

INSTITUTE OF SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGIOUS  
FORMATION

TANGAZA COLLEGE

CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

KAMBA TRADITIONAL FORMATION AND ITS RELEVANCY TO  
THE FORMATION OF THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY

AUTHOR:  
SR. JOYCE K. MULANDI

TUTOR:  
REV. FR. QUIRINE ONG'OM A.J.

*This is a long essay submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for a diploma in Spirituality and Spiritual Direction.*

APRIL 2002

NAIROBI, KENYA

## DECLARATION

I here declare that the material used herein has not been submitted for academic credit to any other institution. All sources have been cited in full.

*Sr. Joyce K. Mulandi*

---

Sr. Joyce K. Mulandi SOLC.

TUTOR Rev. Fr. DOMINIC K. DING'EM NJ

*[Signature]*

## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to all who will read it with interest of inculturation and desire to discover their own traditional values as formators or formees. Special dedication to all the formators and those in formation in the Sisters Of Our Lady Of Charity.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This work is a result of many inspirations and encouragements from many people whom I am deeply indebted to. I want to thank God the Father through the Son in the Spirit for the great gift of faith that has enabled me to realize that He is present and alive in every human culture including my own.

I want to thank the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity who have given me the Religious formation and its values according to the Charism of the congregation and for allowing me to pursue the Spirituality studies in the Institute of Spirituality and religious formation in Tangaza College – CUEA. Special thanks to Sr.Teresa Musembi our Provincial Superior who took so much interest in reading and encouraging me in my work. A special thanks to all my sponsors locally and internationally.

I want to express my gratitude to all those who provided me with vital information concerning the Kamba traditions through interviews. I want to thank especially my mother Philomena Kavitha, Sr. Florence Kisilu and all the elderly people who entrusted very secretive information to me despites my age limit.

Above all, I want to express my heart felt gratitude to all those who helped me to shape my work in proofreading and editing.I owe a special thanks to Bro. Tom Kearney cfc, Mrs. Mary Getui and my committed tutor Fr. Quirine Ong'om A.J. I thank Quirine for his time, dedication and patience with me and for guiding me in this paper.

Special thanks to the three directors of the Institute during the 2000/2002 academic year; Fr. Dominic Izzo, Sr. Carmel Powell and Sr. Loretta Brennan for organizing the formative and informative program for the Institute.

# TABLE OF CONTENT

iv

Page.

Declaration .....	i
Dedication .....	ii
Acknowledgement .....	iii
Table of Content .....	iv
General introduction .....	1
<b>1.0.0.0. CHAPTER ONE: THE KAMBA TRADITIONAL FORMATION .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1.1.0.0. SECTION ONE: The Kamba People .....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1.1.0.0. The Geography .....	4
1.1.2.0.0. The Population .....	5
1.1.3.0.0. Traditional Economy .....	5
1.1.4.0.0. Social and Political organization .....	5
<b>1.2.0.0. SECTION TWO: The Kamba Values .....</b>	<b>6</b>
1.2.1.0.0. Marriage and procreation .....	6
1.2.2.0.0. Life .....	6
1.2.3.0.0. Respect .....	7
1.2.4.0.0. Community .....	7
<b>1.3.0.0. SECTION THREE: The Kamba beliefs .....</b>	<b>8</b>
1.3.1.0.0. Belief in the Spirit world .....	8
<b>1.4.0.0. SECTION FOUR: The Kamba Rites of Passage .....</b>	<b>9</b>
1.4.1.0.0. Birth and Naming .....	9
1.4.2.0.0. Initiation to Adulthood ( <i>Nzaiko</i> ) .....	11
1.4.2.1.0. First Circumcision ( <i>Nzaiko Nini</i> ) .....	12
1.4.2.1.1. The meaning of the Symbols involved .....	13
1.4.2.2.0. Second initiation ( <i>Kuatha Mbusya</i> ) .....	14
1.4.2.2.1. The meaning and impact of the Symbols involved .....	16
1.4.2.3.0. Third Initiation .....	18
<b>1.5.0.0. SECTION FIVE: The Traditional Methods of Formation .....</b>	<b>19</b>
1.5.1.0.0. The role of the <i>Avwikii</i> .....	20
1.5.2.0.0. The role of the Family .....	20
1.5.3.0.0. The role played by the Peer-group .....	20
1.5.4.0.0. The role played by the Community .....	21

<b>2.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER TWO: THE FORMATION IN THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY</b> .....	22
<b>2.1.0.0.0. SECTION ONE: Who are the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity?</b> ...	22
2.1.1.0.0. The Specific Mission of SOLC .....	23
2.1.2.0.0. The Spirituality in which this Mission is exercised .....	23
2.1.3.0.0. The Spirituality of SOLC .....	24
<b>2.2.0.0.0. Aims of Formation</b> .....	24
<b>2.3.0.0.0. Dynamics of Formation</b> .....	25
2.3.1.0.0. Personalized process .....	25
2.3.2.0.0. Freedom .....	25
2.3.3.0.0. Accompaniment .....	26
2.3.4.0.0. Planned process to be Evaluated Periodically .....	26
<b>2.4.0.0.0. Formation Team</b> .....	26
<b>2.5.0.0.0. The different stages of formation</b> .....	27
2.5.1.0.0. Aspirancy .....	28
2.5.2.0.0. Postulancy .....	29
2.5.3.0.0. The Novitiate .....	30
2.5.4.0.0. Temporary Vows .....	33
2.5.4.1.0. Accompaniment .....	35
2.5.4.2.0. Evaluation .....	36
2.5.5.0.0. After Final Vows .....	36
<b>3.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER THREE: DIALOGUE BETWEEN KAMBA TRADITIONAL FORMATION AND THE FORMATION IN SOLC</b> .....	38
<b>3.1.0.0.0. Similarities</b> .....	38
<b>3.2.0.0.0. Differences</b> .....	42
<b>3.3.0.0.0. The Church teaching and other writers on Inculturation</b> .....	43
<b>4.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER FOUR: TOWARDS AN INCULTURATED SOLC FORMATION PROGRAM: PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS</b> .....	48
<b>4.1.0.0.0. Promotion Work</b> .....	48
<b>4.2.0.0.0. Aspirancy</b> .....	49
<b>4.3.0.0.0. Postulancy <i>INzaiko Nini</i></b> .....	51
4.3.1.0.0. Values to be transmitted in postulancy in the light of Kamba tradition..	51

	vi.
4.3.1.1.0. Value of Community Life .....	52
4.3.1.2.0. Value of Generosity .....	52
4.3.1.3.0. Social vices to be avoided .....	53
4.3.2.0.0. Separation from Childhood .....	53
<b>4.4.0.0.0. Novitiate / Kuatha Mbusya .....</b>	<b>54</b>
4.4.1.0.0. Imparting values to the Novices in the light of Kamba Tradition ....	55
4.4.2.0.0. Expectations of the Society in the light of Kamba Tradition .....	55
4.4.3.0.0. Beginning of new life in the light of Kamba Tradition .....	58
<b>4.5.0.0.0. Third Initiation / Final Profession .....</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>64</b>

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

After six years of working in formation a lot of questions remained in my mind as I watched the young women who came with so much enthusiasm and desire slowly going down. I watched for example the young women putting aside so many things that were so meaningful and beautiful in their cultures in order to embrace religious life that is presented to them in Western culture.

These young people who were traditionally initiated and prepared for what their ethnic groups expect of them at their age now begin to behave as beginners in life when they join religious life. Instead of being responsible and taking the initiatives as young adults, they coil and begin to learn the language of asking for answers to simple requests like going to visit a next of kin. The joys and laughter that they come with are suppressed by fear of being sent away from the congregation.

Having gone through the same kind of experience in formation myself, I have often wondered if there is nothing beautiful that people in formation come along with from their traditional formation. This has prompted me to research into my traditional people, the Kamba and see what values we can take from there to enrich our religious formation in the congregation of the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity.

Though carried out among the Kamba people, this research paper is meant to be a guideline for each individual member of the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity under formation to look back into her own traditional formation and see how it can be relevant to her own formation today. In this paper I have exposed the fact that people coming into formation houses have a wealth of experiences, gifts and talents that they have gained as

they grew up. This paper suggests that the formation build upon these experiences can help them to make the message of Christ a reality in their life. This of course calls for purifying the experiences and the past life through evangelization and making the young people experience God in their life as African women.

I have divided the work into four chapters. In chapter one I have treated the Kamba people, their general background, values, beliefs, their life, initiation rites beginning with childbirth and naming, the three initiation rites to adult life beginning with circumcision, then the rhino rite, and lastly the third rite. The second chapter discusses the present formation of the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity, their aim of formation, the formation stages and after final vows. In the third chapter, I have compared the two formations highlighting the similarities that can be upheld, the differences which ought to be understood and dealt with sympathetically; and I have criticized and reflected on the need for inculturation in the light of the church teaching and what others have written about inculturation of religious formation. In the fourth chapter, I have proposed a practical inculturated formation program for the Sisters of Our Lady Of Charity.

The sources of information are interviews carried out, written literature and any other source as acknowledged in the texts. Every culture is beautiful and there is a need to know our own cultures so that we can make religious life fully African, or which ever culture one is from, and to make the Gospel message speak to us in our own Culture. I hope this paper creates an awareness of the cultural beauty and richness that all our cultures have and desire to know them and integrate them in their religious formation.

# **1.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER ONE: THE KAMBA TRADITIONAL FORMATION.**

## **Introduction**

When God calls young men and women to serve Him through a specific Institute, they come to these institutions with their human, cultural, spiritual and intellectual gifts and their personal history.<sup>1</sup> This implies that these people have had formative experiences that have shaped them into the particular people they are in the society and in their family. Some of the values learned in the traditional formation, if well explored, can be the basis of Christian formation and religious formation in particular.

Among the Kamba people, formation has always been understood as an on going journey that begins right from conception until death. This is what made and identified them as Kamba. My interest has always been how to inculturate Christian formation as truly African so that it can make an impact on the people just as the traditional formation does.

In this Chapter, I shall explore the Kamba approach to formation. I shall divide the chapter into five sections, each of which is subdivided into subsections. In section one is an attempt to show who the Kamba people are, where they live, the estimation of their population density, their economic activities and their political and social organization. Section two I shall discuss some of the basic Kamba values. Section three discusses their beliefs. Section four shall investigate into their rite of passage. The section will be subdivided into three subsections each of which treats a major step in the rite of passage. Section five looks at the Kamba traditional methods of formation. The Chapter will conclude with brief summary of the main issues discussed in the entire chapter.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Union of our Lady Of Charity: Global Plan For Formation, (Rome: 2000), P. 6.

## **1.1.0.0.0. SECTION ONE: The Kamba People.**

The Kamba members are among the Bantu people of Kenya believed to have come into the country from Central Africa.<sup>2</sup> Other Bantus in Kenya are the *Kikuyu, Embu, Kisii, Meru, and Luhya*.<sup>3</sup> The Kamba speak *Kikamba* language. Due to different locations that they live in, there is a little dialectal variation which distinguishes one Kamba from one location to the other.<sup>4</sup>

### **1.1.1.0.0. The Geography**

The Kamba occupy four Districts in the Eastern region, namely, Kitui, Makueni, Mwingi and Machakos. Their land stretches southwards from the Equator towards the Kenya Tanzania border, and outwards from near the shores of the Indian Ocean towards the Kenya hinterland covering an area of about 25,000 square miles<sup>5</sup>. They border Meru, Embu, and Kikuyu to the North East, Nairobi District and Maasai to the North, Masai and Taita to the North West and Somali to the south.<sup>6</sup> Three quarters of land is flat with wild game and some hills in parts of Machakos and Makueni. Many parts of Kamba land get little rain. Water is a major problem, and drought and famine are a frequent menace to the people and their animals. There are many rivers and streams, but nearly all of them dry partially or completely during the dry season. People must then dig wells to find water. Rain comes in two periods; March to May, and late October to January. When and where the rain is enough, crops and fruit trees are grown in variety such like; maize, millet, coffee, mangoes, bananas, cowpeas, and green grams. There are some forests but the countryside is mainly either woodland, or covered with scrubs or open grassland and scattered with people's farms and fields.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> John S. Mbiti. *Akamba Stories* (Nairobi: The Oxford University press 1983), P.3.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 4.

<sup>4</sup> *Loc.cit.*

<sup>5</sup> John Mbiti, P. 3.

<sup>6</sup> *District plan for Development: Mwingi, Machakos, Kitui and Makueni 1997 to 2001*. Pp. 53-54.

<sup>7</sup> John S. Mbiti. *Akamba stories*. P. 10.

### **1.1.2.0.0. The Population**

According to the Gazetted 1999 General Census, the Kamba population totaled to 2,497,439 people. The break down per District was as follows; Machakos: 906,644; Mwingi: 303,828; Kitui: 515,422 and Makueni; 771,545.<sup>8</sup>

### **1.1.3.0.0. Traditional Economy**

in the indigenous setting, the main economic activities of the Kamba included rising livestock, small-scale farming, trading, bee keeping, and hunting. They also did wood carving and pottery. Wild animals were found in large numbers and some of them were used for meat. Domestic animals like cattle, sheep goats, dogs, cats and chicken were found in the home of every *Mukamba*. The keeping of livestock was and is still very basic in the economy of the Kamba community. Among the Kamba, a man was recognized primarily in terms of quantity of his livestock and land. Livestock was used in marriage contracts, shared as expression of hospitality, and for paying fines. In recent years, the Government has encouraged a substantial reduction of the herds and flock to stop the deterioration of the land from overstocking.<sup>9</sup>

### **1.1.4.0.0. Social and Political organization**

Among the Kamba, there was centralized government. Political power layed in the hands of older men known as '*Atumia*' who came together for discussion and action on matters concerning the clan. These '*Atumia*' were older men and women who had lived their lives according to the Kamba culture and were honored because of their wisdom. The clans were created from families of long ago and they number about forty. Each member belongs to one of them. A clan may have a membership of fifty thousand and above and they are not

---

<sup>8</sup> Central Bureau of statistics: Population and Housing census.1999 general census. Pp. 80-84.

<sup>9</sup> Mzee Muithya Syengo, 65 years. "Occupation" Interviewed by author, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Kanyaa, Mwingi District.

localized in one place but are spread all over Kamba land. The clan elders discussed and acted on matters concerning discipline, or issues that needed their attention.<sup>10</sup>

## **1.2.O.O.O. SECTION TWO: The Kamba Values**

Like many African ethnic communities, Kamba had set of values that provided them with meaning and continuity of life. These values were passed on from one generation to another, and thus formed a great part of formation of the young people.

### **1.2.1.0.0. Marriage and Procreation**

The Kamba community placed a lot of value in marriage and procreation. In marriage, a man from one clan contracted relationship with a woman from another clan, thus bringing the two clans together. Marriage had its own courtship rituals and rites that were very specific. These included the search for the right woman/man for marriage, and the marriage contract that was publicly done. Ghee was used to mark the newfound wife to be, and beer was used to contract the actual marriage ritual.

### **1.2.2.0.0. Life**

Among the Kamba, life was valued, nurtured and protected under all costs. Once the child was born, he/she was protected from all harm, bad spell, evil powers and all misfortunes by putting some 'charms'<sup>11</sup> around her neck or waist. According to Kavengi Kyalla, life was to be lived to the fullest; that is through adulthood to old age.<sup>12</sup> It had to be continued through procreation, and after death, in communion with the living dead.

---

<sup>10</sup> John S. Mbiti, *Akamha stories*. P. 7.

<sup>11</sup> 'Charms' this was a combination of different medicinal and protective herbs that were believed to chase away bad omens and evil spirits directed to harm the person.

<sup>12</sup> Kavengi Kyalla, 65 years, "Kamba values" interviewed by author. 24<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Ngong'u Village. Mwingi District.

### **1.2.3.0.0. Respect**

Like in many African ethnic communities, among the Kamba respect was expected of every person. As there were so many relations through kinship, every relation demanded a certain respect. Children were taught during the formation years how to relate and respect their elders and strangers. Respect earned a girl or a boy good marriage and the family, the status of reference and good reputation. The individual tutor got praise and respect in the village.

### **1.2.4.0.0. Community**

The Kamba valued living together as a community even with those who are not of the same kinship. They lived in peace and harmony and consolidated their efforts towards the good of the entire community. Community efforts were required in times of catastrophe, death, or if a family has been struck by a problem, also in good times like in harvest and marriage.

Among the Kamba, every body belonged to every one, as Mbiti puts it, "I am because we are, therefore, I am."<sup>13</sup> Individual problems were community problems and every one cared for each other's needs especially in times of sickness, and incases of orphaned children. Food was contributed to feed the orphaned and to provide them with security. This community aspect formed an integral part of formation as the young people were told a lot of stories concerning the community work and how they were expected to respond to community needs actively.

Decisions were made communally and every one was expected to adhere to them. The young people were taught obedience as they grew up and punishment that would follow disobedience. Physical strength was emphasized in order to participate fully in the life and activities of the community.

---

<sup>13</sup> John S. Mbiti, African Religions and philosophies (New York: Anchor Books. Douleday & Company, INC, Garden City, 1970), P. 141.

### **1.3.0.0. SECTION THREE: The Kamba Beliefs.**

According to Mbula, traditional African beliefs are based on an individual's self-awareness, his/her relation with the environment and the world beyond.<sup>14</sup> The Kamba believed, and still believe, in a Supreme 'Being' who controls the life around them and in the beyond. That 'Being' is referred to as '*Mulungu*'. The Kamba people believed that '*Mulungu*' had power over them. Every life aspect of a Kamba was organized around the awareness of *Mulungu*. Mbula, talking about the African beliefs says:

Africans are traditionally very religious people. Each family is a center of religious worship and religious activities. The observance of religious rituals and acts is required of every member of the family. Every traditional African, is and becomes, religious person to the extent that each of his actions is part of his beliefs. This can be seen in African form of worship, prayer, sacrifices and the relationship of the living, the dead and the unborn.<sup>15</sup>

The existence of God is taken for granted and this is because as children grow, they incorporate this truth in their vocabulary and knowledge of the world. Their belief is part of life; in activities and life experience. The Kamba simply acknowledge the existence of *Mulungu*. All that the Kamba had to do was to keep a good relationship with God and observe the traditions that kept peace between them and *Mulungu*.

#### **1.3.1.0.0. Belief in the Spirit World.**

Besides *Mulungu* the Kamba believe in the existence of lower spirits. These are spirits of the ancestors. Some of these spirits are benevolent, others are hostile and disruptive. These spirits are invisible except when they communicate an intention. The benevolent spirits provide protect life, nurture it and are part of the living community. The disruptive spirits cause death, put demands, and are always searching to destroy. To appease them, the Kamba performed

---

<sup>14</sup> Judith M. Bahemuka, *Our Religious Heritage* (Nairobi: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd. A reprint Kenya, 1983), P. 40.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 40.

certain rituals including shedding of animal blood to invoke them to withdraw the disaster.<sup>16</sup>

#### **1.4.0.0.0. SECTION FOUR: The Kamba Rites of Passage.**

The rites of passage are the rituals that were performed to mark the end of a stage and the beginning of another one.<sup>17</sup> Each passage had its own initiation, purpose and people involved in it. Initiation was a period given to a certain stage with its instructions and rituals. It sealed the end and beginning of the stage. These initiations were important for through them the young people were recognized as members of the community, had rights to participate in community affairs and could own property.

The Kamba had their clear vision of what they wanted their people to become. They wanted mature, responsible, dignified people who would identify and continue the cultural values of the entire community. To get these cultural values inculcated into the young people was important and so those chosen to instruct them were people capable, who had identity in the community, good behavior and were revered in the community.<sup>18</sup>

Looking at these rites of passage and initiation will help us to understand their importance and the impact they had on the life of the individual and that of the community.

#### **1.4.1.0.0. Birth and Naming.**

Among the Kamba when the mother realized that she was pregnant she shared the news with her husband. The husband took special care of the wife who now was exempted from very hard work like breaking new grounds. She was also prohibited from eating harmful foods like meat from dead animals for the sake of the baby. The birth of a child marked an important event especially if the child was the first-born. This sealed the marriage and the woman was

---

<sup>16</sup> John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophy*, P. 42.

<sup>17</sup> *Loc. cit.*, P. 158.

<sup>18</sup> Kaitha Muthii, 75 years "Initiations" interviewed by the author, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Kasanga village, Mwingi District.

completely integrated into the family of her husband and the kinship circle was increased.<sup>19</sup> It brought happiness to the whole community.

When it was time to give birth, elderly women who were mature acted as special midwives. Delivery was done in the house on specially prepared place with green leaves from banana trees or any other peaceful smooth leaves. The green leaves symbolized life and would later be safely buried with the placenta. After the child was born, the midwife made it cry. If it did not cry, it was seen as a bad sign and a ritual to appease the ancestors had to be performed. The parents of the child spat on it, and so did the midwife and those around. The spitting was to wish the child good luck and fortune. Spittle was used ceremoniously for blessing and good fortune. The mother was given hot oxtail soup to assist her generate enough milk.<sup>20</sup>

On the third day after birth, the relatives, friends, and neighbors came together to drink beer, celebrate and give a name to the child. According to Mbula, this event was observed with deep religious feelings and with solemnity.<sup>21</sup> This was because they believed that every child preserved the chain of humanity. The father of the child slaughtered a bull or few goats for the meal. Before eating, libation and prayers were chanted by the father to thank *Mulungu* for the child. This was also to ask *Mulungu* that the child grows up to be a useful member of the society. Half of the meat was given to women and half to the men. This symbolized communal responsibility.<sup>22</sup>

The naming of the child differed according to each locality. Some named according to remarkable events, others, the time the child was born, and others after the grandparents. This naming ceremony was called *Ndua* because of the food eaten with the meat. The name

---

<sup>19</sup> John S. Mbiti, *African Religions and philosophies*, P. 144.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, P. 148.

<sup>21</sup> Judith M. Bahemuka, P. 64.

<sup>22</sup> Kaitha Muthii, "Initiations."

was given by the grand parents. After the naming of the child, the parents offered it their first gift. The father hangs an iron necklace called *Ithaa* around the neck of the child. This *Ithaa* was both a charm against the evil spirits, evil people and as a sign of beauty. The child is now in a human society entrusted to the human people for molding. Before this ceremony the child belonged to the spirit world. It was a gift waiting to be received. To seal this ceremony, the parents had a sexual ritual. This was to separate the child from the spirit world. During this ritual, the child was placed between the parents as a sign of their responsibility and is now accepted into the human world.

In the birth and naming of the Kamba, three things were important; namely the spittle-symbolizing blessings, openness to life and good luck; the necklace, a symbol of protection and beauty that never fades; the name, the newness of life. The sexual ritual only affirmed the symbols and it could have been meaningless without them. The important people during this initiation were the parents, the midwife and the grandparents who automatically took the charge of initiating the young one to the community.

#### **1.4.2.0.0. Initiation to Adulthood (*Nzaiko*)**

The Kamba had rituals that introduced the individual to adulthood socially, religiously, physically and psychologically. These rites marked the changes from passive to active membership in the community. No one was allowed to marry or engage in sexual activities before these rite for they were considered immature and were regarded as boys or a girls. The ceremony that marked this ritual was called *Nzaiko* – physical cutting.<sup>23</sup> The Kamba *Nzaiko* were three in number; *Nzaiko nini*, (First circumcision), *Nzaiko ya kuatha Mbusya*,

---

<sup>23</sup> Judith M. Bahemuka, P. 75.

(to kill the rhinoceros), and *Nzele*-warriors.<sup>24</sup>

#### 1.4.2.1.0. First circumcision (*Nzaiko Nini*)

The date for the ceremony was announced in a certain location and all the parents who had young people of ages four to seven, both girls and boys prepared them for the ceremony. The ceremony was held in the months of August and September because it is warm. According to *Mueni Nzula*, three days before the material day, all the youth were assembled in a compound of one of the candidates who hosted the ceremony. Within these three days the young people were brought to the reality of the ceremony, what it involves and who they will become. A special tutor called *Muvwikii* did this preparation. On the material day, the boys had their own *Muvwikii* and so were the girls had their own. There were special men who would operate on the boys and special women to operate on the girls. They had special knives to perform the operation. The boys were in a separate place from the girls. These special people were called *Mwaiiki (sg) Aiiki(pl)* The relatives of the young people prepared the operation ground with bananas leaves. The operation was performed very early in the morning between 4.30 a.m and 5.00 a.m when it was cold and the body was numb to avoid too much pain and bleeding. The previous night would have been spent singing and encouraging the young people. Relatives and parents were present, men encouraging boys and women encouraging girls.<sup>25</sup>

During the operation the foreskin of the boys' penis was cut and the clitoris of the girls similarly removed. These were sprinkled with herbal water then buried to connect the ceremony with the ancestors. The *Avwikii* held the young people during the operation to offer them support and as promise to stand by them even as adults. The candidates were encouraged

---

<sup>24</sup> Kaitha muthii, "Initiations."

<sup>25</sup> Mueni Nzula , 61 years. "Initiations" Interviewed by author, 25<sup>th</sup> August 2001, Kalawa market, Makueni District.

to bear the whole ordeal courageously without crying or shouting and those who managed such were praised and won praise for themselves and the family. Others were called cowards. The wounds were smeared with special healing herbs prepared by the parents earlier on.

After the operation the initiates were separately given a special meal and placed under the care of their *Awikii* who introduced them to the Kamba values and meaning of life, community life and sharing, respect, marriage and procreation, generosity, sense of belonging and the vices that destroy the community. There was great public rejoicing with dances, singing, drinking, eating and making libation to the living dead. Three days after the operation, the parents of the initiates had ritual sex to invoke the ancestors for the healing of the wounds. In the course of the following weeks, the relatives, and parents visited the initiates and brought them presents of chicken, ornaments, goats and sheep. The first-born uncle and aunt brought them cows.<sup>26</sup> Once the wounds were healed, the parents and relatives came to collect the initiates, singing and dancing, taking them to their own homes as full members of the community. There was great celebration to welcome the new members. That was the end of the first *Nzaiko*.

#### **1.4.2.1.1. The Meaning of the symbols involved.**

The symbols involved in this ritual had meaning. Cutting of the skin from the sexual organs, symbolizes and dramatizes the separation from childhood. It is parallel to the cutting of the umbilical cord when the child is born. The sexual organs attach the child to the state of ignorance, inactivity and potential impotence. Once the operation is done, the young person is freed from ignorance to knowledge, activity and reproduction. Shedding of blood into the ground mystically binds the initiates to the living dead who are symbolically living in the ground. It is the blood of new birth. Physical pain trains the initiates of the difficulties and

---

<sup>26</sup> Mueni Nzula, "Initiations."

sufferings of life. Endurance of physical and emotional pain is a great virtue among the Kamba since life is surrounded by much pain from one source to another. Presents given were a token to welcome them actively to the community participation. It also demonstrated that the young person could now begin to own property and are entitled to rights like the rest of the members. Dancing and rejoicing strengthened the community solidarity and co-operation as the whole group joined in the ceremony. Offerings and libation to the living dead was to renew the bonds between the living and the living-dead and to commit the young lives to their protection. Groups as age-mates were the people initiated at the same time and as *Nzuke* they were bound by their shared shedding of blood and they would support and stand for each other. Green leaves served as a sign of new life for the initiates. The whole ritual was sealed with sexual intercourse of the parents. This was to show the importance of sex not as leisure but as life giving.<sup>27</sup>

#### **1.4.2.2.0. Second initiation (*Kuatha Mbusya*)**

This was the second initiation. According to Mbiti there is no set time between the first and the second initiation.<sup>28</sup> The period between the two initiations was entrusted to the parents and the community to teach the youth the socially needed skills like hunting, looking after animals, learning boundaries, wood curving for boys; girls learned cooking, child care, sitting and eating manners, collecting firewood, fetching water and whatever else was expected of them. Those with specific skills like being inclined to medicine, and use of herbs were detected during this time and were entrusted to skilled initiators.<sup>29</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> John S.Mbiti, African Religions and philosophies. P. 164.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., P. 161.

<sup>29</sup> Mueni Nzula, "Initiations".

The young people could be of ages thirteen and fifteen. The aim of this stage is mainly education. The candidates are secluded to a place far from home and out of reach by the public. They lived in small huts in fives in the forest each person with a *Muvwikii* and other teachers who were known for their integrity and participation in the community. Their responsibility was to introduce the candidates to matters of manhood and womanhood. The Kamba describe these *Avwikii* as 'Brooding over the Initiates'- *Kuvwikii*- just as the chicken broods over their eggs before hatching. The *Avwikii* are supposed to teach by their example of life. Girls are supposed to know their responsibility as women, wives and mothers; how to please their husbands and relate with the mother in-laws and their relatives. Housework and cleanliness were emphasized and so was hard work. Boys were taught how to care for their wives, their in-laws, guard the property, fight and defend the land and how to reconcile with other neighbors. This teaching was also done in songs riddles, and stories carrying morals.<sup>30</sup> These songs and stories carrying moral teachings and responsibilities like taking care of the orphans, irresponsible husbands, wives, laziness and cowardice were told to sharpen the young people's thinking and responsibilities.<sup>31</sup> On the second day of the seclusion, the initiates were brought face to face with a fierce 'Rhinoceros'-*Mbusya*. In some part of Kambaland, only boys go through this ritual. The rhino is a man made structure of sticks and trees, from the inside of which some one makes fearful bellows like those of a big monster. The candidates do not know what exactly it is, this is one of the secrets of the ceremony and they are not allowed to share it with others. They face the rhino bravely shooting it with bows and arrows to destroy the enemy. That night the men and women who performed the operation at the first ceremony have ritual sex with their partners and the parents have it on the third day and seventh nights.

---

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Judith M. Bahemuka, *Our Religious Heritage*, P. 78.

On the third day the candidates rehearse the adult life. Boys go hunting with small arrows, and girls go to collect firewood. While in the forest rehearsing this, the initiators spit beer over the initiates to bless them and then return to their huts. During the night dance, the boys use special sticks given them to perform symbolic sex upon the girls. The girls are supposed to twist their hips as a sign of responding to the sexual activity with their 'husband'. On the third day, they are examined on the riddles and puzzles to test their intelligence and quick thinking. On the fifth day, the initiates and their *Avwikii* go to the sacred tree usually a fig tree or sycamore on the banks of the river. The *Avwikii* take a little sap from the tree and give the initiates to pretend to eat. This allows them now to eat all sorts of food they were not allowed to eat before as young people. Under this same tree, the operators make a small cut called *Nzoo* on the sexual organs of the initiates and rub herbs and pour beer on the organs. The sixth day is spent peacefully with formal instructions. On the seventh day the boys make a cattle raid mock while the girls cry out that the enemy has come. The initiation may end on this day and the initiates can go home collected by their parents. That night the parents had ritual sex to seal the ceremony. The initiates could go to bath in the river while in the forest.<sup>32</sup> They now go home dressed with skins covering their private parts. The young men were given a stool, a staff and bows with arrows as a sign of their readiness as men in their new responsibilities. Women were given a *kiondo*, (A traditional basket) and a pot as a sign of their nurturing of life as mothers. The parents brought food to the initiates alternatively, secretly and avoided seeing them. On returning home there was celebration and eating, dancing and praising the young people as they welcome them home as members.

#### **1.4.2.2.1. The meaning and impact of the Symbols used.**

The symbols used here had meaning and impact on the young people. Mbiti explains the

---

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*

meaning of these symbols.<sup>33</sup> These include; living in the huts, the young people were initiated to community living as they shared together. They are bound to each other and to the age group, no secrets among them. The *Avwikii* played the role of elders in the community and the initiates learned to relate to them, respect and take orders from them. Obedience was necessary. Seclusion served as a re-enacting death. The young people were dead to the world as they were cut off from parents and relatives; this was to allow them to learn the ways of the adults and to practice what was available. The mock raid showed the readiness of the young people to take responsibility as mothers, fathers and defend their land. Frightening the rhino was a psychological device to partly emphasize the seriousness of the ritual and to drive away fear so that the young men may not run away from danger but defend themselves and their families. The riddles symbolized the knowledge that the young people are now open to: the secrets of life, traditions of the tribe and the outside world. The rite at the sacred tree was a reminder of religious life and a symbolic visit to the living-dead who are thought to live under these trees. They are in communion with them and they ought to live religiously in all their lives. Eating the sap was to open the young to take full participation in all the affairs of the community and to keep the secrets of the community. Slight cut on the sex organs under the sacred tree indicated the sacredness of sex in the sight of God, the spirits, living-dead and the human community. It also signified purity and faithfulness that they would maintain till marriage. Returning home was an experience of resurrection. Death is now over as the seclusion ends and they join the community as men and women fully accepted and respected as such. Parent's sexual intercourse was the final sealing of the ritual, a sign that the young people are expected to be fertile and are authorized to continue the life of the community. A new generation is now socially and educationally born. They can now marry and procreate.

---

<sup>33</sup> John S.Mbiti. African Religions and philosophies, P. 163.

### 1.4.2.3.0. Third Initiation

According to Mbiti, before the third initiation, the young adults lived their life as married men and women. The men had become heroes in the village, in the clan and they were regarded as the warriors of the community. They were given the name *Nzele* that means warriors.<sup>34</sup>

This initiation was only for men and some women who have passed the age of child bearing and do not any more feel the need for sexual intercourse. Mbiti says that there is very little known about this especially on the side of men, this is because only those who have gone through this ritual knew about it and it was a secret not to be disclosed. Information gathered from *Kaitha Muthii* reveals the secrecy of the ritual. Once a couple had been married, had their families and at this age they do not want to continue with their sexual relations, the man and the wife told the elderly people who have gone through this initiation. They went to the forest and separately the ritual was carried out. For women, they had three cuts on the 'clitoris' at which they took an oath at each cut. The first cut, they promise not to leave their husband till death, the second they promise not to be unfaithful, the third, they swear not to be jealous even when the husband marries again and that they will take the children of the co-wife as their own and support them. This explains why Kamba men marry second wives at this age. Once the ritual is finished, they both return home with the elder people celebrating. The newly initiated are supposed to have one shot of sexual intercourse and their sex relationship is ended. After this, the couple joins the group of elders *Atumia* and they can become consultants of affairs concerning the clan. They also participate in rituals and judicial matters of the clan. In Kamba language this is called *Kutunga mio uthii*, returning the tools to the store.<sup>35</sup>

---

<sup>34</sup> John S.Mbiti, *African Religions and Philosophies*, P. 164.

<sup>35</sup> Kaitha Muthii, "Initiations."

All in all the initiation period concentrated on preparing the young people to be fully Kamba men and women who stood for what they believed. The symbolic places, instructions and actions taken on them were to mould them fully and be properly formed. This assured the community of the continuation and protection of its life and culture.

#### **1.5.0.0.0. SECTION FIVE: The traditional methods of Formation.**

The future life of the Kamba community depended on the quality of formation that the young people received. Right from birth the sex of the child dictated the kind of responsibilities they will take. Girls were to be women, mothers, wives and home-makers while boys were to be men to protect, care and nurture the family. The children between birth and four years were initiated to life by their parents, next of kin and grand parents. They were taught how to sit properly with respect, how to relate with different members of the community and their genealogy. The common method used during this period was story telling repeatedly until the child could remember and narrate it. Songs and lullabies were common to educate the children about the social life. Riddles and proverbs provided knowledge of history that was applicable to the children. These stories would be carried on through life.<sup>36</sup>

During the initiation period, the seclusion played a vital role in getting the young people understand the seriousness of the ritual and the stage they are in and its responsibility. This facilitated the formation as it was consistent. They both received knowledge and practice of the life they were preparing to face and this gave them courage as men and women. The realities of life were presented to them in form of the scary scenes, the riddles, the stories of heroism and social expectations. The physical pain inflicted and the scars often would remind them of the rituals that bound them as adults and their responsibilities.<sup>37</sup>

---

<sup>36</sup> John S.Mbiti, *Akamba stories*, P. 35.

<sup>37</sup> Mueni Nzula, "Initiations."

#### **1.5.1.0.0. The Role of the *Avwikii*.**

The role played by the *Avwikii* was important for they were trusted members of the community who by their own way of life, maturity and reverence, won the honor of passing their wisdom and knowledge to the young people. Not any body could be a *Muvwikii* but it had to be earned through life experience. These were men and women who knew the culture, the history, values, religion, and all the traditions of the Kamba. They had to be story-tellers and convincing in their presentation. They were people who were good listeners and could understand the young people. Besides all these, they had good reputation in the community and were easy to relate with and not associated with witchcraft. (*Use of destructive powers over the other people*)<sup>38</sup>

#### **1.5.2.0.0. The Role of the Family.**

Another method of formation was modeling. The parents modeled to the young people by their way of living and playing their roles. Boys learned from the fathers about herding, building, fencing, use of tools and all other male responsibilities while the girls learned cooking, milking, looking after babies, and all other feminine activities. It was important that all those around the young people lived good examples and guided the young ones rightly. The grand parents played important roles in introducing the young ones on matters about sex. Every ritual evolved around sex and so sexuality had to be well understood and revered for its sacredness. To be sexist- always craving for sexual intercourse- was a taboo and it was discouraged and condemned during the initiation times.<sup>39</sup>

#### **1.5.3.0.0. The Role played by the Peer-group.**

According to *Kaitha Muthii*, the peer groups played a very important role in the life of each

---

<sup>38</sup> Mueni Nzula, "Initiations."

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*

other. They corrected each other and executed punishment on each other in cases of community offence. They respected each other and they had great support for each other. They helped one another to get married, build a house, fence the individual land and hunted together. This was one way that the age-groups helped to keep law and order in the community.<sup>40</sup>

#### **1.5.4.0.0. The Role played by the community**

According to Mbiti once a child was born, it belonged to the entire community for nurturing and care. The community took upon it self the formation of its youth to build its future. Every person had a right to correct a child in public and inform the parents. Every elder was a father or uncle to the young. This helped the young people to find their rightful place in the society.<sup>41</sup>

### **CONCLUSION**

In the whole of this chapter I have highlighted the general background of the Kamba people. What makes them who they are and the location they are in for this plays an important role in the formation of their people. Cultural values, beliefs, practices and the world view of the Kamba people is what makes them the people who they are and that has to be passed on vividly and concretely. The role played by the *Avwikii*/tutors during the initiation periods and after highlights the seriousness of the rituals and the value they had in the society. Formation is not left to an individual because once a child is given by God, the society has the responsibility to mould and give morals that she/he will live by in relation to God, the community and the environment. The human person was formed fully; spiritually, socially, psychologically and physically in order to play his/her part properly in the society. The whole aim was to promote life to its fullest sense.

---

<sup>40</sup> Kaitha Muthii, "Initiations".

<sup>41</sup> John S. Mbiti, African Religions and philosophies, P. 42.

## **2.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER TWO:**

### **THE FORMATION IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CHARITY (SOLC)**

#### **Introduction.**

God continually calls men and women to be associated with Him and to carry out His work of salvation. Some He gives the Charism of healing, teaching, and preaching.<sup>42</sup> To faithfully and effectively serve and fulfill the will of God for His people, it is necessary that those He calls take the preparation and training that will help them in their work. The Sisters Of Our Lady Of Charity have a program that all those who join their formation have to follow in order to prepare them to work effectively with the women and girls entrusted to their love and care.

In this chapter, I will explore the formation of the Sisters Of Our Lady Of Charity, taking into account their specific Charism of compassion. I will divide the work into five sections. Section one will explore who the Sister Of Our Lady Of Charity are, their specific mission and their Spirituality. Section two will show the Aims of formation; in section three I will discuss the dynamics of Formation, section four, the formation Team, and section five the different stages of formation and, the conclusion to the chapter.

From now on I shall use the abbreviation SOLC to refer to the Sisters Of Our Lady Of Charity.

#### **2.1.0.0.0. SECTION ONE: Who are the Sisters Of Our Lady Of Charity?**

The SOLC are a pontifical congregation founded by a French priest St. John Eudes in 1641 in France. St. John Eudes an Oratorian priest encountered many women suffering during his missionary work in France. He was moved by compassion for these suffering women rejected

---

<sup>42</sup> 1Cor. 12: 27-29.

by society and had no one to give them hope, love and companionship. He responded to their needs by founding an institute that would look after them and bring them the love of God. He founded this women's congregation –SOLC- to look after them and the Eudist Fathers to work in the formation of priests who would minister to their spiritual needs. SOLC operates as a Union with a General Superior and Provincial superiors in all the countries of the Union.<sup>43</sup>

#### **2.1.1.0.0. The Specific Mission of SOLC.**

The Religious SOLC moved by the Spirit of God respond to His call both personally and in community, by consecrating their gifts and talents to the welfare of those persons and groups – in particular women and girls who are exposed to moral dangers and whose human and Christian dignity has been wounded.<sup>44</sup> Attentive to their needs and causes, the sisters seek to respect and restore the dignity of these wounded women and encourage them to discover and develop their potential and the immensity of God's love for them. They are bound to this Spirit by their fourth vow- Zeal for the salvation of souls.<sup>45</sup>

#### **2.1.2.0.0. The Spirit in which this Mission is exercised.**

Following the example of their founder St. John Eudes, the sisters' heart felt desire is to be bearers of hope, witnesses and instruments of God's love and mercy. They seek the Spirit of Jesus to enable them to see these people as brothers and sisters just as Jesus sees them and that they may love them as Jesus did. They are called to be other "Jesus" walking on earth. Mary is intimately associated with Jesus in the task of saving the world; she is the image of God's tenderness; together the SOLC implore her grace that nourishes deep genuine compassion, which enables them to acutely feel the sufferings and hurts of the poor and be closer to them.<sup>46</sup>

---

<sup>43</sup> The Union of Our Lady Of Charity: The Constitution and The Supplements (Rome: 1990), No. 79.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., No. 3 P.19.

<sup>45</sup> Loc.cit., P. 19.

<sup>46</sup> The Constitutions and The Supplements. No.4.

### **2.1.3.0.0. The Spirituality of SOLC.**

The Spirituality of SOLC is to 'form Jesus' and let Him live and reign in their hearts, and that His attitudes and love for humankind be their attitudes and love. Carrying and bearing the misery of the miserable in their heart is a call to imitate Christ in his Compassion and this is the gift and attitude of every member of SOLC. This is centering their lives in the Christ, who was all merciful, tender and Compassionate. With Mary the image of God's Tenderness, the SOLC live the mysteries of Christ namely; Birth, Passion, and Resurrection.<sup>47</sup>

### **2.2.0.0.0. Aims of Formation**

The formation of SOLC is that of an Apostolic Institute. Ideally, the formation prepares those in it to be bearers of hope, witnesses and instruments of God's love and mercy to all.<sup>48</sup>

The initial formation aims at discerning the authenticity and suitability of the young peoples' call to SOLC. The accompaniment helps them to make their own the Charism of mercy and compassion. The young person is invited to a deep experience and relationship with God through prayer and communion with His people, and to form the attitudes of Jesus towards the poor and the rejected.<sup>49</sup> Internationality forms part of the life of SOLC and this is taken into account during the formation, accepting the history and the past life of the congregation and the openness to enrich it with one's gifts. Further training for mission requires the young person to have the academic ability to pursue further education. Currently the Kenya education grade accepted is c+ with a career training of one's choice.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Global Plan, P. 7

<sup>48</sup> The Constitutions and The Supplement, No.34.

<sup>49</sup> Global Plan of Formation, P. 6.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., P.6.

### **2.3.0.0.0. The Dynamics of formation**

The dynamics are ways or means through which the formation process takes place. Formation is the integration of the theoretical knowledge and experience leading to a conversion and personal response to the Lord present in the world in history, and that allows Jesus to live and reign in the people.

#### **2.3.1.0.0. Personalized Process.**

The formation is centered on the response of the young people. This helps them to make the necessary choices they need to move from an “I” centered identity to “Congregational” centered identity. Each young person is an agent of her own formation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit and those accompanying her. She has to be open to the prompting of the Holy Spirit and to be able to reflect, internalize, articulate and integrate her experience and the Gospel values as lived in SOLC.<sup>51</sup>

The basic objective of the personalized process is for each person to find within herself the motivations and values on which to base the option of the life she is choosing. This has to be in line with identity and traditions of SOLC.<sup>52</sup>

#### **2.3.2.0.0. Freedom.**

One of the greatest things God has given to humanity is the gift of freedom. In order for the person to give free and personal response, she needs to be mature; this is having certain inner harmony and ability to develop progressively towards the free and committed life that the church expects.<sup>53</sup> There has to be the right atmosphere that allows the young person to make

---

<sup>51</sup> Global Plan. P. 10.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Loc.cit. P.10.

and live decisions whether right or wrong. She has to be free to express and live her ideas within the expectations of the congregation.<sup>54</sup>

### **2.3.3.0.0. Accompaniment**

This implies that the young person is accompanied by a member of the team in the formation process, to look into the areas of her life; her growth- positive and negative. For example, what experiences bring out in her life such feelings as love, care, compassion, anger and hurt, and have the courage to face herself as she is.<sup>55</sup> This is helping her to have integral and harmonious development as a human person. Spiritual accompaniment is part of the process helping the young person to reflect on her life experiences in faith and to be able to listen to the voice of God in her.<sup>56</sup> This will help her to know the direction she is taking for her life.

### **2.3.4.0.0. Planned Process to be Evaluated Periodically.**

The formation has its different time, rhythms, and intensity in one or another aspect. In the first years, formation has to have some goals and specific characteristics. The different stages are programmed with clear objectives and means. This enables continuity and integration of the different stages. The program for every stage is evaluated to determine its effectiveness to the young people. They in return evaluate their own progress, while those accompanying them individually and communally evaluate them together in the spirit of love for their growth.<sup>57</sup>

### **2.4.0.0.0. The Formation Team**

The quality of any formation depends on the quality of the formators. The formation team is composed of members each responsible for one stage of formation.<sup>58</sup> The formation team is

---

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., P. 11.

<sup>55</sup> Loc. Cit., P. 11.

<sup>56</sup> Global Plan, P.11.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., P.14.

<sup>58</sup> Global Plan, P. 15.

charged with a responsibility for the young people and for the congregation's continuity. The team aims at the growth of the people in the formation with a view to their membership in SOLC and for the service of women and girls in difficulty.<sup>59</sup>

The team safeguards in confidentiality the information given them, and is discreet in the information shared. The team is charged with evaluation of each person in the different stages and gives a progressive report to the provincial superior and her council yearly. It makes recommendations of the young people from one stage to the next. They draw a program for each stage and is approved by the Provincial superior and her council.<sup>60</sup>

In SOLC, a sister to be appointed responsible for formation, needs the following qualifications: To have reached a good degree of human and spiritual maturity, a woman of faith and prayer, to have acquired real experience of community life and apostolate within the institute, to have sound judgment and capacity for good relationship with individuals and group, and, to have been suitably prepared and engaged in personal on-going formation.<sup>61</sup>

#### **2.5.0.0.0. The different Stages of Formation.**

Formation is a gradual process that happens according to the program for each particular stage. Once a young person and the formator meet with the aim of initiation to the congregation, the process begins because there is a desire that needs to be nourished and directed.<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> ibid., P.15.

<sup>60</sup> Loc.cit., P. 15.

<sup>61</sup> The Supplement No.37.

<sup>62</sup> Bro. Tom Kearney, Class notes. "Principles and Methods of formation" ISRF, Unpublished source. Tangaza College, 2001.

### 2.5.1.0.0. Aspirancy.

This process begins when the young woman has had an interview with the Vocation promotor and expressed her desire to join SOLC. One can aspire while at home, working or in school. It is recommended that the young woman participates in her local church for exposure to the Christian life and to have a professional training of her choice. After a while, the young person is attached to one of the projects run by SOLC for work experience in the apostolate. The accompaniment during this period is to discern with the young person her desire and interest in SOLC.<sup>63</sup> This is done through correspondence, visits and organized workshops.

The aim of this period is to enable the young person to know herself better, to know Jesus Christ and the Charism of SOLC so as to discern her vocation. The period takes not more than four years. There are factors that are taken into account during this time. These include;

**Human level:** the knowledge and acceptance of self, the strengths and weakness and the ability to work towards self-development, and to relate with others. **Spiritual level:** the ability to discover the action of God in one's life, to trust God in her formation, purify the image of God, participate actively in the life of the church through the sacraments and prayer. **Community and religious level:** to help the young person to know different Charisms and expose her to the other congregations to help her make a better choice even to marriage life. **Apostolic level:** the participation in SOLC projects and its Charism and her attitudes. **Intellectual level:** assess how the young person will be able to benefit from the formation program proposed by the congregation. **Evaluation:** the young person makes her own progressive evaluation of growth as well as the formator. All these are to assess the suitability of the young person to religious life and particularly to SOLC.<sup>64</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Global Plan, P. 17.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., P. 18.

### 2.5.2.0.0. Postulancy

Once the aspirant is ready for the next stage, she makes her own written application for postulancy. The provincial and the local community admit her to the postulancy. The ritual involves prayer with Psalms and scripture reading and then she is given a breviary to join in the prayers of the church.<sup>65</sup>

The aim of this stage is that the young person seeks to discern her vocation in SOLC and its mission in the church. She lives at her home, in one of the projects or is still working. The period taken is a minimum of six months to a maximum of two years.<sup>66</sup>

Factors taken into account here are; **Human level:** that she will be able to commit her self personally, **community level:** that she deepens her awareness of her cultural values and those of others, **Spiritual level:** to grow in a personal love of Jesus and desire to follow him, openness to the Spirit in her life and prayer that is experiential, and to discover the mercy of God and to offer it to women and those who need it. **Religious level:** deepen the Christian knowledge of religious life, get to know the congregation and its internationality and the ability to become integrated to community life with the joys and difficulties of common life. **Apostolic level:** that the young person is given opportunity to have practical experience in one of the specific missions of SOLC and give her some basic principles regarding the exercise of SOLC apostolate. **Intellectual level:** the ability to understand and apply the information and life issues to her life. The accompaniment here is vital for it helps the young person and the formator to discern their suitability to SOLC. Evaluation is done twice a year to assess the growth and progress of the young person. If ready for the next stage, she makes a written request to the provincial through the formation team.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>65</sup> The Constitutions and The Supplements, No. 66.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., No. 65.

<sup>67</sup> Global Plan, Pp. 21-23.

### 2.5.3.0.0. The Novitiate

Canonically this is the first stage of religious life. It is the initiation stage before one takes her first vows to religious life.<sup>68</sup> According to the Constitution of SOLC, this period takes two years. Each of the two years has a specific theme and timetable that guides the life and activities of the Novitiate. The first year is referred to as canonical year because it is strictly directed to the religious formation of the candidate. The second year is more apostolic.<sup>69</sup> This period starts with a time of three days' retreat directed by one of the formators.

The formation during this stage has a more personal dimension, because the Novice is asked to interiorise her own experiences in prayer and living. Community life takes a priority as it is a call to shared living and this has to reflect in the young persons' attitudes. The Novitiate community provides an atmosphere where the Novice grows in freedom and relationships.

The principal aim of this stage is to introduce the Novice to a radical following of Jesus Christ in the Union of SOLC, by means of a deep religious formation, practical experience of community life, and a deeper understanding of the Charism of the congregation.<sup>70</sup> The Novice is made aware that the entire formation depends on how she integrates events in her life, relate with God in prayer, participation in her own formation through reflections, prayer and living the values of SOLC.<sup>71</sup>

The factors that are taken into account in this stage includes; **Human level:** that the Novice is aware that she is the agent of her own formation and that the Novice mistress is only to accompany her, that some human growth is expected in the areas of self acceptance, ability to

---

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., P. 24.

<sup>69</sup> Canon, 652 No. 5.

<sup>70</sup> Global Plan, P. 25.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., P. 25.

relate, ability to work as a team, ability to receive and accept correction and advice, ability to interiorise, ability to cope with conflicts and misunderstandings. Humanly the Novice needs to be aware of her emotional life and feelings and how to manage her feelings of anger and frustrations. The Novice has to draw a personal project on personal progress to help her assess her life growth.<sup>72</sup>

**Spiritual level;** in order for the Novice to deepen her love and knowledge of Jesus Christ, she has to enter in the program that stimulates her search for God and respond to His call.<sup>73</sup> For knowledge, the Novice joins inter-Congregational courses; other courses offered in the Novitiate covering the History of the Founder, congregation, Eudist family, Constitutions, and the Specific Charism of SOLC. The Novice is introduced to meditation on the word of God according to the spirituality of St. John Eudes. Spiritual reading, liturgy and sacraments, meditation on the mysteries of the Rosary and recollection days introduces the Novice to the prayer life of SOLC that she has to make her own.

**Religious level:** the understanding of vows as the following of Jesus chaste, poor and obedient and the meaning of self-renunciation has to be well presented to the Novice to enable her to give value to the life she is aspiring to live. The meaning of the SOLC's Fourth vow of apostolic service- zeal for the salvation of souls- has to be assimilated in the attitude of the novice towards the poor and the needy. The Novice has to discover by experience what each vow involves-(Poverty, Chastity, Obedience and apostolic Zeal) so that she can see what difficulties and graces are received in living the vows.<sup>74</sup>

---

<sup>72</sup> Global Plan. Pp. 25-26.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., P. 26.

<sup>74</sup> Global Plan. P. 26.

**Community level:** this calls for personal and community ascetic practices, sharing in common tasks, following the timetable, manual work, community meetings, coping with one another, conflicting situations, a sense of belonging and caring for common goods; as a way of initiating the novice to a life in communion. Belonging to an international congregation, the Novice is introduced to the life of the other provinces of the Union and reaches out to them in her prayers.<sup>75</sup>

**Apostolic Level:** in the course of the two years in the Novitiate, the Novice understands the Charism and mission of SOLC, reads and meditates on the essential texts that speak of SOLC, acquires sufficient familiarity with the origins of SOLC to understand the spirit that inspired the first Sisters and how the mission developed. Since the first year is mainly intense spiritual and community formation, the second year provides the Novice with time for apostolic experience. This experience is lived outside the Novitiate community to enable the Novice to have an idea of community demands. This experience is shared and reflected together with the Novice mistress to help her internalize theory with experience.<sup>76</sup>

**Intellectual level:** the Novice is called upon to understand the theory taught in the inter-novice programs, to have a certain degree of knowledge that can interpret the social situations and communicate effectively with others. There is also need to learn another language that one will be comfortable to use besides the language of the country.<sup>77</sup> For example English speakers can learn French, Spanish, or Italian and vice versa.

**Accompaniment during the Novitiate** is essential as it helps the Novice to reflect and pray about her own life motives, experiences, prayer, community and apostolate in order to benefit

---

<sup>75</sup> The Constitutions And The Supplements, No. 29.

<sup>76</sup> Global Plan, Pp. 29-39.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., P. 31.

from them and discover God's love for her. Spiritual direction and guidance is part of accompaniment as the Novice dialogues with her mistress to discover God's work in her life.<sup>78</sup>

**Evaluation:** This is done every six months. The Novice evaluates her life and together with the Novice mistress and the Novitiate community, they evaluate the life of the Novice. This has to be done in fraternal manner and love especially when weaknesses are to be mentioned. Areas to pay attention include maturity, personal responsibility, ability to change and signs of change, ability to live in a community, availability, the presence of God in her life, and how she has integrated the congregational values into her life and how she identifies with it.<sup>79</sup>

By the end of the second year, it should be clear if the Novice is ready to live and serve as a sister of SOLC or be advised otherwise. If ready, she makes a request for first vows to the Provincial superior and her council who, in consultation with the formation team admits her to her vows. The ceremony for the first vows is simple in the sense that, only the family members and the SOLC family that are invited. During the mass, the Novice reads her formula of vows according to SOLC and the provincial receives her on behalf of the congregation. The professed sister signs her formula of vows and so does the superior and the presiding minister. She is given the Constitutions of SOLC and a cross. She freely enters the community of SOLC and shares the rights and privileges as a full member.<sup>80</sup>

#### **2.5.4.0.0. Temporary Vows**

The period of temporary vows is very crucial time because the professed sister has to take responsibility of her own life and live fully what she has vowed. This is the time for living out what has been gained theoretically in the novitiate. The period is five years unless one is doing

---

<sup>78</sup> Global Plan, P. 31.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., P. 32.

<sup>80</sup> Constitution, NO. 81., The Supplement, NO. 45

studies that do not allow time for spiritual preparation for final commitment.<sup>81</sup>

The aim of this stage is to 'check' and confirm that the personal call is completely in accordance with the charism of the institute; it is also to deepen the persons' relationship with Jesus Christ. The sister has to find meaning in the life and apostolate that she has committed herself to.<sup>82</sup>

Factors to take into account during this stage includes; **Human level:** the sister should pursue her own human growth through participating in workshops, open to the reality of the world she lives in; knowledge of the society, awareness of the unjust situations, current trends, and integrate them.<sup>83</sup>

**Spiritual level;** the sister deepens her belonging to the Lord by meditating and studying the Word of God to nourish her prayer and apostolate; deepening her spirituality so that Jesus becomes the center of her life and Mary her model. She follows a year of spiritual, theological and biblical studies, has retreats, recollection days and her own spiritual reading.

**Religious level:** the sister begins to live religious life concretely after profession. She has to have a healthy understanding and practice of the vows and adopt a practical way that has a prophetic value as sign of the Kingdom of God.<sup>84</sup>

**Community level:** the sister is given a community experience where she shares the responsibility in the organization of community life –in jobs and prayer,- where she is made to feel part of common mission. She can grow as a person, relate to others and develop mutual relations. She has to discern priorities between her needs and those of the community.<sup>85</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> The constitutions. No.82.

<sup>82</sup> Global Plan. P. 34.

<sup>83</sup> Constitution No. 4 and The Supplement Nos. 2-3.

<sup>84</sup> Global Plan . P. 35.

<sup>85</sup> The Constitution And The Supplement. Nos. 83-84

**Apostolic level:** through the apostolic experience, the sister has to practice the Fourth vow and gradually discover that it is the way that God has chosen for her as a SOLC to go to Him and that He gives Grace to accomplish the specific mission. She has to collaborate with others working for the welfare of women and to have a current knowledge of the situations of women in her society. Junior's meeting enriches and encourages her vocation and approach to life.<sup>86</sup>

**Intellectual level:** for her own spiritual growth, the sister has to have spiritual reading daily. Opportunity for spiritual, biblical and theology are provided for before the final commitment, the sister needs to have the ability to benefit from these studies. She is also allowed to pursue professional training in accordance with the needs of SOLC apostolate and her ability.<sup>87</sup>

#### **2.5.4.1.0. Accompaniment.**

The sister in temporary vows needs accompaniment that will enable her to feel supported in different areas of life. This is important at the transition between the novitiate – organized life- and the life of the community where she has to take full responsibility for herself and apostolate. This accompaniment is both personal and communal. The personal accompaniment: For the sister to grow from her experience of prayer, community and apostolate, she has to share with her formator and together they reflect and share her questions about life. Spiritual direction is indispensable in formation and the sister is advised to have her own spiritual accompanier whom she meets regularly. Psychological accompaniment is allowed when needed.<sup>88</sup> The community models the life for the young sister and accompanies her in her practical living. It helps her to live her life according to the community plan of life

---

<sup>86</sup> Global Plan . Pp. 36- 37.

<sup>87</sup> Constitutions. No. 84.

<sup>88</sup> Global Plan. P. 38.

and guidance of the constitution as per apostolate and prayer. This helps the sister to fully participate in the life of the community as SOLC member.<sup>89</sup>

#### **2.5.4.2.0. Evaluation.**

The evaluation is done annually by the formator with the sister. The sister is also encouraged to evaluate her growth on her own according to the expectations given her by the community and the congregation.<sup>90</sup> The community and the formator evaluate the junior sister emphasizing on the maturity, ability to take responsibility for self, ability to live community life, ability to change and the signs of change, the link between her relationship with God, her desire to serve, availability, stability and the way she identifies with SOLC. This is done in a spirit of love to help the sister grow and identify the areas she needs to change.

Once the sister and the congregation feel that she is ready to take her final commitment to SOLC, the sister makes an application for final vows to the Provincial Superiors and her council, who in consultation with the General superior admits the sister for final vows.<sup>91</sup> The ceremony is either in the community or sister's home parish according to her choice. Sister reads the formula of the final vows and signs it witnessed by the president of the Eucharist and the Provincial superior. She receives a ring as a sign of her total commitment to God.

#### **2.5.5.0.0. After final Vows.**

There is a program designed for a period of two years after final vows. The aim of this period is to accompany the sister in her transition from temporary vows to final vows. This helps her to draw her own on-going program and to balance her prayer life with the apostolate. She can always seek accompaniment from the sister appointed for this period when she needs it.

---

<sup>89</sup> Constitution No. 86.

<sup>90</sup> Loc. Cit., P 34.

<sup>91</sup> Constitution, No. 89.

There is no formality on how to end this period but one is always advised to seek support from the formator, community or the peer group. The whole growth responsibility is left on the individual and the superior who animates the life of the community and that of the province.<sup>92</sup>

### **Conclusion.**

Formation to religious life does not happen at once but is a process that needs to happen coherently. To be able to belong to a certain congregation, one has to be initiated and formed to its values and spirituality. This Chapter has highlighted the formative process of the SOLC and their expectations on the people who join their formation program with a view of sharing in their life. No one person can cause formation to happen to the other but can avail the materials and means necessary for the other to use for her own growth, this means that each person is responsible for her/his own growth and the other is only an instrument. Personal involvement and prayer plays a vital role in letting the person in formation to allow herself/himself be formed by the Holy Spirit into the life that God has called her/him.

Formation ends after death, this is why religious life has to keep vibrant by responding to the needs identified in the apostolic fields. Formation cannot be separated from the current happenings of the society since that is where the mission lies and where the religious have to take the Gospel of Christ. Formation has to be concrete with experiences and skills needed to respond to the needs of the mission. The SOLC tries to form their sisters to be effective and concrete to their specific mission of mercy and compassion in order to respond to the needs of women.

---

<sup>92</sup> Global Plan, P. 42.

### **3.0.0.0. CHAPTER THREE**

#### **DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE KAMBA TRADITIONAL FORMATION AND THE FORMATION IN SOLC**

##### **Introduction.**

The aim of this paper is to be able to come up with a practical inculturated formation project for SOLC. This can only happen after critically looking at what happens in the traditional Kamba formation and what is happening in the formation in SOLC and critique it with the Gospel and the teachings of the church. The first two chapters have explored in depth these two formations. In this chapter I want to compare the two types of formation addressing in section one their similarities, section two, differences, and since formation is carried out within and in the directives of the church, in section three I will critique these similarities and differences with the teachings of the church and other writers.

##### **3.1.0.0. Similarities**

There are common elements that are within the Kamba traditional formation and the SOLC formation. These elements include:

**Aim of formation:** the aim in both is quite clear, that at the end of the formation period they want to have socially solid, responsible, committed and identifiable people who would carry forth the traditions, identity, aims and life of the community. In any formation program, the goal and objectives have to be set according to the Charism and the life of the Congregation. According to John Paul II, it is for the good of the Church that each institute have their proper characters and functions, therefore the specific aims of each founder/foundress should be

faithfully accepted and retained.<sup>93</sup> Formation aims at handing over these traditions to new members. This was basically the purpose of formation in the Kamba traditional formation.

**Formation environment:** both formations take place in secluded place away from the activities and social environment. It is important to have the formation in an environment that is conducive for prayer, contemplation and reflection fostered by an atmosphere of silence. This is true in religious formation as it is done in the novitiate and in the forests in the traditional formation.

**Specially appointed people for formation:** these are people with certain qualities. In the traditional formation, they are people who are socially accepted and revered for their well-being and integrity. John Paul II in his address to the African Bishops stresses the importance of the people with specific role in the Church to be well prepared. In his post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Vita Consecrata*, the Pontiff stresses the need for trained formation personnel.<sup>94</sup> Both formations look for certain qualified people, who have the ability and knowledge and the skills to impart the necessary information and formation to those in the formation.

**Knowledge and information imparted to the young people:** within the two formation systems, there is a lot of information and knowledge given to the young people. For the SOLC this includes the origin and history of the congregation, different phases in life, history of the Church, the ways of worship and prayer, and what constitutes to their growth humanly, spiritually and their identity in the congregation. The Kamba formation carried the life and traditions of the people, their values and beliefs, and the role they play in the community and

---

<sup>93</sup> John Paul II, Renewal of Religious life: Apostolic Exhortation (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1998), 26(b)

<sup>94</sup> John Paul II, Vita Consecrata: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa 1996), No.66.

how to be a true Kamba. All this was aimed at equipping the young people with the necessary skills and ideas that will enable them to get to the desired end readily.

**Community living:** this element is emphasized in both formations as an indication of its importance in the society. No one person can live his/her life alone. Community life is by itself a witness of the mysteries of faith as God gathers together people from different cultures and races to witness his love. In the traditional community the young people were made to live together during the initiation period in order to build their sense of belonging to one another and learn how to live together in tolerance and care. This living together bonded them to one another and they had a special relationship since they shared the incisions together.

**Responsibility:** the both formations express the responsibility and the role the young people are expected to take and play in the society. This is done by exposing them to the expectations of the society and the congregation. In religious life, it is important that the young people are made aware of their responsibility in the congregation and the church as a whole. Their life commitment is not individual but a public witness to the life of Christ by living in the Church the particular Charism -SOLC- which is a continuation of the mission of Christ to the marginalized of the society. In traditional Kamba community, the young people were made aware of their roles and society's expectations on them and even allowed to share in these roles guided by parents, guardians and the community.

**Apostolic exposure:** in both formations, this brings the young people into contact with the life that they will live and serve in. For SOLC this helps the young person to interpret and translate the Charism and the spirituality knowledge to practice. It also helps their on-going discernment to such ministry through the living of the vows especially the apostolic vow. In the Kamba traditional society, the young people were exposed to the roles specific to their

gender. They had to perfect in their roles since this would be their responsibility through out life and expected to pass it on to others.

**Gradual conversion towards the desired goal:** the desired aim of both formations is reached through the systematic progressive stages that one goes through in the formation process. In both the SOLC and Kamba formations, the young people are taken from where they are, in their ignorance to full identity with the society or the congregation. In the religious formation, the young person is presented with the values, habits, attitudes and aspirations of the congregation. Through the formation process, she is expected to internalize, find meaning and make all these values and aspirations her own. This is done through reflections, prayer, accompaniment and guidance. Gradual challenges and corrections make her conform to the portrait of Jesus as presented by the congregation. In the traditional formation, the young people are gradually presented with the social expectations and needs in the various stages of initiation. They are expected to learn from others in the community and to conform to all that is life giving and to be aware of what the society rejects as bad.

**Accompaniment:** though the process was approached in different ways in the two formations, it shows its necessity in formation. In SOLC, the young people are helped to make their choice of life personal and part of their living. They are helped to listen to the Holy Spirit and to see the direction that God is calling them. Prayer is an essential element for from within the person, the Holy Spirit forms Christ and leads one to the direction best desired by God. The Holy Spirit is the agent of formation and so the young person has to be docile to its promptings.<sup>95</sup> In the traditional formation, accompaniment is done right from the onset of life till death. That is why the different people in the life of the young people played different roles

---

<sup>95</sup> Ibid., No. 66.

and particularly the peer groups that were seen as important life groups. One was never without a support or guardian, to whom the one could consult and confide to.

In both formations, there is a great awareness of the presence of God, that in every thing that the young people do, they should do it as pleasing to God and neighbor. Everything that they have is a gift from God and has to be used as He desires hence obedience to God and His representatives, In religious life the obedience to lawful superiors as representing God's voice and in the traditional community the respect of every elder, neighbor, parents and every one else. This helped the young people to know their right place in the society through relationships.

#### **3.2.0.0.0. Differences**

Looking at the traditional formation, there are very distinct differences from the religious formation. Some of the differences if adapted to the religious formation could enrich the formation in the African context. Other differences need to be evangelized for they not only differ with the Christian teaching but they don't also promote wholeness. These differences are;

**Physical marks, pain, shedding of blood and sealing by sexual relations:** these rituals had social meaning and values. Psychologically these acts affected especially the young children of four years and above for they inflicted fear, early separation from parents, mutilation and lose of blood. It was also a health hazard for many who shared unsteralized knives and often, unexpected deaths due to profuse bleeding. The value of these acts was to mark an end and beginning of a new stage. This could be replaced with the organization of periodic instructions and preparations to adult life with involving the traditional initiators so that they retain the values and the meaning of the stages. The SOLC marked their stages with giving symbols like

the Prayer book, Constitutions, the cross, taking of the vows, and a new dress in different stages.

**Communal efforts:** in traditional formation, the whole community contributed to the formation of the young people. In the religious formation the task is entrusted to a few. This makes the rest of the members appear like spectators and not co-formators. For the young people this brings insecurity as they are appointed to the community whose members they are new to. In traditional community, the young people felt part of the larger community since all participated in their formation and they did not need to be sent to a different community.

**Individual accompaniment:** accompaniment throughout the entire life journey gave security, support and continuity in the traditional formation while in SOLC accompaniment ends with the final commitment. Again religious formation appoints only a team of few formators to accompany a group of about ten and above. This does not allow personal accompaniment and it risks having some young people go through the process unnoticed and helped leading to lukewarm and uncommitted sisters.

**The approach in formation:** in traditional formation there was freedom, open sharing and in a free atmosphere. In religious formation, the emphasis is on determining the end of the persons' fitness to the congregation. This creates fear and uncertainty in the young people thus preventing them from participating fully in their own formation and not being their true self. This leads to the dangers of conforming to the structures and rules so as to remain in and safe.

#### **3.3.0.0.0. The Church Teaching and other writers on Inculturation.**

Since formation and mission in the Church are inseparable, it is the responsibility of the Church's magisterium to see to it that the Religious Congregations form their young people

within the framework of the command of Christ.<sup>96</sup> Religious formation has to be modeled in the formation of Jesus and how he formed his disciples to be with him and to be sent. Jesus called his disciples within a specific culture and formed them within the Jewish culture and its traditions. This upholds the need to value each culture and to bring out the elements that bring life and evangelize those that are destructive to life.

The Church acknowledges that for religious formation to be authentic in Africa, it must touch the very heart of African cultures within their values and beliefs. John Paul II says that a faith that does not come from culture is a faith that has not been fully lived.<sup>97</sup> The Church recognizes the need of dialogue between the Word of God and the various cultures. The formation programs need to reflect the traditional values that bring life and meaning to those in the formation in the particular culture. On inculturation, John Paul II challenged the Church in Africa, “I put before you today a challenge to reflect and reject ways of living which does not correspond to the best of your traditions and your Christian faith---. Today, I urge you to look inside yourself. Look to the values of your own traditions, to your faith; were you will find genuine freedom, you will find Christ who will lead you to the truth.”<sup>98</sup> The Church recognizes the need of inculturation if the Gospel message is to be lived fully within the African culture. These cultural elements can be integrated within the formation program to make religious life African and meaningful.

Inculturating the formation program leads people of different cultures to live together in responding to the God who has gathered them together. According to Gerald Arbuckle, people have to be prepared to learn from their own culture and others and to be prepared to let go of

---

<sup>96</sup> The Code of Canon Law. English Tr. (London: Collins Liturgical Publications, 1983), No. 781.

<sup>97</sup> Cecil McGarry, The African Synod Comes Home: A simplified Text. (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa 1996), No. 6.

<sup>98</sup> John Paul II, Ecclesia in Africa. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1998), No. 48.

the attachment areas of their cultures that interfere with the growth of mutuality.<sup>99</sup> This learning of cultures in formation houses especially the multiracial/international communities promotes understanding, acceptance and liturgy enrichment as people of different backgrounds share who they are.

In *Evangelii Nuntiatio*, Pope Paul VI explains the purpose of evangelizing cultures. It states that the Kingdom of God which the Gospel proclaims is lived by people who are linked to a culture, and its building cannot avoid borrowing the elements of human cultures which are life giving and part of human life.<sup>100</sup> This can be said to be true of formation, that the cultural elements of each individual have to be recognized, appreciated and respected if the formation has to take root in the integral person. In these cultural elements is the meaning of the individual's life and formation can benefit by building upon them.

Waruta in his article, "Meaning of mission ministry in Africa Today" writes that the most important challenges in the execution of the Christian mission in the modern world is that of making the Christian Gospel meaningful to the people to whom it is to be presented. He goes on to state that the tendency in the historical missionary has been to present the Gospel as if it is only being filled into empty vessels.<sup>101</sup> This should not happen in formation.

In his Post-synodal apostolic Exhortation, the Holy Father recognizes the positive values of African culture. He upholds the profound African sense of Sacredness, religion, the reality of sin both individual and community, the role of the family, the love and respect for life,

---

<sup>99</sup> Gerald A. Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission: Refounding Religious Life formation* (London: Geofrey Chapman Wellington House 125 Strand 1996), P. 40.

<sup>100</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Evangelization in the Modern World: Apostolic Exhortation* (London: Catholic trust Society, 1975), No. 20.

<sup>101</sup> Douglas W. Waruta, "Missionary and Missiology In Africa Today." *Tangaza Occasional Papers No.1* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1994), P. 42.

solidarity and communion with the extended family and the ancestors.<sup>102</sup> These are beautiful African cultural values that can benefit the mission of evangelization if they are first given to the young people in formation. This gives all the more reason to emphasis on inculturating the formation programs, bringing in them the values the give life and meaning to African people.

The Instructions from the Inter-institute Collaboration for Formation recognizes the need for qualified formators who among many goals, would be able to read and understand the many cultural contexts of people they are forming.<sup>103</sup> This will help the formators to prepare for health cross-cultural awareness and living which will prepare grounds for cultural formation. If the formators are well informed and formed on cultural issues, they will promote this formation in their formation programs which will reflect a cross-cultural community where each ones culture is valued and respected.

## **Conclusion.**

Looking at the similarities and the differences of both the Kamba traditional formation and the Formation in SOLC, it is clear that the rituals and customs are in some way about life, either to give life, prolong life, protect life, save life and to live it fully. This gives the importance of nurturing each individual's life in formation in order to attain full maturity, to be able to give life and to protect it to its fullest. It is the task of the formators to provide programs that are holistic in approach in order to help those in formation to fully gain and grow through these programs.

---

<sup>102</sup> Pope John Paul II, The Church in Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic exhortation (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, Africa, Kenya, 1998), No. 42.

<sup>103</sup> Paul Mulinary SJ, Formation to the Religious Life: Initiation and Continual Renewal (Kisubi, St. Paul Publications, Uganda, 1982), No 26 (b).

The similarities highlighted up need to be encouraged while the differences need to be evaluated in the light of the gospel particularly those in the traditional formation that are not life promoting, those that are life giving can be inaugurated within the SOLC formation.

The Church as an instrument of Gods' mission continually invites those in Religious life to be the voice of the voiceless, conscience of the society and witnesses of God's mysteries in their lives. This can only happen when people are formed to be responsible witnesses through their life, activity, preaching and attitudes. Formation should prepare people to be the salt, light and sign to the society. The society expects the religious to be answers to all their social problems; the formation has to prepare the young people to deal with the expectations of the society in a mature, respectable and responsible way. This is why it is important for those in formation to be informed of their cultures, have interest in the other cultures and to be open to learn from others what gives meaning to their life.

Much has been written of inculturation, its urgency and means so that the Gospel message with all its richness may find a home in the lives of all the people of God using their local medium and language. While inculturating the Gospel message is important, those who are the instruments of the Gospel need to be well inculturated, hence the need to do inculturation in the formation programs to prepare the agents of inculturation.

To prepare those in formation to respond to the needs of the apostolate, it is wise to provide each stage with the formation that is appropriate so that the formation is progressive and coherent. The next chapter will treat each stage with its formative program.

## **4.0.0.0.0. CHAPTER FOUR**

### **TOWARDS AN INCULTURATED SOLC FORMATION PROGRAM: PRACTICAL SUGGESTION.**

#### **Introduction.**

Many theologians agree that religious life like Christianity has not taken root in Africa because the missionaries who brought religious life came with a model designed in Europe and transplanted it in Africa. I agree with Wariggo when he says that the religious models did not take into account the cultural background of the people who would embrace this new way of life. They were expected to abandon their cultures and customs within which they grew up; disassociate themselves with the traditional values which until then provided the foundation of their authentic living, acquire the new mode of thinking, and act according to the new mode.<sup>104</sup> This explains why the formation programs have not taken into account the cultural background of those in formation. They tend to take formation as beginning in the congregation while those already in it have been prepared for life traditionally. The Church, aware of this dilemma, is calling on the African Christians to look into their roots and bring forth those values that when inculturated will bring the gospel message at home to the people. In this chapter I will make practical suggestions to the SOLC formation program in all the stages trying to bring in them the Kamba traditional methods and values hence making an inculturated SOLC formation program.

#### **4.1.0.0.0. Promotion Work**

I would like to compare this stage with the Kamba traditional preparations for marriage. In the Kamba community before the young man and woman settled for any marriage, there were certain things that were necessary for the two marrying families to know and be aware of. The

---

<sup>104</sup> John Mary Wariggo, "The African Clan as True Model of the African Church": The Church in African Christianity, Edit J.N.K. Mugambi and Laurent Magesa (Nairobi: Initiative Publishers, 1990), P.11.

family of the young man and young woman had to know the background of the family from which they were marrying. This included the kind of upbringing, the social life, the economic situation of the two families, the social status of the families and finally, the preparedness and integration of both the young man and the young woman. Certain that both parties had good information of the kind of communities they were receiving in their relations, the two families engaged in the marriage contract.

The means used to get this information was through visiting the young peoples family, interviewing their peer groups and neighbors. The aunt of the interested young man did all the investigations and the father or the uncle at times appointed a mediator. The girls' parents did like wise to investigate about the man's family and both families presented the best of themselves to attract the new relatives to be.

Since in religious life the young woman is interested to become a member of the congregation, the Kamba practices before marriage can help to identify the right candidate for the religious life. The Vocation Animator can get the necessary information about the young woman through home visits, through the Parish Priest, the parish council, the small Christian community and heads of learning institutions where the young woman has been. This information can be about the family background, education, social involvement, Christian living and involvement and even the character of the young woman. This will equip the Vocation Animator with enough materials about the person she intends to engage in her congregation. Through this information the Vocation Animator can assess the suitability of the young woman to religious life and help her to continue or discontinue the journey.

#### **4.2.0.0.0. Aspirancy**

Before the actual initiation ceremony among the Kamba, there was a period of three days set

apart for the parents to introduce the young people to the meaning and practices of the initiation rite, what it entails and the effects it will have on them from then on. They were made to understand that their years of childhood are about to end and enter into another stage in life where they would be expected to live and behave as adults with certain responsibilities and duties.

This stage of the Kamba can be equated to the 'live-in' or the 'come and see' visits where the young women visit the sisters and are introduced to the meaning of religious life, its demands and expectations and particularly the apostolic challenges that are found in helping the wounded women and girls in the society. This would give the young woman more time to discern about her vocation and the specific Charism and help them to make the right decision for their way of life. This will help to ease the many frustrations experienced by the young women as they discern their vocation while within the congregation.

Once the young woman decides that she is going to join religious life in SOLC, she makes a step to a new way of life, a new beginning and a new community. This stage can be equated to the Kamba stage of birth and naming. Though it is not the expectant mother who needs the care this time, the young woman is the one in focus, who needs to be tended and provided with the necessary help and materials so that she can feel well accepted and prepared to make the right choice of her life. As a child was born, received and given a new name, the SOLC need to have an organized ceremony to receive the new members who come to their community as aspirants. Such as a simple reception at evening prayer by the Vocation Animator, an introduction to the entire community, and a symbol of a cross. This will make the young person have an identity of the congregation and also affirm her desire. The cross will be as a pointer to her intention and a sign that she has a new life direction in a new community of religious life.

#### **4.3.0.0.0. Postulancy /Nzaiko Nini**

In the Kamba community, this ritual was carried out within a homestead of the initiate host. Everybody except the uninitiated members was involved in the ceremony encouraging, feeding, entertaining and teaching the new initiates. At the actual incision, the whole community supported and encouraged the young people to go through the rite courageously.

In SOLC, the entry to Postulancy should be marked with some time of prayer, such as three days of retreat where the young woman is accompanied as she opens her heart to God and congregation in accepting to proceed further in her formation. A member of the formation team should accompany the young woman during these days presenting to her the realities of the life she is intending to embrace. The reception has to be marked by a community celebration as the receiving community gathers together at evening prayer and the young woman is presented to the Provincial superior and the community.

The symbol to mark this stage would be a simple dress and presentation of the expectations of the Postulancy stage that the young woman is expected to sign. This new dress is a sign of letting go the past and the signing is a personal free commitment to the journey that she is beginning. The gathering community makes intercessory prayers for the young woman in her journey and their desire to help her in her journey. The community can share together a cup of tea rejoicing over the new member.

#### **4.3.1.0.0. Values to be transmitted in Postulancy in the light of Kamba Tradition.**

In the traditional Kamba formation, during this initiation period, there were specific values that were presented to the young people and they were expected to adopt them and to make them their own by living them out. These included the value of life, which was received as gift from God and had to be respected and protected. This formed the major role of the individual

that they had to give life and protect it. In SOLC formation this can be a basic value, as the young women understand the meaning of life and how they are called to be spiritual life givers and how they have to <sup>nature</sup> that life in their service to the hopeless, helpless and marginalized.

#### **4.3.1.1.0. Value of Community life.**

Another value in the traditional formation was the value of community life. In the traditional community, no one lived his/her life in isolation. As Mbiti puts it, "I am because we are, therefore I am"<sup>105</sup>, community life formed the axis of the life of the individual and the entire group. This value had to be given and emphasized through out all the formation stages. In the religious formation where the young women come from diverse cultural backgrounds, this value needs to be introduced and emphasized. This will help them to understand what community life demands from them as religious, living together, sharing all in common, caring for each others' welfare, participating in the community affairs, and what dying to self means in community living. This value understood and lived joyfully can bring the unity in the community and service as St. Paul puts it to the Ephesians that each one has been called with different gifts for the service of the community.<sup>106</sup> The young people have to be helped to share their cultural values and traditions so that they can understand each other better and live with the different cultural backgrounds with understanding and appreciation.

#### **4.3.1.2.0. Value of Generosity.**

In the Kamba community, the value of generosity was emphasized as much as the community living because what one owned was not his/her property but was seen as a steward for the community goods. Each one was expected to provide for others during the times of needs and

---

<sup>105</sup> John S. Mbiti, African Religious and Philosophies, P.141.

<sup>106</sup> Eph 4:11-13.

to respond generously to the community calls for support, sharing and even with time. This value can be integrated into the SOLC values at this stage as the young women come with their various gifts, talents and the zeal to serve so that from the beginning they know that their self gift to the community and the congregation is expected at all levels. That they begin to see themselves in relation to the larger community of SOLC, the union and that they are prepared to accept whatever appointments and call for service. They have to learn flexibility, availability and letting go of ones' ideas and desires for the good of the congregation and to be ready to respond to the needs as they arise.

#### **4.3.1.3.0. Social Vices to be avoided.**

In the traditional community, sense of belonging was important. Lonely life was always discouraged because it was attributed to many social vices. During the initiation period, the young people were told of the things that make people feel out of the community and become isolated. Such things included witchcraft, theft, sorcery, rumour-mongers and all bad vices that can upset the life and unity of the community. This value can help in the SOLC community building as the young people live together and uphold the goodness of each other with dignity and respect. Since the religious community is based on the Christian values, it is important that the young women are helped at this stage to build healthy community relationships based on the life they desire to embrace for the rest of their life.

#### **4.3.2.0.0. Separation from Childhood.**

As the cutting of the fore skin during the initiation rite symbolized the separation of the young people from their childhood, the entry to postulancy should mark the end of indecisiveness and the beginning of directed desire towards religious life, and in this case to SOLC. All the

formative information during this time in the traditional community was to break the ignorance of the young people.

The formative program during this period should provide the young women with enough knowledge and information about the SOLC life that they desire to live. Hence the program should include the following elements:

- Understanding of religious life, - History of SOLC, - Charism of SOLC,
- Community life, - Skills proper to SOLC apostolate like basic counseling,
- Basic human development to facilitate self awareness, - Familiarity with Scriptures,
- The scope of SOLC apostolate, - Introduction to prayer, reflections and meditation,
- Spiritual reading, life of the saints, - Days of prayer, - accompaniment and spiritual direction,
- Introduction to the prayers of the Church, - introduction to the SOLC apostolate,
- Catechesis and sacraments.

All these subjects are aimed at giving the young women enough materials to help them form the values necessary to the life of SOLC and to live it as African Christian women.

#### **4.4.0.0.0. Novitiate/ *Kuatha Mbusya*.**

Among the Kamba, the aim of this period was basically educational and living out the taught values in a complete secluded place far from home and out of reach by the public. This demonstrated the seriousness of the stage and all it involved. As compared to the Novitiate house, the canon law stipulates the location qualities of a house of formation<sup>107</sup> a challenge in deed for the SOLC whose novitiate is situated in the same compound with the residential care center for the young girls in difficult situation. This takes away the value of silence both from the outside and the environment. The lack of this lonely place interrupts with the Novitiate program, which is supposed to be independent of all other community programs. For example,

---

<sup>107</sup> The Code of Canon Law. No. 652.

the use of the same transport, same times for prayer and the Eucharist, all have to be determined by the larger community. If secluded on its own like the Kamba traditional formation, there would be less interference from the public, much concentration and solitude as the young women contemplate their relationship with God and the building of their own relationships in the novitiate community.

#### **4.4.1.0.0. Imparting values to the Novices in light of Kamba Tradition.**

During this second period of initiation among the Kamba people, the young people had time for community living where they were expected to live out the values they learned in the first initiation and what they have learned from their parents and next of kin. They learned new ideas presented to them in stories, riddles, songs and dances. There was time for manual work, rest, and visit to the sacred tree where the ancestors were believed to live and sacrifices were offered. All this was to introduce the young people to the real life of the Kamba, which was a life of communion with one another, with God and the living dead.

The whole novitiate program can learn from the Kamba traditional initiation where the young women have to be introduced to the life of community, to the sacredness of the novitiate and the sacredness of the chapel where Jesus is present in the Blessed Sacrament. This is very helpful since most of the young women joining religious life are coming from the secular world where there is little reverence for God and what is sacred. They ought to know how to behave in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament, in the chapel and what would be helpful disposition in encountering God in their prayer and liturgy.

#### **4.4.2.0.0. Expectations of the Society in the light of Kamba Tradition.**

Like in the traditional community, the learning in the novitiate should state what the young women are expected to be at the end of the novitiate period. Like in the Kamba community,

they should be hard working women, holy and faithful, life giving, nurturing, available committed and ready to stand for what the SOLC belief. Identity with the congregation is vital in and after the novitiate. This means the young women have internalized the SOLC values and made them their own. To facilitate this in the SOLC, I propose the following program as in the traditional formation where each day was planned for a specific activity to help the young people to grow and benefit from the set period.

### **History of SOLC,**

- Spirituality and Charism of SOLC, - Constitutions of SOLC, - The nature and scope of SOLC apostolate, - The SOLC government/Administration,
- The Trustees and the SOLC. Projects.

### **Prayer.**

- Purpose of prayer, - Jesus' prayer and relationship with the Father, - Different methods of prayer, - different prayer postures, - Spiritual reading, -spiritual accompaniment, - Prayer according to St. John Eudes.

### **Religious life.**

- Introduction to religious life, - Origin and history of religious life, - Aims of religious life in the church - challenges of religious life today, - consecration by vows; individual vows and their meaning in the traditional community and how the Church presents them and their practices, - the SOLC apostolic vow and its challenges.

### **Liturgy.**

- Of the hours and its history, - The Eucharist, - Sacraments, - Traditional ways of worship, - Inculturating liturgy.

### **Human development.**

- Human growth and development, - growth in self-knowledge and personality formation and identity, - Human sexuality, - Genogram/Birthmarks, - Psychology of the person, - Basic counseling.

## **African Anthropology**

- Understanding African culture, values, belief and rituals, - Inculturation,
- Understanding of womanhood in African perspective, - study of ones culture.

## **Scriptures**

- Salvation history, - Old Testament, - Psalms and wisdom literature, - The Synoptic Gospels and the Acts, - The person of Jesus in the Scriptures, - Discipleship, - Mission of Jesus.

## **Church History.**

- The early church, - The fathers of the Church, - Middle ages and dark ages of the Church,
- Religious orders and their influence in the Church, - The reformation period, - The apologists and defenders of the faith, - The Age of missionary growth, - Christianity in Africa, - Missionary Spirituality, - Church documents, - The teaching Authority of the church, - Local Church.

## **Community life**

- Communication, - group dynamics, - Human relations, - Public speaking, -

## **Practical.**

- Sewing, - Knitting, cookery, - games, - Recreations, - artwork, - Liturgy preparations, - Eucharist, -reconciliation -Reading, - Singing, - Spiritual accompaniment, - Community experience and apostolic experience in the second year. Enough time has to be given for personal reflection, prayer and meditation.

At the end of the seclusion period, the Kamba young people came out publicly as new people, they were seen as young adults, they came out dressed in new dressing covering their private parts, with a sitting stool and staff for men, indicating their new responsibilities of procreation, participation in the community meetings, and as shepherds of the family and community. Women covered their private parts as well, and they carried a basket, cooking pot and a stirring stick. This also indicated their call for procreation, feeding of the family and the

community, and always on the lookout for what can feed the family. All these symbols showed to the public the role the young people were ready to play and they were received as adults in the community.

#### **4.4.3.0.0. Beginning of New Life in the light of Kamba Tradition.**

When a novice is making her first profession in the SOLC, she should come out as a new person with symbols that indicate the newness gained during the novitiate period. The symbols given prior to entry to the novitiate should be left behind; she should be given a religious dress proper to SOLC and explained the significance of that dress as the wedding garment worn at the wedding feast that made one special as the chosen one of the bride. She should be given the constitutions of SOLC, which are now the rules of life in the new family she has become a member, and the traditional tools that a woman was given during marriage and the second initiation. The symbols of the basket, the cooking pot, grinding stone, mortar and a thistle a 'Jembe' or a weeding hole can be given to dictate the service that the young woman is going to render to the community. These symbols strengthen the pronunciation of vows that the young woman makes to the public and they are meaningful and abiding.

Like in the traditional community, there should be rejoicing over the new member who has joined the community and can participate in the community affairs as stipulated by constitution 82 and Ts 46.

#### **4.5.0.0.0. Final Profession /Third initiation.**

In the Kamba community the period between the second and the third rites was a period of activities of participation in community affairs, marriage and procreation, or in other words a period of community building. At the age of forty-two years, basically when women are undergoing hormonal changes, they went through a final rite, which included three cuts on the

'clitoris' and for men, the penis. At every cut, the women made promises to their husband and since there was blood shed, the ritual was made sacred as the ancestors and God was invoked. At the first cut they promised staying with the husband till death, the second cut, faithfulness and the last willingness, acceptance of a co-wife and of service to others off spring.

This ritual can be a very rich focus for those making final profession to God in the religious community and especially SOLC. The young woman has to reflect on the meaning and the weight that these rituals entails particularly of unconditional love and service to people of every race, culture, social class and religion that will come to be served and helped to meet God through the sister. The SOLC take the three evangelical counsels and a fourth vow for the apostolic zeal. I see the first promise of the Kamba of stability as a vow of total surrender where a SOLC will surrender her whole self to God's will and to the rules of the community/congregation. This means that the young woman will do whatever the community in the name of God will ask of her.

The promise of faithfulness, like in the traditional community, the young woman would promise to remain faithful to the God who has called her, to the community through which she is missioned and to be faithful in her promises. This means that she has given her life to God through the service that she will be involved in and will not prefer any other choice to this one. This is very significant for the young woman because it calls for total fidelity and total love for the one she is to embrace-God. It is a choice of chaste life for the sake of God's love for His people and she has to treasure and nurture it.

The promise made of caring, acceptance and support in the traditional initiation opened one to love those whom God will bring to them in the family and in the community. This is a very appropriate significance as the SOLC make their fourth vow of apostolic service. This calls

for an open heart to love and to serve unconditionally people of different cultural, religious and education backgrounds.

As noticed, these rites are very real, personal, sacred, life giving and have very abiding impact on the people both socially and religiously. The whole community understood these rituals and saw in them deeper meaning that was beyond; in communion with the living dead and the creator. This same focus should be understood in the religious life as the young women and community witness the final commitment of one of their own; the ideal life of love and communion that each baptized is called to live. It should provoke in each person the call to committed Christian living as these women make their final commitment to God.

To be able to make a genuine and free commitment to religious life, I suggest that the young women be given reflective questions as pertains to the vows they are about to make and see how prepared they are. The following is a format of questions to reflect on:

- How has my vocation been affirmed since my first profession?
- What are my joys and pains in living a vowed life?
- Where do I draw my strength during my times of dryness and doubts?
- Has my relationship with Jesus deepened through my prayer, apostolate and Community living?
- Is community life a gift for me? What is my sense of belonging? What have I contributed to the congregation? What is my identity now?
- How has my life been centered on Christ? What am I now offering to God in love and freedom?
- As a woman, according to my culture, what is my understanding of poverty, chastity, obedience and service?

After these reflective questions, the young woman should come out clearly with a symbolic gesture to the community that would signify the kind of service she would give. Among the Kamba community, a young woman gave traditional beer to her husband and parents-in-law as a sign of total commitment to her marriage, husband and, to the service in her new home. This ritual could be done before the sister pronounces her vows so that it expresses deeply what she means by her words. Among the Kamba, this was seen as an oath taken before the community and it was abiding to God and was non-revocable. The sister making her final vows can take wine and give it to the presiding minister representing the entire Church that she is vowing to serve, the superior to whom she will be answerable to and representing the congregation, and one of the women whom representing all those she will serve in her life. This becomes symbolic and meaningful to her and the entire Christian community.

## **CONCLUSION.**

In this chapter I have made some practical inculturation suggestions for the formation program of SOLC. The Kamba rites of passage if integrated into the stages of formation in the SOLC, can bring a lot of meaning and value to religious life today. Understood and respected as the ritual were, carried deep meaning and commitment which was for life and no reverse. If well developed in the formation program, it can bring a lot of stability, commitment and responsibility in religious life because the rite was a public covenant/contract and the public had the right to question the individual if a breach occurred especially the peer groups.

The symbols used during the rite of passage and after carried a lot of meaning. They spoke for themselves and one was bound and felt responsible for the actions taken during the ritual. This is significant that whatever symbols and gestures used during the formation stages convey the individual desire and longing so that they support and encourage the young women in times of doubt and discouragement.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The aim of this paper was to dig down into the Kamba traditional methods of formation and understand what makes them true Kamba and apply them to the formation of SOLC. It is clear that the Kamba traditional methods are marked with very rich rituals and symbols that had a lot of meaning and commitment of the individual to the community, to the living dead and *Mulungu*. This commitment paved way for the individual to live fully his/her life in relation to the community and *Mulungu* following the traditions, cultural values and norms. The religious formation has its own cultural values and norms that have to be followed in order to live life to the full. Life is a gift from God and it has to be nurtured at all costs so that it is lived fully and according to God's design for those in formation. Thus the formation program has to take care of the holistic formation of the individuals especially the cultural element that forms the worth and the background of the individual.

Reflecting on the two different methods of formation has been an eye opener for me as I dug deep into the values of the Kamba people who, when joining the religious formation, have to abandon all their cultural formation in order to fit into the Christian religious formation. What this paper has brought out is that the traditional formation has roots that are life giving and beautiful that the religious formation can build upon. Echoing the Church's call on inculturation, the SOLC can learn a lot from the traditional formation methods and help to form well grounded African women as sisters of Our Lady Of Charity with all the enthusiasm and integrity that the Church in particular expects on all the consecrated people. The differences in formation; those that are positive need to be upheld and the negatives one to be evangelized to give life.

The practical suggestions that I have made for the SOLC formation are meant to ground the formation on earlier formed people traditionally. If religious life is to be African, the African

cultural values have to be inculcated into the formation at all levels so that it can be seen as African religious for the African people. This would bring the Gospel message at home. If vowed life is to mean anything to the African people, it has to be paralleled to what they already know and understand. Religious life in Africa has not to be seen as a sterile life but as life giving and nurturing so that there is a continuation not basically biological but through the committed actions and loving service of the religious people.

Incultured formation program brings out the beautiful cultural values and rituals that can be meaningful and applicable to the modern religious formation so that those in formation can integrate their values in the faith growth and identification. Inculturating the Kamba traditional values and methods of formation to SOLC formation program is a model of how wealthy, rich and natural the traditional values and cultures are and how they can enrich the Christian religious formation. Each one in the formation has a culture rich, beautiful and wealthy enough to give light to the understanding of religious life in our cultures, it has to be encouraged, exposed, understood and valued according to the Gospel message.

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

## DOCUMENTS

### **BIBLE**

The African Bible. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1999.

### **PAPAL DOCUMENTS**

Antoniutti Card. Prefect. Instructions on the Renewal of Religious Formation: Sacred Congregation For Religious and Sacred Institutes. New Dehei: St. Paul International Books, 1969.

Hamer Card. Jerome Prefect. Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes: Congregation For Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life. Kenya: St. Pauls Publications, Koble Press, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_ The African Synod Comes Home: A simplified Text. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1996.

Pope John Paul II. Ecclesia In Africa: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1998.

\_\_\_\_\_ Vita Consecrata. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1996.

\_\_\_\_\_ Mission of the Church. Nairobi: St. Pauls' Publications Africa, Kenya, 1990.

\_\_\_\_\_ Renewal Of Religious Life: Apostolic Exhortation. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya. 1998.

Pope Paul IV. Evangelization in the Modern World: Apostolic Exhortation. London: Catholic Truth Society, 1975.

Somalo Eduardo Card. Martinez. Inter-institute Collaboration for formation: Congregation For Institutes of Consecrated Life and for Societies of Apostolic Life. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1999.

## **VATICAN TWO DOCUMENT**

Decree on the Up-to-date renewal of religious life, Perfectae Caritatis, Vatican Council II

Vol. 1, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 1965, Flannery Austin ed., New York: Costello

Publishing Company 1975

Religious life in the Light of Vatican II, Boston: St. Paul Edition. Daughters

of St. Paul, Massachusetts, 1967.

## **CHURCH DOCUMENTS**

The Code of the Canon Law. In English Tr. London: Collins Liturgical

Publications, 1983.

## **SOLC DOCUMENTS**

Union Of Our Lady of Charity: The Constitutions and The Supplements: Rome: 1990.

Union Of Our Lady of Charity: The Global Plan For Formation: Rome: 2000.

## **REFERENCE BOOKS.**

Agudo Philomena fmm. I Chose You. Bombay: Pauline Publications. Waterfield, Bandra,  
1996.

Arbuckle A. Gerald. From Chaos to Mission: Refounding Religious Life Formation.

London: Geofry Chapman Wellington House Strand, 1996.

Bahemuka M. Judith. Our Religious Herritage. A Reprint, Nairobi: Thomas Nelson and  
Sons Ltd. Kenya, 1983.

Central Bureau of Statistics: Population and Housing Census. Kenya General  
Census 1999.

District Plan for Developmen; Mwingi, Machakos, Kitui and Makueni  
1997 to 2001, 1997.

Dilan Albert sm. Religious Life as Adventure: Renewal, Refounding or Reform. New York: Alba House, 1994.

Mbiti S. John. African Religions and Philosophies. New York: Anchor Books, Doubleday & Company INC, Garden City, 1970.

\_\_\_\_\_ Akamba Stories. Nairobi: The Oxford University press, 1983.

Mc Garry Cecil sj. What happened at the African Synod? Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1995.

Wariggo John Mary. "The African Clan as True Model of the African Church": The Church in African Christianity. Edit J.N.K. Mugambi and Lauret Magesa. Nairobi: Initiative Publishers, 1990.

The Iperu Formation Community: A Hand Book on Formation. Remo: Ambassador Publications P.M.B. 2011. Iperu, Ogun State, Nigeria, 1992.

\_\_\_\_\_ Formators Hand Book. Remo: Ambassador Publications P.M.B. 2011. Iperu, Ogun State. Nigeria Ogun State. Nigeria 1995.

## **PERIODICAL**

Mulinary Paul sj. Formation to the Religious Life: Initiation and Continual Renewal. Kisubi: St. Pauls Publications, Uganda, 1982.

Religious Formation in International Communities. Tangaza Occasional Papers No. 6. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1996.

The Sisters of Eastern African study Conference. Inculturation and Millennium-Trends: Consecrated Life Of Women Religious In Eastern Africa. Makuyu: Don Bosco Training Centre Printing Press, Kenya, 1997.

Waruta, W. Douglas. "Missionary and Missiology In Africa". In Tangaza Occasional Papers No.1. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 1994.

## UNPUBLISHED SOURCES

Kearney Tom cfc. Class Notes. Principles and Methods of Formation: Institute Of Spirituality and Religious formation. Tangaza College, 2001.

## ORAL SOURCES.

Kaitha Muthii. "Initiations" interviewed by author, 25<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Kasanga Village, Mwingi District.

Kavengi Kyalla. "Kamba values" interviewed by author, 24<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Ngong'u Villange, Mwingi District.

Kavitha Philomena. "Life after Death" interviewed by author, 20<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Ngong'u Village, Mwingi District.

Muithya Mzee Syengo. "Occupation" interview by author, 17<sup>th</sup> July 2001, Kanyaa, Mwingi District.

Mutua Francisca. "Initiations" interviewed by author, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2001, Mitaboni Market, Machakos District.

Mwai Nzesa. "Initiations" interviewed by author, 20<sup>th</sup> August 2001, Mitaboni Market, Machakos District.

Mwiu Syambo. "Marriage" interviewed by author, 21<sup>st</sup> July 2001, Kasanga Village, Mwingi District.

Nzula Mueni. "Initiations" interviewed by author 25<sup>th</sup> August 2001, Kalawa Market, Makueni District.