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**THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA**  
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**ENHANCING YOUTH CATECHESIS IN THE  
CHURCH'S PASTORAL ACTIVITY**

**A Study on the Content and Methods for a Better  
Catechesis with Special Reference to Guadalupe Parish  
Nairobi - Kenya**

Moderator

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Masters

Degree in Pastoral Ministry

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## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to all the faithful who are very much committed to imparting the faith to the youth and to my parents who taught me the basics of faith.

## EPIGRAPH

Concern for young people calls for courage and clarity in the message we proclaim; we need to help young people to gain confidence and familiarity with sacred Scripture so it can become a compass pointing out the path to follow. Young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers. Man's last and highest parting occurs when for God's sake, he takes leave of God (POPE BENEDICT XVI, *Africae Munus*, 61).

'Youth' catechesis must be faithful to God and his word (Gospel, scripture, tradition, Magisterium of the Church) and faithful to the human situation, respect for culture, link with experience, and diversity of methods for varying youth groups and circumstances  
(POPE JOHN PAUL II, "Catechesis in Our Time", *Vol. 8 of an Experimental Source-Book for Catechetics*, XII).

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I would like first of all, to express my gratitude and appreciation to Almighty God to whom I owe my existence. He has been with me all through my life. Many thanks and may His name be praised always.

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Lastly, I am deeply indebted to the entire pastoral team of Our Lady of Guadalupe parish (OLGP) and of its outstation St. Benedict Olympic - Kibera who accepted me and assisted me in my pastoral work and in obtaining information for my research. A few deserve mentioning: Fr. Juan José Cortés, Sr. Faith, Evlynn Ndilu, Mr. Duncan, catechists, and Fr. Willy Schoofs (M.Afr), and Fr. Fritz Stenger (M.Afr) in particular. May God bless and reward those whom I have acknowledged and those not acknowledged here for their contribution.

**STUDENT'S DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that this long essay is my original work achieved through my personal reading, scientific research method and critical reflection. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Pastoral Ministry. It has never been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit. All sources have been cited in full and acknowledged.

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Name of Student: John Chomba MUBANGA

Date: .....

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

Signed: .....

Name of Supervisor: Rev. Dr. Fr. George KOCHOLICKAL

Date: .....

## ABBREVIATIONS

Assist	<i>Assistant</i>
DRC	<i>Democratic Republic of Congo</i>
M.Afr.	<i>Missionary of Africa</i>
NT	<i>New Testament</i>
OT	<i>Old Testament</i>
OLGP	<i>Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish</i>
RCC	<i>Roman Catholic Church</i>
SCC/s	<i>Small Christian Community/s</i>
St.	<i>Saint</i>
TVs	<i>Television/s</i>
VCRs	<i>Video Cassette Recorders</i>

### CHURCH DOCUMENTS

AM	BENEDICT XVI, <i>Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation "Africae Munus" on the Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace</i> (19 November 2011).
CC	<i>A Catholic Catechism</i> (25 March 2008)
CCC	<i>Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> (11 October 1992)
CCCC	<i>Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church</i> (28 June 2005)
CCD	<i>A Catechism of Christian Doctrine</i>
CCL	<i>Code of Canon Law</i> (14 May 2013)
CT	JOHN PAUL II, <i>Apostolic Exhortation "Catechesi Tradendae"</i> (16 October 1979)
DV	<i>Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation. Dei Verbum</i> (18 November 1965)
EG	POPE FRANCIS, <i>Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Gaudium" on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World</i> (24 November 2013)
EN	PAUL VI, <i>Apostolic Exhortation "Evangelii Nuntiandi" on Evangelization in the Modern World</i> (8 December 1975)

<i>GDC</i>	<i>General Directory for Catechesis (15 August 1997)</i>
<i>IM</i>	<i>The Degree on the Means of Social Communication. Inter Mirifica (4 December 1963)</i>
<i>LG</i>	<i>Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Lumen Gentium (20 November 1964)</i>
<i>NDC</i>	<i>National Directory for Catechesis (USCCB)</i>
<i>PDV</i>	<i>JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation "Pastores Dabo Vobis" on the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day (25 March 1992)</i>
<i>PO</i>	<i>Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priest. Presbyterorum Ordinis (7 December 1965)</i>
<i>YOUCAT</i>	<i>Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church (3 March 2010)</i>

#### **BIBLICAL ABBREVIATION**

<i>Acts</i>	<i>Acts of the Apostles</i>
<i>1 Cor</i>	<i>First Letter of St. Paul to the Corinthians</i>
<i>1Tim</i>	<i>First Letter of St. Paul to Timothy</i>
<i>1 Sam</i>	<i>The First Book of Samuel</i>
<i>Dt</i>	<i>The Book of Deuteronomy</i>
<i>Ex</i>	<i>The Book of Exodus</i>
<i>Gal</i>	<i>The Letter of St. Paul to the Galatians</i>
<i>Gen</i>	<i>The Book of Genesis</i>
<i>Jer</i>	<i>The Book of Jeremiah</i>
<i>Jn</i>	<i>The Gospel According to John</i>
<i>Lk</i>	<i>The Gospel According to Luke</i>
<i>Mal</i>	<i>The Book of Malachi</i>
<i>Mk</i>	<i>The Gospel According to Mark</i>
<i>Mt</i>	<i>The Gospel According to Matthew</i>
<i>Phil</i>	<i>The Letter of St. Paul to the Philippians</i>
<i>Prv</i>	<i>The Book of the Proverbs</i>

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Catechesis is the teaching (including the process and the method) of the content of faith within the Church (cf. *GDC*, 149). In other words, it is the process of Christian formation and instruction that is based on the proclamation of the word of God in view of the education of people to faith.<sup>1</sup> This teaching is designed to nurture and strengthen the life of the Christian, particularly the youth in the Church. Since it concerns faith, the Church has given it much importance for her growth, the society, and above all for the glory of God.

Catechesis helps the youth to deepen their faith in Jesus Christ as really the Son of God and by whom they are lead to the love of the Father through the power of the Holy Spirit; it also makes them and the Church at large share the life of the Holy Trinity (cf. *CT*, 5). Therefore, those appointed to teach catechism in the Church have to take it seriously, because catechesis is part and parcel of the dynamic process of pastoral activity in the Church.

In this dissertation, the researcher is interested to write about how youth catechesis can be enhanced in the Church's pastoral activity. The researcher will evaluate the content and methods that can be used in teaching the faith to the young people, who want to belong to the Church no matter what they like or do.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 176.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. A. O. OJORE, "Helping Young People Identify Their Vocation in Life and Service to Community", 27.

This dissertation comprises of three chapters that will draw attention to some of the ways that can help enhance youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity.

The first chapter deals with the insertion experience. It will present the researcher's experience while he was working with the youth, observing how catechesis was taught and what was taught. His experience is also drawn from his participation in teaching catechism at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and its outstation St. Benedict, Olympic in Kibera. As well, the information gathered during the researcher's pastoral experience is included.

The second chapter presents the literature review with regards to youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity. In this chapter, the researcher will also present the pastoral agents responsible for providing catechesis for the youth in the Church. Besides, the content and methods of teaching catechism to the youth will be studied. The third chapter presents the theological reflection on the content and method that is currently being used at Guadalupe parish in the light of what the Church suggests and recommends. It will also give some practical recommendations and a pastoral plan for action that can be of some help for all the people that are involved in teaching catechism to the youth in order to enhance youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity will be suggested.

## CHAPTER ONE

### BACKGROUND AND INSERTION EXPERIENCE

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Youth Catechesis<sup>3</sup> has been always "concerned with the development of the life of faith, (of the youth)."<sup>4</sup> But often, one notices that something is lacking in the life of faith and Christian living of many youth. Many young people even after following catechism classes have shown no enthusiasm to continue practicing their faith in the Church.

According to Ojore A. Otieno, "So many young people are leaving the church today. They join the new religious movements or Pentecostals where they are appreciated."<sup>5</sup> In those churches, it seems what is given is a 'catechesis of prosperity' for their future. Of course, one thing which is seen is that most of the elders and leaders do not seem to realize that something is lacking especially in the formation of the youth. The researcher's experience shows that many of those young people who leave the church hardly return. Therefore, it is very important that the Church understand the youth and give them a solid catechesis.<sup>6</sup> It is only in this way that the youth will actively participate in the Church and love it.

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<sup>3</sup> "Youth Catechesis" is the education of the faith in Jesus Christ more specifically to the young people with the aim of initiating them to the fullness of Christian life in the Church.

<sup>4</sup> M. WARREN, *A Future for Youth Catechesis*, 9.

<sup>5</sup> A. O. OJORE, "Helping Young People Identity Their Vocation in Life and Service to Community", 29.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. A. O. OJORE, "Helping Young People Identity Their Vocation in Life and Service to Community", 29.

Despite all the efforts of spiritual and educative programs for the youth the Catholic Church has made in order to help the youth grow towards mature faith, "it seems that she has not been able to effectively meet their needs. Many of the youth have no sense of real commitment in the Church. They seem not to be satisfied with the education activities they are given for their journey of faith."<sup>7</sup> The youth are the Church of today and of the future. It is clear that something has to be done "to help the young people attend to their existing faith experiences [...] and find a home for their faith in our Catholic family."<sup>8</sup>

Youth catechesis should always relate the gospel to many queries and yearnings the youth have in their minds and hearts in this contemporary world. One of the most critical issues that require our attention to improve youth catechesis is to look at the content and the methods used to teach catechism to the youth. This is necessary, while planning youth catechesis within the Church's pastoral activity is a suitable approach in the lines of development of faith of the youth.

It is the urgency of the subject-matter and my own personal interest that motivated me to do this study.

### ***1.1.1 The Insertion Experience***

The researcher did his insertion experience under the supervision of Fr. Juan José Cortés, his field supervisor and parish priest of the placement sites for his designation: Guadalupe main parish and its outstation St. Benedict-Olympic in Kibera.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> B. L. MARTHALER, "Catechesis", 113.

<sup>8</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 1.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> of February, 2014, he officially started his field experience. He arrived at the Parish in the afternoon and met Sr. Faith, Evlynn Ndilu and Fr. Juan, who later on gave the researcher some orientation on the activities he was expected to do and on the places to go for his field experience of 150 hours on youth catechesis. The researcher celebrated with the youth joyfully and appreciated what was good rather than strictly focusing on what he was researching about. This positive attitude to learn generated a great deal of trust, mutual respect and support between the youth and the researcher.<sup>10</sup>

The researcher also tried to be actively present in the youth catechetical program by fully taking part in their activities and celebrations. Some of these activities the researcher took part in consisted in attending meetings, the preparation and animation of the Holy Mass (Youth Mass), the participation and teaching in catechism classes, Bible sharing, sports, music (which seemed to be their favourite), and many others.<sup>11</sup>

The researcher did the *practicum* experience with the youth mostly those who were attending the class of Confirmation and those who have already received the sacraments of initiation. Within the practicum period, the researcher was able to attend various activities carried out by catechists and the youth that gave him a general idea of the reality of youth catechesis. As he observed, the youth were taught about "common prayers and prayer life", "the people in the Church", "African morals: respect for life, family, dignity in the community", "the cardinal virtues", "the Creed", "precepts of the Church", and "the sacraments". Also the youth were

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<sup>10</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 1.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 2.

taught about "the Eucharist", "Liturgical calendar, the Mass vestments, Sacred vessels, gestures used in the Eucharistic celebration", "the Saints", "the meaning of Pentecost", "the Rosary and its mystery", "the Ten Commandments", "God the Father and his works of creations", "the Bible: reading and sharing", and once "about vocations" during the researcher's practicum experience.<sup>12</sup>

Now, how were these topics taught? Mostly the methods, which the catechists and even the researcher used were *memorisation, questions and answers*, the use of *visual aids* and that of "*Lumko*"<sup>13</sup> especially when it came to Bible reading and sharing. Besides, the researcher had to use also:

***a) Group Discussion and Observation Method***

Group discussion was used in order to take into consideration the views, opinions, and experiences of the researcher himself, the youth and the catechists. The discussions were held either in small groups of five people or the entire group. The subject was discussed and at the end relevant questions were asked and the discussed information was carefully collected.<sup>14</sup> Also the researcher listened to and observed how catechesis was taught to the youth. Later on, after he had seen how they were doing things, he then participated in the youth meetings and catechetical program of the parish.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> Cf. For the detailed program of what was been taught see the appendix number II.

<sup>13</sup> "Lumko" is the program that suggests methods for the pastoral use of the Bible and training for community ministries. In our case, the catechist used "Group Response Method" where we read the text twice, identified the problems mentioned in the text, then the catechist asked each one to think about what God was telling the youth about their problems, and finally asked what does God want the youth to do? O. HIRMER, *The Pastoral Use of the Bible*, 52-57.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 52.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 38.

### ***b) Informal Interview***

In this method, research questions<sup>16</sup> were used so as to keep the researcher focused. Its main purpose was to ensure the validity of the information that would have not been understood clearly if he used only the formal approach scheme.

### ***c) Formal Interviews through Questionnaires***

The researcher used written questionnaires that were given specifically to people who could read and write but had little time to respond to oral interviews.

Through his experience of observing and teaching catechesis, the researcher was assisted to immerse himself into the reality of teaching catechesis to the youth and the need to always equip himself as a future pastoral agent to respond to their challenges.

### ***1.1.2 The Social - Cultural Analysis of the Study Area***

The researcher did his research at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish and its outstations. The parish is run by the Missionaries of Guadalupe and is situated at the roundabout of Adam's Arcade, along Suna Road about 100 meters away from Ngong Road. It is within Nairobi West Deanery in the Archdiocese of Nairobi. It is a big community comprised of different people, poor and rich alike. Apart from the Christian faithful coming from the well-to-do families, there are also a good number of poor people coming from Kibera informal settlement where living conditions are extremely difficult.<sup>17</sup>

In the parish and in Olympic and Makina there are also a good number of foreigners from Uganda, Tanzania, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Mexico,

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<sup>16</sup> Cf. Page, 14.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 3.

to mention but a few, who are part of Guadalupe community. The place is having more residential development and this is attracting many people from other places to come and settle there. The Kenyan people speak at least English and Swahili though many non-Kenyans are not familiar with the Swahili language which is commonly used. Also there are a good number of religious communities whose members come to pray at Guadalupe parish and involve themselves in different pastoral ministries. Apart from good organisation of catechism classes, the parish also has a studio, music school, and a nursery school that is open for use to all people.<sup>18</sup>

Guadalupe community works tirelessly to ensure that the Gospel is preached to every member of the community. Hence, as evidently seen by the researcher, their scheme of evangelization has embraced many members of the community by attending to their particular needs. The parish offers five Holy Masses in English and Swahili every Sunday. Each person is therefore free to choose which Holy Mass to attend.<sup>19</sup>

The researcher has been also working with the youth in two of the outstations of Guadalupe parish in Kibera. Kibera is one of the divisions of Langata constituency. It is an informal settlement that is inhabited by over half a million people from various ethnic and national backgrounds such as Kikuyu, Kamba, Luo, and Nubians. Within it, there are also more than thirteen villages some include: Lain Saba, Silanga, Lindi, Mashimoni, DC, Soweto East and West, Toy Market, Katwekera, Kamukunji, Darajani and my area of study Makina and Olympic. The place is terrible because of the poor sanitation due to a poor drainage system,

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<sup>18</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 3.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 3.

improper toilets (flying toilets), and poor housing. In fact, because of this, Kibera has been experiencing outbreaks of many water borne diseases especially typhoid.<sup>20</sup>

Kibera has a high level of poverty. Its main economic activities are: small scale businesses of people selling second hand clothes, barber shops, sale of 'changaa' (local beer), and small kiosks of food stuff like samosa, sweets, and chapati. Many families work very hard with their little businesses to support their children and to be able to pay rent and other needs like health, and food. Maybe, about 60% of the population in Kibera, work in the factories as unskilled labours as compared to most of the people living in Adams Arcade where the main church centre is located. Kibera also has a high rate of crime, immorality, prostitution, rape, drug abuse and many people are infected and affected by HIV/AIDS.<sup>21</sup>

So, this is the situation the youth find themselves in. Most of the youth at the outstations, are very committed in every activity, including attending catechism classes as compared to the youth in the other parts of the parish. Though youths in Kibera are influenced by so many things happening there, most are eager to know more about our Catholic faith while others have no interest at all especially if they find that what they are learning is not helping them. And so, it is a challenge for the catechists precisely on the methods to use to teach catechism so that everyone could understand. As to the content it was not a big challenge because the catechists were given the syllabus to follow. At the main centre, most of the young people have a lot of excuses in spite of having committed people to help them grow in faith.

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<sup>20</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 4.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. The Staff of St. Vincent de Paul Community Development Organisation, "The Kibera Community", <[www.kiberachildren.org/about-us/the-kibera-community](http://www.kiberachildren.org/about-us/the-kibera-community)>, accessed on 06/01/15, 1.

In fact, differences in ethnic identities among the youth and the adults play a big role such that once one happens to comment negatively of their culture, it becomes a big issue for them.<sup>22</sup>

### ***1.1.3 The Pastoral Assessment***

In simple terms, having good content and method of teaching catechism engages passive people and youths at the parish to become actively involved in catechesis in order not to let the youth break the links with the Catholic Church, nor should the youth obliterate the characteristic traits of the faith that they have learned. However, in trying to promote and provide direct aid to youths, there are some deficiencies, one being the poor foundation in faith of some of the catechumens. Others are interrupted because of the school curriculum. Many youths have no time since they go to school even during holidays.<sup>23</sup>

Another deficiency is their rootedness in their unhelpful traditions. Some parents want their children to receive the sacraments without proper preparations, lack of commitment especially of adults, and also the gap between the poor and the rich, the level of education, external influences be it by other religions, feeling of insecurity, as well as liberalization (youths wanting to do whatever they want without interference).<sup>24</sup>

On one hand, the Parish wishes to ensure that there is a proper cooperation between the catechists and parents for the reinforcement of good formation of the youth. But, on the other hand, there are some missing links that the researcher discovered like lack of support from some parents, not too active program at the

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<sup>22</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 4.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 5.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 5.

Archdiocesan level, the economic conditions of many families, and there is no strong interfaith dialogue among youths to equip them for their future challenges.<sup>25</sup>

Also, training catechists and other ministers is very difficult due to the inadequate resources. In case of transfers, some new catechists come with their own vision different from those of their predecessors, thereby neglecting some programs.

As pertains to catechism for the deaf, there aren't enough people, both deaf and hearing, who have the understanding or the skills necessary to translate into indigenous sign language the liturgical readings. There is a strong tendency among the readers/signers to use signs according to the grammatical structure of the spoken language which unfortunately fails to transmit clearly the full meaning embodied in the texts in a way that is natural and meaningful to deaf people.<sup>26</sup>

All in all, the content of youth catechesis that is being used at Guadalupe parish is very good although it has also to be complemented by other alternative approaches to enhance the general atmosphere of youth catechesis as will be pointed out in chapter two.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Just like any other Christian denomination across the world, the Roman Catholic Church has tried by all means to devote herself actively to the task of teaching the faith to the young people in order to help them become good Christian believers. Unfortunately, very many youths are more concerned about what can

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<sup>25</sup> I had an opportunity to attend catechism classes for the deaf together with Evlynn Ndilu (Youth Matron) who later shared with me the ideas above. She could understand and communicate sign language Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 5.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 102.

energise them or that which can make them be 'somebody'; hence, catechesis is considered irrelevant and days of worship have become a normal routine for them.

Thus, it is from this background that the researcher was strongly motivated to carry out the research at Our Lady of Guadalupe parish in order to evaluate the content and the methods used in order to find and or suggest ways of enhancing youth catechesis within the Church's pastoral activities, as well as prepare him for future ministry.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

Youth catechesis is part of the Church's pastoral activities and it is part of the proclamation of God's love made manifest in Jesus Christ. This study, hence, aims at:

1. Finding out the reasons why many youth have lost interest in Church activities.
2. Evaluating the content and the methods that will help improve youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity.
3. Preparing a youth catechesis that is an improvement on the current one.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

It is the researcher's hope that this study will help him deepen his own faith as a Catholic Christian and be able to teach catechism with a better grasp of its content and methods in his pastoral ministry now and in the future. The researcher also hopes that this research will help other pastoral agents to become more aware of their responsibility of teaching catechesis to the youth since it is an essential element of the pastoral activity of the Church.

Besides, this study will also help the youth and catechists to appreciate the term catechesis that it is not just a system of ideas or instructions but a proclamation of the events in which God made known and has continued revealing to us today. Not only will this study empower the youth to have the ability to teach but especially to witness to the message of Christ and his Church. Over and above being a learning process for me, the study aims well at enabling the reader to become aware that catechising the youth is a mission for everyone. And so, everyone in the Church need to share the happiness, strength and love that we have received from Jesus Christ.

### **1.5 The Research Methodology**

The researcher basically engages the pastoral cycle methodology of 'See - Judge - Act,'<sup>27</sup> insertion experience and social analysis, theological reflection, and pastoral planning. The 'See' step is the insertion experience that helped the researcher to keep in touch with what was happening on the ground concerning the reality of teaching catechism to the youth and how in response the youth participate in the pastoral activities at the parish. The researcher was immersed in the day-to-day life experiences of the entire community of Guadalupe parish and its outstations, gathered empirical data and experiential information through observation and interviews<sup>28</sup> as will be pointed out later on.

As regards to 'Judge' step, the researcher looked at the content and method of youth catechesis in the light of magisterial guidelines and theological reflection on the same. The 'Act' step is the pastoral planning, that is to develop a practical

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<sup>27</sup> P. HENRIOT - F. WIJSEN - R. MEJIA, *The Pastoral Circle Revised*, 49.

<sup>28</sup> Cf. C. BODEWES, *Parish Transformation in Urban Slums*, 14-15.

response to his lived experience of attending, observing and teaching catechism to the youth. The researcher will identify some practical steps at the level of the youth, catechists, and the Church at large that will contribute in strengthening youth catechesis in the Church.

### **1.6 Research Questions**

In order for the researcher to carry out his research effectively, the following guiding questions were used:

- What are the youth being taught in the catechism classes?
- What methods can be applied to enhance youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity?
- Why is it that many youths nowadays have lost interest in Church activities?
- To what extent does youth catechesis attract those who have the responsibility to catechize the youth, namely the promoters and the teachers of catechesis?
- What are some of the possible strategies that will help the Church to continue the systematic deepening of the message of faith to the youth?

### **1.7 Hypothesis**

Youth catechesis is one of the essential components of the Church's pastoral activity. Hence, there is need for the Church to revisit the content and the methods that are used to teach catechism to the youth.

### **1.8 Delimitation and Limitations of the Study**

Although this topic touches many areas, it is limited in scope to only some aspects that can help enhance youth catechesis within the Church's pastoral activity. And so, for the sake of clarity we could not focus on all aspects of catechesis but we

had to focus on youth catechesis without many details and purposefully omitted the other types of catechesis. Content and methods on how youth catechesis can be improved will be pointed out. So, we hope that as we try to explain on how youth catechesis can be enhanced in the Church other areas will be explored too.

Additionally, our study is based on the catechesis done at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Adam's Arcade within the Archdiocese of Nairobi - Kenya. The researcher chose Guadalupe Parish because the content and methods used to teach catechism there seemed to be the same as those practiced at other parishes within Nairobi Archdiocese.

### **1.9 Conclusion**

The researcher has presented through his observation and participation in teaching catechism at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish, how catechesis is taught and what is taught to the youth. Youth catechesis is an instruction given to the youth in the Christian doctrine in order to lead the youth to the fullness of Christian life in the Church. Youth catechesis is part of the Church's pastoral activity, and without it the Church can collapse as will be pointed out in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER TWO

### YOUTH CATECHESIS IN THE CHURCH'S PASTORAL ACTIVITY

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the research presents the views of related literature with regards to how youth catechesis can be enhanced within the Church's pastoral activity. Not only is it going to elaborate more on some pastoral agents responsible to teach catechesis to the youth but it will also point out some ways of teaching catechesis to the youth and the preferred content of what is to be taught. Nevertheless, before we tackle all these, the researcher thinks it may be appropriate to give a brief historical view of youth catechesis by actually looking at the history of 'catechesis' itself.

#### 2.2 Youth Catechesis in Historical Perspective

##### 2.2.1 *Biblical Roots of "Catechesis"*

The noun catechesis comes from the Greek word (κατήχησις).<sup>29</sup> This word "does not occur in the New Testament (NT); only the verbal form (κάτηχέιν) (Katechein) is to be found there in the NT for instance in Rom 2:17-21, though not in the technical sense it was later to acquire, being taken rather by the N.T authors in

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 173.

the current sense of the 'recount' or 'give *viva voce* instruction.'<sup>30</sup> In fact, 'Katechein' literally meant to 'echo' or 'resound' or even 'teaching'. In Acts 21:21-24, catechesis is used as information given to someone about something. We read: "That [the Jews] have been informed or told about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the gentiles to forsake the law of Moses, telling them not to circumcise their children or observe the customs (Acts 21:21)."<sup>31</sup> In other contexts, the word 'katechein', takes on a religious meaning, referring to the Jews being instructed in the Law that forbade many things<sup>32</sup> as we read in the letter of St. Paul to the Romans:

Now if you call yourself a Jew and rely on the law and boast of God and know his will and are able to discern what is important since you are instructed from the law, and if you are a guide for the blind and a light for those in darkness, that you are a trainer of the foolish and teacher of the simple, because in the law, you have the formulation of knowledge and truth - then you who teach another, are you failing to teach yourself? You who preach against stealing, do you still? (Rom 2:17-21).<sup>33</sup>

Besides, in Gal 6:6, 1 Cor 14:19 we hear of the Christians being instructed in the inspired word of God.<sup>34</sup> Also in Lk 1:4, we hear of the instruction being given in the events of Jesus' life. He shows us some kind of already set up program of catechesis.<sup>35</sup> Therefore, to give a kind of a summary, we can say that the N.T itself is a catechesis because the content of what we read is Jesus Christ himself.

During the time of the apostolic period, catechesis more often than not meant a moral instruction. Catechesis "was also considered as the continuation of the teaching ministry of Jesus Christ. The apostles were not imparting their own

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<sup>30</sup> J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 173.

<sup>31</sup> J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 106.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 173.

<sup>33</sup> Biblical citations in this research are taken from the African Bible.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 173.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 12.

teaching; instead, they were imparting the teaching of Christ."<sup>36</sup> This is clearly seen when St. Paul in his letters at three places used the word catechesis such as in Rom 2:18; 1Cor 14:19; as well as in Gal 6:6<sup>37</sup> has had mentioned earlier. In the Bible, the word that is frequently used to "refer to the teachings of Jesus Christ is *didakein* or *didache* which means to teach or teaching. Hence, we can say that Jesus is not called a catechist or instructor but a teacher (*didaskalos*). The word used to refer to the teaching act of Jesus is *didakein*."<sup>38</sup> St Paul also uses the word *didaskaloi* or *didache* to refer to the teachers and to the teachings though he uses it to refer to the teachings of Jesus and of the direct teaching of the apostles.<sup>39</sup>

During the apostolic period catechesis developed in two forms. The first form of catechesis was addressed to the converts from Judaism. Here the task of the catechesis for the Jews was to make clear that Christ is the promised Messiah. With the expansion of the Church to Syria, Asia Minor, and Greece, the second form of catechesis appeared and this was directed toward Hellenistic proselytes and converts from paganism.<sup>40</sup>

So, we can see that during this period, catechesis was a ministry through which new members, adults and youths were introduced into Christian community and to their way of life although the youth are not explicitly mentioned.

### ***2.2.2 Some Traces of Youth Catechesis in the Early Church up to Today***

Although there are no clear indications to youth catechesis in Church history, we still find some teachings in the *Didache* (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles-Syria

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<sup>36</sup> J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 107.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 107.

<sup>38</sup> J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 107.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 107.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 12-13.

c. 100)<sup>41</sup> and the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus written around 215 in Rome, which gives an account on *beliefs* and *moral imperatives* of the early Christians. We can guess with great certainty that the young people were part of the catechumenate and the teaching was meant for them as well. For instance, in the Apostolic Tradition of Hippolytus we read: "Those who are newly brought forward to hear the word shall first be brought before the teachers at the house, before all the people enter. Then they will be questioned concerning the reason that they have come forward to the faith."<sup>42</sup> Those who are newly brought forward are those who were catechized and ready to be admitted into the Church. Among them, without any doubt were the children, the youth and the adults.

Furthermore, in the same document, we are told that the children, the youth and the adults who were chosen, their lives were examined and if their lives were good, then they were accepted to receive the sacrament:

When they are chosen who are to receive baptism, let their lives be examined, whether they have lived honorably while catechumens, whether they honored the widows, whether they visited the sick, and whether they have done every good work. If those who bring them forward bear witness for them that they have done so, then let them hear the Gospel.<sup>43</sup>

During this period of Hippolytus, there was no mention of youth catechesis directly. Perhaps, the reason behind as was presumed by St. Augustine was that by instructing well the ignorant people or adults in the faith, they will in turn instruct

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<sup>41</sup> Cf. L. A. CLERICI, ed., *A Reader in Early Patristic Writings*, 17.

<sup>42</sup> HIPPOLYTUS, *Apostolic Tradition*, <<http://www.bombaxo.com/hippolytus.html>>, accessed on 20/01/15, 15.1-2.

<sup>43</sup> HIPPOLYTUS, *Apostolic Tradition*, <<http://www.bombaxo.com/hippolytus.html>>, accessed on 20/01/15, 20.1-2.

and introduce their children and the youth to grow in faith and discipleship in the Church.<sup>44</sup>

Also during this same period of the Church, most of the people who became Catholics were already adults. As a result, they had to undergo a catechumenate or a preparation for baptism which included instruction in belief, in practice, in prayer and in Christian life, before they were eventually accepted into the Church.<sup>45</sup> Now once these converts were instructed and accepted into the Church, "It was generally presumed that the children of such converts, who were themselves baptised in infancy, would be instructed by the families who had received a thorough catechetical preparation for Baptism and [other sacraments].<sup>46</sup>

And so, through this practice in the first centuries of the Church, we can easily trace youth catechesis by really looking at those people most likely the catechists and sponsors who introduced children in the faith of the Church.<sup>47</sup>

Today, the notion of catechesis has been retrieved to capture the broader mission and pastoral activity of the Church to indicate that the teaching of the faith cannot be reduced to the provision of a adult and children catechism as was frequently practiced in history but also to the youth who nowadays seem to be most venerable in order to put them in communion with Jesus Christ (cf. *CCC*, 426). Our effort in youth catechesis at the present time is to restore its due position in the pastoral activity of the Church.

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<sup>44</sup> Cf. "Catechesis in Church History", <http://www.ewtn.com/library/catechism/ncofcc.htm>, accessed on 19/01/15, 2.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. "Catechesis in Church History", <http://www.ewtn.com/library/catechism/ncofcc.htm>, accessed on 19/01/15, 2.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. "Catechesis in Church History", <http://www.ewtn.com/library/catechism/ncofcc.htm>, accessed on 19/01/15, 2.

<sup>47</sup> Cf. L. A. CLERICI, ed., *A Reader in Early Patristic Writings*, 65.

Therefore, as Audinet Jacques highlighted, "Catechism for the young remains a privileged instrument of the catechesis as a whole. It makes use of suitable pedagogical devices, always with an eye on the goal of catechesis."<sup>48</sup> It involves understanding of the mystery of Christ in the light of God's word, so that the whole entire life of the youth is impregnated by that word (cf. *CT*, 20). Catechesis has to take into consideration the child, the young people, and adults receptive to the word of God. This being the case, John Paul II and his successors calls on for the adaptation of catechesis for the youth (cf. *CT*, 40). This concern for youth catechesis was explained explicitly by Pope John Paul II:

It is reassuring to note that, during the fourth general assembly of the synod and the following years, the Church has widely shared its concern about how to impart catechesis to children and young people. [...] The synod has been variable for the whole Church [because it tried] to trace with the greatest possible precision the complex characteristics of present-day youth; by showing that these young persons speak a language into which the message of Jesus must be translated with patience and wisdom and without betrayal; by demonstrating that, in spite of appearances, these young people have within them, even though often in a confused way, not just a readiness or openness, but rather a real desire to know 'Jesus...who is called Christ' (*CT*, 40).

So, the youth need to be encouraged and supported by giving them the catechesis that is attuned to them in order for them to be able to grow in faith and live by it more and more (cf. *CT*, 42), despite the challenges they meet in our society. To implement the ideas raised by the synod fathers of the *Fourth General Assembly* of 1977 regarding catechesis, the Church has provided us with very valuable documents such as The '*General Directory For Catechesis*', '*Catechism of the Catholic Church*',

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<sup>48</sup> J. AUDINET, "Catechesis", in RAHNER, K., ed., *Encyclopedia of Theology: A Concise Sacramentum Mundi*, 177.

'*The Journey of Faith 1-7*', 'YOUCAT', as well also some local catechisms. All these documents and those not mentioned, provide us with a good content and method for teaching catechesis to the youth.

### **2.3 Importance of Youth Catechesis Within the Church's Pastoral Activities**

The youth are the "first victims of the spiritual and cultural upheaval facing the world today."<sup>49</sup> Besides, it is also true that any commitment to the betterment of our society finds its hopes in the young people. And so, the Church has to be motivated all the more to announce the Gospel to the youth with courage and creativity (cf. *GDC*, 131). Youth catechesis is important within the Church's pastoral activities because:

- It makes the youth feel at home for their faith in the parish community and the Catholic family at large.<sup>50</sup> Youth catechesis develops the faith of the young people at an early stage in order for them to understand the Church's teachings and what is expected of them as Christian youths and even as they grow up into adulthood.
- It helps the youth have "intimate ability to sense the Sacred and develop a relationship with God,"<sup>51</sup> with one another and with self.
- It gives the youth an opportunity to attend to their existing faith experiences.
- It empowers the youth with the knowledge and skills for active participation in the Church's pastoral activities. Furthermore, youths are also helped to apply their Catholic faith to their day-to-day life experiences, nurture in youths a

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<sup>49</sup> It was pointed out by EVLYNN NDILU, the Youth Matron of both the youth of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish (OLGP) and its outstation St. Benedict in Kibera where I did my 'practicum' experience on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 2014.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

<sup>51</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

lifelong commitment to our faith as Catholics, guiding them in developing their personal spirituality and prayer basing on the content of their lives and the content of Catholic faith.<sup>52</sup>

- Last but not least, youth catechesis helps the youth cultivate their skills, gifts and talents, and empower them to use these gifts for continuing their growth in leadership and pastoral ministries of the Church today and the future.

### ***2.3.1 Relationship Between Youth Catechesis and Pastoral Ministry***

Pastoral ministry in the Church comprises of so many areas of which youth catechesis is one: a very remarkable one in the whole process of evangelisation in the Church (cf. *GDC*, 63). Youth catechesis is "thus the necessary link between missionary activity which calls to faith and pastoral activity which continually nourishes the Christian community" (cf. *GDC*, 65) into the fullness of Christian life. It is part and parcel of pastoral activity of the Church through which the Church is able to achieve its mission of evangelisation. Thus, youth catechesis is not "an optional activity, but (it is) basic and fundamental for building up the personality of the individual (youth)" (*GDC*, 64). Without it, pastoral activity within the Church may lack roots and become superficial and eventually may cause directly the collapse of the entire Church (cf. *GDC*, 64).

### ***2.3.2 The Purpose of Youth Catechesis***

One of the ways to enhance youth catechesis in the Church is to look at the purpose of youth catechesis. According to De Souza Cyril, youth catechesis has the purpose to arouse the faith of the youth "to ever deeper intimacy with Christ

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<sup>52</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

through an ongoing, ever broadening conversion."<sup>53</sup> In fact, not only youth catechesis has the purpose to "help the faith of the young to grow through a series of life-challenges and successful conversions-as-response"<sup>54</sup> as De Souza pointed out, but also it is to "educate the youth by means of a profound and more systematic knowledge of the person and message of Jesus Christ."<sup>55</sup>

In addition, youth catechesis has the purpose to instill spirituality, which is the main outgrowth of an authentic religious education of the youth as De Souza pointed out: "The faith formation of the young is the one necessary ingredient to ensure that the adults of tomorrow are spiritually armed and equipped to live their lives as fully convinced and committed Christians."<sup>56</sup> Accordingly, "youth catechesis should be a serious and profound pastoral action, that aims at bringing about the kind of faith development in the young Christians that builds up in them a contemporary spirituality, one that will make out of them mature believers"<sup>57</sup> to respond to the particular situation in the world of today.

Also, Benedict XVI, in his Post-Synod Apostolic Exhortation, "*Africae Munus*", asserts that:

the goal of youth catechesis is to help young people to gain confidence and familiarity with sacred Scripture so that it can become a compass pointing out the path to follow. Young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers (cf. *AM*, 61).

In a word, the reason of youth catechesis is to mature the faith of the youth from their initial stage and to help them discern their vocation.

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<sup>53</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 23.

<sup>54</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 21.

<sup>55</sup> Cf. C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 24.

<sup>56</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 23-24.

<sup>57</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 31.

### 2.3.3 *The Sources of Youth Catechesis*

When we talk about youth catechesis, we may wonder and ask ourselves a question whether it is also drawn from the same source as that of adult catechesis. Catechesis is one. Hence, the basic sources are the same. However, what matters most is the content and methods used to present it to a particular group. Like in the rest of catechesis the fundamental sources of youth catechesis are:

drawn from the living Word of God transmitted in Tradition and the Scriptures, for 'sacred Tradition and Sacred Scriptures make up a single sacred deposit of the Word of God, which is entrusted to the Church', [...] to speak of Tradition and Scripture as the source of catechesis is to draw attention to the fact that catechesis must be impregnated and penetrated by the thought, the spirit and the outlook of the Bible and the Gospels through assiduous contact with the texts themselves [...] (CT, 27).

The Word of God is the living source of catechesis. The word is the wisdom of God which in the light of the New Testament is Jesus Christ who is to be known to youths by means of their actions and words (cf. *GDC*, 94). By '*divine condescension*' (*DV*, 13) this '*word*' "became flesh and dwelt among us" (Jn 1:14) and that "his voice continues to resound in the Church and in the world through the Holy Spirit" (*GDC*, 94).

The primary sources of youth catechesis are Sacred Scripture, which "is the speech of God as it is put down in writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit" (*GDC*, 96), the Sacred Tradition that "transmits in its entirety the word of God which has been entrusted to the apostles by Christ the Lord and the Holy Spirit" (*GDC*, 96), and the Magisterium which has the "duty of giving authentic interpretation of the word of God" (*GDC*, 96).

Its subsidiary sources is meditation upon the word of God, Holy Mass, Christian witness of the saints, Church history, theological research, religious and moral principles which take roots in society and culture (cf. *GDC*, 95-96).

All these sources such as the word of God, which is the living source of youth catechesis and other sources both primary and subsidiary, are closely linked to each other according to its own way. However, all that is to be transmitted to the youth in depth is the person of Jesus Christ and the truth that He communicates to humanity through the Holy Spirit so that the youth can radiate God's love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22) in their lives.

#### **2.4 Pastoral Agents Responsible for Providing Catechesis for the Youth**

In our Church, "the whole Community of the faithful" (*GDC*, 220-221) has a responsibility for providing and teaching catechism to the young people. The Bishops, for instance, are the chief catechists in a particular Church. Together with the Pope, they are the catechists par excellence (cf. *CT*, 63). Their principle role is to get involved in seeing to the authenticity of the teaching of the faith, providing necessary personnel, financial resources, and the quality of textbooks and other tools being used in catechesis (cf. *GDC*, 223). In short, bishops are to maintain in the Church a real enthusiasm for bringing about youth catechesis.

The priests "are the immediate assistants of (the) Bishops" (*CT*, 64) in providing catechesis to the youth and to make sure that the catechesis given to them is carefully structured. The priests are the "instructors of the people in the faith" (cf. *PO*, 6) and so, they themselves are to teach youths faith and "warn them as their dearest children" (cf. *PO*, 6) of what is currently happening in the world today. Also priests have the duty to look and encourage Christians to take up the work as catechists. Deacons and other ministers are natural assistants of the priest in catechizing the youth (cf. *CT*, 64).

Besides, Religious men and women present at the parishes or any institution also have the responsibility to impart the faith to the youth. As St. John Paul II said, "many religious institutes for men and women came into being for the purpose of giving Christian education to children and young people [...]" (CT, 65). Religious men and women ought to be totally dedicated and available for Church's pastoral activity and especially in catechizing the youth. Also, the catechists who have volunteered themselves and those chosen among the faithful should be well trained and give full time service of educating the youth our faith. Catechists, as Pope Francis pointed out in his homily during the Holy Mass for catechists, are people who keep the memory of God alive; they keep it alive in themselves and they are able to revive this memory of God in the lives of the youth through catechesis.<sup>58</sup> Thus, catechists should collaborate with the parish priest and those in the pastoral team in trying to awaken in the youth the sense of God in their lives.<sup>59</sup>

Furthermore, we have also family catechesis that enhances all other forms of catechesis in the Church as regards to the faith of the youth. We see that:

the early years of the child are passed almost exclusively within the family. [...] during this time attitudes are formed that can hardly be eradicated in later life. The parents are always with their children; and their influence, if properly used, will outweigh undesirable external influences and safeguard the future of the children [when they grow up]. Christian parents should be to their children [and the youth] what we may call a first picture of God, a 'kind of transparency of his presence'. In the ideal home, their love, generosity, kindness, piety, and humility coupled with a true Christian dignity will leave indelible marks [...] and will form stepping-stones to God.<sup>60</sup>

The family is, so to speak "the church of the home" (CT, 68). In it parents should, by their word and example, be the first educators of the faith to their

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<sup>58</sup> Cf. "Who are Catechists"?, <[www.ccee.eu/00002303\\_catechesis\\_section.html](http://www.ccee.eu/00002303_catechesis_section.html)>, accessed on 02/02/15, 1.

<sup>59</sup> Cf. J. HOFINGER - C. HOWELL, *ed.*, *Teaching all Nations*, 295.

<sup>60</sup> J. HOFINGER - C. HOWELL, *ed.*, *Teaching all Nations*, 294.

children. They should encourage children and young people in the vocation which is proper to them, fostering with special care a vocation to a sacred state (cf. *LG*, 11) through receiving '*bona fide*' catechesis.

As well, we have the SCC, which is a "little church cell wherein the mystery is lived directly and with great simplicity."<sup>61</sup> According to Fr. Healey, J.G, it is "a new model of church."<sup>62</sup> SCCs are the church on the move: the church from bottom up. And so, they are the bone and flesh of the faith of the young people in the Church. Youths enjoy being in the groups and plan their activities. So not only SCCs should take the responsibility for the wealth and expansion of faith to the youth and to attract them to participate in Church's pastoral activity, but they are also to help to show to young people more clearly the diversity and the unity of the Church.<sup>63</sup>

The school is one of the predominant place and new consciousness of the identity of youth catechesis. Of course I am very much aware of the many arguments of about whether education of religion or even of faith is to be extended to non Catholic schools or not. If we think in the same line as Alberich and VallabaraJ, indeed, teachers more especially those from Catholic Schools have the responsibility to give *information* to the youth by providing them "a serious and an objective knowledge of the religious facts in its essence and its manifestations."<sup>64</sup> Above all, teachers are to give *formation* to the youth that can enable the youth to be free, responsible and mature in their faith as well as giving the youth education for peace in order to educate them towards peaceful coexistence and for dialogue in different

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<sup>61</sup> J. G. HEALEY, *Building the Church as Family of God*, 5.

<sup>62</sup> J. G. HEALEY, *Building the Church as Family of God*, 125.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 216.

<sup>64</sup> E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 233.

religious persuasions.<sup>65</sup> So, providing this kind of education to the youth in school, is in fact catechesis at the grass root in which teachers are to devote themselves to sustaining the faith of the youth. Schools are appropriate places for providing youth catechesis.

Likewise, youth matrons and patrons are also religious educators of faith to the youth. They are chosen and entrusted with the duty of accompanying the youth at the parish. They are not only to escort the youth when they have some activities outside the parish to perform but they are also to nurture in the youth positive Catholic values of love, integrity, responsibility, and community of life for them to continue growing in the Catholic faith. They have to encourage youths to take part in the Church's pastoral activities fully. As Christian parents whose role is basically to give the youth good catechesis, they determine on how the youth turn out in the future.

Finally, the youth themselves are the effective pastoral agents responsible for their own growth in faith. Once the youth have received good catechesis, then surely, they will in turn evangelise their fellow youths to be responsible in life and to become active participants in Church activities; be it in meetings, Mass animation, works of charity and so on. Youths like to be together; and so, their togetherness and encouragement they give to each other should leave an impact on their life for they are instruments of faith to each other.

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<sup>65</sup> Cf. E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 233.

## 2.5 The Content of Youth Catechesis

Knowing the content of what is to be imparted in catechesis in general is very important though this content varies depending on the group one is having. However, what is clear is that "there is the essential content, the living substance, which cannot be modified or ignored without seriously diluting the nature" (*EN*, 25) of catechesis. And so, the youth who were attending confirmation classes at Guadalupe parish had to be taught the same content based on the Catechism of the Catholic Church. The content in brief was more on introducing the youth to the Catholic doctrine and faith. These included the Ten Commandments, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, fruits of the Holy Spirit, seven works of Mercy, the history about creation, Sacraments, Liturgy, and the Church precepts. With prayers, the youth were taught the sign of the Cross, common prayers such as the "Glory Be," "Our Father," "Hail Mary," "the Apostles Creed," and other prayers before and after meals and so on.

Now looking at what the youth were taught, we can say that the content was good but need to be improved in order to fully help the youth deepen their faith and prayer in the Church's pastoral activity. Faith in Jesus and commitment without catechesis is worthless. Therefore, among other things the youth are supposed to be taught during catechism classes are about their faith as Christians, celebration of the Christian mysteries, life in Christ, and Christian prayer.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 5.

### ***2.5.1 The Faith of the Youth as Christians***

The faith expression of some of the young people in the Church seems to be limited only to Sunday Mass and to occasional devotional practices.<sup>67</sup> The youth need to be taught about what we believe as Christians. At least, the youth should know from the very beginning the reasons why we believe that we are here on earth so as to love God, to serve him and to give him reverence.<sup>68</sup> The youth need to be aware that God desires them and the entire people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (cf. 1 Tim 2:4).<sup>69</sup> Also it is not superfluous for the youth to know about the "witness given to the Father's love by Jesus Christ and that salvation is in Jesus Christ and it is offered to all people, as a gift of God's grace and mercy" (EN, 26-27).

Notwithstanding, the youth have to be instructed that they are receptive to God, and that God approaches the youth in stages and transmission of divine revelation and Sacred Scripture.<sup>70</sup> It is normal for the youth to search for God who supports them, satisfies them, and employs them totally in his service. Furthermore, when explaining to the youth why they should believe, let them be aware also of their response to God, the characteristics and language of faith (CCC, 153-170), the knowledge of God according to the Church, the Christian Profession of faith, through believing in God the Father, in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God as well as in the Holy Spirit.<sup>71</sup> In other words, the priest or the catechist should explain to the youth how they can respond to God, that is, to believe in him, when he

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<sup>67</sup> Cf. C. De SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 22-27.

<sup>68</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 1.

<sup>69</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 1.

<sup>70</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 1-8.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 1.

speaks to them as Mary said, "behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38). Also the youth have to be taught the reasons why the Church attaches great importance to faith. Youths have to understand that "Faith is not about empty words but about reality. In the 'Church', condensed formulas of faith were developed over the course of time; with their help we can contemplate, express, learn, hand on, celebrate, and live out this reality."<sup>72</sup>

Besides, the '*Nicene-Constantinopolitan*' creed is to be explained to the youth in details. Also why we believe in one God?; Why the reports about Jesus called 'the Gospel' or 'the Good News'?; Relationship between God and Jesus, and human beings as well what it means to say 'I believe in the Holy Spirit' as found in Jn 14:14; Mt 1:18; Lk 4:16-19; Jn 19:30; Jn 20:22; 1 Cor 12:3b and so on.<sup>73</sup>

### ***2.5.2 Celebration of the Christian Mysteries***

As Catholic Christians, we celebrate the Christian mysteries that are 'the Sacraments', by "encountering Jesus Christ in time. Until the end of time he is present in his CHURCH. The most profound encounter with him on earth is the LITURGY (Divine Worship)."<sup>74</sup> In brief, the content here to be taught is: God acts in the life of the youth and ours in general by means of sacred signs and the Sacred Liturgy, the sacramental celebration of the paschal mystery, the seven sacraments of the Church such as the sacraments of initiation (Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist), the sacraments of healing (Reconciliation and the anointing of the sick), and well as the sacraments of communion and mission (Holy Orders and

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<sup>72</sup> THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 25.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 71-115.

<sup>74</sup> THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 166-167.

Marriage).<sup>75</sup> As well, explain to the youth other liturgical celebrations and sacramentals like holy water, the consecration of a bell, the blessing of the house or automobile, receiving of ashes on Ash Wednesday, Easter candle, and many others.<sup>76</sup>

### ***2.5.3 The Life in Christ and the Youth***

There is need to teach the youth why they are put on earth, what they are supposed to do, and how God's Holy Spirit helps them to do it.<sup>77</sup> Also youths are to be taught about the dignity of human person and that "God created man in his image; in the divine image he created him; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27), their vocation to beatitudes, their freedom as they call it today, morality, the virtues, and what sin is all about (CCC, 1720-1873).

It is also necessary that the youth are taught the communal character of human beings, the importance of being able to get along well with the people, with whom they live (cf. CCC, 1878-1889), about *the Church* in general and how it helps us all lead a good and responsible life,<sup>78</sup> and about the Ten Commandments of God: they shall love the Lord their God with all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind (cf. CCC, 2083-2195), and they shall *love their neighbour as themselves* (from fourth Commandment to tenth commandment),<sup>79</sup> with special emphasis on the Scriptural texts such as Mt 19:16-17; Mt 19:21; Ex 20:2-17; Dt 5:6-21 and many more (cf. CCC, 2052-2076).

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<sup>75</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 172-178.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 272.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 279.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 343-345.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 367-468.

### **2.5.4 Prayer in the Life of the Youth**

Last but not least, it is necessary that the youth are taught the importance of prayer in their life, what prompts the person to pray, the gift of God's presence, the sources of prayer:<sup>80</sup> Prayer in the Old Testament (OT) and in the fullness of time, in the age of the Church (CCC, 2566-2649), the way of prayer and the Lord's Prayer: The Our Father (cf. Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4).<sup>81</sup> Also encourage the youth to pray regularly as St. Gregory Nazianzen (330-390) said, "one should remember God more frequently than one breathes."<sup>82</sup>

Therefore, in brief the, content of youth catechesis as Pope John Paul II pointed out is "man's creation and sin; God's plan of redemption and its long, loving preparation and realization; the incarnation of the Son of God; Mary, the Immaculate one, the Mother of God [...], sacramental and liturgical action, the reality of the Eucharistic Presence, and so on (CT, 30). In short, the entire life of faith of the youth as a whole has to be believed, celebrated, lived, and prayed.

### **2.6 Methods of Imparting Catechesis to the Youth**

Method refer to the way and means in which catechesis is conducted. It is the way of passing on the faith to the youth and even to other groups. Clearly, "catechetical methodology has the simple objective of education in the faith. It avails itself of the pedagogical sciences and of communication, as applied to catechesis, while also taking account of the numerous and notable acquisitions of contemporary catechesis" (GDC, 148). Very often, the concern of youth catechesis is not only on the content of catechesis, as had been pointed out earlier, but on the

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<sup>80</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 470-490.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 499-527.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. THE GERMAN BISHOP'S CONFERENCE, *YOUCAT*, 499.

method used to catechize as well. It is about how the faith can be transmitted faithfully and effectively to the youth and to different groups in the Church.<sup>83</sup> There are varieties of methods that can be used to communicate and transmit the faith to the youth in an effective manner and below are some of these methods.

### **2.6.1 Inductive and Deductive Methods**

The Communication of the faith to the youth is an event of grace that is comprehended in the encounter of the word of God and the experience of an individual. According to Isara Callistus:

Two methods worth referring to in the history of [communicating the faith to the youth in] the Church are *inductive* and *deductive* methods. The inductive method is teaching from the particular to universal, from effect to cause. This means using concrete facts such as biblical events, the liturgy, the life of the Church, and our individual faith experiences, to come to divine revelation and God's message for us. From concrete life and faith experiences, we come to the truths of divine revelation; from visible knowledge to invisible reality; from practical experience to our understanding of God's revelation. The deductive method, on the other hand, begins from the universal to the particular; from cause to effect. This means understanding first the content of divine revelation, biblical passage, liturgy, [events from daily life], and then relating them to individual and particular situations in life.<sup>84</sup>

In the case of youth catechesis, both methods inductive and deductive could be used (cf. appendix III).

### **2.6.2 Memorization**

Memorization has been one of the most used methods in the history of Christianity. Our forefathers through oral transmission, they understood and kept the faith as it was handed on to them by use of memory before the Bible was written.<sup>85</sup>

Many youths currently prefer simple ways of looking for a solution by use of

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<sup>83</sup> C. ISARA, "Methodology of Catechesis", <[gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc](http://gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc)>, accessed on 04/02/15, 1.

<sup>84</sup> C. ISARA, "Methodology of Catechesis", <[gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc](http://gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc)>, accessed on 04/02/15, 2.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. C. ISARA, "Methodology of Catechesis", <[gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc](http://gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc)>, accessed on 04/02/15, 2.

new technologies. Hence, there is little effort to put to memory what they have learnt in catechism classes. Nevertheless, memorization still remains one of the vivid ways of teaching catechism to the youth today in order for them to keep and maintain the presence of God among them. According to Isara Callistus:

There are various aspects of the faith [of the youth] that should be committed to memory. Some of the major texts in the Bible, the teachings of the Church, some parts of the liturgy, and the common prayers of the Christian Tradition: the creed, Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be [...], Act of contrition, (and many others). Most of us learnt catechism by memorization.<sup>86</sup>

And so, memorization remains a dominant means of preparing the young people spiritually and for their future responsibilities. All what they need is some form of explanation of the faith they are to embrace.

### ***2.6.3 Questions and Answers***

Questions and answers methodology may also be helpful to enhance catechetical instructions among the youth. The catechist may prepare the lesson to be taught in a question and answer format using the books such as "Manual for Catechists," "The Catechism of the Catholic Church: Compendium" (CCCC), "A Catholic Catechism" (CC), (localised Catechism by Kenya Episcopal Conference), "YOUCAT", and many others. The researcher saw this method being used at Guadalupe parish and he could see many youths taking part in the discussion.

### ***2.6.4 Audio/Visual Aids***

Visual aids are one of the tools that can be used in youth catechesis. After using the methods already discussed above, abundant, stimulating and enriching tools and materials such as photos, videos, films, slides, placards, as well as

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<sup>86</sup> C. ISARA, "Methodology of Catechesis", <[gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc](http://gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc)>, accessed on 04/02/15, 2.

recordings, assemblages, radio programs and documentaries may be utilised occasionally in order to effectively transmit the message to the youth.<sup>87</sup> The use of music, and the homily in the Eucharistic celebration could help the transmission of faith too. The catechist can actively engage the catechumens and the youth by showing them a good and inspiring movie on the related topic for them to connect and easily understand what the catechist is teaching.

Besides, tales and story-telling can also be one of the methods that can help to improve youth catechesis. In our cultures, story-telling has been a vital tool of communication. Jesus Christ used story-telling in the form of parables to teach the people. Hence, we could tap into the reservoir of our story-telling culture to transmit the faith and other Christian values to the youth.<sup>88</sup>

#### ***2.6.5 Catechetical Tour***

Catechetical tours may be arranged during the course of the instructions. The catechists or even those people in charge of the young people, occasionally, may organise a pilgrimage to some of the places of importance in our Christian faith be it Shrines, some Churches, or organise retreats, recollections, and so on. This is in view of letting the youth be in contact with the reality besides what they are learning in class or in their gathering.

#### ***2.6.6 Human Experience and Images***

This method is essential in youth catechesis. Human experience gives rise to the youth, "interests, questions, hopes, anxieties, reflections and judgments, which

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<sup>87</sup> Cf. E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 275.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. C. ISARA, "Methodology of Catechesis", [gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc](http://gesinstitute.org/word/methodologyInCatechesis.doc), accessed on 04/02/15, 3.

increase one's desire to penetrate more deeply into life's meaning."<sup>89</sup> It is the task of youth catechesis to use human experience in order to make the youth aware of their experiences and enable them to judge in the light of the Gospel (cf. *GDC*, 152). The use of human experience also promotes intelligibility of the Christian message as S. Alathara stated:

Experience promotes the intelligibility of the Christian message, by providing illustrations and examples which shed light on the truth of revelation [...]. Christ himself preached the kingdom of God by use of illustrations drawn from human experiences and situations in order to explain eschatological and transcendent realities.

So, it is important for the catechist to teach the youth by means of this method in order for them to read their own lived experience to discover God's plan for them (cf. *GDC*, 152). In this method, the lesson begins with a story, normally from the Bible, followed by an *explanation* of the moral truths which it contains, and finally by its *application* in concrete life of the youth under instructions.<sup>90</sup>

### ***2.6.7 The Joint Study, Preaching, and Social Media***

These methods have a fundamental importance. For instance, in group methods, youth catechesis "takes on the character of a joint study. Joint study aims at exploring the mutual relationships between the content of the Christian message, which is always the norm for believing and acting, and the experiences of the group."<sup>91</sup> In group method, the youth are educated in the faith through sharing the experience of the group. The catechist is a facilitator.

Preaching is also another method of imparting the faith to the youth. The priest can put into good use of the exigencies and the possibility of preaching, so

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<sup>89</sup> S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 164.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 147-148.

<sup>91</sup> S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 171-172.

that it acquires all its pastoral effectiveness (cf. *EN*, 42-43). "This is why Saint Paul's axiom, 'Faith comes from what is heard,' also retains its relevance: it is the word that is heard which leads to belief" (*EN*, 42). Therefore, preaching is essential and cannot be neglected in any celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

Pope Paul VI pointed out that "our century is characterized by the mass media of social communication, and the first proclamation, catechesis or the further deepening of faith cannot do without these means" (*EN*, 45). Many youths use social media these days in communicating. And so, pastors and the laity are encouraged to use best of their ability through their technical, economic, cultural, and artistic talents in order to enhance youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity (cf. *IM*, 3). The social media is at the highest calling of revealing the truth with used with discernment (cf. *IM*, 1-24). If taken seriously, the use of social communication is a very good method for propagating the faith of the youth.

#### ***2.6.8 Mystagogical Catechesis***

"Youth catechesis is ongoing process up to adulthood. It begins at youth stage and must be carried forward, as a person develops through young adult into adulthood."<sup>92</sup> Hence, the youth still need to be accompanied in their faith journey after receiving the sacraments. This could be done by making available different activities for the youth to take part in such as singing, recollections, animation of the Holy Mass, and so on. Give the youth instructions that always aim at motivating them, at each session, to commit them to Jesus, in the Church. Giving the youth ongoing faith formation, "is the one necessary ingredient to assure that the adults of

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<sup>92</sup> C. BERNARD, "Education of Youth in a Christian View of Sexuality", 11.

tomorrow are spiritually armed and equipped to live their lives as fully conceived and committed Christians"<sup>93</sup> in the Church's pastoral activities.

## **2.7 The Need for Substantial Content**

There is a call for a substantial and accurate catechesis to the youth in order for them to be open to learn and appreciate the truths, values, and behavioural norms of Christian life. Solid youth catechesis may be expressed in the language of today (cf. *GDC*, 185), so that the youth are not forced to cope with terms beyond their comprehension.<sup>94</sup> More stress on discipleship than on the communal membership may be put in order to capture the spiritual interest of the youth. "The fact that Jesus Christ is the fullness of revelation is the foundation for the '*Christocentricity*' of catechesis: the mystery of Christ, in the revealed message, is not another element alongside others, it is rather the centre from which all other elements are structured and illuminated."<sup>95</sup> So, youth catechesis is to put the youth always in communion and intimacy with Christ through their active participation in the Church.

Thus, necessary adaptation of youth catechesis "would include the spiritual resources of Christian faith like hope, strength, truth, compassion, love, freedom, moral principles and service."<sup>96</sup> This comprehensible teaching of doctrine to the youth smoothens the progress of memorization as mentioned earlier, which is an essential component of youth catechesis. When this memorization is properly integrated into the catechetical program of the youth, it gives the youth a sense of accomplishment and mastery, enables them to feel part of the entire Christian

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<sup>93</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 21.

<sup>94</sup> Cf. SYNOD OF BISHOPS "Fourth General Assembly", on the Message to the People of God and Interventions of the U.S. Delegates, 70.

<sup>95</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 176.

<sup>96</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 176.

community and intensifies their Catholic identity.<sup>97</sup> In brief therefore, youth catechesis ought to enable youth's response to revelation through their personal commitment and is connected also with the commitment of those responsible to teach to them.

## **2.8 Jesus Christ: The Foundation of Catechesis and the Supreme Catechist**

The mystery and redemption brought by Jesus Christ (cf. *CT*, 5) is the fundamental point of catechesis. Jesus Christ went about doing good by preaching the Good News to different kinds of people including the youth. The content of his teaching was the kingdom of God. He used various methods to communicate and facilitate better catechesis and community participation. Jesus Christ used parables, storytelling, sermons, miracles, preaching, group gathering and metaphors to teach the community about the kingdom of God and to help them see how the Scriptures are life giving. For example, Jesus says: "You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned?" (Mt 5:13), "You are the light of the world. A city set on the mountain cannot be hidden" (Mt 5:14). In the Gospel according to Luke, we have the Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37), which is a great story to teach about the love of neighbour.

Also in the same Gospel according to Luke, Jesus said, "What is the kingdom of God like? To what can I compare it? It is like a mustard seed that a person took and planted in the garden. When it was fully grown, it became a large bush and 'the birds of the sky dwelt in its branches'" (Lk 13:18-19). To the crowds, he never spoke to them except in parables (Mt 13:34). And so, it was through the use

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. SYNOD OF BISHOPS "Fourth General Assembly", on the Message to the People of God and Interventions of the U.S. Delegates, 70.

of all these parables and metaphors that Jesus conveyed the reality and truth of the kingdom of God to the people. So, the heart of catechesis and the example to follow is Jesus of Nazareth (cf. *CT*, 5). According to the *General Directory for Catechesis*, "Jesus Christ not only transmits the word of God, but he himself is the word of God. Therefore, youth catechesis too is totally tied to him. And so, all that is transmitted through youth catechesis is the teaching of Jesus Christ: He who is the truth (cf. *GDC*, 98).

Prophet Malachi emphasises the importance and understanding of the word of God in ministry and catechesis. He pronounces a condemnation on those who neglect this ministry (cf. Mal 2:7-9).<sup>98</sup> We can apply this to those who are involved in teaching catechism to the youth by paying attention to teaching the texts of the New Testament more extensively by use of a proper method to a particular group to be catechized. Jesus used story telling in the form of parables to teach the listeners. Hence, we could also enter into our story telling cultures as one method of transmitting the faith to the youth.

As regards to the apostles, they also began to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ mainly by preaching the kingdom of God as Jesus had commanded them, "Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature" (Mk 16:15).

Puthiyedath J, reports that:

The content of their preaching was the Christ event, and the content of their teaching was Jesus' teachings. The content of the Gospels by all the evangelists was the same, the life and teaching of Jesus Christ; that is the Good News of Jesus Christ. We can see it clearly in the Gospel of Mark. This Gospel begins with the words 'The beginning of the Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ' (Mk 1:1). When we follow the Gospel of Mark, we can understand that it is the narration of what Jesus has done and taught. In the preaching of Peter in Jerusalem at the day of Pentecost,

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<sup>98</sup> Cf. T. MANJALY, "Building up Faith Communities", 150.

together with all the apostles, [...] he narrates there all the things God has done and said, in and through his only Son Jesus Christ (Acts 2:14-36).<sup>99</sup>

Therefore, in teaching catechesis to the youth, we share in the experience of the faith of the apostolic community whose content and method of teaching were centred on Jesus Christ.

## **2.9 Youth Catechesis and Theology**

Youth catechesis passes on the faith to the youth and leads them to the knowledge of God. Hence, youth catechesis calls for a definite foundation to help the youth seek to know God better. What is authentic for youth catechesis is as well proper for theology since one of the tasks of theology is service of faith to people and in particular to the youth. Pope John Paul II, in explaining the relationship between catechesis and theology, insisted that "catechists for their part must have the wisdom to pick from the field of theological research those points that can provide light for their own reflection and their teaching" (*CT*, 61). The points picked by the teachers have to be simple and easy to be understood by the youth at their level in order for them to gradually enter into the whole mystery of Christ's incarnation and redemption. There is no way we can do youth catechesis without taking into consideration the mystery of God, his word and his love, as revealed in the Sacred Scripture.

Both youth catechesis and theology have as their starting point the revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Both, while relating to revelation in a different way have the same goal that is to enrich the faith of the youth. In fact, through the authentic reading of the Bible during the time of catechizing the youth, the youth are lead to a

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<sup>99</sup> J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 69-70.

life with God and to participation in divine life itself. Through catechesis, the youth freely come to respond to the word of God and continue in this vital dialogue between catechesis and theology. Thus, youth catechesis "must be impregnated and penetrated by the thought, the spirit and the outlook of the Bible and the Gospel" (CT, 27). To support this idea above, Lining Waltraud, stated that:

The Bible itself reveals how God educated his people through his covenant. So, it is through insertion into revelation that the unity and the entirety of teaching in the faith and the life of faith of the youth can and does provide the keys for the true understanding of the word of God transmitted in Sacred Scripture through the Tradition of the Church.<sup>100</sup>

In view of what Lining W. stated then, we can say that through clear understanding of the Holy Scripture, the youth become instruments of the transmission of revelation today and tomorrow, as it is written: "You will be my witnesses [...] to the ends of the world" (Acts 1:8).

## **2.10 Discernment of the Vocation Through Catechesis**

First of all, it is important to mention that the ultimate vocation of every human person is the call to holiness (cf. *GS*, 32). As regards to the youth, there are many ways in which they can be helped to discern or identify this ultimate vocation in life. One of the ways, and I suppose the most important one, is through youth catechesis. Catechesis assists and supports the youth in their choice of vocation, which is, pertaining to marriage and religious life among others. The youth gets informed that God calls each one of them personally to serve Him, and this is their vocation, their call. Vocation is a call from God.<sup>101</sup> And so, the youth are also called by God in a general way.

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<sup>100</sup> W. LINING, "Using the Bible in Catechesis", <[www.studiumdenotredame-devie.org/trans/multimedia/lining-the-bible-in-catechesis.pdf](http://www.studiumdenotredame-devie.org/trans/multimedia/lining-the-bible-in-catechesis.pdf)>, accessed on 15/02/15, 5-6.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. D. GUERESI, *About Vocation*, 6.

Those involved in teaching catechesis to the youth are called to explain to them that all of them are called to live their lives to the full, to be part of the human environment such as a family, a nation, a community, a tribe and so on;<sup>102</sup> as well as in due time to make a free choice on how they would like to live their life at the service of God and the Church rooted in the will of God. And then, in that context, also to choose a career, a particular responsibility in society, where they will live out their vocation, their call. But in and through catechesis they need to be invited and encouraged early enough into different ministries in the Church as *National Directory for Catechesis (USA)* states:

Catechesis with the youth draws them into the liturgical life and mission of the Church. It invites the youth to commit themselves to Christ, live fully Christian lives, and carefully consider their life discernment, whether it be to priesthood, marriage life, and other careers they may draw to. This can also be an opportunity to consider a future of lay ecclesial ministry in the Church's pastoral activity. Practically, the youth should be trained in various areas and given an opportunity to take part in all activities of the Church such as to serve as liturgical ministers.<sup>103</sup>

Therefore, the youth have a special call to follow Christ in various ways. Most of them would be called to marriage and bringing up a good family while others too may decide to join religious life as sisters, brothers and priests.

Besides, not only should youths be taught about marriage and religious life, but they may also be given information on professions such as being a teacher, a doctor, a pilot, an engineer, and so on. I wonder if many youths of St. Benedict especially will be able to get into university to achieve their dreams. So, youth catechesis is one of the roads through which the youth grow in maturity and in strength and courage to be able to overcome setbacks and disappointments. Youth

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<sup>102</sup> Cf. D. GUERESI, *About Vocation*, 6-7.

<sup>103</sup> Cf. *NDC*, <[www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/upload/national-directory-for-catechesis-on-young-adults.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/upload/national-directory-for-catechesis-on-young-adults.pdf)>, accessed on 23/01/15, 2.

catechesis is there to help them to reflect individually and as a group on the life experience of a Jeremiah or David and Samuel and above all on the experience of Jesus' disciples and of course on Jesus' own struggled to cope with obstacles and disappointments in his life.

### **2.11 Naming the Experience of a God Already Active and Present Among the Youth**

We are aware that all human beings "have the natural ability to know God."<sup>104</sup> In fact, the human faculties make us capable of coming to knowledge of the existence of a personal God. God the creator of all that exists, "can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason'. [...] (human beings) have this capacity because (they are) created 'in the image of God.'"<sup>105</sup> Thus, the youth in particular already have an experience of a God who helps, through the people in the Church who have helped them in one way or the other, to discover who they are.

The youth have already a faith relationship with God but it seemed they do not know it. And so, youth catechesis has to help them attend to their existing faith experiences.<sup>106</sup> They are the light and salt of the world (cf. Mt 5:13-16) but do they know it? Only when they become aware of it will they be able to be relied upon in their present and future ministries in the Church and pastoral agents in the

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<sup>104</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 172.

<sup>105</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 173.

proclamation of the kingdom of God they are empowered and their God. They need in and through appropriate catechesis to be empowered and their God-given talents are appreciated.

## **2.12 Pastoral Theological Contribution of the Church Toward Youth**

### **Catechesis**

Indeed, the Church has tried to find ways and means of how youth catechesis can be encouraged and kept alive in order for the youth in the Church to stand firm and show their faith in practice. Certainly, youth catechesis is a gift and at the same times a challenge. Very many youth in the Church have needs which ought to be catered for by first of all the parents and then catechists and youth ministers who have been well prepared to handle them.<sup>107</sup> The youth need to know how to pray although in many cases youth think they know how to pray. Youths have human struggles that pertains their human life first: a basis for the spiritual life.<sup>108</sup>

Quite often, in the area of our worship, we see the youth bored, and to make matters worse, many ministers of the word do not really break the word and bring it at the level of the youth. And so, the days of worship to most of the youth has become a daily routine for them. For this and many other challenges the youth are facing, the Church has given the youth an opportunity to dedicate themselves in matters of faith and morals through youth catechesis at any level because without a high level of 'oil', the faith of the youth would rock.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> Cf. I. SHESANYA, "Youth Ministry - A Gift and A Challenge", 16.

<sup>108</sup> Cf. I. SHESANYA, "Youth Ministry - A Gift and A Challenge", 16.

<sup>109</sup> Cf. D. MUSILI, "Young and Proud to be Catholic", 50-51.

The Church so far encourages the youth "to rely on themselves and their conscience and must ever more frequently and decisively assume responsibility for their destiny" (*CT*, 39) amidst what the Church is offering them. The Church has seen it fitting to give "good catechesis to the youth strictly based on religious realities which is never to be neglected" (*CT*, 39). In doing so, the Church ensures that youth catechesis is taken with great care to make sure that the youth are "able to grow in faith and live by it more and more, in spite of the lack of support or even the opposition they meet in their surroundings" (*CT*, 42).

All these efforts above are "to be bold and creative in the task" (*EG*, 33) of improving youth catechesis so that it will speak to their heart and enkindle and arouse enthusiasm in them with the joy of the Gospel. Bearing in mind that the world is changing, therefore, the Church also has provided content and methods for teaching catechesis to the youth that is connected to their life experience in order to provide the sensible signs that leads the youth, by the grace of the Holy Spirit, to a better understanding of the truths of the faith (cf. *NDC*, 98). They are the means through which youths come to know God and themselves in life (cf. *NDC*, 98).

### **2.13 Youth Catechesis: An Activity of an Ecclesial Nature**

Youth catechesis is an activity of an ecclesial nature (cf. *GDC*, 78): it is a pastoral activity of the Church. By this the researcher means, "it is a reality in the Church, for the Church and by the Church. This means, it is a reality that exists within the Church and directed to the members of the Church and executed by the Church through her members."<sup>110</sup> The nature of youth catechesis is then seen as a catechetical form, which is intended to make the faith of the youth become living,

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<sup>110</sup> J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 123.

conscious, and active, through the light of instruction.<sup>111</sup> Thus, doing the work of catechizing the youth, is responding to the life of the Holy Spirit because catechesis has always being looked as the Church sacred duty and inalienable light (cf. *CT*, 14).

Youth catechesis is the responsibility of the Church for it leads the youth to the full, conscious and active participation in the Sacred Liturgy and in other pastoral activity of the Church (cf. *GDC*, 85b). John Paul II says: "Catechesis is closely linked with the responsible activity of the Church and of Christians in the world" (*CT*, 25). Any youth "who has given adherence to Jesus Christ by faith and endeavouring to consolidate that faith by catechesis needs to live in communion with those who have taken the same step. Catechesis runs the risk of becoming barren if no community of faith and Christian life" (*CT*, 24) takes the youth in at the certain period of their catechesis. Youth catechesis is the responsibility of all the Christians in the Church. The document confirms that ecclesial community has a responsibility with regards to youth catechesis of providing for the training of the youth (cf. *CT*, 24), and "of welcoming them into an environment where they can live as fully as possible what they have learned" (*CT*, 24).

If only youth catechesis "is done well, Christians will be eager to bear witness to their faith and to be able to hand it over to their children, to make it known to others, and to serve the human community in every way" (*CT*, 24). Thus, the Church catechizes her members, in particular the youth entrusted to her, in order to help them become real pastoral agents, by giving them a pastoral conscientization.<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 123.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 160.

## 2.14 Youth Catechesis: A Means to Pastoral Oriented Formation in the Church

Youth catechesis certainly is the means to pastoral and even theological faith formation in the Church. Youth catechesis builds the Church pastorally if only the youth are well rooted in faith.<sup>113</sup> Also, it fulfils its prophetic function with regards to the Church. It is the task of youth catechesis to educate and prepare the youth to the sense of the Church today and in the future.<sup>114</sup> Taking the example of Jesus in the gospel of Matthew, Jesus instructed his disciples to "go therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19-20). Jesus assured them that he will be with them always until the end of the time. Therefore, youth catechesis should be also oriented to actualizing this priority so that by the youth's active existence, the Church may live. According to Pope John Paul II:

the more the Church, whether on the local or universal level, gives youth catechesis priority over other works and undertakings the results of which would be more spectacular, the more she finds in youth catechesis a strengthening of her internal life as a community of believers and of her external pastoral activity of the Church. So, the Church is bidden to offer youth catechesis her best resources for her growth (cf. *CT*, 15).

Youth catechesis is indeed a part of the ministry of the word (*GCD*, 17) and a means to pastoral oriented formation of faith-life of the Church. Formation of the youth to the Christian faith-life is the primary objective of youth catechesis proper. Youth catechesis gives formation to the future members of the Church in the Christian faith-life, through the light of instruction in Christian doctrine.<sup>115</sup> Thus, youth catechesis indirectly gives formation to members enabling them to take up the pastoral activities of the Church present and future.

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<sup>113</sup> Cf. E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 180.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. E. ALBERICH - J. VALLABARAJ, *Communicating A Faith That Transforms*, 180.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. J. PUTHIYEDATH, *Catechesis of an Evangelizing Church*, 104.

## 2.15 Conclusion

In this chapter we saw the content and methods of teaching catechism to the youth and the pastoral agents responsible for providing catechesis for the youth in the Church. Young people are quite often ambivalent about their growth, emotions, development and the continuing process of growing into adult persons.<sup>116</sup> Hence, there is a call for giving the youth a substantial and accurate content using an appropriate method when doing catechesis in order for the youth to be open to learn and appreciate the truths, values, and behavioural norms of Christian life (cf. *GDC*, 185). Besides, parents and educators in the Church are to recognise that taking advantage of youth catechesis is preparing the youth for the transmission of faith to adult life.

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<sup>116</sup> Cf. C. BERNARD, "Education of Youth in a Christian View of Sexuality", 11.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **THEOLOGICAL EVALUATION, PASTORAL PLANNING FOR ACTION AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the theological evaluation on the content and methods of youth catechesis that is currently being used at Guadalupe parish in the light of what the Church suggests and recommends. It will give a theoretical presentation based mainly on the biblical, and Church resources on the topic under discussion and on life experience. The theological evaluation will strive to show that youth catechesis may be an occasion to encounter and dialogue with God. Besides, this chapter also suggests some broad guidelines for pastoral planning and for lines of actions offering ways of implementing the research findings of the insertion experience, and theological reflection of the researcher's practicum experience on youth catechesis. It will as well give some recommendations that can be helpful to enhance youth catechesis in the Church's pastoral activity, and for all the people who are involved in teaching catechism to the youth in the Church.

#### **3.2 Reasons for Young People Losing Interest in Church Activities**

Many youths of Guadalupe parish expressed the reasons why nowadays they are losing interest in Church activities. They pointed out that the adults whom they

request to accompany them do not seem to have the spirit of the youth. They do not give the youth the chance to let them feel that they are doing things for and by themselves. In some significant events like animation of the Holy Mass, music festivals, sports, meetings and so on, those appointed to work with the youth are not available but if they happen to be around they just complain and do not appreciate anything they do.

Also they highlighted that when the Church at large is designing or making the yearly program of the activities to be done they are not given much consideration. Besides, they do not understand the mystery behind the celebration of the Holy Mass. As a result, they see the celebration of the Holy Mass as repetitive and boring as compared to the 'services' the neighbouring churches conduct. In addition, the youth feel that once catechesis is given, that's the end of the story. The Church does not provide them with a enough knowledge of the Bible and opportunities for spiritual activities to strengthen their faith. Instead, more emphasis and energies is put on other activities such as providing the youth entertainments and social activities rather than building them in their faith. Consequently, the youth are end up not prepared to face the challenges they will encounter in the world. In general there is not a very conducive atmosphere or environment of living according to Gospel values.

Furthermore, many youths leave or do not participate in Church activities because they have come to doubt Christian faith. The youth are intellectually sceptical simply because they are not being taught in depth the Catholic doctrines in their homes, or in their Churches during catechism classes. Due to this lack of the knowledge of the Catholic faith, the youth end up familiarizing themselves with

ideas that the world is offering and which are absolutely opposed to the doctrinal truths. Some of these ideas include acceptance of homosexuality, the denial by those who have little faith that Christianity does not offer any solution to our problems, etc. At home they sit in front of the Television for many hours and are bombarded by flashy commercials, connecting with friends on Viber, WhatsApp and many others. Because of these attractions, the youth have very little time for prayer; hence, they end up being not well grounded in the life of faith. At the same time, the youth thinks they are not taught during catechism classes on how to examine the views of the 'unbelievers' who more often than not challenge their faith.

Through my experience of working with the youth, I feel that the parish tries hard to involve youths in her pastoral activities both at the spiritual level and at the physical and psychological level. It's only that today the youth have become so much attached to the modern world of technology that the Word of God, catechesis or anything to do with the Church are seen as irrelevant. Youths always want to differentiate themselves from their parents or elderly people, and it is also the nature of the elderly people to be upset about the behaviour of the youth.

In brief, some of the youth have lost interest in Church activities because they have not yet encountered Jesus Christ and His love in their lives. Some of the youth have no fervent desire to be with God through Jesus Christ who loves them more than any other person. Youths are in search of love and meaning in their lives. And so, if these are not felt in the Church as a community of love or help them seek Jesus Christ as the God of love, then they will definitely find other places where these can be experienced.

### **3.3 Evaluation of the Content and Methods of Youth Catechesis**

#### ***3.3.1 A Look at the Content of Youth Catechesis Used at Guadalupe Parish***

The content of youth catechesis that is currently being followed at Guadalupe Parish is basically based on the localised catechisms in Kenya such as the "Manual for Catechists", "A Catholic Catechism," the African Bible and others. The youth are taught "the Apostles' creed" (were all the twelve articles are explained including the "names and symbols of the Holy Spirit" and "the Church and its structure)", "the Sacraments and the sacramentals" (what is being taught under this topic are the Seven Sacraments, the Liturgy, Liturgical calendar and seasons, Sacred vessels, Mass vestments, Sunday worship, the purpose of Sacramentals in Christian life, and gestures and postures used during the celebration of the Holy Mass.

Also the youth are taught about "the Ten Commandments and the Commandments of the Church" (it includes the purpose of the Ten Commandments with more emphasis on the first and the fifth Commandment, and on African morals, respect, family, and dignity in the community), "Prayer in Christian life" (meaning and place of prayer, praying with Mary, the Rosary, fruits of prayer, the Lord's Prayer, and the application of prayer in the daily life of the youth), as well as the Bible and its structure, and some particular Scriptural passages such as Gen 1:1-31, Gen 3:1-24, Gen 4:1-16, Gen 11:1-9, Mt 16:18, Lk 7:36- 8:26, Jn 3:16-17, Jn 6:69, Jn 1:32-34, 1Cor 4:14-20 and many others.<sup>117</sup>

#### ***3.3.2 A Look at the Methods of Youth Catechesis Used at Guadalupe Parish***

At Guadalupe Parish various methods are used to present the content to the youth in an effective manner. These methods include: *Memorization*: where the

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<sup>117</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 107-108.

youth are encouraged to memorize some of the things like some prayers and so on, *Questions and Answers* methodology as is proposed in the "Manual for Catechists", the "YOUCAT", and "The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church", and group discussion.

Other methods that were utilised to impart the faith to the youth at Guadalupe parish were the *inductive method* where the catechist could begin with the specifics of the human experience and examining them in the light of the Gospel, the *deductive method* where the catechist could begin with the general principles or the truths of the faith as they are presented by the Church and then apply them to concrete experiences of the youth at the parish. *Preaching* was also another method that was used at Guadalupe parish especially during the celebration of the Holy Eucharist, as well as story-telling and visual aids occasionally.

According to the researcher's judgment, the content of youth catechesis that is being taught to the youth at Guadalupe parish is very good. The whole structure of the content of catechesis is based on what is proposed in the localised catechisms such as "Manual for catechists" and "A Catholic Catechism." The content is centred on the knowledge of the mystery of Christ and the way God is revealed in Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The researcher thinks that, if the content is well taught to the youth, it can help the youth to have a deeper knowledge of God and to glorify him by their lives. The whole content of youth catechesis at Guadalupe parish is illumined by the mystery of Christ and the catechists always try to emphasize the presence and worship of the Holy Spirit by which the youth are continually moved to have communion with God and among themselves.

However, the researcher also thinks that when transmitting the faith to the youth, memories of the past, awareness of the present and even hopes for the future life is to be more evidenced so that youths may come to know how the saving mystery of Christ has worked throughout the history of the Church. Apart from teaching what has been given in the catechism books mentioned above, the youth can also be taught as starting point some topics especially with regards to African culture that is relevant to the topic that is being treated in every Class. The Kenyan Bishops' *A Catholic Catechism* can provide good insights into how to use the cultural elements in imparting the truths of Christian Revelation. Along with this, more emphasis could be put on the knowledge and use of modern media, its advantages for knowing our faith and discovering more about the living out of that faith in the lives of Christians today in different cultures.

And so, in order to present the content faithfully, different methods can be used depending on the group one has. As for Guadalupe parish, it has its own methods of teaching youth catechism as already mentioned, but I think other methods like visual aids, occasional catechetical tours, and social media may also be helpful to transmit the faith to youths. The Church has no particular method, as long as the method that is being used is well-suited to the Gospel message and is in conformity with the teaching authority of the Church. For instance, inductive and deductive methods are distinct yet complementary methods for communicating the faith to the youth. Therefore, in selecting a method to use, circumstances in which these youths live is to be taken into consideration.

It is important to remember that the Church as "mother and teacher" proposes us the content to be taught as it is in the Catechism of the Catholic Church

(CCC). And so, the content of youth catechesis should base on the CCC even though it is contextualized. "Catechesis is a practical theology and theology determines the content of catechesis. Theological nature of catechesis derives from the theology of revelation, faith and the word."<sup>118</sup> And so, youth catechesis in particular also draws its source from revelation through Jesus Christ and leads the youth into the maturity of faith and a richer living of the fullness of the Gospel message in their lives as Christian.<sup>119</sup>

Our duty as teachers of the faith to the youth is to make sure that the content and the methods we use to teach the faith, is capable of equipping the youth to know the authenticity of their Christian faith since it is important for their holiness and final salvation. In the life of the youth faith is first and foremost LIGHT to their soul so that when they believe they may not walk in darkness. The youth, although wanting to do things on their own still wants their parents and the Church to provide them with guidance and direction regarding the worries they may have about their faith and life. If the youth are taught good content and proper methods are used, they will be ready at any time to give reasons for the hope that is within them (1 Pt 3:15) and when they grow old they will not turn from it (cf. Prv 22:6).

### ***3.3.3 Needs Assessments at Guadalupe Parish***

At Guadalupe parish, there are a lot of youths who have not followed catechism classes while others have attended catechism classes but they seem to have no interest in the parish pastoral activities. Hence, the parish is in need of having more youths attending catechism classes and taking part in the activities of

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<sup>118</sup> S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 85.

<sup>119</sup> Cf. S. ALATHARA, *Introduction to Catechetics*, 85.

the parish. The parish is trying to a great extent in making sure that youth catechesis is not simply an exercise at the level of the intellect as it is currently, but the young see its relevance to their concrete life situation in this present day world. Since the parish has not many well trained and informed catechists and facilitators in youth apostolate, occasionally, a few among the Christian community are selected to go and do catechetical courses to be able to help the youth grow in the Christian faith. The parish also sees to it that sufficient finances are put on youth catechesis programs, teaching materials and recreational facilities to allow the youth to let off the steam and channel their excess energies enabling them to do something productive.

The parish also tries to have youth ministers and youth Matrons and Patrons who are ready to be with the youth most of the time. However, some of the parents and even Small Christian Communities seem not to show interest in boosting youth catechesis. As well, there is little education of youths in politics, in ethnic awareness, in economics, and in social situations of the world today. The parish is of the idea to providing professional counsellors to give help to the pastoral agents who then in turn are better equipped to help the youth in the day to day contact with them. Also at the parish, activities such as visiting orphanages, old people's homes, mentally disadvantaged, hospitals and others are not so much exposed to the youth through youth ministry and youth catechesis. And so, there is need to integrate these activities and many others into youth ministry and youth catechesis since they can be avenues for the youth to build character and discern their vocation. Since the parish has few workshops on career discernment, youth empowerment and religious

education that interests the youth, the parish pastoral team are looking forward to organising these programmes regularly if need be.

#### ***3.3.4 The Current Resources Available at Guadalupe Parish***

Guadalupe parish has a well-formed pastoral team that comprises of priests and brothers and sisters and lay people who are ready to collaborate. The few volunteers who are there are trained as full time catechists, as youth counsellors, and as youth leaders. The parish has a good number of youths though very few as mentioned earlier are active in the parish pastoral activities. The parish gets diverse assistance from religious and missionary congregations who are present in the parish to offer seminars, workshops, retreats, recollections, Bible sharing, teaching catechism, ICT training, and many others. The Christians of the main parish centre and its outstations give financial support through Sunday collections, tithe, renting the infrastructures (renting out church Hall, meeting room, studio, music and sign language schools), parish equipments, as well as providing human resources.

Also the volunteer lay professional counsellors who are present at the main parish and in the outstations give some of their time and skills to the smooth running of the pastoral activity of the parish. It has as well Patrons and Matrons in charge of youths, families, well trained catechists, the youth themselves, and some Small Christian Communities (SCCs). Above all, there is regular Liturgical celebration of the Holy Mass along with inspirational homilies. The parish also makes use of the catechetical books that are present and are proposed by the Church in teaching catechism to the youth.

### 3.4 Planning Our Youth Catechesis

The pastoral Plan of youth catechesis is the most important stage in that it provides the framework to the pastoral agents responsible in imparting the faith to the youth. Also planning helps the youth to concretely focus on doing something that can transform their knowledge of God in the light of the Gospel. According to Henriot Peter, "without the planning, action, and evaluation phases of response, there is no outcome of the pastoral cycle, no consequence of the efforts put in."<sup>120</sup> This being the case, the pastoral plan of youth catechesis is basically meant to effectively change the daily lives of the youth so that eventually they can strengthen their faith in God by fully participating in the Church's pastoral activity.

Doing youth catechesis without real critical reflection on what the world is proposing today would be disastrous activism; together with critical reflection I would add the need of gratuitous contemplation.<sup>121</sup> So, there is need to having a pastoral plan for youth catechesis that can help youths nourish their faith and empower them for action in the Church. Therefore, based on the three moments, - that is insertion experience, the critical study of the content and methods used in catechesis at Guadalupe parish, and theological evaluation, - the researcher proposes the foundations of a pastoral plan for youth catechesis that will aim at the integral formation of the youth and the pastoral ministry of the researcher in his own future pastoral work in the Church.

For the youth to effectively participate in the pastoral activity of the Church, there is need to give them good catechesis that can help them require adequate

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<sup>120</sup> P. HENRIOT - F. WIJSEN - R. MEJIA, *The Pastoral Circle Revised*, 47.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. P. HENRIOT - F. WIJSEN - R. MEJIA, *The Pastoral Circle Revised*, 50.

integral formation. The researcher being aware that he is not writing about the youth in priestly formation, he thinks it is worthwhile to integrate the human, the spiritual, the intellectual, and the pastoral formations when planning youth catechesis as recommended by Pope John Paul II in his *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (cf. *PDV*, 57). All these areas of formation aim at leading the youth to responsible contributions to the pastoral activities of the Church.

### ***3.4.1 Human Formation of the Youth***

Human Formation is the basis of the entire life of the youth. It aims at instilling in the youth human values that can help them have a good discernment and make well-founded choices about their lives in relation to the current and future tasks they are to do, as St. Paul says: "keep on doing what you have learned and received and heard and seen in me" (Phil 4:9). Of special importance, is the capacity to help and encourage the youth relate to others, and be ready to take part freely in the Church's pastoral activity since this they are the Church of tomorrow.

Therefore, as Pope John Paul II pointed out with regard to priestly formation, which is also applicable to the formation of the young people, formation in affective maturity to be important component of formation of young people. In Church's pastoral activity, he says, "human maturity, and in particular affective maturity, which is the result of an education in true and responsible love, is a significant and decisive factor in the formation" (*PDV*, 43) of the youth to be ready to participate freely in the pastoral activity of the Church. Also he continued by saying that "human maturity requires a clear and strong training in freedom, which expresses itself in convinced and heartfelt obedience to the 'truth' [...] and 'meaning' of the own

existence, that is to the 'sincere gift of self' as the way and fundamental content of the authentic realisation of self" (*PDV*, 44).

One of the purposes of catechesis in the human formation of the youth is to help the youth to move out of the stage of being perennially an "adolescent" to a responsible adult. Two main characteristics traits of the young adolescents are a sort 'self-absorption', and 'irresponsibility'. While this is normal for the young adolescent, however, these have to give way to a genuine concern for everyone else and of responsible freedom. So youth activities must assist the young generation to become more altruistic, grow in responsible freedom, and responsibility. As a future pastoral agent, the researcher will try to organise seminars, sports tournaments, nutrition lessons if possible, picnics, sessions on moral living, healthy sexuality, relationships, and etiquette<sup>122</sup> that will help smoothen the progress of the integral growth and maturity of the youth. All these are in view of helping the youth to open their eyes to see what the Church teaches us and to understand the Christian worldview.

The researcher being aware that he is not an expert in some of the areas and cannot do all that by himself will facilitate it by looking for some experts or among the adult Christians who are studying those topics to collaborate in helping the youth in some specific areas of their lives be it topics like sexuality, peer pressure, relationships with the opposite sex, and so on. Pastoral plan of youth catechesis should also include formation to self-discipline, self-determination, and self-acceptance. Above all it must include the formation of conscience, the ability to listen and obey the moral interior voice of truth formed by divine revelation and the

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<sup>122</sup> Cf. F. J. ARZOLA, *Toward A Prophetic Youth Ministry*, 45.

Church. Youth catechesis has also to be a place where youths are able to receive counselling, to enable them to deal with challenges they may face at home, at school, at work, and in studies. Besides, the youth can use the same skills gained to go out and be able to offer practical assistance to their fellow youths.

### ***3.4.2 Spiritual Formation of the Youth***

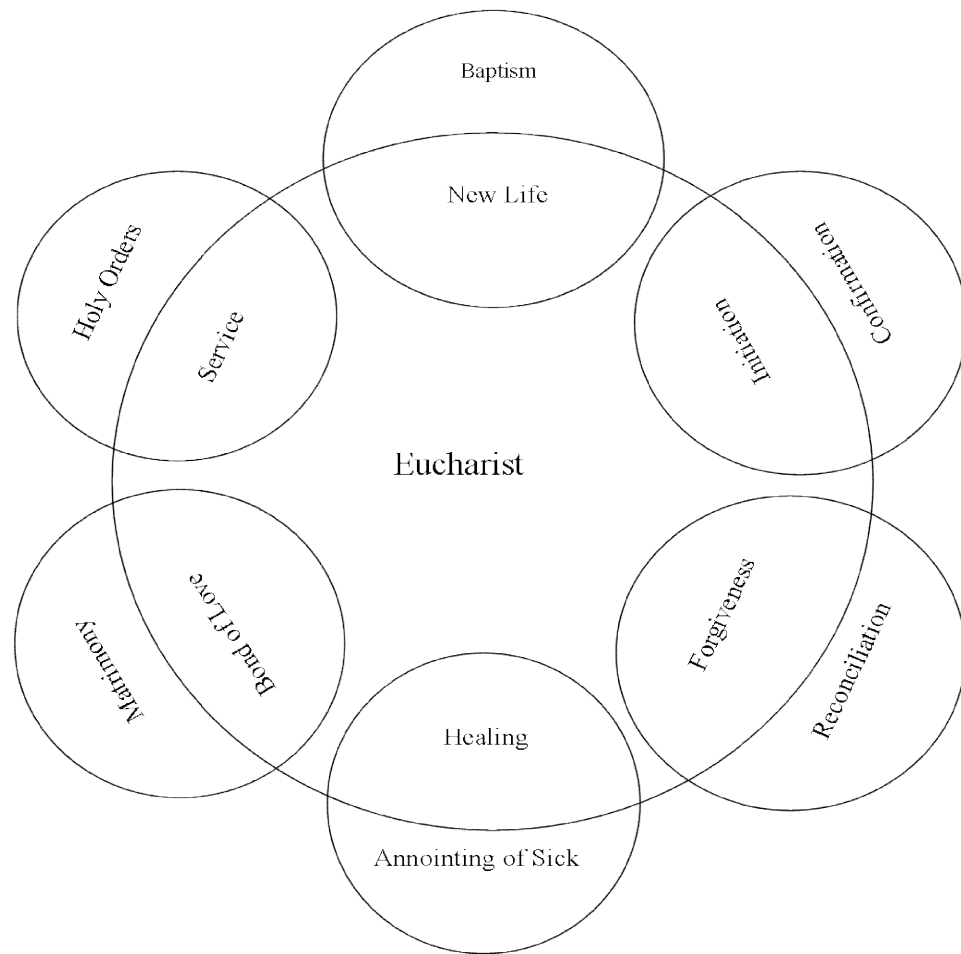
Youth catechesis has to help the youth to live their faith with confidence and courage in the Church. The youth should develop a sustained prayer life that can lead them to be in communion with God and in search of Jesus Christ. To develop and to foster a deeper spiritual life of the youth, the youth in the Church have to regularly and actively take part in the preparation and celebration of the Holy Mass even on a daily basis. The Eucharist is the summit of the youth's prayer life.

Hence, the Holy Eucharist has to be placed at the centre of all the activities of the Church as it is written that "the Eucharist is the heart and summit of the Church's life, for in it Christ associates his Church and all her members with his sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving offered once for all on the cross to his Father [...]" (CCC, 1407).

Through the Eucharist, the youth in the Church are united to Christ and his sacrifice. Below is a good diagram I can give to illustrate the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist as the source and centre of all the other sacraments as given by Crabu Franco in his book "Manual For Catechists."<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> F. CRABU, *Manual For Catechists*, 79.



**Figure 1:** Shows how the Eucharist is at the centre of all the other sacraments.

Periodical adoration, different forms of prayer and meditation; the way of the cross during the time of lent, periodical retreats and recollections, regular confessions, and devotion to our Mother Mary have to become part of the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly activity they are supposed to do as Christians. Pastoral agents are to have time of personal sharing for the youth's constant renewal of their relationship with God. Youths, without fail, should also be invited to read the word of God, reflect and share about what it means in their lives to enable them appreciate the richness of the word of God.

In fact, it is the work of youth catechesis to "help the youth expand their knowledge of the Scriptures and the traditions and their application to life through prayer, justice, and loving service."<sup>124</sup> This expansion of the knowledge of faith of the youth is meant to equip and train them as leaders so that they can actively participate in the Church's pastoral activity. Youth catechesis has to be concerned with the fostering of the faith of the youth, faith that is rooted in the heart by having programs like Bible study, retreats, spiritual disciplines, prayer service,<sup>125</sup> and through knowing and believing (mind)<sup>126</sup> as will be pointed out below under intellectual formation.

### ***3.4.3 Intellectual and Cultural Formation of the Youth***

Youth catechesis should be intelligible so as to give hope and understanding to the youth. In fact, youth catechesis should lead to a deeper understanding of the youth's freedom and relationship with the world and with God (cf. *PDV*, 52). Once the youth are formed intellectually, then their life of prayer is also strengthened and nourished to carry out their pastoral ministry with a generous spirit in the Church (cf. *PDV*, 53).

Also, a good intellectual formation of the matters of faith and life will in a way help the youth to be able to deal with the current challenges that are attractive to them and seem not to be attractive to the older generation. For instance, today, too much information has excited many youths such that they are no longer at ease with their traditional cultures in this modern culture of mass media. Most of them have strong admiration and have embraced a modern way of lifestyle; hence, they desire

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<sup>124</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 170.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. F. J. ARZOLA, *Toward A Prophetic Youth Ministry*, 45.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 170.

the freedom to do whatever they want with their life without interference from the older generation. And so, it is necessary that the youth work in group and share, and let them be aware of the harm of mass media on their lives if not used responsibly. By doing so, the youth can learn by themselves how best to handle and deal with their immediate challenges without ignoring what the Church is offering to them. To reach this goal other possible programs may be helpful such as tutoring, homework help, academic empowerment classes, organising debates, quiz topics and other educative programs that can motivate youth to love the Church and participate fully in her pastoral activity.<sup>127</sup>

#### ***3.4.4 Pastoral Formation of the Youth***

The pastoral formation of the youth aims at forming the youth to be pastorally oriented people in the Church. Once the youth are formed well, they then can meaningfully contribute and take part fully in the pastoral activities of the Church. The youth should not only be taught the teachings of the Church in preparation of receiving the sacrament, but they should be imparted with the knowledge which has something to do with our day-to-day life experiences. That is, that of caring heart and loving, and *foot-minded* in the sense of reaching out to God's people.

Along with the encouragement and opportunities to engage in ministerial activities (praying together, visiting homes of those physically or mentally disadvantaged, old people's homes, orphanages, social services activities, and so on), the young people must already begin to seek what their "vocation" in life is. Clearly,

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<sup>127</sup> Cf. F. J. ARZOLA, *Toward A Prophetic Youth Ministry*, 45.

vocation discernment is an important dimension of youth ministry and youth catechesis. And so, in youth ministry and youth catechesis, activities such as the ones as mentioned above that can help the youth discern their vocation are to be promoted so that youths may expose themselves already to these activities, which later on in their life can help them discover their vocation. In fact, this preparation to help young people to seek God's will in their lives begin from their childhood in the family, then the society, within the Church and in schools.

### 3.5 The Time of Youth-hood and Catechesis

The time of the youth can be tremendously complicated. "Emotional and behavioural problems may surface during this stage in life."<sup>128</sup> The researcher could observe this during his practicum with the youth of Guadalupe main parish and its outstation St. Benedict in Olympic - Kibera. Most of the challenges these youths are facing is about how to form a new and unique identity which enables one sustain oneself in life and also to mature in the faith of the Church.<sup>129</sup> The youth have to make every effort to have a sense of personal responsibility today instead of keeping on depending on others.<sup>130</sup> Now, to help the youth have interest in the Church's pastoral activity, the teachers have to understand first of all that the youth are living in this "fast-paced, increasingly demanding world (and) are required to deal with pleasure and stress that did not confront previous generations."<sup>131</sup> Many youths are

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<sup>128</sup> L. THOMAS, "Youth Psychology", <[www.atimetogrow.org/youth-psychology-young-adults.php](http://www.atimetogrow.org/youth-psychology-young-adults.php)>, accessed on 26/02.15, 1.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. M. MOLONEY, *Skills For Counselling Young People*, 15.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. M. MOLONEY, *Skills For Counselling Young People*, 15-16.

<sup>131</sup> L. THOMAS, "Youth Psychology", <[www.atimetogrow.org/youth-psychology-young-adults.php](http://www.atimetogrow.org/youth-psychology-young-adults.php)>, accessed on 26/02/15, 1.

not able to participate actively in Church activity. In a way, "their energy level is low."<sup>132</sup>

And so, youth catechesis can be an occasion for many youths in distress to get psychological and emotional assistance to work out in a safe surrounding their struggle to find their identity and their place in society. The structures of the parish can offer them the support and the environment in which they can grow, can make mistakes but are nevertheless accepted and welcomed. Through interaction with others, being offered a listening ear by the youth leaders and adult Christians they will be able to find their psychological and human balance and so they can become mature Christians ready to play their part in society and in the Church. For all this to be better, it entails having good content and method for youth catechesis.

Based on the above evaluation and reflection, let us now propose a Pastoral Programme for Youth Catechesis (prepared in the context of Guadalupe Parish, but which could be easily used to similar pastoral settings).

### **3.6 Pastoral Programme (Project) for Youth Catechesis**

#### ***3.6.1 Project Name: Youth Ministry Centre***

This programme might be established both at St. Benedict in Olympic and at Guadalupe main parish centre. The aim of the programme is to strengthen youths in the area of education, culture, evangelization, discernment of their personal vocation, and to seek to promote valuable personal and spiritual growth of the youth in the area. In fact, it is necessary to have this kind of project or something equivalent because youth catechesis "is of the utmost importance, since it helps the

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<sup>132</sup> M. MOLONEY, *Skills For Counselling Young People*, 17.

youth understand the depth and richness of our Catholic faith, to bring it to maturity and also to share it with others" (CC, 13). This project can become a tool to train the youth in other areas of their interest for life and primarily, to enhance youth catechesis itself in the Church. Also it can help to instil in the youth the Enthusiasm to participate in Church activities wholeheartedly. This I have to admit that Guadalupe parish has done a great job to put up a formation centre, which in practical ways is benefitting the youth and all the parishioners at large.

### ***3.6.2 The Vision of a Youth Ministry Centre***

To promote youth catechesis that will help the youth to mature and to commit themselves in the Catholic faith.

### ***3.6.3 Mission Statement***

To enhance youth catechesis that will form the youth to remain firm in their faith in Jesus Christ, be active participants in the Church's pastoral activity and have a sense of belonging to the Church.

### ***3.6.4 Needs Assessments of the Parish***

1. There are a lot of youths who have not followed catechism classes. Others have attended catechism classes but they seem to have no interest in the pastoral activity of the Church.
2. Youth catechesis is primarily at the level of the intellect; there is less integration with concrete life situation of the youth in our present day world.
3. There is a need of having a good number of well trained and informed Catechists and facilitators in youth apostolate.

4. Some of the centres of youth ministry are lacking teaching materials.
5. The parish and the Centres need more recreational facilities to allow the youth to be able to interact to each other and to channel their excesses energies enabling them to do something productive.
6. Some of the parents and even Small Christian Communities need to show more interest in boosting youth catechesis.
7. There is need to encourage everyone in the parish to be more interested in youth ministry and youth catechesis in particular.
8. There is a need for adequate spiritual, intellectual, and even pastoral formation of the youth in some parish communities.
9. There is a need to educate the youth in politics, in ethnic awareness, in economics, and in social situations of the world today.
10. Providing professional counsellors to help the pastoral agents who then in turn are better equipped to help the youth in the day to day contact with them.
11. There is need for regular workshops on career discernment that speaks to their interest.
12. Parish needs youth spiritual empowerment and religious education classes.

#### ***3.6.5 Resources that can Help to Improve the Effectiveness of Youth Catechesis***

1. The parish has a well-built pastoral team that is comprised of priests and brothers and sisters and lay people who are ready to collaborate.
2. Trained volunteers as full time catechists, youth counsellors, and youth leaders.

3. Assistance from the religious and missionary congregations who are present in the parish to offer seminars, workshops, retreats, recollections, Bible sharing, teaching catechism, ICT training, and many others.
4. Finance available through Sunday collections, tithe, infrastructures (renting out church Hall, meeting room, studio, music and sign language schools), parish equipments, as well as providing human resources.
5. Volunteer lay professional counsellors present at the parish or parishes to give some of their time and skills.
6. Patrons and Matrons in charge of youths, families, well trained catechists, the youth themselves, and Small Christian Communities (SCCs).
7. Liturgical celebration of the Holy Mass and inspirational homilies.
8. Catechetical books that are proposed by the Church.

### ***3.6.6 Goals and Action Steps***

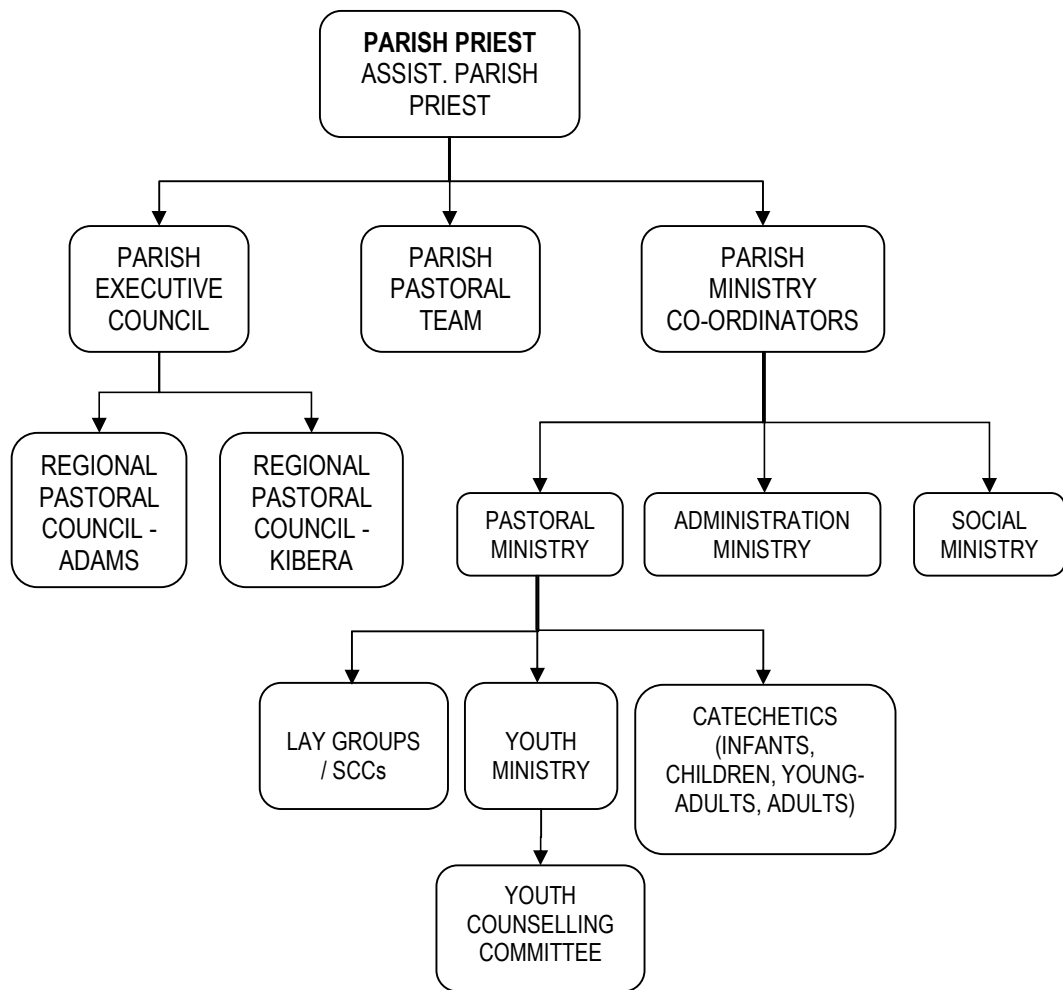
- 1) ***a. Goal:*** To have a youth ministry that will prepare the youth to grow deeper in the knowledge of God and faith in Jesus Christ with confidence.
- b. Action Steps:*** - Provide enough but interesting content for the youth, based on what the Church suggests and incorporate it with modern realities.
  - Encourage the youth if possible to do daily Bible reading and sharing, meditation, participating in the Eucharist, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, recollections, retreats, and introducing them to Scripture and tradition.
  - Provide well trained and informed catechists.
- 2) ***a. Goal:*** To instil in the youth human values that will promote integral growth, and active participation in the life and pastoral activities of the Church.

- b. Action Steps:** - Encourage the youth to attend Holy Masses, seminars and workshops.
- Encouraging the youth to participate in acts of charity and strengthen the youth ministry.
  - Invite and make use of those parishioners who are experts in different aspects to give the youth counselling and psychological help.
  - Organise meetings, team building, leadership training for the youth and familiarise them with the teaching of the Church.
- 3) a. Goal:** To provide a progressively appropriate content and methods for a better youth catechesis.
- b. Action Steps:** - When teaching the youth, the focus should be on Jesus Christ as the centre of all that exists.
- Use of visual aids, videos, deductive and inductive ways of teaching, having catechetical tours, drawings, power point presentation of the topic, and use of catechetical books such as: The "Youth Catechism of the Catholic Church" (YOUCAT), "A Catholic Catechism" (localised catechism in Kenya or any one from the different dioceses), "Manual For Catechists", "Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church" and so on.
  - By having exchange programs with the youth from other parishes or even at deanery or diocesan level.
- 4) a. Goal:** To have a youth catechesis that integrates the developments in the mass-media and their Christian faith.

- b. Action Steps:*** - Have well trained catechists who are able to create awareness on the youth especially on social media: its good points and its negative aspects.
- Call experts to come and teach the youth on how they can use social media for evangelisation as well as to create awareness on its advantages and disadvantages.
  - Organise interactive events to keep them busy such as: dramas, youth festivals, concerts, and recreational facilities, picnics to create the spirit of togetherness, and involving them in Church leadership to let their contribution be felt in the Church. Also educate the youth on their sexuality.

### ***3.6.7 Organisational Flowchart***

Below is an extract of the organizational flowchart from the detailed structure of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish as found in Appendix II.



### 3.7 Duties of Some of the Organs

The Parish organization structure is there to promote a more holistic approach and efficient participation of the community members at all levels in supporting the Parish Priest, Assistant Priests and the whole Parish activities. All organs work hand in hand with each other.

#### A. The Parish Priest

The Parish priest is the proper pastor entrusted with a responsibility of a parish. He exercises the pastoral care of the community under the authority of the diocesan bishop in whose ministry of Christ he has been called to share (cf. *CCL*,

515-519). He also collaborates with the faithful and ensures that they are nourished by devout celebration of sacraments and is bound to be on guard against abuses (cf. *CCL*, 528-530).

#### **B. Assistant Parish Priest**

He assists the Parish Priest in the daily running of the Parish. The Parish Priest entrusts to him in preference to others, those things which by law require special mandate.

#### **C. Pastoral Ministry Co-ordinators**

They are employed by the Parish Priest and his council to co-ordinate spiritual, social and economic related activities. The co-ordinators are responsible for planning, monitoring of development programmes within the ministries (pastoral, administration, and social) and action plan of the Parish.

#### **D. Parish Executive Council**

The parish executive council generally oversees the operation of catechetical ministry, the goal of such being to further the mission and ministry of the Church. Also they help the Parish Priest and his assistance in the management of the Parish.

#### **E. Youth Ministry**

The ministry is established at the Parish to promote the Church's pastoral activities among the youth. The ministry is to live and communicate the love and values of Christ to the youth. Of all the organs, my focus was on the one of catechetics, which is under pastoral ministry. Catechetics shares in the responsibility for the ongoing life and maturity of the faith of the youth and of every member in Jesus Christ in the Church.

### 3.8 Pastoral Recommendations for People Responsible for Catechizing Youths

"Youth catechesis is not an end in itself, but oriented to youth who should grow and become an adult"<sup>133</sup> in the Church and the society at large. Youth Catechesis is a faith journey. Hence, all the people involved in teaching catechesis to the youth should take it very seriously. They need to be well trained with the help of the parish priest and the pastoral co-ordinators. Priests and qualified catechists, may find time to be with the youth, to make sure that they understand and are convinced on their part of what they are about to commit themselves to.

The youth from the very beginning need to be informed that catechesis is a lifelong journey. And so, priests at their respective parishes should make youth catechesis one of the priorities and make it available to all the young people. Spiritually, the priest should journey with his youths present at the parish. It is the duty of the priest first of all to know his youths, and if they are reluctant to take part in the Church's pastoral activities find lasting solutions that can help the youth love and belong to the Church. The researcher recommends that the pastoral co-ordinators of the youth be role models so that youths can learn from them.

The "*Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples*" pointed out that those catechists responsible to catechize the youth for instance have to try to promote communication and communion among the youth and understand their particular needs so as to help them as much as possible. They must be able to share in and express the immense compassion of the heart of Jesus during and after youth catechesis (cf. Mt 9:36; Mk 6:34; 8:2; Lk 7:13).<sup>134</sup> So, catechists and all people

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<sup>133</sup> C. DE SOUZA, "Youth Catechesis", 27.

<sup>134</sup> Cf. CONGREGATION FOR THE EVANGELIZATION OF PEOPLES, *Guide For Catechists*, 11.

responsible for the youth should keep in mind that youth catechesis has to build on human qualities already existing in the youth so that they can develop them for fruitful pastoral ministry in the Church.

The researcher also recommends that all the people responsible to catechize the youth "consider the religious diversity of the youth and make efforts to contextualize youth catechesis."<sup>135</sup> The presence of a priest in youth meetings and catechism classes can eventually instil the zeal in the hearts of catechumens, in particular youths, to become active participants in the Church. Also there is need to integrate into youth catechesis and youth ministry various community activities like paying visits in orphanages, old people's homes, hospitals, physically and mentally disadvantaged, and so on that can help the youth identify their vocation.

### ***3.8.1 Recommendations for the Youth Themselves***

The youth have to understand that faith is not static but dynamic. Therefore, they need to keep on maturing their faith and continue having a deep love for God and the Church. The youth have to keep the spirit of their youth to think with the Church the lasting effects of youth catechesis and communal responsibility. The researcher encourages the youth to use wisely the social media, to interact with each other and share on the importance of nurturing their moral needs bearing in mind that they are the leaders of the Church of today and tomorrow. The youth know each other very well and so, they can be a tool to encourage and evangelise their peers who are reluctant to participate actively in the pastoral activity of the Church. The youth themselves are the best catechists and can help enhance youth catechesis in the Church.

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<sup>135</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 169-170.

### ***3.8.2 Recommendations for the Christian Community***

For the Church to succeed in youth catechesis, regular supervision and evaluation are necessary. In the light of youth catechesis, the content as found in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, other localised catecheses especially those that are specifically designed for the youth and various methods used to communicate the faith to the youth are to be examined. The researcher recommends the leaders in the Church "to consider the diverse forms of catechesis and find new ways to carry out youth catechesis" (*GDC*, 185), through serious commitment, preparation, collaboration and communication among youth, parents, youth animators, and catechists.<sup>136</sup> The Church needs to treat the youth in a holistic manner, and hand over their faith to the youth who will later walk on their own faith journey in the Church following the Emmaus story (Lk 24:13-35) as model.<sup>137</sup>

Most importantly, the parish and diocesan community or leaders such as Bishops, priests, religious men and women and so on needs to provide an ongoing formation of the catechists and the volunteer catechists. Not only should the Church foster the milieu which is favourable for the youth to learn and interact to each other but also have to make sure that Catechetical books are made available to everyone at the parish. Besides, the researcher also recommends that for the effective youth catechesis,

the Church needs to foster dialogue between life and faith of the youth, engages the youth in the learning process through interactive methods, fosters an environment that is conducive to the youth to hear, to search, to question, to express themselves and to respond in faith to God's love in freedom. The Church should provide real-life applications of learning in youth catechesis, promote family faith development,

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<sup>136</sup> S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 174.

<sup>137</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 166.

recognize and celebrate multicultural diversity and invite the youth to explore their personal call to ministry.<sup>138</sup>

Furthermore, the Church in general should ensure that there are a good number of teachers. Having not well trained teachers may not effectively promote the knowledge of faith or reinforce good formation of the youth. Proper collaboration between parents, God parents, catechists and even priests have to be encouraged at all levels. In addition, when the Church makes the budget this important ministry of youth catechesis has to be considered. The researcher recommends that though it is the matter of service, incentives in the form of 'allowance' can be given to the volunteer catechists for this magnificent ministry of instructing the youth in order to motivate them. The Church is welcome to encourage regular, even daily, celebration of the Holy Eucharist, and occasionally give catechists and youth animators retreats, and spiritual direction for their personal and community revival.

The researcher also recommends the Church to establish youth catechesis centres where youths can be helped to have integral formation. The Church should be aware that the youth are the majority members in the Church and so future leaders of the Church and the society though some of them do not come to Church. The youth who are committed have proven to be organised and wanting to participate fully in the Church's pastoral activity.

Thus, the researcher recommends the Church to encourage the youth to join other youth groups existing in the Church through which the youth can be helped spiritually and enable them arouse enthusiasm to take part in the Church's pastoral

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<sup>138</sup> Cf. S. MULLICK, "Evangelisation, Catechesis and Youth Ministry", 170-171.

activities. The youth like to meet together to identify themselves with their peers. Hence, the researcher suggests that the Church takes the task to organise and to form youth groups that can help the youth achieve proper goals. Otherwise, the youth will surely form their own groups that might not even help them think through and make informed decisions for their growth.<sup>139</sup> Indeed, the youth are in need of witnesses and teachers who can help them grow in the faith of the Church as His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI articulated that "young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it" (*AM*, 61) with others.

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<sup>139</sup> Cf. P. RYAN - *al.*, *The Journey of Faith* 6, 23.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

Youth catechesis is the instruction given to the youth in the Christian faith in order to lead the youth to the fullness of Christian life in the Church. Youth catechesis is part of the Church's pastoral activity, and without it the Church would fail in its duty. In this thesis, the researcher tried to show how youth catechesis can be enhanced in the Church's pastoral activity. The researcher also explained that youth catechesis should nurture the faith of the youth by deepening Christ's message in their lives and thus enabling the youth to fully proclaim the Gospel and participate actively in the Church's pastoral activity.

Youth catechesis has a crucial role to orient the youth towards their pastoral vocation in the current circumstances where God's grace, the choice of the youth, and the environment are the determining factors for the maturity of faith of the youth. And so, if at this stage youths receive good guidance and proper formation, they can have the potential to become better parents and leaders of the Church today and in the future. If the youth are holistically formed through youth catechesis, they will become active participants in forming their fellow youths and in the Church's pastoral activities.

Faith is the way of believing (*Lex credendi*), a way of worshipping (*Lex orandi*), and a way of living (*Lex vivendi*) (cf. *GDC*, 122). It is cognitive, effective,

and behavioural (cf. *GDC*, 35). Faith engages minds, emotions, and wills of the youth. Through proper youth catechesis, faith has to enlighten the life and quality relationships of the youth (cf. *GDC*, 16). This being the case, youth catechesis has to promote a lived, living, life-giving faith of the youth, as well as inform, form, and even transform the youth to be totally in intimate communion with Christ (cf. *GDC*, 80). It should by its very nature touch all the aspects of life, in the Church and society, and inculcate the knowledge of faith in the day-to-day life experience of the youth.

The researcher strongly thinks that doing youth catechesis in the Church needs good collaboration of both the parish priest and catechists and the ecclesial community. This is so, because presently many youths are more open to new realities such as the use of social media, the advancement in technology and it is the time of taking decisive steps that can determine their future. If the youth are not given good catechesis as they grow, in older age they will easily drift away from the Church.

Therefore, the Church leaders, as the researcher pointed out, should in the spirit of collaborative ministry help the youth understand the Catholic faith and their personal faith journey in Christ by giving them good catechesis. This good catechesis may not be very much different from what the Church has been teaching. Nevertheless, youth catechesis can be improved or become more successful than the current if it is looked and carried out within the framework of youth ministry, which embraces education, Evangelisation and catechesis, culture, discernment of one's vocation, and groups and movements. The youth very often desire to do things that are applicable to their lives hence the need for participation in the Church's pastoral

activity in order for them to feel at home in the parish community and the Church at large.

The youth "are the hope of the Church. In a letter to the youth of the world, Pope John Paul II said, 'the Church looks in a special way at herself in the youth.'"<sup>140</sup> Therefore, reflecting on the word of God in youth catechesis is an essential component in enabling the youth to participate actively in the Church's pastoral activity and be able to connect faith to life and vice versa (cf. *EN*, 20). Hence, it is up to the particular parish to make use of the content and the methods that are given already for the realisation of the Church's basic mission. So, as pastoral agents, we should have a plan for youth catechesis in order to promote a faith that is active, dynamic and practical in the life of the youth today and tomorrow.

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<sup>140</sup> *NDC*, <[www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/upload/national-directory-for-catechesis-on-young-adults.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/who-we-teach/young-adults/upload/national-directory-for-catechesis-on-young-adults.pdf)>, accessed on 23/01/15, 3.

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## APPENDICES

**APPENDIX I:** Below is an example of a teaching format through which youth catechesis can be carried out. The format was used by the researcher when he was asked to teach the youth catechism during his practicum at Guadalupe main parish centre. The topic of the day was: '**The People in the Church**' as directed in the book called "Manual for Catechists."<sup>141</sup>

*Introductory part:* after opening prayer and remarks, the researcher reminded the youth that the topic under discussion is one of the articles in the profession of our faith that states, "I Believe in the Holy Catholic Church and the Communion of Saints" (CCC, 748-975). The main aim was to let the youth be aware that the topic was not of my own initiative but it is what all of us in the Church believe in. The researcher tried to explain to them the categories of people found in the Church and their mission so that by the end of the discussion they would desire to belong to a particular category and be able to participate fully in the Church.<sup>142</sup>

*Life experience:* Here the researcher asked the youth to explain to him various government ministries they know in Kenya and if possible to explain in brief their functions. To allow everyone to participate, the researcher proposed them to form three groups and discuss. Then after the discussion, the researcher asked one in

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<sup>141</sup> This was one of the catechetical books that were recommended for the catechists to use at the parish whenever they go to teach catechism. Others were: 'Our Journey of Faith (1-7)', 'Catechism of the Catholic Church', 'General Directory for Catechesis', 'The Bible', and 'A Catholic Catechism'.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. F. CRABU, *Manual For Catechists*, 54 - 56.

each group to share with all of us the answers.<sup>143</sup> All the groups did the assignment as was proposed and at the end the researcher *explained* a little bit further that our Church too is made up of people in three states of life with various spiritual ministries such as: *The Lay people* (all the Baptized Christians married and unmarried), *the Religious* (Men and women consecrated to God through evangelical vows), and *the Ordained Clergy* (bishops, priests and deacons).<sup>144</sup> After my sharing, the researcher allowed the youth to ask some questions and then after he explained the function of each one of them. At the end of the day, all were happy and wished to continue but due to time, we could not. So to *apply* or as a kind of an *evaluation* of what we learnt, the researcher proposed to the youth to think of any ministry at the parish such as Choir, Readers of the Word of God, Liturgy, cleaning the Church environment and many other ministries at the parish which they can dedicate ourselves to as an individual or as a group. We concluded the discussion with a song called '*Bind us together*' and then we prayed together and departed.

In addition, this is not the only teaching format catechists can use. There are a variety of them and depending on the group one is having, he or she can use the format that can help to teach catechism to the youth effectively. In fact, other people would say that the method should proceed through five steps such as *preparation* (the catechist must *set the mood*), *proclamation* (give heart of the teaching), *explanation* (giving them the meat), *application* (compel to witness or service), and *celebration* (ending on a high note or a prayerful gratitude and praise to God).<sup>145</sup>

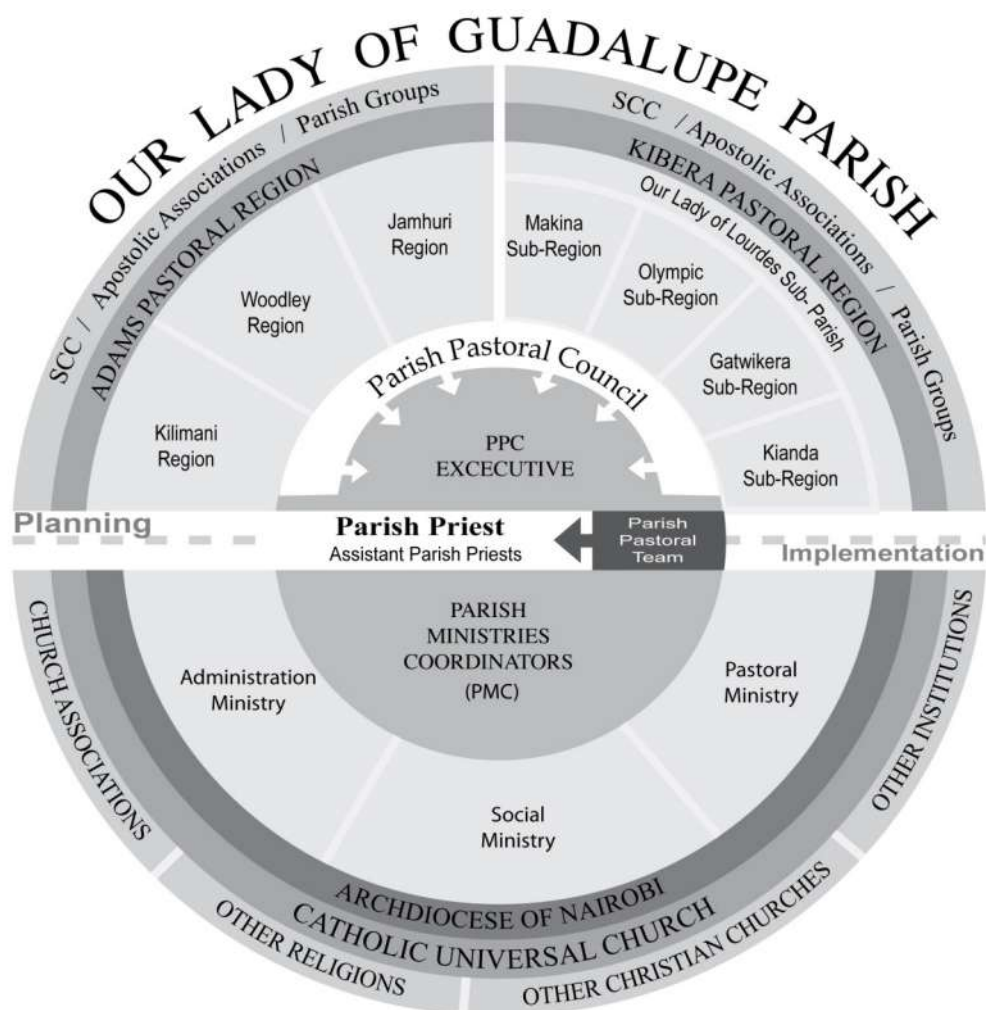
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<sup>143</sup> Cf. F. CRABU, *Manual For Catechists*, 54 - 55

<sup>144</sup> Cf. J. C. MUBANGA, *Journal on the Insertion Experience of the Researcher*, 54-56.

<sup>145</sup> Cf. "Methods in Catechesis", <[phatcatholic.blogspot.com/2011/10/ecclesial-method-in-catechesis.html](http://phatcatholic.blogspot.com/2011/10/ecclesial-method-in-catechesis.html)>, accessed on 03/02/15, 1-5.

**APPENDIX II:** Below is a Detailed Parish Structure and Organisation.



**Source:** I was given this parish structure and organisation by my field supervisor at the placement site.



a) If yes, for how long have you been teaching catechesis especially for the youth?

Please mark with an **X** the answer: [5yrs] [10yrs] [15yrs] [20yrs]  
[25yrs] [30yrs]

b) If the answer is not one of the above, please feel free to write in the following

Box

5. Is youth catechesis important in the Church's pastoral activity?

Yes [ ] No [ ]

Can you support your answer please!

6. How is catechesis being taught?

7. What is the relationship between youth catechesis and pastoral?

8. How can we enhance youth catechesis within the Church's pastoral activity?

9. What are the youth being taught in the catechism classes or similar sessions they have?

a) According to you, what should they be taught?

10. What dynamic of teaching is more interesting to them?

11. Who are the pastoral agents responsible to teach catechesis to the youth?

12. Mention some of the suggestions that will help the Church to improve youth catechesis?

13. You are free to give any recommendation or any point not mentioned above concerning youth catechesis.

## APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUTH

### Dear Respondents,

I, John Chomba Mubanga, wish to write about the topic: “**Enhancing Youth Catechesis in the Church’s Pastoral Activity: A Study on the Content and Methods for a Better Catechesis**”. I am a student pursuing a Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry (MPM) at Tangaza University College - Duquesne University (USA). The research is a partial requirement for the Masters Degree in Pastoral Ministry. Therefore, your positive contributions to this research by answering the questions below will be greatly appreciated.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

NAME (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

GENDER {Tick one} Male [ ]  
Female [ ]

STATUS: \_\_\_\_\_

OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

*N.B: If the space provided for each question below is not enough, you are free to use the remaining space at the end so long you indicate number of the question.*

1. What comes in your mind when you hear the word youth catechesis?
2. Do you think youth catechesis is necessary in the Church?  
Tick Yes [ ] No [ ]  
  
Why do you think so?
3. Is what you are learning in catechism class helpful for you?  
Tick [Yes] [No]
4. Are you in one of the groups at the parish?  
Mark with an X Yes [ ] No [ ]
5. What did you learn in catechism class?

6. Which of the methods below are being used to teach you catechesis?

Please Tick: Teaching  Questions and Answers   
 Memorisation  Catechetical Tour  Preaching/Homily

7. Many Youths today have lost interest in Church activities. What do you think?

Agree  Strongly Agree  Disagree  Strongly Disagree   
 None of them

8. What are you learning in catechism class if you are following catechesis now?

Please Tick one below:  
 Sacraments  Bible  Commandments  the Creed   
 Prayer  All of them

a) If none of them above, please write down which one in the space provided.

9. What type of teaching is more interesting to you?

10. What is the role of the youth in youth catechesis?

11. You are free to give any recommendation or suggestion regarding youth catechesis.

Thank you very much for your contribution.

**Name: John Chomba Mubanga**

**Email: [jchomu@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jchomu@yahoo.co.uk)**