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No. 11012T

**THE EFFECTS OF MATERIAL POSSESSION ON THE
MINISTERIAL PRIESTHOOD: A STUDY IN THE
ARCHDIOCESE OF NYERI**

Supervisor

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**A Long Essay Submitted in the Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for Bachelor of Theology**

NAIROBI 2016

DEDICATION

This Long Essay is dedicated to all the Priests who have a strong pastoral zeal in the vineyard of the Lord, and who treasure the virtue of poverty in the Archdiocese of Nyeri, as they imitate the life Christ lived on earth.

Secondly, I dedicate to all my family members who have encouraged me throughout my journey of formation and have seen me through.

Finally, I dedicate it to my classmates, Class 4C in Tangaza University College, who have been with me all through the theology course for four years, for their encouragement and support.

EPIGRAPH

“No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Mt 6:24)

“By using the world, then, as those who do not use it they will come to that liberty by which they will be freed from all inordinate anxiety and will become docile to the divine voice in their daily life” (Vatican II, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 17 of 7th December, 1965)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank God for his guidance and seeing me through this work from the time I started it to its end. I also thank my community Quebec Missionaries for the contribution towards my formation.

I thank my lectures in the School of Theology in Tangaza University College, for journeying with me throughout this journey of studies. Also I thank my Supervisor, Fr. Andrew Okeyo who has guided me through the process of writing this project.

I thank most sincerely Fr John Kamondo for facilitating the interviews with the respondents from the Archdiocese, and making my research work a success.

Finally I thank all those who helped in different ways and means in making this Long Essay a success, may God bless you.

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this Long Essay is my original work achieved through my personal readings, scientific methods and reflection. It has been submitted in the partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in Theology, and has never been submitted to any other College or University for academic credit. All sources quoted have been cited and fully acknowledged.

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This Long Essay has been submitted for examination with my approval as College Supervisor.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Mt	Matthew
Mk	Mark
Lk	Luke
Jn	John
Gen	Genesis
Eccl	Ecclesiasticus
Jos	Joshua
Sir	Sirach
Heb	Hebrew
Prov	Proverbs
Cor	Corinthians
Tim	Timothy
Col	Colossians
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CCL	Code of the Canon Law
CMA	Catholic Men Association
CWA	Catholic Women Association

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1. Background of the study

This Long Essay is intended to explore the effects and challenges posed by possession of material wealth by the Clergy in the Archdiocese of Nyeri. The world today has become secularised and the church is not spared and this has generated a lot of challenges on the priesthood ministry of the clergy. Possessing material wealth is not the issue, but, its effects and how it is administered and is the issue. The Church has been emphasising on the need for the clergy to live a life of poverty and simplicity.

Possession of wealth by the clergy was one of the reforms the Church has tried in some of the Church Councils. This issue needs a new approach other than the canons that were developed in the various Councils, as well as change of attitudes by the Clergy of what material wealth means to them.

1. Statement of the problem

The background of my Essay is that, despite the long formation that the priests undergoes the issue of living a simple life and commitment to the ministry is still very wanting. Possession of material wealth has become a big challenge to the pastoral ministry, causing some to neglect their pastoral work and lose their pastoral zeal, which is a disturbing reality. In my

observations while doing my apostolate within the Archdiocese, I realised that, there is a strong urge for possessions of material wealth. Their pastoral responsibility like visiting the sick, small Christian communities, schools etc. are no longer important as they are busy searching for wealth. My study will concentrate on the effects the material wealth is posing on the pastoral ministry in the Archdiocese.

2. The Goal of the Study

The goal of this Essay is to find out what are the factors that have accelerated this problem. Also, the root causes such as the social background of the person, attitudes toward riches, the taste, fashions and preferences, etc, which might have influenced this state of affairs in the Archdiocese. To find out how the Church is responding to this situation or any step taken to handle this growing concern.

3. Rationale/justification of the study

I am concerned by the attitudes of the clergy toward wealth possession and what it means to them. Their call is to serve God and mankind and not to be preoccupied by the search for riches. Therefore, this study shall be of benefit to me in having a better understanding of what the priests take the material wealth to be, and what are their attitudes toward the life of simplicity and poverty. Also, it will help the reader to reflect on their call to service and the need to live a simple life.

4. Objectives of the Study

It is clear that the material wealth is a challenge, among the clergy and the impact is being felt. Christian can also observe what the clergy are doing and the kind of life they are living, and they may wonder why this is happening. The objectives of my study are;

1. The kind of materials the priests are possessing in the Archdiocese.

2. To identify the root causes of the urge for possession material wealth by the priests.
3. To understand the Biblical and Magisterium teachings on possession among the priests, so as to create awareness of this problem.
4. To propose some suggestions and recommendations on some possible solutions to the problem.

6. Hypothesis

1. By living a simple life, the clergy will be able to do a good pastoral work and care.
2. Being a good example to the flock, the clergy will attract many souls to Christ.
3. Life of poverty promotes pastoral zeal and holiness among the clergy.

7. Scope and Limitation

My research paper will focus on the challenges posed on the priestly pastoral ministry by the material possessions. My scope shall be the priests within the Archdiocese of Nyeri. I will target a sample of priests between the ages of 35 years to 55years, in different Parishes and Departments, as this is the age bracket that is mostly affected by this issue.

8. Methodology

I shall apply the Pastoral Cycle method in my Long Essay. I intend to collect data from both the primary and secondary sources. The primary data shall entail personal interviews and Questionnaire. The secondary data shall be from written sources such as books, Encyclicals, Church documents, Journals, Papal letters and Scriptures.

9. Structure of the Work

My work shall be contained in four chapters. The first chapter shall contain the background of the Archdiocese, and the situation as it is now, with the aim of making the

reader understand how things are. The second chapter will discuss the factors, causes and the attitudes that are making the clergy have the strong urge to search for material wealth, at the expense of their pastoral work. Chapter will deal with the theological reflection on wealth possession in the light of the teaching of the Magisterium, the Church and the Scriptures, on wealth possession by the clergy. Chapter four will discuss the pastoral planning and some suggestions and recommendations that can be considered to correct the situation.

Chapter I

Background and the effects of possessing material wealth

Introduction

The issue of possessing material wealth has always been a subject of debate in the Church, and it has always been associated with secularism and materialism that is going on in the world today. It is not well accepted that, the priests should possess material wealth, as they are expected to dedicate themselves in serving God. They are called to live a life of poverty and simplicity and not a life of prosperity as the case is today. As consecrated people, they are called to live in a canonical state of abstaining from wealth possession, so as to dedicate all their energy in serving God and mankind.

1.1. Background of Archdiocese of Nyeri

Archdiocese of Nyeri is located in the central highlands of Kenya, and it was started around 1905 by Consolata Missionaries as an Apostolic Vicariate of North Zanzibar, and later Vicariate of Nyeri and later Diocese of Nyeri before becoming an Archdiocese as it is today. It covers an area of approximately 8,450 kms². Majority of the people in Nyeri are Christians with minority Muslims, Hindus. A good percentage of the Christians are Catholics. The Archdiocese is composed of 48 parishes, which are divided into 8 Deaneries, manned by 133 diocesan priests and a few missionary priests.

Its suffragan dioceses are; Embu, Meru, Vicariate of Isiolo, Maralal, Marsabit, Muranga and Nyahururu

1.2. What is material wealth

These are material things that are owned by an individual person [priest] and he has the title of ownership. These are not part of the temporal goods of the Church that the priest should take care of on behalf of the bishop. The most common form of wealth includes; money, cars, buildings, land and sometimes dairy animals.

1.3. Priest's attitudes towards material wealth

Priests are human beings and they can have inclinations and attitudes to possessing the earthly goods and pleasures. Some are able to control their urge while others are defeated, and fall into the temptations and of amassing material wealth, so as to satisfy their urge of possessing the earthly things.

1.3.1. Social competition

The attitude that we are in a social competition is very present in some priests, because of comparing themselves with others. He ends up acquiring material wealth because in his mind he is competing with other priests. Possessing something, like a land, car or a building etc, or establishing businesses, is the ultimate source of satisfaction sought for by him.

1.3.2. Status in the society

A Priest has a higher social status in the Society because of the office he holds, and thus he must possess some material wealth so that he can be seen and felt in the Society, especially by my Christians faithful. Possession of tangible and visible material

wealth makes him fit in that status and to be seen and felt, making him feel important in the Society. This is mainly in possessing latest model of car, mode of dressing and the lifestyle in general, as what you own is what defines who you are.

1.3.3. Bitterness in life

As some have lived a difficult life in the past, they develop internal bitterness due to the many challenges they have faced in life and had never had an opportunity to own anything in their life. Since an opportunity has arisen, they amass all that they can with a lot of bitterness, so as to compensate for what they did have in the past. Some go overboard and become overwhelmed by the material wealth and forget who they are and they end up losing their pastoral zeal.

1.3.4. Ambitions

Ambitions to succeed can lead one to gather a lot of material wealth and which may not add any value or happiness to their lives and ministries. The motive of this person from the beginning was in his ministry, but enriching himself, as this is why at a certain point in time he shifted the goals of his calling to personal goals.

1.3.5. Change of Religious mentality

In the early Church, life of poverty and simplicity was meant for the Monks and the Hermit who had chosen to live this kind of life. It seems this has no place in the modern Church of the 21st century. That was due to the faith and ignorance that was there, but now things have changed. This mentality dictates that we should live a life that matches what is happening in the world and move with the current waves of fashions, tastes and materialism. Those who lived those days lived in their own context and that has been rendered irrelevant in the today's world.

1.3.6. Poverty as a Vocation and gift

There is a shift from the mentality that, poverty was a gift towards holiness and perfection, but today it has lost that meaning. In fact some claim that, the then Church was primitive and was guided by ignorance and people of those ages believed what they were taught and followed it blindly without questioning. With the many discoveries that have taken place, the world is not the same as it was, and so the meaning of poverty as a vocation and gift has also changed.

1.3.7. The need to possession

The attitude is that 'we need them' but essentially, there is no real need or necessity that warrants possession these material wealth. They console themselves that, God hates poverty and He is a God who is rich and furthermore, who hate to be rich or to possess. Even after acquiring it, some end up not using it after all that effort and time while others use it but do not enjoy the kind of satisfaction and happiness they expected.

1.4. Effects of Material Wealth on the Ministry

Amassing and possessing of material wealth has more negative effects than the positive on the pastoral ministry. It may be thought that, there are no effects as they may not be very visible but, the effects are mainly felt by the ones who are working with the priest in the Parish like the Parish Council, Pastoral Agents, the Christians, employees of the parish etc.

1.4.1. Loss of Pastoral Zeal and focus

The pastoral zeal and remaining focused is what drives a priest. When it is shifted to the material wealth, then the pastoral work becomes secondary and the zeal is lost. The priest loses the meaning and reason of what he was called for and he turns his focus and energy towards either, searching for more wealth or maintaining what he has already acquired. Their ministry and other responsibilities are no longer important to them, to the extent that, they are like a part-time job or activity and with time the pastoral ministry becomes a burden to them.

1.4.1. Burden to Christians

The language of the priest is always about money and contributions, and rarely about the issues that affect Christians. The Christians cannot see what their money is doing in the Parish as the priest diverts it to his personal account. Some even say that if you don't contribute I will not be celebrating Mass for you, attend burials, visit Small Christian Communities, etc. It is a ministry of money and prosperity and not of shepherding the flock, making him to be like an employed pastor. His pastoral service depends on how much the Christians are contributing.

1.4.2. Pastoral work and care

In many occasions, the priest is absent from the parish attending to his own private affairs and always he has reasons for his absence, at the expense of the much needed pastoral care to the Christians. He comforts himself that, since the Catechist, a Deacon or Seminarians are in the Parish, then all the pastoral work and care can be entrusted to them as I am busy. They do not only have no time for their flock, but

also they are not in touch with what is happening in the Parish and in the Outstations. It is as good as having no priest in the Parish.

1.4.3. Change of social status

Wealth possession is one of the things that change the social status of many priests. He no longer talks of his priestly ministry but, of his social status in the Society and in the Archdiocese. This change affects how he works, relate with other priests and Christians, as he is like a boss of himself. He can influence many issues such as which parish or place to work, when to go for studies and where and even which class of Christians to deal with. Interestingly, some are even invited as guest of in fundraising. They socialise with the rich and even brush shoulders with politicians and the mighty in the society and meet in places that befits their social status like golf clubs, big hotels etc. Their ministries are secondary in their lives.

1.4.4. Scandal and crisis of faith

Wealth possession can be a scandal in the life of a priest, putting his faith in crisis and in turn affect the faith of the Christians faithful. Possession of material wealth makes the Priest feel that material wealth is sufficient and since the Christians are observing their lifestyles, they are scandalised and their faith goes down. The Christians lacks interest and this is manifested in their attendance of pastoral activities in the parish like Small Christian Communities, in groups such as C.W.A., C.M.A. etc. The result is faith crisis, both on the priest and the Christians and some Christians have opted to join other churches where their faith is nourished and less scandals and crisis.

1.4.5. Other effects

Some effects are on individual priest as an individual. Their behaviours and conduct of their day to day affairs of the Parish changes or they start to handle issues differently.

1.4.5.1. Selective Christians

Priest change the way he treat Christians. Due to change in their social life as result of material wealth, they develop an attitude of selecting Christians on the basis their social and economic backgrounds and, he only serve and visit the rich families and people of means within the Parish. He despises the poor as they have nothing to offer and they are not of his social class though they are part of his flock. What you possess in the Society determine what kind of treatment you shall receive from the priest. This has brings favouritism and discrimination and the priest forgets that, he is a pastor and a shepherd for all and not a selected few Christians or part of the flock.

1.4.5.2. Demoralized

Having a poor and rich priest is an issue. The rich priest overburdens the poor priest as he [rich priest] is absent most of the time taking care of his affairs as the poor priest always remains in the Parish. The poor priests are very serious and focused in their ministries and at times they feel demoralised. They feel that they are foolish by living life of simplicity, poverty and commitment, while others are busy enriching themselves. They feel it is the time to change their attitudes and join them and enjoy life like them.

1.4.5.3.Change of attitudes

Some priests start to change their attitudes when they in their formation, as they interact with their fellow seminarians who are rich or come from wealthy families, and rich priests when they go for their pastoral work in different Parishes.They join formation when they are innocent and focused but when they understand what goes on, their attitudes on material wealth changes. The priests whom they work with and who have some possessions have a huge influence on the seminarians and once they are ordained the culture continues, as they have already developed that attitude. This attitude of possession have made many priest to adore what they possess and even develop‘a don’t care attitude’ and they no longer care whatever people say or feels.

1.4.5.4.Conscience and guilt

What was I called for, to enrich myself orto be a profession orto serve people of God or to serve my own interests? Some suffer guilt conscious while others do not care. However, even those who suffer continue to acquire more material wealth as it is very tempting and it is not easy to let it go. Their consolation is that, this is how the world is today, and I am not the only one and since I have not offended anyone whyshould I suffer from guilt conscious or feel sorry for being rich. Be it be a consolation or a defence mechanism, it affects them interiorly as they know what is expected of them.

1.4.5.5.Wealth is everything

What I possess is everything to me and some ask what else do you need? Even if you are suspended or decide to leave the ministry, you have enough to survive on. The attitude is that material wealth is a source of satisfaction, happiness and security and

that is all that I need. This goes to an extent that, even they do not need God so much because they can take of themselves as the material wealth can support them and they can get all that they want.

1.5. Positive aspects of Material Wealth

Despite the many negative effects of possessing material wealth there are some positive aspects which can also be counted, as some have used the same material possession in some useful way.

1.5.1. Self-support

Some have used their material possession for their ministry. This is particularly those priests who are sent to work in poor areas where there are insufficient financial resources. Due to poverty to economic situation there, Christians have no means of supporting the priest. They supplement the little they get with their material wealth.

1.5.2. Support others

Some priests come from a poor background or areas, and they are expected to help their sibling and parents. Also there are poor people and some are his Christians who come for assistance, forcing the priest to use some of his material wealth to support and help them. They become beneficiaries of the material wealth of the priest unfortunately, this has been used as a justification to amass material wealth.

1.6. Response of the Church Authority

This issue is no longer a secret, as gone are the days when things were done in secret, as it is visible and its effects can be felt. There are responses from the authority as well as the concerned priests.

1.6.1. Wait and see attitude

The authority has taken this kind of attitude, assuming that things will change. Despite the fact that, things are not so good, the authority assumes that all is well. Unfortunately, the more the situation is ignored the worse it becomes. The consolation is that, this is what is happening in the world and there is no immediate solution to fix the problem.

1.6.2. Transfers

This means putting the priest in a physical separation from the wealth. Transfers not only make the management difficult, but the continuance possession of the wealth becomes a challenge. In some occasions, priests are sent for further studies in an effort to separate him with his wealth, with the hope that with the new environment he will change. The transfer or being sent for studies may be a relief to the Christians and not solution to the Church.

1.6.3. Confinement

This involves confining the priest in a place where his movement and chances of searching for wealth are limited. This may be in the bishop's house or in an institution like the hospital etc, where the priest is given some demanding duties which will take up all his time. This has caused some issues such as stress, depression and in some cases alcoholism, thus not as productive as it was intended.

1.4.6. Set free

In some occasions, the bishop is forced to set the priest free. He let him to go and do what he wants and if need be, he suspend him. The priest can go and do all he thinks is good for himself. This has proved to be the worst response, as the priest becomes worse and some end leaving priesthood. However, a few learn from their past mistakes and come back to their senses.

Conclusion

This issue of amassing material possession by the clergy is a reality and it can no longer be ignored. It is a serious issue and concern as it is making the clergy live secular lives as if they are not in the clergy. It is making some of them to do some things or involved in some activities that make them to be doubted if they are really in the ministry or whether they are committed. Priests are called to serve God and they respond to this call voluntarily and it is purely a service. They should survive on what is provided to them, the generosity of the Christians and Divine providence, as God will always give tools and means of living and doing his work and thus no need of worry of what will happen.

Chapter II

Causes for the urge to possess Material Wealth by Priests

Introduction

The challenge of the priest possessing material wealth cannot be ignored as it is really affecting the ministerial priesthood. This is coupled with what is happening in the world and the change in technology. It is even making Christian wonder if the ministry of priesthood is a profession or a lifestyle or people or people join it to live an easy life of pleasure and luxury though not all priests are like that.

2.1. Exception

Not all priests are affected by this issue, as some have values which they treasure. They think that possession of material wealth is not for priests, as the priests are called to live a simple life. Worldly things will cause distraction and turn him away from God, and thus earthly materials are only good as long as they are necessary and used in service of God and for the good of man.

2.2. Material Wealth

Material wealth means any “resources, property; that which has money value or economic usefulness.”¹ Material wealth or possession can also be understood as

¹ A. NEVINS, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 602

a; “large amount of money or valuable possession that someone has”² From a religious or spiritual point of view, when one possesses these material wealth, he is considered to belong to the world or has worldliness. Thus, the term world is taken to mean; “being in opposition to God and Spiritual matters [.....]the focus which draws man away from God”³ The worldliness may be defined as “the state of one whose main motivation comes from the world and not from God.”⁴

2.3. Poverty

Poverty should be taken to mean “the voluntary renunciation of possession in whole or in either part by an individual or by a religious community.”⁵ Jesus taught His Disciple to live the Evangelical poverty which is; “a promise made to God of a certain constant renunciation of temporal goods in order to follow Christ.”⁶ This voluntary poverty should be from interior of the person before it is seen exteriorly. The interior enable one to remove the desire as St. Alphonse stated that; “interior mortification is more important, but exterior mortification is extremely useful.”⁷

2.3.1. Poverty of being

Though poverty is lack of physical material it should start from the interior of the person, as the person must have that spirit that guides him. Thus we should think of the poverty of being and poverty of having. It is possible to have material wealth and still live a life of poverty (poverty of being) by “emptying of power and prestige, a form of wealth to which all people instinctively tend.”⁸ Voluntary poverty offers a priest the

²Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary, 1644

³ A. NEVINS, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 607

⁴ A. NEVINS, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 608

⁵ A. NEVINS, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 42

⁶ S. J. T., C.P. *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxii

⁷ GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *The Priest in union with Christ*, 173

⁸ M. AZEVEDO, S.J., *Vocation for Mission*, 14

much needed interior self freedom, as poverty is “is not having, but rather it is being free to be without having.”⁹ The pastoral work and the pastoral zeal depends on how free the priest is, because the desire to physically own begins from inside. St. Philip Neri said; “a man who never restrain his appetite cannot attain perfection.”¹⁰

2.3.2. Poverty of having

This is lack of physical material wealth, and which should be voluntary, as this call for renouncing worldliness which is to stop being; “guided by worldly maxims and fashions, accompanied by neglect of religious duties and spiritual needs.”¹¹ Detachment from priest’s heart becomes necessary and strong enough to; “mortify the love of riches, to cut-off vain glory and to free from the excessive care for temporal property.”¹² Though we cannot do away with the earthly things for we need them for survival, we have to free ourselves. St. Francis of Assisi taught that; “material possessions turns us away from God, we have to free ourselves from them completely.”¹³

2.4. Causes of the urge to possess material wealth

The causes are from both the internal and external forces and differ from one individual priest to another. This is mainly due to the attitude(s) that an individual forms regarding material wealth as it is; “a personal attitude towards goods of this world: first towards money and things money can buy.”¹⁴

⁹ M. AZEVEDO, S.J., *Vocation for Mission*, 14

¹⁰ GARRIGOU-LAGRANGE, *Priest in union with Christ*, 174

¹¹ A. NEVINS, *Maryknoll Catholic Dictionary*, 608

¹² SIDNEY, J. T., C.P. *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxii

¹³ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for Others*, 142

¹⁴ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 138

2.4.1. Internal forces

This comes from the attitudes that an individual priest develops regarding material wealth as an individual, because of how he views this issue from his own point of view.

2.4.1.1. Personality and maturity

Personality is the; “the type of person you are, which is shown by the way you behave, feel and think.”¹⁵ A priest with a personality of fear and insecurity, try to compensate by possessing material wealth so as to feel secure. They fear not to be felt by their peers and this makes them feel inferior; “some fear as to how they are to be taken by their peers, especially your former classmates in the Seminary.”¹⁶ A priest who has a low self esteem will possess so as to compensate for what he doesn’t have; “the tendency of the man with an inferiority complex to strive to compensate his low estimate of himself by the acquisition of wealth or of remarkable things.”¹⁷ He does this not because needs them, but because by possessing he gains security and acceptability from others priests.

2.4.1.2. The family background

The family background of the priest affects him even after his priestly ordination. Some priests “had a very poor and difficult family background and they have never possessed anything of their own apart from the ones of the family.”¹⁸ After his ordination, he gets excited and strives to compensate the past by acquiring what they have never owned in his life. The danger is if he cannot hold himself and detach from

¹⁵Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 1059

¹⁶ Fr. John Weru, “Causes of fear among a priest and his peers” Interviewed by M. Martin, on 3^d August, 2016

¹⁷ M. EUGENE, *The Spiritual Life of the Priest*, 78

¹⁸ Fr. G. Muthee, “Impact of a priest’s family background” Interviewed by M. Martin, on 25th July 2016.

the material wealth he acquires; “the greatest danger for the clergy is not the sumptuous living, but deep attachment to material values that removes him from Christ’s spirit.”¹⁹ When he realises that, he has an opportunity enrich himself has arisen he start to grab whatever he can, which leads to some vices such as corruption etc.

2.4.1.3. Search for pleasure

A priest is a human being who seeks for pleasure and the immediate means is to possess material wealth. The priests; “today are tempted to have beautiful car, a TV and Hi-Fi set or the best camera in the market. Other surrounds themselves with works of art antique furniture.”²⁰ Search for pleasure because of the life schedule of the priest may be used as a deceitful justification of acquiring his own material wealth and use it for their own benefit as the; “priest may be seeking his own pleasure and using his ministry as the pretext to rid himself of a guilt complex.”²¹

2.4.1.4. Social class and status

To maintain a certain social class and status and means that the priest must live a certain lifestyle and associate himself with a certain class of people so as to be compatible to that social class to have a sense of belonging. This has caused disconnect between the priest and his faithful he is supposed to be serving. He is seen by his fellow priests as a special priest and who is higher than them, untouchable and they are sometimes feared.

¹⁹ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 144

²⁰ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 136

²¹ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 139

2.4.1.5. Formation

The formation sometimes fails to form the human part of the Seminarian and that end up as a challenge to him. Vatican Council II insisted that, formation should be in all areas and thus; “.....inculcate self-control, to promote solid maturity of personality and the formation of those other trait of character which are most useful for the ordered and fruitful activity of the Church.”²² The main focus of formation is mainly the spiritual and pastoral, and the human formation is ignored and upon leaving the Seminary, the human challenges follow him. Possession of material wealth is one of them as they are unable to handle it well, due to lack of skills and values that could have been incorporated in their formation.

2.4.2. External forces

Some causes emanate from outside the individual priest. Some are able to overcome and be in control of the situation while others are defeated, and they end up in the trap.

2.4.2.1. Change of mentality

The changes in the world today have changed people’s mentality and the priests are not an exemption. The culture in the world is that, what you possess is what defines who you are. With this in mind, priests are striving to change their lifestyles to match up with what is happening in the world. The young priests believes that, “those who belong to the old school of thought cannot bring a change that fits the today’s world, as they always maintain the status quo, and so the young clergy must bring change.”²³

²² AUSTIN, FLANNERY, Vatican Council II, *OptatamTotius*, No. 11,635

²³ Fr. P. Waweru, “*Change of way of thinking by the Clergy*” Interviewed by M. Martin on 5th August, 2016

2.4.2.2. Age factor

Some issues are always associated with some age bracket, and it should not surprise anyone. They are saying that, our age and the changes in the world demands a total paradigm shift from what was assumed to be poverty those days and what the developed world would define poverty to be. We in the “young generation of priests, wants to be modern and different from the old priest of the old school of thought who held that a priest should not possess anything.”²⁴ This generation have come up with a totally different mentality that, their lifestyle should match their age and times. They want to assert that, you can possess material wealth and yet you live a life of simplicity and poverty.

2.4.2.3. Socio-cultural factor

Africa is a patriarchal society and thus the culture holds that, despite the fact that one is a priest he is still a man who should possess something on earth. He is expected to take care of and support his parents as they grow old. The priest comes from and belongs to these cultures. With these beliefs, they want to acquire material wealth not only to be seen but also to fulfil some of these responsibilities expected of them.

2.4.2.4. We are not religious

In the ancient times, poverty and living simple life was assumed to be of Monks and Nuns, and all those who wanted to live ascetic life. It should be noted that the diocesan clergy do not take vows but promise and poverty is not one of them; “We (diocesan priests) do not have the vow of poverty like the religious, and so we are free

²⁴ Fr. F. Kimaru, *“Impact of age to the Ministerial Priesthood”* Interview by M. Martin, on 6th August, 2016

to be rich. Even those who take the vow they still possess wealth secretly.”²⁵ Thus the life of poverty and simplicity and is not meant for us but for the religious. We can possess worldly wealth moreover such life does not have much meaning or add value to our ministries.

2.4.2.5. Social competition

Competition is healthy only if it is adding value to someone. Priests are competing to be better than the other in all ways, and this has become the rule of the day, such as driving the most recent model of a car, etc. This is mainly caused by; “peer pressure, inferiority complex among some priests, comparing with your former classmates in the Seminary and age.”²⁶ This is forcing some priest to focus on outdoing their peers, instead of concentrating on their ministry. A priest can work hard to possess material wealth, so as to look modern and this causes him to neglect his pastoral work.

2.4.2.6. Materialism

Materialism is; “the belief that having money and possession is the most important thing in life.”²⁷ This has not spared the priests as they continue to acquire wealth and this has become a priority as; “The servants are also threatened by this materialism that surrounds them.”²⁸ This problem is here with us in Africa and it is becoming difficult to tame the appetite. Buddhism teaches that; “the renunciation of property as being advantageous for the restraint of human desires.”²⁹ It is mainly affecting the priests who cannot be contented with what they have and what they get, as poverty demands the; “abandonment of all superfluous things [.....] but a man must be contented with

²⁵ Fr. W. Kaguamba, “The attitude of the Vow of poverty” Interview by M. Martin, on 22nd June 2016

²⁶ Fr. F. Kinyanjui, “Peer competition and lifestyle” Interview by M. Martin, on 5th July, 2016

²⁷ Cambridge Advanced Learner’s Dictionary, 882

²⁸ L. JACQUES, *Man of God for others*, 140

²⁹ S. JOSEPH, *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxi

whatever is necessary for his own use.”³⁰ Paul reminds the priests that; “For we brought nothing into the world, just we shall not be able to take anything out of it.” (1Tim 6:7)

2.4.2.7. The culture

Priests have formed a trend and it has become a culture revolving around the car you drive, your lifestyle, your associates, what assets you possess, your office and influence you have in the Archdiocese. The more you have of these, the more important you are and felt by your peers thus making others to strive to have these things so that life can be better. It is a kind of peer pressure, and mainly because of comparing with each other and this has a huge effect on priests as each want to outdo the other. Acquiring material wealth is not because he wants but because it is what the culture is dictating.

2.5. Impacts and Consequences of possessing Material Wealth

These are the results that follow this kind situation on individual priest or some of them as the situation influence them differently.

2.5.1. Temptations to Vices

Paul reminds the priests that, “Those who want to be rich are falling into temptation and into a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunge them into ruin and destruction.” (1 Tim 6:9) Wealth is very tempting and can make a priest unable to control their desires which breed into vices such as theft, misappropriation, corruption and scandals. Some have taken the Archdiocese’s cash and property while others have mismanaged the institutions belonging to the

³⁰ S. JOSEPH, *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxii

Archdiocese by colluding with the workers and suppliers for their own personal selfish gains. They say “when it is your turn, you take care of yourself, *jipange*, as who know about tomorrow.”³¹ This makes the priest to lose moral authority in condemning these vices in the Society.

2.5.2. Rivalry

Each wants to grab or to benefit himself and thus rivalry and infighting between priests arises, if any attempt is made to stop them to do what they want. St. Francis taught that; “property is not only a means to protect us from will of God, but source of almost all conflict between men.”³² Other priests claim that they are all equal and have the same rights in the Archdiocese to benefit from the wealth of the Archdiocese. These priests gets enemies and rivals from outside the Archdiocese because of the deals that the greedy priest has entered with other people who are not priests, such as Contractors, Suppliers etc.

2.5.3. Double life

Material wealth influences priest towards worldly life and makes him attractive to women thus venerable to intimate relationships. Priests who have wealth should always remember the issues that follows wealth as; “one of the characteristic of riches is that they gives rise to new needs, desires and lusts.”³³ Unless the priest is strong enough to stand the test of his call, what results is an unchaste and double life. Intimate relationships with women are on the increase though they are secret, and even some priests keep their concubines in the parishes under the disguise that they are clerks,

³¹Fr P. Mugweru, “*State of management of Archdiocese Wealth*” Interviewed by M. Martin, on 27th July 2016

³² J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 143

³³ F. SUAREZ, *About being a Priest*, 135

cooks or just worker in the parish. The priest is forced to maintain her and it is worse if they have a child, the maintenance cost goes high thus the necessity to possess wealth.

2.5.4. Alcoholism

Wealth influence alcoholism among the priests, whether taken in some secret or open places as this is a means of enjoying the wealth he has. It creeps in slowly as a priest becomes wealthy and especially if the wealth is causing stress and anxiety to him or looking for a way of enjoying his wealth. When the stress is too much, the priest turns to alcohol for consolation though the problem does not end. The danger is that some have been rendered incapable and can no longer perform their pastoral ministry while others have lost their lives through road accidents.

2.5.5. Disobedience

Wealth influences a priest to feel untouchable and obedience to his ordinary and other authority becomes a challenge as finds it difficult. They become very arrogant to the Christians and to their fellow priests just as; “the usual arrogance of the rich and men in high place shows us the danger of wealth.”³⁴ If they lose their wealth they became miserable and they find it hard to go back to their friends whom they had despised when they were wealth and influential in the Archdiocese, and they end up being bitter and frustrated.

2.5.6. Impact on the life of the individual priest and the ministry

I was interested to know whether, material wealth adds any value to the life and the ministry or a meaningful contribution to the life of priesthood or otherwise. I found

³⁴ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for Others*, 138

out that there are some good side of possessing but the negatives seems to outweigh the positives.

2.5.6.1. Anxiety and stress

This varies from one individual priest to another but majority suffers a lot of stress as they try to balance between maintaining the wealth and the pastoral work especially those priests with demanding schedules. The solution lies with the priest detaching from the wealth as; “real detachment, sufficient to mortify the love of riches, to cut-off vain glory and to free from the excessive care for temporal property.”³⁵ If he is transferred the coordination becomes a challenge, especially if the wealth requires attention as; “no one can serve two masters. He will [.....] be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Mt 6:24) His life becomes clouded with worries and anxieties and it end up adding no value to him.

2.5.6.2. Priest’s faith and ministry

Attention is shifted to the possessions and faith becomes of less importance and the ministry just a fulfilment of a duty, and with time it turns to a bother and a burden. When the priest begins to live a double life their lives becomes empty and the material wealth are no longer adding any value and meaning to their lives, faith and ministry. They should give up their wealth as St. Anthony the Hermit did, he; “gave up a fortune. The day he decided to consecrate himself to God, he threw his money out through the window so he could belong to God wholeheartedly.”³⁶ They are not enjoying it neither getting the desired happiness and satisfaction, and some end up leaving the ministry or they live very miserable lives.

³⁵S. J. TURNER, *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxii

³⁶ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God and Others*, 142

2.5.7. Priesthood Ministry is not a job but a call

The attitude should be that, priesthood is a call and not a job or profession, as; “today some priest are beginning to live like workers.”³⁷ Due to the challenges in the world; “priesthood has turned to be just like any other work, as people in the ministry no longer fear or mind what they are doing.”³⁸ Wealth has turned priestly ministry a lifestyle or a job, and this issue of possession of material wealth is worsened by the attitudes the priest develops, such as disobedience etc.

Conclusion

To possess material wealth is not bad but, it has brought more harm than good to the priestly ministry. The issue is how to balance between the ministry and the material wealth, without compromising the ministry. There are many influences and consequences of possessing material wealth especially that, the world is becoming more materialistic. Church has to devise an approach to address issue before it is too late so that, as the priest moves in the direction the world is moving, they should not compromise their ministries and vocation.

³⁷ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God and Others*, 136

³⁸ Fr. S. Ndungu, “*Faith in the Priesthood Ministry*” Interview by M. Martin, on 3rd August, 2016

Chapter III

The Church teachings on possession of Material Wealth by Priests

Introduction

As much as the world has become very secular and materialistic the Church has not given up in teaching on the importance living a life of simplicity and poverty, so as to serve God better. The worldly materials are meant to help us to carry out the day to day affairs of life and not to control us.

3.1. Plan of God

God created everything that we have on earth “God looked at everything he had made, and found it very good.” (Gen 1:31) God intended man to use them for his survival; “All the good things of this world, everything on this earth, has been placed there by God for our use to the extent to which we need them, but always with a view to our final destiny.”³⁹ He gave man the necessary knowledge so as to be a good steward of His creation, and to use them for his glory and for his own goodness. He commanded man to; “Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that moves on the earth.” (Gen 1:28)

³⁹ F. SUAREZ, *About Being a Priest*, 135

3.2. Scriptures

3.2.1. Possession of Material Wealth in the Old Testament

The Scriptures does condemn the possession of material wealth instead, it advises and warns against those vices that come with the possession of wealth, like enslavement, adoring or abusing it and forget God who created them. The priests should be grateful with what God has given and never forget that everything comes from Him, “remember it is the Lord your God who gives, the power to acquire wealth.” (Deut 8:18) The priests chose voluntarily to serve God, and thus they must fear Him and commit themselves so; “now, therefore, fear the Lord and serve him completely and sincerely.”(Jos 24:14) God has given each priest the freedom and will to choose which God he wants to serve as, “if it does not please you to serve the Lord, decide today whom you will serve, the gods [...]. As for me and my household we will serve the Lord.” (Jos 24:15)

Having all that he (priest) wants does not guarantee him happiness he desires, “there is the man to whom God gives riches and property and honour, so that he lacks none of all the things he craves, yet God does not grant him power to partake of them [...]. This is vanity...” (Eccl 6:1-2) Possessor can deceive himself that, he is in control and does not need God and they are warned that; “rely not upon deceitful wealth, for it will be no help on the day of wrath,” (Sir 5:10) and so trust in the Lord and not on your riches to be your security.

As material wealth increases, more worries and anxieties to the owner increases; “keeping watch over riches waste the flesh and the cares of wealth drives away rest.” (Sir 31:1) The priest’s social status in the society demands integrity which they should

treasure as a; “good name is more desirable than great riches and a high esteem, than gold and silver.” (Prov 22:1)

Worries about their wealth will not add value to their life, as the wealth the priest amasses will be; “vanity of vanities! All things are vanity!” (Eccl. 1:1) The worldly materials shall not add happiness to them but only a strong crave and upon getting it more worries will follow; “the covetous man is never satisfied with money, and the lover of wealth reaps no fruits from it, so this too is vanity.” (Eccl. 5:9)

3.2.2. Possession of Material Wealth in the New Testament

The Scripture does not condemn the possession, but reminds the priests of what follows after we have acquired it. A priest is called to serve God and not wealth as; “no one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.” (Mt 6:24) The priest must make a choice between God and wealth and stop to worry about tomorrow, as God assures tells us that; “don’t worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself.” (Mt 6:34)

The spirit of detachment comes from the heart, so as to let go anything that may be an obstacle in following Christ; “Good teacher, what must I do to inherit the eternal life? (Mk 10:17) Jesus [.....] said to him, you are lacking one thing. Go and sell all what you have and give it to the poor [...] then come and follow me.” (Mk 10:21-22) Spirit of detachment demands the priest to let go the most valuable thing to him, and follow Christ as; “he threw aside his cloak, sprang up and came to Jesus.” (Mk. 10:50)

Possession of wealth can breed vices such as greed etc, which may control the priest’s life and so he should cultivate the virtues that befits him such as that of service;

“rather whoever wishes to be great among you shall be your servant, [...]. Just so, the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve.” (Mt. 20:26-28) Though Jesus did not condemn wealth He taught the importance of poverty and the dangers of wealth as; “it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for one who is rich to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.” (Mt 19:24)

Paul taught that, we should not let wealth be a problem or an obstacle to reach God, but only use it as; “for we brought nothing onto the world, just as we shall not be able to take anything out of it.” (1Tim. 6:7) Also; “Those who want to be rich are falling into temptations and into trap and into many foolish and harmful desires, which plunges them into ruin and destruction.” (1Tim. 6:8-9) The Priests should “think of what is above, and not what is on the earth.” (Col.3:2)

The simplicity of life is meant to assist the priest avoid some temptations as; “all that is in the world, sensual lust, enticement for the eyes and pretentious life is not from the Father, but from this world.” (1Jn. 2:16) Serve the Lord with your whole heart and you will find your treasure there and the happiness you desire “for where treasure is, there also will your heart be.” (Mt 6:21) Remember that; “the world and its enticement are passing away, but whoever does the will of God remains forever.” (1Jn. 2:17) Serving the Lord and finally to be with Him should be the ultimate goal of the priest.

3.3. The teaching of the Church

3.3.1. Catechism of the Catholic Church

The Catechism teaches us about the importance of living the Evangelical Counsels as taught by Christ, as they are important for our salvation.

3.3.1.1. Representatives of Christ

By virtue of ordination a priest becomes the representative of Christ on earth and acts in His place for; “in ecclesiastical service of the ordained minister, it is Christ himself who is present in his Church [.....] the priest, by virtue of the sacrament of Holy Orders act in *persona Christi; capitis*.” Thus the priest should practise that voluntary poverty so to be close more close to Christ, whom he is representing on earth and for the Kingdom of Heaven. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 1548*)⁴⁰

3.3.1.2. Service to God

A sincere ministerial priesthood should be like that of Christ who came; “not to be served but to serve.” (Mt 20:26) It is a service to God and for the good of people of God and so the priest should not be preoccupied with searching for earthly wealth as; “that office [....] the Lord committed to the pastor of his people is in the strict sense term a service. The exercise of this authority [....] be measured against the model of Christ.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, No.1551*)⁴¹

3.3.1.3. Good example

The priest offer his service to people of God by exercising their three offices; “service for the people of God by teaching (*munusdocendi*), divine worship (*munusliturgicum*) and pastoral governance (*munusregendi*) and thus he should serve as the best example to his flock.” (CCC No. 1592)⁴² This demands that the priest be an excellent example as, he is a teacher and everyone will be looking upon him whether he is living what he teaches. He is a leader and as such he should lead by example, and being a man of God he should lead his flock closer to God.

⁴⁰*Catechism of the Catholic Church, Revised Ed.,347*

⁴¹*Catechism of the Catholic Church, Revised Ed.,348*

⁴²*Catechism of the Catholic Church, Revised Ed.,357*

3.3.2. The code of the Canon Law

The law is meant to guide people to how they should conduct themselves. The Canon Law guides the priests on how to live a good life, regarding earthly things.

3.3.2.1. Divided Heart

The Church Law reminds the priests that; “[...] sacred minister can more easily remain close to Christ with undivided heart and can dedicate themselves more freely to the service of God and to their neighbours.” (Can. 277.1)⁴³ It is the expectation of the Church that, they follow the example of Christ by living; “a simple way of life and avoid anything which smacks of worldliness.” (Can. 282.1)⁴⁴ These canons are meant to help the priests to avoid their involvement with earthly things and to encourage them to detach from the worldly things.

3.3.2.2. Worldly business

The Church forbids priests from involving themselves in any kind of business, so that they can focus on their ministries. The; “clerics are forbidden to practice commerce or trade, either personally or through another, for their own or another’s benefit [.....].” (Can. 286)⁴⁵ Their upkeep should not be used as a justification for searching for wealth as the Church has a duty to provide for them; “since the cleric dedicate themselves to the ecclesiastical ministry, they deserve the remuneration that befits their condition, taking into account [...] the condition of [...] place.” (Can.

⁴³*Code of the Canon Law*, 62

⁴⁴*Code of the Canon Law*, 63

⁴⁵*Code of the Canon Law*, 63

281.1)⁴⁶ The Lord commanded that; “those who preach the gospel should live by gospel.” (1Cor 9:14) and thus Christians should maintain the priests.

3.3.3. Priestly life and Ministry

A priest; “is a man of God among men: everything he has is supposed to serve that mission.”⁴⁷The priests should be service oriented, and not concerned with the world affairs as he cannot; “be a true servant and minister of his brother if he were excessively worried with his comfort and wellbeing.” He should trust in Divine providence and be contented with what they get and not excessive, because; “renunciation that is essential and strictly required, is the abandonment of all superfluous things, [.....] but a man must be contented with whatever is necessary for his own use”

The priests must appreciate the worldly things, by using them responsibly, moderately and be detached from them. Priests should cultivate an attitude of voluntary poverty regarding earthly wealth, which is good for the ministry and thus he should; “deny himself those worldly activities which are not in keeping with his ministry”. Poverty is expressed in the way of life and as such, a priest “must lead a simple life and avoid anything which could have an air of vanity”. (*Directory for the Ministry and Life of Priests, No. 67*)⁴⁸

3.4. Church Fathers

The Church Father taught what they thought in their own wisdom, how the clergy can deal with this issue of material wealth as they were concerned with the trend.

⁴⁶Code of the Canon Law, 62

⁴⁷ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for others*, 135

⁴⁸ THE CONGREGATION OF THE CLERGY, *Directory for the Ministry and life of Priests*, 53-4

3.4.1. St. Ambrose of Milan (339-397c)

The intention of the Fathers was not to separate the priests from the world as they live in and belong to this world. Ambrose encourages the priests not fear what they are going to lose from the world if they detach themselves as; “the priest should have no fear that he will be a loser by thus cutting himself off from the world: he actually will gain more than he gives up.”⁴⁹ Sincere detachment is from the heart of the possessor meaning; “he detaches himself generously from small satisfaction within the limited orbit of his own life,”⁵⁰ and he should be guided by the spirit of Christ. Money is very tempting and so the priests should focus on the service to God and leave money out and stop to; “involve yourself in worldly business for you are in the service of God [...].You will have peace of mind [...] in your use of worldly goods”⁵¹

3.4.2. St. John Chrysostom (347-407c)

The priest should distant themselves from the worldly things, as if they do not belong to this world; “priest remain foreign to these things as the Hermits who spend their lives on mountain tops.”⁵² As a human being, a priest can be overcome by his weaknesses on how he deal with the material wealth especially in balancing between wealth and ministry as; “natural frailty will tend to upset the proper balance [.....] because of the excessive interest [...] in the worldly affairs, we have [.....] scandals which we encounter almost daily”⁵³

To live a life of poverty does not mean to be paupers, although they are; “entitled to nothing more than food and clothing [.....] should not be interpreted [...] that

⁴⁹ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 122

⁵⁰ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 121

⁵¹ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 135

⁵² E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 118

⁵³ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 119

Christ's ministers live in squalor and misery."⁵⁴ Moderation is necessary meaning, to live a standard life of comfort without excesses, and have the ideal humility that; "we want to be unnoticed, to be like Jesus who said he was said he was humble and poor of heart."⁵⁵ Priest is model to his flock, and thus be a man of dignity and respect by being a living example as; "subordinates are accustomed to take their superiors for their examples and model; they form themselves along this line which they see in him."⁵⁶

3.4.3. St. Jerome, (345-420)

The priest should not let his character be questioned by his flock; "do not permit your actions to belie your words, lest [...] someone should ask himself: why do you not practise what you preach?"⁵⁷ He encourages the priests to live a life of simplicity and poverty as it is; "good in so far as it is useful to remove the obstacles which may stand in the way of spiritual perfection."⁵⁸ Money received should be applied as intended, as it may turn into wealth of the priest and; "degenerate into an indirect means of self-aggrandizement. If he [...] has a natural fascination he may [.....] fall victim to the temptation to appropriate these riches of the poor for his own advantages."⁵⁹ The danger is when the material wealth takes the priest's attention from God. St. Francis taught that; "material possessions turns us away from God, we have to free ourselves from them completely."⁶⁰

⁵⁴ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 129

⁵⁵ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for Others*, 138

⁵⁶ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 74

⁵⁷ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 78

⁵⁸ S. J. T., *The Vow of Poverty*, xxxi

⁵⁹ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 134

⁶⁰ J. LECLERCQ, *Man of God for Others*, 142

3.4.4. St. Augustine, (354-430)

The priest should live what he teaches before he causes harm to his flock as the; “preachers whose lives are inconsistent with their teaching [.....]. For in so far as the priest acts wrongly, he is not preaching from the chair of Christ.”⁶¹ He taught that detachment is essential in making a priest Christ-like as the; “spirit of detachment is drawing the priest ever closer to Christ; [.....]. True servant of God are [.....] faithful in obeying the will of the Lord in all things.”⁶² Interior freedom means that there is nothing forcing the priest to have a divided heart in serving the Lord, as all his treasures are in heaven as “owning nothing we shall possess all things.”⁶³

3.4.5. St Bernard (1090-1153)

Priest’s conduct must be; “grounded so solidly in the fundamental requisites of priestly holiness”⁶⁴ The priest must judge which side he belongs, whether of the world or of God as it may be asked; “why do clerics want to be one thing while appearing to be another? [...] Trying to dress like a soldier and to act like clerics, [.....].”⁶⁵ Priests should carry themselves as if they don’t belong to this world, so as to lose the worldly life and have eternal life; “loses his life in this world, that he may keep it unto life everlasting,”⁶⁶ and to remain close to his Divine Master.

3.5. Magisterium-Popes

The reality of this issue is a disturbing and the Magisterium has to address through any means possible.

⁶¹ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 78

⁶² E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 135

⁶³ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 135

⁶⁴ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 76

⁶⁵ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 114-115

⁶⁶ E. L. HESTON, *The Priest of the Father*, 123

3.5.1. Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903)

Priest's self denial to the worldly things is necessary so as to have space for God and serve Him as; "it is from self denial chiefly that strength and power and fruit of every priestly function derives."⁶⁷ Lack of this self-denial the priest end up doing his will and to please men and he warned those priests who acts; "for the sake of filthy lucre, or become involved in worldly affairs [.....] or follow human counsel or seek to please men [.....] this is the result of neglect of the command of Christ."⁶⁸

3.5.2. Pope Pius XI (1922-1939)

He taught that, due to the materialism that is there in the world today the priest should practise a sincere detachment and he; "ought to be remarkable for his detachment from worldly things [...] living in the midst of a corrupt world [...] he must be completely devoid of self-interest. He must put aside all desires for earthly gain."⁶⁹ He who works in the vineyard of the Lord and cannot be paid as; "as his labour and care could never be recompensed by the wealth or the honours which the world has to offer."⁷⁰

3.5.3. Pope Pius XII (1939-1958)

In a letter to all priests, the Pope insisted that the priests should; "not trust in his own strength [.....] nor seek praise of men but let him imitate Christ, [.....] detaching from the things of the earth in order to follow the Divine Master more easily."⁷¹ Diocesan priests do not profess vow of poverty but, they can nurture the virtue of poverty and demonstrate their; "simplicity and modesty of their manner of life, in their

⁶⁷ POPE LEO XIII, Exhortation, "*HaerentAnimo*" to Catholic Clergy on Priestly sanctity, 60

⁶⁸ POPE LEO XIII, Exhortation, "*HaerentAnimo*" to Catholic Clergy on Priestly Sanctity, 60

⁶⁹ PIUS XI, Encyclical, "*Ad CatholicaSacerdotiFastigium*", on the Catholic Priesthood, 221

⁷⁰ POPE PIUS XI, Encyclical, "*Ad CatholicaSacerdotiFastigium*" on the Catholic Priesthood, 222

⁷¹ POPE PIUS XII, Apostolic Exhortation, "*To the Clergy of the entire World, No. 7*", 8

living quarters and in their generosity to the poor.”⁷² This calls for the priest to avoid any distraction from his pastoral ministry and thus; “let them refrain from those economic enterprise which would impede the fulfilment of their pastoral duties and lessen the respect which is due to them from the faithful.”⁷³

3.5.4. Pope John Paul II (1978-2005)

Pope reminds all the priests that, they have a “ministerial’ priesthood. It constitutes a special *ministerium*, that is to say ‘service’ in relation to the community of believers.”⁷⁴ Priesthood was instituted by Christ Himself as he has the fullness of priesthood and it demands a change which; “calls for a particular integrity of life and service and precisely such integrity is supremely fitting for our priestly identity.”⁷⁵ The identity is expressed in the dignity, the great sacrifice and service to others as Christ did. This calls all the priests to renounce everything and follow Christ.

3.5.5. Pope John Paul II (1978-2005)

Priests come from people and go back to work among people, as a mediator between man and God. With his human weaknesses, can be enticed by worldly goods so he need to be strong like Christ; “one who has similarly been tested in every way, yet without sin.”(Heb 4:15) The concern is how priests have been enticed by the world, because the; “lure of the so called ‘consumer society’ is so strong [.....] that they become totally dominated and imprisoned by an individualistic, materialistic and hedonistic interpretation of human existence.”⁷⁶

⁷² POPE PIUS XII, Apostolic Exhortation, “*To the Clergy of the entire World, No. 25*”,10

⁷³ POPE PIUS XII, Apostolic Exhortation, “*To the Clergy of the entire World, No. 25*”,10

⁷⁴ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Letter, “*To all priest of the Church, No. 4*,” 16

⁷⁵ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Letter, “*To all priest of the Church, No. 4*,” 12

⁷⁶ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, “*PastoresDaboVobis*”, No.8, 18

Serving God means sacrifice but due to the materialistic attitude of the today's world; "there is refusal of anything that speaks of sacrifice and a rejection of any effort to look for and to practice spiritual and religious values."⁷⁷ Evangelical poverty demands that, the priest possess what will not affect his pastoral ministry. Poverty sets the priest free to follow Christ and be committed to his ministry as; "no one who sets a hand to the plough and looks to what was left behind is fit for the kingdom of God." (Lk 9:62) The freedom should be both interiorly and exteriorly, so that he can serve people freely and happily.

3.6. The Church Councils

Councils were convoked to address certain problems that the Church has been facing all along. The issue of wealth was one of them and some Councils tried to address it, as it was not only a problem but also a threat to the Church.

3.6.1. Synod of Elvira, AD. 304-306

The priests were honoured and respected, and were even expected to show that in their lifestyles. They were not allowed to take interest on loans; "and this was imposed also and made a clerical offence both for clergy and laity" and also "the conduct of ordinary business and trade, the clergy were subjected to stringent restrictions."⁷⁸ It is also to be noted that in those early days, the offering were not sufficient. The priests had to do some work just to maintain themselves and staff and not to become rich; "many clergy followed St. Paul's great example, were compelled to

⁷⁷ POPE JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, "*Pastores Dabo Vobis*", No. 8, 18

⁷⁸ ALFRED, W. W. D., *The Synod of Elvira*, 189

work with their own hands.”⁷⁹ This was not meant to give them an advantage to enrich themselves but just to obtain their sustenance.

3.6.2. Council of Nicea II, A.D. 787

The Council decreed some canons which emphasised on simplicity of life for priests and maintaining internal poverty. The Canon were against the priests who lived an expensive and luxurious life as portrayed by their lifestyle. It warned those bishops and clergy who live such life to stop or be punished; “all those bishop and clerics who deck themselves out in brilliant showing clothes should be called to the order and if they persist let them be punished.” (Can. 16)⁸⁰

3.6.3. Council of Chalcedon, A.D. 451

This Council formulated Canons that prohibited the priests from conducting or being involved in commerce or business of any kind or form; “.....that, some of those enrolled in the clergy are, for sordid gain, [.....] are involving themselves in worldly business, neglecting the service to God. So the sacred synod decree that, in the future no one, [.....] involve himself as an administrator of the worldly business.” (Can 3)⁸¹

3.6.4. Council of Lateran II, AD. 1123

The Council began by emphasising the importance of holiness and pleasing God as the main reason of the priestly calling. They were expected to focus on serving God and worldly things to come later and so we; “enjoin that bishops as well as clergy takes pain to be pleasing to God and to humans in both their interior and exterior

⁷⁹ ALFRED, W. W. D., *The Synod of Elvira*, 189

⁸⁰ N. P. TANNER, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Vol. 1*, 150

⁸¹ N. P. TANNER, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils, Vol. 1*, 88

comportment [.....] they ought to be a model and example, [.....] let them exhibit holiness.” (Can 4)⁸²

3.5.5. Council of Lateran IV, AD. 1215

In the course of looking for wealth and money, some clerics have extorted money for their own personal gains from their subjects. If their demands are not met, they impose some false restrictions and impediments as; “certain clerics demand and extort payments for funeral fees for the dead, the blessing of those marrying and the like, and if it happens that their greed is not satisfied, they deceitfully set up false impediments.”(Can 4)⁸³ The Council affirmed that it was aware of that, and thus this trend had to be stopped.

3.6.6. Council of Vienne, AD. 1311-1312

To demonstrate the seriousness of this issue the Council decreed that, the bishop had to stop and warn those who were in the worldly business through this Canon that; “we strictly command local ordinary to admonish by name three times clerics who publicly and personally engage in the butcher’s trade or conduct taverns, that they cease to do so within a reasonable time to be fixed by the ordinary and never resume such trade.” (Can 8)⁸⁴

3.6.7. Council of Trent, AD. 1545-1563

The Council did some reform on the life of the clerics. It reminded the priests that, they have been raised to a higher level and called by God so as; “to have the Lord for their portion, [.....] to regulate their life and conduct that in dress, behaviour, gait,

⁸² N. P.TANNER, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Council, Vol. I*, 197

⁸³ N. P.TANNER, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Council, Vol. I*, 265

⁸⁴ N. P.TANNER, *Decrees of the Ecumenical Council, Vol. I*, 364

speech and all other things, nothing may appear but what is dignified, moderated and permeated with piety.”⁸⁵On the issue of priestly life, the Council decreed that; “since therefore the more these things contribute to the usefulness and honour in the Church of God, so the more zealously must they be observed, the holy council ordains that those things [.....] enacted by the supreme pontiffs and holy council concerning adherence to the life, conduct, dress and learning of clerics, as also the avoidance of luxury, feasting, dances, gambling, sports and all sorts of crime and secular pursuits, shall in future be observed under the same or greater penalties.”⁸⁶

3.6.8. Vatican II Council, AD. 1962-1965

The Council was concerned with the priests who were part and parcel of the modern world.

3.6.8.1. *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (1965)

This decree emphasised that, the priests should nurture the right values and attitudes toward created things. They should not be controlled by the worldly material and the Council encouraged the priests to live as if they do not belong to this world; “while living in this world, they should still realise that, according to the word of our Lord and Master they are not of this world.” Thus they live a life of freedom and docility, cultivating and developing the right attitude as; “from this liberty and docility grows that spiritual insight through which is found a right attitude to the world and to the earthly goods.”

The Council emphasized that we still need material goods for survival and so the; “Church mission is carried out in the midst of the world and that created goods are

⁸⁵ H.J.SCHROEDER, O.P., *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, 152

⁸⁶ H. J.SCHROEDER, O.P., *Canon and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, ,153

absolutely necessary for man's personal progress." The earthly goods should be used in the right way, and not for enrichment and prosperity, but for the mission of God, and that the priest "ought to judge everything they meet in the right of faith, so that they will be guided towards the right use of things in accordance with God's will and reject anything that is prejudicial to their mission." They should not acquire wealth for a living as the Council decreed that "priests are entitled to receive a just remuneration. For labourer deserves his wages." (Lk 10:17) They should devote all his time and energy in serving the lord and faithful. (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 7th December, 1965, No. 17)⁸⁷

3.6.8.2. *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965)

Imitating Christ is to follow his way of life and a priest should put himself; "in the footsteps of Christ, is a symbol of Christ which is much esteemed, especially nowadays." By living a life of poverty, the one becomes rich as this is the example that Christ set for all prieststo; "share in the poverty of Christ who for our sake became poor, though he was rich, so that we might become rich through his poverty." (2Cor 8:9; Mt 8:20). Poverty is not suffering or inadequacy, but it is to have only the things which are necessary for mission, so as to have a space for Christ. Life of poverty helps the priest to dedicate themselves wholeheartedly for the service of God, and to maintain the perfect marriage between Christ and his Church. (*Perfectae Caritatis*, 28th October, 1965, No.13)⁸⁸

⁸⁷ AUSTIN, FLANNERY, Vatican II, *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Document*, 785-6

⁸⁸ AUSTIN, FLANNERY, Vatican II, *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Document*, 551

3.6.8.3. *Lumen Gentium* (1964)

The holiness of priests should be like that of Christ who is a perfect shepherd of flock, and this by imitating Him as their example to be a good; “shepherd of Christ flock, in the image of the high and eternal priest, shepherd and bishop of our souls, should carry out their ministry with holiness and eagerness, with humility and fortitude.” (LG 41) The holiness is fostered through observing the counsels which the Lord proposed to his disciples, and the Father also gave them divine graces so that they “devote themselves to God alone more easily with undivided heart.” (1Cor 7:32-34) (LG 42) Possession of material wealth diverts him from what he was called to do but helps them to poverty a life of less distractions where they can enjoy the; “fullness of priesthood, they are endowed with sacramental grace, so that by prayers, sacrifices and preaching and through every form of Episcopal care and service, they may fulfil the perfect duty of pastoral love.” (*Lumen Gentium*, 21st November, 1965, Nos.40&42)⁸⁹

Conclusion

It is clear that there are no justifications for the priest to acquire material wealth at the expense of his ministry, as it has more disadvantages and challenges than poverty. According to the teaching of the Church, the priest chose to follow this life voluntarily, and to live it calls for a lot of sacrifices on the part of the individual priest. What matters is not what you own but how you use it and whether it is an obstacle to the ministry.

⁸⁹ AUSTIN, FLANNERY, Vatican Council II, *The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, 360-363

Chapter IV

Pastoral planning and suggestions for action

Introduction

Possession of material wealth comes with challenges and crisis both in the Church and in the society. Human desires must be fulfilled in different ways and one of the ways is possessing material wealth. This has caused scandals including neglecting the ministry and loss of pastoral zeal.

4.1. Preventive measures

It can be wiser to try to prevent this problem from the beginning than to think that, making and tough talking will solve the problem. Some strategies, if well applied and followed up, can be of use. They may not eliminate the whole problem, but can minimise or control the situation.

4.1.1. Selection and admission of candidates to priesthood

The candidates to priesthood should be well assessed and evaluated, on motivation and intention of joining priesthood to ensure that, the right candidates are admitted. The Vocation Director must investigate this candidate, including his social, family and spiritual background so to know him better. As it is not possible to know them completely, the formation process will take care of the other aspects, because,

soon after the admission, the true character of the candidate shall come out. With well structured formation program, the weaknesses can be corrected and the strengths maintained. The Vocation Director should bear in mind that, the success of this will determine how successful the other stages of formation will be.

4.1.2. Initial formation

A good priest is a product of good formation, and the Vatican Council II insisted that, the formation should; “inculcate self-control, to promote solid maturity of personality and the formation of those other trait of character which are most useful for the ordered and fruitful activity of the church”⁹⁰This is aimed at forming a mature and holistic person and be formed to the true spirit of “giving of oneself and spirit of service.”⁹¹

Many seminarians are formed in a closed environment where they have no contact with the world. It should be open formation so that they can have contact with the worldly reality as they “are called to be in the world, to understand the world, and to accept the world, but, at the same time, to undertake a mission which distinguishes him from the world.”⁹²This formation should ensure that, the seminarian acquires maturity that can be displayed in his personality, “mature personality is a harmony of elements and integration of tendencies and values.”⁹³

In this seminary formation proper values and attitudes towards earthly things should be instilled, and the necessity of living a simple life of poverty. The formation should at transforming and not training, in that it should at transforming the seminarian

⁹⁰ AUSTIN FLANNERY, Vatican Council II, *Optatam Totius*, No. 11, 634

⁹¹ CONGREGATION OF THE CLERGY, *Directory for the Ministry and Life of Priests*, No. 67, 53

⁹² SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy*, No. 87, 72

⁹³ SACRED CONGREGATION FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATION, *A Guide to Formation in Priestly Celibacy*, No. 18, 20

to be better and changed people. This transformation should make him a holy person who understand his vocation and know that it does not end with seminary studies as the priestly starts after ordination. This transformation should aim at first forming him interiorly and then exteriorly.

4.1.3. On-going formation

This formation begins after the ordination, and it aims at empowering the priest to respond to the challenges and changes that follows after his initial formation in priestly life. With this formation, he can respond to the pastoral challenges and that is happening in the world without losing his identity and focus. Materialism is one the challenges as the; “Rapid and widespread transformation and a secularized social fabric typical of the contemporary world are what makes unavoidable the priest’s duty of being adequately prepared, so that he not lose his own identity and so that he might respond to the demands of the new evangelisation.”⁹⁴ Loss of this identity will lead the priest to lose the spirit of service to God and his people, and this may lead to scandals, and may hinder his human and spiritual growth.

4.2. Practical suggestions

These suggestions are meant for the long term, so as the problem can be put into control or at least minimise its effects.

4.2.1. Code of Ethics

Seminary formation may not be enough and there is need to have a well drawn code of conduct, which is realistic and attainable as a guide to what ought to be done and what ought not to be done. This code of ethics should address on how this issue of

⁹⁴ CONGREGATION OF THE CLERGY, *Directory for the ministry and life of priests*, No. 69, 56

personal material wealth, should be handled. This code should not just be words on a paper, but should be strictly implemented by those responsible of doing so.

A Code is not only a good tool for self-evaluation by the individual priest, but can also be used by the authority when handling cases and reaching a fair decision. It is also a good tool for helping the affected priest to form and train his conscience, in all that he is involved in. Encourage each to have a copy and to make it a mantra so that he never forgets.

4.2.2. Church Authority

The authority should be strict and decisive regarding this matter as the blame stops at them. However, the authority should not preach water while taking wine, by doing what they are talking against as they should be a living example, if they want to succeed. Otherwise, those who will be joining will follow the same style making it a culture or tradition which will be very difficult to end or stop. Church authority [mainly the bishop] is a leader, and all eyes are upon him on how he offers direction and leadership.

4.2.3. Support groups

The priests should be encouraged to form support groups among themselves so as to support each other. Many priests are finding themselves in some of these problems because of living a solitary life and lacking the support of others. It is advisable that the priest joins some groups as he can learn something and can share his struggles and pains as they need; “associations and groups in which they can give one another much-needed appreciation, affirmation and encouragement.”⁹⁵

⁹⁵ D. R. HAND & W. L. FEHR, *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy*, 68

The priest must be very honest with himself and to the group on the issues he is passing through, so that the group can understand him and the situation as such groups; “recognizes men’s need to gather in groups to do their grief-work over the common”⁹⁶ Many struggles are common and once expressed and shared honestly, it can turn out to be a problem half solved and the priest can live a healthy spiritual and human life. These groups are very important in helping the priest to be an open up without fear, nurture the right attitudes, develop a high self-esteem and enjoy the warmth of true friends. Priests should be encouraged to join these groups so as to avoid a life of solitude, which can cause a priest to turn worldly things for happiness.

4.2.4. Counselling and Spiritual direction

The attitude that one has about the material wealth should be addressed either through the on-going formation or through counselling. Many people think that counselling is only for the mentally sick and those having mental disturbances. Counselling and spiritual direction is meant to empower someone to cope or to handle the situations well. It is of much help in strengthening the weak areas of the priest, such as attitude formation, and enabling one to grow humanly and spiritually.

The priest must be very honest with himself and to the group on the issues he is passing through; “need is to be honest about one’s life, to give and to receive affection, [.....] and to express one’s personal faith and faith struggles. [.....] no clergy can live a healthy spiritual life without that kind of a life-context for his journey.”⁹⁷ This empowers the priest face the many challenges that are there in the world today, and perform his pastoral duties well. These spiritual accompaniments and counselling can be arranged by the diocese or by the individual priests.

⁹⁶ D.R. HANDS & W.L. FEHR, *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy*, 68

⁹⁷ D.R. HANDS & W.L. FEHR, *Spiritual Wholeness for Clergy*, 67

4.3.Recommendation to the Priests

I have some recommendation for individual priest as this problem also affects them individually and in a unique way as each is unique.

4.3.1. Interest and love for priestly life

Develop and nurture a great interest and love for your priestly life and ministry which you chose for yourself freely and voluntarily. This must be from the interior of the priest and this will be the source of happiness and satisfaction for you. This also, helps in cultivating values and developing the right attitudes which in turn will grow into a strong pastoral zeal.

A priest who a true pastoral zeal attracts many souls to God as the priest is able to embrace his vocation as gift from God. He will ever feel that, the ministry is a burden or life is boring for he will be living a full life of priesthood.

4.3.2. Holiness and good example

A priest is a pastor and a man of people as well as a leader. He has an obligation of helping his faithful to attain holiness and be close to God. This cannot be possible if he does not embrace holiness and be a good example. What distract him, like material wealth etc, from achieving his goals, should be removed from his way. Holiness will enable him to fight temptations of the world and to a space for God in his life, so that Christians can be seeing God through him.

4.3.3. Adequate preparation

In all that a priest do, he should prepare well, so as to guard himself from anything that might arise in course of his ministry. Even when going to meet the

Christian prepare well, otherwise your work will be disorganised and this will lead to lack of interest. Good preparation makes the pastoral work enjoyable, interesting, attractive and exciting. The priest will always be eager to do it and worldly things will have no place in his life. The preparation should be accompanied by prayers and spiritual reading, and if the priests are two, they can share some of these reflections.

4.3.4. Self-evaluation

A priest lives a life as a person and also life of the ministry. Thus, self-evaluation is essential as he knows himself better and he knows how the ministry has been. Evaluation should be in terms of holiness, poverty and simplicity, attitudes, pastoral work and other criteria that he may set for himself. You need to be very sincere and with no prejudice against yourself. Also, if you have a good friend that you trust, he can help you to evaluate yourself as he can see you better than you can see yourself. The aim of self-evaluation is not to look for your weaknesses and to praise your strength, but it is mainly for improvement and to build on the weak areas.

Conclusion

Material wealth possession is becoming more complex issue day by day, mainly because of what is happening in the World today and the ever changing thinking pattern and mentality, tastes, culture, values, concepts and technology. This is hurting the church and even making her lose vocations. The church has to respond and accommodate the changes in the world. At the same she must not forget her mission, and have to become decisive on some these issues. If one has to own material wealth, the church can consider release him so that he can concentrate on one thing.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

Those who lived life of simplicity and poverty have made a big contribution to the Church. They have made the Church to be what she is today as they devoted all their life to serve God and the Church. Possession of material wealth is a cause of worry and anxiety and makes the priest lose focus to what exactly he was called to be and to do. Those who lived like St. Teresa of Calcutta are highly honoured in the Church. One may argue that this vow of poverty should only be limited to the monks and religious and not diocesan priests. I want to concur with the mind of the Roman Catholic Church that, before this rule was thought of, there were many challenges and problems revolving possessing property. The only way of handling the issue at that time was to enforce the rule to contain the situation, despite the many justification of possessing material wealth.

Possession of material wealth possession has become an issue to the Church and especially now that it has taken a political and cultural dimension in it. The cause of the problem has been realised, but it has not been addressed sufficiently by the Church as an institution. Priests are provided with all that they need by the Church and no priest should say that I am amassing wealth because of my sustenance. Those who want to be rich and popular should be relieved off their pastoral ministry, so that they can live the life they want, rather than having them and they are scandalous.

The authority is trying to be strict on their subjects especially because of the pain they are causing to their flock, who expects them to live a certain way of life. This becomes more painful and scandalous when the same priest becomes arrogant to the Christians, whose contributions he has been squandering and misusing. We should appreciate them and always remember that human beings are both human and divine. We should pray for these priests and try to bring them back to our family and make them feel appreciated and loved.

If the Church today decides to change that rule, the clerical office will not only become weak but also corrupt. Many young men will opt to join, as it will be an easy route to good life and riches. The pastoral role of the Church and the reason why Christ instituted her as an institution will be rendered meaningless. However, there will still be a good number of priests who will opt to live a life of simplicity and poverty as Christ did, despite the change of rule. They shall be held with high esteem and honour because of their bold sacrifice, and with time the other shall realise the necessity of living a simple life and the role poverty plays in pastoral ministry.

Opening the door for possessing material wealth means that, the Church will be following the Protestant's route and this will attract a lot of vices. Possessing material wealth or being rich is very tempting and this calls for a lot of prudence and self-control. Let the priests live their call and vocation which is possible, and don't let the worldly things take control of their life.

In my opinion, this rule has helped to control the situation though, much need to be done. It must begin with the individual priest changing his attitude, and be Christ-like and then change the others. As each made a choice and a decision freely, each priest must chose which side he want to be, so that those who want to be rich can leave

and devote their lives and energies in searching for wealth. The two should be separated as they cannot move together, and each person should live what he is called for. If the Church will ever change the rule then, the process should be gradual so as to avoid some challenges and not be a reality shock to the faithful. All the wealth should revert back to the Church upon the death of the priest. There is no need to change the rule as material wealth does not add any value to pastoral ministry. Life of simplicity and poverty has proved to be more fruitful and beneficial to the life the individual priest and the Church.

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APPENDICE

QUESTIONNAIRE

I am Martin Mwangi, and a Theology student in Tangaza University College. This Questionnaire aims at gathering data that will enable me write a Long Essay on the “Effect of Material Wealth on the Priesthood Ministry in the Archdiocese of Nyeri. The information you will give me will be used for academic purpose only. I promise to treat with respect and confidentiality and it will not be published anywhere or in any media. Have confidence to give me the relevant information.

SECTION A: Biographic Information

Name (Optional)

Current Parish/ Office/ Department/Institution.....

Status: (i) Diocesan () (ii) Religious ()

Age: (i) 35 – 40 () (ii) 41 - 45 () (iii) 46 – 50 () (iv) 51 – 55 ()

Other information about yourself you may want to disclose if you think is necessary

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SECTION B: Information regarding the Effect of Material Wealth on Ministry

1. What do you understand by the term Material Wealth or how can you define it?

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2. What is the current situation regarding possession of material wealth in the Archdiocese?

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3. What are the attitudes that make a Priest to have the urge to possess material wealth?

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4. What causes the Priests to have the urge to possess material wealth?

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5. What is the impact of possessing material wealth on the priesthood ministry?

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6. What are the influences and consequences of possessing material wealth on the Priest(s)?

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7. How is the authority responding to this situation of the Clergy becoming wealthy?

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8. Has the Seminary formation contributed to this problem and if yes, how has it contributed?

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9. What are some of the challenges a priest face when he possess material wealth?

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10. Which suggestion(s) would you give regarding this issue on how it can be dealt with?

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Any other thoughts, information or comments.