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# TANGAZA COLLEGE

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA

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**DISCIPLESHIP IN THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS AS A MEANS OF NURTURING  
INTEGRATED AND MATURE CHRISTIAN MEMBERS OF SAINT JOSEPH'S  
GITHARE-INI SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IN MIGUTA CATHOLIC  
CHURCH PARISH.**

**Moderator**

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A Long Essay Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Bachelor of  
Arts in Religious Studies

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# CONTENTS

STUDENT'S DECLARATION.....	i
DEDICATION.....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

0.1.0	STUDY BACKGROUND.....	1
0.1.1	SITUATIONAL FOUNDATION.....	1
0.1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT.....	3
0.1.3	OBJECTIVES.....	3
0.1.4	SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.....	4
0.1.5	PROBLEMS.....	5
0.1.6	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY .....	6
0.2.0	DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.....	7
0.2.1	DISCIPLE.....	7
0.2.2	CALL.....	8
0.2.3	MATURE.....	8
0.2.4	INTEGRATED.....	8
0.2.5	A CHRISTIAN.....	8
0.3.0	CONCLUSION.....	8

## **CHAPTER ONE.**

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS**

<b>1.1.0</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.2.0</b>	<b>RESPONDENTS DESCRIPTION.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>1.3.0</b>	<b>FINDINGS.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>1.4.0</b>	<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>15</b>

## **CHAPTER TWO.**

### **THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION.**

<b>2.1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.0</b>	<b>SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.1</b>	<b>THE TERM DISCIPLE.....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2.2.2</b>	<b>DISCIPLESHIP.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>2.3.0</b>	<b>THE CALL.....</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>2.4.0</b>	<b>THE CONDITIONS.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.4.1</b>	<b>TO BE WITH HIM.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>2.4.2</b>	<b>BEING READY TO FACE RISKS.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>2.4.3</b>	<b>RENUNCIATION OF MATERIAL POSSESSIONS.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>2.4.4</b>	<b>CHOICE IN OBEDIENCE.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>2.5</b>	<b>CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>23</b>

## CHAPTER THREE.

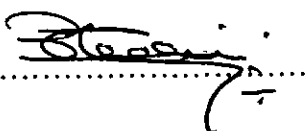
### RESEARCH REFLECTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, PASTORAL

#### PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS AND GENERAL CONCLUSION

3.1.0	INTRODUCTION.....	25
3.2.0	REFLECTIONS.....	26
3.2.1	LIVING FAITH.....	26
3.2.2	EVANGELIZATION.....	27
3.2.4	USE OF BIBLE.....	27
3.2.5	BIBLE SHARING METHOD.....	28
3.2.6	SENSE OF BELONGING.....	29
3.2.7	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL SUPPORT.....	30
3.2.8	MINISTRIES.....	31
3.3.0	CONCLUSION.....	32
3.4.0	RECOMMENDATIONS.....	33
3.5.0	PASTORAL PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.....	34
	<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION.....</b>	<b>37</b>
	<b>ABBREVIATIONS.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
	<b>APPENDIX I : QUESTIONARE.....</b>	<b>v</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY.....</b>	<b>vi</b>

# STUDENT'S DECLARATION.

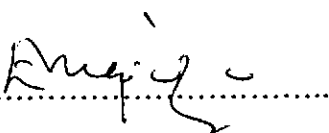
I here by declare that this study work is my original work and has never been submitted for any academic credit to any other institution.

Signed.....

**Maguta Bernard Mbugua, Cp.**

Date.....9-12-2004.

This long essay has been submitted for examination with my approved as the College Supervisor.

Signed.....

**Prof. Emmy Gichinga**

(Supervisor)

Date.....9/12/04

**DEDICATION.**

I dedicate this essay to my Dad and Mother, all St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members and pastoral ministers in the field caring for the welfare of all the faithful willing to be good witnesses of the Christian faith.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

At the end of this theological study, I wish to express my sincere thanks to all Tangaza staff that have devoted themselves to shape my life both intellectually and spiritually. Special thanks goes to my tutor, Mrs. Emmy Gichinga for her advice, insights and wonderful guidance in the fulfillment of writing this work. I would also like to thank in a special way Rev Fr. Aelred Lacomara and Mrs. Edel Chulu for their total support in proof reading the work.

Special gratitude goes to Fr. Michael Karanja the Parish Priest Miguta Parish and all St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* SCC members who in one-way or the other assisted me during the field research.

My sincere gratitude to all the Passionist brothers especially regional Vicar of Kenya Rev. Fr. Filippo Astori, Fr. Anthony Mdhululi, Fr. Francesco Breda, my two Rectors in Kisima Community and Fr. Willy Mukolmen Okey, Vice Rector-Kisima, Fr. John Muthengi and Br. Martin Odego, Bursars- Kisima, and all those who had shown a brotherly love in helping me to overcome the difficulties and setbacks in fulfilling this endeavor.

Finally, my deepest thanks goes to my parents, brothers and sisters, relatives who support me through prayer and material needs. Also without forgetting my beloved Passionist fellow students in Kisima for their challenging critiques in my life formation, encouragement, moral and material support, and for their patience during my long hours of computer usage while typing this work.

It is true that all people who helped me cannot be mentioned here but I sincerely thank and cherish them all in my heart and prayer with the warmest appreciation.

Thanks to all. God bless you abundantly.

**MAGUTA BERNARD MBUGUA. CP.**

# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

## 0.1.0 STUDY BACKGROUND

### 0.1.1 Situational foundation

*Miguta* Catholic Church Parish is within Nairobi archdiocese located 20 kms North East of Nairobi city Centre towards *Githunguri* town in *Kiambu* District in Central province. *Miguta* Parish has five outstations. The biggest geographically and population wise among these five outstations is known as *Miguta*. As the mother center, it caters for nine Small Christian Communities. One of these Small Christian Communities is Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community where I come from and the center of attention in this my paper.

In 2002, I went home for my long holidays. I met with my Parish Priest with whom I shared a lot about the pastoral work in the parish. Knowing that I am from Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community, he shared with me on how the members were faring on. In the course of the discussion the Parish Priest said; "I don't know your view! Personally, I have experienced a great lack of realization in life about the implications of living the Christian faith. It is a concrete problem with most of the Christians here in the parish in general, over the five years I have been here."

My desire to know more led me to ask him what exactly are the problems facing him on this pastoral issue. He mentioned a good number of things, just to mention a few: how to let my flock see the relationship of all human issues in life and how they can be attended by our basic Christian *call*; how we are here not as individuals but as one whole body; what role each one has to embrace in relation to his/her neighbor; how a spiritual journey is not necessarily from the Father-in-Charge; can help in support of each other,

how it is not enough to come for the Eucharistic feast on a Sunday then leave with no gain or change of lifestyle back in the family and village relations in general.

With this situation at hand, I spotted a pastoral challenge to be researched on. With time, the interest and enthusiasm to research more on this made me to settle on it as my thesis. Thank God that when we reported back to College, I found among the pastoral related courses offered, 'Pastoral counseling'; "... an intervention for the well-being of a parishioner, the Gospel made incarnate ... a response to the need for someone to really care for the troubled within the Church fellowship and ... (outside)."<sup>1</sup> I could trace some elements of help related to the situation of St. Joseph's Small Christian Community.

In fact, among the proposed topics for a research paper was one that read: 'Discipleship as a means of nurturing mature and integrated Christians in Africa'. I picked on this and wrote a paper, an endeavor that made me more convinced that I should borrow from the gospel on the call to discipleship and apply this "... as a systematic method of enabling (St, Joseph's *Githare ini* Small Christian Community) ... overcome ... (their) problems of ultimate concern within a perspective of faith in order to live a more creative and meaningful life."<sup>2</sup> I have thus chosen to develop this for the good of our pastoral work now and in the future. For as long as this confrontation of worthy level of living Christian virtues in practice and the prevailing culture of silence, doing what the others are doing, Catholic Christians will remain alienated from the Gospel message; being shy about witnessing to their faith.

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<sup>1</sup> S. L. Ssempijja, "Pastoral Counseling as Human Encounter", 307.

<sup>2</sup> Ssempijja, 309.

### 0.1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT.

Jesus Christ entrusted his mission to us that we be responsible for the progress of His church. In the background of this study, there is an obstacle for this SCC as a family of God and to the Church's growth. The obstacle is the pastoral problem encountered by the Christians in living their *call* to the full, "calling 'great Grace to rest on (all)...' (Acts 4: 33b)<sup>3</sup>, working the powerful "signs and wonders" of the kingdom (5:12,15-16), i.e. leading people into the magnetic sphere of Jesus' resurrection power."<sup>4</sup>

It is here that the problem lies. First of all the study is inexhaustible for all the challenges concerning overcoming the separation of faith from life<sup>5</sup> in practice as a pastoral problem. Therefore I have chosen to consider a few aspects of it, which underline many others especially in St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community, which is part of the functional structure of the Parish besides being the most local level of public Church of the members.

### 0.1.3 OBJECTIVES.

**First:** to find out whether this separation of faith from life among the Christians is a problem that exists as a pastoral issue today.

**Second:** to identify the major causes of the problem affecting both the Christian Faithful and those in the pastoral ministry (priests, catechists, social ministers etc.)

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<sup>3</sup> All Scriptural quotations in this study come from the *New International Version*.

<sup>4</sup> Ssempijja, 365.

<sup>5</sup> Synod of Bishops '*Instrumentum Laboris*': *The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years after the Second Vatican Council*. Rome, 1987. No. 34.

**Third:** to find out what can be done in order to make people aware of what is happening and what they are expected to know and live, that they might come to know how to insert in a Christian synthesis all the realities of their human existence.<sup>6</sup>

**Fourth:** to find out whether Christ's invitation 'to follow' and 'to be with Him' as witnesses, can help to achieve a more creative and meaningful life as Christians, looking at their lives in the light of Christ.<sup>7</sup>

**Fifth:** to investigate the Pastoral approach to be followed or rather recommendations to be applied in order to renew if not to eradicate the prevailing idea of discipleship among St. Joseph's Small Christian Community members specifically.

#### **0.1.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.**

This research work is submitted to the pastoral department as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for Bachelor of Arts, in religious studies. The study will concentrate on the synoptic gospels on discipleship as expressed by many writers and an application of this in St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community situation.

Our study will therefore deal mainly with two aspects; First, what does the synoptic gospels dictate about discipleship? Second, how can we use this discipleship to nurture disciples in the very context of the specified SCC?

The study remains within the limits and requirements as set out by the Rules and Regulations in the *Tangaza* College Academic Handbook 2004-2005 no.4.4.<sup>8</sup> This paper

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<sup>6</sup> GS. 43.

<sup>7</sup> Mc Grath and G. Nicole, "Africa: Our Way to be other Christs", i.

<sup>8</sup> The final written project should contain 6,000 – 8,000 words of text (excluding preface, table of contents, bibliography etc). Students are expected to adhere to this limit.

will follow the principle of Pastoral methodology: SEE, JUDGE and ACT. The work will have three chapters: right before Chapter One is General Introduction entailing the Study Background, Problem Statement, Objectives of the Study, Significance of the Study and finally Definition of Key Terms with a short Conclusion. Chapter One is the Findings Report, which presents the real situation in St. Joseph's Small Christian Community. This is what the members responded to the Questionnaires I distributed and the oral meetings' findings. Chapter Two is based on Theological Reflection, pointing out the Biblical and Theological foundations of Discipleship. Chapter Three is the major piece with the Research Reflections, Recommendations (Specific Observations/Advantages) and Practical Pastoral Suggestions. General Conclusion and back matter takes the back pages.

### **0.1.5 PROBLEMS**

During the data collection, the researcher was faced with many difficulties of which a few are here reported. A major limit was the respondents' failure in keeping the promise made for the meetings with the researcher. Some did not complete the work as required by the researcher. Language too was a problem to many which called the researcher to be there and explain further in spite of having translated the questionnaire to the local language (*Gikuyu*). This was due to the fact that majority of the respondents were more conversant with *Gikuyu* than English. Some too had to use *Gikuyu* while the researcher is listening, translating their words mentally and taking notes.

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<sup>8</sup> The final written project should contain 6,000 – 8,000 words of text (excluding preface, table of contents, bibliography etc). Students are expected to adhere to this limit.

### 0.1.6 Significance of the study.

As the objectives indicate, there are many reasons why this study is significant. First, there is a need to research the existing ideas of what it costs to be a Christian in a certain context where many take for granted the *status quo*<sup>9</sup> as being okay.

This may be summed up in a question that: "...how can the men and women who gather around the gospel in (*Miguta*) express their faith and make use of their own faculties?"<sup>10</sup> The search for faith manifested in life experience which dissolves daily life identity with the knowledge of what Christ's *call* entails and ensures a mutual Christian living. The research work therefore calls for scriptural based solutions or rather approach to the challenge facing our groups of Christians in Small Christian Communities who pray the gospel together and try to live according to its light.

The Bible being the heart of evangelization, comes as an eye-opener and a challenge to all pastoral field workers/agents e.g. ecclesial Community, Family action movements, parish pastoral care, to re-evaluate their commitment to being Christ-like and witnesses more relevant to their lives.<sup>11</sup>

Second, the work explores discipleship as a means and a way to rethink about the great invitation and commission by Christ the risen Lord. To see why, what and how the members of St. Joseph's Small Christian Community are living as other Christ(s) witnessing "... the path that leads to true freedom and true peace ... in a plurality of forms, personal and communal ... in the everyday conditions of life."<sup>12</sup> It will also initiate a great need to understand why today we need a serious reflection on the pastoral

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<sup>9</sup> prevailing situation.

<sup>10</sup> J-M. Ela, *My Faith as an African*, 55.

<sup>11</sup> Ssempijja, 403.

<sup>12</sup> *Instrumentum Laboris*. 34.

problems as we endeavor in “Christian life: ... a constant effort to become ever more Christ-like” (Rom 8: 29-30) <sup>13</sup>

Third, is a reflection on the firm base in the Gospel values, which goes beyond inculturation, which is the “ultimate transformation of the authentic ... (situational) values through their integration in Christianity in the human ... (situation).”<sup>14</sup> The study will implicitly indicate how we can update the customary practice of presumed Christianity to fit the Gospel stand on the discipleship, begging from it ideas to go on living a worthy and fulfilling Christ’s witness.

Fourth, to show that the pastoral responsibility comes from God and extends to all, including parish priest, catechists, and Christian faithful of all walks of life. This will awaken people in their understanding of baptism and what it entails: reminding individuals of their responsibilities in nurturing each other’s faith and educating them on the values of Christianity. The ministers too then after such considerations will have grounds why they must give this pastoral issue a preferential place in their ministry.

## **0.2.0 DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS.**

**0.2.1 Disciple.** The term disciple identifies he who has decided to respond to the call ‘to follow Christ’ who is the master, (Mt 10: 24) “...a learner who always struggles with human limitations, faith limitations, fear, and doubt.”<sup>15</sup> Discipleship is thus “... the offer and the invitation made by Jesus ... and the consequent response given by these to this

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<sup>13</sup> Mc Grath ii.

<sup>14</sup> J. Paul. II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 44.

<sup>15</sup> P. Hertig “The Great Commission Revisited: The role of God's reign in disciple making”, 346.

<sup>16</sup> Raja, “Follow Me: Discipleship in the synoptic gospels”, 513.

invitation ... an act of God, a miracle of divine grace ... receive(d) ... in obedience and surrender”<sup>16</sup> in the context of relation to Christ, not in the mere following of rules or principles (Mt 23:3). A total self-commitment and surrender breaking all other ties which interfere in following a commission from Jesus Christ thus emulating Christ-likeness in all dealings.

**0.2.2 Call.** A divine invitation extending beyond the Gospel closing words to Jesus’ program for the future.

**0.2.3 Mature.** The ones who have been transformed by the Christ’s event and are ready to follow him becoming new people of God.

**0.2.4 Integrated.** Bearing the capacity to live ones faith without shying away.

**0.2.5 Christian.** He who here and now is as much like Christ striving to be more so even in the future. It covers ones whole way of life: way of thinking, of wishing, of acting, of speaking, etc. it means that what was important to Christ is now important to him and what was and is Christ’s attitude becomes his; in short being truly “another Christ.”<sup>17</sup>

## 0.3.0 CONCLUSION

The study background part here, gives the reason why I chose this particular topic. The statement of the problem concern the demands of living a Christ-centered faith, hence the problem faced by the parish priest while carrying out his pastoral ministry especially in the specific SCC. The objective of the study is to express clearly

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<sup>1</sup> Mc Grath, iii.

and work towards understanding what Christ's *call* is all about in continuation of His mission; proclaiming God's Kingdom as per our specific context. The scope and limitation of the study expressed the aim and the aspects of the study that can't go unsaid as they affect the research directly; the limits required by the College and the difficulties faced by the researcher during data collection. The significance of the study indicated the very reason why the study is necessary and important. Last but not least is the definition of the key terms, which define the major terms involved in this study work for better clarification, and comprehension of ideas and insights here after. The following chapter expresses what the Scripture and other people say concerning this particular subject.

# **CHAPTER ONE.**

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS.**

### **2.1.0 INTRODUCTION.**

In preparation for writing this essay, I prepared a questionnaire (appendix 1) and sent it to specific members of St. Joseph's Small Christian Community. In this chapter then, I am out to report the findings as expressed in the responses. I have described the respondents as this might even say more about the situation in the Small Christian Community. I have then narrated the findings and lastly drawn a conclusion.

### **2.2.0 Respondents Description.**

In St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community area, there are nine Catholic faith oriented homes. The total number of people in these homes after a minor census early last year is 26 with only nineteen active members. Their age ranges from 24 to 72 years not counting the children who attend the meetings rarely. Fourteen of them are women. Five of these women are not lettered while the rest have the capacity to read and only five can write. Out of the five men, three can read and write while two are not lettered.

Most of the women are housewives. One of the ladies works with an NGO as a secretary and she is also the secretary of St. Joseph's Small Christian Community. Three of the members are teachers; two, a man and a woman in a Primary School near by and the other in a Secondary School outside the division. One of the men is a Social worker in the district Hospital. Most of the women being housewives spend most of their time in

the houses or in the *Shambas*.<sup>1</sup> In the whole group, we have five committed couples while five women are married but their husbands do not attend the gatherings. Five women are widows, advanced in age. One man is a widower but has married another wife who is not attending the gatherings. Three of the ladies are in their thirties, not yet married, still pursuing their college studies.

### 2.3.0 FINDINGS.

When looking at the way the members live their lives, I expect to see the members bearing witness to their faith as a course of their actions. In their responses to the questionnaire, faith is not well manifested in that community pastoral affairs are not workable from faith point of view. The community experiences as narrated orally, are not enriched or enriching for very few do see their belonging to the community and their activities as a chance for spiritual growth. They take it like belonging to any social group that is out to bring people together for there is faint courage to face life with Christ. The specific force or interest for that matter which makes them one as a Christian Community is the style of worship with nice songs. They do not connect faith and life.

There is no vigor in their daily activities as Christians. There is less devotion in the specific activities and a case of doing things for the sake, giving a poor life style prove contrary to Christ's idea of who his follower should be. Though not clearly manifested, there is to an extent preaching of good news but by only a few. Two male members have volunteered to offer spiritual guidance, to both young and old members even though they rarely do so. There is deficiency of good role models among the

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<sup>1</sup> The people being Small Scale farmers in this area, the *Kiswahili* term *Shambas* refer to the small pieces of land where most of the women members invest their time and energy over the week.

members as clearly manifested in the way other people who belong to other denominations approach or deal with them. Faith is not for them the point of departure and arrival bringing all into a living relationship with Christ and to know his values.

Some members traced specific means that they came into contact with the Small Christian Community and later joined. Majority traced the word of God and the need to exercise Christian virtues that they joined hands to offer and get help through sharing faith. The need of fellowship led to registration. Since 1991, none of the members pinpointed any positive influence he had from the older members. All theses only present the spreading of the Good News so limited in the word of the mouth and no influence in deeds. Every member seems to know exactly what he is expected to live.

The prayer life too seems to dwindle for even if capitalized, the manifestation in the concrete life is minimal. There is a clear separation between the religion and the secular dimensions in their lives. What they talk about in Church and in the Small Christian Community is different from what they talk about in their homes.

One of the items featuring in most responses as presented is bible sharing. There is no clarity of exactly what it all entails. Some talk of reading of the scripture alone without sharing. Some go a step further and mention sharing. I sensed that the use of Bible is rather superficial where the reading of the text is too quickly followed by some personal observation on it, made by only a few members of the group.

The life of the group is very remote from scripture, not really based on genuine reflection on the word of God and the Community experience. The reflections seem to be a re-telling of the particular Gospel story without relating it to here and now daily lives. Sometimes the reflection consists of just a few pious remarks after the reading. Reference

to life is almost always limited to individual personal life, or the immediate neighborhood. Seldom it is made to the wider situation or vice versa. They do not see it as making a real difference in the social-economic-political dimensions of their lives.

It is very clear that, the community uses one method where the household if not the chairman is supposed to choose at random the scriptural passage to be shared. Sometimes they have the speaker of the day choosing it. One member does it frequently, and others only rarely. A huge percentage is tired with this method and they are no longer interested. None of the respondents seems even to know very well the method or generally the use of the bible in the community. The chairperson is mainly depended upon giving no chance to many who would even bear a more enriching method if given a chance. A typical meeting program lasting for 50-60 minutes would be:

1. Hymn
2. Reading of scripture and sharing.
3. Information passing.
4. Closing hymn and prayer.

St Joseph's Small Christian Community foundation is not specifically traceable. Different members joined the community after different experiences. When I traced the invitations to join the Small Christian Community, most talked of the parish chairman invitation on a Sunday during Church announcements. Some too mentioned the Small Christian Community Chairperson when that specific community was serving in the Sunday mass. Some traced their invitation from the executive council members who in the course of sharing found it good to respond.

This could have come also due to the attraction by prayers, songs and bible sharing. Parents too have featured in that they attracted their children and with a simple '*karibu*' the children become new members.

Only five men avail themselves during the meetings, as men seem to think it is a waste of time, maybe meetings are inconvenient for them or hindered by their work. Children are mildly included in Small Christian Community. Moved thus to join, one could remain in due to different reasons. As we differ one from the other. Different reasons maintained the heart or vigor to be a life member. The active life of the Small Christian Community to some created the great heart as in this they could see in members a positive charge of life.

There is also a manifestation of poor relationship in that most talk of rare meetings with even a neighbor intentionally. Socially, they carry out outreach by holding house visits to talk to people about the need for clean environment.

There is to an extent 'team spirit' in families committed to the Small Christian Community revealing the realization of the great hope of group as social reality. There is a mention of many activities carried out in the Community. Helping children, the poor, the aged, the disabled, and any people of the neighborhood who are in need. From the married, there is hope and some marriages have been rectified through the help of concerned members.

Many ideologically do help the needy, as they can't quote concrete cases though they mention it as one of their activities. They contribute to the hungry but only when there is an outcry. Clothing the poor too. Visiting children's homes is also mentioned though when I followed this up, this took place only once.

## 2.4.0 CONCLUSION

There is a lot of wishful thinking. To many, the ideal Christian in their minds and the general know-how of who a Christian is called to be, is strong though they seem to put no effort in living this. There is a need to strengthen or revitalize the formation of St. Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members towards their call to live their faith-in-practice. Here the real presence of the risen Christ can be seen and expressed in the true light of love, where all are one in the body of Christ as a lived reality. In the following Chapter, I hope to do some relevant literature review which will help with ideas and insights on how the St. Joseph's Small Christian Community members.

## CHAPTER TWO.

# THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION.

### 2.1 INTRODUCTION.

In this Second Chapter, I intend to review some works on this subject: discipleship. It is a literature review on the different ideas and insights, which have been highlighted by other people concerning discipleship in the synoptic gospels. I hope to develop or modify these ideas and insights later in Chapter Three to fit our context drawing relevant conclusions for Christian discipleship for today and tomorrow.

### 2.2.0 SYNOPTIC GOSPELS.

#### 2.2.1 The Term Disciple.

Each Gospel narrates Jesus' *call* to His first disciples, who later on played an important role in the future Church (Mk 1: 16-20; Mt 4: 18-22; Luke 5: 1-11). In the Gospels, the discipleship vocabulary of 'ἀκολουθεῖν' and its compound forms are found roughly 90 times. The term "Disciples" occurs 73 times in Matthew, 46 times in Mark, and 37 times in Luke. The ignate verb of the noun "Disciples" μαθητεύειν "to make disciples," occurs only four times in the New Testament, three times in Mathew and no where in the other Gospels.<sup>1</sup> "The term '*disciple*', *μάθητάι* as used in the synoptic Gospels' is rather broad, and would include, on the one hand, '*the Apostles*' or '*the twelve*' whom Jesus had chosen (cf. Mt 10:1; 11:1; 13:10; 14: 15. 29.22; 20: 17; Luke 6:40; 9:16, etc.) and on the other, '*the multitude*' or '*the crowd*' that followed Jesus (cf.

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<sup>1</sup> D. J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm shifts in Theology of Mission*, 73

Luke 6:13, 17; 19:37, etc.)... Mention is made of the disciples of the Baptist (Mt 11: 2 par.), of Moses (Jn 9:27-28), of the Pharisees (Mk 2:18 par.), of Paul (Acts 9:25) and especially, in most cases, of Jesus, about whom we are concerned here (Mt 5:1; Mk 2:15; Lk 5:30, etc).<sup>2</sup>

With only a few exceptions (Mk14: 13, Mt 9; 19) all the rest of the term ‘discipleship’ occur in the context of ‘going behind’, ‘walking after’ or ‘following’ Jesus! In a broad sense, the phrase is used to portray the crowds ‘going behind’ Jesus, denoting an external and literal walking in the company of Jesus (Mk 3: 7, 5: 24, etc). Extended, it describes ‘the Twelve’ or isolated disciples following Jesus, again only externally (Mk 6:1, Mt 8:23, etc). In a deeper sense, which I am after in this thesis, it acquires the meaning of following Jesus, but in a religious context (Mk 1: 17-18, 2: 14.). It is a total self-commitment and surrender, which breaks all other ties.

### **2.2.2. Discipleship.**

The texts: Mk 1:16-20 and par. Mt 4:18-22; Lk 5:1-11., Mk 2:14-17 and par. Mt 9:9-13; Lk 5:27-32., Mk 3:13-19 and par. Mt 10:1-4; Lk 6:12-16 gives us what we can term as the discipleship-charter<sup>3</sup> applicable to our situation. If we can question then who is a disciple for us, then we can answer that, it is the one who is called by God (Jesus), to be with him and to be sent out for a mission. Discipleship then falls in when we go for a consideration of what this mission entails with its conditions.

Discipleship is a call for all Christians of all times in relation to the Christ of faith, the risen and exalted Lord. It is all about expressing a relationship of the Christians to the

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<sup>2</sup> R.J. Raja. “Follow Me: Discipleship in the Synoptic Gospels”, 513-515

<sup>3</sup> Raja. 519.

exalted Christ, the present Lord of the Church in whom they confessed the Historical Jesus. The Christ sayings and events (Luke 5:1) become then an inspiration and guide to day-to-day Christian living, with the life of the Church making sense only as a sharing in the discipleship of Christ.

### **2.3.0 THE CALL.**

A disciple being the one who is called, and not the one who has arrogated him/herself this privilege, the call then is a gift first and last to an ordinary citizen of Galilee for that matter: the fishermen (Mk 1: 16-20), a tax collector (Mk 2:14-17), a rich young man who is also a ruler (Luke 18: 18), a scribe who is a disciple of the law (Mt 8:19), an anonymous disciple (Luke 9: 61), any one in general (Luke 14:26).<sup>3</sup> There was apparently no special reason why Jesus singled them out for His *call*.

It is clear then that the Gospels present the invitation as sudden and given to strangers (Mt 4: 18, 21) with some accepting it (Mk 1: 16-20, etc), while others rejecting (Luke 14: 15-20; 18: 23, etc). "His invitation or call demands, then and now, radical and prompt obedience from those called...an entire change of ones life-direction and attitude towards life. It is a decisive action which changes one's life."<sup>4</sup> Echoed in Luke 5:3,10 and Matthew 6:14 is Simon and Companions' faithful following of Jesus, symbolizing our personal responsibility for accepting Christ's invitation.

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<sup>3</sup> Raja, 521.

<sup>4</sup>W. Kowalski, "The Call To Discipleship: A challenge to personal commitment", 370.

## 2.4.0 THE CONDITIONS.

Two basic conditions of discipleship spelt out in Mk 3: 14 are 'to be with him' and 'to be sent out.' To follow Jesus Christ means to be attached to him and surrender oneself completely to him and all his values, and at the same time taking up his task of proclaiming the kingdom as well as calling disciples (Mt 28:18-20) and bearing witness to him (Luke 24: 46-49)<sup>5</sup>, identifying him/herself with Jesus i.e. being a disciple before acting as one.

### 2.4.1 "To be with him".

Special interest exists in Mark when he uses the expressions 'to be with him', 'to be with them', etc., some 20 times to express closeness of the disciples to Jesus and that of Jesus to them (1:36, 3:14, 4:36, 5: 24. 37. 40, 6: 50, 8:10, 9:8, 11:11, 14: 18-20.30, 15: 28). There is in Mark a sense of Jesus always being 'on the move', and the disciple of Jesus thus precisely being on the move with him.<sup>6</sup> Following closely behind Jesus in need of being shown the way, journeying with him in need of being given solid food.<sup>7</sup> In fact the whole section 8:27-10:45 is conceived as a journey with Jesus' eyes fixed on a destination which he gradually reveals to his disciples: Jerusalem.<sup>8</sup> Mark thought of the following of the risen Lord by the would-be-disciples of all times as keeping 'the way' (1:2).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Raja, 521.

<sup>6</sup> J. Murphy-O'Connor, "John the Baptist and Jesus: History and Hypotheses", 306.

<sup>7</sup> Mc Grath and G. Nicole, *Africa: Our Way to be other Christs*, ii.

<sup>8</sup> Murphy-O'Connor, 307

<sup>9</sup> Raja, 522.

So for Mark, discipleship is all about dynamic running after Jesus who precedes us on the way of rejection, persecution, suffering and death. For Luke, faith is what 'being with' is for Mark (Luke 7: 50, 8:48, 17:19, Acts 10:43, 14:9, 16:31, etc.), the identification of oneself with the Lord's way of life and destiny in the daily existence of one's life (Luke 9:23). For Matthew, 'baptizing into the name' bares the same idea of giving identity to the disciple (Mt 28: 19), involving repentance, conversion, faith in and adherence to Jesus and fellowship with him.<sup>10</sup>

The result thus would be a reshaping not of a human life due to transcendent influence of Christ's indwelling but, a symbiosis of the disciple with Christ; getting rid of all that may be a hindrance to the following of Jesus, and clinging to all that will facilitate the symbiotic union with him. As Luke "highlights Peter's dedication to Jesus, his commitment to work with Jesus and his immediate consent to change from catching fish to being a fisherman netting people for their salvation...he learns that Peters missionary work did not rely on his personal efforts alone, but, on growing together with the *Lord's grace*."<sup>11</sup>

#### **2.4.2 Being ready to face risks.**

In Matthew 6, 24, we read, "... you cannot serve God and Mammon". Mammon in this case means all that stands in the way of following God, namely self, possessions, persons etc. to become a disciple is to expose oneself to the risks of hardship, misunderstanding, persecution, and, above all, to the risk of failure,<sup>12</sup> to give one's all to God as per the command "let him deny himself" (Luke 9: 23, Mt 16: 24, Mk 8:24). This becomes possible only through committing the self unreservedly to Christ. Christian

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<sup>10</sup> Raja, 522.

<sup>11</sup> Kowalski, 375.

<sup>12</sup> A. Stock, "Call To Discipleship: A Literary Study of Mark's Gospel". 144-145.

discipleship consists not merely in the radical renunciation of oneself but resolutely accepting death and allowing oneself to be established and ruled by Christ.

This total commitment to Christ is expressed in terms of 'carrying One's own cross' after the example of Jesus (Mk 8:34, 38). It entails a spiritual and symbolic carrying of the cross namely, embracing the consequences of the discipleship style of life which entails suffering, martyrdom and death i.e. ("his own cross" -- Luke 14:27).<sup>13</sup> This is clearly echoed in Luke than in Mark and Matthew, when he quotes Jesus' healing of an apposed person and curing of Simon's mother in-law. This reveals Jesus' generosity among his people but He meets 'hostility to His preaching of the promise and fulfillment' (Luke 4: 16-30), a reality not to be avoided by disciples.

### **2.4.3 Renunciation of material possessions**

The first disciples (Simon, Andrew, James and John) who were all fisher folk left their only means of sustenance, their nets and their boats, in order to follow Jesus (Mk 1:16-20). For Luke, "...they left everything and followed him"(5:11)... Jesus himself made the demands "renounce all" (14:33), "sell all that you have" (18:22) and as the first Apostle (the disciple) of the Father, had set the example by "having no place to lay His head" (Luke 9:58), and by not clinging on to his divinity (Phil 2:6-7).<sup>14</sup>

"Discipleship entails renunciation of possessions (Mk 10: 21) and family ties (Mk 10:29)<sup>15</sup> ...(taking)... a decisive action, which changes one's life. The four first disciples immediately dropped their fish nets, gave up their family ties and became His

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<sup>13</sup> Stock. 524.

<sup>14</sup> Stock. 524.

<sup>15</sup> E.J. Mally, "*The Gospel According to Mark; the Jerome Biblical Commentary*, Raymond E. Brown, ed. II, 25.

followers ... for them, the Kingdom of God, which was to establish His full and effective rule over His people, came first.”<sup>16</sup>

Luke presents a two-fold attitude to riches, a moderate one advocating a prudent use of them (cf. 3:11; 10:35-37, 12:33, 14: 13 etc.), and a radical one responding total renouncement (5:11, 14:33, 18:22 etc.). We may possess them, but not be possessed by them.<sup>17</sup> For ‘giving up’ of wealth is for the sake of ‘giving to’. This is in view of how much discipleship costs with its demands to leave behind family and financial security.

#### **2.4.4 Choice in Obedience.**

Jesus having chosen the disciples “of His own free will, He demanded the disciple’s responsible consent to His choice through their radical and complete change of life-direction and attitude.”<sup>18</sup> For Mark, it is Jesus who decides who is to receive the call. He calls the people, who have already their occupation underlining the fact that to follow Jesus is not their personal choice.

It is clear that in this call, Christ is the master of the disciples and not a community of equals. There is one who proceeds while the other follows. Discipleship in this sense lasts as long as there is obedience with the one who takes the initiative to call being responsible for the decision and disciple to follow the initiator, Jesus in this case. True then to say that discipleship begins when the disciple stops doing what he/she knows and starts doing what his/her master wants, how the Good News can best be proclaimed and passed on to others.

With this, the disciples “here bound to ...(Jesus) and His mission by complete self-dedication making them ambassadors of the Kingdom of God, peacemakers

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<sup>16</sup> Kowalski, 370.

<sup>17</sup> Raja, 524.

<sup>18</sup> Kowalski, 371.

ministering to all nations (Luke 4:44) whom they gather into one flock with one shepherd, by their teaching ... participating in (Jesus') ... own dedication to and labor for the Kingdom of God as collaborators in His and the Father's eschatological ministry."<sup>19</sup> Underlined thus in the choice making as being disciples is our role of our existence lived in the spirit, to be the Lord's faithful and obedient helpmates in the task of proclaiming the "word of God", according to "... the Father's plan of salvation in Christ"<sup>20</sup> (Mt 16: 22-24).

## 2.5 Conclusion

The discipleship of Jesus as recorded in the synoptic is a gift of a new manner of acting and thinking which is sustained by the event of Grace along the way of love and service.<sup>21</sup> The offer of discipleship is extended to all, not curtailing in any way the freedom of people to refuse the call. It entails renunciation; denying oneself, giving up all one's possessions, and freeing oneself off from all persons whom one would love and cherish, turning aside thus to a life that is new,<sup>22</sup> to take on the ideals and values of Jesus Christ, to put on Christ: the pioneer and perfecter of our faith" (Heb 12:2), to be with him (*verticality* of discipleship) and to preach and bear witness to the kingdom by serving the poor (*horizontality* of discipleship)

Discipleship thus acquires its full meaning only in reference to the person of Jesus, which makes the costly commitment a yoke sweet to bear (Mt 11:29), a journey (Lk 9:51. 53; 10:1; 13:22, etc.), a course (Acts 13:25; 20:24), which the disciple must

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<sup>19</sup> Kowalski 371.

<sup>20</sup> Synod of Bishops '*Instrumentum Laboris*': *The Vocation and Mission of the Laity in the Church and in the World Twenty Years after the Second Vatican Council*. 36.

<sup>21</sup> B. Earnest, *The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology*, 190.

<sup>22</sup> Raja, 529-530.

now run, and a way (Lk 1:79; 20:21). He still repeats His *call*, “*Follow Me*” to many people today to open out unbounded opportunities to live and grow in the self-dedicated service of the Kingdom.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Kowalski. 376.

# CHAPTER THREE.

## RESEARCH REFLECTIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, PRACTICAL PASTORAL SUGGESTIONS

### 3.1.0 INTRODUCTION.

After taking a close look at the situation as presented by our findings in Chapter One, I now turn to the insights and ideas in Chapter Two to come up with relevant conclusions first for the good of *Githare-ini* Small Christian *Mwaki*<sup>1</sup> members and secondly of all Christian disciples for all times.

I am not judging St Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian as a non faith-sharing, reflecting community that relate the Bible to daily life, connect faith to life, faith to concrete lived experience, but it is clear though that not every single member is committed unreservedly to following he who witnessed God the Father "Jesus Christ" (Mk 8: 34, 38) in the immediate social environment.<sup>2</sup> In this Third and final Chapter, I am out to present the research findings reflections, recommendations as per the situational analysis, Pastoral Practical suggestions and general conclusion finally.

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<sup>1</sup> *Mwaki* means fire and when used for a Community, it means, the people "warming up together". cf. Gichuhi, G., "The Spirituality of SCCs in E A", 33.

<sup>2</sup> F. Banda, "Dialogue", 2.

## 3.2.0 Reflections

### 3.2.1 Living faith.

If I take bearing faith to be taking courage in losing life (Luke 14:27) in order to live abundantly (Luke 18: 29-30) and genuinely, it is then clear that when St. Joseph's Small Christian Community members live out their faith in response to Jesus' call, they dare to invite others to believe in the Lord Jesus with the witness of their life (Acts 4:13; 4:30-31; 13:46). Willingly and strongly done, this will call forth for a response from others around them, that they too are netted for salvation (Mt 28:18-20).<sup>3</sup> In the present local Church of *Miguta* Parish, the *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members are the chosen few to follow Christ (cf. Mt 10:1; 11:1; 13:10; 14: 15. 29.22; 20: 17; Luke 6:40; 9:16, etc.).

When Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members in a friendly Christian way, prays and celebrates together, serve one another and interact with each other, they not only help themselves by living their faith as they are called to, but more so they influence others around them.<sup>4</sup> As witnesses, they ought not only to pray together in their homes but also to go practicing concretely their faith in the field by being involved in apostolic and social works which they organize through their own initiative, inspired by their faith in Jesus (Luke 9:23, Mt 28:19). From within, I note that the very existence and experience of *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community is a witness to the power of Christ present and active among the faithful.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> M. Clare, "Faith as a Challenge: Personal Reflections", 43.

<sup>4</sup> John Paul II, *Catechesis Tradendae*, no. 24.

<sup>5</sup> T. Zemale, "Christian witness Through Small Christian Communities", 41

### 3.2.3 Evangelization.

Authentic Christian evangelization entails preaching of the Gospel, listening to the Gospel preached, and living out sincerely in faith the call and invitation of the Gospel.<sup>6</sup> There is then a need to bring Christ in life, not ideologically but in the day-to-day life experiences, putting aside the hindrances whatever they may be and harnessing all community elements if possible to keep Christ presence alive. Letting the Good News be known by word and deed (Luke 4:44; Mt 16:22-24) is effective when the group exposes itself to the word of God in Scripture as an inspiration and guide, which they share in faith at the “breaking of Bread” during Eucharist,<sup>7</sup> in the company of Christ who call all ‘to be with him’ and ‘to follow him’ (Mk 3:14, Luke 24: 46-49).

This will inspire each to be on the move with Christ, an indication of the desire manifested in the closeness of Saint Joseph’s *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members behind Jesus in need of being shown the way (Mk 8:27-10:45).

### 3.2.4 Use of Bible.

Tracing of *Githare-ini* bait<sup>8</sup> is a challenge to these Small Christian Community members. It is possible, already traceable in the little and limited ways they share the scripture. With an effort to search the Scriptures in an open Spirit of friendship, they find how the word of God can give light and guidance to their daily struggles and encourage

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<sup>6</sup> L. Magesa, “Evangelization” 354.

<sup>7</sup> Zemale, 38.

<sup>8</sup> To gather as one fraternal community, Living together, united in the one Holy Spirit, listening together to God’s word, and celebrating together the Sacrament of unity, the Eucharist, to clarity, deepen and confirm their choice as the right choice. (“AMECEA Plenary Study Conference 1979”, AFER 21:5 (1979): 260-261)

them to transform the society,<sup>9</sup> bearing credible steps of being whom they are called to be, disciples of the triumphant Lord committed and in total surrender.

Often, I have grasped the idea of the members taking with them a word of Scripture, which remains with them during the following days, with an attempt of making the encounter between God's Word and the local situation the centre of their Community. "They are thus united around the Lord who calls, corrects and inspires them (through the word)."<sup>10</sup> Here I tend to put forward a challenge that they need to ask them now and then what these particular passages say to their concrete life situation. Bible sharing thus becomes a promising search, opening up their mind and hearts, making their affiliation and believe in the Church (Body of Christ) doctrines more relevant to their lives, building a way and journeying with Jesus along it (Mk 1:2).

### 3.2.5 Bible Sharing Method.

There is no single method as presented by the respondents, which can do justice to all essential aspects of such Communal Gospel reflection. There is a need to have a profound approach towards a humble and honest listening to God, a careful analysis of life problems, a trust building from the Gospel and, a search for connecting lines between life and the Gospel with none of these aspects being neglected. Same Bible sharing method week after a week will surely lead to boring encounter.

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<sup>9</sup>J. G. Healay, "Today's New Way of Being Church", 74.  
<sup>10</sup>Zemle, 38

### 3.2.6 Sense of Belonging.

Faced with the question, who is the Church, according to the findings, very few talked of the Church as “people”, “a group of local Christians”, “a Community” themselves.<sup>11</sup> For them, it does not strongly sound that their Small Christian Community is a small group of people (themselves) who gather together to read the Bible and apply it to their everyday lives, “...where the faithful can communicate the word of God and express it in service and love to one another; ... true expressions of ecclesial communion (inculturated in local places and situations).”<sup>12</sup>

This encamps not all the members as it is clear that the few know what this community is up to and to who it belongs. The call that each has received and is out to respond is a gift first and last to an ordinary citizen, personally, having a right, by that very fact, to take a role in the mission of bringing the kingdom of God to realization. To many, the community belongs to the Parish Priest, Parish Council Executive or the Catechist who devotes his/her life and energy for the betterment of this Small Christian Community.

They fail to understand that they mostly gather without the priest, council executive, catechist and sometimes the very leader of their Community to read and interpret Holy Scripture, to pray, sing, prepare for worship and to advice each other on making decisions concerning concrete questions in their concrete life. They also address and grapple with a variety of human problems in their very community context (Mt 8:34, 38. Luke 14:27).

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<sup>11</sup> Healay, 63.

<sup>12</sup> Apostolic exhortation on the Vocation and mission of the Lay Faithful which was a follow-up to the 1987 World Synod of Bishops on “The Parish” No. 26.

It is up to each of them to take responsibility not relying on personal efforts solely but Lord's grace too and to be proud of the little he or she can do knowing that the community is there for him or her to serve and to be served in response. If the community experience proves otherwise, then they are to be aware that they are not the first along this road of life. Rejection, persecution, suffering and even death if it demands as we have seen in chapter two are all tests along the way of Christians. To have courage in faith, in facing all as they struggle to identify themselves with the Lord's way of life and destination (Luke 9: 23) is all what it calls for.

### **3.2.7 Personal and Social Support.**

Apart from the enrichments as expressed by many of the very members, there seems to be a huge limit towards social affairs. A few instances appear where very few activities take place either for personal or social support. The members being Christ's followers need to create a Christian attitude towards common social problems, grasping the social commitment in Christianity. There is a great need for enrichment and great investments in Prayer groups, Home visitations and AIDs counseling therapeutic groups targeting the bereaved especially with an outreach to support, encouragement and give home care as "Sharing truly divides the sorrow". "Love of God and neighbor was Jesus' command to his followers"<sup>13</sup>

Marriage counseling too is an area of concern though not fully attended as the words of the respondents seems unsatisfied with the faint family Spirit traceable already among Community members. Self-help groups, Religious education for children,

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<sup>13</sup> M. I. Aquilar, "An African Theology of Praxis Through SCCs", 143.

Sponsoring catechumens in RCIA (Mt 28:19) and Youth animation are some of areas to be adventured. Helping the poor and the needy are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ and <sup>14</sup> seem to be a very common practice that most talk of it but rarely do it with commitment. They should know that any action undertaken comes from the reflections in common with a crucial place in human life.

### 3.2.8 Ministries.

In Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community, the laity as we saw in the respondents' description, ought to organize themselves, plan and face their activities without avoiding them in such a way that different people are involved in various services as suggested by personal and social support demands above, a response to the call for a mission. This way, lay ministries emerge as various persons in the light of their talents and gifts, profession where it counts, discover their capacities to serve the needs of the Community and collaborate to carry out the tasks decided upon by all.<sup>15</sup> This is not yet fully realized in St. Joseph's Small Christian Community where like a tree, each part has something to do in cooperation with all the other parts. As for those bearing professional expertise, there are many areas to serve such as, planning seminars and retreats to give a basic orientation to the members on their following Christ's mission.

As for the Reading at the community meetings and at the Eucharist, leading the Community gatherings, facilitating Bible sharing groups, doing family apostolate, catechesis for children, helping the sick and their families, serving the welfare of the neighborhood, helping with organization on the parish or sub-parish councils as some of

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<sup>14</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*. 1.

<sup>15</sup> Zemale, 38-39.

Christ's mission choices call for voluntary embrace.<sup>16</sup> Following Christ's words and deeds in his earthly ministry (Luke 5:1), is a good trend in knowing and identifying responsibilities in spiritual and pastoral life of their own selves, and that of the whole Christian Community. Each is called to deny (Mk 18: 22) him/herself if it calls to do so and actively share in the Pastoral work of the community in his or her own way, for it is in giving that we receive. This will only be possible when each member will take the community at heart and listen to its voice as the voice of Christ commissioning his followers towards his ministry.

### **3.3.0 Conclusion.**

God's self revelation through little and small ways of daily living of faith in *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community as presented in Chapter One is like the metaphor of a *fifth Gospel*. The Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members require help, encouragement and animation beyond what little I have done here to move from an insulated prayer group to a faith-sharing reflecting community that relate the bible to daily life. Help can come especially from the grass root experience of the Small Christian Community itself on discipleship for the experience of ordinary people is a powerful testimony of the faith journey.

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<sup>16</sup>The LUMCO Series: Training For Community Ministries, Provides a set of training materials for each of these major ministries.

### 3.4.0 Recommendations. (Specific Observations/Advantages)

1. Being, in the forefront as witness and ‘mediator’ of the Gospel, the Saint Joseph’s *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members has the possibility and capacity to attest to this truth and meaningfulness of Christian faith in their little and small ways in their lives, by being at once, teachers, disciples and witnesses.
2. From the responses, there is a feeling that there is a potentiality for even though not fully, God is with them in their situations as individuals but barely as a community.
3. Looking at the charter of charitable actions by Saint Joseph’s *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community members, I come to see the very core recommendable for the deepening of faith as reach out to those in need and analysis of the local problems with reference to their broader causes and consequences opening their eyes to see where it matters most to give a hand.
4. As for a mature embrace of ministries, I would recommend that they apply especially the parish priest’s allowance of freedom and corporation with the Christians.
5. Each household has an opportunity for soliciting grace and special prayer when they take a turn to take part in scriptural choice and to sharing their experience.

### 3.5.0 Pastoral Practical Suggestions.

► First, when there is a choice of **activities** to be initiated, there is a great need to go for activities that will really attract, engage and stimulate members according to taste, age and availability. Eg.

**\*Youth-** drama, singing, traditional dances and other cultural activities.

**\*Men-** A tree nursery and tree planting project as a self-help group.

**\*Everybody-**Organized renewal and awareness creating program for example, Easter themes set by Justice and Peace Commission of Kenya in co-operation with the Church. This will help members to learn how to work with people of different characters, respecting one another's background apart from the position or power or wealth one may have.

► Second, on handling the Scripture in the Community, **Bible sharing**, which is the backbone of re-evangelization necessary in this case, discipleship acquires its full meaning only in reference to the person of Jesus, which makes the costly commitment a yoke sweet to bear, a journey, a course, which the disciple must now run, and a way.<sup>17</sup> Great care must be taken to make each method so simple that practically every community member can lead and participate actively in such a Gospel sharing adventure, to avoid leadership centralization in one or a few people.<sup>18</sup> Imposition of any method from above should be highly avoided.

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<sup>17</sup> Kowalski, 376.

<sup>18</sup> F. Lobinger, "New Aids for Using the Bible in SCCs". 401.

A practical way to deal with this is to alternate several methods of Gospel sharing.<sup>19</sup> I would go for alternating two methods, adding a third one from time to time. An effective bible reflection method fitting if possible See-Judge-act model is better, where the people can critique their situation in the light of the Bible and take steps to improve or transform it. Samples of bible sharing methods would be:

- *Picture-programmes: for catechumens.*
- *The Group-response method: searching for issue touched by the Gospel.*
- *The Look-Listen-love method: a simplified See-Judge-Act method.*
- *Amos Programmes: analysis of one specific life issue.*
- *The Parish-Search method: the parish designs notes for a community.*<sup>20</sup>

► Third, all need to work as a co-operate body where all feel at home that this is their choice to belong to the group ready to serve and to be served and that Love takes the inner core space of this friendly community. It is possible when Small Christian Community members are helped through bible study and discussions. This will mark the core of the endeavor to a new understanding of faith and to a deeper commitment. Developing community spirit would entail facilitating sharing of responsibilities in line with gifts and talents, involving everyone in leading to a renewed sense of what the Small Christian Community is, as opposed to the conception of it being a welfare society.

Possible to work too in this is taking naming ceremonies, anniversary days of the community members commemorations to the level of community marked by a Eucharistic celebration at the open place where the regular meetings are held in a different day apart from normal meeting day. Corroboration too with other Small

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<sup>19</sup>Lobinger, 399-400.

<sup>20</sup>Lobinger, 400.

Christian Communities is healthy where invitations can be extended in case of such occurrences.

► Fourth, the priest by use of parish notes can play a unifying and inspiring central role in the evangelization process of a large area. Here, the parish communities can base their meetings on one-page “notes” or “guide-lines” prepared in one central place may be by the team of pastoral workers. The priest by use of the outcomes of these notes can base his homilies. By this, the faith-experience of the many Communities flows into one central group with individual Christians benefiting from the inspiration developing in this central group.<sup>21</sup>

► Fifth, regular meetings with the pastoral workers will foster preparedness of all Community members’ involvement in discussing, learning and trying out new ways of carrying out different affairs. Communication network thus is made with the people who are prepared to learn. Once in awhile too, plans should be made of inviting a visitor from a different Small Christian Community not necessarily from the same parish during the usual weekly prayer time to begin with, whose sharing her/his journey of faith, scripture and prayer know-how will help them to improve.

This would auger well with the presence of an effective facilitator helping Saint Joseph’s *Githare-imi* Small Christian Community members to link Gospel to their life situations. A Choice of someone too who in a motherly way can organize the youngsters during prayer meetings and during mass on Sunday is advisable too.

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<sup>21</sup> Lobinger. 402.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION.

As we have come to the end of this work, I can deduce from the research findings that there is lack of living the call of Christ to be his witnesses in word and deed in other words, being disciples is a pastoral issue in Saint Joseph's *Githare-ini* Small Christian Community. From this, I feel that I have managed to achieve the goals we aimed at my proposed main objectives which were the following:

**First:** to find out whether this separation of faith from life among the Christians is a problem that exists as a pastoral issue today.

**Second:** to identify the major causes of the problem affecting both the Christian Faithful and those in the pastoral ministry (priests, catechists, social ministers etc.)

**Third:** to find what can be done in order to make people aware of what is happening and what they are expected to know and live, that they might come to know how to insert in a Christian synthesis all the realities of their human existence.

**Fourth:** to find out whether Christ's invitation 'to follow' and 'to be with Him' as witnesses, can help to achieve a more creative and meaningful life of Christians, looking at their lives in the light of Christ.

**Fifth:** to investigate the Pastoral approach to be followed or rather recommendations to be applied in order to minimize if not to eradicate the out-dated but prevailing idea of being a disciple among St. Joseph's Small Christian Community members specifically.

For me to go ahead, first of all I had to question the faith-life situation of St. Joseph's Small Christian Community and prove that there is a problem in it. The research findings helped me to point the problem lived by the members. The theological reflection chapter was of great support in identifying problems more clearly and purposing ways

forward. This also qualified my step in carrying out this research work. It is in line with all this that I was able to analyze and discuss about this problem and come up with the results as I have them in chapter three of this essay.

However, on the one hand in analyzing and discussing the research findings relevant to this research work as explicated in chapter three, I was able to develop from the signs of hope in what we take as little or small contribution in commitment in St. Joseph's Small Christian Community share in the discipleship of Christ, some recommendations, which I hope if encouraged can be helpful in combating this pastoral problem. On the other hand, I tried to give some few pastoral suggestions which if implemented can change the situation for the better.

It is my hope as I finalize this work that, other people of good will, will research for more and better solutions in renewing the Christian call to witness Christ.

## ABBREVIATIONS.

ACS	African Christian Studies
AFER	African Ecclesiastical Review.
AIDs	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.
B.A.	Bachelor Of Arts.
BT	Bible Today
cf.	<i>Confer</i> : compare.
e.g.	<i>exempli gratia</i> : for example.
GS	<i>Gaudium Et Spes</i> .
GNS	Good News Studies
Heb	Hebrew.
Jn	John.
KMs	Kilometers
Lk	Luke
Mk	Mark
MS	Missiology
Mt	Matthew
NGO	Non Governmental Organization.
NP	New People
NTS	New Testament Studies
Os	Origins
PHIL	Philippians.
PP	Priests and People
RCIA	Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults.
SCC	Small Christian Community.
SH	Spearhead
VJTR	Vidyajyoti

APPENDIX I.

QUESTIONARE

**Discipleship being a an invitation to individuals working in communion with Jesus among others, there is a level of personal awareness of what his/her role entails in a Small Christian Community (SCC).**

1a. As a member of this SCC, who invited you to join and what moved you to join?

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b. How do you make it everyday or what keeps you as a member of your SCC?

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2.a. What is your role in relation to your neighborhood that is different from your; gender, age, life-style, family background etc yet belonging to your Church?

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b. How do you exercise these gifts in relation to various ministries that a SCC is expected to bear?

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3. How often do you meet as a Christian Community?

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4. What do you say about the size of your SCC?

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5 Your Community being Christian in nature, what witness in the church, neighborhood and life in general do you give as Christ like?

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6. What would you say about your Sunday as Lord's Day and any other Feast-Day in relation to your SCC?

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7. How do you discuss or Share the Word of God in the SCC?

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8a. What are the Social affairs/projects of your SCC?

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b. As a Catholic faithful, where have you placed your Church in your life?

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c. What is your SCC up to in line with your Church's value in your social life?

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9.a. With the Parish as God's Family, how would you account for the past present and future of your Community?

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b. How do you view the Parish from your SCC stand?

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10. Again as part of the Local Church, how is your contact with the Church Council, Father in Charge and the whole edifice of the Christian faithful?

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