

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

EMEKA CHRISTIANA CYNTHIA CHINYERE

**DEEPER UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHARISM
OF THE DAUGHTERS OF DIVINE LOVE IN THE LIGHT
OF 2 COR 5: 14-21**

SUPERVISOR:

Rev. Prof. Christopher Owczarek, S.D.B

**A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the
Masters of Arts Degree in Theology**

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all the Daughters of Divine Love who burn with great zeal for spreading the love of God and love of neighbor by making a generous return to Divine Love Incarnate. They have accepted their vocation to the ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ, so that the spirit of love may permeate each one of them.

EPIGRAPH

“Spread love everywhere you go, let no one ever come to you without leaving happier”

Mother Teresa

God bestows his love without discrimination. The followers of Jesus are children of God, and they should manifest the family likeness by doing good to all, even to those who deserve the opposite.

F. F. Bruce

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

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

Signed: _____

Name of Student: Emeka Christiana Cynthia Chinyere

Date: _____

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

Signed: _____

Name of Supervisor: Rev. Prof. Christopher Owczarek, S.D.B

Date: _____

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ABBREVIATIONS

BC	Before Christ
Cf.	Confer, Compare
1 Cor	First Corinthians
2 Cor	Second Corinthians
C.S.Sp.	Congregatio Sancti Spiritus
DDL	Daughters of Divine Love
DDLs	Daughters of Divine Love Sisters
Deut	Deuteronomy
DNA	Deoxyribonucleic Acid
Eph	Ephesians
Gal	Galatians
Gen	Genesis
GMP	Godfrey Mary Paul
Isa	Isaiah
Jas	James
Lev	Leviticus
Mat	Matthew
MSS	Manuscript
OSB	Order of St. Benedict
Phil	Philippians
Rom	Romans
SDL	Sons of Divine Love
St	Saint
Thess	Thessalonians
V.	Verse
Vol	Volume

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The thesis aims at an exploration of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (5:14-21). This passage of the scripture is chosen because it is what forms the basis of the charism of the Congregation of the Daughter of Divine Love and is central to understanding of that charism.

The charism represents the commitment that everyone who is welcomed into the Congregation makes so as to give response to God's call to Divine love, exercised first of all, in the love of oneself and then of the neighbour.¹ The charism of the Congregation is the compelling force of the life of the Daughters, and all the members of the Congregation strive to give response to God's call to the love of God and the fellow human beings.² Generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate has a central place in the life of the Daughters of Divine Love.³

¹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 17.

² Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* vol. I, 18.

³ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, 1.

In order to achieve the goal of this thesis, the paper is divided into four main chapters. The first chapter presents the historical background of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, the founder, their charism, spirituality, motto, apostolate, mission and vision and how all these are related to the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. Chapter two focused on an analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21. This is explored in a way that sheds light on a deeper understanding of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. Chapter three of the thesis is focused on revisiting the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21, exploring how this passage shades light on the charism, spirituality, mission, vision and apostolate of the Congregation.

Chapter four is dedicated to a presentation of the application of 2 Cor 5:14-21 to the daily life of the members of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love. The possible application is explored with the aim of making an enhanced application of the scriptural analysis of the chosen passage to the life and apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. In so far as the charism calls the members of the Congregation to imitate the Love of the Trinity expressed through Christ, the research recognizes that the members are limited human beings and may have shortcomings in living out that Divine Love through interpersonal relationships. The possible application is explored with the aim of highlighting the love of Christ expressed through dying to self, living for Christ alone, the expression of the love for Christ through the ministry of reconciliation and the application of Divine Love in action.⁴

⁴ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 3.

The thesis concludes with the summary and some recommendations. This is followed by the bibliography. It is the hope of the researcher that this thesis would make a contribution to a deeper understanding of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

Background of the Study

The inspiration for the choice of this thesis came after the researcher's deep personal reflection on the prayer that is usually said after vespers, as stipulated in the Daughters of Divine Love's manual of prayers. This prayer is intended to assist in inculcating in the Daughters the spirit of the father founder, His Lordship, Rt. Rev. Dr. Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye, as presented below:

“O God our loving Father, since it has pleased you to bring into existence this Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, grant that the spirit which inspired its foundation by your faithful servant Bishop Okoye of happy memory may be infused into every Daughter of Divine Love. Grant that by making a generous response to Divine Love Incarnate we may please you and our neighbor, make you known and loved by all people thereby making a return of love for love and making your love known to all. One thing we desire, O Lord, and for that we pray, not wealth, rank, power or worldly pleasure, but that the spirit of love which brought us into existence may permeate each one of us, so that we may accomplish the purpose of our foundation here on earth and eventually come to love you in heaven, through Christ our Lord Amen.”⁵

In Bishop Okoye's vision of a world where love abounds, he saw love as the only solution to the distortion brought about by hatred and disunity in the beautiful world created by God in love. The context and historical events surrounding the time of the foundation of the Congregation had an influence on the Bishop's vision of love as solution

⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Manual of Prayers*, 34.

to the challenges of the time. In fact, the Congregation was founded during the Nigerian-Biafra war in 1969.⁶

In a deep search for a means through which such love could flourish despite the then experience of hatred and division, Bishop Okoye discovered that he could not attain this love by human efforts alone but through the grace of God who is love itself.⁷ He thus thought of founding a women Congregation who would draw this love from God and dispense it to the world through their personal lives and apostolate. It is because of this that the Daughters of Divine Love are known specifically for their love of God and love of neighbour, rooted and grounded in Christ.⁸

In order to answer God's call to love, the response of the members of the Congregation must live a life characterized by love in whatever they do.⁹ The Daughters of Divine Love Congregation is therefore a religious Congregation in which all the members feel a sense of belonging and feel welcomed into the Congregation. With gratitude they embrace the very life of the Blessed Trinity, expressed by Christ's infinite love for humanity.¹⁰

The effort to live out the kind of love existing in the communion of life of the Blessed Trinity is the inspiration for the Congregation's choice for the motto: "Love of Christ urges us on" (cf. 2 Cor 5:14).¹¹ Therefore, the love for Christ plays a central role

⁶ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Bishop Okoye; Truly Human, Truly Divine*, 97.

⁷ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 9.

⁸ Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* vol. I. 1.

⁹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 11.

¹⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 13.

¹¹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Constitution*, v.

in the life and activities of the Daughters of Divine Love. The love for Christ is thus the centre of whatever the members of the Congregation do, no matter where. It is the love for Christ that forms the basis, the goal and the value of the being and acting of the Daughters.¹²

Problem Statement

While the charism of every Congregation forms the very foundation of their existence, the researcher discovered that some of the Daughters of Divine Love are not as conversant as they should be with the charism of their founder. This implies a gap in the very foundation of the existence of some of the Daughters as members of this religious Congregation.

Having lived in the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love for a number of years, the researcher observed this need for a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. Anyone who is accepted into this Congregation is required to give generous response to the call to love God and the fellow human beings.¹³ Therefore, such a lack of deep inculcation of the charism constitutes a problem in living out the life effectively with joy and contentment as it should be.

The members of this Congregation are meant to give response to the infinite love of God which is incarnate in Jesus Christ. They are also to keep in mind that in their relationship with other human beings, they are required to comport themselves in a way

¹² Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Information Flash*, 15.

¹³ Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* vol. I, 20.

that communicates and preserves their own personal dignity as representatives of the divine love of which they bear and to which they give testimony by their lifestyle. Therefore, it is by the love the Daughters have for each other, that others will know that the Daughters are the disciples of Christ (cf. John 13: 35).¹⁴

Purpose and Aim

The aim of the thesis is to shed more light on the Daughters' understanding and practice of the love for Christ manifested in action through acts of generosity, compassion towards the needy and practicing sacrificial and forgiving acts with the goal of manifesting the kind of love that Christ showed towards sinners.¹⁵

The thesis goes further at providing possible proposals that would motivate the desire of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation to give generous response to Divine Love through living out of their charism. This implies living a life of the Love-Incarnate through love of God and of the neighbor. The thesis also intends to foster the integral growth and maturity in the Daughters' understanding of the charism of their Congregation and attain a renewed appreciation of that charism. The researcher hopes that this thesis will serve as a source of motivation for each and every member of Daughters of Divine Love Congregation to find joy and contentment in their commitment to the life they have chosen.

The thesis also aims at achieving the above purposes by exploring a deeper understanding of the charism of Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the light of

¹⁴ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Information Flash*, 14.

¹⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, Okoye's *Vision Today*, 14.

the Second Corinthians 5:14-21. It is thus the hope of the researcher that the thesis will be a source of light for the members' better understanding and practice of the love of Christ manifested in action, in their mode of life and in their apostolate.

Study Objectives

Having stated the problem above, the objectives of the study seeks to:

1. Explore the charism of the Congregation as manifested by their spirituality, motto, mission, vision and apostolate.
2. Make analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21 in order to gain a deeper understanding of St. Paul concept of love of Christ as expressed in his Second Letter to the Corinthians which forms the charism of the Congregation.
3. Explore a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation in the light of St. Paul's Concept of Love of Christ as expressed in his Second Letter to the Corinthians 5:14-21.
4. Search for ways of applying St. Paul's concept of love as expressed in 2 Cor 5:14-21, which is the motto of the Congregation, into the daily life of the Daughters.

Assumption/Working Hypothesis

The thesis hypothesizes that some of the Daughters of Divine Love are not as conversant as they should be with the charism of their foundation.

- The thesis thus assumes that there is a gap in the very foundation of the existence of some of the Daughters as members of this religious Congregation.

- The thesis consequently assumes that the gap is attributed to a lack of deep inculcation of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love, which constitutes a problem in living out the life effectively with joy and contentment as it should be.
- The thesis assumes that a better comprehension of the Pauline concept of love as expressed in 2 Cor 5:14-21 will lead to a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation which in turn, will help the members to respond to God's call to love of God and the neighbour.
- Consequently, the thesis assumes that there is need for a deeper understanding of the Charism of the Congregation in the light of the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21.

Rationale /Justification of the Study

The theme of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation has been addressed in many workshops and seminars conducted by the Congregation but the understanding of the charism has not been adequately examined from the perspective of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. The charism of the Congregation is inspired by this passage of Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians and forms the compelling force in the life and apostolate of the Daughters. However, there has been no official document making this link between an understanding of the charism and motto of the Congregation.

This thesis therefore considers it important to explore better ways of enriching the Daughters with a deeper understanding of how this passage relates to the charism of the Congregation. This linkage encompasses the charism, mission, vision and apostolate of

the members of the Congregation. Therefore, it is the view of the researcher that this thesis will contribute to the life of the members of the Congregation through the exploration of a deeper understanding of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love and will help them integrate its message.

Scope and Limitation

The study is delimited to exploring a deeper understanding of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. The choice of the focus of the thesis is based on the fact that this passage is the basis of the motto of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. It is true that there are many other aspects of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love that could be explored but this research focuses mainly on exploring a deeper understanding of the charism, limiting it to the insights given by that passage from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians, so as to make a thorough and feasible research in order to yield practical results.

The Significance of the Study

The researcher is of the view that this work will be useful to the members of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love by facilitating a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation in a way that would have an impact on their lifestyle, that is, on the community life, mission and apostolate. It is also hoped that the insights gained through this research may lead the Congregation to discover new ways of

animating vocations and training candidates in a manner that would help them inculcate more deeply the charism of the Congregation.

Because most of the founders' talks were written in his local dialect, it is not easy for many Daughters to understand the true meaning of the background experiences that inspired the founder of the Congregation and which are very vital for the understanding of the origin of the charism of the Congregation. The researcher believes that the exposition of these talks of the founder through this research will enrich the Daughter's deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation.

Methodology

In order to achieve the goals of the thesis, various biblical methods will be used such as historical, textual, form and literary criticism of the chosen passage of scripture. The work will therefore offer a systematic synthesis of what many scholars have written about this text from the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. The work will also explore some writings of Bishop Okoye, especially his talks, including both published and unpublished material. The work will also make use of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregational documents and other relevant articles and internet sources. The work will also make use of the relevant documents of the Church and other materials that would be of help in integrating the researcher's personal experiences to enrich the thesis.

Careful attention will be paid to the analysis of the content of the chosen passage from the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21. There will also be a brief explanation of St. Paul's general understanding of love and other scriptural understanding

of love which will shed more light on the deeper understanding of the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love. The Gospel of John 13:35 and four other Pauline passages that speak directly about love such as: 1 Cor 13: 1-11; Eph 1: 3-12; Phil 2:7 and Rom 8:17 would also be considered.

Difficulties and How to Overcome Them

Some of the difficulties that the researcher foresees could be encountered during the course of the study include the fact that most of the documents of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation are archived at the General House in Nigeria. Thus, it will not be easy to access some of the important documents that would be relevant for the thesis. Thus, the researcher will try to overcome this challenge by making use of phone calls, and e-mails to contact the librarian of the congregation to assist in getting the relevant documents which will be of importance for the thesis. The hard copies of relevant books could be obtained through the help of some of the Daughters who travel between Nigeria and Kenya.

It is foreseen that there could also be the challenge of language barrier because most of the founder's talks were written in his local dialect, which is not the researcher's dialect. The researcher would overcome this challenge by seeking the help of competent translators from the founder's dialect and this will be of great help in the efforts to translate the Father Founder's talks into English language.

Possible Research Questions

The research seeks to answer the following questions

1. What are the charism, spirituality, motto, mission, vision and apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love?
2. How the analysis of St. Pauls' concept of love as expressed in his Second Letter to the Corinthians 5:14-21 may lead to a deeper understanding of the motto of the Congregation?
3. Could St. Paul's concept of love as expressed in his Second Letter to the Corinthians 5:14-21 lead to a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation?
4. How St. Paul's concept of love as expressed 2 Cor 5:14-21, enhance the application of the motto of the Congregation to the daily life of its members.

Chapter I

The Historical Background of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation

1. Introduction

The chapter begins with a brief biography of the Founder of Daughters of Divine Love (represented as DDL in this work) Congregation; Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye C.S.Sp, offering insight into his personality, spirituality, charism and vision. The work proceeds to explore the history, charism, spirituality, motto, vision and mission and the apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love (DDL) Congregation. This is then followed by the concluding remarks of the chapter.

Each religious congregation has the beginning that is based on a certain individual person that has a special call to start forming a group of people who will participate in the same gift he or she received from God. This individual adopts a certain form of religious life in the church for the purpose of living and spreading the Gospel. In case of the Daughters of Divine Love God used the late Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye, C.S.Sp. as the founder of their Congregation.

2. A Short Biography of the Founder of Daughters of Divine Love Congregation

Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye was born on December 19, 1913 to a family of Okoye Nwazulu and Ada Oji of Ifitedunu in the then eastern Nigeria, now Anambra State of Nigeria. He was the last of 8 children of his mother. He completed his primary education at his native town Ifitedunu and in Adazi. Thanks to the help of one of the missionaries, Fr. Liddane, who worked in Adazi parish for a long time and whose name has been immortalized there. Bishop Okoye grew in a happy and well-coordinated family. This was testified by his own balanced personality and wisdom demonstrated in all his dealings with the people of all walks of life.¹⁶

The young Godfrey entered the minor seminary in 1933. It was there that he first came in contact with the Blessed Iwene Tansi who was his parish priest and mentor. Godfrey was admitted into the major seminary (St. Paul's Seminary, now Bigard Memorial Seminary) in January 14, 1941 amidst anxiety, crisis and protestations from his nuclear and extended family. Having lost all his brothers, there was serious pressure from his family to abandon his vocation, and take care of his family but he remained steadfast in his journey towards the priestly ministry. Blessed Iwene Tansi led him through the hardships and troubled times he had to face at times.¹⁷

He was ordained a priest by the Most Rev. Dr. Charles Heerey, the Archbishop of Onitsha on the 27th of July 1947. Consumed with the desire to become a religious priest in order to offer his entire life to God, he was influenced by the Holy Ghost Fathers

¹⁶ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 1; *Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, The works of Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye*, 5.

¹⁷ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 2.

working in Southern Nigeria. Thus, in 1950, he joined the Holy Ghost Fathers.¹⁸ He became the 1st West African member of the Congregation. On 3rd September, 1961, he was consecrated and installed the Bishop of Port Harcourt Diocese. Barely seven years in Port Harcourt, the Nigeria/Biafra civil war broken out. He got involved by serving as a travelling ambassador for the Church and the people. He was very instrumental in getting the Caritas International Relief Agency and the World Council of Churches bringing relief food and clothing to meet the basic needs of the suffering Biafran refugees.¹⁹

Bishop Godfrey published many books and authored several articles. Some of his books are:

- a) *Our Strange Gods,*
- b) *The Glories of the Priesthood*
- c) *The Sacredness of Marriage and Family Life*
- d) *The Laity in the Church*
- e) *Love one another as I have loved you*
- f) *The Christian and Sense of Responsibility*
- g) *Our concern to the less privilege.*

All his works revealed a man full of energy and apostolic zeal. He died on March 17, 1977.²⁰

¹⁸ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*, 24.

¹⁹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*, 23.

²⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*,

2.1 The Founder's Personality

Bishop Okoye's unique personality of simplicity and availability added much to the growth of his diocese. He possessed gifts and talents, which allowed him to face all difficulties squarely. He was not discouraged by difficulties because of the faith which he had in God and in his Divine will. He was fascinated and carried away by the love of Christ. He was a charismatic leader possessing the theological virtues of faith and hope. His motive force was love. He was always in search of the Divine will even in minor things.²¹

Like St. Paul, Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye was all things to all people. He related with the young and the old, the saint and the sinner, the rich and the poor. He respected every person even small children, and recognized the divine in everything created. Like St. Theresa of the Child Jesus he discovered that his vocation was to love and so his motto for the Congregation which he regarded as an extension of his aspiration "Caritas Christi Urget Nos! (2 Cor 5:14). His entire personality could be summarized as "man of God and man of the church". His personality incorporated his spirituality. He remains a model of the balanced spirituality. Fr. James Okoye (Diocesan Secretary of Enugu Diocese) said in his write-up Bishop GMP Okoye, "the perpetual attraction of the Bishop was that in him humanity and spirituality had merged and become one."²²

Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye was always conscious of his dignity, always conscious of his mission as an ambassador of Christ. He was happy that he had been

²¹ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 53.

²² Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*, 100.

called by God to serve. The joy in his heart radiated in his entire personality and tended to touch everyone that came his way. Thus going out and spreading joy among the people of God without discrimination was part of his vocation. His motive in doing this, was to enhance the kingdom of Christ. However, in all that he did, the love of Christ motivated him.²³

2.2 The Founder's Identity

It was a great advantage that Bishop Okoye was a religious priest who lived a community life, experienced it and thus could understand what personal interaction means. He was a friend, he was a brother, and he knew how to be son to his elders, how to be a brother to his equals, and how to be a father to the young. For him, there was “no Jew or Greek”. He was his brother’s keeper so that he might unite all in Christ. This shows the purity of his love, mind and heart.²⁴

At the same time, he was a man of tradition and culture. He embraced all without discrimination; he was always hospitable. His principle was to give Christ to the people and bring people closer to God. His life style based on high moral principles helped him preserve his essential qualities as a man of God. He lived the Lord’s invitation “come to me all that labor and are heavy laden” (cf. Matt 11:28).²⁵

²³ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, viii.

²⁴ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 57.

²⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*, 66.

2.3 The Founder's Spirituality

As a priest and bishop, he was a fervent pastor, a shepherd of souls, a missionary, a faith crusader, a church leader, a social worker, a peace crusader, an educator, a man of the church and a founder; to put all into one brief summary—a man of God, who in imitation of the Master was all things to all men. He always saw himself as the “*alter Christus*”. As a religious, he lived his commitment to the full. Though he lived amidst great wealth as a bishop and church administrator, in his personal life, he lived in poverty. He was a man of solid piety. He was a very simple, humble and obedient. All these characteristics revealed much about his deep, integrated and balanced spirituality.²⁶

Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye was a man of many sterling qualities who wanted to reconcile all things in God through Christ. For him, the strongest instrument to use in this great enterprise was love. According to bishop Okoye, love of fellow men should proceed from love of Christ. And the love of Christ is not discriminatory. It is transcendental love. Consequently, he was very much aware that, to build on sand, that is, to build on race, tribe, ethnic group or other horror factors, is to build on the flesh; on hollow foundation. He always spoke to people about Divine Love, and he manifested this love in all his dealings, selfless and ready for self-sacrifice without counting the cost.²⁷

²⁶ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 51.

²⁷ Cf. DAUGHTERS OF Divine Love CONGREGATION, *Truly Human; Truly Divine*, 64.

2.4 The Founder's Charism

In the apostolic exhortation *Evangelica Testificatio*, promulgated in June 1971, the pope Paul VI gave special attention to those charisms which were confided to founders and were raised up by God within his church. It was the Council that gave founders a pivotal place in the understanding of the call of the Spirit manifested in various Congregations.²⁸ However, the charism of the founder cannot be fixed in an abstract, verbal definition. The founder's charism, as shared and lived by the members of the community today is a mystery, as is anything which is dynamic and alive. This implies that the founder's charism cannot be totally defined. It can only be described.²⁹

Bishop Okoye had an outstanding charism of love as St. Paul described it in his First Letter to the Corinthians: If I speak in the tongues of mortals and angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal (1 Cor 13:1). With this special charism of love, he wanted his young Congregation to grow in Divine love. He taught the love of Christ by his life more than by words. The love of Christ and his fellow men drove him to work really hard, to sleep little, to be always available and to be there to share the sorrows and joys of everyone. He had a burning desire to spread this love of God which is manifested in the Incarnation, Crucifixion and death of Christ, and diffuse it to the four corners of the earth.³⁰

Bishop Okoye showed, in his life, that charity is love in action; he neither does nor sets limits. This manifested the kind of passion and purity of love that he desired to

²⁸ *Evangelica Testificatio*. 11.

²⁹ J. C. FUTRELL, *Discovering the Founder's Charism*, 64-65.

³⁰ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 55.

set ablaze in the world.³¹ He often said that “charity is born from love of God and implies the active presence of God as well to the extent of loving the unloved”. For him, there was “no Jew or Greek, free or slave, man or woman”. He agreed with St. Paul (1 Cor 10:13) in saying that we do all things in Christ.³²

In other words, the Holy Spirit was central to the person, faith, spirituality and mission of Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye such that whoever wants to understand his vision should do so from a pneumatological point of view. There are no doubts that Bishop Okoye was fully aware of the fact that the ministerial priesthood of Christ is essentially the same, whether one is ordained for a particular diocese or religious Congregation.³³

In other words, his decision to become a Holy Ghost Father after he had already been ordained a priest was definitely informed by something besides the priesthood. Most probably, his association with the Holy Ghost priests and brothers would have helped him to realize what a close relationship with the Holy Spirit would mean for a priest. Gradually, the unfolding of his life and actions strongly supports the argument that the reason for his changing from the diocesan priest to the religious priest in the Congregation of the Holy Spirit was largely motivated by his love for the Holy Spirit. He wanted to be consecrated to the Spirit and to dedicate his future ministry as a priest to the same Spirit.

³¹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 13.

³² Cf. C. I. EKE, *In the Footsteps of Our Founders*, 560.

³³ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 73.

3. Vision of the Founder of the Congregation

For any religious Congregation which was founded after the Second Vatican Council, the requirements to carry out the vision of the founder and to imbibe the spirit of the Second Vatican Council is very important. In case of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, this means to preach the Gospel of God's love to the ends of the earth. In order to bring its charism in line with the spirit of the founder.³⁴

Bishop Okoye a man full of love and so large hearted had a burning desire to spread the love of God and diffuse it to the four corners of the earth. His participation at the Second Vatican Council (1962-65) deepened the desire to found a new Congregation whose major task would be to imbibe the spirit of the Second Vatican Council and preach the gospel of God's love to the ends of the earth in any manner they could do it. This resulted in non-restrictive nature of the apostolates of the Daughters of Divine Love.³⁵

He was a man with visionary spirit. His visionary spirit is manifested in his foundation of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation during the most agonizing and ravaging war in the history of Nigeria. Being a man of peace, he did all he could to prevent the war by heading and attending peace conferences in the country and outside the country. Even when the war eventually broke out, in the spirit of divine love, he stepped out of his comfort zone, risking his life to do all he could to find food for the starving Biafran and to help bring the war to an end. He was instrumental as the head of

³⁴ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 74.

³⁵ Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Founder's Preface*, v.

Caritas in the defunct Biafra to carry in the relief transports into the then Biafra and saved a lot of lives.³⁶

During the Nigerian/Biafran war, many atrocities and inhuman acts were committed. There were many killings, bombings, destructions, fighting, negative propaganda and general insecurity. Many people ran away from their houses and had to stay in refugee camps. Many died of hunger and violence begot violence. Peace and love seemed to have eluded the world of Biafra and Nigeria. Bishop Okoye experienced firsthand the devastating effects of hatred among the people and even in the Church. This situation revealed to him how depraved the human hearts could be in the absence of love.³⁷

The hatred and lack of brotherly love in the country and even among religious caused him a lot of anguish. He spent endless time pleading with the Lord to have mercy on the country for rejecting his love. It was not just enough for him to pray and plead for God's mercy on behalf of his people but he thought of what he could do practically to alleviate the situation of his people. He knew he could not do it all by himself so he envisioned a Congregation that would stand out because of their love for God and neighbor. He envisioned a community that will forever commemorate the infinite love of God, return love for love, with deep humility and selflessness in their service of God and humanity; a community that will be a microcosm of his idea of a divine love-filled society.³⁸

³⁶ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 46.

³⁷ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 50.

³⁸ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 47.

Thus, the historical events surrounding the time of the foundation of the Congregation had an influence on the Bishop's vision of love as solution to the challenges of the time. According to him, when the good and loving God created the world, he saw all he made and said it was very good. At the end of his creation God admired his work and at the end of this admiration, "he saw all he made and indeed it was very good" (Genesis 1:31). However, after the fall of man, sin came to world. As a consequence, the harmony and peacefulness in all that God created and held together by his love were shattered. With the disobedience of our first parents came blaming, avarice, deceit, cover up, knowledge of good and evil came up. And as they bred jealousy and envy, curse and murder came in too. Love started giving way to hatred, harmony to disorder, peacefulness to violence, etc.³⁹

In a deep search for a means through which love could flourish in the world despite the experiences of hatred and division, Bishop Okoye discovered that his love cannot be attained by human efforts alone but through the Grace of God, who is Love itself.⁴⁰ Despite the gloomy situation, Bishop Okoye saw that he could use love to mend bridges and reconcile all things in Christ.⁴¹ He believed that love was the only solution to most of this world's problems. He was certain that if all the Daughters would love their neighbors as Christ loved us, the world would be heavenly.⁴² Bishop Okoye's vision of love made him seek, think, speak, and do all things out of love. He believed that love softens hearts and heals wounds. He longed to see a world where love abounds; a world

³⁹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 13.

⁴⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 9.

⁴¹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 49.

⁴² Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 14.

where love impels, urges, overwhelms and moves those living in it; a world that recognizes the infinite Love of God, and thus, gives him honor and pays him homage; a world that has the culture of love, a world of love.⁴³

In Bishop Okoye's vision, he saw love as the only solution to the distortion of hatred and disunity in the beautiful world created by God in love. As a man with visionary spirit, he wanted collaborators who would live his vision in the future, who would put Divine Love in action even in situations where human beings are deriding and rejecting God is love. According to him, the new Congregation was like "a mustard seed that must be planted" (Luke 13:18-19). This new group of women (the Daughters) were to draw this love from God and dispense it to the world through their personal lives and apostolate. It is because of this reason that the Daughters are known specifically for their love of God and love of neighbour which is rooted and grounded in Christ.⁴⁴

During his participation at the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), he deepened his desire to found a new congregation whose major task would be to preach the Gospel of God's love to the ends of the earth. This love that communicates hope for the future propelled his actions. His ardent hope for the future and the visionary spirit compelled him to found a Congregation who would light up the world with love.⁴⁵

Bishop Okoye had in his pastoral activities experienced the love of God. He was conscious that the greatest commandment of God is love. He wanted to give a radical ardent response to God's love by his love of God and his fellow men and women. Love propelled his actions. Knowing that he could not do this alone, he sought to gather a group

⁴³ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 16.

⁴⁴ Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* Vol I. 1.

⁴⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Flash*, 15.

of people as companions, women and men who would carry out this God's mandate of love in a special manner and commemorate the infinite love of God for us all.⁴⁶

Bishop Okoye thought that they should be responsible and exemplary for living out the Lord's mandate to love. As a good leader, he also thought of future leaders whom he would nourish and allow to blossom, so that they could take over and make sure that his vision would not die with him. Thus, in July 1969, he founded the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation; a Congregation that put into practice his vision and desire. It was also his expectation that the Daughters would strive to become being great saints—"unugabu agadaga saints" (you all should be great saints).⁴⁷

He expected the best from this congregation and so he constantly said "no half measures". This also explains his reason for founding a Congregation, he called "Daughters of Divine Love" during the war. This motive inspired and guided him in the foundation of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. The magnitude of the relevance of his visions today is so overwhelming that makes one to remain baffled and dumb-founded as we reflect on them.⁴⁸

4. A Brief History of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation

The time and place of the foundation of the congregation were God's own providential design. It is worth mentioning that when founding this Congregation, bishop Okoye's blind trust in divine providence manifested itself vividly. St James teaches that

⁴⁶ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 16.

⁴⁷ Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* Vol I. 5.

⁴⁸ Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 90.

faith must go with good works otherwise it is dead (James 2:17). The socio- political situation required a great courage and fortitude. Though there was war around, he saw it as a good opportunity for the concretization of his vision. However, the founding of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation was not a sudden event. It was a long premeditated event envisioned during the Second Vatican Council and realized during the civil war when the nation was in uproar.⁴⁹

The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, came into existence during the agonizing and ravaging Nigeria-Biafra war. During the refugee situation at Ukpok in Anambra State of Nigeria the Congregation was founded in July 16th, 1969 by a Nigerian Bishop, His Lordship, Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye, C.S.Sp of happy memory. The death of the founder in 17th march 1977, barely seven years after the founding of the Congregation, put its survival in question. However, the Congregation only continued to grow and thrive. In spite of the overwhelming storm of the time, the Daughters of Divine Love were able to surf the crest of the storm and their survival can be seen as a great miracle of God's love.⁵⁰

Today the mustard seed envisioned by Bishop Okoye has grown to become an International Congregation of Women Religious of pontifical rights. The members take the public vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, otherwise known as the Evangelical Counsels and they dedicate themselves to contemplation and active apostolic work.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 20.

⁵⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today* 23; *Information Flash*, 13.

⁵¹ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today* 23; *Information Flash*, 13.

The Novitiate formation of the new foundation was entrusted to a Nigerian formator; Mother Mary Charles Anyanwu, OSB. The 4th of November 1973 was a memorable day when 16 young girls dedicated their lives to God in the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love. Members of this congregation are fondly called and known as “the Daughters or the DDLs”.⁵²

According to *mutuae relationes*, every authentic charism implies a certain element of genuine originality and of special initiative for the spiritual life of the Church. When it first developed, it may have appeared troublesome and may have even caused difficulties since it is not always and immediately easy to recognize a new charism.⁵³ In view of this, the foundation stage of this newly formed Congregation was not very easy. The first community moved from one place to another, that is, from Ukpor to Ihiala and later to Isieniu (in Nsukka diocese in Enugu State). Then, in 1975, they were forced to move out of the borrowed accommodation used as Motherhouse at Isieniu to the sisters' staff quarters at the Holy Rosary Teachers' College in Enugu.⁵⁴

In 1979, a mighty wind struck the building of the aspirants at Abakpa Nike, Enugu and in sympathy, the then Anambra State government donated two duplex apartment buildings in Trans Ekulu to the congregation. With some adjustments, the Motherhouse was moved to these duplex buildings in 1980 and up to this day it serves as the Generalate of the Congregation. The Congregation has two formation houses; the Postulate and the Novitiate all located in Enugu State in Nigeria. At the same point, their existence and

⁵² Cf. N. I. OMENKA, *Portrait of a Founder and Church Leader*, 21.

⁵³ *Mutuae Relatione*. 11-12.

⁵⁴ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Flash*, 15.

survival was very much in doubt and many people even suggested that they be disbanded and sent home. This was because of the death of their Founder, Bishop Okoye of Enugu Diocese, who unexpectedly died on 17th March 1977, when the Congregation was just seven years old.⁵⁵

In the apostolic letter *Witnesses of Joy*, Pope Francis invited consecrated persons to “look to the past with gratitude”⁵⁶ By God’s mercy this mustard seed, the DDLs has grown into a big tree. Today the Daughters witness to God's love on three continents – Africa, Europe and the Americas. God has really borne them on his wings of love. The Congregation has already had eight general chapters and is blessed with 12 regions. The Lord has had generously blessed the Congregation with a teeming vocation of 1000 and more wonderful Daughters. Vocations to the Congregation are still many and the DDLs are determined to reach all the continents of the world which agrees with was Bishop Okoye’s vision to preach the gospel of God's love to the ends of the earth.⁵⁷

5. Charism, Spirituality and Motto of the Congregation

The term charism of the Congregation refers to the particular qualities of the life style of the founders which lingers through history to form a vocational identity that is lived, safeguarded, enriched and developed by all the members of the congregation. This charisms of consecrated life matures across time and history and transcends the ethnic cultures and national identities of its members. It would be good to note, however, that

⁵⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Flash*, 15.

⁵⁶ *Witnesses of Joy*, 1.1.

⁵⁷ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye’s Vision Today* 20 -21.

this act of living, safeguarding, deepening and constantly developing still takes place in the Congregation.⁵⁸

Therefore, the spiritual legacy which the Founder gave to the Daughters through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is clearly seen in the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, as it spells out in the constitution of the congregation as “generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate”.⁵⁹ This implies that the Daughters generous response to Divine Love must be adequate and for it to be adequate, the love that the Daughters give must be like that of Christ, thereby having the qualities like: generous, self-emptying, compassionate and forgiving. In other words, these qualities mentioned above, are the quality that make the Daughters’ response of love a redemptive service.⁶⁰

Additionally, we see that this mystery of Divine Love Incarnate is the reality which every Daughter is invited to live out in daily life. This incarnation of Divine Love is understood as the self-humiliating love of God for human beings. In order to describe the depth and power of this love, St. Paul says: “he emptied himself” of his Godhead and assumed the condition of a slave. This describes the love that moved God to be incarnate in order to become man and then suffer, die and rise again for the sake of humanity. All that love is what the Daughters are called to give response to, returning love for love. Therefore, the Daughters’ generous response must be ardent, that is, fervent and passionate; it should be burning like a furnace.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Cf. R. CRUZ, *Class Note on Religious Charisms*, 13.

⁵⁹ Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Art 2*, 1.

⁶⁰ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 88.

⁶¹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion* 55

In line with this, the motto of the Congregation is “*Caritas Christi Urget Nos*”, that is, the love of Christ urges us on (2 Cor 5:14). This motto leaves nobody in doubt that the choice of Divine Love for the name of the Congregation did not come by chance. The love of Christ which continues in the world under the shadow of his Spirit urges the Daughters on. The implication is that the Daughters must have love that is generous and full of zeal.⁶² This was why right from its very beginning, the founder wanted this religious family to “give a generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate meaning that the compelling motive force of each Daughter must be an ardent response to God’s love. Moreover, love is the distinguishing mark of the Congregation.”⁶³

The spirituality of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love as expressed in the constitution in this way; “Divine Love in action, expressed in the contemplation of God, deep fraternal love and apostolic action”.⁶⁴ In other words, to be a true Daughter, love must permeate all their thoughts, words and actions. This implies that the DDLs are not just present to serve the world but to exemplify the model of relationship between God and creation. That is why in chapter one of the Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, the founder wrote: “the compelling motive force of this institute must be an ardent response to God’s call to love Him and our fellow human beings”. It is quite clear that the essence of this spirituality is identification with Jesus Christ. The Daughters are to behave like Jesus by doing what he

⁶² Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Bishop Okoye’s Talks to His Daughters*, Vol 1. 20.

⁶³ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Father Founder’s Talk*, Vol I. 13.

⁶⁴ Cf. Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Art 3*,§i

did on earth. People should be able to see Christ in the Daughters and the love Christ in them.⁶⁵

6. Mission, Vision and Apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love

The apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love consists primarily in the witness of their consecrated life to Divine Love, hence their entire religious life is permeated by an apostolic spirit after the example of Christ's love. Thus, the Daughters labor unremittingly to bring Christ's redemptive action to the lives of men and women who come in contact with them in their ministry. By word and action, the Daughters teach the truth of the gospel and encourage men and women to live by the norms Christ gave us and bring them in touch with Christ's grace through the Sacramental.⁶⁶

Gen 1:2 teaches that we are created to resemble God because he made us in his own image and likeness. Similarly, Jesus Christ invites us in Matt 5:48 to set no bounds to our love just as our heavenly Father sets none to his. As Daughters of Divine Love are called to commemorate the infinite love and mercy of God, this implies that the Daughters are to be known primarily by their love for God and love for others in their ministry. It was Bishop Okoye's vision that anywhere the manifestation of God's love is needed, this becomes the apostolate for the Daughters of Divine Love. Thus, the Daughters are not limited to any particular type of ministry or apostolate.⁶⁷

⁶⁵ Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, 2.

⁶⁶ Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, 24.

⁶⁷ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 63; Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 20.

The Daughters are involved in all works that need touch of love such as hospital apostolate, social work, prison ministry, hospitality centers, teaching, physically/mentally challenged ministry and Catechetics. It is not what the Daughter does or in what profession she is that matters. What really strikes the cord is the intention, the spirit with which she does things. She is to do all things impelled by love of Christ. The name Daughters of Divine Love implies that the Daughters show love in all they do, since it is love that inflames and forms all their actions and it is also in love that they reach perfection.⁶⁸

Bishop Okoye's vision and the DDL's vision today are still compatible. As bishop Okoye lived and looked forward to a world of love, so do the Daughters. As he used many avenues like schools, hospitals, social centers and so on to make this love of God known and felt, so also the Daughters are doing so. As Bishop Okoye found out that he could not do it alone and wanted all men and women to participate, so it is the wish of the Daughters. Like his master, Jesus Christ, he founded a group to help propagate this mission of love, so the Daughters have founded a group-the Sons of Divine Love (SDL) as an extension of their founder's wish that both men and women (not only women) should join together and take this mandate of God to love him and our neighbor as their serious business. In this way, the vision of Bishop Okoye still lives.⁶⁹

⁶⁸ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 22.

⁶⁹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion* 24.

7. Conclusion

In this chapter we have looked at the brief biography of Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye, the founder of Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, at his personality, spirituality, charism and vision. We have also explored the historical situation of the foundation of the Congregation, its charism, spirituality, the motto, the apostolate, the mission and vision and the ideas which inspired Bishop Godfrey Okoye to found the Congregation of Daughters of Divine Love. As a result, we concluded that the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine is really a fulfillment of the legacy which Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye left to the world.

The Daughters on their part respond to the needs of the local church. They do that in according to the availability of personnel, in practical ways in which the Daughters of Divine Love Sisters are setting the world ablaze with love. This is done with the Bishop's vision in mind, that the Daughters should, by the quality of their lives reflect this great act of God's love to humanity by loving God and humanity in a very special way.

In so doing, they rediscover and keep alive the spirit which inspired the foundation of the Congregation. It is a legacy that is very much in agreement with the apostolic letter of Pope Francis (*The Joy of the Gospel*) challenging consecrated men and women to light up the world with love, joy and faith. This chapter has thus shed more light on the path the Daughters of Divine Love who need to better explore and appreciate their charism in the light of the spirit and vision of their founder and also in line with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council to preach the gospel of God's love to the ends of the earth.

This chapter also offers both challenge and encouragement to the Daughters of Divine Love to go back to the spirit of their Founder so as to keep alive the vision of Bishop Okoye which is full of gratitude for the past, full of passion for the present and full of hope for the future.

Chapter II

Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5: 14–21: Ambassadors of Reconciliation of Humanity with the Love of Christ

1. Introduction

In this chapter we will do the analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21. We will start with the delimitation of the text that is: “*terminus a quo*” and “*terminus ad quem*”; textual criticism, the context of the text, historical setting, structure of the text and finally the exegetical analysis of the text. We conclude with the theology and the message of the text.

The analysis mentioned above is meant to help the Daughters of Divine Love understand St. Paul’s ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ that he proclaimed to the Christians in Corinth. This analysis will also to help them (Daughters of Divine Love) deepen the understanding of their charism as seen in Bishop Okoye’s vision to see a world where love abounds, overwhelms and motivates those living in it and in turn gives ardent response to God’s love. In fact, he saw love as the

only solution to the distorting hatred in the world. He believed that love softens the hearts and heals the wounds.⁷⁰

Verses 5:14-21 of the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians offer a number of insight into their ministry as Daughters of Divine Love. This passage displays some of the principles for which St. Paul claims to be an authentic minister of Jesus Christ. Thus, St. Paul's ministry could be understood in two ways: that is, as a minister of a new covenant strengthened by God's power, which makes him a true ambassador (2 Cor 2:14–3:6); and his apostolic sufferings (2 Cor 4:7–5:10) as the spirit that he shares in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.⁷¹

Besides, it would be hard to come across a passage in St. Paul's letters which has a greater meaning for the Daughters of Divine Love understanding of the Christian faith than 2 Corinthians 5:14-21. The second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (5: 14-21) is considered as one of the finest descriptions of the meaning of Christianity in the Scripture.⁷² It also gives a brief summary of the atonement of Christ.⁷³ Christ sufferings were a preparation for the final transformation to glory at the resurrection of the body (2 Cor 4:7–5:10).

In 2 Corinthians 5:14-21, St. Paul brought in a third and final aspect of his apostolic ministry, namely, that the ministry of reconciliation of the Corinthians with the generous love of Christ is given gratuitously. As the minister of a new covenant, St. Paul

⁷⁰ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Vision Today*, 9.

⁷¹ Cf. V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 321.

⁷² Cf. G. R. BEASLEY-MURRAY, *Broadman Bible Commentary*, 36.

⁷³ Cf. J. MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, 1729.

is Christ's ambassador who proclaims the good news to the Corinthians that God has reconciled the world to Christ and he does it free of charge.⁷⁴

2. Delimitation of the Text

This section highlights the "*terminus a quo*" and "*terminus ad quem*". "*Terminus a quo*", that is, where the text under discussion begins and *terminus ad quem* that is the end of the textual unit. Under this sub topic, different commentators have given their interpretations about the end of the passage on St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation.

2.1 Terminus a Quo

The 2 Corinthians 5:14-21 lies within the episode of St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ. Scholars had different opinions about the *terminus a quo* (the beginning of the text). According to T. Milinovich in his book, *Now is the Day of Salvation*, quotes Reimand Bieringer who held that St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation begins at 2 Cor 5:14.⁷⁵

Basing on the views mentioned above, 2 Cor 5:14 can be regarded as the motivating force of St. Paul's reconciling ministry, that was "Christ's love" which was made manifest in his sacrificial death (v.14). Christ's death "for all" like the statement that Christ died for our sins (1 Cor 15:13; Rom 5:8; 14:15; 1 Thess 5:10), were cited in an early creed.⁷⁶ In 2 Cor 5:13, St. Paul is trying to help his converts defend his behavior

⁷⁴ Cf. F. J. Matera, *II Corinthians*, 126.

⁷⁵ Cf. T. MILINOVICH, *Now is the Day of Salvation*, 3.

⁷⁶ Cf. C. J. ROETZEL, *2 Corinthians*, 80.

against the attack of his opponents. His defense is twofold. First, he and his fellow-apostles are motivated only by the yearning to serve God and their fellow-men. This attitude of self-sacrifice is required because the actions of Christian must be an imitation of the actions of Christ in the sense that Christ gave his life for the benefit of mankind (verse 14).⁷⁷

2.2 Terminus ad Quem

Reading through St. Paul's episode of reconciliation, V.P. Furnish indicates that St. Paul's episode of reconciliation ends in 2 Cor 5:19 when St. Paul says that: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19a). By this, St. Paul substituted "through Christ" which means through Christ's death that he used earlier in this episode (2 Cor 5:115). The phrase "of Christ's death" is also used in other Pauline passages when he speaks of reconciliation (cf. Rom 5:6-11).⁷⁸ Therefore, the reconciliation that comes through Christ's death does not mean only "the overcoming of the enmity between God and his people but also the overcoming of their weakness, their ungodliness, and their sin. It is, in short, the transformation of their whole situation, [...], v. 17."⁷⁹

Other scholars are of the opinion that the passage on St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation ends in 2 Cor 5:21 due to various reasons. Jan Lambrecht, for example, argues that: "there is much more than a simple exchange between God and humankind.

⁷⁷ Cf. M. E. THRALL, *The First and Second Corinthians*, 148.

⁷⁸ Cf. V. P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 336.

⁷⁹ V. P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 336.

On God's part, there is, through the representative action of Christ, forgiveness of our sins; on our side, there is justification, as a result, yet as a way of life as well."⁸⁰

Furthermore, F.J. Matera also maintains that St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation ends in 2 Cor 5:21 because of the "divine interchange that God has effected in Christ: Christ became 'sin' so that 'we' might become 'the righteousness of God' (v.21)."⁸¹ The appeal of reconciliation that St. Paul makes here will be followed by other appeals for not receiving God's grace in vain (cf. 2 Cor 6:1-2). P. Madsen also holds a similar view that reconciliation was completed by God through Christ. Christ was born and took our human nature, was exposed to all human rebellion, but he remained without sin. He was made "to be sin who knew no sin" (2 Cor 5:21). As a result, he healed the broken relationship of humanity with God and those who believe in him "become the righteousness of God" (2 Cor 5:21).⁸²

Other scholars are of the view that St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation ends in 2 Cor 5:21. Among such scholars is P. Barnett who argues that 2 Cor 5:21 is one of the most critical within the writings of St. Paul. This passage makes powerful assertions about Christ, his life and death. It points to the sinlessness of his incarnate life "he knew no sin" (v. 5:21).⁸³ Paul Barnett declares that, with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ (5:14-15), the very day of God's salvation has dawned. This is the eschatological grace of God (v.1)."⁸⁴

⁸⁰ J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 101.

⁸¹ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 141.

⁸² Cf. N. P. MADSEN, *First and Second Corinthians*, 121.

⁸³ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 314.

⁸⁴ P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 318.

3. Textual Criticism

It is worth noting that 2 Cor 5:17 has a textual problem, given that the following sentence starts with τὰ δὲ πάντα, and that the reading καινὰ started when the eye of a copyist by accident passed over the first τὰ πάντα. It could be argue that the original reading was καινὰ τὰ πάντα. In view of the following τὰ δὲ πάντα, it was normal that copyists would add to the meaning of καινὰ in the beginning or by adding τὰ πάντα.⁸⁵

Barrett continued that the majority of MSS (manuscripts) add τὰ πάντα, (all things or all these things) that requires a fresh translation as “All things have become a new” (5:17). He is also of the view that this reading was used by Marcion, and might have originated from him as he desires to have done with all the old things including the God of Old Testament as he believes that he is different from the God of the New Testament. St. Paul on the other hand is concerned with the new creation not much with renovation.⁸⁶

4. Context of the Text

In this section, we investigate the immediate and remote contexts of the text in order to have a wider view of St. Paul’s ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ.

⁸⁵ Cf. B. M. METZGER, 580.

⁸⁶ Cf. C. K. BARRETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 162.

4.1 Immediate Context

In 5:11-13, St. Paul reintroduces the main theme of new covenant ministry that he broke off in 4:14 to talk also about the situations of believers in general. Two verses, 2 Cor 4:14 and 4:16 lay the ground for all that will follow. In these two verses (2 Cor 4:14.16), there is a central message for the Corinthians. They must not get their bases of evaluation mixed up.⁸⁷

The assessment of ministry is to be sought in the public realm, not private. If in private he is “beside himself,” this is “for God” and does not bear on his authority as an apostolic minister. By this, St. Paul stands bare and open to God now as he will on the Day of Judgment, before the seat of Christ. He wished the Corinthians could understand that in the public area where judgments about ministry are made, his ministry could withstand their analysis.⁸⁸

At the end of the preceding argument, St. Paul focuses attention on the future of all Christians. In 5:11 he goes back to his self-defense, starting a third phase in this long argument for the authenticity of his apostolic ministry. He addresses the community from the beginning to end (“you,” in v. 12 and in v. 20), though evidently with an eye on his rivals. St. Paul accepts that his role is to persuade others (v. 11), yet he implicitly distinguishes himself from his opponents by stressing his transparency before God, which he hopes the Corinthians will also recognize.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 278.

⁸⁸ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 278-279.

⁸⁹ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 279.

St. Paul's idea was to give the Corinthians reason to take pride in him, as a man of substance and to disprove those who are all show, capable to boast only in external appearance, maybe even in ecstatic experiences (12:1) and miracle-working (12:12). Besides, as St. Paul makes clear, ecstatic experiences are personal affairs between an individual and God. They are not necessary for ministry, which is "for you" (v.13). St. Paul brings this up in order to allow the Corinthians to make right choice between himself and his rivals.⁹⁰

The real situation in Corinth is clearer in 5:11-13 than it is in 3:1 where it was only a transitory allusion to "some" who used commendatory letters. The apostle is aware of the criticism that the genuineness of his apostolate has not been supported by "religious" proof in the form of public displays of ecstasy. In reply, St. Paul questions the pertinence of ecstatic experiences for the validity of apostleship (5:13a), and stresses in its place the commitment to the preaching of the gospel (5:11a) and to the care of those who have accepted it (5:13b).⁹¹

Addressing in a direct way, the subject of his own ministerial practice (cf. 3:1-2; 4:2ff), St. Paul writes that "we are persuading people". The word "persuading" should perhaps not be taken literally, for in another place he has opposed the thought that he has engaged in "persuasion" (cf. Gal 1:10). As many of his colleagues, he must relate it with the practice of artful but not deceptive rhetoric.⁹²

⁹⁰ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 116-117.

⁹¹ Cf. V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 321.

⁹² Cf. V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 322.

One may ask why St. Paul should persuade the Corinthian to accept him as authentic ambassador of Christ. Scholars think that he was anxious to persuade people of his integrity as a person and of his genuineness as an apostle. The term to persuade is in line with the context of the Corinthian community, but it is hard to verify because of the technical meaning the term often had in St. Paul's day and the apostle's own use of it elsewhere in that sense.⁹³

It is more fitting to understand St. Paul to be using the term, as his opponents have, with reference to his preaching of the Gospel, but at that point qualifying it to such an extent that he is able to accept it. This meaning, too, is in line with the context, where the apostle is concerned with stressing the commitment of his apostolate to the preaching of the Gospel (cf. 2:14-17; 4:5, 7, 13-15; 5:20; 6:1).⁹⁴

Looking now at the text that follows our passage, we find an instruction of 6:1 "not to receive the grace of God in vain". God's grace is here a reference to the gospel and all for which it stands, but mainly the reconciling love of God carried out through Christ's death. St. Paul's message in 5:14-15, 17-19, as in 5:20, is the plea to conform one's life to the reality of the new creation, to let one's behavior be "worthy of the Gospel of Christ" (Phil 1:27) in case one "become separated from Christ" and fall away from grace (Gal 5:4).⁹⁵

St. Paul's second explicit citation of scripture in this letter (the first was in 4:13) occurs in 6:2. It is taken from Second Isaiah (Isa 49:8a), in the context of which "the time

⁹³ Cf. V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 322.

⁹⁴ Cf. V.P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 322.

⁹⁵ Cf. V. P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 352.

of favor” is the time when God communicates consoling words of pardon Jerusalem her sins (Isa 40:1-2). The text is in general applicable to whatever St. Paul has been emphasizing about the *grace of God* (6:1), in which the believers *become ... righteous* in Christ (5:21) and are reconciled (5:18-19). What matters in the passage, however, is St. Paul’s usage of it: *Behold, now is the time of favor! Behold, now is the day of salvation!* This “*now*” is in the first instance the eschatological *now* of life “in Christ” and of the ‘new creation’ (5:17) as in (5:16). Yet, it is not to be limited to this, it is the *now* of the present plea to the Corinthians to be reconciled to God and allow the grace of God to manifest itself in their lives.⁹⁶

Obviously, understanding the Corinthians’ practical lapses both with regard to unity/reconciliation (1 Cor 1–4) and holiness (1 Cor 5–6. 8–10), St. Paul rightly worries that the community has received the grace of God in vain (2 Cor 6:1). Henceforth, he appeals to them to convert and respond to that grace. In support of his petition, he cites Isaiah here (2 Cor 6:2a, see Isa 49:8), who predicted the day of salvation as a future event. St. Paul believes that with the coming of the Messiah, that day has come. Thus, salvation is a present offer, a grace to which the Corinthians needed to respond.⁹⁷

2 Cor 6:1 takes up the plea of 5:20. Through the phrase “the grace of God” the verse goes back to what is clarified in 5:14-19 and 21. But in 6:1-2, it is St. Paul himself who speaks, as it were, in his own name, not God through St. Paul as has been the case

⁹⁶ Cf. V. P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 353.

⁹⁷ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 119.

in 5:20. He is allowed to do this in full confidence since he is a fellow worker of God (6:1), but also since no fault can be found with his apostolic existence.⁹⁸

4.2 Remote Context

2 Cor 5: 14-21 is situated within the wider theme of St. Paul's defense of his apostolic ministry (2 Cor 2:14–7:4). 2 Cor 2:14–7:4 is consistent with St. Paul's historical situation in the period between his second and third visit to Corinth. It is an exposition of the apostle's identity in which he engaged in a defense of his apostolic ministry, affirming that his mission is an extension of Christ's ministry.⁹⁹ The occasion of these passages was as a result of St. Paul's response to reports brought by Titus to him from Macedonia about the state of the Church in Corinth, in particular the attitudes of the Corinthians to him at that time.¹⁰⁰

It can be argued that 2 Cor 2:14–7:4 reflects the inner feeling of St. Paul and expresses his feelings about the Corinthians as he want to make his final visit to them. In this passage, St. Paul tries to answer the criticisms of his spiritual integrity. He defends his ministry in the new covenant against those who question his authority, he warns them to separate themselves from Corinthian temple worship and he rejoices in their acceptance of his message. Finally, he exhorts them to complete the collection and urges them to correct false attitudes to him as they prepare for his third visit.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 111.

⁹⁹ Cf. D. BERGANT, - R. J. KARRIS, *The Collegeville Bible Commentary*, 1139.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 26.

¹⁰¹ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 16.

However, the letter is written against the background of an unsuccessful second visit in the light of new difficulties that have now arisen, especially the arrival of the Jewish Christian or false apostles who are bent on making the Corinthians ready for St. Paul's last visit, when he and they can be reconciled before he finally leaves the region.¹⁰²

St. Paul is also aware that there are some individuals who have imposed themselves on the congregation (2 Cor 2:14; 7:4), on the basis of letters of recommendation (3:1), and who, in the progression of their self-confident boasting (5:2), have declared that St. Paul's authorizations are not sufficient for one who claims apostolic status (2 Cor 2:14-3:6; 4:1-15; 16; 5:11; 6:4-10). However, St. Paul had been uplifted by Titus' report, and he is now confident of the congregation's loyalty to the gospel and to his apostolate.¹⁰³

St. Paul carries out a rousing defense of his apostolic ministry which develops into the focal section of this letter, that is, in 2:14-7:4. His self-defense turns out to be a presentation of the very heart of the apostolic gospel, where he calls on the Corinthian community to accept and be reconciled to his ministry.¹⁰⁴ He raises the issue of his being competent for this ministry, but a problem emerges on the horizon. Some people have arrived in Corinth bearing letters of recommendation. St. Paul did not need such letter because he believed that the faith of the Corinthians is proof that he is competent.¹⁰⁵

Having identified the service in which he and Timothy are engaged as a ministry of a new covenant, St. Paul turns his thought back to the Corinthians as he expresses his

¹⁰² Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 15.

¹⁰³ Cf. V. P. FURNISH, *II Corinthians*, 41.

¹⁰⁴ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 156 -158.

¹⁰⁵ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 38.

heartfelt love for the community. He wishes only that they would requite his love. They seem not to have done that.

5. Historical Setting

Corinth was a wealthy city, because of its commerce. Corinth was strategically located on a narrow peninsula that connected mainland Greece to its north and the Peloponnese to its south and the main trade sea path between Asia and Italy. It was renowned as an important east-west axis, situated within a few miles of two great harbors: Cenchreae, which handled commerce to and from points east, and Lechaenum, which handled commerce to and from points west.¹⁰⁶

The city gained its income from the exchange of merchandise from both directions. Since the city was the capital of Achaia, it attracted many ambassadors and other officials who came to see the Roman governor, and many travelers from Greece and Asia. Corinth also became one of the notable centers for banking and finance in the Roman world.¹⁰⁷

It was a flourishing city among many Greek cities from the 5th BCE until it was left in devastated situation by the Romans in 146 BCE. In 44 BC Julius Caesar restored Corinth as a Roman colony, settling the city with freed slaves from Rome and people from other nations including Syrians, Egyptians and Jews. The city was rebuilt only after a century using the Roman architectural models and everything in it was reorganized

¹⁰⁶ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 2-3.

according to the Roman styles of doing things such as politically, socially, economically and administration.¹⁰⁸

In 29 BC, Corinth was made the capital of the province of Achaia and it became the place of residence of the Roman governor. Culturally and religiously, Corinth was a very diverse city, accommodating not only people from various nations, but also a wide variety of pagan cults as well as Jewish settlers. Corinthian were known to be fiercely competitive, driven by desire of status, wealth, honor, and power.

In the middle of the first century, a Christian community was established in the city.¹⁰⁹ While St. Paul deals in his letters with the problems of that Christian community, the problems in Corinth concern the ethical behavior of all the Christians.¹¹⁰

6. Structure of 2 Cor 5:14-21

According to T. Milinovich, the structure of St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of God has chiastic structure¹¹¹ and it can be divided into two main parts with two subdivisions under each part.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. M.A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 6.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 2.

¹¹⁰ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 4.

¹¹¹ Cf. T. MILINOVICH, *Now is the Day of Salvation*, 157.

I: Christ's Death and St. Paul's Ministry of Reconciliation of humanity with the

Love of God with Humanity (2 Cor 5:14-17)¹¹²

(a) Christ death for all (2 Cor 5:14-15)

A – ^{14a}For the love of Christ

B – ^{14b}one has died for all;

C – ^{14c}therefore all have died.

C¹ – ^{15a}and he died for all,

B¹ – ^{15b}so that those who live might live no longer for themselves,

A¹ – ^{15c}for him who died and was raised for them.

(b) Consequences of Christ's death (2 Cor 5:16-17)

A – ^{16a}From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view;

B – ^{16b}even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know
him no longer in that way.

B¹ – ^{17a}so, if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation:

A¹ – ^{17b}everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

II: The work of reconciliation (2 Cor 5:18-21)¹¹³

(a) God and Christ (2 Cor 18-19)

A – ^{18a}All this is from God,

B – ^{18b}who reconciled us to himself through Christ,

C – ^{18c}and has given us the ministry of reconciliation;

C¹ – ^{19c}and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.

¹¹² F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians: A Commentary*, 129.

¹¹³ F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians: A Commentary*, 129.

B¹ – ^{19b} God was reconciling the world to himself,

A¹ – ^{19a}that is, in Christ

(b) St. Paul as Christ’s ambassador (20-21)

A – ^{20a}So we are ambassadors for Christ,

B – ^{20b}we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

B¹ – ^{21a}For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin,

A¹ – ^{21b}so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

7. Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

This section analyses the passage which forms the peak of St. Paul’s explanation of the ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ in verses 5:14-21, and that of the Christian ministry. St. Paul presents here with a driving force the divine mission received from God and the different ministries of the New Covenant. He does this to inspire the Corinthians to recognize his ministry as Spirit-led, and to follow his example in their ministries.¹¹⁴

2 Cor 5: 14 For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced that one has died for all therefore all have died.

St. Paul has showed his wish to persuade people in order to win them over to his way of life. In verse 5:14 St. Paul presents his other motivation, namely him being urged by the love of Christ. As a result, St. Paul upholds that Christ’s love for him offers the

¹¹⁴ Cf. C. S. KEENER, *1-2 Corinthians*, 163.

inner urge for his activity. In this case, the love of Christ which urges St. Paul (cf. 5:14a) could be compared with the fear of the Lord (cf. 5:11a).¹¹⁵

P. Barnett expounded on how these two motives of the “fear of God” and the “love of Christ” are not opposing each other. The phrase “fear of God” is not a terror but awe-filled respect, and the full expression of the love of Christ is no sentimental thing but his sacrificial death. Acceptance of this love should go hand in hand with deep awe-filled respect.¹¹⁶ Christ’s love is manifested through his death on the cross, and we fear him as our future judge.¹¹⁷

In the second part of this verse, St. Paul indicates Jesus as a representative of the humanity. St. Paul develops on this concept in Romans 5:12-21. Just as Adam can be seen as a representative of fallen humanity, so Jesus (the last Adam) is representative of the new humanity. This is the key principle of St. Paul’s theology. Because Christ died, the sinful human race whom he represented (v.21) has in principle been destroyed, so that there is possibility of a fresh start, a new world, for those who are united to Christ and so share the life he now possesses (cf. v.17).¹¹⁸

St. Paul indicates to the Corinthian community the death of Christ and draws out the implications of this event. He understands its end result as one who died for all (cf. 5:14b). His main concern was to remind the Corinthians about the death of Christ for all believers. He held that all believers owe their new life to Christ and therefore they must

¹¹⁵ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians: A Commentary*, 133.

¹¹⁶ Cf. P. BARNETT, *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, 288.

¹¹⁷ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 94.

¹¹⁸ Cf. M. E. THRALL, *I and II Corinthians*, 149.

mold their lives after Christ's. Consequently, believers no more belong to the sphere of the flesh, but rather a new life in Jesus Christ.¹¹⁹

A question can be posed as to why Christ died for all and therefore all died. This supposition that St. Paul makes is not convincing, because it cannot instantly be obvious that the death of a single individual effects the death of others, let alone the reason that it might be a desirable event, inspiration and motivation for his apostolic ministry. According to St. Paul, all people are sinners and are separated from God, sold into slavery under the power of sin, and condemned to death (cf. Rom 1-3; 7:14). So as to reconcile this situation, the Old Testament law of atonement stipulates that the sinner must identify himself/herself with a sacrificial victim (cf. Lev 1:4), so that when the victim is sacrificed, the sinner in effect dies with it. Sprinkling the blood of the victim on the altar (cf. Lev 1:5) denotes giving the life to God, since according to Lev 17:11, "the life of the flesh is in the blood." This is not so much an issue of pacifying an angry God as it is providing restitution both of the life of the condemned sinner and of his/her relationship with God. In other words, Jesus became sin, so that people could be both justified before God through his blood (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 3:26; 5:9) and reconciled with him (2 Cor 5:18).¹²⁰

The love of Christ urges St. Paul on and it has become the all-determining aspect in his entire life. In the same vein, the Daughters of Divine Love are to reveal this love of Christ by living not for themselves but for the sake of others as Christ did. The love of Christ plays a central role in the life and activities of the Congregation of the Daughters

¹¹⁹ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 117.

¹²⁰ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 123.

of Divine Love. It is foundational in whatever the Daughters do, the love of Christ forms the basis, the goal and the value of the being and actions of the Daughters.¹²¹

2 Cor 5:15 *And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.*

Upon declaring that he is not commending himself but acting in a humble manner toward the Corinthians as he persuades them of the gospel he preaches, St. Paul clearly asserts that the love of Christ controls his ministry. Even though “the love of Christ” (ἡ ἀγάπη τοῦ χριστοῦ) could mean Paul’s love for Christ, if considered as an objective genitive, it is more probably that St. Paul has in mind Christ’s own love for him (subjective genitive), which Christ manifested in his saving death. The verb that St. Paul employs here, σὺνέχει, is generally interpreted in one of two ways: (1) “to urge” or “to impel,” (2) “to direct” or “to control.”¹²²

In addition, St. Paul gives two statements. The first in (v. 4b) he gives a basic assertion about Christ’s death and its effect: “Christ died for all.” Thus, all died. This is an indication that St. Paul reaffirms the basic statement (“he died for all”) and brings in a purpose clause to elucidate why Christ died for all: “so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them” (5:15). The purpose clause includes an element not found in the first statement (“and rose for them”), which point out that Christ’s saving death and resurrection are one and the same. Additionally, to underline the soteriological importance of Christ’s death and resurrection for all, St.

¹²¹ Cf. *Daughters of Divine Love, Information Flash*, 15.

¹²² Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 132-133.

Paul unveils the implication of this event for the moral life of believers that is, “to live for Christ.”¹²³

The soteriological consequence of Christ’s death has important outcomes: Christ has died “so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them” (v.15). Again, one might have expected St. Paul to write “in order that the living might live no longer for themselves but for others.” St. Paul’s analysis, however, is Christological. The main reason of life is to live for the one who died and rose for all (cf. Rom 14:7-9). Such a life essentially consists of living for others, since Christ has died for all. But instead of starting with humanity, St. Paul begins with humanity’s representative, so that life for Christ becomes the most profound kind of service to others.¹²⁴

The reason is that (ὅτι) Christ’s universal atonement was to bring new life to those who live so that they can be dedicated and live in obedience to him. Those who have been baptized into Christ were baptized into his death too, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, they might walk in newness of life (cf. Rom 6:2-11). St. Paul clarifies that believers are not free to live as they wish; they are under the authority of a new master and are led by the Spirit dwelling in them. This is what motivated St. Paul for his apostolic ministry, and the criterion which he wished to be evaluated.¹²⁵

The phrase “those who live” perhaps no longer embraces the entire humankind that is, in actual sense, symbolized on the cross. Christ’s death has not yet brought about

¹²³ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 133.

¹²⁴ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 135.

¹²⁵ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 124.

the final salvation; but those who have died with Christ must comply and live for Christ. Accurately, this is articulated by the purpose clause. It would seem, therefore, that by “those who live” St. Paul has the Corinthian Christians concretely in mind.¹²⁶

2 Cor 5:16 From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way.

Verse 16 begins with a conclusion “so”, that sums up all that St. Paul has been saying in the preceding section and makes a shift to a new focus. In the earlier section (4:7-5:15), St. Paul has been arguing that the rival’s physical criterion for assessing the legitimacy of his apostleship is blurred. St. Paul’s suffering and dying body as well as his lack of a glorified face like that of Moses cannot be used to show that he is a fraud. For that reason, St. Paul now relates his own principle to himself in a sort of reverse psychology: “we regard no one from a human point of view” (5:16b). Literally, St. Paul is trying to say “we know no one according to the flesh.” This means that, St. Paul’s foes do “know” him “according to the flesh.”¹²⁷

Verse 16 has two parts: a universal declaration that St. Paul no longer regards anyone according to the flesh and a restrictive sentence that, if he once knew Christ in this way, he no longer does. Interpreted literally, “according to the flesh” (κατὰ σάρκα), it normally bears a negative implication in St. Paul’s writings. For instance, even if St. Paul recognizes that he lives “in the flesh”, he strongly opposes to charges that he behaves

¹²⁶ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 95.

¹²⁷ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 133.

“according to the flesh” (10:2-3); he affirms that his moral behavior is not determined by what is transitory and mortal and so ordained to perish.¹²⁸

St. Paul now alludes to his own case, to how those things once he regarded vital, as worthless now (cf. 5:16). Christ’s self-emptying love is the base of reconciliation and unity for all. It is through Christ’s love that the Corinthian community was brought into being and it is this love that must be their criterion of acting and judging. Since both St. Paul and Corinthians are now know from the same point of view in Christ and they are supposed to judge everything based on the same standard, that is, Christ. It is evident that the Corinthians’ pessimistic evaluation of St. Paul according to the old standards of power and stature needs to be re-evaluated.¹²⁹

God’s love compelled St. Paul to devote his life to those who had never heard the good news of Jesus’ death and resurrection. The Daughters of Divine Love too have also received this calling to dispense the love of Christ to the whole nations with grateful hearts through their charism.

2 Cor 5:17 So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

St. Paul draws a general conclusion (therefore), from his encounter with the risen Lord on the way to Damascus. Henceforth, he no longer regards Christ according to the flesh as a crucified messianic pretender. Contrasting v.16 between old and new ways of viewing Christ raised a further contrast between old and new that makes St. Paul’s

¹²⁸ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 135.

¹²⁹ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 117-118.

experience ideal of all believers. Being in Christ results from having been baptized into Christ by faith (cf. Gal 3:27), so that one now becomes part of the Church, which is the “body of Christ”. Believers are personally joined to Christ, who is a corporate figure like Adam and indeed his typological counterpart.¹³⁰

St. Paul draws his distinction between the old and the new from Isaiah. It is the context of Israel’s future liberation from exile. It evokes the exodus from Egypt, Isaiah 43:18-19 read: “Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:18-19 plays a major task in the New Testament. St. Paul identifies these “new things” with Christ’s redemptive work in the world.¹³¹

The truth of this new creation is shown by the fact that Christ had to die in order to bring it about and that Christians have to die in Christ in order to take part in it.¹³² Bishop Okoye enjoined the Daughters to examine how we treat and look upon those who offend us, whether our love is like the one revealed by Jesus on how he treated his enemies and how he loved them. This is exemplified in the parable of the unforgiving servant (Matt 18:23-35), through this parable, God is inviting every Daughter to join in this work of restoring humanity to their lost dignity. By reconciling us to himself through the death of his son, God has made all of us instruments of reconciliation as St. Paul says in 5:17-20.¹³³

¹³⁰ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 136.

¹³¹ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 136-137.

¹³² Cf. R. P. C. HANS, *II Corinthians*, 51.

¹³³ Cf. M. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing In Compassion*, 56.

2 Cor 5:18 *All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.*

Everything that took place in Christ is from God since he (God) took the initiative in offering his Son in accordance with his divine plan. Apocalyptic writing of the Old Testament and early Judaism give emphasis to the fact that in the last days God himself will intervene in world affairs to set up his kingdom. God is at work from the beginning to the end. God is portrayed by means of two parallel participial clauses that highlight his reconciliatory “deed,” on the one hand, and the resultant reconciliatory “word,” on the other. Regarding the “deed,” it is obvious that participation in the new creation presupposes that God reconciled St. Paul to himself through the substitutionary death of Christ.¹³⁴

Concerning the reconciliatory “word,” it shows the apostle’s participation in proclaiming God’s reconciliatory deed. The use of the word “ministry” (διακονία) and “minister” (διακονος) was not new to St. Paul; he had already used it in the earlier context to refer to his own ministry of the new covenant in contradistinction to Moses’ “ministry” of the Old Covenant (3:6. 7. 8. 9; 4:1). Here, he implies a typological comparison to Moses.¹³⁵

Having made known Christ’s death “for all” and the “new creation” and the effects of this death on humanity, St. Paul brings in “God” as the prime actor in this event of salvation and identifies the work of God in terms of reconciliation. All that happened in the Christ event was ultimately the deed of God, who was reconciling “us” (humanity) to

¹³⁴ J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 136-137.

¹³⁵ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 137.

himself “through Christ” (διὰ Χριστοῦ), giving “us” – St. Paul and his co-workers—“the ministry of reconciliation”.¹³⁶

God’s work of reconciliation took place “through Christ”. That is, if God is the chief actor in the drama of salvation, then Christ is the mediator by and through whom God reconciles sinful humanity to himself. In saying that God reconciles “us”, St. Paul is referring to Christ’s envoy of a “new creation,” his death “for all” was the mode in which God reconciled “us” to himself; for in giving up his life “for all,” Christ did what we human beings could not do for ourselves.¹³⁷

The love of Christ to which 2 Cor 5:18 refers to is the love that Christ showed through a total gift of his life for our sake. In total obedience to the Father, he gave his life by dying on the cross in order to reconcile us to God and to give us life. This is the event that the Daughters are called to commemorate, that is, continue to make alive in the world with the empowerment that comes through the Holy Spirit. The love of Christ urges us on, because we believe that “one has died for all, therefore all have died” we have died with him. From here derives the demand that Daughters be known for their deep humility and self-sacrifice.¹³⁸

¹³⁶ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 138.

¹³⁷ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 139.

¹³⁸ Cf. M. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing In Compassion*, 122.

2 Cor 5:19 *that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.*

Here St. Paul expounds on God’s reconciliatory deed and his own commission to a ministry of reconciliation. While v. 18 speaks precisely about St. Paul as the object of God’s reconciliatory deed, v. 19 increases the range to embrace the world. The view that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ puts the topic on a grand scale.¹³⁹

It is probable that in verse 19 St. Paul is using imperial imagery of the language entirely devoid of imperial content so as to share his message about God’s reconciling the world to himself in Christ. Earlier in 2:14, St. Paul used another imperial image that is, the triumphant emperor in order to propose that he has met the throne—chariot of God, who is forever directing him to triumphal procession in Christ in all places. In this case, St. Paul may have the same purpose by using Roman imperial imagery here. While applying the reconciliation of the world under the language as a metaphorical vehicle, St. Paul brings up the image of Christ enthroned next to God in accord with Ps 110:1, which is the most important Christological text in the New Testament.¹⁴⁰

We may ask what is the “world” (κόσμος) that God was reconciling to himself by Christ? Though κόσμος often refers to the “universe” (1 Cor 8:4; Phil 2:15), St. Paul’s accounts that God was reconciling “us” to himself (v. 18) and that God was “not counting their trespasses against them” (v.19) propose that he is chiefly referring to our present world. That is, in Christ, God was reconciling humanity to himself. The pointing out of

¹³⁹ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 138.

¹⁴⁰ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 138.

“their trespasses” (τὰ παραπτώματα αὐτῶν) helps to expound why this reconciliation was essential since humanity had offended God by trespassing God’s commandments. For that reason, St. Paul writes in Rom 4:25, Christ was put to death “for our trespasses,” St. Paul insists that the effect of reconciliation is the forgiveness of sins.¹⁴¹

2 Cor 5:20 *So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.*

Here, St. Paul draws a conclusion (therefore) from the earlier discussion concerning his noble apostolic commission and petitions directly to the Corinthians in light of it. This is critical for St. Paul’s defense of his apostolic office in 2:14–7:4, since he certainly holds that Christ and God speak through him. St. Paul is one of Christ’s ambassadors. He is thinking of his apostolic task in a world empire set up by God and Christ analogous to the *Pax Romana* (v. 19).¹⁴²

The term “Christ’s” in this context does not mean “for the cause of Christ,” but rather on Christ’s behalf. Accordingly, in his word as the apostolic ambassador, Christ himself speaks. Hence, St. Paul stands for Christ and is entrusted with all the power of the one he stands for. He is not chosen by human authorities (cf. Gal 1:1, 12) but by the risen Christ himself; St. Paul considers himself as the personal envoy of Christ on earth (1 Thess 1:6; 1 Cor 11:1; Phil 3:17).¹⁴³

Being an ambassador for Christ, St. Paul speaks as though God were making his appeal through him. In this, there is obvious unity of Christ and God in carrying out their

¹⁴¹ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 141.

¹⁴² Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 140.

¹⁴³ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 140.

activities together, including speaking: St. Paul is Christ's ambassador, but it is God who speaks through him. The God who reconciled the world to himself in Christ uses the apostle as a spokesperson to proclaim the good news and to call upon people to accept God's message. Whenever St. Paul is challenged by his enemies, he appeals to the highest authority, that of God Almighty who is the basis of his apostolic ministry and message.¹⁴⁴

Upon establishing his apostolic qualifications as the spokesperson of Christ and God, St. Paul gives a model of his Gospel preaching: "we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (5:20c). It is doubtful that this exhortation is directed toward the Corinthians, because they are already believers and thus have already accepted the message of reconciliation that St. Paul at first delivered to them. In another place, St. Paul does not, of course, entertain the view that Corinthians may not be "in the faith" (6:1; 13:5), and does not encourage them to reconciliation (13:11).¹⁴⁵

Another kind of tension relates to the usage of the phrase, "be reconciled," in v. 20, as seen in the Revised Standard Version. This phrase has a number of meanings. It could be argued that St. Paul's usage of the phrase is an appeal for reconciliation either for reconciliation with Paul (cf. 6:11-12), or an appeal for an ongoing reconciliation of the Corinthian believers to God. For Instance, Ralph Martin proposes that the language is more suitable to a call to unbelievers which St. Paul has applied to his strained

¹⁴⁴ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 140.

¹⁴⁵ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 141.

relationships with the Corinthians by calling them to accept his God-given authority in his apostolic office.¹⁴⁶

Verse 19 presents various translation problems, all of which have difficulties for interpreting the text. Firstly, the opening words, ὡς ὅτι, (that is), are obviously aimed to relate this verse to what has preceded, and the question is how? So, if the bond is casual, the phrase should be translated “since.” In case St. Paul is citing a piece of tradition that is known to the Corinthians, ὡς ὅτι is taken in declarative sense (that is) and here, St. Paul is reaffirming and developing what he has just said in verse 18.¹⁴⁷

Secondly, the Greek phrase θεὸς ἦν ἐν χριστῷ κόσμον καταλλάσσειν could be translated in many ways. For instance, “God was in Christ reconciling the world.” The preposition “in” is interpreted locally and “reconciling” is considered as a participle, putting much emphasis on the divine presence of God in Christ, a sense that coheres with the doctrine of the incarnation. But if the verb “was” and the participle “reconciling” are regarded as an imperfect periphrastic (was reconciling), and if “in Christ” is taken adverbially (by means of Christ), then Greek translation would be rendered, “in (or by) Christ God was reconciling the world to himself,” giving the sense that it was by the agency of Christ that God was reconciling the world to himself.¹⁴⁸

Most likely, the implied point of St. Paul’s pleading here is the world (κόσμος, 19), and be reconciled to God is a direct quote of the message that, as an envoy “for Christ” (ὑπὲρ χριστοῦ), St. Paul preaches to the world “on behalf of Christ” (ὑπὲρ

¹⁴⁶ Cf. S. F. WINTER, <https://perswww.kuleuven.be/~u0007546/sbl/Winter.pdf>, accessed on 12/09/2016.

¹⁴⁷ F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 140.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 140.

χριστοῦ). Then, St. Paul's gospel message is an exhortation (5:11) to stop the revolt against God and to appropriate by faith the reconciliation that God has accomplished in Christ.¹⁴⁹

The motive for which God made sinless Christ a replacement for sinners is that in him we might become the righteousness of God. As St. Paul affirmed in the first letter to the Corinthians: "It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God – that is, righteousness, holiness and redemption" (1 Cor 1:30). It is obvious that the righteousness of God comes from him and is bestowed on believers who are in Christ. Godless sinners, who formerly had no righteousness of their own, obtained righteousness in sinless Christ who, by a process of substitution, became a sin offering for them.¹⁵⁰

When St. Paul acknowledged himself as a "minister of a new covenant" (3:6), he now presents himself as an "ambassador for Christ" in whom God appeals, so he once appealed through Christ. The imagery St. Paul chooses here is important, because an ambassador does not represent himself rather the one who sends him. Consequently, the ambassador's message is not his own but belongs to the one he represents. In this matter, "St. Paul represents himself as an ambassador 'for' Christ, which can be construed as 'on behalf of' Christ or 'in place of' Christ, who no longer conducts his earthly ministry of reconciliation. In either case, St. Paul does not represent himself but the one who sent him."¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁹ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 140-141.

¹⁵⁰ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 142.

¹⁵¹ F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 141-142.

God once made an appeal for reconciliation through Christ, and now He continues making an appeal through Christ's ambassador: "on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God" (v. 20). This reconciliation is two-fold. It entails, in the first place, the reconciliation of humanity with God through the instrument of the sacrificial act of Christ; and secondly, the reconciliation St. Paul wishes to establish between himself and the community of Corinth. The reconciliation of St. Paul is an appeal since he is an ambassador of the message of the risen Christ, therefore, the community of Corinth needs not only accept Christ in the message he proclaims but also accept the one who carries this message, that is, in the person of St. Paul. According to St. Paul, the community needs to accept him as an ambassador so that his message to them could find an authentic ground in the community.¹⁵²

2 Cor 5:21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

St. Paul again brings the Corinthians' awareness to what God has done in Christ. This time, he focuses on God's aim that believers "might become the righteousness of God" (5:21). To become God's righteousness presupposes that as God's salvific intentions are made known in Christ, believers are invited to give response to God's offer by opting to live out this righteousness. Thus, a certain moral implication appears to be fixed to the concept of righteousness and this needs to be shown in the life of the believers.¹⁵³

¹⁵² Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 142.

¹⁵³ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 118-119.

Contrasting St. Paul's current attitude of declining to know anyone according to the flesh, he accepts that in the past he did so in view of Christ. Even if we once regarded Christ in this way (according to the flesh), we do so no longer. Formerly, St. Paul wrongly used the same physical criterion to assess Christ as his enemies presently used on him. By his external look, during the time of Jesus the Jews were in a messianic expectation. This situation made Jesus to be identified as one of the many messianic pretenders.¹⁵⁴

From a Jewish perception, based on Deut 21:22-23, Paul the Pharisee saw the crucified messianic pretender as accursed by God. According to Deut 21:23, which St. Paul cites in Gal 3:13: "anyone hung on a tree is under God's curse". Jesus as a failed messiah from the Jewish point of view because he was hanged on the cross, a punishment meant for criminals. As St. Paul's life ebbs from his mortal body in a process of daily dying, the opponents recognize St. Paul in a similar fleshly way as an apostolic pretender. Hence the previous section (2 Cor 4:7-5:15), he had been at pains to show that, despite appearances to the contrary, the evidence points in another direction, precisely because of the resurrection of Christ.¹⁵⁵

It appears that verse 21 carries on the direct quote of St. Paul's message of reconciliation from verse 20, giving, in effect, authentication for the exhortation to be reconciled with God. As in verse 19, the acting subject is God; on the other hand, Christ is the object of the action. Here is the only passage in which St. Paul alludes directly to the sinless Christ, though other passages seem to assume it (Rom 5:19; 8:3; Phil 2:8). St. Paul's account of Christ in our text conforms to a traditional hope of the Messiah, as well

¹⁵⁴ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 142.

¹⁵⁵ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 133-134.

as to the statement about the Suffering Servant of the Lord (Isa 53:9 “for he did no lawlessness” ([ἀνομίαν]).¹⁵⁶

With verse 21 Paul equips the Corinthians with a deep motive to appropriate the reconciliation God offers them: God made the sinless Christ “sin” so that they might become “the righteousness of God.” In this outstanding declaration, St. Paul refers to the “divine interchange” that happened in Christ’s event. In accord with God’s will, Christ assumes our human sinful condition so that we might assume His (Christ’s) righteousness before God.¹⁵⁷

To sum up the exegesis of 2 Cor 5:14-21, it is clear that believers now belong to a “new creation” (5:17), totally new order, wherein cosmic brokenness is restored by the cosmic reconciliation willed and set in motion by God who reconciled us to himself through Christ (cf. 5:18). God accomplishes reconciliation through the action of Christ. God, in Christ, “rights the relationship between all creation and God..., no longer counting believers’ trespasses against them” (cf. 5:19). It is St. Paul’s task to make known God’s reconciling activity in Christ to the Corinthians. On the other hand, he is not only a bearer of a message about a past incident, but through his own ministry; it is “as if God were appealing” (cf. 5:20). St. Paul recognizes himself as an ambassador of God’s continuing work of reconciliation, mediated in the present through his ministry. He petitions the Corinthians to be reconciled to God; this entails reconciliation among Corinthians and with St. Paul, who is God’s minister of reconciliation.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 141.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 142.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 118.

8. Theology and Message of 2 Cor 5:14-21

The text under investigation has profound theology of St. Paul, in as far as his mission and ministry is concerned. The main purpose of St. Paul's apostolic ministry of reconciliation is to win back the Corinthian Christians to God. He also aims at the restoration of their mutual relationship; so as to bring about eternal reconciliation. St. Paul says that on the day of the Lord, the Corinthians should be proud of him as he hopes to be proud of them (cf. 2 Cor 1:14). St. Paul loves the Corinthians sincerely and he claims that even God knows he does (cf. 2 Cor 11:11). He has a strong bond with the Corinthians and this renewed bond between them also implies peace in the community at Corinth (2 Cor 13:11) and, above all, reconciliation with God.¹⁵⁹

The theology of 2 Cor 5:14-21 is very rich and it equipped the Daughters with an insight of St. Paul's understanding of his ministry as an ambassador of Christ who called people to be reconciled to God (5:20). In his ministry, St. Paul reflects on the following on God who accomplished salvation in God's Son, Jesus Christ, in the power of God's Spirit that is always at work within the Church and in his own ministry, and on the moral and ethical implications of what it means for believers to belong to the New Covenant community.¹⁶⁰

In 2 Cor 5:18-19, St. Paul speaks of God reconciling the world to himself through Jesus Christ. In 2 Cor 5:21, he elaborates that Christ who knew no sin, was made a "sinner" by God so that through him all of us might become righteous before God.

¹⁵⁹ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 12.

¹⁶⁰ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 9.

Similarly, he holds that, “though he was rich, yet, for your sakes, he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich” (2 Cor 8:9). We clearly see that Christology occupies the central place in St. Paul’s mind. Furthermore, in 2 Cor 5:18-20, he stresses the reality that God gave and entrusted the ministry of reconciliation to him.¹⁶¹ As a co-worker in the vineyard of God, St. Paul preaches Jesus Christ as Lord (2 Cor 4:5).

St. Paul holds that the God who raises the dead is the same one who has reconciled the world to himself through his Son Jesus Christ (5:18). In order to accomplish this, God effected a divine inter-change, whereby his Son, Jesus Christ, who was sinless, assumed our sinful human condition so that we sinful humanity might experience the righteousness of God (5:20). Therefore, in and through Christ, God has accomplished a renewal of creation so that those who are in Christ become a “new creation” (5:17). The same God who renewed us and forgave us our trespasses (5:19), continues to strengthen us in Christ.¹⁶²

St. Paul also presents himself as a minister and co-worker, as it were, in preaching the reconciliation between Christ and the people; he is God’s ambassador (cf. 2 Cor 5:18-20). In this case, it would be wrong to separate St. Paul’s union with Christ totally from those of other Church leaders, that is past and present missionaries or ministers and pastors that we have in different Christian communities. Therefore, all Christians should regard him as their rightful leader, an example of a genuine spirituality, since in all sincerity he himself goes so far as to invite all of us: “be imitator of me, as I am of Christ”

¹⁶¹ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 12.

¹⁶² Cf. F .J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 10.

(1 Cor 11:1). All of us Christians, are beholding as in a mirror the Lord's glory, and in the Spirit, we are being made new into Christ's image from glory to glory (2 Cor 3:18).¹⁶³

It is God who gave St. Paul the New Covenant ministry of reconciliation (5:18). Consequently, St. Paul views his entire life in relation to God. For instance, his single-hearted commitment and honesty come from God (1:12). God made St. Paul prisoner, but now he leads him in a triumphal procession in which St. Paul manifests God's knowledge (2:14). It is God who qualified St. Paul to be the minister of a New Covenant (3:5), enlightening his hearers with "the knowledge of the glory of God on the face of Jesus Christ" (4:6). It is also God who led St. Paul to come to Corinth.¹⁶⁴

St. Paul came to the realization that he once regarded Christ from the earthly point of view (5:16), but now he had grasped that Christ died for all (5:14-15). It means, Christ died as a spokesperson for all, in order that we might live "for the one who died and rose for them" (5: 15). This was how God reconciled the world to himself (5:18-19) when he made the sinless Christ "sin" so as to make us "the righteousness of God" (5:21).¹⁶⁵

9. Conclusion

This chapter has an analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21, that is, the exegesis of the text. Having investigated the delimitation of the text and explored the views of some scholars, 2 Cor 5: 14 can be considered as the *terminus a quo* of the text. Meanwhile, there are diverse opinions regarding the *terminus ad quem* of the texts. The paper has looked at

¹⁶³ J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 13.

¹⁶⁴ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 10.

¹⁶⁵ Cf. F.J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 11.

different aspects of the text such as the textual criticism, the context of the text, historical setting, the structure of the text and the exegesis which was the main aim of the chapter. In the exegetical analysis, the chapter highlighted St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation as the central theme that connects with the ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love in the contemporary world.

The ministry of reconciliation that St. Paul preached focuses on communicating the value that Corinthian are reconciled with God and made new creatures as a result of Christ's death. The reason for the ministry of reconciliation is God's love that motivates St. Paul to persuade the Corinthian Christians. This brings about a peaceful transformation, justice and secure life which can be an advantage for all. Therefore, the Daughters should work with God in imitation of St. Paul, to be ambassadors of Christ's love in the contemporary world.

Chapter III

Charism of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the Light of 2 Cor 5: 14-21

1. Introduction

This chapter presents an understanding of the charism of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love in the light of 2 Cor 5:14-21. The work focused on revisiting the charism, spirituality, mission, vision and apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love in the light of the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians (Cor 5:14-21). This chapter explores how these scriptural passages shed light on the charism, spirituality, the mission, vision and apostolate of the Congregation. We believe that revisiting the charism of the Congregation will be of great value for the Daughters of Divine Love to have a deeper understanding of their charism.

The charism of the Congregation is the motivating force of the life of the Daughters of Divine Love, and all the members of the congregation strive to give positive response to God's call to love God and the fellow human beings.¹⁶⁶ Generous loving

¹⁶⁶Cf. G. M. P, OKOYE, *Talks to his Daughters* vol. I, 18.

response to Divine Love Incarnate has a central place in the life of the Daughters of Divine Love. Generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate is the key concept that holds together the many facts of whatever the Daughters of Divine Love are doing. Generosity marks every aspect of the life and spirituality of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation.¹⁶⁷

Love has many qualities, including zeal, mercy and generosity. Generosity is an important quality of love. It is the spirit of unbounded donation of oneself, a donation that is complete and untainted, with no half-measures and no calculation or counting the cost of sacrifice. His Divine Love for humanity spurred God right from the beginning to create and provide for all creation. His mandate to us is to love one another as he himself has loved us; their vocation is a practical response to this mandate (John 15:12).¹⁶⁸

2. The Charism of the Congregation in the Light of 2 Cor 5:14-21

The Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine love spells out the charism of the institute as “Generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate”.¹⁶⁹ The charism can be seen in the light of what of St. Paul says in 2 Cor 5:15 :(*And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them*). This passage of the text invites every Daughter of Divine Love to a deeper understanding of the kind of love which is expressed in a generous way as a

¹⁶⁷ Constitutions of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, 1.

¹⁶⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Love One Another As I Have Loved You*, 3.

¹⁶⁹ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, art. 2, § i.

response to what is shown by the Incarnate Word, who lavished his love on humanity. This love has been demonstrated explicitly in Christ's death on the cross. Certainly, "God shows his love for us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom 5:8; Gal 2:20). It is this love of Christ which determines who the Daughters are, and what they do.¹⁷⁰

2 Cor 5:15 creates an awareness that the Daughters participate in Christ and so what happens to Christ, happens to them all. The Daughters of Divine Love are thereby called to this participatory work of redemption. In order that they may render their services to the Lord and humanity, the Daughters take part in the reality of Christ's event: in Christ's life, in his death and resurrection. This awareness permeates every other response of the Daughters to God's love.¹⁷¹

Therefore, the Daughters are called to rekindle in the whole Congregation, Church and Society the fire of the unconditional love of Jesus. It is Christ's love for us that urges the members to love others and to render their services to them. The Daughters need greater zeal to show the world the love of God as their founder commanded them. The members of this institute are to draw this love from God and dispense it to the world through their lives and ministry¹⁷²

The phrase "generous response" could be understood as a response equal to the love the Daughters have received from God through their charism. The Daughters of Divine Love Congregation are founded "to make a return of love for love".¹⁷³ They are

¹⁷⁰ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 5.

¹⁷¹ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision*, 25.

¹⁷² Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Okoye vision*, 27.

¹⁷³ Daughters of Divine Love, *Manual of Prayers*, 35.

to restore situations of hatred, not by making long speeches or calling a round table conference, but by dying to self, which is through self-renouncement, and self-abnegation. In this way, the Daughters can say: “and it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal 2:20).¹⁷⁴

The Daughters called through their charism, give witness to this love of God by the sharing of love they extend to one another as Christ loves. The Lord’s command to love ones neighbor as God loves us is more demanding than the Lord’s command to love my neighbor as I love myself (Matt 22:39). God loves us so much that he daily gives us everything that is good beyond our merit. God is good, therefore the members are called to imitate God’s goodness and love.¹⁷⁵

Perhaps, before thinking about these higher forms of love, the Daughters of Divine Love are called by their charism to remember the old saying: “Charity begins at home.” Unless the Daughters know and experience love in the community in which they live, they cannot spread that love to the outside world because one cannot give what one does not have.¹⁷⁶ It is good that the Daughters should examine their lives to see whether their love is like that of Christ: kind, generous, compassionate, condescending and forgiving. The charism of the Daughters demands that, this is the type of love the Daughters are to practice, the kind of love that Christ showed and exhibited towards sinners.¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁴ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 123.

¹⁷⁵ Cf. C. U. OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 1.

¹⁷⁶ Cf. .G. M. P. OKOYE, *The Works of Bishop Okoye*, 308.

¹⁷⁷ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 21.

A careful reading of 2 Cor 5:15 shows us how Christ's love for us drew him to self-emptying redemptive service, and it is this self-emptying redemptive service that the Daughters should offer. Therefore, the Daughters of Divine Love are urged to empty themselves of their little ego, like a tube from which every air has been blown out and then to fill themselves with the life of Christ which is redemptive.¹⁷⁸

Christ's love for humanity, urged him to sacrifice himself for us; it drew him to self-emptying redemptive service (Phil 2:7), to immolate himself and suffered greatly for the sake of love. He forgave all his enemies, showing them kindness and love. So the Daughters of Divine Love are called by their charism, to give response to this love of Christ, especially imitating how he loved his enemies and had compassion for them.¹⁷⁹

The mystery of the Incarnation is the event of God, which every Daughter is invited to understand and live out in daily life. The incarnation is the entry of God into the world of labor, suffering, disappointment, frustration and sacrifice, but also of joy and hope. The love, by which the Congregation is known, is the generous and ardent loving response to the divine Love incarnated in Christ. Generosity as defined by Bishop Okoye is an extended favour to do more than one is asked for or expected to do without giving half measures. This means that the offering of oneself must be generous, whole and entire.

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The incarnation is also the self-humiliating love of God for human beings, whose depth is baffling and terrifying.¹⁸¹ St. Paul says: "he emptied himself" of his godhead and

¹⁷⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *retreat conferences*, 21.

¹⁷⁹ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 19.

¹⁸⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Information Splash*, 15.

¹⁸¹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 55.

assumed the condition of a slave (Phil 2:7). A slave is the lowest grade in the social classification of human beings. St. Paul described Jesus' work as a ministry of slavery. "He emptied himself" describes that kind of love which moved God to be incarnated in order to become man and then suffer and die and rise again for us. In order to describe the depth and power of this love: "he died for all; that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised" (2 Cor 5:15).¹⁸²

Consequently, the love of Christ as it is found in God himself and as it is incarnated in our Lord Jesus Christ... drew him to sacrifice himself for humanity. He also forgave all his enemies and showed them kindness and love. All that love is what the Daughters of Divine Love are called upon to give adequate response to, which is revealed in the mystery of the incarnation, thereby paying love for love. So this love of Christ which should continue in the world in the power of his Spirit, urges the Daughters on to express this charism in a convincing way.¹⁸³

For the Daughters to give generous response to this love, it means that, their love must be like that of Christ, having the qualities of self-emptying, condescending, and compassionate in nature as well as forgiving. These are the qualities that make the Daughters' response to God's divine love a redemptive service. Generosity is the hallmark of the Daughters' response to God's love for humanity. The Daughters generous response must be fervent and passionate, it should be blazing like fire, burning intensely.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸² Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 57.

¹⁸³ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, art. 2, § ii.

¹⁸⁴ Cf. .G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 20.

Besides, the love of Christ which is continuing in this world through his Spirit is what moves the Daughters to love divinely. The members are called through their charism, to have good will towards others. However, the Daughters in loving response to Divine Love, strive to render services to humanity. Generous loving response to Divine love is not just a mere word, it demands love in action. This demand comes in terms of services, time, harmonious living, courageous effort and sacrifice. The charism of the Daughters is consequently a gift of the love of Christ that empowers them to offer genuine services to their neighbors.¹⁸⁵

3. The Spirituality of the Congregation in the Light of 2 Cor 5:14-21

The essence of this spirituality is identification with Jesus Christ. The Spirituality of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love is “Divine Love in action, expressed in the contemplation of God, deep fraternal love and apostolic action”.¹⁸⁶

This spirituality of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love can be identified in the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:16-17. Here, St. Paul demonstrates how Christ’s love has changed his attitude in making personal judgments based only on human considerations and on external looks. He no longer understands other people according to the values and standards of the world, rather he understands them in their spiritual status. On the other hand, living in accordance to the flesh would imply adapting to the ways and standards of the world. St. Paul evaluates everything

¹⁸⁵ Cf. C. U. OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 2.

¹⁸⁶ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, art. 3, § i.

through the eyes of Christ; because we are in Christ, taking part in his death and resurrection, the Daughters ought to see people with the new lenses of the Gospel.¹⁸⁷

In addition, identification with Jesus Christ is also to behave like Jesus by doing what he did on earth, so that other men and women may see Christ in them (the Daughters). This identification with Jesus Christ cannot be achieved without the virtue of generosity. Generosity and love led Christ to empty himself, in order to do the will of his Father. The Daughters of Divine Love can achieve this desired union with Christ through their way of generosity¹⁸⁸ In other words, the spirituality of the Congregation provides a new kind of knowledge and new worldview of no longer judging people according to worldly standards. The Daughters ought to see their fellow human beings as the Father in the story of the Prodigal Son, waiting for his son to return (Luke 15:11-32). This reminds the Daughters of Divine Love that Christ died for all, including wicked people who do more harm than good. Therefore, their hearts are not be filled with anger and hatred even for those who do evil to us. This parable of the Prodigal Son describes the extraordinary love for the lost (Luke 15:20).¹⁸⁹

St. Paul is concerned that those whom Christ has reconciled in himself ought not to be divided, and that community life should be the first and foremost expression of God's plan to reconcile all things. St. Paul foresees the unity of not only Jew and Gentile, but also of slave and free, male and female, in Christ (Gal 3:28). Therefore, the Daughters need the ecumenical movement of the Cross, because through the Cross of Christ the

¹⁸⁷ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 46.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.2, 149.

¹⁸⁹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 47.

members can be reconciled and be united, sharing the burdens of life and the cross each one of us has to carry.¹⁹⁰

If the Daughters want to have a deeper understanding of this spirituality, they need to read it within the context of the biblical text from where it is taken. “From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way” (2 Cor 5:16). This could be rightly translated as Divine Love in action, expressed in the contemplation of God, deep fraternal love and apostolic action. Christ’s love for us moved him to action.

According to St. Paul’s theology, if we are “in Christ,” we are a new creation (2 Cor 5:17). This means that we are now under-Christ and we are Christ’s representatives. In order to live out in their daily lives, the spirituality of the Congregation, the Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love gives expression to the identity of the Daughters as: “the images of the Father.”¹⁹¹ This could mean that the Daughters are representing another reality. As the images of the Father, the Daughters are called by their charism, to be representatives of God on earth. The Daughters not only participate and cooperate with God’s power to renew and reconcile the world, but also to proclaim God’s power to renew and reconcile humanity to God.¹⁹²

The Daughters of Divine Love should see the need to withstand and to pray against narrow-mindedness, so that they may see and judge things and peoples as God sees and judges them. This is in line with what St. Paul says in v.16, that, we should no

¹⁹⁰ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 10.

¹⁹¹ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, art. 2, §ii.

¹⁹² Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 124.

longer regards anyone according to the flesh, for Christ's self-emptying love is the basis of reconciliation and unity for all. It is through Christ's love, and through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, that the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love was brought into being. Thus, the Divine Love should be the Daughters' criterion of acting and judging.¹⁹³

It is most important that the Daughters grasp this divine plan of judging not according to human standard but according to the eyes of God, so that they may be pulling in the same direction as God had planned for them and not in an uncertainty as one beating the air. The Daughters' greatest effort therefore is to know this Divine plan and follow it exactly for the salvation of the world.¹⁹⁴ The image the members to display to the world is that of motherly attentiveness of Mary for all God's children.¹⁹⁵

The new creation (5:17) in which, according to St. Paul, the believers participate, is from God, because it was God who first took the initiative in Christ to reconcile us to himself, not counting their sins against them. Having reconciled us, God entrusted to us the message of reconciliation, so that, by extension, through Daughters of Divine Love, others may be reconciled to Christ. Thus, the Daughters' vocation to this ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ is a way to sum up all things in Christ (Eph 1:10).¹⁹⁶

In addition, the spirituality of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love consist in the identification with Jesus Christ. This spirituality of the Congregation also

¹⁹³ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 10-13.

¹⁹⁴ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 11.

¹⁹⁵ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 28.

¹⁹⁶ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *retreat conferences*, 25.

imitates another dimension of the ministry of Jesus; that is the ministry of presence. An important element about Jesus' preaching is the fact that his message was not only expressed verbally but truly lived out through his love in action. Jesus did what he preached. His integrity did not allow him to say one thing and do the other.¹⁹⁷

Therefore, the vocation of the Daughters compels them to love other people as God loves them. The first letter of St. John tells us what this love means: "love has been perfected among us in this... because as he is, so are we in this world" (1John 4:17). The spirituality of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love consists in being images of the Father in this world, and having the same vision and values of God for the world, in imitating him in his actions and therefore in loving as God loves.¹⁹⁸

4. The Vision Statement of the Congregation

In line with 2 Cor 5:14-15, the vision statement of the Congregation is spelled out as "impelled by the gospel of Christ and the spirit of our founder are called to a courageous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate in contemplation, harmonious community living and apostolic action made visible in selfless liberating service to the entire creation".¹⁹⁹ Christ proclaims salvation, the boundless gift of God which is liberation from all that oppresses life. It is a gift that brings both healing and reconciliation, as well as forgiveness of sin, in the joy of knowing God and being known by him.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁷ Cf. D. GOERGEN, *The power of love*, 141.

¹⁹⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *retreat conferences*, 29.

¹⁹⁹ Daughters of Divine Love, *Acts of 6TH General Chapter*, 1.

²⁰⁰ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, x.

In this passages (2 Cor 5:14-15), St. Paul explains how he might not do anything else than to serve Christ. Likewise, the Daughters are thus called by their vision statement to render active services to God and to their fellow human beings, witnessing to their love for God and humanity. This generous loving response always goes with action of divine love and service. The Daughters are called by their charism to live sincerely a life of practical love in their relationship with their fellow men and women through their honest liberating services, work and the help they render to humanity.²⁰¹

This contemplation, harmonious community living and apostolic action made visible in selfless liberating service to humanity must be manifested in the way the members of the Congregation live their lives of prayer, contemplation of God, fraternal love and the services and work they render to humanity. The sacrifices the Daughters make and offer for the progress and development of their fellow human beings, and the society at large, are mark of love of Christ which urges them on. As a result, “loving heart and attitude” is indispensable for a faithful response to the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love. The Love of Christ is to urge the Daughters to respond to God’s call to love, strive to love their neighbor, and live a holy life in their witness through the services they render to their neighbors. Divine Love in action is experienced in prayer life, community relationships and in ministry, such as helping and serving the indigent poor according to the mind of God.²⁰²

As Daughters of Divine Love, they are expected to care for those who are in need by being present to them, give them words of encouragement to them. This shows that

²⁰¹ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 3.

²⁰² Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish* 9.

there must be no limit to our love and forgiveness, no matter the numerous wrongs inflicted on us.²⁰³ It is this act of selfless service that makes them share in the divine life of God; charity to our fellow human beings makes us become like God for “God is Love” (1 John 4:8). F. Cuttaz affirms that if someone chooses to define holiness as an intense love of God and of Christ, it will also be true to say that holiness involves a passionate love of one’s neighbour.²⁰⁴

The Daughters believed that if love genuinely returns to the hearts of people and starts determining their words and deeds, many of the injustices, wars and all sorts of inhumanity will be a thing of the past. Divine Love is marked by tenderness, sympathy, goodness, charity, forgiveness, humility, kindness, sacrifice, compassion, justice, peace and selfless services to all.²⁰⁵ So, The Daughters’ response must be a generous response to God’s call to love.²⁰⁶

5. The Mission of the Congregation in the Light of 2 Cor 5:14-21

Some of the essential determinants of the identity of a person include social and environmental factors. The environment in which one is born and bred determines to some extent the mission of the person. Bishop Okoye considered this an essential factor for explaining the identity of the Daughters of Divine Love. The Daughters of Divine Love were born in the midst of the agonizing suffering of a most ravaging war, a war

²⁰³ Cf. J. PAULS, *A Spirituality of Compassion*, 31.

²⁰⁴ Cf. F. Cuttaz, *Fraternal Charity*, 52.

²⁰⁵ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Splash*, 37.

²⁰⁶ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *retreat conferences*, 20.

caused by hatred and ethnic division. This social circumstance of their birth gave them a mission and in the Church.²⁰⁷

The mission statement of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love as stipulated in the Constitution of the Congregation is enshrined in 2 Cor 5:18, as “the Daughters of Divine Love are called to show Divine Love to the world.”²⁰⁸ The Daughters only motivation for mission is love. They are to be known in a special manner for their love of God and love of neighbor, rooted and grounded in love. Thus, the motto of the Congregation explains the underlying reason why they go for mission.²⁰⁹

St. Paul’s ministry (cf. 2 Cor 5:18) could be understood as a ministry of reconciliation of the Corinthians with the generous love of Christ, given gratuitously. Thus, the ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ that brings peace is essential element of the Daughters’ mission. This ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ requires a spirituality that forms the key attitudes of Jesus, especially the one having to do with his incarnation. It is that humiliation and the love that moved him to be incarnate and became man and then suffer and die and rise again for us. This is what the Daughters of Divine Love are called upon to give response to; the love of God as it is incarnated in Our Lord Jesus Christ.²¹⁰

Furthermore, the mission of Jesus Christ is to reconcile us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor 5: 18). St. Thomas Aquinas said that it is fitting that the God-man should reconcile man to God. The Daughters of Divine Love continue this

²⁰⁷ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, *Founder’s Preface*, §1, v.

²⁰⁸ Daughters of Divine Love, *Acts of 6th General Chapter*, 1-2.

²⁰⁹ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye’s Vision Today*, 23.

²¹⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Splash*, 13.

ongoing reconciliation in the entire creation through their work. It is the love of Christ that propels the Daughters of Divine Love to carry on this special mission of manifesting Divine Love to the world. Christ mandate to the Daughters is to love one another as he himself has loved us. Therefore, it is the practical response to this mandate of Christ that the Daughters must manifest in concrete deeds in dealing with others in the society.²¹¹

The mission of the Daughters is to bring the good news of Christ into all the corners of the world and through its influence transform humanity and the whole world. “So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation” (2 Cor 5:17); a new creation and humanity renewed by baptism and by lives lived according to the gospel.²¹² This mission was entrusted to them in love by their Founder Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Definitely, the mission of the Congregation is not just to work for the world in the church but to stand out as a model of what God wants his people to be. The Daughters are to have and spread joy in their apostolic work. They are to be carriers of joy among the people of God without discrimination.²¹³

The Daughters’ mission and concern is to show Divine Love to the world by spreading joy and rekindling the earth with the fire of the Spirit of love. Knowing the real love of Christ means more than simply going through the actions of being a Christian. It is receiving the heart of God and showing the heart of God to others in the experience

²¹¹ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Truly Human, Truly Divine*, 6.

²¹² Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, x.

²¹³ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *The works of Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye*, 7.

of both giving and receiving love. The role of the Daughters of Divine Love as harbingers of joy to the people is an essential element of their very vocation as religious.²¹⁴

The services they render to humanity here on earth has eternal implications, and it is God's desire for their hearts to be open to Him so that their behavior may be in line with the reality of who we are in Christ as the images of the Father.²¹⁵

St. Paul states that because he knows the fear of the Lord (2 Cor 5:11), "we persuade men". St. Paul is confident that his ministry is approved by God and that he will one day stand before him to give an account for his teaching and his actions. This idea of "fear of the Lord" as a motivating factor would also be of great help to the Daughters of Divine Love to give an ardent response to a call to love God and the fellow human beings with the Spirit of Christ.²¹⁶

Therefore, as an ambassador of Christ's Love to humanity, the Daughters of Divine Love are called to carry this message of love to the ends of the earth. The members of this institutes embark on converting the world with a wide embracing charity, The Daughters must start this by showing true love towards those around them. Then this Divine Love will extend itself beyond the narrow borders of the community.²¹⁷

The members are to commemorate and to make always alive, their mission through witness to faith as did St. Paul in 2 Cor 5:14. The Daughters of Divine Love are to be known by their deep fraternal and unconditional love for all God's people. Where there is hatred and division, they are to bear witness to God's own way of loving, loving

²¹⁴ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 84.

²¹⁵ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 29.

²¹⁶ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol. 2, 10.

²¹⁷ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 19.

without conditions and without boundary. Thus, the Daughters are called to rekindle in the Congregation, Church and society the fire of the unconditional love of Jesus.²¹⁸

Gen 1:27 teaches us that we are created to resemble God because God made us in his own image and likeness. Similarly, Jesus Christ invites us in Matt 5:48 to set no bounds to their love, just as their heavenly Father sets none to his. Equally, the Daughters of Divine Love are called to commemorate the infinite love and mercy of God, the Daughters are to be known primarily by their love for God and love for others; just as God loves them. Jesus already left an injunction for us in the Gospel of St. John when he says: “By this the world will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-3).

Furthermore, the Daughters of Divine Love are to bear witness to the generous love of God through loving responses they give to the needs of other people. To act otherwise is to fail in their charism and to fail in God’s call to become Daughters of Divine Love. Generous loving response to Divine Love incarnate is the DNA of the Daughters’ heritage and breath of life. The Daughters are called to find avenues of improving their generosity-style. In their daily effort to bear witness to God, the Daughters must realize that the things that matter most in their lives are not the grand and fantastic things they achieve, but the little ways in which they manifest this divine love.

6. The Apostolate of the Congregation in the Light of 2 Cor 5:14-21

The message of Christ is that of love and reconciliation. There is nothing that can be of more important in the world than this message of love and reconciliation. Jesus

²¹⁸ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 119.

taught us to express it as the coming of the kingdom of God. Reconciliation is not a human achievement. It is God reconciling the two himself through Christ. God was turning the bad situations of humanity into good so that his kingdom that was preached may come and his will be done on earth as it is in heaven.²¹⁹

St. Paul gives us some explanation in his understandings of the love of God as described in verse 5:18. In this passage, St. Paul reveals his love for them in his appeal for the Corinthians to be reconciled to God because God reconciled us to himself through Christ. In verse 5:19 he reaffirms the idea of 5:18, expounding on the effect of reconciliation. God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting the sins of humanity against them. Not only has God reconciled us to himself, but God also gave us a ministry of reconciliation. He made us his ambassadors for making peace.²²⁰

Therefore, the experience of divisions, hatred, conflicts, and various forms of discrimination, violence and wars during which the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love was born compels the Daughters of Divine Love more, not only to be a sign of reconciliation to a divided humanity, but above all, to devote themselves more effectively to the work of reconciliation. Just as God took the initiative to reconcile humanity to himself, the Daughters of Divine Love are encouraged to do likewise. They should to offer peace. Hence, the love of Christ should be the motivating element that prompts all what the Daughters do.²²¹

The outcome to this insight provides a motivation toward a spirituality of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ. If God is indeed the author of all

²¹⁹ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 10.

²²⁰ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 11.

²²¹ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol. 2, 325.

reconciliation, then, the Daughters of Divine Love will be active messengers and ministers of reconciliation, to the extent that they live a life that are in deep communion with God. So, the members of the Congregation need to seek out spiritual disciplines that will facilitate and sustain such deep communion and depend on God in order to attend more closely, not only to God, but also to the situations crying out for reconciliation.²²²

Apostolic service is an inherent part of religious life for the Daughters of Divine Love.²²³ The Daughters' love of Christ includes sharing in the work that Christ came on earth to do. The Gospel of St. John gives the description of this apostolic service when it referred to what Jesus said: "as the father has sent me, so I also send you" (20:21). If one says he/she loves Jesus, he/she must do his work. The Daughters cannot fold their arms and say Dear Jesus we love you and do nothing while his work is not done. So, the Daughters of Divine Love must make themselves one of those he has sent to carry on the work of his father on earth. This apostolic service is a part of their religious life.²²⁴

The Daughters' entire religious life should be permeated by an apostolic spirit.²²⁵ This means that the spirit of the apostles should permeate their whole religious life. In that way, the Daughters' worship God in everything they do; their life becomes like a continual gift of the self to God. It was Bishop Okoye's vision that anywhere the manifestation of God's love is needed this becomes an apostolate for the Daughters of Divine Love. Thus, the Daughters are not limited to any particular type of apostolate.²²⁶

²²² Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 15.

²²³ Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, 50.

²²⁴ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 173.

²²⁵ *Perfecta Caristas*, 8.

²²⁶ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 20.

As a result, all works of life that need touch of love are open to the Daughters' ministry such as being: teachers, lawyers, catechists, pastoral assistance, spiritual directresses for men, women, youths and children, theologians, philosophers, reconcilers (v. 19) and so on. They work hard in all these spheres of life without being boastful or conceited.²²⁷

All of these apostolates/ministries, however good, will still fail in times of testing, trials and tribulations if they are not rooted and grounded in love. The only motivation that will sustain this ministry is the love of Christ. Moreover, it is not what a Daughter does or in what career/profession she has that matters. What really strikes the cord is the intention, the spirit with which she does things. That is doing all things impelled by the love of Christ as St. Paul expressed in verse 14.²²⁸

Inspired by Christ's own love and in return seeking to love others as Christ loves them, the Daughters of Divine Love will labor unremittingly to bring Christ's redemptive action to the lives of men and women today. Not only by their words, but by their style of life based on divine love. The Daughters are called by their charism to teach the truth of the Gospel, to persuade men and women to live by the norms that Christ gave, and to bring them in touch with Christ's grace through the sacramental encounter with his Church. The Daughters are to live what they preach, namely the Gospel. What we do, how we live, how we act, and especially the life of love that we show to others touches people more than words.²²⁹

²²⁷ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 21.

²²⁸ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 22.

²²⁹ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 173.

It is love that will draw them to Christ. So, by word and example the Daughters will bring people to live by the norms that Christ gave them. Living in harmony with what we believe is powerful witness to Christ. In line with this, the Founder, Bishop Okoye stated, when he made the following statement:

“Abalum unu (I gave you the name) Daughters of Divine Love. What is necessary? Gi bulu ifunanya (you should have love), plenty of love in doing all these things for Jesus and they will sanctify you. It is love that inflames and forms all their actions, big and small, all our sufferings, big and small. It is that love that matters. It is through that love that they reach perfection. And we must beg the heart of Jesus incessantly to inflame us with his own love and form all their actions and sufferings with his own love. ife obuna iga eme, k’obulu ifunanya Jesus (whatever you do, do it for love of Jesus). So that all these services we render to humanity will transform us in Jesus. Therefore, ife nine in’eme, (whatever you are doing) eating, sleeping and so on, it is the love of Jesus that pushes you on”.²³⁰

The apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love consists primarily in the witness of their consecrated life to Divine Love hence their entire religious life is permeated by an apostolic spirit inspired by Christ’s love. Divine Love is known to have no limits.²³¹

The Daughters are agents of reconciliation by moving from one place to another in order to render services to humanity and by spreading Divine Love to the entire creation. This they do through their communication and services to the rich, the poor, the needy and widows and orphans in the society. It is through the Daughters’ commitment to the poor and the marginalized, that healing can begin. It can be understood as God’s restoring to victims the humanity that has been wrested from them by acts of injustice and wrongdoing. The Daughters of Divine Love Congregation strongly believe that all human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (cf. Gen 1:26-27). Treating them as less than being made in the image and likeness of God takes away a portion of

²³⁰ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Information Splash*, 28.

²³¹ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye’s Vision Today*, 20.

their humanity.²³² They must truly feel and experience Divine Love in action through the ministry of reconciliation and the services they render them. Their readiness to help and serve is the key element in their love to one another.²³³

Generosity is the key to all apostolic endeavors. In the words of Bishop Okoye, “be good to people, treat others with much kindness.”²³⁴ This is because God, through Christ, was kind, generous and tender to us. In imitation of God, the Daughters also should be kind, generous and tender to fellow Daughters of Divine Love and to the others.²³⁵ In the apostolate, the Daughters are called to carry the peace and generosity of God to others as they teach them the word and life of God. The Daughters are called to show God’s kindness to others in their words and actions, so that people may recognize the limitations of their own ways and resolve to follow the way of God. Generosity is the key to successful apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love.²³⁶

In the apostolate of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, generosity entails self-sacrifice, availability in service, docility, self-giving, detachment and orientation towards their fellow human beings. It is an aspect of Christian large-heartedness where everybody has a room in one’s heart, loving service without rancor, or meanness, and no animosity against anybody. Generosity characterizes their relationship with other people. Whatever they do, however they feel, whatever they experience, all the time, they live for God and for humanity. A Christian lifestyle means: living for God

²³² Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 16.

²³³ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 175.

²³⁴ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 43.

²³⁵ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 44.

²³⁶ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 91.

and living for other people. We do this, because the love that Christ showed for us, controls us. Because he so much loved us, we live for God and for other people.²³⁷

The Daughters of Divine Love Congregation have a mission, which is aligned with the mission of Christ, to witness and to reconcile the humanity with the love of God. In line with the mission of Christ, who reconciled humanity with God, the Daughters carry out the same mission today, reconciling humanity with God and with one another. The healing the members of the Congregation brought about in the reconciliation process is the restoration of that humanity; a restoration that can equally result in their offering forgiveness to those who wrong them, even if the offenders have not repented. Because such forgiveness does not forgive wrongdoing.²³⁸ It implies that in whatever circumstances the Daughters are as a Congregation, they should never fall away from the mission of Christian proclamation. The Daughters make this reconciliation real and present to today's humanity.²³⁹

7. Conclusion

This chapter examined the charism, spirituality, the apostolate, mission and vision of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation in the light of 2 Cor 5: 14-21. This text gives very helpful insights into the life and ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love. It also shows some of the principles that made St. Paul a good ambassador of Christ. This text also reminds the Daughters of Divine Love of their call to love God generously

²³⁷ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 92.

²³⁸ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 16-17.

²³⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, No. 8.

through their union with him, which is expressed in prayer and selfless service of others. Although, in their efforts to live out their life as Daughters of Divine Love, they may encounter obstacles of various types, just like that of St. Paul did, the Daughters should go on and make the presence and the love of Christ felt. The Daughters should strive daily to discover better ways of improving their capacity for responding generously to God's love.

Chapter IV

Application of 2 Cor 5: 14-21 to the Lives of the Daughters

1. Introduction

This chapter explores the application of 2 Cor 5:14-21 to the lives and ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. It addresses how the Daughters express the love for Christ in dying to self, how the love for Christ is expressed in a life dedicated to Christ alone as personal choice in response to God's love. Love for Christ needs to be expressed in the ministry of reconciliation and other aspects of Divine Love need to be manifested in their daily life.

2. Love for Christ Expressed in Dying to Oneself

The Christian vocation is a call to charity; a call to live for the other in a way of abandoning oneself for the other. The extreme phase of love is expressed when one gives themselves without reservation for the love of the other. This attitude is a virtue exemplified in the entire paschal mystery of Christ. "And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them" (2 Cor 5:15). St. Paul in his second letter to the church in Corinth identified the

extent to which Christ loved us through his total willingness unto the cross. For St. Paul, the cross of Christ was essential for Christian life, particularly as the means by which God provides salvation that is as a new life in Christ.²⁴⁰

Love for Christ expressed in dying to oneself is the most important aspect of spiritual life of the Daughters of Divine Love. By taking upon the cross, Christ shows the extent he abandoned himself to the Father's will and in return the intense relationship he has with humanity. A greater love has no one than to lay down his life for the other (John 15:13). This is what St. Paul emphasizes when he proclaimed to the Philippians: "for me to die is gain" (Phil 1:21). Paul has come to the in-depth understanding of the love of Christ and this propels him to also give his life for his mission. This message is true and is in consonance with Our Lord's own words that he who saves his life will lose it and he who loses his life for his sake will save it (Matt 16: 24). Love drew Christ to the point of losing himself and his life so that he can gain it in his resurrection. Therefore, self-renouncement is a way of life and an expression of love which every Daughter must to follow.²⁴¹

Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye, founder of the Daughters of Divine Love, at the very beginning of his talks to his Daughters on the 21st October 1973, started off with the caption "Jesus sets his face steadfastly to go to Jerusalem to be killed" (Luke 9:51). This caption simply means that the day a Daughter decided to join the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, she has handed over her entire life, setting out on a journey

²⁴⁰ Cf. J. B. GREEN, *Death of Christ*, 34-39.

²⁴¹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 81.

towards Jerusalem, to be immolated there for the sake of Christ in her daily life out of her love for Christ.²⁴²

Jerusalem for the Daughters is the mission which they embark upon. A mission by which through their incorporation in the mission of the Church they portray the love of Christ by giving up their lives in the service of humanity. The total giving of Daughters, according to the charism of their founder is paramount in exhibiting this greater love of Christ. By their religious profession, the Daughters too have steadfastly set their face towards the great step of life. By their vows they have been immolated, killed with Christ, in Christ, for Christ, and for humanity. Their life is always a symbol of the love thought by Christ on the cross.²⁴³

Consequently, the love for Christ compels the Daughters to deny themselves for Christ's sake. They abandon themselves to God to be used according to his will. The Daughters live the life of a sacrificial victim out of love for Christ and of their own free will. Each Daughter loses her life for Christ's sake, so that God could use her as he wants. It implies that the Daughters of Divine Love have sacrificed themselves for their love for Christ. They live for the love of Christ expressed in dying to oneself. The Daughters of Divine Love accept to do God's will at all times and in all circumstances, leaving their own will and doing only what God wants. Often times, the will of God does not seem to be pleasant and sweet. It is painful, but has a greater end of joy and happiness in the Lord. This urges the Daughters to live out their consecrated life joyfully.²⁴⁴

²⁴² Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 1.

²⁴³ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 2.

²⁴⁴ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 76.

However, in order to live a meaningful life of renunciation, a life expressed in dying to oneself for the love of Christ is an expression of charity. The Daughters always prefer to suffer want as a way of dying to oneself so that they can be available for Christ. They have learnt how to manage the little resources at their disposal, even bearing joyfully and patiently the lack of comfortable amenities. The Daughters do not seek to have everything of their own. In all these, they bear the cross of Christ so as to control their sinful passions. In addition to that, they practice Divine Love even when it is inconvenient to do so. The Daughters recognize the needs of the needy and distressed around them. They do this, through provision of sponsorship of the brilliant but needy students around their neighborhood. For the families close to them, they periodically supply food stuffs and other necessary amenities. They equally open their hearts and doors to the homeless and orphans for their Love for Christ”.²⁴⁵

Jesus sees dying to oneself as one of the qualities of a good disciple when he stresses: “If anyone wishes to come after me, he/she must deny him/herself, and take up his cross and follow me” (Matt 16:24). Dying to oneself as expressed in love for Christ, is a positive aspect of life in which every daughter engages with their whole heart.²⁴⁶ In dying to oneself, the Daughters of Divine Love discover the abundant life by being reliant on God, who provides more than they can even imagine (Eph 3:20). In his *kerygma*, Jesus puts it this way: “Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit” (John 12:24; Gal 5:22-23). “Dying to self” is being physically alive but with complete self-renunciation for the love for Christ.²⁴⁷

²⁴⁵ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 79.

²⁴⁶ Cf. D. M. HOFFMAN, *Living Divine Love*, 101.

²⁴⁷ Cf. G.M.P. Okoye, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol 1, 1-2.

Therefore, the Daughters of Divine Love expresses their dying to oneself as they put aside their wants and desires and concentrates more on loving God and their fellow human beings (Matt 22:37-39). This enables them to move away from “self-centeredness” and make them more open as ambassadors of Christ who bring God’s love and reconciliation to humanity.²⁴⁸

The charism of the institute as “generous loving response to Divine love Incarnate”²⁴⁹ invites every Daughter of Divine Love to a kind of love which is expressed in dying to oneself as a response to what is shown from the Incarnate Word. It is this love for Christ that determines who the Daughters are. It is also the same love that draws them to seek souls for Christ through home visitation and hospital apostolate.²⁵⁰

St. Paul in 2 Cor 5:14-21 shows us how Christ’s love for us drew him to self-emptying as a way to redemptive service to humanity. The love of Christ held St. Paul fast, and it became the determining aspect in his entire life.²⁵¹ Humanity is the beneficiary of this act of Christ. All who follow Christ are called in their own special situation and service to contribute to the growth of the Church. The Daughters of Divine Love are a living example to this call. They attest to this call by their act of charity extended in a form of compassion to humanity.²⁵²

In addition, the Daughters of Divine Love are compassionate not only because it is the right thing to do but also because they believe in the special power of love which

²⁴⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Vision Today*, 9.

²⁴⁹ *Constitution of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love*, art. 2, § i.

²⁵⁰ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.1, 5.

²⁵¹ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 94.

²⁵² Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 21.

overcomes hatred and discrimination in the contemporary society.²⁵³ The world today is filled with individualism and self-centeredness and as a result, people are not drawn to the other in term of solidarity. There is this slogan of “me and myself” attitude. The other is insignificant so long as I get what I want. One of the social principles of the Church on solidarity calls the Daughters of Divine Love to extend this solidarity towards others. The Daughters are in solidarity with the brothers and sisters who have less than they do. The virtue of compassion in the life of the Daughters, discovers the lacks and wants of life in the society in order to enrich it. For the Daughters, every life situation needs compassion to sustain, to improve or to repair it. Divine Love is the motivating factor in all their witnesses to Christ.²⁵⁴

According to St. Paul, Christ suffering was a preparation for the final transformation to glory at the resurrection of the body (2 Cor 4:7-5:10). The Daughters life and action tread the same part to death through their humble service to the society. As the ministers of a New Covenant, the Daughters of Divine Love proclaim the good news to humanity through teaching of catechesis to the young and old as a way of contribution to the growth of faith.²⁵⁵

Dying to oneself according to the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love involves being motivated by love for Christ.²⁵⁶ St. Paul’s main concern was to remind the Corinthians about the death of Christ for all people. He held that all believers owe their

²⁵³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Dives Misericordia*, 4.

²⁵⁴ Cf. J. LAMBRECHT, *Second Corinthians*, 94.

²⁵⁵ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 126.

²⁵⁶ Cf. M. E. THRALL, *2 Corinthians 1–7*, 400.

new life to Christ.²⁵⁷ Therefore, the Daughters mold their lives after Christ's. They live for him who died for them and rose again. Through the services they render to humanity, especially to the physically and mentally challenged, the blind, orphans, widows, street children, they incorporate them into the body of Christ. They treat the disadvantaged in the society with care and love, relating with them as fellow children and images of God.²⁵⁸

3. Love for Christ as Living for Christ Alone

The response to follow Christ from the Daughters view, urges them in a radical way to live without reservation for Christ. It is a call to live for Christ alone. St. Paul describes the measure of this devotion when he unveils the implication of this event for the moral life of believers that is, "to live for Christ."²⁵⁹ Christ died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them (2 Cor 5:15).

Christ's universal atonement was to bring new life to those who have embraced him by their dedicated life of obedience. The baptized are baptized into his death too, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, they might walk in newness of life (cf. Rom 6:2-11). This call to live alone for Christ requires that the disciple consider this relationship above all natural relations (cf. Matt 10:22). The Daughters need to grow deeper in their relationship with God. The Daughters need to grow more in their knowledge of who they are and in their need to place more trust in God. The Daughters ability to live for Christ

²⁵⁷ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Vision Today*, 21.

²⁵⁸ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 117.

²⁵⁹ Cf. F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 133.

alone comes to them as grace from God because of themselves, they can do nothing (John 15: 5), but with God everything is possible (Luke 1:38). It becomes possible when they see the need for it and trustingly ask it of God. Therefore, a sincere and persevering prayer that goes hand in hand with daily activity will help the Daughters acquire this grace from God.

What the Daughters experience in their communities and in their personal lives reveals to them the enormity of their need for further growth in love of neighbour. According to St. Augustine, the command to love God and neighbour calls for a radical commitment on the part of every Christian faithful; a commitment and longing that is genuine to love God above all things, and love their neighbour without any prejudice and limits because every honest relationship is an occasion to build a stronger union with God. Therefore, the Daughters' love for Christ involves the love of one's neighbour. The members of the Congregation love with the love that the Holy Spirit has bestowed on them.²⁶⁰ Their love should be motivated and inspired by Divine Love and it should be mirrored by love to their neighbours, because love as a divine gift enables the Daughter to strive for divine wisdom, truth, justice and love.²⁶¹ Accordingly, J. McManus point out that "since God is love, he has endowed humans with the grace and desire to love him and to love the neighbour, imaging love as self-giving, since God's love is unconditional."²⁶²

Therefore, the apostolate of this institute is a call to witness the love of Christ. Through their exemplary life and services, Daughters make Jesus visible to others. At

²⁶⁰ Cf. W. G. JEANROND, *Theology of Love*, 53.

²⁶¹ Von T.J. BRAVEL, *Love*, 515.

²⁶² J. MCMANUS, *I Am My Body: Blessed Pope John Paul's Theology of the Body*, 29-34.

each moment of their lives, they witness and live for Christ through proclamation of the gospel.²⁶³ They bring change in the way they evaluate and relate with others in the society by seeing people with the new lenses of the Gospel. The Daughters make great effort to bring reconciliation between people whose relationship has been stressed to the breaking point and heal their wounds.²⁶⁴

Living in the world, the Daughters are faced with many problems. There is the worry that when confronted by these problems, some of the Daughters begin to exhibit behaviors that appear as signs of lack of love. The Daughters should go about the practical ways of healing broken relationships. This done in a situation where many people have lost their lives. The Congregation proclaims this message of God's love to others through their life and work. They take the gospel message to all people in different works of life, in order for them to live for Christ alone.²⁶⁵

Living for Christ alone urges the Daughters to devote their lives to those who had never heard the good news of the gospel. As a result, the Daughters are dispensers of God's love to the all nations. The Daughters express their love for God by giving a holistic education to their students in the schools and higher learning institutions which are under their jurisdiction. As principals, headmistresses, lecturers in universities, and teachers across all levels of education, the Daughters strive to be motivated only by their love for Christ.²⁶⁶

²⁶³ Cf. N. P. MADSEN, *First and Second Corinthians*, 117.

²⁶⁴ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 46.

²⁶⁵ Cf. N. P. MADSEN, *First and Second Corinthians*, 119.

²⁶⁶ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love, *Information Splash* 17.

When St. Paul says: “for the love of Christ controls us,” the impression is that Christ’s love wholly controls and dominates St. Paul in the manner that he has no option but to preach. Similarly, the Daughters are constrained to live no longer for themselves but for Christ. They are, therefore, called to serve not themselves but Christ (1 Cor 6:19-20). Since, Christ died in order to bring about our redemption, in the same manner Christians have to die in Christ in order to take part in it.²⁶⁷

Thus, the love of Christ propels the Daughters to seek union with God.²⁶⁸ St. Thomas Aquinas commenting on the practicality of the love of God and love of neighbour, says that the love of God is interconnected with the love of neighbour; they cannot be separated. According to him, charity means that one loves God and one’s neighbour. He upholds that the scriptures do not command us to love our enemy as an enemy but to love them as human beings created in the image and likeness of God, whose spirit is love and who cares for all humanity (Matt 5:43-48).²⁶⁹

4. Love for Christ and the Ministry of Reconciliation

The theme of love for Christ moves toward the responsibility to be ambassadors of God’s reconciling love for the world (2 Cor 5:20). In order for the Daughters of Divine Love to understand what this participation in God’s mission of reconciliation may mean, first of all, the Daughters must be aware that reconciliation is primarily the work of God, who makes it a gift to them with which they in turn are called to co-operate.²⁷⁰

²⁶⁷ Cf. R. P. C. HANS, *II Corinthians*, 51.

²⁶⁸ Cf. W. G. JEANROND, *Theology of Love*, 77-78.

²⁶⁹ Cf. W. G. JEANROND, *Theology of Love*, 77-78.

²⁷⁰ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 13.

This ministry of reconciliation invites the Daughters of Divine Love to accept God's offer of reconciliation in Christ, and to become his disciples in the communion of his church.²⁷¹ The Daughters respond to this ministry of reconciliation through the good services and work they render to humanity. Love for Christ and the ministry of reconciliation urge the Daughters to move from hearing about the love of God to living it out in their daily lives.²⁷² For reconciliation is not merely a set of skills; it is foremost an invitation to come in contact with the new world that God has made possible. It is this new world; the new creation that St. Paul talks about in 2 Corinthians 5:16–20.²⁷³

Therefore, the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love is transforming human dignity, bringing the message of God's love to all, through their different forms of ministry especially that of reconciliation. The ministry of reconciliation entails in the Good News is a responsibility to share the gospel of Jesus Christ. Through his incarnation, death and resurrection has once for all gave the basis for reconciliation with God, forgiveness of sins and new life in the power of the Holy Spirit.²⁷⁴

The Daughters of Divine Love in their mission as ministers of reconciliation do not take for granted that all human beings are reconciled with God. Therefore, as agents of reconciliation of humanity with God, the main approach of the Daughters' mission is preaching the message of reconciliation in words and deeds. They desire that all people

²⁷¹ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 69.

²⁷² Cf. D. M. HOFFMAN, *Living Divine Love*, 5.

²⁷³ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 44-47.

²⁷⁴ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 45.

may come to believe in Christ and be united to God and through baptism live their new life as a new creation in witness, service and spiritual growth.²⁷⁵

The ministry of reconciliation had been given to St. Paul to communicate to the church in Corinth. For St. Paul reconciliation was an act of mercy, where judgment was due. “God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us” (2 Cor 5:19). God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself. That world from its beginning had turned a deaf ear to his messengers, and finally took his Son and crucified him.

Reconciliation is more a spiritual element than a strategy. Strategies are necessary, but the ministry of reconciliation of humanity with the love of Christ brings peace and this an essential element of the Daughters mission. God’s reconciling love does not first ask what the members of the Congregation are to do in bringing peace to the world but who the members are to be. The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love must first be a community of peace, a community of self-renewal and by this “the world will come to know Jesus” (John 17: 23).

The Daughters of Divine Love cannot live the life of Divine Love without coming in concrete ways with mercy, justice and peace.²⁷⁶ The Daughters make themselves available as evangelizers of Divine Love. As they carry Divine Love all over the world. They act as instruments of mercy, justice and peace. They spread Divine Love all over the world, so that peace will come as Christ promised us. With this in mind, they share love and live love.²⁷⁷

²⁷⁵ Cf. G. D. FEE, *Pauline Christology*, 196.

²⁷⁶ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 51-52.

²⁷⁷ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 52.

The mission of Jesus Christ was to reconcile us to himself. Consequently, the Daughters of Divine Love continue this ongoing reconciliation to the four corners of the earth through their life and work. It is the love for Christ that urges the Daughters of Divine Love to carry on this special mission of manifesting Divine Love to the world.²⁷⁸ They see the need to embark on transforming the world with charity, and this they do through true love.²⁷⁹

Furthermore, reconciliation is a way of life. As a way of life, it is lived around Scripture and the life of the sacraments, realities that bring Christians into contact with, and make them be grounded deeply in the new creation, which as St. Paul observes, is realized “in Christ”.²⁸⁰ The Daughters of Divine Love are to witness and make alive their mission through witness to faith as St. Paul did (2 Cor 5:19). The Congregation is known by its unconditional love for God and for all God’s people. Where there is hatred and division, they bear witness to God’s love.²⁸¹

Additionally, the work of being ambassadors of reconciliation is grounded in the strong belief that even in the midst of violence, injustices and killings God is always sowing seeds of peace (Isa 43:19). The work of peace therefore involves learning to see and live in the world with faith.²⁸² Therefore, inspired by love for Christ, the Daughters of Divine Love labor endlessly to bring healing to the lives of the people of God. What they do, how they live, how they act, and especially the life of love they show to others

²⁷⁸ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Truly Human, Truly Divine*, 6.

²⁷⁹ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye’s Vision Today*, 19.

²⁸⁰ Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 70.

²⁸¹ Cf. S. NWACHUKWU, *Growing in Compassion*, 119.

²⁸² Cf. R. SCHREITER- K. JORGENSEN, *Mission as Ministry of Reconciliation*, 73.

touches people more than words. The ministry of reconciliation is a constant mark of their individual lives and from the society.²⁸³

In line with the mission of Christ, who reconciled mankind with God, the Daughters carry out the same mission today, reconciling people with their God, with one another and with the whole creation. Reconciliation is a gift and also work. God has entrusted to the Congregation the service of reconciliation: they are therefore Christ's ambassadors. The Daughters response to the ministry of reconciliation is also that of peacemaking (Matt 5:9). In doing this, the Daughters do not represent themselves but the one who sent them to proclaim the gospel of reconciliation.²⁸⁴

Christ who reconciled the world to himself in God uses the Daughters of Divine Love as his messengers proclaiming the good news and calling upon people to accept God's message. With trust in God as their foundation, they are able to transmit love in their apostolic ministry.²⁸⁵ Christ's self-emptying on the cross is the basis of reconciliation and unity for all. It is through Christ's love that the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love was brought into existence and it is this love that is their criterion of acting and judging.²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences*, 173.

²⁸⁴ F. J. MATERA, *II Corinthians*, 141-142.

²⁸⁵ Cf. J. M. SCOTT, *2 Corinthians*, 140.

²⁸⁶ Cf. M. A. PASCUZZI, *First and Second Corinthians*, 117-118.

5. To Live Out Divine Love in Action through Daily Interaction

The status of the Daughters of Divine Love is that of ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:20).²⁸⁷ Divine Love takes on a practical dimension in the life of the Daughters. The hard work and selfless services of the Daughters bring about positive changes and development in their pastoral fields. However, it is sad to recognize that the cultural values by which the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love express divine love in action are giving way to the culture of selfishness. The community structures are fast becoming weaker and are falling apart. The Daughters should live sincerely a life of practical love in their relationship with their fellow men and women through their honest service, work and the help they render to humanity.²⁸⁸

The Daughters respond to that same love that moved Christ to be incarnate among men. This they show by love in action and living amicably with one another through their interaction with people of God. In response to Divine Love, the Daughters care, respect, protect and help one another in their various religious communities. They do that in their community commitment of communal prayer, and work. They always pray fervently for the entire world so that humanity may embrace love, peace, mercy and justice. This impels the Daughters to share love and live love.²⁸⁹

At times, however, some members of the Congregation live with the attitude of Jonah, who deny God the right to forgive others or with an attitude of those who grumble about God's kindness to others. As the Daughters who carry the Divine Love of Christ

²⁸⁷ Cf. N.P. MADSEN, first and second Corinthians, 121.

²⁸⁸ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 3.

²⁸⁹ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 52.

all over the world's community, they are equally ambassadors of mercy, justice and peace. They are gifted in spreading Divine Love all over the world.²⁹⁰

Generosity and love in action led Christ to empty himself, in order to do the will of his Father. The Daughters should always strive for that union with Christ through their generosity.²⁹¹ It is good to be generous in order to be of great help to others, whether this generosity is meant to be extended to individual persons, charitable institutions, hospitals, retirement homes or foreigners. The important thing is that the Daughters of Divine love practice generosity by giving generously.²⁹²

Sometimes, negative experiences lead the Daughters to decide to be economical with the good they can do. The attitude of others gradually lead to them to be protective of themselves and their feelings. The insensitivity and lack of commitment of others as well as lack of a collective effort discourage them and they begin to relent. The Daughters should always remember that Divine Love is marked by goodness, forgiveness, humility, kindness, mercy, sacrifice, justice, peace, and selfless service.²⁹³

The Congregation is called in their mission statement "to show Divine Love to the world."²⁹⁴ But sometimes, they see themselves in the attitude of the unforgiving servant (Matt 18) and in that of the elder brother of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15). Sometimes, selfish desires for independence lead them to neglect their responsibility towards their neighbor. However, they are to be known in a special way for their love for

²⁹⁰ Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 52.

²⁹¹ Cf. G. M. P. OKOYE, *Talks to His Daughters*, Vol.2, 149.

²⁹² Cf. C. U OKOLI, *Let Divine Love Flourish*, 55.

²⁹³ Cf. Daughters of Divine Love Congregation, *Information Splash*, 37.

²⁹⁴ Daughters of Divine Love, *Acts of 6th General Chapter*, 1-2.

God and love of neighbor which is rooted and grounded in true charity.²⁹⁵ They should inspire the poor to love each other, care for each other and forgive those who have wronged them. The Daughters are to preach the message of hope at all times. They are to create that awareness in the lives of the poor that they are equal to all other human beings in the world, thus instilling in them confidence and self-esteem.²⁹⁶

These are the ways in which the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love should preach the Good News to humanity. They are to be the harbingers of love. Wherever there is the lack of love, the Daughters should manifest God's love. They are not limited to any particular apostate. Some of the Daughters preach recollection and give retreats and bring Good News to the consecrated and lay faithful who are passing through difficult times in their lives. The Daughters bring the message of God's mercy, reconciliation, peace, joy, love and hope for a better life in the future.

The sick feel the gentle touch of the DDL consultant surgeon as she makes surgery easy and the caring hands of the DDL nurses are tools of God extending his love to the sick. The welcoming smile of the Daughters in the outpatient department is infectious. The devotedness and kindness of most of the Daughters working in hospitals, clinics and old people homes need to be commended. They also minister to the sick, aged and home-bound as Eucharistic ministers and hospital chaplain. All these give a taste of their humble service to humanity.²⁹⁷

The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love encourages the well to do families to share what they have with the poor among them. As a result, the rich contribute

²⁹⁵ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 23.

²⁹⁶ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Retreat Conferences* 235.

²⁹⁷ Cf. G.M.P. OKOYE, *Okoye's Vision Today*, 20.

monetary assistance as well as material goods to the poor. People feel and experience Divine Love in action not only in Daughters words but also in their deeds through the services they render them. The Daughters are also involved in prison ministry and they carry to prisoners not only the message of the Good News but visit them to spend time with them and care for them.

The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love is engaged in workshops, and seminars to create awareness in the society about human trafficking. The Daughters are working on setting many victims of human trafficking free. They do it by their proclamation of the message geared toward the release of many people from this predicament.

Among the goals in setting up the educational facilities is the mission of setting people free from ignorance, unemployment, poverty and all forces which dehumanize them. This is also a means to eradicating poverty and bringing about integral human growth and development. The poor are being trained to know how to “fish other than provide fish for them”. This is a holistic approach to changing the lives of people.

The Congregation helps people who have lost the sense of dignity and equality in human society to have it restored. These people are helped to see themselves as people with equal dignity, rights and respect just like any other citizen. They, like all other citizens, deserve equal respect, support and accompaniment. The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love stands for social justice. It empowers the poor people in the parish ministries to be agents of justice in their personal lives and in the society. They also collaborate with the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission to influence government leaders in matters of justice, peace, and equality in the society.

The Daughters have always worked tirelessly to make people aware that the Lord Jesus is a friend and a brother to all. They tell people that Jesus has won and reconciled all peoples for God and that Jesus always stays with us and in us. They are friendly and loving towards their workers and collaborators wherever they work. In this way, the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love proclaims the acceptable year of the Lord in the society through love. The Congregation works to send out missionaries who are able to be exemplary in matters of forgiveness shown in their way of life.

6. Conclusion

The call to discipleship is a call to follow Jesus entirely and devotedly. Jesus in his ministry of proclaiming the kingdom of God exemplified what true love is through his words, his works of healing and finally through total surrendering of himself to the Father's will. "If anyone wants to follow me, said Jesus, then he is to carry his cross and imitate me". Jesus portrays what the true love is and he is our model. The Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, through their charism and mission, tries to respond to the call of discipleship. In their apostolate, they become the other Christ to humanity and invite all to join call of love. In their mission, the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love extend their work of Christ through reconciliation and healing.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

In this work we have made an analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21 in order to gain a deeper understanding of charism of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love. Thus, the work has explored the charism of the Congregation as manifested by their spirituality, motto, mission, vision and apostolate in the light of 2 Cor 5:14-21. The work also shed more light on the Daughters' understanding of their charism in the light of 2 Cor 5:14-21. The exploration of the biblical text is to foster the Daughters' understanding of the charism of their Congregation so that they may attain a renewed appreciation of that charism.

St. Paul in 2 Cor 5:14-21 presents how the love of God, the ministry and message of reconciliation has been entrusted to him, thereby laying the foundation of the mission of reconciliation of humanity with the love of God on earth. It could be noted how reconciliation of humanity with the love of God is a central motif in manifesting God's work in the world in 2 Cor 5:14-21. St. Paul's message has been called a "Gospel of reconciliation". It is so inasmuch as he had experienced being reconciled to God and to the followers of Jesus by a gracious act on the part of God, not due to anything he himself had done but rather through grace and the love of Christ.

The Daughters on the other hand, in their relationship with other people in the society, show themselves as agents of the divine love of which they give testimony by their lifestyle. As a result, better understanding of their charism in the light of 2 Cor 5:14-21 helps the Daughters to practice Divine Love manifested in love of neighbour, which is rooted and grounded in Christ. This practice of the love for Christ also manifested in action through acts of generosity and forgiving acts towards the needy helps them to find joy and contentment in their commitment to the life they have chosen and in their ministry of reconciling the humanity with the love of God. Thus, they are known for their love of God and love of neighbour. Therefore, our analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21 will enrich the Daughters with a deeper understanding of the charism of the Congregation. It will help them integrate its message.

In chapter one, we begin with a brief biography of the Founder of Daughters of Divine Love Congregation; Bishop Godfrey Mary Paul Okoye C.S.Sp, offering insight into his personality, spirituality, charism and vision. We also explored the historical background of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, the charism, spirituality, motto, vision and mission of the institute and how all these are related to the second letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21.

Bishop Okoye was a man so full of love and warm hearted that he had a burning desire to spread the love of God to the four corners of the earth. He taught the love for Christ by his life more than by words. He showed practically in his life, that charity is Divine Love in action; he never sets limits. His visionary spirit is manifested in his

foundation of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love, during the most agonizing and ravaging war in the history of Nigeria. This foundation was envisioned during the Second Vatican Council and realized during the civil war when the nation was in uproar.

Consequently, this chapter offers both challenge and inspiration to the Daughters of Divine Love to go back to the spirit of their Founder so as to keep alive the vision of Bishop Okoye to see a world where love abounds. The Daughters witness to God's love all over the world. The Daughters immediate response to the needs of the local church, is practical ways in which the DDLs are setting the world ablaze with love. However, this mystery of Divine Love is the reality which every Daughter is invited to live out in daily life. In so doing, they rediscover and keep alive the spirit which inspired the foundation of the Congregation. As a result, the Congregation is really a fulfillment of the legacy which Bishop Okoye left to the world.

In Chapter two, we have analyzed the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21 verse by verse and found out that this text gives the full meaning of Christian living. It equally gives a brief summary of the atonement of Christ which was manifested in his death on the cross. The text shows that Christ sufferings was a preparation for his final transformation to glory at the resurrection of the body (2 Cor 4:7-5:10).

The analysis of this chapter has brought to light St. Paul's ministry of reconciliation as the central theme that connects with the ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love in the contemporary world. The analysis of 2 Cor 5:14-21 are useful to the members of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love by facilitating a deeper

understanding of the charism of the Congregation in a way that would have an impact on their lifestyle, mission and their ministry of reconciling humanity with the love of God.

Moreover, the ministry of reconciliation that St. Paul preached focuses on communicating the message that Corinthian are reconciled with God and are made new creatures as a result of Christ's death. Similarly, the insights gained through this exploration intend to lead the Congregation to discover new ways of animating vocations and training candidates in a manner that would help them deepen the charism of the Congregation.

In chapter three, we have presented an understanding of the charism of the Congregation of the Daughters of Divine Love in the light of 2 Cor 5:14-21. This Chapter focused on revisiting the charism of the Daughters of Divine Love in the light of the Second Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians 5:14-21, exploring how this passage shades light on the charism, spirituality, mission, vision and apostolate of the Congregation.

Consequently, this chapter shows the linkage between the charism, spirituality, mission, vision and apostolate of the Congregation and how the love of Christ is the motivating force of the life of the Daughters of Divine Love. All the members of the Congregation should to give positive response to God's call to love God and the fellow human beings. Thus, generous loving response to Divine Love Incarnate is the key concept that holds together the many facts of what the Daughters of Divine Love are doing. In order words, generosity is to mark every aspect of the life and spirituality of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation.

The fourth chapter explored the application of 2 Cor 5:14-21 to the lives and ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love Congregation. It has addressed the way the

Daughters express the love for Christ. The call to discipleship is a call to follow Jesus entirely and devotedly. Jesus in his ministry in proclaiming the kingdom of God exemplified what true love is through his preaching, his works of healing and finally through the total surrendering of himself to the Father will. Jesus portrays love per excellence and he is the model of the Daughters. The Congregation is trying to respond to this call of discipleship. In their apostolate, the members become the other Christ to humanity and invite all to this call of love. In their mission they extend the work of Christ of reconciling the humanity to God till the second glorious coming of Jesus.

We have to acknowledge the fact that in their efforts to live out their life as Daughters of Divine Love, there may be obstacles of various types, as it happened in the ministry of St. Paul. Despite that, the members of the institutes go on making the presence and the love of Christ felt. They strive daily to discover better ways of improving their capacity for responding generously to God's love. The message 2 Cor 5:14-21 is a reminder to the Daughters of Divine Love of their call to love God generously through their union with him, which is expressed in prayer and selfless service to others. It can be concluded that 2 Cor 5:14-21 gives very helpful insights into the life and ministry of the Daughters of Divine Love. It also shows some of the values that made St. Paul a good ambassador of Christ.

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