to resist the temptations of secluded life which the urban culture embraces.

Thus as Christians we should not be afraid of the urban culture, it is here with us but we should minimize the dangers and the negative influences which might put the Christian faith in an awkward situation. Through Christian Communities we have the chances, the tools and the resource to counteract it in prudent manner without causing any commotion in our families and society at large.

Conclusion

The impact of SCCs in the AMECEA region is the fruit of Vatican II and as such a gift to the people of God. The sense of the Church as a Community among the laity is visible and people are able to proclaim without fear, “we are the Church.” It is indeed wonderful to move together

²⁹ D. MOSCHETTI, A New Approach to Urban Ministry in Africa, 62.

responsibly while caring for one another as Paul's tells us "For those who are led by the spirit of God are children of God, (Rom. 8:14).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Building the Church as Family of God: Evaluation of Small Christian Communities in Eastern Africa, HEALEY, J.G., Eldoret: AMECEA Gaba Publications, Double Spearhead, A 199-200, 2012

Feelings of celebration engulf whoever begins to read the introductory part of this very book due to its wording. “Today, there are over 110,000 small Christian communities (SCCs) in the Catholic Church especially in the nine AMECEA Countries in Eastern Africa, Kenya alone has over 40,000 SCCs.”

Healey in a candid way reports the success of SCCs in the region so that the historical development simplifies the connection of 50 years Jubilee since AMECEA was inaugurated in 1961. And in this historical development of SCCs, a detailed report is made available capturing different plenary assemblies, dioceses, parishes and even individuals be they clerics or laity who have played a central role.

On the quantitative and qualitative evaluation Healey explain the criteria used in making sure the results are factual. He mentions the challenges facing the development of SCCs due to mixing two models of the church, the SCC model and the apostolic association model. Another challenge is lack of participation of priests in SCCs upon which he gives 35 obstacles. But one thing which Healey does not hide is that this success is one sided in countries of Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Malawi and Zambia while South Sudan, Sudan, Ethiopia and Eritrea have a long way to go.

The promotion of SCCs as a priority in evangelization has played a major role in both the Church and society. Here, Healey bring on board practical example in parishes, communities, villages, families and individual cases. The idea which he stresses is through SCCs transformation is taking place. The indicators are visible in the structures at all levels of the church. Leadership, ministries, faith formation, workshops and participation in socio-economical activities in society.

Taking advantage of modern technologies Healey elaborates the importance of using social media promoting SCCs. He goes on pointing at some of which have led to a fruitful moments such as online journals, online learning sites, video conferencing, webinars, such engines like Google, social networking sites like facebook, twitter, you tube and Skype, podcasts, video clips, DVDs, special applications (called “apps”) plug-ins, blogs, email messages, cell phones (including smart phones), text messages etc. He says by making use of the means mentioned people involvement in SCCs will be excellent, and nobody will be left out even those with very busy schedules especially in urban areas.

In the final stage Healey focus on small Christian communities as a new model of the church which implies SCCs are a new way of being Church. His argument touches even the spiritual aspect of SCC which is different from that of the apostolic association. This spirituality is built upon “New Way of Being local Church”. It involves every member of the community to participate fully by taking up a role and acting responsible. It lifts up the level of interaction into the sharing attitude which is truly African.

Healey concludes by appreciating the efforts of AMECEA members and the spirit of all Christians in realizing SCCs are a new way of being church. Nevertheless he gives 15 recommendations as a gesture of goodwill.

2.2 We are the Church: sharing in Small Christian Communities, Mejia, R, Nairobi, Paulines Publications Africa, 2009.

Mejia, a well known Bishop and a missionary, expresses his experiences in simple way. He begins with a shocking story on how his fellow missionary mistreated him on arrival. The behavior of his Jesuit brother does not portray the brotherly concern articulated in the gospel. However, this example should not be taken negatively but should prompt us to help missionaries in their spiritual life hence his assertion, “missionary also need conversion.” The aim of Mejia is not only a group of people but what makes a parish to be what it ought to be. He explains, “The parish is a concrete community of Catholics, usually sharing the same area but must important-sharing their own faith in worship and action, sharing in the one and same mission of the Church in the world. Christianity is not a private individual religion but a community of believers, a new people of God,” or as the African synod has put it, “The family of God”.

In building his argument Mejia step by step gives short stories but very rich in message about Christian identity, personal responsibility, readiness to face challenges, steadfastness in faith, making use of variety gifts in the Church, practicing our faith and so on.

Mejia pointing at an attitude which has a different picture of the Church, concerned more with the externals, but calls for a renewal for a missionary spirit as a response to the words of Jesus,

“you are the light of the world” Mt 5:14. For this to happen we need committed people in our SCCs but not every person is aware of what it entails to belong to a SCC. Therefore we have to understand we are the Church and help one another since Community life is never easy. However this can happen when we learn to share in the Small Christian Communities. Sharing does not imply wealth but whatever little we have. He wants people to understand that sharing is the backbone of SCCs and it is inclusive ranging from weekly bible sharing, maternal needs, to culture, development ideas, our gifts, sharing our wisdom, democratic ideologies which are important in society and so on. His concluding remarks admonishes us from being satisfied with the maintenance level but we need to go beyond as the Second Vatican Council urges us in order to continue ministering to one another.

2.3 Communities for the Kingdom: A handbook for Small Christian Community Leaders, Flynn. K, Edoret, AMECEA Gaba Publications, Double Spearhead No.181-182, 2007.

Point one of his presentation, Flynn has shown how instrumental Vatican II has been towards the promotion of Small Christian Communities. He develops his argument by bringing in the themes used. The Constitution on Divine Revelation,” “Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World,” and Decree on the Apostolate of the Lay People. And in order to give his assertion the impetus needed Flynn has expounded three images of church namely church as the “New People of God”, “Body of Christ” and “Temple of the Holy Spirit” as discussed in Lumen Gentium. The images reveal the communitarian and Trinitarian aspect of communion and as understood communion deals with relationship of members who assembly as believers and minister beyond their boundaries.

Flynn states that a theological interpretation of Vatican II as pointed by Karl Rahner is the faith of the church expressed in different cultures hence Episcopal Conferences were eager to form communities which are in line with the teaching of Vatican II. Part two of his presentation, Flynn deals with the historical development of SCCs within the AMECEA region which to some extent was influenced by the Latin American style of Basic Ecclesial Communities associated with liberation theology. He goes on mentioning specific dates, what they are and how they conduct weekly Bible sharing by giving seven steps. He also mentions the role played by SCCs in parishes such as practical activities of reaching out to the sick and the needy. He then mentions five development stages of SCCs and four faces of the church model.

In part three of his presentation which is also the last one, Flynn explains in detail the social responsibility of Small Christian Communities as the family of God in Africa. While arousing the feeling of life and relationship within the African context, Flynn's purpose is to point at another tradition centred on communities and specifically SCCs. These communities help members to back and retrieve the essential African traditional values which are of paramount importance to stability. In these values we find the family model, commitment to community, sharing of resources and other social responsibilities. These values have been an added advantage to the growth of SCCs in the AMECEA region according to the plans of the Bishops.

**2.4 Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing the New Moment, Healey J. G –
Hinton. J, ed, Nairobi, Paulines Publication Africa, 2006, pp 97-114.**

This very book has six chapters dealing with pastoral experiences from different parts of the world, which have been compiled by 31 people into 26 topics. We shall deal with chapter 4, our area of concern that is SCCs in AMECEA region.

Christopher Cieslikewiez His opening remarks are “Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the Church,” (Rev 2:7). He views the growth in number of SCCs in Dar es Salaam as the work of the Holy Spirit and even more encouraging, is that all Parishes in the Archdiocese have SCCs in place. In 1995 SCCs were made a pastoral priority in Dar es Salaam and in 1998 election of Lay Leaders in Parishes throughout Tanzania started at the grassroot level and moved upwards. The Bishops see “New Moment” in them as they transform Communities and offer Christians the opportunity to deepen their Faith.

Cielikewiez also reports how wonderful reports from individual members are a motivation, sighting the example of St. Charles Lwanga SCC which is visited. He mentions some challenges as, Large membership, Few men who attend, Small number of the youth involved, Lack of SCCs involvement in social life, Lack of missionary spirit and Lack of ongoing formation which affect negatively the maturity of Faith as many Christian go back to their traditional religions to seek answers for their problems.

John Vanney Muweesi And Emanuel Mwerekande: Muweesi and Mwerekande start their presentation by pointing at 1973 as a turning point for the Church within the AMECEA region which saw SCCs declared as a “New Way of Being Church”. After the creation of the Diocese of Kiyindu-Mikandu in 1981 SCCs were promoted and in 1985 they were made the focal point. In 1997 Bishop Joseph Mukivaya declared SCCs as the pastoral priority and came up with a Diocesan Training Team. By then there were 2,815 SCCs spread across the Diocese. The task of diocesan Training Team was First to Train Trainers followed by the Clergy, Community Leaders, Religious men and women.

The two see the relevance of SCCs which are known in the local language as Ebibiina by abassekimu in the family, leadership, pastoral activities, weekly Bible sharing, health care in support to people with HIV/AIDS, social justice issued and Church development projects. The team was also able to reach out to the Archdiocese of Kampala and the Diocese of Kasana-Luwero and Lugazi.

Alphonse Omolo: Omolo starts sharing his finding in a very attractive way by referring SCCs as emerging neighborhood Communities. Bible sharing as shown was the pillar in this urban city of Kisumu. These Communities formed caring Community ministries in order to reach out to needy. The services offered such as visiting the sick, praying together, counseling and other services have transformed the neighborhood. He continues to explain the SCCs come together on a montly basis for a meeting and the priest joins them. They discuss different issues and come up with ways and means on how to go about solving them. The neighborhood Church Community

Mass is also celebrated once per month. House blessing is done after every two years and also the members look for those who have not joined SCCs , in order to help them join.

2.5 To Honour Mary, Marial's Cultus, Paul VI, Nairobi Paulines Publications Africa, 1974

In part one pope Paul VI reflects on the theme of “Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary in the liturgy. He shows their connection to the mystery of Christ, right from incarnation to his return in glory. These devotions have at the center the link of prophecies in the awaiting of the Messiah as Church tradition shows. Step by step the pope gives the long list of Mary’s Devotions beginning with Solemnities, Feasts, Themes and their place in the Roman Calendar. He explains their proper place in the Revised Missal and Liturgy of Hours. His beseeching message to the world is the realization of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the model of the Church in Divine Worship. That she received the word in holiness dedicated herself in loving service of a humble handmaid of the Lord.

Pope Paul VI in part two, begins by pointing at the Second Vatican Council, call for the promotion of other focus of devotions side by side with Liturgical Worship as long as they are inline with theological reflections as recommended by the Magisterium. He stresses that the Christian worship ought to be worship offered to the Father, through Christ in the Spirit. In doing so the faithful will enjoy the richness of Divine Wisdom as they come to understand more and more the action of the Church. His Holiness also presents guidelines for the Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary. The four guidelines are founded within the Biblical, Liturgical, Ecumenical and Anthropological context. Paul VI concludes with part three where he reflects upon the Angelus and the Rosary. He stresses that the Angelus reminds us of the paschal

mystery. About the Rosary the pope urges the Church to frequently recite it. Hence the Rosary is a prayer with a clearly Christological orientation. Therefore Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary has a theological and pastoral value as a means of leading people to Christ.

2.6 Catholic Charismatic Renewal, www.catholiccharismaticrenewal.org- Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, Retrieved on 11-06-2012, 6.10pm

The free Encyclopedia defines the Catholic Charismatic Renewal as movement who's worship is characterized by vibrant masses, prayer meetings featuring prophecy, faith healing and praying in tongues. It started in 1967 at Duquesne university, USA. The Catholic university in Pittsburgh operated by the congregation of Holy Spirit founded in France in 1703. By 2003 the Movement existed in over 230 countries with over 119 million members. Nine gifts are considered extraordinary namely faith, expression

n of knowledge and wisdom, miracles, the gift of tongues and their interpretation, prophecy, discernment of spirits and healing (1 Cor 12:8-10). They are related to the gifts describe in (Isaiah 11:1-2), wisdom understanding counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety and fear of the lord as they are shown in Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1831. Wikipedia reports three Popes have acknowledged the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Pope Paul VI in 1975 invited the leaders worldwide to come to Rome and celebrate Pentecost with him. He encouraged the members who in a secularized world were a testimony of the “Spiritual Renewal.” Pope John Paul II in 1992 said Charismatic Renewal can play a major role prompting in defending the Christian life in

Societies and in 1998 recognized the essential nature of the Charismatic dimension. Pope Benedict XVI affirmed the charismatic renewal during 2008.

2.7 Neocatechumenal Way, www.necatechumenalway.org – Wikipedia, the free Encyclopedia, Retrieved on 11-06-2012, 6.22p.m.

Neocatechumenal Way or Neocatechumenate is a group within the Catholic Church that focuses on the Formation of Christian adult. It was formed in 1964 by Kiko Arguello and Carmen Hernandez to evangelize the slums of Madrid, Spain. Its approach was a catechetical synthesis founded on what was called “tripod” (Word of God- Liturgy –Community). After the Vatican II the Archbishop of Madrid Casimiro Morcillo encouraged Arguello to spread it to Parishes and eventual reached other Dioceses in Spain.

It is led by the international team of the Way which number about seven hundred teams. Neocatechumenal describes itself as a Community. It provides an ongoing education in Faith and a service of Catechesis. It has a programme called “Families in Mission” with the aim of establishing the presence of the Catholic Church in countries where there is none or in particular difficult areas. In 2009 the pope celebrated 40th anniversary with 10,000 members in Rome.

Pope John Paul II in 1997 encouraged (Arguello and Hernandez) to examine their thirty year experience and formalize it with a written statute. “The paschal mystery, celebrated in the Sacred Triduum, is seen as Liturgical axis and source of Christian life and a fulcrum of the Neocatechumenate which leads to “Rediscovery” of Christian Initiation.” Neocatechumenal Way has been criticized by both clergy and theologians because of the Orthodoxy of the way’s teaching Liturgical practices and its divisive impact on Parishes.

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 Introduction

The researcher will explain the two Moments of Pastoral Cycle that is Insertion and Socio-Economic Factors, as a Case Study in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya. We will base our arguments from the Practicum or student dossier, different authors, Church Documents, News Media and other Sources which are helpful to us. The researcher will then conclude by giving the general analysis of the presentation.

3.1.1 Insertion experience

The Insertion experience started on Tuesday 19/09/2011 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish after meeting the Parish Priest and the Coordinator for Pastoral Activities who ushered us into the Parish Community. What is Insertion all about? Insertion is about, getting in Touch with Reality and, experiencing things as they unfold. It is a moment of accompaniment and solidarity with the People in order for one to become part of that Community. It is living together with the Community in order to see issues from their perspectives. This is why Insertion is the 'First Moment' or 'The Beginning of Activities'. Parise Alberto says, Insertion means direct contact with Reality in order for the Researcher to affect us leading to involvement empathy and commitment.³⁰

While giving the 'Foreword' on Faith, Justice and Injustice Jon Sobrino, view, Insertion as 'Allowing Ourselves to be affected by reality.'³¹ We also see another explanation given by 'New

³⁰ Cf. PARISE, A., *The Pastoral Cycle: A pedagogy of Social Transformation*, Social Ministry, 160

³¹ SOBRINO, J. *Foreword: The Pastoral Circle Revisited, A Critical Quest for Truth and Transformation*, 9

Way of Being Church' that "Insertion is what is being experienced. What is happening now; what needs to be changed."³²

During our Insertion experience we interacted with members of Small Christian Communities, apostolic association, choir members, members of different ministries, youth, children, leaders and in particular St. Joseph Deaf community. The Insertion experience was realized in two areas within the Church and in the homes of the Christians where the SCCs held their weekly Bible sharing administering to the sick and needy. It was a learning moment, observing how people come together, Share and deal with issues.

3.1.2 General Overview

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish belongs to the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya. It is an urban Parish made up of two completely different set up, the Slums where majority of people live and the Estates. The Slums area of Kibera has five outstations namely, Our Lady of Lourdes sub parish in Olympic region, St. Bakhita in Katwekera region, St. Thomas and St. Dominic outstations in Makina and St. Luke in Kianda. The constituent area is Adams Arcade which includes Woodley, Kilimani and Jamhuri regions.

The Parish is made up of 43 SCCs and 5 apostolic associations namely, Catholic Women Association, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Neocatechumenal Way, Legion of Mary and Pioneer. Concerning groups there are 11 Choirs and 6 youth groups. A total number of 5 Pastoral Ministries operate and serve the Parish Community. The Ministries are Liturgical

³² New Way of Being Church <http://www.newway.org.UK/Whatwedo/> Retrieved on 19/06/2012

committee, Justice, Peace and Reconciliation, Pastoral committee, Life and Family committee, Social Pastoral committee and Pontifical Missionary Childhood.

In order to give good services to all Parishes and the Society at large, the Parish has three major departments, Administration, Pastoral Activities and Faith Formation. All the three offices are well equipped with modern facilities both for communicating purposes and preservation of records.

3.1.3 Weekly Bible Sharing in St. Joseph Deaf Community

St. Joseph Deaf Community is among the 43 SCCs in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Nairobi, Kenya. The members meet every Sunday from 10.00 am to 11.00 am. On 2nd October 2011 we visited this particular SCC and participated.

The members assembled at the Hall No. 2 in Guadalupe Integral Formation Centre at 10.10 am. The opening prayer was led by Hillary Otieno. In attendance were 16 people, 10 women and 6 men. The seats were arranged in a circle with the table in the middle which was not covered with table cloth. But on top of the table were a crucifix and two light candles.

The chairman David Niwagaba welcomed the members to participate fully. In preparation for the Gospel Peter Mugambia a Deaf member invited all the members to sing. “Nobody can give love except you, my Lord.” As the singing continued there was clapping, jumping, and dancing while moving round in a circle.

The Gospel reading was from (Mt. 22:1-14), it was about “The Parable of the Marriage Feast”, and the reader was Rosemary Adhiambo. The sharing was very enriching and can be summarized as follow.

- God’s kindness to his People
- We are invited to Celebrate the Eucharist
- Our sins make us desert God
- We are warned to live holy life for at the end of time will be judgment
- Faith in Jesus Christ is our garment.

The prayers of the faithful then followed

- We pray for God to touch all the Deaf in our Parish, direct them to come and join us in experiencing the love of Jesus.
- We pray for Peace in our Country Kenya
- We pray for God to guide us always and especially as we prepare to animate during Mass.
- We pray for our Parish Priest God to give him strength and wisdom as he continues to minister.

During collection a folded paper was used and everybody gave generously. Action plan was the planning of animating at the Holy Mass 8.30 am on Sunday the 30th October 2011. This included 2 readers, 4 ushers, and sign language translator. Gifts required 2 kilograms of sugar, tomatoes, potatoes and carrots.

The Weekly Bible Sharing ended with a word of prayer at 11.30 am.

Comments:- St. Joseph Deaf Community follows the 13 steps in conducting Weekly Bible Sharing as given by Healey J. G. “13 Steps in the Weekly Bible Sharing/Bible Reflection/Bible-Life connections of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) in Africa.”

1. Opening prayer or song
2. Brief reports on the members’ lives during the past week (called a “touchdown period”) include a report on the SCCs actions/tasks (Community response) carried out during the previous week.
3. Brief introduction of the Liturgical theme. Read the Gospel of the following Sunday (first time)
4. Mention a word, phrase or image in the Gospel that strikes you most. Read the Gospel of the following Sunday/second time)
5. Silence. Listening to what God is saying/what God wants to tell us/
6. Bible Sharing/Bible Reflections/Bible-Life connections, connect, relate and apply the Bible (Gospel) to our daily lives and experiences. Sometimes the SCC is a daily life – Bible connections group. Start with our experiences and events of daily life and then go to the Bible. Use the SEE – JUDGE – ACT process. Both ways are an experience of Faith Sharing.
7. Prayers of the faithful (general intercessions)
8. Collection

9. Choose a concrete practical action/task (Community response) to be carried out during the next week. Ideally it is connected to/flows from the Gospel text. Examples: visiting the sick, visiting members who rarely come to the SCC, helping needy people
10. Choosing prayer or song
11. Exchange of sign of peace.”³³

3.1.4 A Case Study of SCCs as Promoters of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation in St.

Theresa of Avila SCC at St Thomas Outstation

1 In Our Case Study we shall use the method of Pastoral Cycle that is Insertion, Social Analysis, Theological Reflection and Action Plan which is applicable in the process of SEE, JUDGE, and ACT.

SEE

St. Teresa of Avila SCC:

On 19th November 2011 the members gathered in St. Dominic outstations, Makina sub-region of Kibera in Nairobi, Kenya. The Weekly Bible Sharing started at 3.00 pm. The participants were 24 of which 13 women and 11 men. The dwellers of Kibera come from different ethnic backgrounds. The Gospel reading was taken from Mt. 25:31-46 and in preparation a Kiswahili song was sang “Tukipenda wenzetu kati yetu Mungu yupo” – Tumshangilie Bwana 8-40

The chairman invited the members to point out whatever touched them most. No sooner did he finish speaking than a woman rose up, very furious and in a loud voice started “My name is

³³ HEALEY J. G., 13 Steps in the Weekly Bible Sharing/Bible reflection/Bible –Life connections of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) in Africa. www.smallchristiancommunities.org/africa. Retrieved on 20/6/2012

Philistia. I am from western part of Kenya, a member of St. Teresa of Avila SCC. I was, however, discouraged and annoyed by the attitude of our leaders who did nothing to help me during my difficult time. The leaders turned a deaf ear to my cry. After receiving a sick call from home about my beloved husband and biological father, I informed them. The two members of my family were very sick, especially my father who was elderly. To my surprise there was no response. The leaders just assumed me because of my poverty; they never came even to pray with as it usually happens.”

“I travelled home as a wounded person with no peace of mind and heart, unwanted by the SCC. I felt I was a useless woman not worth to continue living. When I reached home, my husband was critically ill and finally died after taking care of him for three weeks. The same day we buried him, I received a call in the evening informing me about the death of my father. I informed one of my neighbors about what had transpired and asked her to pass the sad news to the chairman. But even after the chairman and other leaders received the news, they were not bothered. None of the leaders called to console me or pray with neither me nor a word of encouragement. They remained quiet as though nothing happened. It was a painful experience for me as a member of the same SCC. I asked myself so many questions whether I was loved and cared for by any of our SCC leaders. Why were they so cruel to me? What had I done yet no leader had ever accused me of any wrong doing? Was it a punishment due to my poverty, my tribe or simply because I am a woman? No answer was coming forth. I want to finish by saying we have bad leaders, who look like human beings but inside they are wild animals”.

After narrating her sad story Philistia started crying and after a while she sat down.

JUDGE

The following story was told to draw the attention of members towards judgment, of a couple who stayed together for 20 years. They loved each other very much, but one day they had a quarrel over finances. The man blamed his wife for misusing the money. The woman explained how she careful uses the little money for the good of the family but in vain. The man took a machete (panga) and began chasing after his wife in order to kill her. Down the farm was a very deep well and as the woman was running pass by she realized her husband might fall in the well and perish. So while on the other side of the well, she shouted at her husband “Please Stop,” there is a danger, as she pointed at the well. Immediately the husband caught sight of the well,he was overtaken by great fear of losing his life, while trembling the machete fell into the well. He thanked his wife for saving his life and begged for forgiveness as tears continued to run down the checks.

Also we reflected upon “The last social judgment” (Mt. 25: 31-46). The following verse was repeated several times “And the king will say to them in reply, Amen I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine you did for me” (Mt 25:40).

After the Social Analysis of the events and Theological Reflections there was an atmosphere of listening to one another.

ACT

After a few minutes Philistia moved by story and the word of Jesus announced “I am ready to forgive my leaders.” The leaders looked shaken and very remorseful, without hesitation one by

one asked for forgiveness. Once more peace and reconciliation prevailed and there was joy, singing and clapping. There and then, a visit to Philistia home was arranged, every member was asked to bring either money or foodstuff on Wednesday 23rd November 2011 at 6.00 pm.

2 St. Thomas outstation: On Sunday 15th April 2012 we gathered to celebrate the Holy Eucharist. St. Thomas outstation is found in Makina region of Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya. The two mainly tribes are Luo and Luhya. These tribes support mainly ODM party, however their leaders disagreed some few days and parted ways, as a result tension was building up between the supporters.

The Theme of the Homily was “Peace and Reconciliation through Jesus Christ.”

After the mass an elderly man came to greet me and shared the following message:

“Father, we are not going to fight anymore in future, my neighbor has not been greeting me since our political leaders disagreed because we come from different tribes just as our leaders. But since belong in the same SCC; I am going to take the initiate so that we may be reconciled. We are not going to let politics destroy our Peace this time as it happened in 2007 and 2008”

The two examples show how Small Christian Communities are Promotes of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation. When interviewing the members of St. Kizito they raised the following points on some of the benefits of being a member of SCC.

1. Helping the entire society especially on issues of Justice, Peace and Reconciliation
2. Console one another in time of difficulties such as sickness, loss of job or loss of a family member

3. Praying for one another as a way of uplifting others spiritually
4. Shaping the ability of one another especially the thinking capacity when reflecting on different issues and come up with their own solutions.

Pope Benedict XVI in his letter *Africa Munus* states that Reconciliation is not realized due to our efforts, but God give us grace.³⁴

So as members gather for a Weekly Bible Sharing, God grace moves their hearts into communion. Paul Bene gives “The African notion of Reconciliation in Three Moments.”

1. Reconciliation with oneself
2. Reconciliation with the visible world
3. Reconciliation with the invisible world.”³⁵

In other words Reconciliation is a process which leads to transformation, that is why SCCs are avenues of building a three social relationship. Healey J. G. states “Our research has been tracking the slow, gradual shift of SCCs in Eastern Africa from small prayer groups that are inwardly focused to active Small Faith Communities that are outwardly focused on Justice and Peace issues.”³⁶

If matters of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace become part and parcel of all SCCs then the Church will be in a better position to influence positively the entire society and minimize waste of resources in minor cases which find their way to the law courts.

³⁴ Cf.: Benefit XVI, *Africae Munus*, no. 20

³⁵ Cf. BERE P., The word of God as transformative power in Reconciliation African Christian: Reconciliation, Justice and Peace, *The Second African, Synod*, 52-54

³⁶ HEALEY J. G. Small Christian Communities: promotes the reconciliation, justice and peace in Eastern Africa, reconciliation, Justice and Peace, *The Second African Synod*

Let us conclude with a Reflection on the Pope Benedict XVI “Among the many areas where commitment is needed, the synod earnestly called for the Promotion of Reconciliation and Peace. In the present context it is more necessary than ever to rediscover the word of God as a source of Reconciliation to himself. All things (Cf. 2 Cor. 5: 18-20, Eph. 1:10). Christ “Is our Peace: (Eph. 2:14), the one who breaks down the walls of division.”³⁷

3.1.5 Weak Communities

Since SCCs are a “ New Way of Being Church” they ought to grow, for this is the same direction of moving a head responsibly. However the challenge is that some SCCs have not grown, many years of their existence after they were established. There are so many reasons, why some SCC are weak, one of the reasons is lack of new members especially in urban areas where people move regularly.

On Sunday 27/11/2011 there was a workshop organised for both SCCs namely St. Veronica, ST. Joseph the worker, St. Philip and the apostolic associations Legion of Mary, Catholic Charismatic Renewal and Catholic Women Association.

Four points were singled out as to why Catholic should join SCCs.

1. It is the most appropriate way of belonging to the Church
2. A good place where others can have a taste of my Salt that is my Faith
3. The best way of expanding one’s Home is by joining the nearest SCC
4. If one would like to learn from others in a simple manner, the best place is in SCCs.

³⁷ BENEDICT XVI, Verbuni Domini

The four points shows how active members of SCCs enjoy practicing their Faith in a very outgoing style. A sense of maturity is evident, because SCCs act at the same time as places of ongoing Formation not only for the Laity but the Religious and Priests.

For John Joseph the Parish Priest of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Nairobi, Kenya states the following concerning weak Small Christian Communities

1. Reluctant in supporting parish activities which concern the diocese at large
2. Contribute well only towards project and programmes which concern them directly, example Patron's Feast days and Burials
3. Lukewarm towards involvement in Church Ministries example Reconciliation, Justice and Peace, Lectors and Ushers
4. Not concerned with Faith Formation of the Youth and Children

In order for SCCs to grow they need to go beyond and be concerned with not only with spiritual matters but Social-Economical issue as well. Healey J. G. states that some SCCs in East Africa have remained in the status of prayer groups hence they need to be involved with matters of justice and peace.³⁸ Remaining on the status of a prayer group is a weakness which need to be removed. A sign of life is that of participation not only on spiritual matters but also matters of raising the standard of living for all human beings.

³⁸ HEALEY J. G. Small Christian Communities: Promoters of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace in Eastern Africa, Reconciliation, Justice and Peace, The Second African Synod, 60

It is also important to remember where there is no unity, weakness will prevail. Thus for SCCs to be strong both the Lay, Religious and Priests need to have one agenda of serving the society in love. Weak communities have been identified in some aspect with lack of support from the Religious and the Priest.

Yaa Tabu Harrison in one of his Pastoral Recommendations states “The entire Archdiocese takes up the initiative and appreciate the fact that SCCs are now “New way of Being Church.” The Clergy, the Religious and the Laity should be challenged in order to understand that SCCs are no longer optional but rather a Pastoral Priority” and “a Way of Life.” according to the AMECEA Bishops. It is advisable for all the priests and the Religious Brothers and Sisters to belong to a specific “Jumuiya Ndogo Ndogo” as a way of showing example.”³⁹

Weak Communities are a threat to the very spiritual growth of the same members, because their main concern is the opposite of meaningful life. Mejia Rodrigo states “In some Parishes there are SCCs that only have the name. The reality is quite different because they are exactly like the traditional pious religious movements that have always existed in the past.”⁴⁰

3.2.1 Social Cultural Analysis

The African Culture is a fertile ground for relations, that why Christianity has spread very fast. To be a true Christian is to have at the same time a true relationship with Jesus Christ. Healey Joseph and Sybertz Donald in their book, “Towards an African Narrative Theology” states. “ The encounter of African Culture with Christianity brings a newness, a freshness an originality, a

³⁹ YAA. T. B. Pastoral Recommendations of SCCs for Mombasa Archdiocese, 68

⁴⁰ MEJIA R. Shadows of the Small Christian Communities, New Strategies for a New Evangelization in Africa.

difference like a spice that brings a new taste to food. In one way it is the same food (core Christianity), but it tastes very different.”⁴¹

In other words Christianity is lived in a Social Cultural Contexts. The values of the Culture to some extent play a major role in defining how certain Christian values ought to be expressed. Aware of this Pope John Paul II in his “Ecclesia in Africa” does not hesitate to add, “By reason of its deep conviction that “the synthesis between Culture and Faith is not only a demand of Culture but also of Faith,” because a Faith that does not become Culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived.”⁴²

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish which comprises two regions, Kibera and Adam Arcade has a mixture a of Social Cultural trends. While the Cultural traditions are African, there are slight differences in approaches to matters of Faith. Looking at the Communities from outside it is very difficult to notice but inwardly there are some cracks which slow down individual witnessing. In Mathew 23:13-27 Jesus was at loggerheads with the Scribes and Pharisees because there were more concerned with their Cultural tradition than the core values which shape humanity in response to God. He goes further by pointing out, that they ought to Introspect themselves by asserting, “Even so, on the outside you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evil doing” (Mt. 23: 28).

Bodewes Christine in his Book Parish Transformation Urban Slums: voices of Kibera, Kenya, has a good input especially his comments about, “The African Synod Comes Home,” In

⁴¹ HEALEY – SYBERTZ, D., Africanizing Christianity or Christinizing Africa?

⁴² JOHN PAUL II, Ecclesia in Africa, no. 78

evaluating the influence of African Culture on Parishioners the African Bishop's observations were very valid in the Parish. The tension between Culture and Faith and the constant shifting back and forth is clearly felt by many Parishioners. For some it is like a dual membership. Even though many customs and practices are being adapted or lost in the Urban Slum context, the prevailing Culture is often the traditional one, particularly in areas of marriage and death."⁴³

On Sunday 30th October 2011 we Celebrated the Holy Eucharist at St. Dominic Outstation in Makina region, Kibera. Three SCCs gathered, St. Theresa of Avila, St. Kizito, and St. Andrew. During the time of receiving holy communion only eleven adults came forward while over sixty adults remained seated. After the Mass we were arranging on how to visit each SCC and many questions were being asked. One of the issue discussed, was about the small number of adults who receive holy communion. The major hinderance was Cultural traditions on marriage whereby some people have more than one wife, others cannot marry in the church since they have not paid dowry, relationships resulting from a girl becoming pregnant as traditions dictate the approval of the families for a girl and a boy to live together without consideration of their Christian Faith.

On the other hand those who accept to enter into these kind of relationships which are contrary to the Christian Faith claim to be strong Christians. In fact some have been even youth leaders in the Church or in their respective Small Christian Communities for a long time. Kanyandogo Peter makes his observation about the importance of Culture as to why nobody can grow outside

⁴³ BODEWES, C. African Culture in Kibera

his/her Culture. We are identified according to our own Cultures.⁴⁴ But the problem arises when we mix up our priorities as Christians hence fail to appreciate the teaching of the Gospel. In one of the SCCs a man narrated how he was forced to abandon his first wife because she came from another tribe . This trend of dealing with relationships matters only from one side, locks out the aspect of witnessing on a practicing individual and doubles the difficult in trying to solve such matters amicably according to the teaching of the Church.

Death is also another complex issue in the African Cultural set up which has continued to confront what Faith holds in our midst. In Kibera where many families languish in poverty, when death occurs everybody contribute some money due to Cultural demands. There are many cases of people infected by HIV/AIDS and other sicknesses, in some instances these sick people have no one to assist them except the help they get from the Church. But when one dies their families take over and come up with very complicated programmes which cost a lot of money. Christianity ought to challenge our Culture so that we can help the sick, buy them medicine and show them love instead of waiting to buy them expensive coffins. Healey Joseph gives us a nice proverb from the Sukum people of Tanzania which we should think about, “ Only a person who is alive eats (that is, a dead person does not eat)”.⁴⁵

In fact the African Culture looks at a person in totality and death is only the connecting point with the ancestors. All along Culture has been at the service of humanity and the Church attests to this “Culture must represent a privileged area for the presence and commitment of the Church

⁴⁴ KANYADOGO P. Rethings: African Ecclesiology Challenges from People’s Rights and Participation. Inculturing the church in Africa Theological and Practical Perspectives 97-98

⁴⁵ HEALEY J. G. Importance of Death in African Culture, Towards an African Narrative Theology, p.207

and individuals Christians. The Second Vatican Council sees the separation of Christian Faith and daily life as one of the most serious errors of our day.”⁴⁶

There is a need to re-examine our Culture values therefore in the light of Gospel values in order to live them better. Anne Nasimiyu Wasike enlightens us more when she asserts, “Jesus Christ accepted and was conditioned by human Culture. No human person can exist outside a specific Cultural context. Through divine, Jesus emptied himself and took the nature of a servant. He became like man and appeared in human likeness. He was humble and walked the path of obedience, all the way to death on the cross (Cf. Phil. 2:6-11).⁴⁷ Jesus who was born in the Jewish Social Cultural set and was able to overcome all the negative barriers to reach us. By imitating Him, we have the opportunity to overcome our own shortcoming so that the “seeds” of Faith may flourish.

3.2.2 Geographical Set Up

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish belongs to the Archdiocese of Nairobi, Kenya. It was started in 1973 when Maurice Cardinal Otunga was the shepherd. The Parish is situated South west of the capital city. It comprises of two major zones which have a different Social set up namely Kibera Slums and Adams Arcade area. Kibera Slums is a highly populated area without permanent house structures and roads, it also lacks Social Facilities and playing grounds. When walking through Kibera one will notice a dirty environment, very few toilets, no drainage system and poor electricity connections which result in causing damages of property and sometimes death.

⁴⁶ Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, Service in Culture, No.554

⁴⁷ NASIMIYU-WASIKE, A., Imaging Jesus Christ in the African context at the Dawn of A New Millenium Challenges and Prospects of the church in Africa: Theological Reflections of the 21st century

Adams Arcade zone is the opposite of Kibera, here people live in Estates which are well kept. The compounds are big with plying grounds and modern Social Facilities are in plenty. The environment is very conducive for human activities, there are beautiful flower gardens, ever green trees and even small gardens with different species of vegetables.

The Parish is found in Nairobi County, its population is made up to people from Dagoretti and Langata constituencies. It is surrounded by Westlands, Makadara and Starehe constituencies. Within the Archdiocese it boards the following parishes Holy Family Minor Basilica, St. Michael Otiende, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Holy Trinity and Christ the King Parish. The population of Catholics in this Parish is around 20,000, served in 5 church buildings. Adams Arcade zone has three regions, Woodley, Kilimani and Jamuhuri served by the main Parish Our Lady of Guadalupe . While Kibera zone has 4 regions Olympic, Katwekera, Makina and Kianda. These regions have 5 outstations namely Our Lady of Lourdes, St. Bakhita, St. Thomas, St. Dominic and St. Luke.

3.2.3 The Ethnic Factor

Kibera and Adam Arcade is a home of many people from different parts of the country. These people are born and brought up within a particular Culture which ordinarily is referred to as tribe. Belonging to a particular tribe is not a choice but a blessing that is why we need to be proud of where we come from. In Kenya there are 42 tribes spread across the 47 counties, some of these are Kikuyu, Luhya, Luo, Maasai, \Kamba, Kalenjin, Mujikenda, Somali, Taita and Kisii only to name a few. Before independence these Communities used to trade and lived in peace despite some few instances of conflicts. After Kenya got its independence in 1963 the

government tried very hard to address these problems especially cattle rustling and boundaries, however it failed on issues of Land ownership. In other words there was lack of coordinated efforts as some leaders focused their attention on the narrow aspect of tribal king makers instead of the nation as a whole.

Today the Ethnic Factor is proving to be very complicated especially in Kibera Slums. Post Election Violence which was carried on tribal lines has continued to cause hangover in many peoples mind. And as the General Election is hovering around the fears grip everybody. In St. Teresa of Avila SCC a good number of the members say already they have transported whatever they value most of their rural homes. This because during political temperatures rise very high such that even good neighbours tend to become enemies. One of the leaders of the same Christian Community said, “Here in Kibera, you do not need to be told which party a person supports , you only need to know his/her tribe and you make a conclusion.”

Tribal politics have entered the nervous system of our Communities to the extent of leading people to blind obedience. In his letter on “ New Social Problem” Pope Paul VI Cautions Christian to examine their actions when relating with others. He urges us to make wise choices which benefits everybody and moves towards true humanism.⁴⁸

Looking at the complex situation brought about by the Ethnic Factor one will understand why tribal feelings have not spared our Small Christian Communities. For example in Kibera a good number of SCCs have taken a trend of tribal grouping not because they were established on those

⁴⁸ Cf. PAULVI, Octogesima Adveniens, No. 49

lines but due to tribal animosity, people tend to live in the neighbourhood with those whom they know and trust.

In one of the Small Christian Community Kibera, a 56 years old man narrates how his wife deserted him during Post Election violence even after living together for 24 years. The man has asked his 5 children not to marry people from other tribes in order to avoid shame and suffering. Sarah Robert says we should not separate Faith from Life because we shall be sending negative signals that the Gospel is incapable of Transforming the world.⁴⁹

The destruction caused by Ethnicity takes a long time to heal, hence it calls for change of attitude and operative skills which have been conditioned to function narrowly. On the same issue Mejia, R., explains “some SCCs especially in Cities, tend to group themselves according to tribes. So that they may use their mother tongue. This kills the openness and universality proper to the Church.”⁵⁰

Christians therefore should not be captives of political parties propagated on tribal affiliations for merely personal gains. The Church proclaims in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church the following “ It is the proper duty of the lay faithful to proclaim the Gospel with an exemplary witness of life rooted in Christ and lived in temporal realities: the family professional commitment in the world of words, culture, science and research the exercise of social, economic and political responsibilities.”⁵¹

⁴⁹ Cf. SARAH, R., “Good works”: Are born of faith, 99-100 MEJIA, R., Small Christian Communities in Eastern

⁵⁰ Africa 26 years: Lights and Shadows, New Strategies for a New Evangelization in Africa.

⁵¹ Compendium of the Social doctrine of the church, Social doctrine and the commitment of the lay faithful, no.543

The Church call upon all Christians to witness everyday because this is the kind of life Jesus lived. We should not be satisfied by remaining on the tribal level because it does not give a picture which befits us, we have to transcend and embrace Faith as Scriptures tell us, “Be doers of the word and not hearers, deluding yourself” (Jas. 1: 22)

3.3.1 The Socio-Economic Factors

Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish comprises two zones with different standards of living. The Adams Arcade is made up of people who work in big companies and high ranking government offices. The people here live in good houses with maximum security throughout. The area is surrounded by big supermarkets such as Nakumatt and Uchumi. High class hospitals among them the Aga Khan, Institutions for higher Education such as Hekima University College, Kenya Science and well established schools for Social Communication, Dress making, Mechanics and things alike.

On the other hand Kibera region which is a Slum has a different Socio-Economic Factors. Being the most populace Urban area in Nairobi and Kenya at large. Bodewas Christine gives us some reasons why people settle in this place comfortable, as law retail houses, food, used clothing which are affordable, vegetables are cheap, its central location to industrial area where people can easily walk and easy to find relatives. There are other reasons why people come to settle in Kibera, forced to flee political clashes, collapse of agriculture sector in the rural, no development in the rural and availability of markets to begin business.⁵² These reasons illustrate why the low income people flock every year in big numbers from the rural area to Kibera. Kibera as a whole

⁵² Cf. BODEWES C., The physical and social environment of Kibera, 31-54

is a home to more than 700,000 people living in an area of less than 550 acres. Other big Slums in the Kenya are Korogocho and Mathare.

Shorters Aylward states: African countries are poor and high urban growth rates mean that there is a high concentration of poverty in the towns. Unlike the urban poor of Latin American cities who are a distinct and visible minority, the vast majority, perhaps 70% of African urban dwellers are poor.”⁵³

In Kibera poverty is the order of the day, when we made our visit to St. Bernadeta SCC we were unable to be accommodated ,the rooms are very small. The Weekly Bible Sharing was good and the welcoming heart of the house owner made even those who were standing outside to feel at home. Within the neighbourhood nobody could help us with a seat because they don't have, the room was 10 feet wide and 10 feet long and about 4 (wanajumuiya) were sitting on the bed. A member made a remarkable statement, “Though we live like in concentration camps, our Faith is strong enough to enable us face the economic hardships. With the intercession of our patron saint, we share our poverty, yet each day we are having enough.” The Church has continued to advocate for distribution of wealth whereby every person is able to meet his essential needs. Carlos Evaristo Da Gama states, “It is essential to be aware of the fact that option for the poor is an option of God Himself, a clear option of Jesus. Jesus was born poor, lived and died poor. In his life and death he sided with the poor. His real poverty is not an accidental matter but part of his mystery of humiliation and annihilation. He is the son of God of the poor.”⁵⁴

⁵³ SHORTER, A. Slums A Social Analysis, The slums: A challenge to Evangelization, Tangaza Occasional Paper No. 14

⁵⁴ DA GAMA C. E. The Christian Option for the poor

Thus the Church calls upon those vested with powers by the Society to work for the same Society in making sure there is respect for human dignity. And that all programmes be they Political Economical, Social, Scientific and Cultural should be focused in improving the conditions of humanity. Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church looks at these necessities as vital in order to avoid any manipulation which endanger human development.⁵⁵

The Socio-Economic situation in Kibera is pathetic, a big number of the population is idle with no work, poor housing, no access roads, no drainage system, dirty , everywhere poor electricity connection and scarcity of water. Laurenti Magesa and Michael C. Kirwen, see much of Economic Injustices arising from absence of information as they assert, “ One main source of Economic Injustice is absence of information about the impact of Economic process on People’s well being and human dignity. Developing Countries generally have virtually no statistics anywhere on most of the aspect of life that nearly matter, such as the average distance people have to carry water and food, the number dying, from preventable diseases, the extent of overcrowding the prevalence of violence or the number of people who are unable to multiply one number by another or summarize their own Country’s history.”⁵⁶

The absence of information has denied the poor the crucial opportunity to express their conditions to the government so as to improve their living standards. During Election period the political leaders make all kinds of promises to improve the Socio-Economic conditions only for Kibera dwellers to wait for 5 years for the same promises to be repeated. As a result the unemployed youth indulge themselves in stealing, robbery and drug trafficking to get money.

⁵⁵ Cf. COMPENDIUM OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, The many aspects of the human person, Nos. 132-133

⁵⁶ MAGESA L. – MICHAEL L. C.K Does the church have a role in Economic Justice.

Girls turn to prostitution whereby they end up becoming pregnant, since a big number of them cannot bring up children they seek abortions. A good number of children are able to afford only primary education in government crowded schools like Olympic primary and they hardly progress afterwards due to lack of school fees required for secondary education. The problem of HIV/AIDS is also rampant and other diseases such as TB, Cholera, Skin Diseases et cetera. However the people of Kibera have hope that with the new constitution things will improve. Many Slum dwellers laud the Constituencies Development Fund popularly known as (CDF) because it has helped them especially in bursaries, improvement of sanitation facilities and construction of dispensaries which serve them better.

3.3.2 The Presence of the Church and the Kenyan Lenten Campaign

The presence of the Catholic Church is evident in Kibera and Adams Arcade areas served by Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. Pope John Paul II in his letter, “The Church in Africa”, states “As a body organized within the community and nation, the Church has both the right and the duty to participate fully in building a just and peaceful society with all the means at her disposal. Here we mention the Church’s apostolate in the areas of Education, Healthcare, Social Awareness and in the other programmes of assistance. In the measure that these activities help to reduce ignorance, improve public health and promote a greater participation of all in solving the problems of society in a spirit of freedom and responsibility, the Church creates conditions for the progress of justice and peace.”⁵⁷

Through Community Ministries or Pastoral Ministries the Church has been able to reach out to the need both in terms of awareness and material assistance. McGarry C., says evangelization in

⁵⁷ JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, NO. 107

the third million will be credible if the African Church allows the transforming experience of Christ.⁵⁸

In Kenya something wonderful has been taking place during Lent Season of every year since 1985 known as “Lenten Campaign”. Lenten Campaign is carried out through the Pastoral Community Ministry of Justice and Peace or Justice and Peace Committees. This Ministry is transforming many Social Structures through awareness not only for the Catholics but also of the society at large. Ignorance has remained a big challenge toward liberating especially the marginalized in society. It reminds us about the prophet’s message “My people perish for want of knowledge” (Hos. 4:6). In his opening remarks on this year 2012 Lenten Campaign Most Rev. Zacchaeus Okoth the Chairman Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Kenya states “To have a transformed Kenyan we must return to believing in authentic authority and tradition. Any Society that does away with its past and authority is bound to perish. We have to go back to our Christian and African roots and reclaim what we have lost. Transformation means that we reclaim our humanity from false doctrines and ideologies that have infested our society. Our Lord told us that only truth will set up free (Jn.8:32).”⁵⁹

The Theme of this year Lenten Campaign 2012 was “Towards a Transformed Kenya” let light shine out of darkness (2 Cor. 4:6). The booklets were given to all 43 SCCs in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. The involvement of SCCs which are a New Way of Being Church had tremendous success as per the report of Parish Justice and Peace office.

⁵⁸ Cf. McGARRY C., A Community of Disciples to witness to the kingdom, inculturating the church in Africa: Theological and Practical Perspectives.

⁵⁹ OKOTH Z. Preface Towards A Transformed Kenya, Lenten Campaign 2012

The booklet had five topics on weekly basis:

Week one: General Election Our Country, Our Leaders, Our Responsibility

Week two: Food Security

Week three: Devolution

Week four: Family

Week five: Peace and Cohesion

On 5th March 2012 after the Holy Mass in Our Lady of Lourds Outstation Kibera the Leaders of St. Kizito SCC who had already held their weekly bible sharing on 30th March 2012 were explaining how interesting the topic of Food Security was. It was after discussion using the method of See, Judge and Act the members found out they had the chance to improve on matters of Food Security even if they live in town. They agreed to help one another come up with good strategies of buying and storing important Food stuff such as maize and beans. This would enable them to overcome hunger and suffering , especially when one does not have money or during dry seasons when prices go very high. Also they said through their SCC and with the assistance of Justice and Peace Parish Office they have been able to help their neighbours who are not Catholic. It is very interesting to note that the booklets are in demand to people of other Faiths. This is a sure way that the Presence of the Church is alive in Societ.

On the importance of Lenten Campaign which are done every year Healey J. G. states “Annual campaigns such as the Kenya Lenten Campaign focuses more on the involvement of SCCs in Justice and Peace issues at the local level. Thousands of booklets in both English and Swahili are used in the Weekly SCC meetings in Kenya during the five weeks of lent. The See, Judge

and Act process draws on the experience of SCCs on Justice and Peace related themes. The questions and proposed actions steps directly involve SCC.”⁶⁰ Therefore through SCCs the Church has continued to penetrate the lives of the people not only on matters of Faith but those also which concerns human daily struggles.

3.4.1 Pastoral Activities and Social Outreach

The Pastoral life in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish can be explained by the many Pastoral activities which take place. The Parish Pastoral office is responsible for coordinating all the activity under the direction of the Parish Priest. The office is well organized and incorporation with Faith Formation, Justice and Peace offices it is able to discharge its duties very effectively.

The Second Vatican Council calls upon the Church to be more sensitive as it serves humanity. At all times the Church carries the responsibility of reading the signs of the time and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel if it is to carry out its task. In language intelligible to every generation she should be able to answer the ever recurring questions which men ask about the meaning of this present life and of the life to come and how one is related to the other. We must be aware of and understand the aspirations, the yearning and the often dramatic features of the world in which we live.”⁶¹

Then, Pastoral activities have to be in touch with reality, responding day by day with what concerns people most. Through Small Christian Communities and apostolic associations transformation has to taken place. That is to say effective means as in the case of Our Lady of

⁶⁰ HEALEY J. G. Historical Development of Small Christian Communities

⁶¹ VATICAN COUNCIL II, Gaudium et Spes, no. 4

Guadalupe Parish have to be adopted not as a matter of policy but of fulfilling the Lords invitation. “Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you will find rest for yourselves,” (Mt. 11:29).

It is in line with the teaching of our Lord and the ever changing Socio-cultural and Economic demands which at times impact negatively on the Faith of the Christian to the extent of leading into spiritual disorientation. To minimize such dangers the Pastoral office draws up the programme of Pastoral activities in all the 43 SCCs, 5 postolic associations, and group ministries . These activities includes seminars, workshops and Liturgical Celebrations. By doing so the office makes sure no group is left out in receiving essential services which are crucial for growth. On the other hand the leaders of SCCs, apostolic association and group ministries such as choir are able to bring the feedback. Hence the Pastor is able to make a follow up and whenever some changes or interventions are required, solutions are given without causing any confusion or unnecessary delays:

Pope John Paul states, “In all areas of the Church life formation is of primary importance. People who have never had the change to learn cannot really know the truth of faith, nor can they perform actions which they have never been taught. For this reason “the whole Community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelization, each according to his or her specific role within the church.”⁶²

In order to broaden the Pastoral action plan which is of paramount importance in the success of Pastoral activities, the office encourages SCCs, apostolic association and group ministries

⁶² JOHN PAUL II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, no.75

organize Social Outreach. Healey J. G. in his checklist of 14 common activities in Small Christian Communities in Africa Today has included Social Outreach.⁶³ It is very important to know that Social Outreach serves two major purposes, first it offers the opportunity to learn from others and second it lets us experience our reflections by being charitable in meeting the needs of our people.

Pope Benedict XVI in his letter “The word of the Lord” challenges us on how we allow ourselves to be inspired in our Pastoral activity by the word of God. “ Along these lines of the synod called for a particular Pastoral commitment to emphasizing the centrality of the Word of God in the Church’s life, and recommended a greater “Biblical Apostolate” not alongside other forms of Pastoral work, but as a means of letting the Bible inspire all Pastoral work. This does not mean adding a meeting here or there in Parishes or Dioceses, but rather of examining the ordinary activities of Christian Communities in Parishes, associations, and movements, to see if they are truly concerned with fostering a personal encounter with Christ, who gives himself to us in his word. Since ignorance of the scripture is ignorance of Christ.⁶⁴

Social Outreach in a way helps each one of use Bishops. Priests, religious men and women and the lay to reciprocate today the missionary activity within our locality. Pope John Paul II encourages when he states, “ Since the work that awaits everyone in the vineyards of the \Lord is so great there is no place for idleness. With even greater urgency the “householder” repeats his invitation, “you go into my vineyard too.”⁶⁵

⁶³ HEALEY J. G. www.smallchristiancommunities.org/Africa

⁶⁴ BENEDICT XVI, Verbum Domini no. 73,

⁶⁵ JOHN PAUL II, Christifideles Laici, 3

3.4.2 Faith Formation

Faith Formation is an integral a part of the Christian living. It moulds us into a relationship which entirely focus upon the love of God as revealed to us in the action of Jesus Christ. That is why the missionaries had to struggle by risking their lives to come and share the good news of salvation. The task was making Christ known to us not only by preaching but by the word of testimony and above all witnessing. Church historian John Baur presents a time framework of the missionary activities in Africa. About Kenya, he mentions the Portuguese as first missionaries to evangelize the Coast in the 17th century. However only in the 19th century Christianity did manage to expand rapidly.⁶⁶

In Kenya today the Catholic Church is present everywhere. This calls for an elaborate method in Faith Formation for Christianity to maintain it's traditional influence in the Society. Rinaldo Ronzani states, "Being truly African and truly Christian is the challenge ahead of us. In many places we are still under the impression that there are two :worlds" the world of our daily life where the "Traditional" values are at work and the world of worship where some Christians values are at work. This dichotomy between faith and life is still very much felt."⁶⁷

In Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, Faith Formation is highly regarded. There is a special office with trained personnel who handle all related matters. This include Adults , School children, Sunday school, Deaf Community and Infant baptism. It is also good to mention that there is a Trained Deaf Catechist who handle issues of the Deaf Community in Faith Formation. An office separate from the main one, has been created by the Parish Priest as a motivation proper to

⁶⁶ Cf. BAUR J., East Africa with Madagascar and Islands, 337-339

⁶⁷ RONZANI, R., Anthropological Foundation

catechesis. Pope John Paul II in his letter “Catechesis Today” explains “The specific character of Catechesis, as distinct from the initial conversion-bringing proclamation of the gospel, has the two fold objective of maturing the initial faith and educating the three disciple of Christ by means of a deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and the message of our Lord Jesus Christ.”⁶⁸

For the apostolate to succeed the Catechists have drawn up “Catechesis syllabus” which they adhere on year to year basis. It enables them to assess the candidates and also evaluate themselves accordingly. The big number of candidates in Faith Formation is very encouraging. 60 adults, 350 School children and, 15 adults who are deaf. The departments for Catechesis are Baptism and Eucharist, Confirmation, Marriage, and Reverts (those who left the Catholic faith in one reason or another and would like to be accepted back). The General Directory for Catechesis says care has to be taken in adult Catechesis in order to help them cope with their responsibilities and that Catechists have a duty of assisting them realize the task before them.⁶⁹

On the same, the introduction of ‘A Catholic Catechism’ Published by the Kenya Episcopal Conference states “The gift of Faith that we have received in Baptism through the Church needs to be nourished and strengthened. We do so especially when we read the scriptures, when we pray, when we celebrate the sacraments and live our Christian life to the full in charity and holiness. Besides these necessary means, Catechesis is of the utmost importance since it helps us understand the depth and richness of our Catholic Faith, to bring it to maturity and also to share

⁶⁸ JOHN PAUL II, Catechesis Tradendae No. 19

⁶⁹ GENERAL DIRECTORY FOR CATECHESIS: Congregation for the Clergy NO. 173

it with others.⁷⁰ Catechesis nourishes us to continue practicing our Faith for those who have already been Baptized and also opens up a new chapter for those in the process to reflect the mysteries of salvation which they long celebrate.

The office of faith formation in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish has a list of reference books as follows

1. The Episcopal Conference of Kenya, Tumshangilie Bwana, Kitabu cha Sala na nyimbo
2. Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)
3. Catechism of the Catholic Church, Compendium
4. A Catholic Catechism, Kenya Episcopal Conference.
5. General Directory for Catechesis, Congregation for the Clergy.
6. African Bible
7. Vatican II (GS Gaudium et Spes, LG, Lumen Gentium)
8. A Guide to the Catechists
9. John Paul II Catechesis Today (Catechesis Tradendae)
10. Canon Law of the Catholic Church
11. This is Our Faith
12. Manual Book for the Catechists

The Catechists are happy to share their joys in the words of Pope John Paul II in his letter , The Beginning of the New Millennium where he speaks about “ Starting a fresh from Christ.”⁷¹ These expressions are true to the character of the teacher, we have to start from Christ just as

⁷⁰ A CATHOLIC CATECHISM , Kenya Episcopal Conference, Introduction

⁷¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Novo Millennio Inuente, No. 29

those who come to us have to start from him because Catechesis has no professionals but all the time learners and this is the only guarantee of continuous growth in Faith. The Catechesis of the Catholic Church enlightens us more when it asserts “Catechesis is an Education in the Faith of children, young people and adults which includes, especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way with a view to initiating the hearers into the fullness of Christian life.”⁷² Thus the Church as a sign of the kingdom of God has the obligation of making sure her curiosity to impart faith according to the command of Jesus is fulfilled. “ Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ” (Mt. 28:19).

3.4.3 Pastoral assessment

Sociological leadership is the driving force of every Community, no matter how the individuals are talented a community cannot exist without leaders. That is why every Parish has a leader in the designation of the Parish Priest. The 1983 Code of Canon Law affirms “The Parish Priest is the proper Pastor of the Parish entrusted to him. He exercises the Pastoral care of the Community entrusted to him under the authority of the Diocesan Bishop, whose ministry of Christ he is called to share, so that for this Community he may carry out the office of teaching, sanctifying and ruling with the cooperation of other priests or deacons and with the assistance of lay members of Christ’s faithful in accordance with the law.”⁷³

In Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, indicators of good leadership are visible in every aspect of the Pastoral activities. The Parish has shown how much good leadership can impact on the lives of

⁷² THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, no.5

⁷³ THE CODE OF CANON LAW, Can. 519

the Parishioners and the Society at large. The conducive working relationship between the Priests and the lay faithful is worth imitating. Pope Paul VI in his letter On Evangelization in the Modern World states, “Hence the active presence of the laity in the temporal realities takes on all its importance. One cannot, however, neglect or forget the other dimensions, the laity can also feel themselves called, or be called, to work with their Pastors in the service of the Ecclesial Community, for its growth and life, by exercising a great variety of ministries according to the grace and charisms which the Lord is pleased to give them.”⁷⁴

The increasing in number of the Catholic population call for a united team work while at the same time allowing the Holy Spirit to guide us, in the words of St. Paul “in the same way, the spirit too comes to the aid of our weakness” (Rom. 8:26). Alex Vadakumthala asserts, “Successful Parish leadership is matter of relationships. The relationships augment active involvement and participation of all and create Community consciousness among the members. Often it is easier to achieve this, when a lay person who is of the equal juridical status is appointed for the Pastoral leadership.”⁷⁵

Active participation and involvement of the lay in key areas of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish life is as follows.

1. Liturgical worship: members participate fully during Eucharistic Celebrations in singing, readings, presentation of gifts, attentive listening and responding appropriately. Each Mass has a choir group to minister.

⁷⁴ PAUL VI Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 73

⁷⁵ VADAKUMTHALA, A., Active involvement and community consciousness

2. Leadership:- the lay participate in all levels of leadership, Parish Pastoral Executive Council, Parish Pastoral Councils, Finance committee, Development committee, Pastoral committee, Justice and Peace committee, Pontifical Missionary Society, Health Care, Youth leadership and Liturgical committee
3. Small Christian communities: all the 43 SSCs are represented in the Parish Pastoral Councils
4. Apostolic association: The leaders attend Parish Pastoral Council, in attendance capacity.
5. Researchers: the big number of researchers Priests, Deacons, Seminarians, Religious men and women and the Lay Faithful is a prove of a welcoming Community
6. Volunteers:- many Christian offer their services on voluntary basis such as Lectors, Extra-Ministers of the Eucharist and members of Justice and Peace

At the same time there are some difficulties which hinder Pastoral activities in this Parish.

1. Land: the scarcity of land to build permanent Church structures or for expansion purposes is a night-mare in Kibera region where the population is very high, the small buildings are unable to accommodate the Faithful who turn up for Mass on Sunday
2. At Adams Arcade where the main Parish stands, there is a problem of parking on Sundays the compound is not enough. During Eucharistic celebration a good number of people remain outside for lack of space.
3. Another problem is nearly all Pastoral Ministries do not have enough personnel to carry out the demanding duties.

However the positive thing, is the realization of belonging to one Community. In this way the Christians together with their Pastor guided by love and hope will find other alternatives in solving their problems.

3.4.4 General Assessment on the Success of SCC Model of the Church

The understanding and acknowledgement by the lay faithful that SCCs are New Way of Being Church” has led to a tremendous boost towards their success. General the spirit of belonging has been awakened in Diocese and Parishes as the Church has become the mirror of African household.

Through SCCs the Lay Faithful have come to understand, it is their responsibility to support the Church in the task of evangelization. They have also realized that the Church is a Community whereby every member is appreciated not for what he/she does, but just for his/ her presence. Alex Vadakumthala states, “A Parish is more meaningful defined in terms of a Community. The Parish is to be organized and managed as a Community which would constantly cultivate in the Parishioners an awareness of becoming active, responsible and ever alive members of the people of God who are interested in themselves as individuals, as well as in others as members of a united family. The Parish Community realizes its purpose and significance only when it lives out the Faith in the Lord in solidarity between one another.”⁷⁶

In Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish the Christians have put into practice the message of AMECEA Bishops that SCCs are the Key Pastoral Priority in evangelization. The day to day running of the Parish is supported both financial and provision of personnel in different capacities. This is in

⁷⁶ VADAKUMTHALA A. Active Involvement and Community Consciousness

line with Church law which states, Canon 2221, “Christ Faithful have the obligation to provide for the needs of the Church, so that the Church has available to it those things which are necessary for divine worship, for apostolic and charitable work and for the monthly support of its ministers.

They are also obliged to Promote Social Justice and mindful of the Lord’s precept, to help the poor from their own resources.⁷⁷ While SCCs are doing their best to support by providing necessities, the cost of living has been on the rise, a set back to budgeting process and Pastoral strategic planning. Therefore more care is to be taken to rescue the situation because members have other areas of concern to look after namely families, welfares and others. One the same view Laurent Magesa and Michael C. Kirwen states, “The rise of SCCs as a new way of being church has brought most powerful to the fore the truth of the principle that in the Church’s needs should determine ministries and not ministers its needs.”⁷⁸

On the other hand many members of SCCS in Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish speak openly about the success of their Communities by looking at their own lives.

1. Majority married in the Church after joining SCCs.
2. Secured employment by intervention of fellow members.
3. Influenced to share the little income to help the most needy cases.
4. Have been enlighten on the important of Tithes, Solemnities, Saints and Fasting
5. Have come to understand the Catholic Faith better

⁷⁷ THE CODE OF CANON LAW, Can. 222

⁷⁸ MAGESA L. – KIRWEN M. C., Theological Reflections on the Future of Mission in Africa.

The success of SCCs is also indicated by plans to establishing new Communities where the members exceed the required number. The members agree that in the past some SCCs resisted any more to divid them, but now they know it is part of growth.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.1 Introduction

In our third moment of pastoral cycles we shall give a theological reflection on the SCC model of Church. During the insertion I have lived and experienced the life of our people in different Small Christian Communities and in apostolic associations as presented in the reflections. The researcher will also address the socio-cultural analysis of these Communities in depth and mentioned a number of issues which contributed both positively and negatively. With the eyes of faith we would like to draw from the scriptures and the teaching of the Church the richness of our Christian values to enlighten our minds and hearts before moving to the Action Plan.

4.2 Small Christian Community Model of Church as the contexts of Acts 4:32-37

Pentecost is referred to as the Birthday of the Church, because things started to unfold according to the teaching of Jesus in such a powerful way, to the extent of causing tensions between the apostles and those who strictly followed the Jewish religion. Without the intention of separating from the larger Jewish Community the disciples of Jesus found themselves in complicated situations and had to design a new way of living in order to continue preaching the good news. Be that as it may, preaching alone could prove a bit tricky for those who were being counted into Christian hence witnessing was necessary. The individual expectations and the love for one another continued the set up of a Christian Community as we see in Acts 4:32-37.

In his letter post-synod Apostolic Exhortation of 2010 Pope Benedict XVI clearly points at the first Christian Community “The Synod of Bishops forcefully reaffirmed the need within the Church for a revival of the missionary consciousness present in the people of God from the

beginning. The first Christian saw their missionary preaching as a necessity rooted in the very nature of faith, the God in whom they believed was the God of all, the one true God who revealed himself in Israel's history and ultimately in his son, who thus provided the response which, in their inmost being, all men and women waited. The first Christians Communities felt that their faith was not part of a particular cultural tradition, different from one people to another, but belonged instead to the realm of truth, which concerns everyone equally.”⁷⁹

The coming together as a Church Community should not be viewed as a reaction against Jewish traditional patterns but an invitation to the Redeemer of humanity. That is why Luke the evangelist begins by telling us in his passage “The Community of believers was of one heart and mind” (Acts 4:32). Sociologically this can be explained as a change of attitude in order to allow transformation of every individual in relation to others. But it is more than that, prophet Ezekiel calls it “giving of a new heart” (Ez 36:26). St. Paul's calls it giving away the old self in order to embrace a new life in God, a life of holiness and truth, (Eph. 4:22-24).

The present day Small Christian Communities within the AMECEA region are actually a reflection of Communities found in Acts of the Apostles. While the apostolic communities were bigger in terms of numbers the basis for their foundations are the same, the spirit of sharing with one another. A sharing in which everybody needs was provided. This gesture was culminated with the experience of breaking of bread. St. John testifies on what this Community perceived “what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our own eyes, what we looked upon touched with our hands concerns the word of life. 1 Jn. 1:1 yet John in a dramatic tone bring to the attention of his hearers that the connection relies at responding to the

⁷⁹ BENEDICT XVI, *Verbum Domini*, no. 92

very word of life as a sign of individual commitment. He asserts “what we have seen and heard, we proclaim now to you, so that you too may have fellowship with us, for our fellowship is with the Father and with his son, Jesus Christ,” (1 Jn 1:37). Hence the hope of the Church today within AMECEA region will be determined a lot by SCCs as a “New Way of Being Church”. Even though there are so many apostolic associations in Africa doing commendable work nevertheless they do not hold the momentum found in SCCs. Apostolic associations deal with spiritual matters of their members in general on the basis of Parish level or outstation. Their operational structures and leadership focus are only applicable for big groupings. On the hand SCCs concern themselves with day to day issues of the people. For Example health care ministry popularly known in Kiswahili as (wahuduma wa afya) visit the sick at their homes, give them medicine, prepare food and even bath them when the need arises. Whenever some members of the families have domestic problems, they immediately turn to SCC leaders nearby for assistance. Also SCCs through Justice and Peace ministry reach out to the entire Society in offering its service like helping a raped woman to report the case to the police without minding her religion. It is well known apostolic associations relate with issues of Catholics faithful according to their strict defined apostolate. Sighting this kind of realization in SCCs Joseph G Healey states “This is the local African Christian Community theology. Local gathering of SCCs in Eastern Africa reflecting on their daily lives in the light of the gospel can be a real theological locus or theological moment.”⁸⁰

These reflections motivate the Christians in those particular SCCs to be more outgoing even when the socio-economic, political, conditions are not favorable. Christ has to continue being the focus. Prophet Jeremiah who had to suffer a lot for the sake of preaching they message of

80 HEALEY J. G. Evaluation of the Impact of SCCs in the Church

God, knows it better, “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose hope is the Lord. He is like a tree planted beside the waters that stretch out its roots to the stream. It fears not the heat when it comes, its leaves stay green. In the year of drought it shows no distress but still bears fruits (Jer. 17L7-8). The stream is the sacrament of the Church, whose source is Jesus Christ. Aware of him, the apostles were not only part and parcel of the early Community but the strength and the hope of the same Community. Luke does not hesitate to elaborate “with great power the apostles bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus and great favor was accorded them all” (Acts 4:33). The actions of the apostle were not in any way aimed to seek individual glorification, in fact they were geared towards the spiritual growth as an aspect of fellowship. The witnessing to the resurrection was the unifying factor as it clearly promoted a liberation theology based on justice and peace.

Second Vatican Council looks at the whole scenario with the following words, the Church, like a stranger in a foreign land, presses forward amid the persecutions of the world and the consolations of God,” announcing the cross and death of the Lord until he comes (Cf. 1 Cor11:21). But by the power of the risen Lord she is given strength to overcome, in patience and in love, her sorrows and her difficulties, both those that are from within and those that are from without, so that she may reveal in the world, faithfully, however darkly the mystery of her Lord until, in the consummation, it shall be manifested in full light.”⁸¹

The theology of SCCs within the AMECEA region is not that of copying the Community of believers in the apostolic period rather it is a “New Way of Being Local Church.” This implies not just existence in a juridical sense but participation and involvement in the life of the Church

⁸¹ VATICAN II, Lumen Gentium no. 8

Joseph G Healey and Donald Sybertz explains, SCCs are the Church from below where small is beautiful. The Sukuma proverb says, “A few goats hear the whistle of the herder”. The meaning is that it is easier to work in a small group than a big group, which is easier to teach a small group than a big group, SCCs are the nuclei. Pastoral work should start from the SCCs and then go to the Outstations, Parishes and Dioceses.”⁸²

That is why it was easier to identify the needs of those who were converting to Christianity in big numbers (Acts 4:34-35). At the same time we see some were selling their properties and bringing their proceeds to the apostles. In Africa helping one another is vital; it strengthens the unity and defines the activities of the community in relation to the socio-religious sphere. In this case SCCs as a “New Way of Being Church” are not coming up with a new style of expressing the Gospel values contrary to the community in the early Church, but as it were, expressing them in the African theological aspect of neighborhoods based on the African cultural set up crowned with very rich traditions. For what do we see in our Communities weekly Bible sharing, visiting the sick and the elderly, Reconciliation, justice and peace taking place? Distribution of food and cloths, to the needy, establishment of deaf communities, helping widows and orphans, health care available to those injected with HIV/AIDS, rehabilitation to drug abusers and street children, financial support for the Church, volunteers in different ministries et cetera.

Pierre Lefebvre borrowing a leaf from the Pauline Communities asserts, “So that the Community may develop, it is necessary for each member to use his or her gifts for the good of all. Paul explains at length analogy of the human body. Some have special gifts and a particular role to play, but the whole body must remain united, must be one in the loving service of all members.

⁸² HEALEY J. G. – SYBERTZ, D., *Theology of Small Christian Communities as a New Way of Being Church*,

No one can assume greater importance nor expect the Community to be at the service of his or her own personal interest. Everything must be done for the edification of all in peace and good order (1 Co 13:14).⁸³

Just as the first Communities were led by the apostles, we see the same thing happening in our SCCs. The Bishops within the AMECEA region have set a good example. The Bishops made their position very clear since 1973 as Joseph G Healey confirms.⁸⁴ They have been participating fully including a priests and deacons. It is simple theology that SCCs are for everybody in the Church, however those who have not joined should not be viewed as the outcast but should be helped from their own perspective and encouraged to be part and parcel of a “New Way of Being Church. It is the wisdom of the AMECEA Bishops with share with one another our different gifts as a way of growth and maturity in faith.

4.3 Prospects of Early Christian Community Acts 4:32-37

The Community life in the early Church had its own challenges but one thing which is very clear is that God continued to be the source of guidance and inspiration all long. Step by step the ground for Christian tradition was emerging from everyday practices some of which were alien to the existing Jewish traditions. The love and care for one another was a testimony of the Christian tradition which was sign that theological truth is lived by all members. “If you love me you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father and he will give you another advocate to be with you always, the spirit of truth, which the world cannot accept, because it neither sees nor knows it. But you know it, because it remains with you and are in you.” (Jn.

⁸³ LEBEBVRE, P., Church and Service, Ministries and Community, For a Church as a Family

⁸⁴ HEALEY, J. G., Historical Development of Small Christian Communities, 8

14:15-17). The first Christian Communities had to be grounded in faith streaming from theological truth. This was the assurance of Jesus to his disciples as he prepared them for the great mission, the mission which its interpretation is reliable to the action of the Holy Spirit.” But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be very witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the world (Acts. 1:8). The spread of the first Christian Communities could not be successful only on the direction of good regulations dependently on the human intellect but to the word of God, inspired by God himself.

Pope Benedict XVI in his letter, “The word of the Lord” states after reflecting on God’s final and definitive word to the world, the need now to mention the mission of the Holy Spirit in relation to the divine word. In fact there can be no authentic understanding of Christian revelation apart from the activity of the Paraclete. This is due to the fact that God’s self-communication always involves the relationship of the son and the Holy Spirit whom Irenaeus of Lyons refers to as “the two hands of the Father.”⁸⁵

The apostles found themselves in a complicated situation in these first Christian Communities due to the danger of false teaching and ideologies. In order to keep the faith of the Christians in fact they had to be bold enough as evident in many occasions in Acts of Apostles. Today the Church undergoes the same threats hence it has to clarify its divine obligation on the matter. The Second Vatican Council presents the following reflections “The Tradition that comes from the apostles makes progress in the Church, with the help of the Holy Spirit.” There is a growth in insight into the realities and words that one being passed on. This comes about in various ways.

⁸⁵ BENEDICT XVI, *Verbum Domini*, no. 15

It comes through the contemplation and study of believers who ponder these things in their hearts (Lk 2:19 and 51). It comes from the intimate sense of spiritual realities which they experience. And it comes from the preaching of those who have received, along with their right of succession in the episcopate, the same charisma of truth. Thus as the centuries go by, the Church is always advancing towards the plenitude of divine truth, until eventually the words of God are fulfilled in her.”⁸⁶

However despite the many obstacles the first Christian Communities faced, they were able to spread. From Jerusalem the Gospel was preached to the Gentile nations and as more and more people were converted into Christian, new Communities came into existence. Today within AMECEA region the 110,000 SCCs are the fruit of the same Holy Spirit. The Church line of thought is clearly attested, “The father’s self-communication made through his word in the Holy Spirit, remains present and active in the church. God, who spoke in the past, continues to converse with the spouse of his beloved son. And the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the church and through her in the world heads believers to the full truth and makes the word of Christ dwell in them in all its richness, (CCC).”⁸⁷

God’s spirit works in every person who has opened his/her heart freely. Our cooperation is important in accomplishing the plan of God in our lives. The first Christian Communities were very much aware, and allowed God to use them in bringing transformation. For instance we need “Thus Joseph, also named by the apostles Barnabas (which is translate, son of encouragement) a Levite, a Cypriot by birth sold a piece of property that he owned, then brought

⁸⁶ VATICAN II, Dei Verbum 8

⁸⁷ THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, no. 79

the money and put it at the feet of the apostle (Act 4:36-37). His actions were prompted by the Holy Spirit. These events are familiar with us as Joseph G Healey and Donald Sybertz reports “Empowerment by the Spirit is more than just a nice-sounding expression. It is a daily reality on the local level. Concrete examples of inculturation are the various empowerment, commissioning and sending forth ceremonies, the installation of the new parish council leaders or a new catechist, the commissioning of new religion teachers and the sending forth of SCC members to start new Small Christian Communities. The people felt deeply the presence and activity of the “unsurpassed Great spirit.”⁸⁸ It goes without saying that the creation of ministries such as Justice and Peace, Health care, Ministry for the Deaf, Extra ordinary Ministers of the Eucharist and, Pastoral ministry of Liturgy is a response to collaborative Ministry in the Church of which many of the members are drawn from SCCs. The responsibilities of these ministries are similar to the ones in the first Communities which we contemplate at the joyful return of the 72 disciples (Lk 10:17-20). The Holy Spirit leads the disciples to serve others and as we know good services calls for self denial while at the same time remaining faithful to the task. God power manifests itself in different ways, with or limitation at times we may fail to recognize His actions or just improve them. John the Baptist was hesitating to confirm Jesus missionary activity in its totality. He sends his disciples to Jesus for clarity and Jesus responds. “Go and tell John what you have seen and heard, the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them”: (Lk 7:22). In our own locality Jesus is calling us to attentively pay attention to what is going on in our SCCs, Bible sharing is taking place, the sick are attended to, the hungry are given food, the naked are given clothes, the dying are comforted, visitors are welcomed, the deaf have formed a Community, the Church is supported and the faith is growing.

⁸⁸ HEALEY J. G. – SYBERTZ D. Power of the Holy Spirit and the Charismatic Dimension Today.

The kind of transformation taking place in SCCs within the AMECEA region can only be explained in reference to the theological trends of the first Christian Communities. Just like today the liturgical worship was the centre of their life. “They devoted themselves to the teaching of the apostles and to the Communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayer” (Acts 2:42). John Lukwata elaborates “Liturgy expresses the faith of the church. This faith flows from what the Community celebrates. There is an important dictum attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine which states that the law of prayer is the law of faith. Liturgy existed in the Church before the articulation of the faith in creeds, dogmas, and catechisms. Liturgy faith and life are reciprocal and correlated.”⁸⁹

As members of SCCs express their faith the sacrament of the Church make impact as the saving graces are understood brethren, internalized and applied practical. Hence the sacraments of Baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, Reconciliation, Anointing of the sick, ordination and marriage become part and parcel of life. The beauty of celebration of the sacraments brings into the community a sense of holiness “Be holy because I am holy.” Thus it is the aspect of celebration of the Eucharist which indicates the acknowledgement of faith as Pope John Paul II puts it “The proclamation of the Gospel and its acceptance in faith reach their fullness in the celebration of the sacraments. The Church which is a believing and evangelizing Community is also a priestly people invested with the dignity and sharing in the power of Christ, the high priest of the New and External Covenant.”⁹⁰ Ultimately the Community will safeguard the natural upbringing of

⁸⁹ LUKWATA, J., *Worship and Mission*

⁹⁰ JOHN PAUL II, *Familiaris Consortio*, no. 55

families whereby the rights of individuals will be protected and responsibilities shared according to the charisms.

Conclusion

There is a great need of collaborative ministry in the Church today, done and other time in history. This urgency is brought about by the ever growing of Catholic population in Africa, the influence of the western culture on one hand and readiness of the lay faithful to be more involved in the life of the Church.

It is through combined efforts that the church in Africa, especially the AMECEA Bishops who have declared SCCs as the key pastoral priority in evangelization within the region, can extend a helping hand to other parts of the world. The theological reflection as illustrated, points to the mission work of the Church in However the potentiality of carrying this demanding apostolate of our Lord Jesus Christ is solidified by the presence of thousands of SCCs in Eastern Africa.

The anointing by the Holy Spirit as witnessed at Pentecost is manifested all through in the life of the first Christian Communities. The same, Holy Spirit has never ceased to inspire and empower the church, as her testimonies cleanly show. The Holy Spirit enabled the Judeo-Christians, later the Pauline Communities to discern their Christian patterns in the midst of confusion and persecution. Above all they remained steadfast in faith. The good news is, the favours promised then, continued to be poured abundantly in our SCCs.

CHAPTER FIVE

PASTORAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TWO MODELS OF CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE ARCHDIOCESE OF MOMBASA

5.0 Short Introduction

In chapter five the researcher will present recommendations on the topic of discussion as shown in the three other moments of pastoral cycle methodology. The researcher will highlight on the major challenges facing the Church Community today in order to digest their main causes.

He will then proceed with giving some remarks on the planning for the future as it pertains the comparing two models of the Catholic Church, SCC model of Church and apostolic association model of Church. With an overall picture at our disposal the researcher shall then give some insight on the way forward. And in a nutshell summarize his ideas in hopefulness for the really transformation SCCs which are, “a New Way of Being Church within AMECEA region. Our recommendations are specific to the Archdiocese of Mombasa.

The Archdiocese of Mombasa was created in 1955 with its first Bishop Eugene Butler. By then there were only 20 parishes spread in 45 deaneries namely Taita Taveta, Mombasa, Kwale, Kilifi, which included Malindi and Lamu. In 1978 Fr. Nicodemus Kirima was ordained as its Second Bishop. In 1989 Mombasa was made an Archdiocese with the installation of Archbishop John Njenga at Mombasa Municipal Stadium.

In 2005 Archbishop Boniface Lele was installed coming from the Diocese of Kitui where he had served for about 10 years. At present the Archdiocese of Mombasa has 6 deaneries namely Taveta, Taita, Mombasa West, Mombasa Central, Kwale and Kilifi. There are 49 parishes served by both diocesan priests and missionaries. The number of Diocesan priests is around 60s. The missionary congregations in the Diocese are Holy Spirit, Consolata, St. Patrick, Apostles of Jesus, Claresians and Contemplatives. We have also two local communities of Sisters, St. Joseph and Mary Mother of God. Others sisters congregation include, Daughters of Divine Love, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Little Sisters of the Poor, Consolata Sisters, Sacred Heart of Jesus and others. We have also one local congregation of religious men which was started recently known as Good Shepherds Brothers.

The number of seminarians in the Archdiocese is above 40

Evangelization is mainly done through SCCs which are a “New Way of Being Church.” However we have also apostolic associations which play important roles. These associations are not found in every parish like SCCs. Some of them include Legion of Mary, Catholic Charismatic Renewal, Neocatecunato, and st Joseph, st. Ann, Sacred Heart of Jesus, Children of Mary, Marriage Encounter, Catholic Women Association, Catholic Men Association and Pontifical Missionary Society.

5.1.1 Major Challenges

As we have observed the Bishops within the AMECEA region are doing a lot of good work to bring about transformation in evangelizing. Though the focal point for this transformation is faith oriented, it has to influence the socio-cultural and justice aspects. To attain the goal the

Bishops have adopted SCCs as key pastoral priority in evangelization. Hence SCCs are a “New Way of Being Church.” Despite the good progress since the inception of SCC in 1973 till today, still we encounter many challenges which we cannot avoid mentioning.

1. The number of SCCs is growing very fast. As we have discussed earlier there are 110,000 SCCs within AMECEA out of which 40,000 are in Kenya. Unfortunately not all parish priests or priests support and promote them because of one reason or another. This attitude denies SCCs the opportunity to influence the society from the bottom and cause artificial barriers which melt down the theological perspectives of neighborhood. The voice of the Bishops has been a voice of communion, that is priests, religious men and women and the lay faithful should work together towards the success of the SCCs.
2. The number of SCCs in the AMECEA region does not reflect the Catholic population. Still there are hundreds of Christians who have not joined and make no efforts to find out what SCCs are all about. Some give reasons of their busy schedule, others pose questions related to trust worth of members et cetera. In order to move on the researcher has floated the idea of adapting modern technology especially the internet. Also Christians should be encouraged to join SCCs through announcement in the church, workshop/seminars and visitation in their respective home or places of work.
3. The problem of weak SCCs is very evident. It is an indication of bad leadership, poor participation in making decision and, un-cooperative members. This can be improved by the provision of leadership skills through training, sharing responsibilities, team work approach on issues and active participation of all members as for the requirement.

4. In urban slums of Kibera poverty is rampant which result in insecurity, HIV/AIDS, TB, Prostitution, Drug Abuse, Abortions, school dropout, Robbery and poor sanitation only to name a few. The cause of poverty has been identified as high population, lack of employment, corruption, lack of political land problem drunkenness and exploitation by the rich. Through pastoral ministries such as justice and peace committee, health care and social outreach the Church presence is felt.
5. The pastoral ministries in the Church are doing commendable work, but the set back is on the small number of volunteers involved. In order to strengthen them, there is a need for more members to be enrolled. This will make these ministries to be effective in serving the ever rising population.
6. The establishment of the Deaf Community in Guadalupe Parish shows the church concern of option for the poor and marginalized in society. To enable SCC make impact in the society, requires a lot of support and good will. The formation of mission outreach by the Deaf Community is a step ahead towards reaching different parishes. We should open up and allow the Deaf in different points of the AMECEA to participate in the weekly Bible sharing and make their contributions in evangelization.
7. Apostolic associations have continued to play a major role in the Catholic Church. They have been very supportive and still their presence is important in evangelization, today. Meanwhile we need to come to the realization SCCs are a “New Way of Being Church” and that being in apostolic association is secondary without disregard of spiritual values which define them. This realization is not only for those who have passion for apostolic association but for the entire Church Community which embraces all her children with kindness and love.

8. In our case study we have seen how SCCs are promoters of reconciliation, justice and peace. This implies where SCCs are strong, they help reduce tension, tribal conflict and injustices in the church. Whereas the absence of SCCs means all matters will be carried to the parish priest office for solutions. May be, we need to ask ourselves? How much can a pastor handle, and why? Should we demoralize the.
9. Good leadership is a blessing in the church. The success on the SCC model of Church within a short time is an indication of combine efforts towards the implementation of effective pastoral plans in parishes. The task ahead, lies in sustaining the different levels of leadership with the same capacity. Then more resources should be availed to train trainers who are willing to help.

5.1.2 Recommendations for SCC model of Church

1. Since SCCs are the key pastoral priority in evangelization within the AMECEA region we need to pursue the adaptation with a clear framework. The researcher suggests 4 steps to help in the task.
 - Every parish pastoral council should find out the year SCCs started having weekly Bible sharing.
 - The growth rate of SCCs since the year 2000. For example parish A in 2000 had 20 SCCs, by 2012 it had 25. This shows in parish A the growth rate is 2 SCC in 2 years.
 - Analysis of the general population in a given area versus the Catholic population. This will enable the identification of the gap in question.
 - Workshops whereby presentations of the findings will be tabled and deliberated upon. In these workshops the attendee should bring in other factors for discussion.

- In the end these workshops ought to come up with strategic pastoral plans for implementation purpose.
 - In order to cut down expenses, this exercise is suitable on parish level. However on a wider scale it can be conducted in deanery level or even at the diocesan level.
2. Concerning the youth on matters of SCCs, there has been a laxity in mingling with their parents.
- The youth should be encouraged to form parallel SCCs especially in urban areas. Example St. Mary Magdalene SCC and St. Mary Magdalene SCC for the youth. In Kiswahili (Jumuiya ya Mt. Maria Magdalene, halafu Jumuiya ya Vijana wa Mt. Maria Magdalene). This will motivate the youth to participate fully in the life of the Church. And after a duration of three months the two Communities should come together so as to maintain the relationship. The youth SCCs will have the same leadership as per the diocesan guidelines. But should work hand in hand with their parental SCC.
 - The youth SCCs should not be represented directly in the parish pastoral council, instead should lease with their parental SCCs in case there are issues which need the attention of the parish pastoral council.
 - Youth SCCs in the parish can also meet after duration of three months to strengthen the reality of fellowship. At these gathering they can freely discuss on issues concerning their progress and challenges. Through their youth leaders they can forward their report to the relevant offices, patron, or parish priest for further discussions or action

3. Children, through pontifical missionary childhood (PMC) or through other groups such as Altar services or children of Mary should be educated on the importance of SCCs. This will build a character in them of nurturing good neighborhood. Occasionally they should be guided on how to share the word of God and apply it, in their own situation. Time and again they should be made to understand SCCs are a ‘New Way of Being Church.’”
4. Online SCCs: A lot of excuse is given by those who do not regularly attend SCCs, meetings. Other has decided not to join completely sighting busy schedule. Our research has shown this problem can be solved through online SCCs. Just like what happens in ordinary weekly bible sharing, the members are enabled to participate and give their reflections from other offices, places of work even when travelling. In the beginning the process may prove to be complicated one, but after sometimes the result will begin to pay.
5. Separation with people whom we know is always a difficult thing to comprehend. Likewise in SCCs there is always an attitude of unwillingness to divide their Communities. We all need to realize that division of SCC is part of growth which should be encouraged by all members. SCCs where the number is above 20 should contemplate creating a new one. The minimum numbers is 10 except online SCCs where the minimum number can be 5 members. We suggest the following steps to help in dividing SCCs.
 - SCCs whose membership is above 20 people should be presented to the parish pastoral council by the parish priest.
 - The SCCs under discussion should agree on the way forward and report back to the parish council.
 - An example of St. John SCC with 28 members agrees to divide it.
 - a) St. John SCC 15 members while St. John B 13 members

- b) In a period of 1 year St. John B should be helped to be holding weekly Bible sharing and in creating different ministries. But other service like animating during mass should be done together.
 - c) After one year St. John B should choice its patron saint name and be baptized. Hence we can have instead of St. John B, we call it St. Agatha.
 - In this way we shall have normal SCCs instead of those with 45 members and some with 70 members.
6. Weak SCCs should be given more attention through workshops and treats. Parish priests should identify these Communities and lease with the pastoral coordinator for assistance. Christians who come from weak SCC should not be blamed especially if they are unable to offer financial support required or set by the parish council. It is the duty of priests to help them improve and love to participate in pastoral activities both in the parish and Diocesan level.
 7. The Diocesan pastoral office should help to create SCCs in the Archdiocese for the Deaf. This is a challenging ministry, however these are so many Deaf children in our Communities who are unable to participate and share the Good News. We can begin by establishing Community for the Deaf in an appropriate place and later expand depending with the numbers.

5.1.3 Pastoral Recommendations for Apostolic Association Model of Church

1. Apostolic associations are very important in the Church and the members love to express faith while adhering to their proper spiritualities. However they should be made to

understand that these associations are not at par with SCCs. This should be done through workshops or special talks to serve the purpose.

2. Members of apostolic association should at the same time identify themselves with SCCs and participate fully like the rest of the members. Concerning leadership we should like to make the following remarks.
 - Any member, who is chosen in the executive of the apostolic association, should not hold another office in the SCC with executive power.
 - Leaders of apostolic association with executive powers should not be chosen in the parish pastoral council executive. The simple reason here is to give SCCs their proper role. This does not mean members of apostolic association are not allowed to in the executive of the parish organ. But if they are to hold those offices, then they should be elected in their SCCs and should go to the parish pastoral council as representatives of particular SCCs and not representatives of apostolic association.
3. Christian should be encouraged to practice in one apostolic association to avoid confusions. It is not fair for one person to belong to three apostolic associations. We need to cultivate a culture of truthfulness while at the same time remaining the ‘salt’ of world as Jesus tells us (Mt.5:13).
4. Growth seminars for inter apostolic associations to help them understand the teaching of the church and Diocesan policies on different issues.

5.1.4 The Way Forward

Priests should become more involved in SCCs and take an active role. Their interaction will motivate the lay faithful to deepen the communion aspect of the church. This will be a sign of

success in the implementation of pastoral goals which demand a lot of planning. The many numbers of SCCs is important but not guarantee sustainability unless they make an impact in social life of the Community.

It is then, our task to see that the future of SCC model of Church adheres to its purpose not as a matter of policy but in its theological orientation as lived within a particular locality. The pastoral activities have to be understood by all members, while the presence which is true to the call of Jesus, loving and serving one another should be a testimony not only of Catholics but also people of other faith. For when the Jesus speaks about “The people of God” it does not select a few but point to the creation of humanity.

However we ought to remember, not all members of SCCs are able to know their rights and obligation. Care should be taken and the powerful method of SEE, JUDGE and ACT explained because it is very crucial in the life of the church today.

5.1.5 Conclusion

The pastoral success of the Archdiocese depends on viable approaches which ought to eliminate the non progressive operational strategies. The direction of our scope is from the bottom to the top. SCCs as such, are the foundation of the larger parish church and ultimately the Dioceses. By choosing SCC model of church as a key pastoral priority in evangelization implies polling our resources together as a matter of urgency. Thus our focus should be which levels of participation need empowerment. To be on the safe side the perception of leadership need to be reexamined from within as a way of rectifying the pace of progress in the near future. It means

electing leaders who will provide services in a balance manner and who have the knowhow of the same offices which they hold. It will be self denying choosing somebody a secretary yet he/she cannot read and write. Leadership is not personal tasks but discharging service according to laid down norms cherished by the very Community. In SCCs everybody has a role to play, let these roles be distributed in a sincerely manner with the understanding that our actions speak louder than words.

General Conclusion

From the start we have been comparing two models of the Catholic Church namely SCC model of Church and apostolic association model. The two are complementary realities within the sphere of evangelization. This discovery is expressed by Christ himself who build his church upon the foundation of the apostles. The Church community is the fruit of that realization as she continues to respond without hesitation. In fact the AMECEA Bishops guided by the Holy Spirit promised by the Redeemer of mankind spoke with one voice about the future of the Eastern African Church. By choosing the SCC model of the Church as the key pastoral priority in evangelization they become part and parcel of this transformation. This term ‘transformation’ should not be viewed as a conclusion of pastoral activities rather as a continuation of whole process which ultimately has to be lived in the SCC. Hence we should not view nor misinterpret that the two models of the Catholic Church are moving towards different directions. As we have noted in our discussion both model face different challenges. But we have to admit these challenges are everywhere and should not make us failures, instead should help us seek strength from God to face them amicably.

We have analyzed a good number of examples in our case study to help us in trying to figure out our own solution to different issues. The Community is always ready to facilitate by providing us with her wisdom and alternatives which are rooted in the Christian values. As a Community of believers we have to go beyond our socio-cultural set up and borrow a leaf from the first Christian Community in the Acts of the Apostles and from Pauline Communities to. We need about the activities of these Christian Communities that they not only prayed and celebrated the Eucharist together but moved to meet the social needs of their brethren. Hence our SCCs have to indulge in fighting socio-injustices evils in the entire society.

As a Church today we have also realized that we need to reach out to everybody, we have to promote the internet for weekly Bible sharing in the order to meet our target. On the same line the church has a concern of option for the poor and the marginalized. In view of this consideration of establishing SCCs for the Deaf has to be made. Already in Our Lady of Guadalupe, these pastoral demands have been actualized. The same spirit should continue to light in different parishes in our region.

Finally we have reflected on some recommendation particularly to the Archdiocese of Mombasa. These recommendations can be adopted elsewhere as a way of helping one another. We need the cooperation of every Christian as we continue witness in our SCC which is a ‘New Way of Being Church.’

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Appendix



FR. ARMOGAST MDAWIDA WITH MEMBERS OF SAINT BERNADETA SCC



SAINT MONICA APOSTOLIC ASSOCIATION PARTICIPATING IN A WORKSHOP



SAINT VERONICA SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY



PARTICIPANTS OF SAINT VERONICA SHARING WITH REV. JOSEPH HEALEY