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**INCULTURATED CONSECRATED LIFE AND
THE GROWTH OF VOCATIONS: PROMOTING
AND SAFEGUARDING THE GIFT OF FIDELITY,
THE JOY OF PERSEVERANCE**

A Publication of the Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria

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A Publication of the Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria

Motto: *Witness to Truth and Mercy through Love and Service
with Faith and Reason*

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EDITORIAL

Theologically, Consecrated Life has its origins in the mystery of Christ and of the Trinity. It stands as a sign of fraternity and Communion in the Church. Consecrated Life is built on the service of Charity, manifesting God's love in the world through prophetic witness, engagement in new fields of mission, and dialogue with everyone.¹ Africa is the birthplace of Christian religious life.² Of the many paradigm shifts in our historical developments, consecrated life more than once has been the first to sense the changes in history and grasp the calls of the Spirit. Today, too, the Church needs the prophetic life and visions of Consecrated life.³

The Synod of Bishops on Consecrated Life was held about thirty years ago. Since then, many important events, changes or trends in the Church and society have interpellated and still confront the Consecrated Life worldwide. Among these, we have the celebrated Year of Consecrated Life (2015) that invited Consecrated persons - as witnesses to the Gospel - to live the past with gratitude, the present with joy (passion), and the future with hope. In this way, Consecrated persons were called to "wake up the world". In 2019, the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life published "The Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance"⁴: this document demands looking at life as consecrated persons without closing one's eyes when problems or difficulties arise, and it aims to address what Pope Francis referred to as "'hemorrhage' that is weakening consecrated life and the very life of the Church."⁵ Today, through the synod on Synodality, the Church calls on everyone to embrace and practice synodality through communion, participation, and mission; this is one of the vital ways of being, living, and leading people in a Church understood as the Family of God. The Church recognizes that she also "needs to let herself be questioned by the prophetic voice of consecrated life, the watchful sentinel of the Spirit's call."⁶

¹ Cf. St. John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata*, 1996.

² "Africa is the cradle of the Christian contemplative life." (Benedict XVI, *Africae Mnumus*, n.119).

³ XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops First Session (October 4-29, 2023), *Summary Report on a Synodal Church in Missio*, Part 2, No.10b.

⁴ Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *The Gift of Fidelity the Joy of Perseverance. Manete in Dilectione Mea (Gv 15,9) Guidelines* (2019).

⁵ Pope Francis, *Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life* (Clementine Hall Saturday, 28 January 2017).

⁶ *Letter of the XVI Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops to the People of God* (25/10/2023).

Editorial

In Africa, far from experiencing an acute lack of vocations and facing a 'haemorrhage' that weakens consecrated life and the very life of the Church, presently, there is the welcome phenomenon of a steady increase in vocations to the Consecrated Life and the Priesthood.⁷ This phenomenon, a moment of grace, though filled with hope and promises seems to confirm "that the 'hour of Africa' has come" and it is a motive of thanksgiving to God.⁸ However, history teaches us that the phenomenon of an increase in vocation in Africa must not necessarily be taken for granted nor presumed to be indefinite. Rather, with gratitude to God, it must be critically and carefully yet fully welcomed, assessed, promoted, and safeguarded. We must also learn lessons from other regions of the world that have once enjoyed similar experiences. Thus, observation raises the question: how can the African Church appropriate the visions and resources of this graced moment of "vocation boom" without allowing it to turn into a "vocation doom"? To foster the deepening of Christian faith and commitment to evangelization, there is the need for inculturation of faith, and also for perseverance and faithfulness to the charism and mission and to the people of God in Africa.

Therefore, the present edition of *The Catholic Voyage: African Journal of Consecrated Life* (TCV-Africa) chose to highlight this theme: "*Incultured Consecrated Life and the Growth of Vocations: Promoting and Safeguarding the Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance.*"

With the flourishing of vocations to Consecrated Life and Priesthood, the Church in Africa has a new and unique opportunity to advance the promotion and safeguarding of the gift of fidelity and joy of perseverance in Institutes of Consecrated Life and secular institutes, while strengthening initial and permanent formation. Considering the profound importance of religious vocation in the Church, and the increasing number of entrances into Formation Houses and Seminaries, it is also alarming the rate at which some consecrated persons exit the Consecrated life. Sometimes, we need to interrogate ourselves about the retention rate of candidates admitted and the multidimensional factors leading to their separation, and about how to address the issue. This publication addresses some of the concerns while offering admonitions on how the current difficulties of members and departures in religious institutes and societies of Apostolic life as experienced in some regions can be avoided or mediated. The contributions here are suggestive templates on how we can work toward sustaining and safeguarding the fidelity and perseverance of members, young or elderly, especially in the face of some sensitive situations. They remind us about opportunities Africa has to

⁷ http://www.fides.org/en/news/74319-Vatican_Catholic_Church_Statistics_2023.

⁸ John Paul II, *Church in Africa* (1995), n.6; John Paul II, *Vita Consecrata* (1996), n.2

learn lessons from the past, to be thankful and hopeful, and to work toward sustaining the growth of vocations.

Each author here writes on a chosen topic from the perspective of his/her research or pastoral interest. John Egbulefu, a Priest and Theologian, opens the conversation, as he examines the contribution of inculturated consecrated life to the deepening of Christian faith and fidelity to vocations. His essay, in four parts, highlights the principles relating to Consecrated Life; the practices as the application of the principles in concrete situations; the problems arising as the discrepancy between the principles and their practices due to the deviation of the practices from the principles; and proposals of some solutions to the problems partly in the light of the general theory of problem-solution.

Reflecting on the theme of Africa and the future of Catholicism, Olisaemeka Okwara, a Nigerian theologian and member of the Daughters of Divine Love, makes critical considerations on the formation of candidates for consecrated life and priesthood. She explores some of the factors that shape Catholicism today and the place of the African Church within these factors. Her essay premises this exploration on the thesis that cultivating grounded-dialogic and inculturated faith could be a credible resource for attaining the required task of Africa's role in the future of Catholicism, and that without such dialogic-grounded faith in the formation of candidates for Priesthood and Consecrated life, its enrichment of the global Church might be jeopardized.

The reflection by John Cardinal Onaiyekan, Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja, addresses a key and broader theme: *Church Life in Africa*. He gives some insights into what young people could do to make a positive impact on Africa. After making a general reflection on “the enigma that is Africa,” he presents the futile efforts that were made to make Africa rise. He invites us to look at the African church in history, and then draws attention to the church in Africa today, and to the place and role of Africa in the world church. Consequently, he offers an assessment and expectations of the African church as a witness to and in service of the African continent. The author, finally, shares his vision of the relationship between Africa and the USA Church. His article is an invitation to us all, too, as African Christians, pastors and scholars to carefully and honestly reflect on the state, the role and prospect of the Church in Africa today and in the future world church.

Reflections about vocations to Consecrated Life and Priesthood inevitably and certainly involve the question of generations. Juliana Osiyemi, a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, explores some aspects of *inter*-generational dialogue towards building of synergy in Consecrated Life in Nigeria. “Our past remains the greatest influence on how we deal with ourselves, others and God,” she claims. Noting the three key stages of human life,

Editorial

she argues that “each of the three stages of the human life is complete in itself, but one affects the other.” What would be the implications of this? She offers some suggestions on practical strategies for fostering intergenerational dialogue within the Consecrated Life.

Agnes Okoye, DDL, a Canon Lawyer, draws attention to the discernment of vocation in religious life, a complex and delicate process, especially when it concerns the challenges of departure from religious institutes. Departures from religious life nowadays are not few and insignificant. Several factors contribute to the departures. Okoye points out the ways to stop the malady and foster perseverance in religious life, as well as the value of accompaniment by a formator. Her article, first, explores the discernment of vocation to and departures from religious life in the light of recent research, and provides an overview of the discernment process; it discusses the reasons for departures and, then, offers some recommendations on how to support those called to religious life to live the life joyfully and to persevere in it. Consequently, while turning our gaze on departure from religious institutes, this study draws attention to the stable nature of religious life and the need to promote elements that foster happiness and fulfilment in Consecrated Life.

One of the major concerns of the Church in Africa in recent years is the growing phenomenon of migrants and refugees, now at a crisis level. Several religious orders and institutes are committed to this area of apostolate. From the viewpoint of Social Communications, Bishop Emmanuel Badejo of the Catholic Diocese of Oyo (Nigeria), and the President of CEPACS, focuses on “The Communicative Dimensions of the Church's Vision of Migrants and Refugees: An African Perspective”. The paper was originally delivered at a meeting of Catholic journalists and experts in social communications in Africa. It offers valuable insights into the pastoral mission of the Church, including consecrated persons and other pastoral agents who are dedicated to the service of migrants and refugees. He suggests that everyone should correctly expound the vision of the Catholic Church on migrants and refugees. We should confront the often-sad reality of migrants and refugees of the African continent with the vast possibilities of our calling as communicators of Gospel values in the Church in Africa. “We would have before our eyes not numbers, not dangerous invaders, but the faces and stories, gazes, expectations and sufferings of real men and women to listen to.”⁹

⁹ Pope Francis, *Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 56th World Day of Social Communications*, 2022.

The Ikechukwu Kanu, OSA draws attention to the urgent need for inculturation of consecrated life in Africa, highlighting what he calls the “logic for promoting and safeguarding indigenous gifts of fidelity”. *In faithfulness to the teachings of the Church's Magisterium, theology and Institutes of Consecrated life in Africa should pass from doctrinal and theoretical enunciations to practices as it relates to inculturation. The first African Synod (1994)* “considers inculturation an urgent priority in the life of the particular Churches, for a firm rooting of the Gospel in Africa. It is 'a requirement for evangelization', 'a path towards full evangelization', and one of the greatest challenges for the Church on the Continent “ Inasmuch as “inculturation includes the whole life of the Church and the whole process of evangelization,” *inculturation of Consecrated life is necessary and feasible. The author seeks to establish the possibility of the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa and further provide the possible areas where this inculturation could take place. the inculturation of consecrated life, he claims, is possible within the context of the evangelical vows (that is, chastity, poverty, and obedience) and community life. Inculturation is an expression of a genuine encounter between faith and the culture of the African people; despite the challenges, he asserts that there are many opportunities that this encounter promises and will hopefully be welcome.*

Finally, the reader will find, in this volume, the recent document of the Conference of Major Superiors in Nigeria (CMSN[Men]) and the Nigeria Conference of Women Religious (NCWR), titled: “*Policy on Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria*”. The new norms serve to strengthen the measures of accountability, reporting, and prevention of the sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons, as well as those perpetrated through abuse of authority. They reflect the commitment of both Conferences to protect minors and vulnerable persons in a transparent, accountable and responsible manner.

Enjoy reading, and spread the word! Wake up the world!

Oseni Ogunu, OMV

Editor-in-Chief, TCV Africa

www.tcv africa.org

Focus

The Contribution of Inculturated Consecrated Life to the Deepening of Christian Faith and Fidelity to Vocations

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Pontifical Urban University, Rome, Vatican.

Abstract

As against the current situation in some places like Europe where the dwindling of vocations to Consecrated Life, is contributing to a notable disturbing fourfold loss - the loss of appreciation of the divine gift of vocation to the Consecrated Life, the loss of zeal for the consecrated life, the loss of joy in living the consecrated life, and the loss of fidelity and perseverance in the four major structures for living out the Consecrated Life, namely in the Monasteries, in the Religious Institutes of Consecrated Life, in the Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, and in the Societies of Apostolic Life, the current situation in Africa where the vocations to the Consecrated Life are rather blossoming, flourishing, on steady increase, it is rightly being hoped that the Church in Africa will contribute to further promoting and safeguarding the gift of fidelity and joy of perseverance in Religious and Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, in Societies of Apostolic Life and in Monasteries.

¹John Okoro Egbulefu, born 1950 in Ohuru-Aba Nigeria is a religious Priest and catholic Theologian (Peritus at the General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the priestly formation in the present day circumstances, Rome 1990; Consultor to the Pontifical Council for the Dialogue with Non-Believers, Rome 1992; Peritus at the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the Evangelizing Church of Christ in Africa, Rome 1994; Member of the International Historico-Theological Commission 1995-2000; Delegate President for the first Synod of the Diocese of Aba on the Identity of the Christian, 2001), Emeritus Professor of Dogmatic Theology at the Pontifical Urban University Rome for thirty years (1989-2020); the Innovator of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology, and the Father of the Theodemocratic System of Government; the Founder of the priestly Congregation of Christ the Emmanuel (CCE), and the Father of the Emmanuelite Rite of Chanted Adoration. His bibliography includes over sixty published scientific essays on God and the Universe, Man and the society, Faith and Reason, Religion and Science, the Government and politics, the Church and the Sacraments, Death and the life after death. His musical compositions include thirty-nine Latin, three English and three Igbo hymns for the Celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrament and the Adoration of God in the Blessed Sacrament.

It is being encouraged that the departures that members are making in some regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal, socio-cultural, or socio-economic nature, which they encounter in the process of living out the consecrated life in these structures should be taken by the faithful members not as a discouragement to them but rather as an opportunity for them to be thankful to God and to help each vulnerable fellow member join their enjoyed active collaboration with the Holy Spirit in His work of sustaining and safeguarding the vocations and the fidelity and perseverance of members, young or elderly, to the vocations, especially in the face of sensitive situations. Hence the general theme of the current edition, Volume 21, No.1, January 2024, of *The Catholic Voyage: African Journal of Consecrated Life* (TCV-Africa) reads: “Inculturated Consecrated Life and the Growth of Vocations: Promoting and Safeguarding the Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance”.

By so doing, the Godthanking consecrated men and women coming from the African Culture who are Godfaithfully and joyfully living the africanly inculturated Consecrated Life would have contributed greatly to the promotion, growth and safeguarding of the divine gift of Vocations and Fidelity to, and of Joy in, the Consecrated Life as well as of the Perseverance in living it out in the Institutes, Societies and Monasteries. And with such contribution a shining example from the Church in Africa would have been given as witness to how inculturated Consecrated Life can contribute to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations in the universal Church and contemporary society.

Hence the proper sub-theme that the present essay would be exploring in the following reflections is this: “The contribution of inculturated Consecrated Life to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations”. The essay is thus in four parts. The first part, dealing with the principle, presents the essence of Consecrated Life and the Christbased structure of the africanly Inculturated Consecrated Life. The second part, dealing with the practice as the application of the principle, presents the functioning of the africanly Inculturated Consecrated Life.

The third part, dealing with the problem as the deviation of the practice from the principles, presents the issue of the departures or exits that members are making in some regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal or socio-cultural, or socio-economic, nature, that they encounter in the effort to live out the Consecrated Life in the institutes.

The fourth and final part proposes some solutions to the problems partly in the light of the general theory of problem-solution laid out by the author of the present essay

in one of his earlier writings: “About Problems”, in: *Encounter: A Journal of Life and Religion*. Rome 1992, Vol. I. Nr.1, pp. 21-24), and partly in the light of the solution proposed by him to the present day problems of the developing young Church of Christ in the Africa in another of his earlier writings: “The Church in Africa towards the Third Millennium. The Present problems of the young African Church as the occasion for the Synod”, in: *Omnis Terra*, nr. 211, 24th year September-October 1990, Rome, pp. 413-424; also in Italian, in: *Ecclesia Mater*, Roma, 2, maggio-agosto 1990, anno XXVIII, pp. 97-112.

Introduction

1. As against the current situation in some places like Europe where the dwindling of *vocations to Consecrated Life*, is contributing to a notable disturbing *fourfold loss - the loss of appreciation of the divine gift of vocation to the Consecrated life, the loss of zeal for the consecrated life, the loss of joy in living the consecrated life, and the loss of fidelity and perseverance in the four major structures for living out the Consecrated Life, namely in the Monasteries, in the Religious Institutes of Consecrated Life, in the Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, and in the Societies of Apostolic Life*, the current situation in Africa where the vocations to the Consecrated Life are rather blossoming, flourishing, on steady increase it is rightly being hoped that *the Church in Africa will contribute to further promoting and safeguarding the gift of fidelity and joy of perseverance in Religious and Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, in Societies of Apostolic Life and in Monasteries.*

*It is being encouraged that the departures that members are making in some regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal or socio-cultural, or socio-economic, nature, that they encounter in the process of living out the consecrated life in the institutes should be taken by the Faithful members not as a discouragement to them but rather than as an opportunity for them to be thankful to God and to help each vulnerable fellow member join their enjoyed active collaboration with the Holy Spirit in His work of sustaining and safeguarding the vocations and the fidelity and perseverance of members, young or elderly, to the vocations, especially in the face of sensitive situations. [Hence the general theme of the current edition, Volume 21, No.1, January 2024, of *The Catholic Voyage: African Journal of Consecrated Life* (TCV-Africa) reads “*Inculturated Consecrated Life and the Growth of Vocations: Promoting and Safeguarding the Gift of Fidelity, the Joy of Perseverance*”]*

2. By so doing the Godthanking consecrated men and women coming from the African Culture who are Godfaithfully and joyfully living the africanly inculturated Consecrated Life would have contributed greatly to the promotion, growth and Safeguarding of the divine gift of Vocations and Fidelity to and of Joy in the Consecrated Life as well as of the Perseverance in living it out in the Institutes, Societies and Monasteries.

3. And with such contribution a shining example from the Church in Africa would have been given as witness to how inculturated Consecrated Life can contribute to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations in the universal Church and contemporary society. [Hence the sub-theme that the present essay would be exploring in the following reflections: “The contribution of inculturated Consecrated Life to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations”.

4. The essay is thus in four parts:

(4a) The first part, dealing with *the principles*, presents : Inculturated Consecrated Life both as an object and as an event based on the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ the Godman; Christ the incarnate Word as Godman on whom the Consecrated Life is based and modelled to be an authentic Christian life; and the africanly Inculturated Consecrated Life that is based and modelled on Christ the incarnate Son of God.

(4b) The second part, dealing with *the practices* as the application of the principles in concrete situations, presents : the acts constituting the practice of the Consecrated Life; the procedure of the practice of the Consecrated Life (containing all the other four - namely spiritual, religious, communitarian and missionary - components of the full Christian life that are born from it and which only together with it constitute the full Christian Life) from the religiosity innate in Man; and the Christbased justification of contents of the practice of the Consecrated Life.

(4c) The third part, dealing with *the problems* arising as the discrepancy between the principles and their practices due to the deviation of the practices from the principles, presents the issue of the departures or exits of members in diverse regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal or social (socio-cultural, or socio-economic, or socio-political)

nature which they encounter in the effort to live out the Consecrated Life in the Monasteries, in Religious and Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life and in Societies of Apostolic Life, under five centers of gravity;

- the problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred;
- the problems resulting from deviation from the divine Will done by the eternal Word in the womb of the Virgin;
- the problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the divine Life lived by the eternal Word in the incarnate Word;
- the problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the divine Word living the divine life and doing the divine Will; and
- the problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the triune God and His Trinity.

(4d) The fourth as the final part proposes *some solutions to the problems* partly in the light of the general theory of problem-solution laid out by the author of the present essay in one of his earlier writings: “About Problems”, in: *Encounter: A Journal of Life and Religion*. Rome 1992, Vol. I. Nr.1, pp. 21-24), and partly in the light of the solutions proposed by him to the present day problems of the developing young Church of Christ in the Africa in another of his earlier writings: “The Church in Africa towards the Third Millennium. The Present problems of the young African Church as the occasion for the Synod,” in: *Omnis Terra*, nr. 211, 24th year September-October 1990, Rome, pp. 413-424; also in Italian, in: *Ecclesia Mater*, Roma, 2, maggio-agosto 1990, anno XXVIII, pp. 97-112.

Part 1: The Principles

Inculturated Consecrated Life both as an object and as an event based on the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ the Godman; Christ the incarnate Word as Godman on whom the Consecrated Life is based and modelled to be an authentic Christian life; the africanly Inculturated Consecrated Life that is based and modelled on Christ the incarnate Son of God.

1.1 *Inculturated Consecrated Life both as an object and as an event based on the incarnate Son of God, Jesus Christ the Godman*

1.1.1 Inculturated Consecrated Life as a thing in the form of an object presupposes five things:

- (a) the divine Vocation to the consecrated Life, a vocation that has a divine-human structure based and modelled on the union of the divine Word (living the divine life and doing the divine Will of the Father in the womb of the Virgin Mary) and the mortal human body in the incarnate Word as Godman,
- (b) the Formation of the human person divinely called to live the consecrated Life, a formation that has a divine-human structure based and modelled on the union of the divine Will (of the Father done by the divine Word in the womb of the Virgin) and the immortal human spirit in the incarnate Word as Godman;
- (c) the religious Profession of the vows as promise made to God by the human person called and formed to live the consecrated Life, a profession that has a divine-human structure based and modelled on the union of the divine life (lived by the divine Word) and the mortal human body in the incarnate Word as Godman;
- (d) an Apostolate of the consecrated persons, an Apostolate that has a triadic structure based and modelled on the triadic salvific Mission of the incarnate Word Jesus Christ as Godman (His mission to accomplish the spiritual salvation of humans through His paschal mysteries as mysteries of His two passages comprising His sorrowful passage from His suffering, through His death on the Cross, to His burial in the tomb, and His glorious passage from His resurrection from the dead, through His Ascension into heaven, to His obtaining from the Father the sending and

descent of the Holy Spirit upon His faithful and obedient Apostles and into their Assembly to united with them to form the Church; His mission to accomplish the moral salvation of humans through His proclamation - preaching and teaching to humans - of the Name and the Kingdom and the Will of God; and iii) His mission to accomplish the material salvation of humans through His miracles of physical and psychical healing on human individuals and of raising individual from the dead as miracles for the well-being of the individual, and His miracles on things for the social welfare of the human collectiveness and embracing the socio-cultural miracles like the multiplication of bread and fish as food to feed the hungry and the change of water into wine to cheer the human heart, exhilarate the human spirit and enkindle joy in the human soul, the socio-political miracles like the silencing of the violent forces of nature, as in His calming the tempest on a high Sea to prevent the drowning of the ship and inmates on the ship travelling on the waters from sinking and getting drowned, and His suspending the law of the gravitational pull of the earth to enable Him and Peter walk on the waters without sinking and getting drowned, and the socio-economic miracle of invoking money into the mouth of the fish and getting it brought out and be used to pay tribute to Caesar as tax to the Government);

- (e) the Structures within which to live out the Consecrated life, structures the aggregate of which has a trinitarian structure as it comprises on the one hand (in correspondence to the one and indivisible divine essence that is united with the three persons in one God to constitute the divine Trinity) the Monastery and, on the other hand (in correspondence to the three persons in one God who unite with the one and indivisible divine essence to constitute, only together with it, the divine Trinity) the Religious Institutes of Consecrated Life, the Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life, and the Societies of Apostolic Life, a trinitarianly structured aggregate based and modelled on the trinitarianly structured aggregate of the Institutions called into existence by Christ for the prolongation of His missionary salvific activities on earth and comprising, on the one hand (in correspondence to the one and indivisible divine essence that is united with the three persons in one God to constitute the divine Trinity), one collective person called the Church (as the unity resulting from the union of one single divine Person, namely the Holy Spirit, and many human persons, namely the Apostles of Christ as His Faithful and the disciples

of Christ as those who through the preaching and teachings of the Apostles have joined the Community of the Christfaithful People as the new people of God called the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church of Christ) and, on the other hand (in correspondence to the three persons in one God who unite with the one and indivisible divine essence to constitute only together with it the divine Trinity) three things: i) the Sacraments instituted by Christ for the prolongation of the spiritual salvation He accomplished through His paschal mysteries; ii) the Commandments of love of one another and of peace with one another among His Faithful and of their exercise of perfect charity, doing both material and corporal works of mercy to both the good as the just and the bad as the unjust persons (commandments instituted by Christ for the prolongation of the moral salvation He accomplished through His proclamation - preaching and teaching to humans - of the Name and the Kingdom and the Will of God), and iii) the Christian Theological Technoscience instituted by Christ for the prolongation of the material salvation accomplished by Him through His miracles.

1.1.2 Inculturated Consecrated Life as an event is that life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred which is instituted by the Church for men and women in the Church and based and modelled on the incarnate Word and stretches (i) from the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the positive level of sacredness, namely to the divine Will that the Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word for the Salvation of humans, a Will done in the womb of the Virgin by the eternal Word, through (ii) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the comparative level of sacredness, namely to the divine Life lived by the eternal Word as the incarnate Word, to (iii) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a person that is sacred at the relatively superlative level of sacredness, namely to the Word of God as the only person through the concentration on, and dedication to, whom the Godbelieving Christfaithful comes to the collective person that is sacred at the absolutely superlative level of sacredness, namely to the God of whom the eternal Word is one of the constituents, the God who is Spirit, Light, Love, and Goodness itself in person, the God who is triune and whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity, the God that has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependency of all creatures on the Creator, the God who created Man in His image and resemblance and to whom Man has to bind himself for Man to remain alive (like the fish must

bind itself to water - enter into and remain in the water and let water enter into it and remain in it - for it to be alive), whereby in the union of God's binding of Man to God in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive consists the religiosity innate (inborn) in Man.

1.2 Christ the incarnate Word as Godman on whom the inculturated Consecrated Life is based and modeled to be an authentic Christian life.

1.2.1 In Christ, the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, true God and true Man in one person, there is a trinitarianly structured aggregate of theandric, i.e. divine-human, unions that underlie and inspire and sustain the teamwork or work-together, live-together, act-together of the true God and the true Man in Him.

- a. On the one hand (in correspondence to the one and indivisible name of God as the only one ineffable thing with which the three nameable persons in the numerically one God, namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, are united to constitute only with it together the structurally triune God and the trinity of the triune God, the divine Trinity) is the only one hypostatic theandric union, namely the union of the divine, hence eternal, Word as uncreated, hence supernatural, person, hypostasis, that has neither a beginning nor an end, with the human spirit as a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end, a union effected by the adherence of the human spirit to the divine Word (not vice versa).
- b. On the other hand (in correspondence to the three nameable persons in one God, namely the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) are the three diverse immediate non-hypostatic theandric unions comprising:
 - (i) the immediate theandric union of 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural, thing (non-person, non-hypostasis) that has no beginning but has an end (namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being - or has been - fulfilled or accomplished)' with 'the human body as a created mortal thing that has both a beginning and an end, a union effected by the adherence of the divine Will to the human body, not vice versa (in correspondence to the Father as the first of the three persons in the numerically one God);

- (ii) the X-shaped (i.e. cross-shaped, or staurological - cf. Greek 'stauros', meaning 'cross', hence transversal, not tangentially adherent) theandric union of 'the human spirit as a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end' and 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural, thing that has no beginning but has an end namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being - or has been - fulfilled or accomplished' union effected through their traversing or crossing one another at a point within, and at the center of, the space between the divine Word and the human body as between two vertically parallel lines that the divine Will and the human spirit like two oblique lines are uniting together (in correspondence to the Son as the second of the three persons in the numerically one God);
- (iii) the union of 'the divine, hence eternal, Life as uncreated, hence supernatural, thing (non-person, non hypostasis) that has neither a beginning nor an end' with 'the human soul as a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end', a union effected by the adherence to, and participation in, the divine life by the human soul and the penetration and permeation and divinization, but not deification, of the human soul by the divine life (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as the third of the three persons in the numerically one God), an immediate Theandric union from which derive two mediated theandric unions:
- the mediated hypostatic union of the human soul with the divine Word as a person (hypostasis) through the divine life with which both the divine Word and the human soul are united (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit proceeding from the Father), and
 - the mediated non-hypostatic union of 'the human soul' with 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural, thing that has no beginning but has an end namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being - or has been - fulfilled or accomplished' through 'the divine life with which both the human soul and the divine Will are united' (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit proceeding from the Son).

1.2.2 In other words, The way the Holy Spirit united the eternal Word with the human flesh is by uniting the eternal Word (as an uncreated person that has neither a beginning nor an end) and the human body (as a created thing that has both a beginning and an end):

- (a) through the human spirit (as a created thing that has a beginning but no end) by joining where the human body and the human spirit contained in the human body have a beginning to where the eternal Word and the human spirit have no end (in correspondence to the Father as the first of the three persons in the numerically one God),
- (b) through 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural, thing that has no beginning but has an end namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being - or has been - fulfilled or accomplished' by joining where the divine Word and the divine Will have no beginning to where the human body has an end (in correspondence to the Son as the second of the three persons in the numerically one God),
- © through joining the human soul to the divine Life (as a thing, a non-person, non-hypostasis) and joining the divine Life to the human soul, giving rise thereby to the immediate and fusional non-hypostatic theandric (i.e. divine-human) union of the divine Life as of a thing (non-person) with the human soul, i.e. the union of the divine, hence eternal, Life as uncreated, hence supernatural, thing (non-person) which has neither a beginning nor an end, with the human soul, a union deepened by the adherence to, and participation in, the divine life by the human soul and the penetration and permeation and divinization, but not deification, of the human soul by the divine Life (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as the third of the three persons in the one and triune God), an immediate union from which results two mediated theandric unions or which gives rise thereby to two mediated theandric unions: 3a) the mediated hypostatic union of the human soul with the divine Word as a person (hypostasis) through the divine life with which both the divine Word and the human soul are united (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as Spirit proceeding from the Father) and 3b) the mediated non-hypostatic union of 'the human soul' with 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural,

thing that has no beginning but has an end namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being - or has been - fulfilled or accomplished' through 'the divine life with which both the human soul and the divine Will are united' (in correspondence to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit proceeding from the Son).

1.2.3 Furthermore, in correspondence to this trinitarian structure of the aggregate of the theandric unions in Christ, Christ instituted certain salvific realities the aggregate of which is trinitarianly structured:

- (a) On the one hand, in correspondence to the only one hypostatic theandric union, namely the union of 'the divine, hence eternal, Word as uncreated, hence supernatural, person (hypostasis) that has neither a beginning nor an end' with 'the human spirit as a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end, a union effected by the adherence of the human spirit to the divine Word (not vice versa)', Christ has instituted His one, holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.
- (b) On the other hand are the three immediate diverse non-hypostatic theandric unions. In correspondence to these three immediate diverse non-hypostatic theandric unions, Christ instituted three salvific things.
 - (i) In correspondence to the immediate theandric union of 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption and salvation of humans, a Will that is an uncreated, hence supernatural, thing that has no beginning but has an end, namely there in the act of incarnation where it, this divine Will of the Father, is being, or has been, fulfilled or accomplished' with 'the human body as a created mortal thing that has both a beginning and an end, a union effected by the adherence of the divine Will to the human body, not vice versa' (which corresponds to the Father as the first of the three persons in the one and triune God), Christ instituted the Commandments of love for one another, of peace with one another, and of perfection in charitable works as means for the Church's work of prolonging to all the nations and generations the moral Goods which He procured for the spiritual salvation of humans through His proclamation - preaching and teaching - of the Word of God about the Kingdom of God as the Reign of the virtues of justice, peace from justice, and joy from peace brought by the Holy Spirit and which Christ accomplished that has happily arrived in

His person and the entry into which Kingdom had become accessible to everyone that believes in Him.

- (ii). In correspondence to the immediate non hypostatic union of 'the divine, hence eternal, Life as uncreated, hence supernatural, thing that has neither a beginning nor an end' with 'the human soul as with a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end, a union effected by the adherence to, and participation in, the divine life by the human soul and the penetration and permeation and divinization, but not deification, of the human soul by the divine life -(which corresponds to the Holy Spirit as the third of the three persons in the numerically one God), Christ instituted ***His seven Sacraments*** as means for the Church's work of prolonging to all the nations and generations the spiritual goods which He through His paschal mysteries procured for the spiritual salvation of humans.
- (iii). In Correspondence to the immediate X-shaped (or staurological. - i.e. cross-shaped, cf. Greek 'stauros', meaning 'cross', hence transversal, not tangentially adherent - theandric union of the divine Will and the human spirit, a union effected through their traversing or crossing one another at a point within, and at the center of, the space between the divine Word and the human body as between two vertically parallel lines that the divine Will and the human spirit are uniting together (which corresponds to the Son as the second of the three persons in the numerically one God), Christ instituted *Christian Theological Technoscience* as the union of *Christian theological Science* and *Christian theological Technology*, in so far as Technoscience is the union of Science and Technology. And as long as Science as thing in the form of an object is constituted by Research, Teaching and Study and learning from a Master, an authoritative and exemplary teacher, but Christ the Master has instituted theological Research (“Ask, and it will be given to you; *search, and you will find*; knock, and the door will be opened to you. For the one who asks always receives; the one who searches always finds; the one who knocks will always have the door opened to him” Mt 7:7-8), and instituted theological Teaching (“Go, therefore, *make disciples of all the nations*, baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and *teach them to observe all the commands* I gave you .And know that I am with you always; yes, to the end of time” Mt 28:19-20), and

instituted theological Study as learning from a Master as authoritative and exemplary teacher (“Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest, shoulder my yoke and *learn from me*, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light” Mt. 11:28-30), but to institute means to speak an imperative word followed by a promissory word as in the above statements of Christ, it follows that Christ has instituted the Christian theological Science.

Technology is the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of the Technical Sciences to defend and promote the well-being in mind and body of the human individual and the social welfare, particularly socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness (family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdoms), but Christ has through His miracles on human individuals brought forth material goods like physical and psychological healing and waking up dead individuals that have been applied for the material wellbeing of human individuals and through His miracles on things brought forth material goods that have been applied for the social, particularly socio-cultural, socio-economic, socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness (family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdoms), it follows that Christ has accomplished and hence instituted Christian Theological Technology as the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of Technical Theology as the Christian technical Science and as the fourth of the four species of the Christian Theology (the scientific, mystical, practical and technical theologies) which Christ has instituted as means for the Church's work of prolonging to all the nations and generations the material goods which He through His miracles on the individual human being (miracles of physical and psychological healing, and waking up the dead) and miracles for the good of the collective human person, the social miracles (embracing the socio-cultural miracles as those involving the means of feeding like bread and fish to be multiplied and water to be changed into wine to cheer the heart, exhilarate the spirit and enkindle joy in the soul, the socio-economical miracles like that of invoking fiscal cash into the mouth of a fish and bringing it out from there for the payment of tribute to Caesar or tax to the Government or to settle expenses , and socio-political miracles like those of hushing the violent forces of nature like the tempest at the high Sea or suspending the law of the gravitational pull of the earth to

enable Him and Peter walk on the waters without sinking down and getting drowned) through all of which miracles Christ accomplished the material salvation of humans.

1.2.4 There are three diverse structures in which the Son of God, and hence the Word of God as one of the three constitutive elements of the Son of God, is involved: the pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator; the incarnational theandric structure of the incarnate Word Jesus Christ the Godman; and the post-incarnational Trinitarian-theandric structure of the God of salvation.

- (a). The pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator is that single unit the unity of which exists out of the eternal and, hence, indissoluble, union and, hence, inseparability, of 1) the triad of persons that there are in the numerically one God and who are called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and 2) the one and indivisible ineffable divine thing that is the substance of God (divine substance consisting in that all-embracing power which embraces all the three most powerful powers that can exist - namely the power to do all good things and to do each well at the absolutely superlative level of its being well done, the power never to do any evil nor to make any mistake, and the power to overview, overpower, overthrow, overcome, and eliminate any evil - and is constituted by the unity existing out of the nature of God, divine nature consisting in the union of all the attributes that derive from the essence of God, divine essence consisting in God's being the first and the last Being, from which derive the divine attributes like the fact, act and state, of God's existing by Himself, His being absolute, the fullness of goodness, eternal, immense or immeasurable, all-embracing, hence omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent, holy, perfect, and mysterious.
- (b) The incarnational theandric structure of the incarnate Word Jesus Christ the Godman (as the only proper and infallibly efficient Mediator and Reconciler between God and humans, Revealer of God to humans, Redeemer of humans from the evil spirits, from the Devil and the demons, as from the enemies of God and of goodness) consists in that single unit the unity of which results from the indissoluble mediated union and, hence, inseparability, of the divine Word and the human flesh (the Word of divine nature and the flesh of human nature, the divine nature of the Word and the human nature of the flesh) effected in the womb of the immaculate Virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit through His uniting each of the three constitutive elements of the divinity of the Godman (namely first the divine Word as a person that has neither a

beginning nor an end and is living the divine life and accomplishing the divine Will of the Father for the salvation of humans, secondly the divine Life itself as a thing that has neither a beginning nor an end, and thirdly the divine Will itself as a thing that has no beginning but has an end there where it is accomplished) with each of the three constitutive elements of the humanity of the Godman (namely first the material visible and mortal human body as a created thing that has both a beginning and an end, secondly the immaterial invisible and immortal human soul as a created thing that has a beginning but no end, and thirdly the likewise immaterial and invisible and immortal human spirit contained by the body and containing the soul and therefore uniting the soul and the body).

- (c) The post-incarnational Trinitarian-theandric structure of the God of salvation is that single unit the unity of which results from the mediated union of the post-creational but pre-incarnational trinitarian structure of God the Creator with the incarnational theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, Theandros, in the one divine person of the incarnate Son of the living God, Christ Jesus, through the mediation of the eternal creative Word of God, the divine Logos, so able to unite effectively the divine Trinity and the incarnate Word because such is the Word that is a co-constituent of each of them two at the same time.

1.2.5 There are three diverse systems of unions existing in and with Christ: the system of the altogether fifteen intra-relational unions existing within the incarnate Word; the system of the only one inter-relational mediated union between the incarnate Word and the divine Trinity through the divine Word; and the system of the only one all-embracing extra-relational mediated union between the triadic humanity of the Godman and the divine Trinity through the triadic divinity of the same Godman.

- (a) The system of the altogether fifteen intra-relational theandric unions consists in the unity resulting from the union of each of the three constitutive elements of the divinity of the Godman with each of the three constitutive elements of the humanity of the same Godman.
 - I. This system is in the form of an arithmetical progression running from “six hypostatic unions existing in the form of ‘one immediate plus five mediated’ theandric unions which result from the union of the divine Word with each of the three constituents of the humanity of the Godman, through “five non-hypostatic unions” which result from the union of the

divine Life with each of the three constituents of the humanity of the Godman, and exists in the form of 'one immediate plus four mediated' unions, whereby the four exist in two by two unions', to "four non-hypostatic unions that result from the union of the divine Will with each of the three constituents of the humanity of the Godman and exists as two immediate and two mediated theandric unions".

- ii. How was the true God, that the Son of God is, made Man? (*Quomodo Deus homo factus est?*). And how was the Word made flesh? (*Quomodo Verbum caro factum est?*)

The Son of God was made made Man through the God-willed incarnation of the Word of God as one of the three dimensions of the Son that, like each of His rest two dimensions, is identical with the Son and, hence, with God. The Word was made flesh through the Holy Spirit's action of first uniting the Word-dimension of the Son of God as a Word of divine nature with the flesh of human nature taken from the immaculate womb of the Virgin Mary and then uniting the divine nature of the Word with the human nature of the flesh to give rise to the incarnate Word of God. The Holy Spirit's projecting of the Word-dimension of the Son of God to unite it with the human flesh in the moment of the incarnation to give rise to the incarnate Word is reminiscent of, and analogous to, how at creation God the Creator took a rib from the side of the male and enclosed this bone in the flesh with which He then wrapped the rib or bone and united it to form the new creature 'woman' (cf. Gen. 2:18-24).

Thus the resulting incarnate Word of God is that indivisible singular divine person the singularity (numerical oneness and hence indivisible unity and, hence, truth and truthfulness, goodness, beauty and beautifulness) of whom results from the twofold Union effected by the Holy Spirit as the Spirit both of the Father and of the Son. The first of the two unions is the union of the divine Word with the human flesh (as the Scripture says, '*Et Verbum Caro factum est*', Jo 1:14) effected by the one and indivisible Holy Spirit as by the Spirit of the inseparable Father and Son. The second of the two unions is the union of the divine nature of the Word with the human nature of the flesh (as the Magisterium teaches in the Tradition of the Church since 22nd October 451 at the Council of Chalcedony (cf. Council of Chalcedony, *De duabus naturis in Christo*, in: Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and*

Declarations on Matters of Faith and Moral, edit. Peter Huenermann, 43rd Edition, Ignatius Press, San Francisco, 2012, nn.301-302) effected by the same Holy Spirit.

(iii) And : In what consists the flesh of human nature with which the Holy Spirit has united the Word of divine nature? And in what consists the human nature of the flesh with which the same Holy Spirit has united the divine nature?

- God has created man in the image of Himself. But the image of God is such that God (being “the first and the last”, cf. Is 44:6, “the first, and also the last”, cf. Is 48:12) is the union of two contraries, i.e, two opposites that but are not opposed to one another. As a result, God has created man in such a way that the human being is a genus of two contrary - opposite but not opposed - species called male and female : “God created man in the image of himself, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them” (Gen 1:27).

Yet it is precisely the three persons in the numerically one God that have made man in the proper image and likeness of themselves. The proper image and likeness of the three persons in the numerically one God is such that only one of them, namely the Father, has no origin, while the rest two, namely the Son and the Holy Spirit, have Origin but again diversely, such that the Son originates from only the Father, while the Holy Spirit originates from the Father and the Son together. It is in such image of theirs that the three persons in the numerically one God have jointly made man: “God said 'let us make Man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves’” (Gen 1:26).

As a result, the three divine persons together made Man in such a way that Man is constituted by three things only one of which, namely the human body, is material, visible and mortal, while the rest two, namely the human soul and the human spirit, are spiritual, invisible and immortal, in similarity to the three persons in one God, only one of whom, called the Father, has no origin but is rather the Origin of all other beings that are good, while the rest two persons, called the Son and the Holy Spirit, have Origin, the Son originating only from the Father, while the Holy Spirit originates from both at the same time.

As a result, the human flesh and the human nature as well as the human person have each to be defined in terms of the three constitutive elements of the human being: body, soul and spirit (cf 1 Thes.5:23).

It is from there that the human flesh has come to be defined as consisting in that single unit the unity (oneness and, hence, trueness and goodness and beauty) of which has resulted from the mediated dissoluble union of the mortal and visible human body with the immortal and invisible human soul through the immortal and invisible human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and thus uniting the body and the soul.

It is also from there that the human nature has come to be defined as consisting in that single unit the unity (oneness and hence trueness and goodness and beauty) of which has resulted from the immediate and dissoluble union of the mortal and visible human body with the immortal and invisible human spirit contained in and by the human body.

It is also from there that the human person has come to be defined as consisting in that single unit the unity (oneness and, hence, trueness and goodness and beauty) of which has resulted from the immediate and indissoluble union of the immortal and invisible human spirit with the immortal and invisible human soul. The human person is thus different from the angelic person and from the divine person.

The human person is that created immortal human spirit that is inseparably united with the created immortal human soul because of that indissolubility of the immediate union, and hence inseparability, of the human soul and the human spirit in the human person which goes back to the indissolubility of the union, and hence inseparability, of 'life' and 'breath' in the one and indivisible 'breath of life' that God, during His creation of the human being, breathed through the nostrils into the human body, and in the unity resulting from the union of which with the human body consists the created living human being ("A flood was rising from the earth and watering all the surface of the soil. The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then he breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being" Gen 2: 6-7). And from such an understanding of the human person it becomes clear that Jesus Christ, though He was perfectly a living human being as long as He had the human nature, was not a human person. For on the one hand, the human

spirit and human soul of the true Man Jesus were separated from one another at the moment of His death on the Cross. For at His death the three components of His humanity (namely the spirit, the soul and the body, cf 1Thes 5:23) fell apart. His human spirit ascended to the Father in heaven into whose hands He had commended it (Lk 23:46; Ps 31:5). His human soul descended with the divine Word to the land of the dead as to where the Word went to proclaim the Good News of liberation to the souls of the dead imprisoned there for the debt of the sins they had committed during their life here on earth before their death. (cf. 1Pet.3: 19-20; 4: 3-6). His human body was consigned to the grave in wait for the hour of the resurrection (cf. Mt 27: 57-66), when both His human spirit returning from heaven above and His human soul returning with the Word from the land of the dead below would come to get reunited with it in the grave by the work of the Holy Spirit as of the all-uniting and life-giving Lord (*Dominus vivificans*) for the exit of the incarnate Word from the tomb, thus for the Resurrection of the Godman Jesus Christ.

And such separation from one another of the three components of the humanity of Christ showed that their union with one another was a dissoluble one. But, on the other hand, the human person is that created spirit that is inseparably united with the immortal human soul because of the indissolubility of the immediate union of the human spirit and the human soul in the human person. It follows that there is no human personhood in Jesus Christ, hence that Jesus Christ is not a human person. The separation of Christ's human spirit that ascended to the divine Father in heaven from His human soul that descended with the divine Word to the human souls in purgatory was immediate, without any mediation and any intermediary, hence it was a yawning separation. The separation of the soul from the body was, in contrast to it, rather a mediated one. For the soul and the body can be said to have been separated in the sense that, since the soul and the spirit containing it have been separated from one another, but the spirit and the body that contains it have been separated from one another, it follows that the body and the soul have been separated from one another. But the soul and the body are also not separated, and this in the sense that, since the soul remained united with the divine Word who travelled with it to the souls of the dead in purgatory, and the Word remained united with the divine Will of the Father (that His Holy One would not see corruption), and this divine Will remained united

with the human body in the tomb, it follows that the human soul remained united with the human body through the divine Will and the divine Word.

The angelic person is that created spirit that was never, is not, and shall not be, united with a soul.

A divine person is that eternal, supernatural, thus non-created, Spirit that can be united with the human soul in a mediated union that can sometimes be dissolved by man through his separation from God as long as Man is living here on earth.

- Furthermore: as long as God has created man in His image (cf Gen 1:27), such that man should be similar to God, wherefore the human should be like the divine, it follows that the human realities have to be defined (determined) in terms of the divine. Hence, as long as God has said Himself to be the First and the Last (cf Is 44:6; 48:12) and, therefore, to be He who has neither a beginning nor an end, it follows that each of the three constitutive elements of the incarnating divine Word (namely 'the divine Word Himself', 'the divine Life being lived by the Word', and 'the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made man through the incarnation of the Word for the salvation of the world, an action which the Son accomplished when the remote Will of the Father that the Word be made flesh got accomplished by the Word in His act of leaving Himself be made flesh through the all-uniting work of the Holy Spirit'), and each of the three constitutive elements of the human flesh with which the Word is to be united at the incarnation would have to be defined in terms of having or not having a beginning and of having or not having an end. And such three constitutive elements of that human flesh with which the divine Word is united at the incarnation are namely 'the human body', 'the human soul with which the body is united' and 'the human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and hence uniting the soul and the body'.

It is from there that the divine Word has come to be defined by way of description as a supernatural person (hypostasis) that has neither a beginning nor an end.

It is also from there that the divine life has come to be defined by way of description as a supernatural thing (i.e. non-person, non-hypostasis) that has neither a beginning nor an end. Likewise the divine Will (of the Father

that the Word be made flesh) has come to be defined by way of description as a supernatural thing (i.e. non-person, non-hypostasis) that has no beginning but has an end (with its accomplishment in the very act of the incarnation).

Similarly the mortal human body has come to be defined as a created thing that has both a beginning and an end, while the immortal human soul is defined as a created thing that has a beginning but no end, whereas the immortal human spirit is defined as a created thing that has a beginning but no end but that contains the soul and is contained in the body.

- (iv). Uniting the above answers to the above two questions - 1) regarding how the Spirit has effected the union of the Word of divine nature with the flesh of human nature and the union of the divine nature of the Word with the human nature of the flesh, and 2) regarding in what the human flesh and the human nature may consist - it must be said that, since the all-uniting Holy Spirit (who unites the Word of divine nature and the flesh of human nature and the divine nature of the Word with the human nature of the flesh) is God and therefore perfect and all-embracing, He acts perfectly and not partially but rather integrally, holistically, leaving no stone unturned, the Holy Spirit must unite not only a part, but the whole, of the divine Word with not only a part, but with the whole, of the human flesh, and thus must unite each of the three constitutive elements of the divine half of the incarnate Word as Godman with each of the three constitutive elements of the human half of the same Godman.

The three constituents of the divine half of the incarnate Word as Godman are namely 'the divine Word Himself, the divine Will of the Father done by the Word at the incarnation, and the divine life lived before and during and after the incarnation by the eternally living Word'. The three constituents of the human half of the incarnate Word as Godman are namely 'the human body', 'the human soul' and 'the human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and thus uniting the soul and the body'.

- Thus there is a sum-total of *six hypostatic theandric (i.e. divine-human) unions resulting from union of the divine Word* (a non-created, hence supernatural, person, hypostasis, that has no beginning and no end) with

the three constitutive elements of the human component of the incarnate Word, as Godman (Theandros), *namely with the mortal human body* (as with a created mortal thing that has a beginning and an end), *with the immortal human spirit* (as with a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end), *and with the immortal human soul* (as with another created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end). And out of these six hypostatic theandric unions, only one, namely the union of the divine Word with the human spirit, is an immediate (i.e. direct) union, while the rest five are mediated; and, among these five mediated ones, only two come from the union of the divine Word with the human soul, and such are: the mediated union of the divine Word with the human soul through the divine life, and the mediated union of the divine Word with the human soul through the human spirit, whereas the rest three of the five mediated hypostatic unions come from the union of the divine Word with the human body, and the three comprise the union of the divine Word with the human body through the spirit, the union of the divine Word with the human body through the divine Will, and the union of the divine Word with the human body through the unity resulting from the non-hypostatic union of the divine life (as a supernatural thing, non-person, non-hypostasis, that has no beginning and no end) with the immortal human soul (as with a created thing that has a beginning but no end) at the point that the divine life and the human soul have in common, namely at the point of 'having no end', the point of infinity.

- And there is a sum-total of *five non-hypostatic theandric unions resulting from the union of the divine life* (a supernatural thing, non-person, that has no beginning and no end) *with the immortal human soul* (a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end), *and with the immortal human spirit* (a created immortal thing that, like the soul, has a beginning but no end), *and with the mortal human body* (a created mortal thing that has a beginning and has an end). And of all these five non-hypostatic theandric unions, only one is immediate, namely the union of the divine life with the human soul, while the rest four of the five are mediated, whereby these four comprise, on the one hand, the two that result from the union of the divine life with the human body, and such are: the union of the divine life with the human body through the divine will, and the union of the divine life with the human body through the human soul, and, on the other hand, the two that result from the union of the

divine life with the human spirit, and such are: the union of the divine life with the human spirit through the human soul, and the union of the divine life with the human spirit through the divine Word.

- And there is a sum-total of *four non-hypostatic theandric unions resulting from the union of the divine Will of the Father* (a non-created thing that has no beginning but has an end, a will that the Word accomplishes in His act of leaving Himself be made flesh through the work of the all-uniting Holy Spirit at the incarnation) *with the immortal human soul* (a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end), *and with the immortal spirit* (a created immortal thing that, like the soul, has a beginning but no end), *and with the mortal body* (as a created mortal thing that has a beginning and has an end). And of these four non-hypostatic theandric unions, two are mediated and two are immediate. The two mediated non-hypostatic theandric unions are those of the divine Will with the human soul, and they comprise the union of the divine Will with the human soul through the divine life, and the union of the divine Will with the human soul through the human body. And of the two immediate non-hypostatic unions, the first is the union of the divine Will with the human spirit (the only union that is X-shaped and lying inside, and at the center of, the entire incarnate Word), the second is rather the union of the divine Will with the human body (and it is precisely on the basis of this union - which recaptures the truth that the will of God that His Holy One would not see corruption faithfully remained united with the dead body of the crucified - that the corpse of Jesus did not decay during those days in the tomb nor after His resurrection).

- (v). Finally, the Son was made Man for the purpose of the Son's using the flesh of human nature that the Word was made to undergo willingly the Father-willed sacrifice on the Cross for the Redemption of the humankind. Such Sacrifice consisted in the sacred twin-act of the immolation of His human body, with thorns and nails and canes and spear, and the libation of His blood that rushed out, and gushed out from, His body during its immolation. The redemption procured by Christ with His suffering and prayers and death on the Cross was the redemption of all humanity from the evil that had beset them and was hindering the already begun earthly journey of humans to heaven to meet the inviting Creator and Saviour God for the beatific vision and the eternal banquet.

(vi). *Only this system of the altogether fifteen intra-relational unions existing out of the union of each of the three constitutive elements of the divinity of the incarnate Word as Godman with each of the three constitutive elements of the humanity of the Godman is the veritable source and regulating principle of each of the Institutions that Christ has called into existence and built on Himself as on their proper foundation, on Him the Incarnate Word, on the Godman, who has willed that such institutions be instruments for the prolonging of His salvific activities to all the nations and generations and hence for the prolongation of the salvation accomplished by Him to all peoples on earth in the world.*

Such institutions that Christ has called into existence for salvific purposes towards humanity are:

- the one collective person called the Church and the three things done in and by the Church for the Christworked salvation of humans on earth :(i) the Sacraments as the efficacious signs and instruments of that spiritual salvation of humans which consists in man's intimate union with God, and Christ has instituted the Sacraments in His Church as in the sign and instrument of man's intimate union with God and of the unity of the entire humanity (the aggregate not only individually of the body and the soul and the spirit but also socially of male and female); they are instituted by Christ in the Church to enable the Church use them to accomplish her Christ-given missionary task of prolonging the spiritual salvation of humans which Christ has accomplished through His paschal mysteries as mysteries of His passages: His dolorous passage from His suffering, through His death on the Cross, to His burial in the tomb' and His glorious passage from His resurrection, through His ascension into heaven, to His effusion of the Holy Spirit onto His faithful and into their Assembly on the Pentecost day at Jerusalem;

- the Commandments of love for one another, of peace with one another, and of perfection in doing all, both spiritual and material, charitable works to all, both to the just as good and to the unjust as bad persons; the Sacraments are instituted by Christ in the Church to enable the Church use them to accomplish her Christ-given missionary task of prolonging the moral salvation of humans which Christ has accomplished through His Proclamation - preaching and teaching to the people - of the Name and Will of God and of the Good News of the Kingdom of God as of the

reign of justice and peace and joy brought by the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 14:17);

- the Christian Theological Technoscience as the union of Christian theological Science and Christian theological Technology, whereby 3a) the Christian theological Science is the aggregate of 'Teaching about the Way (that Christ is) to Life', 'Researching about the Truth (that Christ is) as the proper Way to life', and 'Studying about the Life (that Christ is)'. 'Studying' means learning from a Master as from an authoritative and exemplary teacher, i) be it by listening to the Master and looking at Him to thereby acquire not only theoretical knowledge from Him but also practical knowledge from Him through the application of the theoretical knowledge to life as the translation of such knowledge into action, or be it by imitating Him, not only His goodness and virtues to become holy but (also and above all) precisely His operations (*operationes*, i.e. opera et actions), with the goal to appropriate His method, technique, skill, technical know-how and to use them to produce material objects as material goods with which to defend and promote the human life, to conserve it and propel its progress towards its perfection, whereas 3b) Christian theological Technology is the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of Technical Theology (as one of four components of truly Christian Theology and that presupposes the preceding three components in their logical order of succession: Practical Theology, Mystical Theology and Scientific Theology) 1) to defend and promote (propel the motion, movement, development, advancement, process till unto their perfection) the seven innate capacities in the human being as a living being (irritability as the capacity to perceive and react adequately to the perceived reality, the capacity to respire, inhale and exhale, breathe in from others and breath out to others a certain air, the capacity to make a movement, the capacity to nurture oneself, the capacity to grow, make an outward and inward expansion of oneself, expansion of oneself in body as the container-component of the reality human being and in the soul and spirit as the content-component, the capacity to reproduce oneself, and the capacity to reject and excrete, eject out of oneself the poisonous material - in liquid or solid or gaseous form - waste products of the metabolic processes going on in the body), 2) for the wellbeing of the human individual in mind and body and the social, especially the socio-cultural, socio-economic, socio-political,

welfare of the human collectiveness (family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdoms), 3) for prolonging to all nations and generations the material goods as the proper means with which Christ accomplished the material salvation of humans through His miracles (as methods) on individual human persons (namely the miracles of healing for the well-being in mind and body and of waking up from the dead of the human individual, for the well-being of the human individual) and on things (namely the miracles on bread and fish and money as matter in solid state, on water and the waters as matter in the liquid state, and on the wind as matter in gaseous state, for the social, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness (family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdoms).

- (b) *The system of the only one inter-relational union* consists in the unity resulting from the mediated indissoluble union of the entire incarnate Word as Godman, Theandros, on the one hand, and the divine Trinity on the other hand, through the eternally living creative divine Word, the eternally living divine Logos, who, by being one of the components both of the incarnate Word and - of the Son of God and hence one - of the components of the divine Trinity, is, as what the divine Trinity and the incarnate Word not only have in common but also own together, what can unite the two with one another at best to give rise to the Trinitarian-theandric structure of the God of Salvation.

Only this system of the only one inter-relational mediated union of the incarnate Word with the divine Trinity through only the eternal Word as one of the components both of the incarnate Word and of the divine Trinity justifies the claim of Christ that only Himself the incarnate Word is the Way to the Father (cf. Jn 14:6) and the claim of His Faithful 1) that Christ is the indispensable and inevitable, efficient and infallible, and only one Mediator between God and humanity: the only one Mediator of humanity's quests and requests and questions at God concerning the eternal life and of God's corresponding truths and graces and answers to humanity, the only one Bringer and Giver of the Fatherwilled Salvation to humanity and of humanity's thanks and praises to God the Father in a manner acceptable to God for the Salvation received from Him (cf. 1 Tim 2:3-6), thus 2) that Salvation comes to humans from God only through the Lord Jesus Christ (Dominus Jesus Christus).

- (c) *The system of the only one all-embracing extra-relational mediated union is the unity existing out of the mediated indissoluble union between the triadic humanity of the Godman and the divine Trinity through the triadic divinity of the same Godman - between the aggregate of the three components of the humanity of the incarnate Word as Godman Jesus Christ which are the human body, human soul and human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and thus uniting the soul and the body, on the one hand, and the divine Trinity, on the other hand, through the aggregate of the three components of the divinity of the same Godman, called the divine Word living the divine life and doing the Will of God, the divine life lived by the divine Word, and the divine Will done by the divine Word in the womb of the Virgin.*
- (i). Such a system of an extra-relational union is precisely the typical system of the salvation of Man and shows that Jesus Christ as the incarnate Word ad Godman has the salvation of Man with Him and that He, being Someone that has the Salvation of Man with Him, is in the position to give it to men (since one can give to others only what the one has, for no one can give to others what the one does not have, *nemo dat quod non habet*), only if He wants and only to whomever He chooses to give it (cf “Like the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son gives life to anyone He chooses” Jn 5:21) as to those humans that are in need of it, and that Jesus not only is in the position to do so but also does give it really to all humans since, on the one hand, He has come to do the Will of His Father and does what the Father wants and the Father wants that everyone be saved (cf 1Tim 2:4) and has sent Him to humans in the world that they may have eternal life by believing in Him and doing what He tells them, like getting baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (cf. Mk 16:16 and Mt 28:19) and eating His flesh and drinking His Blood as the flesh and blood of the Son of Man (cf Jn 6: 54) that the Son of God has become without ceasing to be Son of God, whereby in Him, in the incarnate Word of God, God became man but without ceasing to be God and has through that incarnation of the Word become the only one that is truly God and truly man at the same time and this in the one divine person of the Godman called Christ the Lord (*Christus Dominus*), the Lord Jesus (*Dominus Jesus*), Jesus the Christ (*Jesus Christus*), Christ the Emmanuel (*Christus Emmanuel*), the God with us, the God - in union with us and in love with us and in solidarity with us and engaged with us and living - thus feeling and seeing and moving and eating and drinking

and understanding and knowing and speaking and creating - with us humans.

- (ii) *Only the system of the extra-relational mediated union* of the aggregate of the three constitutive elements of the humanity of the Godman with the divine Trinity through the aggregate of the three constitutive elements of the divinity of the Godman is the veritable source and regulating principle of the three diverse salvific activities or operations of Christ.

Such three salvific activities of Christ are:

- His paschal mysteries for the spiritual salvation of humans;
- His Kerygma of the Gospel, proclamation - preaching and teaching to humans - of the Name and Will of God and of the Good News of the Kingdom of God as of the reign of the justice and, from it, of the peace and, from it, of the joy brought by the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 14:17), for the moral salvation of humans; and
- His miracles, for the material salvation of humans.

1.3 The africanly Inculturated Consecrated Life that is based and modelled on Christ the incarnate Son of God

1.3.1 'Inculturated Consecrated Life' is that single unit the unity (oneness interchangeable with the beauty and beautifulness, the trueness and truth and truthfulness, the goodness as suitability and usefulness and desirability) of which results from the union of 'Consecrated Life' and 'Culture' and must, in order to be an authentic Christian Life, be based and modeled on that unit the unity of which results from the union of 'the eternal creative Word of God' and 'the human flesh' to form 'the incarnate Word, the Godman Jesus Christ', wherefore the Inculturated Consecrated Life must have the divine-human structure of the incarnate Word on whom it is built, based and modelled.

1.3.2 The structure of incarnate Word as Godman (Theandros) on which should be based and modelled the structure of the Inculturated Consecrated Life for such Life to be authentic Christian Life is that structure which consists in the unity resulting from the union of "each of the three distinct inseparable components of the divinity of the incarnate Word as Godman (namely the trio: 'the divine Word as a divine person that has neither a beginning nor an end and thus can be represented with an irreversibly southward moving vertical line that is the shortest distance between the point where the divine Word and Life and Will have no beginning as

the line's point of departure and the point where the divine Word has no end as the line's point of arrival', 'the divine life that is lived by the divine Word and is a divine thing that has neither a beginning nor an end, and thus can be represented with an irreversibly eastward moving horizontal line that is the shortest distance between the point where the divine Word and Life and Will have no beginning as the line's point of departure and the point where the immortal human soul as a created thing that has a beginning but no end has no end as the line's point of arrival", and 'the divine Will of the Father accomplished by the Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary, namely the Father's Will that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word, hence the divine Will as a divine thing that has no beginning but has an end when and where it is fulfilled in the womb of the Virgin, and thus can be represented by an irreversibly south-eastward moving oblique line that is the shortest distance between the point that represents where the divine Word and Will and Life have no beginning as the line's point of departure and the point representing where the mortal human body as a created thing that has both a beginning and an end has an end as the line's point of arrival')” with “each of the three constituents of the human half of the incarnate Word as Godman (namely 'the human body as a created and mortal thing that has both a beginning and an end and that thus can be represented with an irreversibly southward moving vertical line as the shortest distance between the point representing where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning as the line's point of departure and the point representing where the body has an end as the line's point of arrival, hence a line that stands in a vertically parallel relation to the divine Word as to an uncreated supernatural person that has neither a beginning nor an end', 'the immortal human spirit as a created thing that has a beginning but no end and that thus can be represented with an irreversibly south-westward moving oblique line that is the shortest distance between the point that represents where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning as its point of departure and the point representing where the divine Word as a person that has neither a beginning nor an end has no end as the line's point of arrival', and 'the human soul as a created and immortal thing that has a beginning but no end and that thus can be represented with an irreversibly westward moving horizontal line that is the shortest distance between the point that represents where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning as the line's point of departure and the point representing where the divine Life as a thing that has neither a beginning nor an end has no end as the line's point of arrival').

1.3.3 'The Consecrated Life' - with which "Culture" is to be united to constitute Inculturated Consecrated Life at the model of the union of 'the eternal Word of God' with 'the human flesh' to form 'the incarnate Word of God' - is that life lived by those who believe in God and believe in Christ, trusting in God still, in spite of all odds, and trusting in Christ (cf. Jn 14:2), which is essentially the 1) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the positive level of sacredness, namely to the divine Will that the Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word for the Salvation of humans, a Will done in the womb of the Virgin by the eternal Word, 2) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the comparative level of sacredness, namely to the divine Life lived by the eternal Word as the incarnate Word, 3) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a person that is sacred at the relatively superlative level of sacredness, namely to the Word of God as the only person through the concentration on, and dedication to, whom the Godbelieving Christfaithful comes to the collective person that is sacred at the absolutely superlative level of sacredness, namely to the God of whom the eternal Word is one of the constituents, the God who is Spirit, Light, Love, and Goodness itself in person, the God who is triune and whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity, the God that has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependency of all creatures on the Creator, the God who created Man in His image and resemblance and to whom Man has to bind himself for Man to remain alive (like the fish must bind itself to water - enter into and remain in the water and let water enter into it and remain in it - for it to be alive), whereby in the union of God's binding of Man to God in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive consists the religiosity innate (inborn) in Man.

'The Consecrated Life' - with which 'Culture' is to be united to form 'the Inculturated Consecrated Life' - takes within 'the Inculturated Consecrated Life' the place and role that the divine Word (that is living the divine life and doing the divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary) has within the incarnate Word.

1.3.4 'Culture' - with which 'the Consecrated Life' is to be united to form 'the Inculturated Consecrated Life' at the model of the union of 'the eternal Word of God' with 'the human flesh' to form 'the incarnate Word of God' - corresponds to 'the human flesh in the incarnate Word (the human flesh as the aggregate of the three components of the human being: the visible and mortal human body, the

invisible and immortal human soul, and the invisible and immortal human spirit contained in the mortal body and containing the immortal soul and thus uniting the immortal soul and the mortal body).

- (a). And such Culture with which the Consecrated Life is required to be united to form the Inculturated Consecrated Life like the divine Word is united with the human flesh to form the incarnate Word may be one of the following three species of culture : 1) the culture of the people (the popular culture, e.g. the ethnic or tribal cultures, like the Igbo culture, the Yoruba culture, or the culture of the African peoples in general, the popular African culture etc.), 2) the culture of the place (the local culture, e.g. the national culture, like the Nigerian culture, or the continental culture, like the local African culture, the local European culture, etc), and 3) the culture of the time world wide (the contemporary global culture, e.g. the technoscientific culture as our present day's global culture, the contemporary 21st century global culture).
- (b). Thus 'Culture' - with which 'the Consecrated Life' is to be united to form "the Inculturated Consecrated Life" - takes within 'the Inculturated Consecrated Life' the place and role that the human flesh has within the incarnate Word (the human flesh as that single unit the unity of which results from the union of the mortal and visible human body and the immortal and invisible human soul by the immortal and invisible human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and hence uniting the soul and the body).
- (c). When the proper culture with which the Consecrated Life is to be united to form the inculturated Consecrated Life (at the model of the union of the human flesh with the divine Word to form the incarnate Word as Salvation-bringer, in order to be an authentic Christian Life) is 'the local culture of Nigeria or of Africa', or 'the popular culture of the Igbos or of the Yorubas, or of the African peoples in general', or 'the contemporary global technoscientific culture', what is formed out of such a union is that inculturated Consecrated Life which is called 'the local Innigeriaculturate or Inafricaculturate Consecrated Life', or 'the popular inigboculturate or inyorubaculturate or inafricanculturate Consecrated Life', or 'the contemporary global Intechnoscientific Consecrated Life', respectively.
- (d). The culture of the people of Igboland as the popular culture of the Igbos,

the culture of the people of Yorubaland as the popular culture of the Yorubas, the culture of the African peoples in general as the popular culture of the Africans in general which comprise objects and events and are characterized by intra-cultural constants and variables, and inter-cultural similarities and dissimilarities, exist as a thing in the form of an object resulting from an ongoing event of the people's 1) cultivation of transcendental values (like beauty and beautifulness, goodness, truth and truthfulness, oneness and unity, freedom and holiness), 2) cultivation of talents (like wisdom, creativity and productivity as against unproductiveness, singing or playing or dancing Music, elegance, humour, cheerfulness, hilarity and liveliness), and 3) cultivation of virtues (like 'attentiveness to the supernatural, religiosity, spirituality, prayerfulness'; 'patriotism, respect and honour to parents and elders, fraternity and mutual solidarity'; 'charitableness, friendliness to others, hospitality to guests', 'responsibility as against irresponsibility, industriousness or hard work as against laziness).

- (e). These three major good things that are being cultivated in the Igboland by the Igbo people, in Yorubaland by the Yoruba people, in Africa by the African peoples in general, into a culture that the people can call their own - namely 'the transcendental values', 'the individual talents' and 'the virtues in general' - unite together with 'man's creativity by which man resembles God his Creator who created him in the image of Himself the Creator' to constitute 'that trinity of the human dignity which reflects - however only to the comparative degree - the trinity of the triune God, the divine Trinity'.

1.3.5. To the aggregate of the three components of the divine half of the incarnate Word as Godman : 'the eternal Word of God', 'the divine life lived by the eternal Word', and 'the divine Will of the Father done by the divine Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary', corresponds the aggregate of the three components of the Consecrated Life as that life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred which is instituted by the Church for men and women in the Church and based and modelled on the incarnate Word: 1) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the positive level of sacredness, namely to the divine Will that the Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word for the Salvation of humans, a Will done in the womb of the Virgin by the eternal Word, 2) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is

sacred at the comparative level of sacredness, namely to the divine Life lived by the eternal Word as the incarnate Word, 3) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a person that is sacred at the relatively superlative level of sacredness, namely to the Word of God as the only person through the concentration on, and dedication to, whom the Godbelieving Christfaithful comes to the collective person that is sacred at the absolutely superlative level of sacredness, namely to the God of whom the eternal Word is one of the constituents, the God who is Spirit, Light, Love, and Goodness itself in person, the God who is triune and whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity, the God that has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependency of all creatures on the Creator, the God who created Man in His image and resemblance and to whom Man has to bind himself for Man to remain alive (like the fish must bind itself to water - enter into and remain in the water and let water enter into it and remain in it - for it to be alive), whereby in the union of God's binding of Man to God in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive consists the religiosity innate (inborn) in Man.

1.3.6. To the aggregate of the three components of the human half of the incarnate Word as Godman: the mortal and visible human body, the immortal and invisible human soul, and the immortal and invisible human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and hence uniting the soul and the body, corresponds the aggregate of the three components of the popular Culture : the people's 1) cultivation of transcendental values (like beauty and beautifulness, goodness, truth and truthfulness, oneness and unity, freedom and holiness), 2) cultivation of talents (like wisdom, creativity and productivity as against unproductiveness, singing or playing or dancing Music, elegance, humour, cheerfulness, hilarity and liveliness), and 3) cultivation of virtues (like 'attentiveness to the supernatural, religiosity, spirituality, prayerfulness'; 'patriotism, respect and honour to parents and elders, fraternity and mutual solidarity'; 'charitableness, friendliness to others, hospitality to guests', 'responsibility as against irresponsibility, industriousness or hard work as against laziness).

1.3.7. In the africanly Inculturated Consecrated life the three components of the consecrated Life are united with the three components of the people's culture respectively.

- (a). In the africanly Inculturated Consecrated life the Consecrated Life as the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the

positive level of sacredness, namely to the divine Will that the Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word for the Salvation of humans, a Will done in the womb of the Virgin by the eternal Word, is united with the people's cultivation of virtues like 'attentiveness to the supernatural, religiosity, spirituality, prayerfulness'; 'patriotism, respect and honour to parents and elders, fraternity and mutual solidarity'; 'charitableness, friendliness to others, hospitality to guests', 'responsibility as against irresponsibility, industriousness or hard work as against laziness.

- (b). In the africanly Inculturated Consecrated life the Consecrated Life as the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred at the comparative level of sacredness, namely to the divine Life lived by the eternal Word as the incarnate Word, is united with the people's cultivation of talents like wisdom, creativity and productivity as against unproductiveness, singing or playing or dancing Music, elegance, humour, cheerfulness, hilarity and liveliness.
- (c). In the africanly Inculturated Consecrated life the people's cultivation of transcendental values like beauty and beautifulness, goodness, truth and truthfulness, oneness and unity, freedom and holiness is united with the Consecrated Life as the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a person that is sacred at the relatively superlative level of sacredness, namely to the Word of God as the only person through the concentration on, and dedication to, whom the Godbelieving Christfaithful comes to the collective person that is sacred at the absolutely superlative level of sacredness, namely to the God of whom the eternal Word is one of the constituents, the God who is Spirit, Light, Love, and Goodness itself in person, the God who is triune and whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity, the God that has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependency of all creatures on the Creator, the God who created Man in His image and resemblance and to whom Man has to bind himself for Man to remain alive (like the fish must bind itself to water - enter into and remain in the water and let water enter into it and remain in it - for it to be alive), whereby in the union of God's binding of Man to God in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive consists the religiosity innate (inborn) in Man.

Part II: THE PRACTICE (as the application of the principles in concrete situations)

A presentation of the acts constituting the practice of the Consecrated Life; the procedure of the practice of the Consecrated Life (containing all the other four - namely spiritual, religious, communitarian and missionary - components of the full Christian life that are born from it and which only together with it constitute the full Christian Life) from the religiosity innate in Man; and the Christbased justification of contents of the practice of the Consecrated Life.

2.1 The acts constituting the practice of the Consecrated Life.

Consecrated Life is that life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred which stretches from 1) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred on the positive level of sacredness, namely the divine Will that the Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word for the Salvation of humans, a Will done in the womb of the Virgin by the eternal Word, through 2) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a thing that is sacred on the comparative level of sacredness, namely the divine Life lived by the eternal Word as the incarnate Word, to 3) the Life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, a person that is sacred on the relatively superlative level of sacredness, namely the Word of God as the only person through the concentration on, and dedication to, whom the Godbelieving Christfaithful arrived at the collective person that is sacred on the absolutely superlative level of sacredness, namely at the God of whom the eternal Word is one of the constituents, the God who is Spirit, Light, Love, and Goodness itself in person, the God who is triune and whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity, the God that has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependency of all creatures on the Creator, the God who created Man in His image and resemblance and to whom Man has to bind himself for him to remain alive (like the fish must bind itself to water - enter into and remain in the water and let water enter into it and remain in it - for it to be alive), whereby in the union of God's binding of Man to God in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive consists the religiosity innate (inborn) in Man.

2.2. The procedure of the practice of the Consecrated Life from the religiosity innate in Man.(containing all the other four - namely spiritual, religious, communitarian and missionary - components of the full Christian life that are born from it and which only together with it constitute the full Christian Life)

- a. The practice of the above described Consecrated Life - the concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred - has to begin from that religiosity innate (inborn) in Man which consists in the union of God's binding of Man to His divine Self in such a way that Man remains dependent on God and Man's binding of himself to God in order to remain alive, passing through Man's binding of himself to the eternal Goodness (as Being that is suitable and useful and desirable) itself in person, to the eternal Light (as immaterial energy, cf. 1Jn 1:5), to the eternal Spirit (as intelligent living Being, cf. Jn 4:24) to the eternal Love (as selfless Life and Care for others, cf. 1 Jn 4:8.16) that God is, and to the triune God whose trinity, the divine Trinity, is the Most Holy Trinity and who has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself.
- b. *Man's binding of himself to God as to the eternal Light* gives rise to the following constituents of the Practice of the Consecrated Life : *Man's living a life characterized by:*
 - i) *the spirit-worked limpidity and purity as cause of radiance and irradiation, chastity as purity in mind and heart and body, the avoidance of impure thoughts and words and action,*
 - ii) *the enlightenment of the people and place that are in darkness of error and ignorance as part of the scientific apostolate of those living the Consecrated Life;*
 - iii) *selflessness - in the service of prolonging to humans the Grace full of which the glory of Christ the Emmanuel as the incarnate Word of God was;*
 - iv) *the communitarian life of the missionaries of Christ (the Emmanuel); 5) honesty - embracing straightforwardness, uprightness, righteousness, truthfulness (as against every crookedness), sincerity and frankness (as against every hypocrisy, simulation or feigning and deceitfulness), naturalness (as against every artificiality), trueness, authenticity (as against every untrueness) - in the service of proclaiming (preaching and teaching) to humans the truth full of which the glory of Christ the Emmanuel as the incarnate Word of God was;*

- vi) *attentiveness to both the good and the bad, the just and the unjust people, perfect charity, all-inclusiveness, catholic thinking as the all-embracing thinking;*
- vii) *the missionary outreach to all the nations of the earth;*
- viii) *dialoguing with one's contraries that are one's correlates and compatible with one for mutual complementation;*
- ix) *making those people warm and hot and fiery for what is good who have been touched by one.*

For, God is Light itself in person in whom there is no darkness at all, no obscurity, no impurity (with the consequence that the human person proceeding to live the consecrated life by binding oneself to the eternal Light that God is, is characterized by transparency, limpidity and purity, radiance and irradiation, chastity as purity in mind and heart and body, avoidance of impure thoughts and words and actions), and that shines for others and not for Himself, and who thus lives for others, lives selflessly (with the consequence that the human persons proceeding to live the consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is, are characterized by selflessness - *cf selflessness as the first and more central of the two specific Emmanuelite vows, promises to God* - selflessness in the service of prolonging that Grace full of which the glory of Christ the Emmanuel as the incarnate Word of God was), and not selfishly, and that shines by emitting rays that are sources of brightness and illumination (with the consequence that the enlightenment of the people and places that are in the darkness of ignorance and of error is that intellectual charity which is part of the apostolate of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the Consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is), and that travel in bundles (with the consequence that communitarian life is intrinsic part of the life of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the Consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is), in straight lines (with the consequence that straightforwardness, uprightness, righteousness, honesty - the avoidance of every crookedness, but rather the practice of truthfulness, the avoidance of hypocrisy and deceitfulness, but rather the practice of sincerity and frankness, the avoidance of every artificiality, but rather the practice of naturalness, the avoidance of every simulation or feigning and untruthfulness, but rather the practice of truthfulness or authenticity - are characteristic features of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the Consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is, *cf. honesty as the second and more fundamental of the two*

specific Emmanuelite vows, as promises to God - honesty in the prolongation, proclamation, preaching and teaching, of the truth full of which the glory of Christ the Emmanuel as the incarnate Word of God was, cf. the Emmanuelite intellectual apostolate of making the name of Christ known) and in all directions (with the consequence that attentiveness to both the good and the bad, the just and the unjust people, perfect charity, all-inclusiveness, catholic thinking as the all-embracing thinking, missionary outreach to all the nations of the earth, are characteristic features of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the Consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is), and making in each direction the alternating journey of going from the face of the Sun as of their common source to strike a certain object outside the source and coming back from the struck external object to the source (cf. with the consequence that dialoguing with one's contraries that are one's correlates and are compatible with one for mutual complementation' is a further characteristic feature of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the Consecrated Life by binding themselves to the Light that God is) after, through the stroke on the external object, enkindling in it, in a crescendo, warmth and heat and fire (with the consequence that making those objects warm and hot and fiery for what is good who have been touched by the one is a further characteristic feature of those missionaries who have proceeded to live the consecrated life by binding themselves to the Light that God is - cf the intellectual and pastoral parts of the Emmanuelite apostolate).

- c. *Man's binding of himself to God as to Goodness itself in person gives rise to Man's doing of perfect Charity as a further component of the Consecrated Life; and this doing of perfect Charity is the core content of the Missionary Life that is one of the constitutive elements of the Consecrated Life. For, God is Goodness itself in person in whom there is no evil, and who diffuses Himself as gift to those outside of Him who are in need of good (i.e. suitable, useful, desirable) persons and of good things in the form of good objects (embracing concrete material goods like 'food and medicine for good-health', or 'money for buying one's vital needs and paying one's debts', etc., as well as intellectual goods like 'good insights, good ideas, good words for the addressee's advance from darkness and sorrow to light and enlightenment and joy, and from there to splendour and glory'), or in the form of good events, interventions or operations (like good actions and works of mercy for the good of the human body, corporal works of mercy, and for the good of the human soul and spirit, spiritual works of mercy - hence perfect charity as thinking and saying and*

doing only good things and all kinds of good thing to all kinds of people).

- d. *Man's binding of himself to God as to the eternal Spirit* - intelligent living being - itself in person gives rise to *lively intellectual Spirituality* as one of the constituents of the Consecrated Life.

For, God is 'Spirit itself in person' in whom there is no matter and that, being (esse) an intelligent living being (ens), understands the limits of its contrary, namely the limits of matter, and considers carrying matter as carrying excess luggage, and knows that excess luggage attracts punishment and would weigh heavily on its carrier and would sooner or later lead to the tumbling and downfall of anyone carrying it while going uphill or climbing the mountain as the journey to heaven is, and that it is an unnecessary load for those going upwards to heaven, since in heaven as purely spiritual community there are no material things, for there is no need of material things there, and therefore that as much as possible those climbing the mountain of the Lord on their way to heaven should shelve themselves of matter or take as little of it with them as is necessary on the way, for beings are not to be multiplied when there is no need for more of them (*entia non sunt multiplicanda sine necessitate*).

The Spiritual Life is the life of contemporaneous detachment of the human spirit from the evil spirits that the devil and demons are and attachment of the human spirit as good spirit to the Holy Spirit (Spiritus Sanctus) that is God and that God is. In such attachment of the human as created spirit to the divine as non-created, thus eternal and supernatural, and all-creating Spirit (Spiritus Creator – cf. *Veni Creator Spiritus*) *consists the mystical half of the Spiritual life*.

In the detachment of the human as created spirit from the evil spirits that the devil and the demons are consists *the ascetical half of the Spiritual life*. These evil spirits from which the human spirit as good spirit, intelligent living being, detaches itself are those created spirits that are privy or devoid of God, and thus privy and devoid of the eternal Love, privy or devoid of the eternal Light, privy or devoid of the eternal Spirit, privy or devoid of eternal Goodness itself in person as of the sources of all goodness, and hence privy or devoid of every goodness. The detachment of the human spirit from the evil spirits is thus the act of continuous self-detachment from spirits that i) in so far as they are emptied of the eternal Spirit as of the source of what they are, are thus without identity, without substance, without essence, and ii) in so far as they are

emptied of the eternal Light as of the source of all light, are thus in darkness and darkness itself, and iii) in so far they are emptied of the eternal Love as of the source of all love are thus in hatred and hatred itself. It is thus a self-detachment from spirits that have nothing good to offer, no light to offer, no love to offer, and no spirit, i.e. intelligent living being, to offer, hence no life and no intelligence to offer, hence no understanding, no knowledge and no wisdom to offer, and from which the wise and intelligent must therefore detach, separate, withdraw and distance themselves. Yet the best way of achieving such self-distancing from the evil spirits is to invite and receive into oneself the Holy Spirit who would as shining Light emit rays that would not only, from outside the soul, 1) dispel, scatter, the darkness that the evil spirits bring with them and that hide from man the malice of sin, the humiliation of God by His own children in the presence of His enemies, the traps set and the pits dug for man on his way to God by the devil and the demons, as well as repel the evil spirits as the enemy of God to ever longer distances (cf. *Veni Creator Spiritus mentem tuorum visita, ...hostem repellas longius*), till the ultimate distance, namely till well into the abyss of the deepest ocean from where they can never come back to disturb, distract, disconnect, interrupt and seduce the human soul and spirit from the necessary (Consecrated Life as the life of) concentration on and dedicatedness to God, while moving on the journey to the calling and inviting God, but also, inside the touched soul, 2) enkindle warmth and heat and fire that would scrub the one floor and bottom of the soul, namely the human reason (as the equilateral triangular base of the regular Pyramide with which the human soul can be geometrically represented), and scrape and flush out the hardened ('*vercrustete*') sins deposited inside the soul by the evil spirits, as well as re-bend the meanwhile bended, curved, and crooked three sidewalls of the soul, namely the human Will and intellect and memory (represented by the three lateral isosceles triangles that together with the one equilateral triangular base constitute the named regular pyramid) and refurbish the interior cavity of the soul, namely the heart (represented by the vacuum inside the pyramid), reinforce and reinvigorate all the four interior angles of the soul - the only one angle under the apex of the pyramidal soul, namely the mind, and the three angles at the base, namely the human conscience, the faculty of intuition and the faculty of affection. (For such salvific works on the human soul by the Holy Spirit, see the traditional hymn 'Veni Sancte Spiritus' : *Veni Sancte Spiritus et emitte caelitus . Veni pater pauperum, veni dator munerum, veni lumen cordium.*

Consolator optime, dulcis hospes animae, dulce refrigerium. In labore requies, in aestu temperies, in fletu solatium. O lux beatissima, reple cordis intima, tuorum fidelium. Sine tuo numine, nihil est in homine, nihil est innoxium. Lava quod est sordidum, riga quod est aridum, sana quod est saucium. Flecte quod est rigidum, fove quod est frigidum, rege quod est devium. Da tuis fidelibus, in te confidentibus, sacrum septenarium. Da virtutis meritum, da salutis exitum, da perenne gaudium').

To practice the Asceticism as the detachment of the human spirit from the evil spirits that the devil (satan, belzebug) and the demons, the Spiritual Life embarks not only inwardly on constant conversion of the soul, hence of each of the nine faculties of the soul, from bad ways to good ways of life, from thinking or saying or doing evil to thinking and saying and doing good things, from cultivating revenge to cultivating forgiveness of the neighbour consisting in forgoing all possibilities and capabilities and all opportunities and powers that are at one's disposal to retaliate, to return evil for evil, to do tooth for tooth, eye for eye, but also embarks outwardly on frequent reception of the Sacrament of Reconciliation as of the interaction of human penance with divine forgiveness, before and after receiving the Sacrament of Confirmation, and on receiving occasionally the Sacrament of the anointment of the sick.

To practice the Mysticism as the attachment of the human spirit to the Holy Spirit (Spiritus Sanctus) that is God and that God is, the Spiritual Life embarks not only inwardly on receiving daily the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharistic as Sacrament of the heavenly Christ - and with Him inseparably united the Father and the Holy Spirit and the one divine thing that is united with each of them and that therefore unites all of the together to constituted the triune God, hence the presence of the entire divine Trinity (*Trinitas divina*) as the Most Holy Trinity (*Sanctissima Trinitas*) - on earth but also outwardly on (silent, or chorally sung) Adoration (i.e. the human act of Admiring devotedly the 'myst-ical' – 'myst-erious' and 'paradox- ical' - face and the mystical operations, i.e. actions and works) of God (Deus) as of the one and indivisible unit eternally existing in and out of the eternally indissoluble and immediate union of the inseparably united 'Deity (*Deitas*) , the unitrinitarianly structured oneness of the numerically one God as the container-component of the Reality God (*Deus*)' and 'divine Trinity (*Trinitas divina*) only together with whom the one and indivisible Paradisum as the

proper place in which the three persons in one God live their life of eternal mutual love and of mutual glorification and of joy at one another and of peace with one another and the triadic Kingdom of heaven embracing the City of God, the House of God within the City of God, and the many Rooms in the House of God constitute the content-component of the Reality God'

- e. *Man's binding of himself to God as to the eternal Love* - living for others, taking care of others - gives rise to *Selfless Life of Caring for Others* and to *Communitarian Life* as further constituents of the Consecrated Life.

For, God is 'Love (as living for others, taking care of others) itself in person in whom there is no indifference to others, neither to those different from one, from how one is, nor to those not different from one, from how one is. It consists not 'in taking without giving any good thing in exchange for the good thing that one has received', and not 'in giving according to as one has received', nor 'in taking according to as one has given', but rather in giving without taking anything in exchange for what one has given' *from any fellow human, especially from those with whom one lives in the community. The Communitarian Life* is the life of sharing actively in the rights and duties, in the benefits and responsibilities, of the members, with selfless services and sacrifices with which to contribute to build up, defend and promote the life of growth of their Community and the joy of living in community.

The Communitarian Life of the consecrated persons is life of the concentration on and dedicatedness to the Holy Spirit by the consecrated persons, the Holy Spirit being a Spirit that is at once unique and manifold, beneficent and loving to man and invulnerable, the Holy Spirit that eternally proceeds from the Father to the Son and from the Son to the Father, whereby these two processions are not successive, but rather contemporaneous, acts and constitute together one and indivisible continuous, not fragmented, not fractured, but rather holistic, integral, act, and this Spirit (Spiritus, the respired Being) is that eternal and most pure, and therefore holy, and vitally indispensable, and therefore not-to-be-removed, not-even-to-be-touched, hence sacrosanct, supernatural Breath of Life itself in person that is breathed out to, and in from, the Father by the Son and breathed out to, and in from, the Son by the Father at the same time (since there is no interval of time, hence no succession, but rather contemporaneity between any two realities, any two persons, any person and any thing, any two things, hence between any two acts within God as long as He is eternal, has neither a beginning nor an end

- i) Man's giving someone, namely 'the one who he is', his 'I am who I am', to God, and
- ii) Man's giving something, namely
 - 'what he is: the thing that he is', thus his 'this is what I am as a human being', his 'human essence', and
 - 'what he has, namely his humanity, comprising (a) his body as his mortal and partly directly and partly indirectly visible half and (b) his soul and spirit as his immortal and invisible half.

Using one's entire humanity as instrument to serve God thus means to render service to God

- i) with one's person, wherefore such service dare not be impersonal,
- ii) with one's material half - comprising liquids like with the water, tears, sweat and blood flowing from the interior as the indirectly visible part of the human body, solids like hands and feet, flesh and bones as the external and directly visible part of the human body, and gases like the air that one breathes out of oneself', and
- iii) with one's spiritual half, since God is Spirit and those who love Him must love in spirit and truth;
 - in spirit: because the nature of the method as of the action performed by an agent with a certain means towards a certain goal at which the agent aims with his action as at the object of the action must correspond, be adapted, to the nature of the goal as of the object of the action of the agent, for the method to be adequate;
 - in truth: because the structure of the means used by the agent to capture, take possession of, the whole object of his action, must correspond to the structure of the object of the action. And such spiritual half of man is constituted by the one and indivisible unit resulting from the indissoluble immediate union of the inseparable soul and spirit. The soul is constituted in turn by the nine faculties: i) the one and indivisible yet all-underlying and sustaining faculty called the three-dimensional human reason (ratio) as the proper human instrument or means for the reasoning, as for the method of thinking, over God, seeking thereby to arrive at insights into Him and at the knowledge of Him, be it by thinking in analogies, proceeding thereby from making comparisons between His creatures and Him on the basis of the similarities existing between Him and them, or be it by thinking in syllogisms, proceeding thereby from

wherefore in Him there is no discontinuity, but rather continuity). And as long as there is similarly no interval of space, hence no division, but rather unity and indivisibility, and hence no separation, but rather union and inseparability between any two realities in the eternal God, there is no separation, but rather inseparability, between the Breath of Life breathed by the Father to, and from, the Son and the Breath of Life breathed by the Son to, and from, the Father, and no separation, but rather inseparability, between the Father's act of breathing this indivisible Breath of Life to, and from, the Son and the Son's act of breathing the same Breath of Life to, and from, the Father.

The Communitarian style of life lived in the Structures for living out the Consecrated Life is that life of God living with us for which any two members have been divinely called to live with the Holy Spirit sent by Christ, such two need one another to become together what they are willed by God and called by Christ to be together, namely sign and instrument of prolonging on earth the life of intimate union lived by the Holy Spirit in heaven with the Father and the Son, like in the Holy Family of Nazareth Mary and Joseph were divinely chosen to be together sign and instrument of prolonging on earth the life of intimate union lived by the Son of God in heaven with the Father and the Holy Spirit. Hence the Communitarian life lived in the Structures for living out the Consecrated Life is a life rooted in the life lived in the Divine Trinity in which all the members own all things essential and substantial in common, a life imitated by the early Christian community belonging to the Holy Spirit.

- f. *Man's binding of himself to the triune God whose trinity, the divine Trinity is the Most Holy Trinity and who has created Man for Himself and consequently bound Man to Himself gives rise to the Religious Life as one of the constitutive elements of the practice of the Consecrated Life.*

The Religious Life is the life of Man's binding of oneself to God with vows, promises made directly to Him in the assembly of the faithful, to be poor in material possessions, but rich in love, since the adherence to Him is adherence to the One who, being the only Being that is the first and the last Being, the primary and the ultimate Being (cf. Is 44: 6), has neither before Him nor after Him another being and therefore has neither a beginning nor an end. Thus the Religious Life as a special expression of human love - as selflessly living - for God, consists in Man's giving of himself entirely to God, i.e. dedicating his entire humanity as instrument to the service of God. And that embraces

making inductive and deductive arguments from His very words or revelations about Himself or about His creatures on the one hand and the observations or experiences of man as of the only creature He created in His image, about Him and about His entire creation embracing not only the duo of created things, namely the universe and history as the space and time, place and period, in which takes place His reign as the reign of Him who reigns only there where His Will is being done, but also the duo of created persons, namely the humans as His royal people, and the Angels as His royal ministers, i.e. authoritative servants); ii-iv) 'the three lateral faculties standing on the three dimensions of the human reason as on their respective base line, namely ii) the will (*voluntas*), iii) the intellect (*intellectus*) and iv) the memory (*memoria*) as the respective sockets into which the cable of the Will of the Father required to be done, and the cable of the Word of God required to be understood, and the cable of the promised reminders by the Holy Spirit to the Christfaithful of what Christ had said to them and done for humanity, would have to be respectively plugged within the soul', v) 'the interior cavity of the soul called the heart (*cor*), not only as the proper place in the soul where God takes His seat (*cor - Sedes Dei in homine*) and where all the self-expressions of God to man in signs or words or actions are reserved, or preserved or conserved and, as food for thought, are chewed, ruminated upon, and digested and assimilated – but also as the microscope with which the soul sees minute realities that, like microbes, can only be seen indirectly', vi) 'that one and indivisible but three-dimensional angle under the apex of the soul which called the mind (*mens*), and is the telescope with which the soul sees far standing objects'; vi-viii) 'those three interior angles at the base of the soul, which comprise, vi) 'the three-dimensional faculty of human affection the three dimensions of which are one element of the will, one element of reason, and one element of what reason and the Will own together, and which is the source of human affectivity, namely of man's capability – i.e. capacity and ability - to attach (cf. lat. '*affigo, affigere, affixi, affectum*, to attach) himself to God as to the source of all goodness and hence to the good things as to things that come from God', vii) the three-dimensional faculty of human intuition the three dimensions of which are one element of the intellect, one element of reason, and one element of what reason and the intellect own together, and which is the source of human intuitiveness, namely of man's capability – i.e. capacity and ability to intuit (cf. lat. *Intuo, intuere*,

intuivi, intuitum, to intuit), make an interior apprehension of, a reality or fact or truth presented to the intellect and reason suddenly and rapidly, and a glimpse of which they catch rapidly like the two physical eyes catch a glimpse of lightning that pre-announces the imminent coming of thunder the pill or sound of which can frighten the hearer and harass and embarrass his ears', and viii) the three-dimensional faculty of human conscience the three dimensions of which are one element of the memory, one element of reason, and one element of what reason and the memory own together, and which is the source of human conscientiousness, namely of man's capability - i.e. capacity and ability - to hear the voice of God, and to feel at peace with oneself when one has done that Will of the speaking God which is contained in the word of God, of the ever speaking God the voice of whom is the mediator between His spoken word required to be heard and the human hearer of His spoken word, or to feel remorse when one has acted against the will of the speaking God'. The human spirit (*spiritus*) – the intelligent living being - itself is the apex of the soul through which the soul penetrates the body; and, as long as the invisible and immortal spirit is contained in the visible and mortal body, but the spirit and the soul are not only invisible but also immediately and inseparably united with one another, it follows that the soul – which, since it is immediately and inseparably united with the spirit and must remain invisible, cannot be outside the spirit, but rather must be inside the spirit - is, together with the spirit and through the spirit, also contained in the body, and that the spirit therefore unites the soul with the body into the one and indivisible living human being. The human spirit inside the human body enlivens the body and uses the organs of the human body (the organs of perception and reaction to the perceived, of movement and of circulation, of respiration, of nutrition, of growth, of reproduction, of excretion) to perform corporal as material or physical acts. The human spirit containing the human soul uses the faculties of the soul (the human reason/ratio, Will/voluntas, intellect/intellectus, memory/memoria, heart/cor, mind/mens, conscience/conscientia, faculty of intuition/intuitus, and faculty of affection/affectus) to perform rational and reasonable acts, volitional and voluntary acts, mimetic or anamnestic acts, cordial and courteous acts, mental acts, conscientious and conscious acts, intuitive and intuitional acts, affective and affectionate acts.

2.3 *The Christbased justification of the contents of the practice of the Consecrated Life*

- a. The Prayer of Jesus in the Gospel of St. John, Chapter 17, has set the theological framework within which to practice, live out, adequately the Consecrated Life.

“Now, Father, ...I have made your name known to the men you took from the world to give to me. They were yours and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now at last they know that all you have given me comes indeed from you; for I have given them the teaching you gave to me, and they have truly accepted this, that I came from you, and they have believed that it was you who sent me. I pray for them: I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, because they belong to you: all I have is yours and all you have is mine and in them I am glorified....Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us. While I was with them, I kept those you had given me true to your name. I have watched over them and not one is lost except the one who chose to be lost, and this was to fulfil the Scriptures. But now I am coming to you and while still in the world I say these things to share my joy with them to the full. I passed your word on to them, and the world hated them, because they belong to the world no more than I belong to the world. I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world. Consecrate them in the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. I pray not only for these, but for those also who through their words will believe in me. May they all be one. Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you so that the world may believe that it is you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one that the world will realise that it was you who sent me, and that I have loved them as much as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world. Father, the Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them” (Jn 17: 5-10 . 11b-26).

- b. It has been rightly said that this Prayer of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Gospel has established the theological framework within which to live adequately the Consecrated Life, in so far as:
- i) on the one hand, *the Consecrated Life is that life only in the union with which the Communitarian Life, the Missionary Life, the Spiritual as ascetical and mystical Life, and the Religious Life, constitute the full Christian Life*, while
 - ii) on the other hand:
 - the statement “They do not belong to the world any more than I belong to the world” evokes *the Religious Life*;
 - the prayer “I am not asking you to remove them from the world, but to protect them from the evil one” evokes *the ascetical half of the Spiritual Life*, whereas the prayer “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world” evokes *the mystical half of the Spiritual Life*;
 - the prayer “Holy Father, keep those you have given me true to your name, so that they may be one like us” evokes *the Communitarian life* as life of the union of communication and unity and sharing among the members which is effected by the fact that Christ (the Head as the Founder of the Body) keeps His disciples (as the members of the body) true to the name of God the Father, whereas the prayer “Father, may they be one in us, as you are in me and I am in you” evokes *the Communitarian Life as life* of the union of communication and unity and sharing with one another among the disciples (members of the body) in the life of Christ (the Head as Founder, who and the Father are mutually in one another), whereby the foundation of such a Community aims at getting the unbelieving world believe that it is the Father who has sent Christ, while the statement “I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so completely one” evokes *the Communitarian Life as life* of the union of communication and unity and sharing among the members of the Institutes which is based on their inherited divinely given charism and spirit of their Founder who is in Christ and in whom Christ is and

on their Founder's presence in them - and which is aimed at convincing the unbelieving world that it was the Father who sent Christ (the Head and Founder of the Body) and that Christ has loved His disciples (the members of the Body) as much as the Father has loved Him;

- the statement “As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world” evokes *the Missionary Life in general* as life of Jesus the Christ, whereas the statement “Father, the Righteous One, the world has not known you, but I have known you, and these have known that you have sent me. I have made your name known to them and will continue to make it known, so that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and so that I may be in them” - whereby only by being in them Christ may be acting in them and, through them, be acting in the world in which they are, such that as He has made the name of the Father known to them He would be making it known to the world through them and they would, in His name, be making the name of the Father, namely 'Holy Father' and 'Father, Righteous One', known to the world - evokes that *particular Missionary Life* (of the Founder and members of certain Institutes like the Congregation of Christ the Emmanuel) at the core or centre of which is *the Intellectual Apostolate* of teaching fellow men to know the name of Christ (namely the Emmanuel, i.e. the God-with-us, the God that is united with us humans, in solidarity with us, living with us, feeling with us, moving with us, understanding with us, speaking with us, creating with us, the God that is the Saviour of us humans and wants every one to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth (cf. 1Tim2:3.4);
- the statement “and for their sake I consecrate myself so that they too may be consecrated in truth” evokes *the Consecrated Life in general* as life deriving from, and similar to, the life of Christ who has consecrated Himself so that His disciples too may be consecrated in truth, whereas the statement “Consecrate them in the truth” evokes *the Consecrated Life as the life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to*, that Sacred reality which is contained inside the truth.

But since 'that which is' and 'that which is true' are interchangeable ('*ens et verum convertuntur*'), the truth ('*Veritas*') itself is that 'being' ('*ens*') which underlies and sustains the trueness and truthfulness of every other being, and withdrawn from which no being were any longer true (i.e. authentic, genuine) nor truthful (i.e. honest, sincere, correspondent as offspring to its origin or as the external half to the internal half of the whole), and the withdrawal of which from any being makes that being cease at once to be true, makes it rather become untrue (i.e. inauthentic, fake, false, counterfeit) and cease at once to be truthful, makes it rather become untruthful (i.e. dishonest, insincere, deceitful and deceptive), and thus become an unreliable base to build upon.

And as long as 1) the truth is the Word of God containing the Will of God as that sacred reality in the concentration on which, and dedicatedness to which, consists *the Consecrated Life*, but 2) the Word of God containing the Will of God is, in turn, interchangeable with the Wisdom and power of God (cf. 1 Cor 1:24), wherefore 3) *the Consecrated Life consists in the life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to*, the Wisdom and power of God, but 4) the sacred reality that is inside the Wisdom and power of God is the Holy Spirit - for "within her (namely inside the Wisdom and power of God) is a spirit, intelligent, holy, unique, manifold, subtle, active, incisive, unsullied, lucid, invulnerable, benevolent, sharp, irresistible, beneficent, loving to man, steadfast, dependable, unperturbed, almighty, all-surveying, penetrating all intelligent, pure and most subtle spirits" (Wisd. 7:22-23), 5) it follows that the Consecrated Life is life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Holy Spirit as that spirit that is intelligent, unique, manifold, subtle, active, incisive, unsullied, lucid, invulnerable, benevolent, sharp, irresistible, beneficent, loving to man, steadfast, dependable, unperturbed, almighty, all-surveying, penetrating all intelligent, pure and most subtle spirits.

Thus the Consecrated Life lived by the Persons who are consecrated in the truth (as in the Word of God containing the Will of God) by God the Father is that life of the concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Holy Spirit by the consecrated persons which (i) is connected with the Religious Life of the consecrated persons, as long as the Holy Spirit is the divine Spirit that is 'unperturbed and steadfast, dependable, unsullied, invulnerable', and (ii) is connected with the Spiritual Life comprising the ascetical and the mystical life of the consecrated persons, as long as the Holy Spirit is the Wisdom-indwelling and power-laden divine Spirit that is 'subtle, incisive, lucid, sharp,

irresistible, almighty, all-surveying, penetrating all intelligent and pure and most subtle spirits', and iii) is connected with *the Communitarian Life of the consecrated persons*, as long as the Holy Spirit is the Wisdom-indwelling and power-laden divine Spirit that is 'at once unique and manifold', and iv) is connected with *the Missionary Life of the consecrated persons*, as long as the Holy Spirit is the Wisdom-indwelling and power-laden divine Spirit that is 'active, beneficent, and loving to man'.

Part III: The problems arising as the discrepancy between the principles and their practices due to the deviation of the practices from the principles.

Presentation of the issue of the departures or exits of members in diverse regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal or social (socio-cultural, or socio-economic, or socio-political) nature which they encounter in the effort to live out the Consecrated Life in the Monasteries, in Religious and Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life and in Societies of Apostolic Life.

3.1. The current main problem at stake

- a. The current main problem at stake encountered in the bid to live out the Consecrated Life as the life of Concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred divine Will, divine Life, divine Word and divine Trinity is the issue of the departures or exits of members in diverse regions of Africa because of the difficulties of personal or social (socio-cultural, or socio-economic, or socio-political) nature which they encounter in the effort to live out the Consecrated Life in the Monasteries, in Religious and Secular Institutes of Consecrated Life and in Societies of Apostolic Life.
- b. Suffice it to recollect, or to say, or to be reminded, that the omnipresent God - the God that is present in all places at the same time and at all times - as the omnivident and omniscient God - the God who sees all things and knows all things before we come to see and to know them and better than we humans can see and can know them, and who, therefore, sees and knows the past, the present and the future of human individuals and of the human collectiveness in all its ramifications (family, ethnicity, community, society, nation, people, kingdoms), before we humans come to see and to know them and better than we can see and can know them, knew of these problems before we began to have them and notice them, and yet He allowed them to happen for reasons

best known to Him and that can only be for our good to His greater glory, namely for our growth in the faith in Him, our growth in the trust in Him, for He has forbidden us from believing in any other being than in Him, and hence from worshipping any other being than Him, from having any other God than Himself who created us for Himself and consequently bound us to Himself through instituting the law of irreversible dependence of all creatures on Him.

In this sense also the problems encountered by humans in their attempt to live out the inculturated Consecrated Life as the life of concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the triune God who has created Man for Himself and in the image of Himself serve to deepen the human faith in God. And in this sense - as the title of this article states - “the inculturated Consecrated Life” can make and makes and has made “contribution ...to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations”.

3.2 The causes of the problems

3.2.1 The problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the concentration on, and dedicatedness to, the Sacred.

A first problem that has caused the above named issue of the departures or exits from the structures for the living out of the Consecrated Life is that of the distractions by lures and seductions coming from the world outside (the worldly things, money, wealth, power) and from the world inside (the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life), whereas the Person who is living the Consecrated Life should be and remain focused and concentrated on, and dedicated to, the positively sacred/holy Will of God, the comparatively sacred/holy Life of God, the relative-superlatively sacred/holy Word of God, the absolute-superlatively Sacred/Holy triune God and His Trinity as the Most Holy Trinity.

3.2.2 The problems resulting from deviation from the divine Will done by the eternal Word in the womb of the Virgin

A second problem that has caused the current issue of the departures or exits from the structures for the living out of the Consecrated Life is that of the crisis into which the material expectation from their family and or from their friends stampedes those who have been divinely called and are humanly striving with the promised divine assistance ever remaining with them to live out the Consecrated Life.

3.2.3 *The problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the divine Life lived by the eternal Word in the incarnate Word*

A third problem that has caused the current issue of the departures or exits from the structures for the living out of the Consecrated Life is that of *the pursuit and accumulation of material wealth on earth, whereas* Jesus has said to those who are striving to live out the missionary dimension of the Consecrated Life that they are travellers and not settlers on earth, and should therefore take nothing for their journey: “no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics.” (Luke 9:3), and that they are in the world but are not of the world and should therefore not fall in love with the things of the world, not crave for comfort, luxury and amassing wealth, and that they should “tend the flock of God” that is in their charge “not under compulsion but willingly, not for sordid gain but eagerly.” (Cf. 1 Peter 5:2).

3.2.4 *The problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the divine Word living the divine life and doing the divine Will*

A fourth problem that has caused the current issue of the departures or exits from the structures for the living out of the Consecrated Life is that of a wavering faith and shaky trust in God and in Christ due to their little or immature or shallow faith and trust in God and in Christ, whereas those who are divinely called and humanly striving with the promised divine assistance ever remaining with them to live out the Consecrated Life should be firm and strong Believers in God still, in spite of all odds, and in Christ, trusting in God and trusting in Christ. In this *sense - as the title of this article states - “the inculturated Consecrated Life” can make and makes “contribution ...to the deepening of Christian Faith and fidelity to vocations”.*

3.2.5 *The problems resulting from the deviation of the practice from the triune God and His Trinity*

A fifth problem that has caused the current issue of the departures or exits from the structures for the living out of the Consecrated Life is *that of being silent about God out of fear of being rejected and avoiding speaking of the triune God whose trinity, the divine Trinity, has to be proclaimed and glorified as the Most Holy Trinity, whereas* Jesus has said to those who are striving to live out the Consecrated Life that they are would face rejection. In sending out his disciples, Jesus prepared their minds for rejection, they should not assume that people would like them because they are a good persons, they must know that the closer one is to God, the more enemies the one will have. He enjoined them - gave them the injunction - not to be

dejected when they are rejected, but rather to shake off the dust from their feet and move on, and continue to be preachers of God's Word, and to preach God as they went, bearing thereby witness to the Truth and Grace and Mercy of God, preaching also with their exemplary conduct, not only with their words, "living the Truth in love" (Eph.4:15) - "Veritas in Caritate" - and showing love in honesty, in truthfulness, "Caritas in veritate" (cf. Pope Benedict XVI). They should not for any reason, neither for fear of being rejected nor of being killed, stop to preach the Good News of the Kingdom of God that has come. In this sense St. Paul said: "Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!" (1 Corinthians 9:16).

Part IV: The proposals of solutions to the problems partly in the light of a general theory of problems and of problem solutions and partly in the light of the solution proposed to the present day problems of the developing young Church of Christ in Africa

1: General Theory of Problems and of Problem Solutions

- a. In general a problem is soluble, can be solved, but in particular there is always a problem that, though it can be solved, has not yet been solved and is required to be solved.
- b. A problem is an evil to man. An evil to man is that being which is unsuitable to the human nature and unbefitting to human dignity, and hence not useful to man, and hence never desired by man, and which exists out of a certain defect (*malum enim ex quocumque defectu*).
- c. The defect out of which evil as something not good to man exists can in turn exist in the following four forms: as the absence of something good that should rather be present; as the presence of an evil as something bad that should rather be absent; as the presence of an antagonism between two norms each of which is something good; and as the presence of a vicious circle, a circle formed out of the fusion of two vices as extremes (e.g. with regard to faith such two extremes are 'fanaticism and unbelief', or 'gullibility and disbelief'; and with regard to reason the two extremes are 'rationalism and irrationalism') that are the two extremes of a virtue lying in their middle (e.g. credulity as the middle between fanaticism and unbelief; rationality as the middle between rationalism and irrationalism); a vicious circle formed out of the fusion of two vices as extremes is like a circle formed out of the fusion of the two ends of a line or of a curve.

- i) The defect existing in the form of the absence of something good to man that should rather be present is the cause of such evils like the problem of a lack, a want, a need (e.g. hunger as the problem of lack or want or need of food; financial poverty as the problem of a lack, or a want, or need, of money). Something good to man is that being which is suitable to the human nature and befitting to the human dignity, and hence is useful to man, and hence desirable by man and exists out of an integral - defectless or indefectible - cause (*bonum ex causa integra*) and is thus in a mutually contradictory exclusive relationship with an evil, something bad to man. The absence of something good to man may be in the form of an evil to man as of the privation of a good to man (*malum est privatio boni*), a privation caused, engendered, either 1) by someone's unjust act of depriving his fellow men of a good to man that is due to them (i.e. by withholding it from them, denying them of it, or withdrawing it from them) or 2) by the inevitable occurrence of the loss of a good to man that one was having hitherto, a loss that creates a vacuum, an empty space, a hollow, a yawning gap, a pit, a hole, a loophole, a pitfall, a lacuna; a vacuum, an empty space, that in turn creates the danger of falling due to loss of balance or loss of steps engendered, caused, by a pull or push, draw or drive; a danger that in turn creates the fear of falling into a hole or hollow due to an existing gap in-between into which a reality that has lost its steps or lost balance through a pull or push, a draw or drive, is bound or geared or prone to fall. And problems of this type can only be solved by addition - as integration - by going out in search for the missing or lacking good to man and - upon finding it (*invenire*) or inventing it - getting it integrated into the structure to close up the yawning gap, the vacuum, the hole, the pit, to cover the hollow, the lacuna, in the structure from which it should not be lacking or missing.
- ii) The defect existing in the form of the presence of an evil to man that should rather be absent is the cause of problems like the problem of a harmful foreign body and the problem of an obstacle, hindrance, obstruction, to progress. And problems of this type can only be solved by subtraction - be it as removal of the obstacle from the road to progress, from the line followed to reach the goal (*ex limine tollere*) - hence by 'elimination', be it as pulling or pushing and flushing out the foreign body from the system, hence by 'ex-pulsion'.

- iii) The defect existing in the form of the presence of an antagonism between two norms each of which is a good to man, and hence has the right to be present, but one of which, or each of which, does not want to exist together and contemporaneously with the other, is the cause of evils to man like the problem of 'either you die and I live, or you live and I die' (*mors tua vita mea, mors mea vita tua*) as the problem of zero tolerance or extreme intolerance, and the problem of two good persons that but do not agree, hence do not meet, do not touch, and that relate to themselves thus like two parallel vertical lines. And problems of this type can only be solved by multiplication - as proliferation, rapid increase in number - by deploying a multiple number of mediators between unilaterally or bilaterally antagonistic norms as antinomies, through constructing between the two norms - that are existing like two vertically parallel lines - two oblique lines as diagonals between the two parallel vertical lines by i) joining the upper point of the first of the two vertical lines to the lower point of the second of the two vertical lines, and ii) joining the lower point of the first of the two vertical lines to the upper point of the second of the two vertical lines; iii) joining the upper point of the first of the two parallel vertical lines to a point lying midway between the two parallel vertical lines and forming thereby a short horizontal line, and iv) joining also the upper point of the second of the two parallel vertical lines to the same point lying midway between the two parallel vertical lines and forming thereby a second short horizontal line, with the consequence that the two short horizontal lines constitute together one long horizontal line that is the shortest distance between the upper point of the first vertical line and the upper point of the second vertical line.
- iv) The defect existing in the form of the presence of a vicious circle - a circle formed out of the fusion of two vices (e.g. 'fanaticism and incredulity or unbelief, or gullibility and disbelief'; 'rationalism and irrationalism') that are the two extremes of a virtue lying in their middle (e.g. 'credulity'; 'rationality') - like a circle formed out of the fusion of the two ends of a line or of a curve and encircling, or enclosing inside itself, some beings like in a cage or prison, is the cause of such evils to man like the problem of confusion, chaos, disorder, and the problem of running round and round without making any advancement, any progress, any achievement and success in life. And problems of this type can only be solved by division - as dissolution, or splitting, and separation - through first fingering out the

point of fusion on the circumference (or periphery) of the circle (formed from the fusion of the two extremes, the two vices), and then, upon identifying the proper point of fusion, working to dissolve the union of the two extremes and hence to separate, put asunder, the two fused extremes.

- v). Thus the four types of problem are soluble through the four kinds of arithmetical operations, namely: by addition as integration; by subtraction as removal or elimination or expulsion; by division as dissolution of union and separation from one another of the hitherto united diverse parts; and by multiplication as proliferation, rapid increase in number, through the deployment of a multiple number of mediators between unilaterally or bilaterally antagonistic norms as antinomies.

2: *Proposals of solutions to the present-day problems of the developing young Church of Christ in Africa*

2.1 The current limits of the African Culture as part of the cause of the defects of the current state of the africanly inculturated Consecrated Life and consequently of the current Problem of the frequent exit of numerous members from the structures for living out the Consecrated Life.

- a. To tackle the current problem of the frequent exits of numerous members there is need for a special type of human formation to be imparted to the members in the structures for living out the Consecrated House, such type that informs itself on, and derives its regulating principles from, the humanity of the Godman Jesus Christ. But the type of education going on in the African Culture of today has not yet taken the humanity of the Godman Jesus Christ, which is the model of renewed humanity, as its guide, whereas Africans are looking for a renewal in secular realities like culture and politics. The old model of education in the African culture was training the people in the exercise of the wisdom of the tortoise the Trickster, rather than in the wisdom of Christ the Truth. That old model has long, since the arrival of Christianity in the African society, become obsolete and irrelevant to the proper needs of the African people of today whose society is replete with the practice of fraud and selfishness. The humanity of the Godman Jesus Christ is the model of renewed humanity, in the sense that (I) a renewed reality (*Renovata*) is the fruit of the act of innovation (*Innovatio*) as of the act of introducing or inserting of a novelty (a series or aggregate of new things, *Nova*) into the old but ever valid Value that, because of this perpetuity of its validity, is handed

on from generation to generation in every nation, and from nation to nation in the world, and is thus called Tradition (*Traditio*), the tradition of the people, *populus*, in a particular place, *locus*, hence the popular local tradition, or the tradition of the Church of Christ as the tradition of the people of God on earth, (ii) the humanity of Christ as of the incarnate Word is the humanity resulting from the insertion of “the divine Word living the divine Life and doing the divine Will of the Father that His Son should be made Man through the incarnation of the Word for the redemption (comprising the liberation of the entrapped and the healing of the liberated and the restoration of the healed human soul to the only Way to heaven from which he had deviated through the seductive insinuations by the evil spirits - the Devil and the demons) and hence progress to reach the Salvation willed by God for everyone - as a Novelty (the aggregate of new things comprising the divine Word, the divine Life lived by the divine Word as the divine Son, and the divine Will done by the divine Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary)” into “the human flesh (taken from the womb of the Virgin Mary and as the unity resulting from the union of the human body and the human soul by the human spirit contained by the body and containing the soul) as the traditional human property that humans of all times and places carry along and about with them, whereby that divine Word (as a supernatural person) and the human flesh (as a created thing into which He is inserted) are united by the Holy Spirit with the result that Jesus Christ is the Son of God that is eternal and of the same substance with God the Father and is thus one God with the Father and has been made man through the incarnation of the Word but without His ceasing to be God and is thus ever since the incarnation of the Word took place in the womb of the Virgin Mary God and Man in one person and hence is called the Godman (Theanthropos in general, but Theandros in particular; for: the Man that He became is male, Man of the masculine gender, since He became Man through the Word's taking flesh of human nature in view of His using the flesh of human nature to offer sacrifice on the Holy Cross for the redemption of the world, but it is the male, not the female, that is the proper material for offering the sacrifice of redemption as the second of the two sacrifices required before Man should arrive at the salvation to which God has invited him: the first sacrifice being the human procreation of the divinely created child, whereby between the two species or genders of the human being only the female can be pregnant and thus is the proper material used for offering such a sacrifice, wherefore the male as the remaining and second of the only two species or

genders of the human being is the proper material for offering the second as the only one and proper sacrifice for the redemption of the procreated child. Sacrifice consists in the two acts of immolation and libation, the immolation of the female is given permanently in the slice carried by her all lifelong between her two legs, while the libation is given only periodically in the menstruation and not all lifelong). The Godman Jesus Christ is the union of the 'in-carnate Word' (the divine Word penetrating and permeating, and remaining inside, inherent in, the human flesh, caro-carnis) with its contrary, its opposite but not opposed counterpart, namely with the human flesh (as with that single unit the unity of which results from the union of the human soul with the human body through the human spirit that is, on the one hand, contained in the body and in a dissoluble union with the body and, because of this dissolubility of the union, is separable from the body and, on the other hand, contains the soul and is in an indissoluble union with the soul and, because of this indissolubility of the union, is inseparable from the soul, and is thus uniting the soul and the body, and moves irreversibly towards the divine Word and eventually adheres irrevocably to the divine Word and participates in the life and function of the divine Word that is using the whole of the human flesh to accomplish His redemptive mission and salvific work, whereas the divine Will, moving irreversibly towards the human body, traverses (piercing, penetrating and permeating) the human spirit and eventually reaches the human body and adheres irrevocably to the human body to fortify it and conserve the fulfilment of God's promise or plan for the human body, whereas the divine life moves irreversibly towards the human soul the irreversibly moves towards the divine life till the two meet at the point that they have in common, namely at the point of their having no end, at the point of their endlessness, at the point of infinity, and get fused with one another at that point to give rise to 'the divinely living human soul' as that single mystical unit the unity of which results from the fusion of the endless divine life and the endless human soul.

- b. Another notable deficit in the current stand of the development of the African culture is the lack of productivity that has caused the vicious circle (*circulus vitiosus*) of chronic poverty, hunger and sickness. For, some of the victims enter into that circle, some enter through the gate of poverty, and the poverty leads them to inability to afford more than one meal per day and, hence, to languish in hunger for many days in the week of each month of each year for many years, and the underfeeding and malnutrition, in turn, leads them to

diseases and sicknesses; some others enter through the gate of sickness that hinders them from working and earning and leads them to poverty that leads them, in turn, to inability to afford what to eat, and to suffer hunger and malnutrition that, in turn, leads them back to sickness as their starting point; and still others enter through the gate of hunger that leads them to sickness that, in turn, leads them to poverty that, in turn, leads them back to hunger as to their original starting point, and so the vicious circle of the suffering of the evil of poverty, hunger and sickness continues and can only be broken for the people encircled and entrapped therein to come out from it and be freed, liberated, from the bondage, the captivity, in which they have been for years now, whereby, in order to be able to break this notorious vicious circle, the prospective circle-breaker must proceed from the knowledge that a circle results when two extremes of a line are fused together, and that, to break the above depicted vicious circle of poverty, hunger and sickness, one must first search out the very point where, on the circumference of the circle, the two extremes are fused, and then seek to undo the fusion, and that, to identify the searched point of fusion, one must first identify the two extremes of the line that have been fused, and that, to identify the two extremes of the line, one must deploy the knowledge of a line as the shortest distance between two points and the knowledge of vice to be the privation of a certain virtue and to be an evil, and the knowledge of evil to be the privation of a certain goodness (*malum est privatio boni*) and to originate, or be welling, from a certain defect (*malum ex quocumque defectu*), and the knowledge of virtue to be standing in the middle between two extremes (*in medio stat virtus*). One must therefore identify that virtue (e.g. faith) which is at once (i) standing in the middle between the two vices as the two identified extremes (e.g. unbelief and superstition, or disbelief and fanaticism, or atheism and idolatry, or fideism as faith without reason and rationalism as reason without faith, etc) the fusion of which has given rise to the lamented chronic vicious circle of poverty, hunger and sickness, and (ii) being represented by the identified line as the shortest distance between two points, but without the two contrary - opposite but not opposed - points, the shortest distance between which is identical with the line, being identical with the identified two extremes in the middle between which the virtue - represented by the line - is standing. That is the system of the algebraic equations as formula for the solution of the vicious circle of poverty, sickness and hunger leading to the vicious circle of poverty, hunger and sickness. is the vicious spiral of hunger, anger, violence, imprisonment,

and poverty. The spiral begins with hunger that makes the hungry man angry (“a hungry man is an angry man”!), and the anger leads them to violence, that leads them to imprisonment that, in turn, leads them to poverty, that introduces them to the vicious circle of poverty hunger and sickness. In effect, like the Godman Jesus Christ used the whole of His human component - comprising His spirit, His soul and His body - to accomplish His mission of holistic (comprising material, moral and spiritual) salvation, and His human spirit used all the organs of His body (the hands and legs, ears and eyes and mouth, etc) to perform His corporal works and used all the faculties His soul (the human reason and heart, the human Will, intellect and memory, the human mind, conscience, faculty of intuition and faculty of affection to accomplish His spiritual works), so the proper pertinent type of education required to be imparted today in the African Culture to the children and the young people and adults as citizens of their nations must be that of educating them 1) in the knowledge and belief that the Creator has foresightedly and providentially implanted in every part of the human body enough talents through the exercise of which with professionalism every one is capable of using their healthy talented legs or hands or voice, etc. to become wealthy, and 2) in the technical knowhow of exercising the discovered God-given talents lying latent in one part of their body or the other up to the professional level as the proper level on which the healthy talented leg or hand or voice becomes God-given instrument for becoming wealthy and so for overpowering and overthrowing poverty and its other vicious companion.

2.2 The Solution proper of the conflict and tension between 'God and Man', between 'the tendencies and bending of Man (created by God in the image of God) towards God (whose image Man should retain) and the inclinations and bending of Man (living in the world) towards the things of the world (mundus, saeculum) in which he lives, but a world of which the Creator told him not to be', between 'the attractions of Man to the Divine as the Sacred and the attractions of Man to the Mundane as the Secular', between 'Religion and Science', between 'faith and reason', between 'Theology and Technology', as the root cause of the causes of the problem of the current exit of numerous members.

2.2.1 *Disposition*

- a. From the outline of the immediate causes of the problem of the current exit of numerous members from the structures for living out the Consecrated Life (see Part III of this Article) one can see that the proper root cause of the causes

of the problem is the conflict and tension between 'God and Man', between 'the tendencies and bending of Man (created by God in the image of God) towards God (whose image Man should retain) and the inclinations and bending of Man (living in the world) towards the things of the world (mundus, saeculum) in which he lives, but a world of which the Creator told him not to be', between 'the attractions of Man to the Divine as the Sacred and the attractions of Man to the Mundane as the Secular', between 'Religion and Science', between 'faith and reason', between 'Theology and Technology'. To solve the problem from the roots therefore there is need for an intellectual (cum spiritual) and technical (cum pastoral) formation of the members which trains them in thinking (cum praying and adoring, ratio cum oratio et adoratio) and acting and producing (cum distributing) in the categories of the divinely revealed truth about the Spirit-effected union of God and Man in the Godman Jesus Christ, hence about the Spirit-effected union of the Divine and the Human components of the Incarnate Word in the person of Jesus the Christ, Christ the Emmanuel, the God-with-us, the God in union with us humans, the God dialoguing and interacting with us humans, the God in solidarity with us humans, the God living with us humans, moving along with us, thinking and feeling with us, working and producing with us humans (and we with Him). Another reason for the problem of the frequent numerous exists of the members from the structures for living out the consecrated Life is that those who embrace God's work become overwhelmed with too much work, mental exhaustion, fatigue, burn-out, depression, etc. And the cause of this is that the work of God is always more than the labourers available. With regard to such permanent imbalance between the quantity of work required to be done and the numerical strength of the workers needed to do the work, Jesus said "The harvest is plentiful, but the labourers are few". But the solution to this problem of mental exhaustion, fatigue, burn-out, depression, etc., sequel to being overwhelmed with too much work in His vineyard has been given by Jesus Himself when He says to such labourers in His vineyard: "Come to me all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy, and my burden light" (Mt. 11: 28-30) - the belt with which to carry the responsibilities for my project as a load on your shoulders is easy to put on if you put it on gently, in other words 'with gentility (not forcefully, violently, roughly, not with force, violence, roughness)', and the weight of your responsibilities for my project as load is light to carry if you carry it humbly and cordially, in other words

'with humility and cordiality' (not with 'pride, superbia, superiority complex, arrogance, haughtiness, pomposity' and 'naughtiness, mischievousness').

- b. God is Goodness itself in person and the first and the last, the first or the primary as the highest, the supreme, existing Being called the Creator as well as the last or the ultimate as the deepest ontological requisite for the existence in general of all existing beings and is called the Omnipotent, the Almighty, the proper Being that underlies and sustains the existence of any other existing being, and underlies and sustains the goodness of any other reality that is good outside Him, be it the goodness of any created good person, be it the goodness of any created good thing, of any good created thing in the form of an object, like places, or of any created thing in the form of an event like the acts, actions and activities of persons or like the inevitable occurrences of such good things as the sunrise and daybreak, or the falling of the rain in dry or hot times, or the circulation of the air for the respiration act of living beings, hence without whose underlying and sustaining presence no other existing being would be existing at all, there would be no other reality than Himself, and every other existing being that is good would be privy of goodness and hence in the state of evil as of the privation of goodness (*malum est privatio boni*).
- c. Every problem as evil begins for Man who was created in the image of God by God when Man does not consult God the Creator who fixed the parts of the whole of each creature or the parts of the whole of creation and arranged them in a definite order of sequence for a purpose and therefore knows at best how, when the parts do not function again or do not function well any longer or do not function at all any more, to re-fix the parts in order to get the whole that they together constitute begin to function again or to function well again. The problem gets worse if we continue taking from God things like the life we have, the air we breathe, the water we drink and the sources of the food we eat, etc. but without giving to God anything, whereas if we must take things from God, it is only right that we give something back to God, something that He likes, deserves and desires to have from us. But what else does God want from us if not that we worship Him in spirit and truth, that we love Him with our whole heart and whole soul and whole mind and with our whole strength, that we be holy because He the Lord Our God who created us in the image of Himself, Gen 1:27, is holy, cf Lev. 19:2 and by wanting from us the holiness of life, He wants from us purity of heart, truthfulness, righteousness, virtue, obedience, repentance from our bad habits and vices.

- d. Whenever Man is standing in front of a problem as an evil and facing an evil as a problem he cannot solve, a problem that, though it can be solved, has not yet been solved and is required to be solved and he fails to consult God, the reason may be that he does not know he should do so or he knows but forgot to do so, just to give him the benefit of the doubt, otherwise the reason is that he consciously refused to do so, out of jealousy or malevolence or disloyalty or insubordination towards God, not as if he is not convinced that God exists and as the supreme, the highest, Being, is superior to him, and that explains why such a one feigns ignorance of God, and does as if God were not existing (*ut Deus non daretur*) or existing but not necessary (*ut Deus non necessarius sit*), whereas God, the presence of God, is indispensable and inevitable (*Deus indispensabilis et inevitabilis*) for the existence in general of all existing beings and for the goodness of every created being that is good. This conscious ignoring of God by Man in the face of a problem that is soluble but that Man cannot solve, whereas nothing is impossible for God and with God everything is possible for Man, reveals itself as a sheer folly on the part of Man and exposes Man as arrogant, whereby that sheer folly and this arrogance together expose the arrogant man to the danger of being an object of derision. For, an arrogant man is one who ignores what he should know, but the more he ignores it the more ignorant he becomes, and so the more mistakes he makes and so he comes to end up in failure, like the fall of a pompous man with a thud which degrades him to an object of irresistible derision, mocked and ridiculed as a stupid man, by those who humbly know what he refused to know.
- e. Such is the lot of those whose perception of God now has gone way off the conduits of the brain to the mind that God should least bother about His creatures and least be bothered by them. In fact it is no longer seldom today to encounter people who - when they are cautioned against the evil or the problem they are struggling to solve only by their human effort without any reference to God - say in reply: "Ah! Leave God aside, He is in charge up there above in heaven and we humans are in charge down here below on earth, and God has nothing to do in the daily running affairs of Man!" It is worrisome and of great concern to human individuals and human societies that believe in the existence, the omnipresence, the inevitability, the irresistibility and the indispensability of God as Spirit, Light and Love when they interface with totally differently thinking persons and commonly hear such words from them and see the depth of apostasy into which persons like these have fallen

who continuously refuse to accept the truth or are utterly bereft of the truth that God exists, is omnipresent, inevitable, irresistible, and indispensable. Such persons that deny the relevance of God in the daily life of humans and the indispensability of God in the struggle of humans to solve the problems they encounter in their daily life and who think they can solve the human problems only by human effort without reference to God, by applying only man-made means without deployment of God-made means, include today those who claims that “African problems that require technology will not be solved by theology” (Prof. Patrick Lumumba, Professor of Law, a popular Kenyan lawyer and activist, former head of the Kenyan anti-corruption agency). The same Kenyan pan-Africanist and human rights activist, Patrick Lumumba, a Founding Trustee of the African Institute for Leaders and Leadership, has said the liberation of Africa will not come by its religious exercises. “Africa can rise and Africa will rise, but it is not going to rise by prayer and fasting” (Lumumba in an address he delivered at the Platform, a non-political and non-denominational program, hosted by The Covenant Nation, Iganmu, Lagos). The above mentioned utterances of Patrick Lumumba are coming from among the nine heresies of our time according to which “There is no God”. “There is no life after death”. “There is no need for hurrying; there is still time to live”. “There is no right or wrong”. “There is no sin”. “There is no need of repentance”. “Whatever good a man does will also be undone sooner or later”. “Religion is for those who lack intelligence and reason”. “Humans are so intelligent as to be able to accomplish anything alone by their own power and effort, without God” (as against the truth that “You alone are the Holy One, You alone the Lord, You alone the Highest, Jesus in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to the glory of God the Father” cf. Gloria in excelsis Deo, and that only by the divine power and assistance remaining with us we can accomplish good things and wonder works, as evidenced in Jesus: “Jesus Christ is Lord of all men...God had anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and because God was with him Jesus went about doing good and curing all who had fallen into the power of the devil”, Acts 10: 36b.38).

- f. The question is how the believers as human individuals like the Theologians and as human societies like the Church are to address this problem of Man's denial of - the omnipresence and irresistibility, the inevitability, and the indispensability of - God in the daily lives of humans.

- (i) A major worry of the Church leaders, precisely of the Popes before, during and after the Second Vatican Council, particularly of Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, in recent times is that the contemporary human society (on earth in this visible world) is derailing from faith due to the threat of Science to Faith posed by the advent of Science and Technology.
- The Faith from which the contemporary society is derailing is the faith in God and in His Son Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and of the Son together. The faith in, as trustful acceptance of, God comprises the belief, namely trustfully accepting, that God exists and is the Author, the Owner and the Governor of all creation and of all life and - beyond this belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, God's existence and belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, His authorship, ownerships and government of the world - i) the belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, His Authority over all creation, over the whole universe and over the whole of history, over the whole humanity and over all the Angels, ii) the belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, God's Lordship and Supremacy as well as belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, His Kingship and His Sovereignty over all the creatures - over the universe and history and over all humanity and the Angels iii) the belief in, namely trustful acceptance of, His Majesty, His being ever greater than - *semper major quam* - each and all together of the created beings than Himself (their sole Creator). The faith in, namely trustful acceptance of, Jesus Christ embraces 1) the belief, namely trustfully accepting, 1a) that Christ is the incarnate Son of the living God, and 1b) that the incarnate Son of God is God made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in the womb of the Virgin Mary but without ceasing to be God, and 1c) that therefore, ever since the incarnation took place in the Virgin's womb, the incarnate Son of God is both God and Man, the Godman, and 2) the belief, namely trustfully accepting, that the Godman Jesus Christ is 2a) the only one infallible Mediator and Reconciler between God and humanity, 2b) the Mediator of human quests and requests and questions to God and of the divine truths and graces and answers to humans', 2c) the proper Communicator of the redeeming (embracing the liberating and healing and restorative) first half of

the Father-willed divine salvation for all humans to the entire humanity', and 3) the belief, trustfully accepting, that the eternal creative Word of God, through whom in His incarnate state as the incarnate Word of God, is that particular one of the three constitutive dimensions of the one Son of God (whose being Son of God is constituted by the trio: 'His being the image of the Substance of God', 'His being the Wisdom and power of God' and 'His being the eternal Word of God, and each of the three dimensions of whom can stand for the whole of Him as the Son of God, according to the principle 'pars pro toto') through whom, in His pre-incarnate state, all beings that were to be created, were created, namely called into existence, by the speaking God the Creator, 4) the belief, namely trustfully accepting, that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to the incarnate Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ the Godman as the only one infallible Mediator and Reconciler between God and humanity, the Mediator of human quests and requests and questions to God and of the divine truths and graces and answers to humans, 5) the belief, namely trustful acceptance, that He knows all creatures at best since He is the Word as person through whom all creatures have been created, 6) the belief, namely trustful acceptance, that He has a best understanding of every creature's structure (principle of intelligibility) and function (mechanism), since He, the eternal Word, is interchangeable with that Wisdom of God itself in person through whom all beings yet to be called into existence are to be first chosen out, or selected, from the multitude of pure ideas as beings that do not yet exist, namely as that which only is but is not yet there, and that could each be created, either by being called into existence through the speaking of the Word imperatively or by being enclosed in matter and united with the matter to form together a synthesis of form and matter by the Creator. The faith in, namely the trustful acceptance of, the Holy Spirit comprises 1) the belief, namely trustfully accepting, 1a) that the Holy Spirit is the life-giving Spirit that proceeds from the Father and the Son together, and 1b) that He, proceeding from the Father as from the source of all Holiness, is the Spirit of sanctification, while He, proceeding from the Son as from the truth itself in person, is the Spirit of truth, and 2) the belief, namely the trustful acceptance, that the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of the Father and of the Son together is

the Bringer of the justifying and sanctifying second half of the Father-willed divine salvation for all humans to those humans who believe in, namely trustfully accept, Christ as the Redeemer of the entire humanity.

- The worries of the Church, precisely of the Popes before, during and after the Second Vatican Council therefore are in the nature of concerns about the renunciation of, not just a deviation from, the traditional Christian doctrines of the faith in God and in Christ by people who before the eruption of Science and Technology into the human society were believers in God, thus about the steadily increasing number of persons who no longer believe in God and in Christ, added to the multitude of persons who do not yet believe in God or believe in God but not in Christ, or do not believe at all in any of the two, and still added to those who believe half-heartedly or superficially.
- The people that believe in God and in Christ are the people that trust in God and trust in Christ (“Trust in God still, and trust in me” Jn 14:1), the people that practice trustful acceptance of God as the Author of creation, trustful acceptance of God's authorship of creation and hence of God's authority over all creatures in heaven and on earth, and trustful acceptance of the eternal creative Word of God in whom God has called beings into existence , and hence trustful acceptance of the fact that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to the incarnate Word of God as the incarnate Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ (“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.” Mt 28:18) who, being God made man, but without ceasing to be God, is the Godman and hence the proper mediator between God and mankind (“For there is only one God, and there is only one mediator between God and mankind, himself a man, Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all“ cf. 1 Tim 2:5-6). And such people that believe in God and in Christ are a different people from the people that believe in an 'inauthentic' Scientist as the Scientist that does not believe in God as the Author of creation and of life, thus does not believe in God's authorship, ownerships and Government of the world and in God's Lordship, Supremacy and Kingship over all creation and all the creatures therein. In other words: When people believe in the

Scientist, but the Scientist in whom they believe is not a genuine Scientist, not an authentic Scientist, not a Scientist that believes in the Author of creation, not a Scientist that believes in God's authorship of creation and hence in God's authority over all creatures in heaven and on earth, nor a Scientist that believes in the eternal creative Word of God through whom God has called beings into existence, and hence in the fact that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to the incarnate Word of God as the incarnate Son of God in the person of Jesus Christ the Godman and proper Mediator between God and humanity, then such people are different from the people that believe firmly and irrevocably in God and in Christ His Son. If the people that believe in God and in Christ as a people that trust in God and trust in Christ (cf Jn 14:1) are being drawn (attracted, lured) by the astonishing performances of Science and Technology to change from believing in God and in Christ to believing rather in (the apparent omnipotence of) Science and Technology, then the people are said to be derailing from authentic faith, while the advent of Science and technology is said to be posing a great threat to the people's faith in God and in Christ. A major Concern of the Popes since the Second Vatican Council (particularly Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis) is that the contemporary human society on earth in the world is derailing from faith due to the advent of Science and Technology, and that the advent of Science and technology is thus posing a great threat to the people's faith in God and in Christ. The Faith from which the contemporary society is derailing is the faith in God, the belief in God (in His existence and ownership of the world, in His Lordship, Supremacy, Kingship, Government over all creation, over the universe and history and over all humanity and the angels) or the trust in God as the Saviour ("God our saviour: he wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth" 1 Tim 2:3-4), and trust in His incarnate Son Jesus Christ the Godman as the proper communicator of the redeeming (embracing the liberating and healing and restorative) first half of the Father-willed divine salvation for all humans to the entire humanity ("Christ Jesus, who sacrificed himself as a ransom for them all" 1 Tim 2:5-6), and trust in that Spirit of the Father and of the Son together that is called the Holy

Spirit as the Bringer of the justifying and sanctifying second half of the Father-willed divine salvation for all humans to those humans who believe in, trustfully accept, Christ as the Redeemer of the entire humanity (“The Advocate, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of all I have said to you” Jn 14: 26; I still have many things to say to you but they would be too much for you now. But when the Spirit of truth comes, he will lead you to the complete truth, since he will not be speaking as from himself but will say only what he has learnt; and he will tell you of things to come” (Jn 16: 12-13). This problem that the advent of Science and Technology is posing today for Faith has been formulated in diverse ways by the different post-conciliar Popes in their writings. But it was Pope Benedict that formulated the problem in a way that the need for a solution to the problem becomes an urgent desideratum, the urgency of the solution to the problem becomes most clear. In number 12 of his Apostolic Letter “*Porta Fidei*”, a *Motu Proprio* released on the 11th of October 2011, he addressed the issue with the following words: “To a great extent than in the past, Faith is now being subjected to a series of questions from a changed (namely a rationalistic and relativistic and materialistic) mentality which, especially today, limits the field of rational certainties to that of scientific and technological discoveries” (FP n.12). The solution to the problem of the derailing of the authentic believers as believers in God and in Christ from the authentic faith has been formulated in diverse manners by the post-conciliar Popes, particularly by Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI. In his Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation ‘*Ecclesia in Africa*’ (1995), n. 115, Pope John Paul II formulates in the following words addressed to the intellectual youth the solution to that same problem of the derailing of the authentic believers as believers in God and in Christ from the authentic faith which is caused by the luring of the authentic Christian believers to the performances and produced material goods of Science and Technology : “Dear young people, the synod to take in hand the development of your countries, to love the culture of your people, and to work for its renewal with fidelity to your cultural heritage, through a sharpening of your scientific and technical expertise, and above all through the witness of your

Christian faith” EA n. 115). Furthermore in his Encyclical letter '*Fides et Ratio*' (14th Sept. 1998), nn. 34 e 106, Pope John Paul II reflects within the framework of the proper relation (dialogue or even union) between Faith and Reason as between the two wings of a bird on flight how the relation between Religion (cf. faith) and Science (cf. reason) should thereby be. In his Apostolic Letter Motu Proprio '*Porta Fidei*' (2011), n 12, Pope Benedict XVI gives justification to the solubility of the named problem of derailment from the faith in the following words: “Nevertheless, the Church has never been afraid of demonstrating that there cannot be any conflict between faith and genuine science, because both, although via different routes, tend towards the truth” (PF n. 12). This idea found in the '*Porta Fidei*' (2011) of Pope Benedict XVI had to be present therein only in a synthetic manner and with precision because Pope John Paul II had earlier presented this same idea in a more elaborate manner in his '*Fides et Ratio*' (1989), nn. 34 and 106.

(ii) To overcome the problem the Popes have called for the collaboration of the Theologians.

- And as a response to the call of the Popes Contemporary Theologians have come up with new models of Christian Theology which not only demonstrate that there cannot be any conflict nor division nor separation but rather harmony and union unity between faith and reason, hence between faith and genuine Science, none between faith-based Religion and reason-based Science, but also show that 1) Christian Theology can be united with the contemporary global culture called 'Science and Technology' (in one word: 'Technoscience', the technoscientific culture) to give rise to Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as an inculturated Christian Theology at the model of the union of the eternal Word of God with the human flesh to give rise to the Incarnate Word as Godman, and that 2) Christian Theological Technoscience is the proper Christian Theology need to counteract the present threat of Faith by Science as long as Christian Theological Technoscience is conceived and practiced as the union of 'Christian Theological Science. understood as coordinate system of Scientific Theology, Mystical Theology, Practical Theology and Technical Theology' with 'Christian

Theological Technology as the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of Technical Theology to defend and promote the well-being of the human individual in mind and body and the social, particularly socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness (in its various ramifications: the family and ethnicity, the people and community, the nations and kingdoms).

- The dependence of Faith and Reason on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness and reliability as ground for their inseparability from one another Faith and Reason depend on one another for them to be credible, trustworthy, and reliable. On the one hand, if reason wants to be credible, trustworthy and, hence, reliable, it has to be credulous, it has to be believing, for it cannot say that it does not believe anything or in anything at all, for it believes at least in itself, believes that it is existing, believes in the truthfulness of its premises and, only so, of its conclusions. If reason is incredulous up to the point of not believing in itself, not believing its existence to be real, or does not believe in the truthfulness of its premises and conclusions, it not only is a liar and thus loses credibility, becomes untrustworthy, cannot be taken serious, and is thus unreliable but also is absurd and makes itself ridiculous. If reason does not believe in itself, it cannot believe in others, 1) it can neither believe in other things, 1a) be they things in the form of events (e.g. the inevitable occurrences of overwhelming things like the falling of the darkness or of the rainwater, the rising of the sun, the passing of time from one period to the other, or the acts and actions and activities of persons like the passing of persons from one place as space to the other, or from one state as situation to the other), 1b) be they things in the form of objects (e.g. the darkness, the rainwater, the Sun, the places as spaces or the states as situations in which one finds oneself or into which one has been driven by oneself or by another than oneself, 2) nor can it believe in persons, 2a) be it that it cannot believe in created persons (namely in the angels and in humans), 2b) be it that it cannot believe in uncreated as supernatural, eternal, divine persons (namely in God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit), wherefore 3) it cannot believe in those realities that are a union of persons and things, 3a) be it that it cannot believe in the union of uncreated

persons with uncreated things (like in the divine Trinity), 3b) be it that it cannot believe in the union of an uncreated person with created things (like in the incarnate Word of God), or 4) it cannot believe in those realities that are a union of an uncreated thing and a created thing - e.g. it cannot believe in the mystical life of the divinely living human soul as (of that single unit the unity of which results from) the union of the human soul with the divine life in such a way that on the one hand the divine life penetrates and permeates the human soul and remains inherent in the soul, while in the other hand the human soul binds itself to the divine life and participated in the divine life and remains adherent to the divine life, with God permitting and enabling this bond and participation and adherence, whereby: i) on account of the inherence of the divine life in the human soul and the adherence of the human soul to the divine life, the divinely living soul acts coherently, logically, consistently, consequentially and thus produced actions and activities and works that have coherence and hence logicity, consistency and consequentiality among them, whereas ii) during the penetration and permeation of the soul by the divine life the soul falls into the state of stupor, being stupefied - benumbed or anesthetized, mesmerized or astonished, enchanted or charmed, utterly fascinated - by the stupendous beauty, sweetness and delight in the feeling of the current of the supernatural life entering into it, while iii) through the participation of the human soul in the divine life the soul is raised in holiness and perfection beyond the comparative level and attains the highest level of holiness and perfection accessible to Man as spiritual creature, such that is second to only the level that God the Creator reserved to Himself, and is effected in Man by the Holy Spirit through His transformation of Man resulting from His conformation of Man to the Godman Christ as to the Criterion of human Holiness and divine Master of human perfection, for it is through the participation of the human soul in the divine life that the soul attains that relatively superlative grade of goodness, of oneness or unity with itself, of trueness and truthfulness, of beauty and beautifulness, which is second only to God's own holiness and perfection as the absolutely superlative - unequaleable and supreme - grade of these Transcendentals. On the other hand, if faith (as divinely aided trustful acceptance of God by

Man) wants to be credible, i.e. trustworthy and, hence, reliable, it has to be reasonable, i.e. it has to make sense, it must have sense, it has to be meaningful, relevant to human needs, it should not be privy of sense, for otherwise it would make non-sense of itself, it should not be meaningless, irrelevant or impertinent to human needs. If faith (as divinely aided trustful acceptance of God by Man) is unreasonable, i.e. 1) if it does not make use of the human reason, it would be irresponsible, cannot make responses that correspond responsibly to realities it has perceived - i.e. intuited from inside or experience from outside - and on account of this irresponsibility it loses credibility, is untrustworthy, and is thus unreliable. 2) if faith it is privy of reason, devoid of reason, emptied of reason, a faith rationally inane, it would be acting senselessly, like a man that is drunk, or insane, mad, and, hence cannot be trusted, and cannot be relied upon. An unreasonable faith is also a faith that does not reason within the frame of maturity, hence a naive, childish, uncritical, gullible or frivolous faith. An unreasonable faith is also a faith that thinks outside the frame of virtue as the middle way, hence one that thinks in extremes, in exaggerations typical of fanatics or in reductionisms typical of simplistics. Unreasonable Faith is at its best only as a faith that cannot reason logically (be it argumentatively in syllogisms, be it comparatively in analogies) with itself and on itself and therefore cannot reason logically with and on realities outside: it is 1) neither able to reason logically on other things, be it 1a) on events (e.g. on the inevitable occurrences of overwhelming things like the falling of the snow or of the rainwater, the passing of time from one moment or period to the other, be it 1b) on objects (e.g. on the snow, on rainwater, on places as spaces, on time and on moments of periods of time), 2) nor able to reason logically with other persons, be it 2a) with fellow created persons (namely with fellow human persons, or with the angels), be it 2b) with uncreated persons (i.e. with the divine persons, namely with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit).

- From the dependence of Faith and Reason on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability, results the inseparability of Science and Religion, of Science and Faith, etc, and of Religion

and Culture, of Religion and Reason, etc. As long as Faith and Reason depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability, they are inseparable from one another. As long as anything that is based on Faith (e.g. Religion, Prayer, Adoration) is inseparable from Faith, it is inseparable from Reason through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. Similarly as long as anything that is based on Reason (e.g. Science, Culture, Technics, Technology) is inseparable from Reason, it is inseparable from Faith through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. Anything that is based on Faith (e.g. Religion, Spirituality, Prayer, Adoration) and anything that is based on Reason (e.g. Science, Culture, Politics and Diplomacy, Technics and Technology) - depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and hence reliability, and - are therefore inseparable from one another through, or because of, the inseparability of Faith and Reason. Therefore in particular: 1)) Religion and Reason (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through, or because of, the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 2)) Religion and Science (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 3)) Religion and Culture (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 4)) Religion and Technics (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason 5)) Religion and Technology (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 6)) Science and Faith (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 7)) Science and Prayer (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of)

the inseparability of Faith and Reason. 8)) Science and Adoration (depend on one another for their credibility, trustworthiness, and reliability and hence) are inseparable from one another through (or because of) the inseparability of Faith and Reason. If Faith (as divinely aided trustful acceptance of God by Man) is incredible, then also will be incredible every human act, action and activity that is based on faith or in which faith is used by Man. But such faithbased human act, action, and activity is 'Religion' Religion as a thing can be defined from the point of view of a thing in the form of an object and from the point of view of a thing in the form of an event. From the point of view of Religion as a thing in the form of an object, Religion is that single unit which has a trinitarian structure similar to the trinitarian structure of God that consists in the unity existing out of the eternal union of 'the three nameable persons in the numerically one God, called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit' with 'the one and indivisible ineffable (unnameable) thing of God that only the divine name is and can be (since only name has no name, the name of name is name, the name of God expresses what God is, the essence of God, consisting in God's being the first and the last Being and from which results the nature of God as the union of all the attributes of God that derive from the divine essence as from God's being the first and the last Being. For from the point of view of its (trinitarian) structure, Religion is that single unit the unity of which results from the union of 1) the essence of Religion as dialogue and interaction between 'God's Words and Actions towards Man and Man's responses to God's words and reactions to God's actions', from which results the nature of Religion consisting in the union of 'Man's quest for God and search for God, questions at God and requests at God' and 'God's self-revelation to Man, leaving Himself be found by Man, giving adequate answers to Man's questions, and granting to Man the human requests at Him', and 2) the particular three diverse relations 2a) the intra-relation between 'God's self-assertive words as what or who God says Himself to be' and 'Man's trustful acceptance of God's self-assertive words regarding what and who He is' called Faith), and 2b) the inter-relation between 'God's imperative - invitational, mandatory, and admonitory - words' and 'Man's obedience to God and compliance with the imperative - invitational, mandatory,

admonitory - words' of God' (called *Morals*), and 2c) the extra-relation between "God's promissory words to Man" and "Man's worship of God with the joy and hope caused in Man by the divine promises and when he intuits (inwardly perceives) and experiences (outwardly perceives) the fulfilment of the divine promises" (called *Cult*). Thus involved in the concept of Religion are persons, namely God and Man, and things, namely relation, actions and reactions, quests and requests, searching and finding, words and responses, questions and answers, reason for human existence, Cult around God, Faith in God, *Morals* of obedience to God and compliance with His words, divine Trinity and eternal life. The reality 'Religion' is intelligible because it has a structure. Structure is the principle of intelligibility. The structure of a reality is the principle of the intelligibility of that reality. However Religion is only a means to an end, it is not the end itself. The end to which Religion is a means consists in the accomplishment of the trinitarian reason why the triune God as the God in whom there are three persons united with the one and same indivisible divine essence made the human being in the image and likeness of the three persons in one God. And such reason consists in Man's 'knowing God, loving God and serving God here on earth' in order 'hereafter in heaven to live eternally with God the life of God (as the life going on eternally inside God among the three persons in one God called the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit, and such innerdivine life lived by the three is their life of eternal love for one another, eternal joy at one another, eternal glorification of one another, and eternal peace with one another)'. God is structurally triune, consequently Religion as a means to reach the above named end has a trinitarian structure, since for a means to be adequate the structure of that means (instrument, e.g. a container) must correspond, be conformed, be adapted, to the structure of the object (e.g. the content) which the means is meant to grasp, comprehend, embrace, encircle, encompass, enclose. Religion has a trinitarian structure in the sense that it is structured in correspondence to the trinitarian structure of God which consists in the unity existing out of the eternal union of 'the three nameable persons in the numerically one God called the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit' with 'the one and indivisible ineffable (unnameable) thing of God that only the

divine name is and can be (since only name has no name, the name of name is name, the name of God expresses what God is, the essence of God consisting in God's being the first and the last Being). Understood from its trinitarian structure Religion is the relation, dialogue, interaction, union 1) essentially between 'God's Words and Actions towards Man and Man's responses to God's words and reactions to God's actions', and 2) existentially 2b) between 'Man's quest for God and search for God, questions at God and requests at God' and 'God's self-revelation to Man, leaving Himself be found by Man, giving adequate answers to Man's questions, and granting to Man the human requests at Him' (Cult), 2b) between 'God's self-assertive words as what or who God says Himself to be and Man's trustful acceptance of God's self-assertive words (cf. Faith)', and 2c) between 'God's imperative - invitatory, mandatory, and admonitory - words' and 'Man's obedience to God and compliance with the imperative - invitatory, mandatory, admonitory - words' of God' (cf. Morals). Thus involved in the concept of Religion are persons, namely God and Man, and things, namely relation, actions and reactions, quests and requests, searching and finding, words and responses, questions and answers, reason for human existence, Cult around God, Faith in God, Morals of obedience to God and compliance with His words, divine Trinity and eternal life. But involved in the Sciences is also God as the Creator whose creatures together with the creativities of Man as of the creature made by God in the image and resemblance of Himself are the objects of the Sciences. From the point of view of Religion as a thing in the form of an event, Religion is that human love for the divine Wisdom as a person which consists in that self-binding of Man to God that presupposes 'God's allowing and enabling of humans to bind themselves to Him' and 'that virtue of fear of offending the Lord that the divine Spirit inherent in the divine Wisdom as a person gives as gift to humans and that constitutes the beginning of wisdom as a thing in the form of an object and event that effects the avoidance of that self-separation of Man from God which is contrary to that self-binding of Man to God which, together with God's allowing and enabling of humans to bind themselves to Him, constitute the essence of Religion. The Formula for the Doctrine of the

interdependence of Science and Religion reads: “A Science that denies God or is indifferent to Him or attacks Him cannot be good, because what is good cannot be against what is good, and God is good - and in fact goodness itself in person as the source of the goodness of the various good things - and science is good, whereby to be good is to be suitable to, and therefore useful to, and therefore desirable by, a living being. Therefore don't accept a Science as true that is privy of Religion, and don't accept a Religion as true that is against, or indifferent to, Science” (*Non accettare una Scienza come vera che sia priva di Religione, non accettare una Religione come vera che sia contro o indifferente alla Scienza*). “Don't accept a Science as true that is no longer credible, trustworthy, as long as it separates itself, or even has separated itself already, 1) from God as the Creator, thus Efficient Cause, of the objects - as the material cause - of the Sciences, and therefore, 2) from the faith in God, hence 3) from Religion, hence 4) from Christianity, hence 5) from the Church of Christ (*Non accettare una Scienza come vera che non sia più' credibile in quanto si separi o persino si sia già separata 1) da Dio quale Creatore, ossia causa efficiente, degli oggetti quali causa materiale, delle Scienze e, quindi, 2) dalla fede in Dio e, quindi 3) dalla Religione, quindi, 4) dal Cristianesimo, quindi, 5) dalla Chiesa di Cristo*’.) As long as Religion is based on faith, and science is based on Reason , but faith and reason are inseparable, it follows that Religion and Reason are inseparable through the inseparability of faith and reason, similarly Science and Faith are inseparable because of the inseparability of faith and reason, consequently Religion and Science are inseparable because of the inseparability of faith and reason . Therefore do not accept a Religion as true that is no longer credible, no longer trustworthy and, hence not reliable, as long as it separates itself from or even has separated itself already from reason (*E non accettare una Religione come vera che non sia più' credibile in quanto si separi o persino si sia già separata 1) dalla ragione e, quindi, 2) tutti gli atti o azioni o attività umani che sono basati sulla ragione (ratio), quindi dagli atti, azioni e attività spirituali, ossia dalla preghiera (oratio) quale implorazione (impl-oratio) e adorazione (ad-oratio), e dagli atti, azioni e attività intellettuali, ossia dalla Scienza, dalla Tecnica, dalla Tecnologia, dalla Cultura*].

- That there is God, as against those who deny His existence, presence and relevance, the contemporary Theology shows it from a peculiar point of view God, having spoken, must be a living Being, since the dead cannot speak; and having been heard, He is perceptible; and having been understood He is intelligible; and, being intelligible, He must be a structured living being, for structure is the principle of intelligibility, an unstructured, is not intelligible, a formless, amorphous, shapeless, reality cannot be understood. And God, having spoken words that are intelligible to intelligent beings like humans and Angels, must be a living person. For, a person is that spirit - intelligent living being, a living being capable of understanding - that is capable of producing words that are intelligible to fellow spirits. 2)) God - having said “let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves” (Gen 1, 26) - must numerically be not a single person but rather a collective person (family, community), an aggregate of persons of a certain number. 3)) God - having appeared to Abraham in the form of three men (cf Gen 18, 1-2a) - must be an aggregate (family, community) of three persons. 4)) As long as at the beginning of the visit of these three men to him, Abraham adored them by bowing to the ground in front of them (cf. Gen 18, 1-2), while Abraham as our father in faith knows before and better than any one of us else that idolatry, the worship of creatures and of creativities of creatures, is against the commandment of God that only God the Creator is to be adored (cf. “You shall have no gods except me...you shall not bow down to them or serve them. For I, Yahweh, your God, am a jealous God” Dt. 5: 7. 9), and Abraham would not have worshipped them if he did not recognize them to be eternal, supernatural, non created persons, it follows that these three persons must be divine persons in human form, three divine persons in the form of three men, showing that God can come to man in human form, and this rightly so, because if God wants to be received by man He has to come to man in human form, since whatever is received, is received according to the mode of the receiver, and this coming of God in human form to man shows that man can reckon with the incarnation of the Word (cf Jo 1, 14). 5)) As long as God had earlier said to Moses that Yahweh, the Lord, is the name by which He is to be invoked by men in all generations (cf.

Ex 3,15), wherefore Abraham who had recognized the three men to be rather divine persons in human form, had to call them Lord, but he did not call the three together “my Lords”, but rather “my Lord” (cf Gen 18, 3). It follows that the three adored, and hence adorable, and hence divine, persons are altogether not three lords, hence not three gods, but rather only one God, and therefore that there are 'three persons in one God'. 6)) And as long as the three persons at the end of their visit, with one voice, together, said to Abraham “I shall visit you again next year without fail” (Gen 18, 10), and not “we shall visit you again next year”, it follows that there is “one God in three persons”. 7)) In synthesis: God exists and is perceptible and is numerically only one God (“Besides me there is no other God” Is 44,6), but not one person (“Let us make man in our own image and in the likeness of ourselves” Gen 1, 26), but one thing. God is not one person, God is not one solitary person (“He is one God, yet not solitary.” (Formula 'Fides Damasi', in: Peter Huenermann, editor, Heinrich Denzinger, Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals, 43rd edition, Ignatius Press San Francisco, 2012, n.71). God is rather a family of three persons of one divine substance, the first of whom is the Father, the second the Son, the third the Holy Spirit. As long as, on the one hand, there are “three persons in one God”, and this one God in whom there are three persons is “one God in three persons”, it follows that God is contemporaneously and unitedly and immediately “one in three” (“one God in three persons”, not “one person in three gods”) and “three in one” (“three persons in one God”, not “three Gods in one person”), and such structure of God is what is called the divine Trinity. Thus, the divine Trinity is like a medal of two sides, the one side of which is called 'God is three in one', while the other side is called 'God is one in three'. The numerically one living (and, hence, respiring and self-reproducing) God contains an intertwining of the three divine persons (God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, each of whom is the union of one of the three persons in the numerically one God with the one and indivisible divine essence). The intertwining results from the order of two diverse originations that are eternal taking place within the numerical one living God: namely the origination of the Son from

only the Father by being generated from the substance of God the Father by the Father, and the origination of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son at the same time by proceeding from the Father and the Son together as long as He is that eternal, most pure, holy, vitally indispensable, sacrosanct, and only one Breath of life that is a person that the Father and the Son contemporaneously breathe in from one another at the same time that they contemporaneously breathe Him out to one another, with the consequence that this unique Breath of life proceeds from the Son to the Father at the same time that He is proceeding from the Father to the Son. From the inner-divine intertwining of the three divine persons results in turn the trinitarian structure of God as of the numerically one God who calls all non-human beings into existence through speaking His Word and makes only the human being with His divine hands, first making the living human being out of the union of the watered dust from the soil and a breath of life from Himself, and secondly making the woman out of a rib as bone from the side of the man and a flesh as the contrary of bone. The divine Wisdom is one of the three interchangeable components of that only one Son of God who is constituted by His being the image of the Substance of God the Father, His being the Wisdom as the breath of the power of God, and His being the eternal creative Word of God, and the Son of God is, in turn, one of the three persons in one God (called the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) who, in turn, are together one of the two contrary - opposite but not opposed - components of the divine Trinity (as that Trinity that consists in the unity existing out of the union of, on the one hand, the three nameable persons in the numerically one God and, on the other hand, the one and indivisible ineffable thing of God that only the divine name is and that expresses the divine essence consisting in God's being the first and the last Being), the divine Trinity being, in turn, only one of the two components of the unitriune God as of the one and triune God, for the unity or numerical oneness of God and the Trinity or trinitarian structure of God constitute together the unitrinity of the unitriune God.

- The interdependence of Science and Religion for their credibility, trustworthiness and reliability is such that if reason is not credible,

then also every human act, action and activity that is based on reason or in which reason is used by Man, will lose credibility and hence reliability; but such human acts, actions and activities are the intellectual ones, namely, “Culture”, “Science”, “Techne”, “Technology”; and similarly if faith is not credible, then also every human act, action and activity that is based on faith or in which faith is used by Man, will lose credibility and hence reliability; but such human acts, actions and activities are the spiritual ones, namely “Religion”, “Prayer” and “Adoration”.. But faith and reason are interdependent from the fact that the credibility of faith depends on the reasonableness of faith, and the credibility of reason depends on the credulity of reason. But Religion is built on faith, while Science is built on Reason. It follows that Science and Religion are interdependent. The two enjoy a relationship of conditioning one another (*gegenseitiges Bedingungsverhaeltnis*). In order to exist, Science needs both Man as its indispensable subject (efficient cause) and God as the Provider of the indispensable object (material cause) of the Sciences; and in order to exist Religion needs both Man (who himself is also the indispensable subject or efficient cause of Science) and God (who Himself is also the Provider of the indispensable object (material cause of Science)). Therefore Science by needing God for its object and needing Man for its subject needs Religion Science depends on Religion as long as Religion is based on God The Scientist cannot get finished with God, cannot be done with God, cannot eschew God from their scientific activity, rather in the activity of the Scientist God is as inevitable as He is indispensable, and the Scientist is permanently dependent on God the Creator, on the creatures of God as the proper objects of their scientific activity, on Christ the Godman as the incarnate Word of God through whom, in His pre-incarnate state, God has called into existence the objects of scientific activities (Research, Study, Teaching), and on certain pertinent creativities of the creatures of God like those of Man as of the only one creature that the Creator made in the image of Himself. The dependence of the Scientist on God is generally in the sense that only the living human beings exercise the scientific activities (Research, Study, Teaching), and all life comes from God. The dependence of the Scientist on the creatures of God is particularly in

the sense that the objects of scientific activities are all directly or indirectly the beings that were created by God, be it those called into existence by God through His eternal creative Word in its pre-incarnate state, be it those made by God, not by word of His mouth, but rather with His infallible hand. When God says “let there be light” (Gen 1:3), light is object of physics. And when God says “let there be a vault - called heaven - in the waters to divide the waters into two between the waters above the vault and the waters under the vault” (Gen 1: 6-8) water is the object of chemistry. And when God says “let dry land appear - the earth - appear from the coming together of the waters under heaven into a single masse” (cf. Gen 1: 9-10), dry earth is object of geology and chemistry. And when God says “let the earth produce vegetation, seed-bearing plants, and fruit trees bearing fruits with their seed inside” (cf. Gen 1: 11-12), plants and trees and fruits and seeds are the object of the biological science of botany. And when God says “let there be lights in the vault of heaven to divide day from night, and let them indicate festivals, days and years, lights in the vault of heaven to shine on the earth, the greater light, the Sun, to govern the day, the smaller light, the moon to govern the night together with the stars” (Gen 1: 14-16) the lights as the Sun and the moon and the stars are object of the geographical and astronomical sciences, while the events of the night and day are the object of the science of history. And when God says “let the waters teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth within the vault of heaven” (Gen 1: 20) or “let the earth produce every kind of living creature: cattle, reptiles or every kind of wild beast” (Gen 1: 24), these living creatures are the objects of the biological science of zoology. And when God says “let us make man in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves” (Gen 1, 26), man created as male and female in the image of God as the first and the last as of two contrary, opposite but not opposed beings is the object of Anthropology, Sociology, Psychology, Medical Studies, Political Science, Economics, Jurisprudence. As long as the Scientist whose object of study and of research is the Creator God or a certain creature of God, but the eternal creative Word of God through whom the Creator God and all things were created such that the Creator God and all His creatures can be understood and known at best by and

through the same creative Word, but Jesus Christ is the name given to this eternal Word when this Word is in His incarnate state, namely when this Word is the incarnate Word, it follows that God and all His creatures as the object of the Sciences can be understood and known at best by and through Jesus Christ the incarnate Word. And as long as the goal of the Scientist is to understand and know the Creator God and the creatures of God, but the Creator God and all His creatures as the object of the Sciences can be understood and known at best by and through Jesus Christ the incarnate Word, it follows that the Scientist if he wants to understand and know the object of his scientific activity at best must pass through Jesus Christ, must switch on, consult, Jesus Christ, must wear, or put on, Jesus Christ, must be built on Jesus Christ The dependence of the Scientist on the creativities of the creatures of God, particularly on the creativities of Man as of the only creature made by God in the image of Himself is in the sense that the Scientist as Teacher, Researcher, and Student or Learner from a Master as from an authoritative and exemplary teacher , needs such creativities of Man like Language and Music to communicate his teaching, and needs such creativities of Man like Mathematics to work out the result of his researches (inquires, investigations), and needs such creativities of Man like Arts to facilitate his studying as learning from a Master as from an authoritative and exemplary teacher . That Religion is not for those who lack intelligence and reason and humans are not so intelligent as to be able to accomplish anything alone by their own power and effort without God this fact has been shown severally by Theologians especially of the Age of Science and of Technoscience as of the union of Science with Technology, so much that it is meanwhile an obsolete standpoint to uphold that “African problems that require technology will not be solved by theology”, an assertion as anachronistic and misleading as it is in error, a statement as sweeping and undifferentiated as it betrays unawareness of, and inattentiveness to, the current stand of research for solution to the core problems that are holding back the liberation of Africa and Africans from the long standing vicious circle of unproductivity, poverty, hunger, sickness, and vicious spiral of joblessness, anger, hatred, violence, killing, stagnation, corruption, disdain and ridicule.

One would do well to get oneself rapidly informed and acquire the missing knowledge of the current stand of the serious efforts being made towards the solution of the named problems, by reading the article: Prof J. Egbulefu, Attempts to provide a vision and strategic plan to assist Africa emerge from misery and marginalization in the overall movement of globalization”, in: Emmanuel M.P Edeh, The Church of Jesus the Saviour in Africa, Vol.Two, Madonna University Press, Enugu (Nigeria), 2009, pp. 58-157. Moreover, seen in the mirror of the ongoing practice of the Inculturated Technoscientific Theology, the assertion that “African problems that require technology will not be solved by theology” can not survive scrutiny and is as overtaken by events as it meanwhile has been contradicted and is invalid. One would do well to see how much that assertion has meanwhile been proved wrong, by reading the article: “John Okoro Egbulefu, Inculturated Technoscientific Theological System as Instrument for the production of material goods with which the Church can prolong the material salvation accomplished by Christ through His miracles”, in: <https://congregatiochristiemanuelis.blogspot.com/2020/05/theology-of-rev-fr-prof-j-egbulefu-ccc.html?m=1>. Under Inculturated Technoscientific Theological System is precisely meant that Inculturatedly Technoscientific Christian Theology as a System which is modeled on the System of the Incarnate Word and hence is technically called Intechnoscientific Christian Theology. Inculturatedly Technoscientific Christian Theology is Christian Theology united with Technoscience as with the proper contemporary global Culture (the proper culture of the present time world wide), a union from which arises the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology and which is modeled on the union of the divine Word with the human flesh from which is arise the incarnate divine Word

2.2.2 Position

a. *Intechnoscientific Christian Theology* is that Union of the Christian Theology (as of the union of 'the Christian Faith in the Word of God about the Unitriune God and the Godman' with 'the Christian Reason for the existence of Man on earth as for God's creation of Man') with Technoscience (as with the union of Science and Technology).

application of the goods produced by the technical Sciences to the defence and promotion of the progress to their perfection of the welfare and innate capacities of the human being as individual and collectiveness). Faithbased Prayer (petition) was instituted by Jesus where and when He said to His disciples: “Trust in God still, and trust in me” (Jn 14:1). “Make your home in me, as I make mine in you” (Jn 15: 4); “If you remain in me and my words remain in you, you may ask what you will and you shall get it” (Jn 15: 7); “ask, and it shall be given to you” (Mt 7: 7); “If you ask for anything in my name, I will do it” (Jn 14: 14); “When you pray, go to your private room and, when you have shut your door pray to your Father who is in that secret place, and your Father who sees all that is done in secret will reward you” (Jn 6:6). “Your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So you should pray like this: Our Father in heaven, may your name be held holy, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we have forgiven those who are in debt to us. And do not put us to the test, but save us from the evil one” (Mt 6: 8b-13). Faithbased Science (comprising Research, Teaching, and Studies as learning from an authoritative and exemplary Teacher) was instituted by Jesus where and when He said to His disciples: “Trust in God still, and trust in me” (Jn 14: 1) and “search, and you shall find” (Mt 7: 7), seeking thereby first the kingdom of God your Father and his righteousness: “Set your hearts on his kingdom first, and on his righteousness. and all these other things will be given to you as well”(Mt 6: 33). “You cannot be the slave both of God and of money” (Mt 6: 24b). Faithbased Technology (as the application of the goods produced by the technical Sciences to the defence and promotion of the progress of the welfare and innate capacities of the human being as individual and collectiveness to their perfection) was instituted by Jesus where and when He said to His disciples : “Trust in God still, and trust in me” (Jn 14: 1), “Make your home in me, as I make mine in you” (Jn 15: 4), “Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15: 5), and “knock, and the door will be opened to you”(Mt 7: 7), “I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself, he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask for in my name I will do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (Jn 14, 12-13). To believe in Christ is to make one's home in him as Christ has made his home in the one and to remain in Christ as Christ remains in the one, only such a believer in Christ can bear much fruit to

- (i) the structure of which is modelled on the structure of the incarnate Word (as of the union of the divine Word with the human flesh, the union of the Word of divine nature with the flesh of human nature, the union of the divine nature of the Word with the human nature of the flesh, the union of each of the three constituents of the divinity of the incarnate Word as of the Godman comprising 'the divine Word, the divine Life lived by the divine Word, and the divine Will done by the divine Word in the womb of the Virgin Mary' with each of the three constituents of the humanity of the incarnate Word comprising the human body, the human soul and the human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and uniting the soul with the body, and thus
 - (ii) in which the mediated union of the Christian Theology with Technoscience is effected threefold by Science tending irrevocably to Reason, by Faith tending irrevocably to Technology, and by the fusion of Faith tending irrevocably to Science with Science tending irrevocably to Faith at the point of infinity or endlessness, and
 - (iii) which is in vogue or has begun to be done in the history of theology only in the contemporary technoscientific Era - the Era of the union and teamwork of Science and Technology, and
 - (iv) which uses Theological Technoscience (through technical Theology that presupposes the scientific, mystical and practical theologies) instituted by Christ to produce material goods with which to prolong to all nations and generations the material goods with which the Church can prolong or extend to all nations and generations the material salvation of humans which God had prepared already at creation and Christ had accomplished with His miracles through which He produced and distributed such goods to humans in His time in Israel.
- b. Christ has instituted the theological Technoscience by instituting the various components of such a Technoscience which are the three methods to be used by the Church to effect relatively superlative wonder works, numerous minor miracles, if not to perform the same wonder works as Jesus performed, producing the same miraculous objects or causing the same miraculous events that Jesus had produced or caused in His time. And such three methods are namely 1) Faithbased Prayer (petition), 2) Faithbased Science (comprising Research, Teaching, and Studying as learning from an authoritative and exemplary teacher), and 3) Faithbased Technology (as the

the greater glory of the triune God: “Whoever remains in me, with me in him, bears fruit in plenty; for cut off from me you can do nothing” (Jn 15, 5). “It is to the glory of my Father that you should bear much fruit, and then you will be my disciples” (Jn 15, 8). However, both such belief in Christ and the consequent capability (as union of capacity and ability) of the believer to perform the same works that Christ did and even greater works - all these take place by the power and working of the Holy Spirit, they pass through the inspirations and infusions of knowledge as of power received by the believer from the light-giving Holy Spirit as the Spirit of splendid truth, of whom Christ tells his disciples, saying: “He will teach you everything” (Jn 14, 26a) and thus “will lead you to the complete truth” (cf Jn 16, 13a), since he not only “will remind you of all I have said to you” (in the past, Jn 14, 26b) but also “will tell you of the things to come” (in the future, Jn 16, 13b), and thus “will glorify me, since all he tells you will be taken from what is mine. Everything that the Father has is mine” (Jn 16, 14-15a).”Father...all I have is yours and all you have is mine - *omnia mea Tua et omnia Tua mea* - and in them I am glorified” (Jn 17, 10). Accordingly, the still greater works that whoever believes in Christ will be capable of performing are works that come from the Father as the living God and His incarnate Son Jesus Christ to both of whom together belong all that is good, since what belongs to the Father belongs to the Son and what belongs to the Son belongs to the Father (cf. Jn 17, 10), for the Father is in the Son and the Son is in the Father (cf Jn 14, 11; 17, 21; like water is in the fish and the fish is in the water), and it is the Father, living in the Son, from whom comes through the Son (as Godman) to men all that is good, who is doing invisibly from inside the Son the work that the Son is doing visibly outside (cf Jn 14, 10b) to the greater glory of the Father and, hence also, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit both of whom are glorified together with Father.

- c. The deployment of faithbased Prayer, faithbased Science and faithbased Technology by the Church in her missionary engagement with prolonging to all nations and generations the material salvation accomplished by Jesus through His miracles is all the more justified by the two facts that i) Science is instituted by Christ for the salvation of men and ii) Science and technology derive from the intellectual human love for Wisdom as reality having his or its peculiar identity - his personhood (namely who he is) or its essence (what it is) and his/its nature (how he/it is and how he/it acts), his/its proper activities, namely what he/it does, hence his/its actions - operations and works, products

- and passions, and his /its substance (namely the power underlying all his/its activities). Since the Church cannot prolong the material salvation wrought by Christ by the same miraculous actions by which Christ as God accomplished it, she has to adapt to the divine methods where she cannot adopt them straight away, what is left for her is to prolong the material salvation wrought by Christ rather through Christ-willed methods and means instituted by Christ which are capable of effecting relative and minor miracles as wondrous works. And such methods are Faithbased Prayer (petition), Faithbased Science (comprising Research, Teaching, and Studies as learning from a Master as an authoritative and exemplary Teacher) and Faithbased Technology (as the application of the goods produced with the instrumentality of the technical Sciences to solve and resolve the material and existential - not so much the intellectual and moral and spiritual - needs of man on earth) as long as such methods lead to the attainment, discoveries and inventions (cf, “ask, search and knock at the door”) of relevant means for the amelioration of the quality of the human life in the form of better means of man's movement, of man's respiration, of man's perception and reaction to stimulus, of man's nutrition, of man's growth, promotion, progress, development, and of man's reproduction as well as for a better standard of man's protection, of man's communication, of man's wealth and welfare of mind and body.

- d. Theological Technoscience as the union of Theological Science and Theological Technology is the proper means or instrument with which the Church, adapting to the miracles as the means by which Christ effected the material salvation of Man, uses to produce material goods with which to prolong to all nations and generations the material salvation accomplished by Christ in His time in Israel.
- Theological Science is that Science the goal of which is the God that has generated the pre-incarnate divine Word as person through whom God has created all things and that has spoken to humans the words of life that stem from the incarnate Word as from the Life itself in person through whom God has redeemed the deviated and fallen humanity and from the Holy Spirit as from the Spirit of truth and light-and-life-giving Spirit through whom God sanctified the redeemed humanity by conforming them to the incarnate Word as incarnate Son of God Jesus Christ.

- Theological Technology is that Technology the practice of which consists in the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of technical Theology to solve and resolve the material needs of man on earth, to defend the human life and property to promote, propel the progress of, the development of the innate capacities in man to their perfection, and so-with to prolong to all nations and generations the material salvation accomplished by Christ in Israel in his time.
- Theological Technoscience is the proper means or instrument instituted by Christ and adapted by the Church to the miracles of Jesus as to the means by which Christ performed great wonder works for the material salvation of humans, be such performance in the form of producing mysteriously in superabundance material objects (like bread, fish, wine, money) with which to feed the hungry and satisfy the thirsty, solve and resolve the financial needs of debtors), be such performance in the form of causing mysterious events (like raising the dead, reviving the moribund, healing the physically or psychically sick, protecting and defending and restoring security and safety to the life and property of the violently threatened and endangered) human person in his singularity and in their collectiveness, whereby the Church seeing that she cannot do these miracles - in spite of the fact that Jesus told His disciples that any one who believes in Him and does not waver would be able to do the same great works as He Himself had done or was doing and that the one would even do them in greater number, what does not mean in greater quality, than He Himself did them (cf. Jn 14:12ss) - and thus cannot adopt the miracles of Jesus as means of producing material goods - had to rather resort to means instituted by Jesus and adapted to His miracles as to the proper means by which He performed wonder works for the material salvation of humans. For, though whatever Jesus, coming from above, does is ever greater than what humans on earth below can do - "He who comes from above is above all others...He whom God has sent speaks God's own words: God gives him the Spirit without reserve. The Father loves the Son and has entrusted everything to him" (Jn 3: 31.34-35) - yet Jesus did not leave the Church with no instruments to continue what Himself had done and commissioned them to prolong, extend, to all nations of the earth till the end of times. For, like the Father loves the Son whom He has generated, so the Son loves the Church that He has instituted. And like the Father has sent the Son to the world, so too has the

Son sent His Church to the whole world, to all the nations. And like the Son can do nothing by Himself, for He can do only what He sees the Father doing and whatever the Father does the Son does too, because the Father loves the Son and shows Him everything He does Himself - showing Him ever more and greater things and astonishing works, giving Him all powers in heaven and on earth, cf. Mt 28:18, such that as the Father raises the dead, giving them life, so too the Son gives life to anyone He chooses (cf. Jn 5: 19-20) - for, the Father who is the Source of life has made the Son the source of life (Jn 5:26), so too the Church can do nothing by herself, she can do only what she sees Christ doing and what Christ asked her to do. And like to have seen the Son is to have seen the Father (cf. Jn 14:9), so too to have seen the Church is (supposed to be!) to have seen Christ. And like it is the heavenly Father, living in the Son, that is doing this work (cf. Jn 14:10), so too it is the heavenly Christ who (being truly God) is omnipresent (i.e. present in all places at same time every time), and therefore is living in the Church at same time that He is living in heaven, is doing the work that the earthly Church (as the Church on evangelizing and hence salvific mission on earth to all the peoples of all the nations of the earth while at same time on spiritual journey to the inviting Heavenly Father, thus on earthly pilgrimage to heaven) is doing here on earth. And since whoever believes in Christ will perform the same works as Christ does Himself, the one will perform even greater works (cf. Jn 14:12) - like the moving of mountain is greater than the cursing of a barren fig tree to wither, hence e.g. “if you have faith and do not doubt at all, not only will you do what I have done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain : 'Get up and throw yourself into the sea', it will be done. And if you have faith, everything you ask for in prayer you will receive” (Mt 21:21-22) - it follows that for one to perform miracles one must have faith and that one who has faith can thereupon with prayer obtain uncountable number of miracles. Prayer comprises both praise to God and petition (supplication) to Him; but such petition is one of the three distinct but inseparable methods which Jesus has instituted for the solution of human problems in general and for the material redemption or salvation of Man from evil of all sorts in particular: suffering, poverty, hunger, sickness, bad government, etc: “ask, and it shall be given to you; search, and you will find; knock, and the door will be opened to you' (*Petite et datur vobis, quaerite et*

invenietis, pulsate et porta aperietur vobis cf. Mt. 7:7). The searching-to-find method is, on the intellectual plane, one of the three intellectual activities that constitute Science (comprising Research, Teaching and Studies as learning from a Master as authoritative and exemplary teacher). The knocking-to-get-the-door-opened (which in the digital language of today means the pressing of the door-bell to get the door opened by someone from inside, or the pressing of the button of the remote control to get the gate opened automatically, namely by itself) is, on the same intellectual plane, the intellectual activity engaged with Technology as the application of Science to open new avenues, roads, horizons, and the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of particularly the technical Sciences to solve and resolve the material needs of Man on earth, to defend the human life and property and to promote, propel the progress of, the development of the innate capacities in Man to their perfection. Thus “Faithbased Prayer (petition)”, “Faithbased Science (comprising Research, Teaching, and Studies as learning from a Master as from an authoritative and exemplary Teacher)”, and “Faithbased Technology (as the application of the goods produced by the technical Sciences to solve and resolve the material and existential - not so much the intellectual and moral and spiritual - needs of Man on earth)” are the proper three methods of effecting numerous miracles, of performing the same works, miraculous works, as Christ Himself, the Bringer of holistic (embracing material and existential, intellectual, moral and spiritual) salvation has done and of performing even greater miraculous works.

- e. The material goods produced by technical Theology are material goods for the defence of human life and the promotion, propelling of the progress, of the development of the seven innate capacities in the living human being to their perfection, and with which the Church can prolong to all nations and generations the material salvation accomplished by Christ through His miracles as wonder works. Such material goods that can be produced with the instrumentality of technical Theology for the defence of the human life and the promotion - propelling the progress - of the development of the seven innate capacities of the human being to their perfection embrace the means of perceiving and reacting to perceived material objects, means of movement or mobility, transport and communication, means of respiration, means of nutrition, means of healing or health care, means of growth or structural and

mental expansion and progress, means of self-reproduction or fecundity, means of security and safety of life and property, means of solving and resolving financial needs of humans, and means of governing well the human collectiveness (society, family, community, State, Nation, kingdom).

2.2.3 Expositions

- a. The Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing exists both in the form of an object and in the form of an event.
- b. The Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing in the form of an object is that inculturatedly Technoscientific Christian Theology which has resulted from the threefold mediated union of Christian Theology with Technoscience as with the proper contemporary global Culture (the proper culture of the present time world wide) and which is modeled on that incarnate Word that has resulted from the threefold mediated union of 'the eternal Word of God' with 'the human flesh taken from the Virgin Mary as the most appropriate human flesh' and that is at once truly God and truly Man, hence the Godman (Theandros), Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the Son of God that is eternal and of the same substance with God the Father and is thus one God with the Father and has been made man through the incarnation of the Word but without His ceasing to be God and is thus (ever since the incarnation of the Word took place in the womb of the Virgin Mary) God and Man in one person and, hence, is called the Godman (Theanthropos in general, but Theandros in particular; for: the Man that He became is male, Man of the masculine gender, since He became Man through the Word's taking flesh of human nature in view of His using the flesh of human nature to offer sacrifice on the Holy Cross for the redemption of the world, but it is the male, not the female, that is the proper material for offering the sacrifice of redemption as the second of the two sacrifices required before Man should arrive at the salvation to which God has invited him: the first sacrifice being the human procreation of the divinely created child, whereby only the female only whom between the two species or genders of the human being can be pregnant, is the proper material used for offering such a sacrifice, wherefore the male as the remaining and second of the only two species or genders of the human being is the proper material for offering the second as the only one and proper sacrifice for the redemption of the procreated child. The Godman, Jesus Christ, is the union of the 'in-carnate Word' (the divine Word penetrating into and permeating, and remaining inside, inherent in, the human flesh, cf. caro-carnis) with its contrary, its

opposite but not opposed counterpart, namely with the 'ad-verbal flesh' (the human flesh adhering to the Word, *verbum*, and participating in the life and function of the divine Word that is using the flesh to accomplish His redemptive, as theological, salvific, work and mission). Jesus is the Christ, and Christ is the Son of the living God, but the Son of the living God is of the one and same substance with the Father and is, thus, the first and the last being, and hence neither has any being before Him and thus has no beginning, nor has any being after Him and thus has no end, and, as long as He has neither a beginning nor an end, is thus eternal and all-embracing, hence omnipresent, omnipotent, omniscient, perfect, holy, paradoxical, mysterious, and, as long as He is eternal and omnipotent, is therefore God. Therefore Jesus is God. Consequently, by virtue of His being almighty, all-powerful, God, Jesus has power not only over all realities that are good but also over all that are bad, both the power of goodness and power over evil : 1) be it power over evil spirits, hence His power over the devil and the demons, 2) be it power over evil things - 2a) power over evil things that are in the form of events : 2aa) evil events in the form of evil acts, actions, activities, evil deeds, of persons, hence His power over sin, thus He never had sin in Him, He was always without any sin, hence had no original sin, and He never sinned, neither by omission by commission), or 2ab) evil events in the form of evil occurrences of things, like accidents and inevitable things, hence His power over death, earthquakes, storms, floods, and 2b) power over evil things that are in the form of evil objects, be it 2ba) non palpable evil objects like the evil conditions, situations or states in which realities as persons or things find themselves, hence His power over darkness, over suffering, thus over hunger or over sickness or over poverty, and be it 2bb) palpable evil objects like traps or ditches or obstacles, hence His power over tricks and over hindrances or impediments. The incarnate Word is that single unit the unity of which results from the mediated threefold union of 'the eternal creative Word of God, the divine Logos, living the divine life and doing the divine Will of the Father in the womb of the Virgin' generally with 'the human flesh taken from the Virgin Mary as the most appropriate human flesh and consisting in that complex unit the unity of which results from the mediated union of the human soul with the human body through the human spirit contained in the body and containing the soul and hence uniting the body and the soul', but particularly with the human body through three means: 'the divine Will', 'the human spirit', and 'the divinely living soul as the union of the human soul with the divine life', The eternal

creative Word of God, the divine Logos (as a non-created person that has no beginning and has willed no end), can be geometrically represented by a vertical line that is the shortest distance between two points and descends irreversibly southwards from the upper point that represents where the divine Word and divine Will and divine Life have no beginning to the lower point that represents where the divine Word has no end. The divine Will of the Father that His Son be made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word in the womb of the Virgin for the salvation of humans (a Will that is thus a non-created thing that has no beginning but has an end there in the Virgin's womb where it is accomplished) can thereby be geometrically represented by an oblique line that is the shortest distance between two points and descends irreversibly south-eastwards from the upper point that represents where the divine Will and divine Life and divine Word have no beginning to the lower point that represents where the human body has an end. The divine life (as 'an uncreated supernatural thing that has no beginning and no end') can thereby be geometrically represented by a horizontal sub-line that is the shortest distance between two points and stretches out irreversibly eastwards from the point representing where the divine Life and divine Will and divine Word have no beginning to the point of having no end (called the point of endlessness or of Infinity) as to the point that the divine life and the human soul have in common. The divine life is thus represented by the irreversible eastward movement of the Christian Faith tending to, looking for, in search of, Infinity, hence an infinitely oriented Christian Faith, as an event, hence an infinite Christian Faith as Christian Faith in Infinity (second only to the Christian Faith in Eternity) and in the Infinity of the Infinite, as an object. The created immortal human soul (as 'a thing that has a beginning but no end') can thereby be geometrically represented by a horizontal sub-line that is the shortest distance between two points and stretches out irreversibly westwards from the point representing where the human soul and human spirit and human body have a beginning to the point of having no end (called the point of endlessness or of Infinity) as to the point that the human soul and the divine life have in common. The human soul is thus represented by the irreversible westward movement of Science in general tending to, looking for, in search of, Infinity, hence 'the infinitely oriented Science, as an event', hence 'a Science of Infinity and of the Infinite, as an object'. The created immortal human spirit (as 'a thing that has a beginning but no end') can thereby be geometrically represented by an oblique line that is the shortest distance between two points and descends

irreversibly south-westward from the upper point that represents where the human spirit and human soul and human body have a beginning to the lower point that represents where the divine Word has no end. The human spirit (as a created immortal thing that has a beginning but no end) is thus represented by the oblique line as the shortest distance between two points and descends irreversibly south-westward from the upper point that represents where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning to the lower point that represents where the divine Word has no end. The created mortal human body (as 'a thing that has both a beginning and an end') can thereby be geometrically represented by a vertical line that is the shortest distance between two points and descends irreversibly southwards from the upper point that represents where the human body and human spirit and human soul have a beginning to the lower point that represents where the human body has an end. The human body as a created and mortal thing (that has a beginning and an end) is thus represented by the vertical line on the right as the shortest distance between two points and stretching out irreversibly from the upper point that represents where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning to the lower point that represents where the human body has an end. The divinely living human soul (as the single unit resulting from the fusion of the human soul with the divine life) can thereby be geometrically represented by the long horizontal line that is the shortest distance between two points and stretching out irreversibly on the one hand, eastwards, from the point that represents where the divine life and divine Will and divine Word have no beginning to the point of having no end called the point of endlessness or of Infinity as the point that the divine life and the human soul have in common, and, on the other hand, westwards, from the point that represents where the human soul, human spirit and human body have a beginning to the point of having no end called the point of endlessness or of Infinity as the point that the human soul and the divine life have in common. Consequently two of the six components of the incarnate Word, namely 'the uncreated divine Word as a person that has neither a beginning nor an end' and 'the created mortal human body as a thing that has both a beginning and an end', stand to one another like two vertically parallel lines united to one another by three means: 1) the oblique line that diagonally unites the two vertical parallels stretching from the point where the vertical line on the right representing the human body has a beginning, south-westward to the point where the vertical line on the left representing the divine Word has no end, whereby such an oblique line and diagonal represents the

human spirit in the incarnate Word; 2) the oblique line that diagonally unites the two vertical parallels stretching from the point where the vertical line on the left representing the eternal creative Word has no beginning, south-eastwards to the point where the vertical line on the right representing the human body has an end, whereby such an oblique line and diagonal represents the divine Will in the incarnate Word and 3) the horizontal diametrical line of two parts, the first part being that the horizontal sub-line - representing the divine life as an eternal thing that has no beginning and no end - stretches from the point where the vertical line on the left representing the eternal creative Word has no beginning, eastwards to the point representing where the divine life and the human soul together have no end, while the second part of the bipartite horizontal line represents the human soul as created thing that has a beginning but no end and stretches from the point where the vertical line on the right representing human body has a beginning, westwards to the point representing where the human soul and the divine life together have no end, whereby such a horizontal and diametrical line represents inside the incarnate Word the divinely living human soul as the single unit resulting from the fusion of the human soul with the divine life. There is a chain of correspondences between the components of the incarnate Word and the components of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology that is modelled on the incarnate Word. To the divine Word, the eternal creative Word of God, the divine Logos, as an uncreated supernatural person (that has no beginning and no end and is represented by the vertical line on the left as the shortest distance between two points and descending southwards irreversibly from the upper point that represents where the divine Word and Life and Will have no beginning to the lower point that represents where the divine Word has no end) within the Incarnate Word corresponds within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology the Christian Theology The Christian Theology is an activity carried out by the human spirit within a coordinate system the two ordinates of which are the vertical axis and the horizontal axis, whereby the vertical ordinate or axis is formed by the alignment of the following four points: 'the divine Revelation in general', 'the Revelationbased Christian Religion', 'the Religionbased Christian Faith in the revealed Truth', and 'the Faithbased Christian Dogmas about God and the Godman', while the horizontal ordinate is formed by the alignment of the following four points: 'the human experience', 'the experiencebased Reasoning over the experienced Reality', 'the reasonbased Science', and 'the sciencebased Mathematics', such

that within the space between the two ordinates or axes there lie four points of incidence formed by the union of the named four points that are aligned to form the vertical ordinate ('the divine Revelation in general', 'the Revelationbased Christian Religion', 'the Religionbased Christian Faith in the revealed Truth', and 'the Faithbased Christian Dogmas about God and the Godman') with the named four points that are aligned to form the horizontal ordinate ('the human experience', 'the experiencebased Reasoning over the experienced Reality', 'the reasonbased Science', and 'the sciencebased Mathematics'): the first point of incidence is that formed by the union of 'the divine Revelation in general' with 'the human experience' and constitutes Scientific Theology the goal of which is to contribute to the realization of the first reason for the human existence on earth or why God created the human being, namely so that Man may know the perceived God; the second point of incidence is that formed by the union of 'the Revelationbased Christian Religion' with 'the experiencebased Reasoning over the experienced Reality' and constitutes Mystical Theology the goal of which is to contribute to the realization of the second reason for the human existence on earth or why God created the human being, namely so that Man may love affectionately the perceived and known God; the third point of incidence is that formed by the union of 'the Religionbased Christian Faith in the revealed Truth' with 'the reasonbased Science' and constitutes Practical Theology the goal of which is to contribute to the realization of the third reason for the human existence on earth or why God created the human being, namely so that Man may love performatively the perceived and known God; the fourth point of incidence is that formed by the union of 'the Faithbased Christian Dogmas about God and the Godman' with 'the sciencebased Mathematics' and constitutes Technical Theology the goal of which is to contribute to the realization of the fourth reason for the human existence on earth or why God created the human being, namely so that Man may serve the perceived, known and loved God. The oblique line formed by the alignment of these four points of incidence that constitute the four species of Christian Theology, namely Scientific Theology, Mystical Theology, Practical Theology, and Technical Theology, respectively is 'that shortest distance between the lower point representing Scientific Theology and the upper point representing Technical Theology which unites with the oblique line that is the shortest distance between 'that point of incidence of the long vertical ordinate or axis with the long horizontal ordinate or axis which constitutes the point Zero - representing that point of

departure which consists in the perception of God as requisite for the knowledge of God (as the goal of Scientific Theology), a knowledge that in turn is the requisite for the affectionate love for God (as the goal of Mystical Theology), an affection that in turn is the requisite for the performative love for God (as the goal of Practical Theology), a performance that in turn is the requisite for the service of God (as the goal of Technical Theology) - and that point of Union of 'the divine Revelation in general' with 'the human experience' that constitutes Scientific Theology to give rise to the elongated oblique line that results from the alignment of 'Technical Theology', 'Scientific Theology' and 'the point Zero representing the perception of God as the point of departure and requisite for Scientific Theology' and such long oblique line lying in the space between the vertical ordinate or axes and the horizontal ordinate or axis and unifying Technical Theology', 'Scientific Theology' and 'the point Zero representing the perception of God as the point of departure and requisite for Scientific Theology' represents Technical and scientific and prescientific Theology as the evidence that Christian Theology can be compatibly united with Technoscience as with the proper contemporary global Culture (the proper culture of the present time world wide), a union from which results that Inculturated Technoscientific Christian Theology as a System which is modelled on the System of the Incarnate Word and hence is technically called Intechnoscientific Christian Theology. To the human body within the Incarnate Word corresponds within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology the Technoscience as the contemporary global culture and as an activity done within a coordinate system the two ordinates of which are 'Science' and 'Technology', wherefore Technoscience is called 'Science searching for Technology' as the downward movement of the human reasoning from Science in general, through Technical Science in particular, to Technology. Science in general embraces 'researching to acquire theoretical knowledge (as knowledge of theories as of principles)', 'practicing, or applying as putting into practice, the acquired knowledge of the principles', and 'studying as learning from a Master of works to acquire from him technical knowledge (as knowledge of technical production of material goods like objects for feeding and healing and making movements and transportation, etc., or production of immaterial goods like good ideas for assuring good governance)', and 'teaching as transmission of all the acquired knowledge'; Technical Science in particular is the proper Science that produces material objects as material and immaterial goods. The

material goods to be produced with the instrumentality of the Technical Theology as of the proper Technical Science within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology are those to be applied to the human life for the material well-being of the human individual and for the material welfare of the human collectiveness in its diverse ramifications: family, community, society, ethnic groups, nation, people, kingdom. Such material goods are in the form of liquid or solid or gaseous material objects as means of fostering good human health and abundant human nutrition, swift and safer human movement or mobility, progressive human growth, assuring human fertility and fruitful childbearing, reducing the rate of mortality, increasing longevity, etc, and The immaterial goods to be produced with the instrumentality of the Technical Theology as of the proper Technical Science within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology are in the form of good ideas to be applied for the achieving and maintaining of good governance, i) ideas encapsulated in the formula for the practice of distributive justice, equity, the maintenance of equilibrium or balance in the distribution of forces and in the offering of equal opportunities to those who have right to participate in enjoying a common good, and ii) ideas encapsulated in the formula for the practice of Theodemocracy, the Theodemocratic System of salvific governing of the Nations as of mere fragments of the whole Universe that is being salvifically governed by the Godman (Theandros) Jesus Christ, the universal King of Kings and the only Saviour of the world, from whom all governors of the various Nations have first got to learn the proper art of salvific governing before beginning to govern the people of their different Nations. Technology is the application to life, the distribution, the use, of the technically produced material goods for the defence and promotion towards perfection partly of the physical and psychical well-being of the human individual and partly of the social welfare, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic, and sociology-political welfare, of the human collectiveness in all its ramifications: the human family, community, tribe, nation, people, kingdom, society. To the divine Will of the Father within the incarnate Word corresponds within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology the irreversible south-eastwards descending movement of the Christian Faith in particular and hence of Christian Theology as a whole towards Technology in particular and hence towards Technoscience as a whole, thus 'a Christian Theology tending to, looking for, in search of, Technoscience, hence a Technoscientifically oriented Christian Theology as an event, a Technoscientific Christian Theology as an object' through 'a

Christian Faith tending to, looking for, in search of, Technology, hence a Technological Christian Faith', whereby the Technoscientific Christian Theology as Christian Theology that passes through Technological Christian Faith as the Christian Faith that searches for Technology, is a part of Technoscientific Christian Theology as Christian Theology that searches for Technoscience. To the human spirit as a created immortal thing (that has a beginning but no end and is represented by the oblique line as the shortest distance between two points and descends irreversibly south-westward from the upper point that represents where the human body and soul and spirit have a beginning to the lower point that represents where the divine Word has no end) within the incarnate Word corresponds within the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology the irreversible movement of Science in particular and hence of Technoscience as a whole towards Reason in particular and hence towards Christian Theology as a whole, thus 'a Technoscience tending to, looking for, in search of, Christian Theology, hence a Christian Theologically oriented Technoscience as an event, a Christian Theological Technoscience as an object' through 'a Science tending to, looking for, in search of, Reason, hence through a Rational Science', whereby the Christian Theological Technoscience as Technoscience that passes through Rational Science, thus through Logic as the Science that searches for reason, is a part of Philosophy as the Science that searches for the ultimate causes of things. To the divinely living human soul as the fusion of the human soul with the divine life into a single unit that at once has no beginning (from the point of view of the divine life) and has a beginning (from the point of view of the human soul) within the Incarnate Word therefore corresponds in the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology the Christian Mysticism as the single unit resulting from the fusion of 'Science in general tending to, looking for, in search of, Infinity, hence the infinitely oriented Science, as an event, hence a Science of Infinity and of the Infinite, as an object'. with 'a Christian Faith tending to, looking for, in search of, Infinity, hence an infinitely oriented Christian Faith, as an event, hence an infinite Christian Faith as Christian Faith in Infinity (second only to the Christian Faith in Eternity) and in the Infinity of the Infinite, as an object'. Therefore the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing in the form of an object is that inculturated Christian Theology formed when the proper Culture that is united with the Christian Theology to form it is that contemporary global culture, the culture of the present day world wide which is called 'the technoscientific culture' or 'Technoscience as that present day

global culture which is nursed and nurtured within a system of coordinates the two ordinates of which are 'Science and Technology' in general, 'Technical Science and theandric Technology' in particular - 'theandric Technology' being the application of the material and immaterial goods produced with the instrumentality of 'Technical Theology' as of the proper Technical Science for the production of goods not only to the benefit (wellbeing, welfare) of the human individuals and human collectiveness (family, ethnicity, community, nation, society, people) but also to the praise of the Wisdom of God and, hence, to the glorification of the God of Wisdom as the Father of that Wisdom of God that the Son of God. For: The inculturated Christian Theology in general is that Theology based on Christ the Godman which arises from uniting Christian Theology (as Theology done within a system of coordinates the two ordinates of which are 'Faith and Reason', hence 'faith-based Religion and reason-based Science') with Culture ('the culture of the people, the popular culture'; 'the culture of the place, the local culture'; 'the culture of the time world wide, the contemporary global culture'; 'the fruit of the cultivation of the transcendentals, the metaphysical culture', or 'the fruit of the cultivation of the virtues, ethical culture', or 'the fruit of the individual and collective talents, social culture'). Put the other way round : The inculturated Christian Theology as Theology based on Christ the Godman is that which arises from uniting Christian Theology (as Theology done within a system of coordinates the two ordinates of which are 'Faith and Reason', hence 'faith-based Religion and reason-based Science') with Culture ('the culture of the people, the popular culture'; 'the culture of the place, the local culture'; 'the culture of the time world wide, the contemporary global culture'; 'the fruit of the cultivation of the transcendentals, the metaphysical culture', or 'the fruit of the cultivation of the virtues, ethical culture', or 'the fruit of the individual and collective talents, social culture'). When the Culture with which the Christian Theology is united to form an inculturated Christian Theology is the contemporary global culture, the culture of the present day world wide, called 'the technoscientific culture' or 'Technoscience as that present day global culture which is nursed and nurtured within a system of coordinates the two ordinates of which are 'Science and Technology' in general, 'Technical Science and theandric Technology' in particular - 'theandric Technology' being the application of the material and immaterial goods produced with the instrumentality of 'Technical Theology' as of the proper Technical Science' not only to the benefit of the human individuals and human collectiveness

(family, ethnicity, community, nation, society, people) but also to the praise of the Wisdom of God and, hence, to the glorification of the God of Wisdom as the Father of that Wisdom of God that the Son of God is - such an inculturated Christian Theology is called the 'Intechnoscientific Christian Theology'.

- c. The Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing in the form of an event, a happening in the form of acts and actions and activities of human persons is best defined from two points of view: from the point of view of its proper aim, and from the point of view of its way of functioning.
 - (i) From the point of view of its aim, the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing in the form of an event, a happening in the form of acts and actions and activities of human persons is that Inculturated Christian Theology which aims at contributing to the realization of the purpose of human existence on earth as of God's intention for creating the human being, is carried out by human persons that must necessarily act and work, operate, with God by leaving the Son of God as the triadic aggregate of 'the Image of the substance of God the Father' (cf 2Cor 4:4; Col 1:15), 'the eternal Word of God' (Jn1:1.14; 1Jn1:1; Rev. 19:13), and 'Wisdom as that breath of the power of God in which is a spirit that is holy and almighty' (cf. Wisd 7:22-23; 1Cor1:24.30; 2:7-8), act, work, operate, with them if they are not to act, work, operate, in vain.
 - The human need for the Wisdom of God to enable humans achieve the ultimate purpose of their existence, a purpose that originates from the reason why God created the human being at all and created him in His image and resemblance in particular calls for a series of intellectual acts and activities based on reason that pass from the knowledge of Wisdom, through the love of Wisdom, to the service of Wisdom.
 - The catholic doctrine that God created man that man may know Him, love Him and serve Him in this world in order to live forever with Him hereafter in heaven (cf. the Tridentine Catechism) can be justified with the logical argument. 1) since God created Man proximately in view of establishing His kingdom of love and of forming His royal people, 2) but what He the King wants from His people is that they fear the Lord their God, follow His ways, love Him, serve Him with all their heart and all their soul, always keep in their heart and in their soul His commandments

and laws which for their good He lays down henceforth for them' (cf. Deut 10:12-13) and 'cling to Him' (cf. Deut 10:20), 'praise Him as their God for the great and terrible things He has done as they have seen with their own eyes' (cf. Deut 10:21), and teach such things to their children (cf. Deut 11:18-20), "to their sons who have not known or seen the lessons of the Lord their God, His greatness, the might of His hand, the strength of His arm, the signs and deeds He performed against the enemy of His people and what He did for His royal people in the wilderness, and to take care that their heart in which the royal instructions they have received must remain is not seduced and that themselves therefore do not go astray, serving other gods and worshipping them, 3) it follows that the remote reason for God's creation of Man is that humans may here on earth know God and make Him known to others (by giving their children the knowledge of Him through teaching those of them who have not known or seen the lessons of the Lord their God, His greatness, the might of His hand, the strength of His arm), love Him (by keeping His commands and by revering Him, showing reverential fear to Him, avoiding offending Him), and serve Him (by taking care that their heart in which the royal instructions they have received must remain is not seduced and that themselves therefore do not go astray, serving other gods and worshipping them), in order to live with Him eternally hereafter in heaven. Accordingly, Christ the incarnate Wisdom of God, has said to His servants and followers "If a man serves me, he must follow me, so that wherever I am, my servant will be there too, if anyone serves me, my Father will honour him" (Jn 12:26). And Christ has requested His Father to let those whom the Father had given to Him on earth be with Him where He is in glory ("Father I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world" Jn 17:24); but the Father has always heard the request of His Son (cf. "Father I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand around me, so that they may believe it is you who sent me" Jn 11:42), it follows that those who stood around the earthly Christ as His servants, servants of the Wisdom of God, have been granted by the Heavenly Father of the Heavenly Christ as of the incarnate Wisdom of God the privilege of living and reigning with the heavenly Christ in the Kingdom of heaven.

Such lot of such a people who stood around the earthly Christ is the lot of those today who on earth stand around the Eucharistic Sacrament and rendering to Christ therein as where He is present really (with His humanity), and substantially (with His divinity), and truly (with the unity resulting from the indissoluble union of His divinity and His humanity with one another, in such a way that though they are inseparably united with one another, yet they remain distinct from one another, and cannot change into one another and cannot be divided from one another (cf. Council of Chalcedon, 451 AD, “De duabus naturis in Christo”, in: Peter Hunermann, editor, Heinrich Denzinger, *Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals*, 43rd edition, Ignatius Press San Francisco, 2012, nn 301-302).

- The knowledge of Wisdom by humans 1) presupposes a preceding perception of Wisdom (hearing about Wisdom) by humans, 2) expresses itself in Culture and Technics, and 3) leads to 'Science underlain and sustained by Culture' and 'Technology underlain by Technics'.

- The love of Wisdom by humans 1) presupposes a preceding knowledge of Wisdom by humans and 2) expresses itself in 'Technical Science as the immediate union of 'Science underlain and sustained by Culture' and 'Technics underlain and sustained by Techne') and 3) leads to Technoscience (as the mediated union of 'Science' and 'Technology (the application of the material goods produced with the instrumentality of Technical Science to defend and promote the human life to its perfection)' through 'Technical Science (as the immediate union of 'Science underlain and sustained by Culture' and 'Technics underlain and sustained by Techne').

- The service of Wisdom by humans 1) presupposes a preceding love of Wisdom and 2) expresses itself in Christian Theological Technoscience, as long as - from the part of faith (fides) - the served Wisdom is that Son of God who is constituted by the trio ('the Image of the Substance of God the Father', 'the eternal creative Word of God', and 'that Wisdom as the breath of the power of God in which is a spirit that is holy and almighty') and who is God and has been made Man through the incarnation of the eternal Word but without ceasing to be God and who thus, ever since that incarnation took place in the Womb of the Virgin, is at once God and Man, the Godman, in the person of Jesus Christ' and - from the part of

reason (ratio) - Technoscience is the mediated union of Science and Technology through Technical Science as the immediate union of Science (underlain and sustained by Culture) and Technics (underlain and sustained by Techne'), and thus 3) leads to the defence and promotion of the material salvation of humans.

- The 'Christian Theological Technoscience' is the union of 'Christian Theological Science' with 'Christian Theological Technology' through the Christian Technical Theology as a technical Science.

- 'Christian Theological Science' is constituted by the proper theological research, study and teaching instituted by Christ.

- 'Christian Theological Technology' is bipartite in correspondence to the divine-human structure of the Christian Theology. 1) On the human part, Theological Technology consists in the application of the material and immaterial goods produced with the instrumentality of the Christ-instituted Technical Theology as of a Technical Science (cf. "I tell you most solemnly, whoever believes in me will perform the same works as I do myself he will perform even greater works, because I am going to the Father. Whatever you ask for in my name I will do so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask for anything in my name I will do it" Jn 14:12-14, whereby the proper believers in Christ who would be able to perform the same works as Christ Himself does and who would perform even greater works, are only those in whom it is the Holy Spirit Himself that is doing the work, the Holy Spirit for the gift of whom they have asked the Father in the name of Christ by asking Christ to obtain from the Father for them the Holy Spirit and Christ has sought and obtained the Holy from the Father and the Spirit has been sent to them and they have received Him as divine Gift and He is since then in them and operating from within them and doing the same work through them which the earthly Christ had done , and even performing works that are so greater than the ones that the earthly Christ had done as the effecting of a mountain's getting up and throwing itself from land into the sea upon being commanded to do so by someone that does not doubt at all and is filled with the Holy Spirit is greater than the effecting of a fig tree's instantaneous withering and seizure henceforth to bear fruit any longer upon being commanded to do so by someone that does not doubt at all and is filled with the Holy Spirit (cf. Mt 21:18-22). The material goods

produced with the instrumentality of the Christ-instituted Technical Theology as of a Technical Science are : 1) goods as means with which to foster the progress of the development to perfection of the seven innate capacities in the human being as in a typically living being, namely: 1a) means for the fostering of human capacity to perceive and react to the perceived realities adequately ; 1b) means for the fostering of the human capacity to respire well; 1c) means for the fostering of the human capacity of self-nutrition and healthcare in abundant measure; 1d) means of mobility for the fostering of the human capacity of making self-movements and travels and transportations in swifter and safer manner and with less fatigue; 1e) means for fostering the human capacity of growth as of structural and mental self-expansion in a progressive manner; 1f) means of fostering the human capacity of self-reproduction to assure human fertility and fruitful childbearing, reduce the rate of mortality, and increase longevity; 1g) means of fostering the human capacity of rejecting and ejecting out of oneself the poisonous waste products (materials in liquid state, e.g. urine and sweat, or in gaseous state, e.g. the exhaled air and the air released from below and behind, or in solid state, e.g. the stool ejected from below and behind) of the metabolic (catabolic or anabolic) processes going on inside oneself; 2) goods with which the Church can prolong the material salvation accomplished by Christ through His miracles, not only His miracles of physical and psychical healing and of awakening from the sleep of death the human individual, but also His socio-cultural miracles of multiplying the means of human nutrition like foods - bread and fish - and drinks like water changed into wine, the socio-economic miracle of invoking money into the mouth of the fish and brining it out from there to use it to pay tax to the Government, and His socio-political miracles of hushing or silencing the outrageous and violent forces of nature like the storm liable to destroy human life and property, and of suspending the laws of nature like the gravitational pull of the earth to enable Him - and His Apostle Peter like Him and with Him - to walk on the waters of the Sea without sinking down and getting drowned. The immaterial goods produced with the instrumentality of the Christ-instituted Technical Theology as of a Technical Science are in the form of good ideas for the achieving and maintaining of good governance, ideas encapsulated 1) partly in the formula for the practice of distributive justice, equity, the maintenance of

equilibrium or balance in the distribution of forces and in the offering of equal opportunities to those who have right to participate in enjoying a common good, and 2) partly in the Theodemocratic System of salvific governing of the Nations as of mere fragments of the whole Universe that is being salvifically governed by the Godman (Theandros) Jesus Christ, the universal King of Kings and the only Saviour of the world, from whom all governors of the various Nations have first got to learn the proper art of salvific governing before beginning to govern the people of their different Nations. 2) On the divine part, Theological Technology consists in the application of the material and immaterial products of Technical Theology as Technical Science to honour the Wisdom of God as Son of God and to live and reign forever with God Himself as the Origin or Father of Wisdom in His Kingdom. Accordingly, Christ the incarnate Wisdom of God, has said to His servants and followers “If a man serves me, he must follow me, so that wherever I am, my servant will be there too, if anyone serves me, my Father will honour him” (Jn 12:26). And Christ has requested His Father to let those whom the Father had given to Him on earth be with Him where He is in glory (“Father I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, so that they may always see the glory you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world” Jn 17:24); but the Father has always heard the request of His Son (cf. “Father I thank you for hearing my prayer. I knew indeed that you always hear me, but I speak for the sake of all these who stand around me, so that they may believe it is you who sent me” Jn 11:42), it follows that those who stood around the earthly Christ as His servants, servants of the Wisdom of God, have been granted by the Heavenly Father of the Heavenly Christ as of the incarnate Wisdom of God the privilege of living and reigning with the heavenly Christ in the Kingdom of heaven. Such lot of such a people who stood around the earthly Christ is the lot of those today who on earth stand around the Eucharistic Sacrament and rendering to Christ therein as where He is present really (with His humanity), and substantially (with His divinity), and truly (with the unity resulting from the indissoluble union of His divinity and His humanity with one another, in such a way that though they are inseparably united with one another, yet they remain distinct from one another, and cannot change into one another and cannot be divided from one another (cf. Council of Chalcedon, 451 AD, *De duabus*

naturis in Christo, in: Peter Huenermann, editor, Heinrich Denzinger, Compendium of Creeds, Definitions, and Declarations on Matters of Faith and Morals, 43rd edition, Ignatius Press San Francisco , 2012, nn 301-302).

- (ii). From the point of view of its way of functioning, the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology as a thing in the form of an event, a happening in the form of acts and actions and activities of human persons is that inculturated Christian Theology which functions in two parts: the scientific part and the technological part.
- The scientific part of the function of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology is that which engages in using the sciences to justify the Christian doctrines of the faith : 1) faith in the one and triune God, 1a) in the numerical oneness of God, the oneness of the numerically one God that constitutes the container-component of the Reality God, a oneness that has a unitrinitarian structure, and 1b) in the trinity of the triune God, the divine Trinity only with which together the triadic Kingdom of Heaven (as the space comprising the City of God, the House of God in the City, and the several Rooms in the House of God) and the one and undivided Paradisum (as the space in which the eternal life of the three persons in one God takes place as their life of eternal love for one another, eternal joy at one another, eternal glorification of one another and eternal peace with one another) constitute the triadic content-component of the Reality God, God as one in essence and three in persons and in whom the three ('tri') persons are united with and by the one ('une') essence to constitute the 'tri-une' God whose - 'tri-unity', Trinity, the divine Trinity, has a trinitarian structure, the condition for the container (the container component of the Reality God, namely the oneness of the numerically one God) to contain the content (the content-component of the Reality God, namely the Trinity of the triune God, the divine Trinity) adequately is that the container has a unitrinitarian structure, while the content has a trinitarian structure; 2) faith in the incarnate Word, incarnate Son of God as Godman, the Godman as one in person and two in natures and in whom the two distinct, opposite but not opposed, namely divine and human, natures are united by the Holy Spirit both ways : on the one hand intra- relationally with one another in a way that they cannot be confused with one another nor change into one another nor be divided nor separated

from one another, and, on the other hand, inter-relationally all the three persons together with the one divine essence

- The technological part of the function of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology is that which engages in 1) using the formulae - the laws of stability and of perfect movement as of dynamism - deduced from the perfect geometrical figures of the pre-incarnational trinitarian structure of God the Creator, the incarnational theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as Godman, and the post-incarnational trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour, and the divinely indicated relevant material objects of the Natural Sciences of Biology, Physics and Chemistry, to produce, and apply to the benefit of humans, material goods : 2aa) material goods with which to defend and promote - propel the motion, movement, development, advancement, progress till onto the perfection of - the seven innate capacities in the human being as a living being : irritability or the capacity to perceive and react adequately to the perceived reality, the capacity to make a movement of oneself, the capacity to respire a certain air, the capacity to nurture oneself, the capacity to grow as making structural and mental expansions, the capacity to reproduce oneself, the capacity to excrete poisonous waste products of metabolic processes, 2ab) material goods for the well-being of the mind and body of the human individual and for the social, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness (society, especially family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdom), 2ac) material goods that the Church can use to prolong to the humans in all the nations and generations those material goods which the Lord Jesus produced with His diverse miracles (His miracles of physical and psychical healing and of raising the dead which He accomplished on individual human persons; and His social, especially socio-cultural, socio-political, socio-economic, miracles which He accomplished on things - things in the form of objects like on bread and fish to be multiplied to feed the hungry, or on water to be changed into wine to cheer the heart, exhilarate the spirit, enkindle joy in the soul, or on money to be brought out of the mouth of a fish and be used to pay tax to the government, or on the violent winds to be hushed to get the life and property of travellers on the sea saved from the perishment and perdition, and on the waters on which to

walk without sinking and getting drowned) with which He accomplished the material salvation of humans in Israel of His time on earth, 2b) using the formulae - the laws of perfect movement as of dynamism - deduced from the perfect geometrical figures of the pre-incarnational trinitarian structure of God the Creator, the incarnational theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as Godman, and the post-incarnational trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour, to deduce immaterial goods, goods in the form of good ideas for the achieving and maintaining of good governance: i) good ideas encapsulated in the formula for the practice of distributive justice, equity, the maintenance of equilibrium or balance in the distribution of forces and in the offering of equal opportunities to those who have right to participate in enjoying a common good, and ii) good ideas encapsulated in the formula for the practice of Theodemocracy, or the Theodemocratic System of salvific governing of the Nations as of mere fragments of the whole Universe that is being salvifically governed by the Godman (Theandros) Jesus Christ, the universal King of Kings and the only Saviour of the world, from whom all governors of the various Nations have first got to learn the proper art of salvific governing before beginning to govern the people of their different Nations, and 2c) using both the material goods (namely 'the defence and promotion - propulsion of the motion, movement, development, advancement, progress till onto the perfection - of the seven innate capacities in the human being as a living being', 'the prolongation of the material goods to the humans in all the nations and generations which the Lord Jesus produced with His diverse miracles' and 'the defence and promotion of the well-being of the mind and body of the human individual and for the social, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political welfare of the human collectiveness - society, especially family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdom') and the immaterial goods (namely the achieving and maintaining of good governance through 'the practice of distributive justice, equity, the maintenance of equilibrium or balance in the distribution of forces and in the offering of equal opportunities to those who have right to participate in enjoying a common good' and 'the practice of Theodemocracy, or the Theodemocratic System of salvific governing of the Nations as of mere fragments of the whole Universe that is being salvifically governed by the Godman, Theandros, Jesus Christ,

the universal King of Kings and the only Saviour of the world, from whom all governors of the various Nations have first got to learn the proper art of salvific governing before beginning to govern the people of their different Nations') to honour the Wisdom of God as Son of God and to live and reign forever with God Himself as the Origin or Father of Wisdom in His Kingdom.

- In other words: The technological part of the function of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology is that which through the Theological Research seeks to make discoveries and inventions of 1) material goods to be applied 1a) to defend and promote - propel the motion, movement, development, advancement, progress till onto the perfection of - the seven innate capacities in the human being as a living being : irritability as the capacity to perceive and react adequately to the perceived reality, the capacity to make a movement of oneself, the capacity to respire a certain air, the capacity to nurture oneself, the capacity to grow as to make structural and mental expansions, the capacity to reproduce oneself, the capacity to excrete poisonous waste products of metabolic processes, 1b) for the defence and promotion of the physical and physical wellbeing of the human individual and for the social, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-political, welfare of the human collectiveness in its diverse ramifications (society, especially family and ethnicity, community and people, nation and kingdom), and 1c) for the prolongation of those material goods to all the nations and generations with which Christ accomplished the material salvation of humans through His diverse miracles (the miracles of healing done on individual human persons for the wellbeing of the individual in mind and body, like the healing of the physically and psychically sick and the raising of the dead, and the social miracles done on things for the welfare of the human collectiveness, especially the social-cultural miracles of multiplying bread and fish as food to feed the hungry and of changing water into wine as drink to cheer the heart, exhilarate the spirit and enkindle joy in the soul, the socio-economic miracle of invoking money into the mouth of the fish and bringing it out to be used to pay tribute to Caesar as tax to the government or to settle the bill of other expenses caused by the cost of living, and the social-political miracles of silencing the violent forces of nature like the storm at the high sea and the gravitational pull of the earth impeding and endangering the

walking on the waters), and 2) immaterial goods in the form of good ideas for the achieving and maintaining of good governance, ideas encapsulated 2a) partly in the formula for the practice of distributive justice, equity, the maintenance of equilibrium or balance in the distribution of forces and in the offering of equal opportunities to those who have right to participate in enjoying a common good, and 2b) partly in the Theodemocratic System of salvific governing of the Nations as of mere fragments of the whole Universe that is being salvifically governed by the Godman (Theandros) Jesus Christ, the universal King of Kings and the only Saviour of the world, from whom all governors of the various Nations have first got to learn the proper art of salvific governing before beginning to govern the people of their different Nations. Technology is the application to life, the distribution, the use, of the technically produced material goods for the defence and promotion towards perfection partly of the physical and psychological well-being of the human individual and partly of the social welfare, especially socio-cultural, socio-economic, and sociology-political welfare, of the human collectiveness in all its ramifications: the human family, community, tribe, nation, people, kingdom, society.

- In sum: With regard to its technological component, the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology is that inculturated Christian Theology the technological component of which consists in its using Technical Theology to professionally (i.e. proficiently imitating God the Creator, the Master of creativity (Magister operis), His technical know-how of producing objects that are master pieces of creativity, particularly His model-technique or skill of creating the human being, and of creating the woman as crystallized in the admirable way the Holy Spirit effected the incarnation of the Word to bring forth the wonderful and salvation-bringing incarnate Word) produce salvific material goods that are then applied to the human life – in order to foster the progress of the well-being of man towards its perfection. To professionally produce salvific material goods means to produce by proficiently imitating God the Creator, the Master of creativity (Magister operis), His technical know-how of producing objects that are master-pieces of creativity, particularly His model-technique or skill of creating the human being, and of creating the woman as crystallized in the admirable way the Holy Spirit effected the incarnation of the Word to bring forth the wonderful and salvation-

bringing incarnate Word. The Professionalism in the professional production of salvific material goods that are then applied to the human life in order to foster, defend and promote, the progress of the well-being of Man towards its perfection consists in the proficiency with which Man produces material goods in the form of objects through imitating God the Creator. The way leading to the production of such material goods passes through man's imitation of the creativity of the good and adored (namely devotedly admired) mysterious (because fascinating and yet inscrutable and tremendous) Creator and King and Saviour of the whole creation in whom Goodness itself in person (the Father as the Speaking One), Trueness and Truth and Truthfulness itself in person - the Son as the Word spoken by the speaking Father and as the substantial Image itself in person of God the Father, namely the Image generated by God the Father as by the eternal shining Light through His casting His eternally emitted rays on His innermost Self, namely on His very substance as on eternal Light, eternal immaterial Energy, all-embracing spiritual Power constituted by the unity existing out of the divine nature as of the union of all the divine attributes - like God's being absolute, eternal, all-embracing, holy, perfect, the fullness itself to which all other beings tend, and the Origin from which all other beings originate remotely or proximately - deriving from the divine essence as from God's being (esse) the first and the last, the primary and the ultimate Being, (Ens) - and Beauty and Beautifulness itself in person (the Holy Spirit as that breath of life in person who is contemporaneously breathed out to and in from the speaking and thus living and thus breathing Father by the living and thus breathing Son at the same time that the Father is contemporaneously breathing Him out to and in from the Son) are united singly with, and collectively by and with, a certain single and indivisible thing (divine essence) out of which exists another one and indivisible thing (divine nature) out of which in turn exists another indivisible thing (divine substance) into a Trinity as into the unity existing out of the union of three realities of same nature with another reality that is contrary - opposite but not opposed - to them in number and in nature, thus a reality that is rather singular in contrast to three as plural number, and a thing in contrast to the case when the three are persons (cf. the divine Trinity). Technical Theology that is used to professionally produce such goods is that which engages in producing material objects as goods by imitating God's

models of creativity found in His creatures especially 1) in those living creatures moving in the air or on land or in and on the waters which He has told Man to master, to have mastery of (“Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth and conquer it. Be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth” Gen 1:28), namely to know them in and out, and to give them names (“From the soil the Lord God fashioned all the wild beasts and all the birds of heaven. These He brought to the man to see what he would call them; each one was to bear the name the man would give it. The man gave names to all the cattle, all the birds of heaven, and all the wild beasts” Gen 2:19-20a), to explore but not to exploit them, to use but not to misuse them, to deploy and not to deplore them, to increase and not to decrease them, to name but not to defame them, to upgrade and not to degrade them, to promote and not to demote them, to polish and not to punish or demolish them, and 2) in how He created the living human being (“A flood was rising from the earth and watering all the surface of the soil. The Lord God fashioned man of dust from the soil. Then He breathed into his nostrils a breath of life, and thus man became a living being” Gen. 2:6-7), and 3) in how He created the woman from the Man (“No helpmate suitable for man was found for him. So the Lord God made the man fall into a deep sleep. And while he slept, He took one of his ribs and enclosed it in flesh. The Lord God built the rib He had taken from the man into a woman. The man exclaimed: 'This at last is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! This is to be called woman, for this was taken from man. This why a man leaves his father and mother and joins Himself to his wife, and they become one body” Gen 2:20b-24).

2.2.4 Propositions

- a. There are several major steps to be done on the way in the practice of the Intechnoscientific Christian Theology, proceeding from i) the Geometrization of the religious symbols into scientific symbols, through ii) the deduction of the laws from the scientific symbols, and iii) the application of the laws in the field of the natural sciences of biology, physics and chemistry and of the human Sciences for the productions of the material goods, to iv) the application of the produced material goods to the defence and promotion of the seven capacities of the living human being to their perfection.

- b. Preliminary strategic remarks on the Geometrization of the Religious symbols as their translation into geometrical as scientific symbols.
-). A Justification of the Geometrization of the Christian doctrines as the translation of the religious symbols into geometrical as scientific symbols is necessary before the actual practice of such symbolization of supernatural things like the pre-creational trinitarian structure of God, the creational and post-creational but pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator, the incarnational theandric structure of the Incarnate Word as Son of God as Godman (Theandros), and the post-incarnational Trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour, goes back to the purpose and consequences of Man's imageness of God. God the Creator is the three persons in one God who have made Man in their image and resemblance or similarity and Man, being an image and resemblance of the three persons in one God that have created him in their image and resemblance, making him thereby to be similar to themselves, can imitate them. Man is an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance, making him thereby to be similar to themselves who always stay together and act together and always do the same thing but diversely and Man (since the order or structure or nature of acting follows, derives from, that of being, 'agere sequitur esse') therefore by nature thinks in images, creates images, and acts in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God. The three persons in one God always stay together and act together and do the same time by virtue of the indivisibility of the one divine essence with which each of the three persons in one God is united to be a divine person and with which the three persons together as a triad are united to constitute with it the triune God. The three persons in one God always do the same thing diversely by virtue of the diversity - plurality and difference - among the three persons the first of whom has no origin, while the second person originates only from the first person and this passively by being generated by the first as by eternal Light from His very substance as from the substance of God by casting His rays as rays of eternal Light on the substance of God, whereas the third person as Breath of life in person originates contemporaneously from the first and from the second and this actively in so far as the first and the second breathe Him in and out to one another in such a way that

the time He is moving proceeding from the one is also the time the one is the time He is proceeding from the other and hence He is said to be proceeding from the two at the same and together. Images are figures. And figures can be of four kinds: literary, artistic, technical, mathematical. 1) Simple samples of literary figures are metaphors (e.g. 'he is a lion'), and similes (e.g. 'he acts like a lion'), proverbs and parables. 2) Simple samples of artistic figures are pictures drawn and painted, baskets woven out of threads, wigs plaited out of hairs. 3) Simple samples of technical figures as images made with techné, craftsmanship, skill, technique, technical know-how of producing material objects (e.g. 'statues carved out of wood or out of stone by someone versed in the knowledge of carving in wood or in stone', or 'cloths woven out of threads, or clothes sewn out of cloths) 4) Simple samples of mathematical figures are geometrical figures, arithmetical figures and algebraic figures ; 4a) geometrical figures are called mathematical diagrams as diagrammatic illustration or symbolization of the shape, form, structure, stature, of a reality (person or thing in the form of an objects or of an event), be it in curves (hence 'complex curved geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect curved geometrical figure, called the sphere, or the imperfect curved geometrical figures, called circles and spirals'), be it in lines (hence 'complex linear geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect linear geometrical figure, called the right-angled triangle, or the imperfect linear geometrical figures like angles, the isosceles or equilateral or obtuse triangles, the quadrangles - rectangles, squares, parallelograms, rhombuses, trapeziums - as well as prisms, and pyramids of triangular or quadrangular base'), be it in 'mixtures of curved and linear geometrical figures (e.g. cones, cylinders, and polygons)'; 4b) arithmetical figures are called numbers, which can be integral or fractional, whereby integral numbers can in turn be odd or even and made of one or more digits, thus integral odd number made of one digit is e.g. 3, or made of more digits is e.g. 35, or integral even number made of one digit is e.g.2, or made of more digits is e.g. 24, or 246; and similarly fractional numbers can in turn be odd or even numbers made of one odd number and one even number, e.g. $2/5$, or made of two odd numbers, e.g. $3/5$), 4c) algebraic figures are called equations or formulae. For : while Geometry as the Science of forms deals with the shapes as diagrammatic figure of the container-component of the reality under analysis, Arithmetic as the Science of numbers deals with the numerical strength

as numerical figure or quantity of the content-component of the same reality, a strength or quantity that can be increased by addition or multiplication, and be decreased by subtraction or division, whereas Algebra as the Science of equations deals with the condition or requisite for the container to contain the content adequately ('ad-equate-ly'). [If I am asked to say in what proportion or ratio the numbers '4', '19' and '50' that constitute the series '4, 19, 50' that represent my date of birth 19/4/1950, stand to one another, I can say it most exactly by proceeding from translating them into algebraic symbols, according to which 4 (as the quantitatively smallest of the three) = a, 19 (as the quantitatively second to the biggest of the three) = b, and 50 (as the quantitatively biggest of the three) = c, so that I can then argue as follows: since $50 = [(19 \times 4 = 76) - 26]$, it follows that $c = ba - 26$, $b = (c + 26)/a$, and $a = (c + 26)/b$; or alternatively: since $50 = [(19 + 4 = 23) + 27]$, it follows that $c = (b+a) + 27$, $b = c - a - 27$, and $a = c - b - 27$. As long as 1) Man is an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance, making him thereby to be similar to themselves who always stay together and act together and always do the same thing but diversely and Man (since the order or structure or nature of acting follows, derives from, that of being, 'agere sequitur esse') therefore, by nature, thinks in images (and creates images, and acts in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God), but 2) Images are figures, and 3) figures, by kind, can be 3a) literary figures (like metaphors and similes, proverbs and parables), or 3b) artistic figures (like pictures drawn and painted), or 3c) technical figures as images made with *techne*, craftsmanship, skill, technique, technical know-how of producing material objects (e.g. 'statues carved out of wood or out of stone by someone versed in the knowledge of carving in wood or in stone'), or 3d) mathematical figures, embracing geometrical figures, arithmetical figures and algebraic figures : 3da) geometrical figures are called mathematical diagrams as diagrammatic illustration or symbolization of the shape, form, structure, stature, of a reality (person or thing in the form of an objects or of an event), be it in curves (hence 'complex curved geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect curved geometrical figure, called the sphere, or the imperfect curved geometrical figures, called circles and spirals'), be it in lines (hence 'complex linear geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect linear geometrical figure, called the

right-angled triangle, or the imperfect linear geometrical figures like angles, the isosceles or equilateral or obtuse triangles, the quadrangles - rectangles, squares, parallelograms, rhombuses, trapeziums - as well as prisms, and pyramids of triangular or quadrangular base'), be it in 'mixtures of curved and linear geometrical figures (e.g. cones, cylinders, and polygons)'; 3db) arithmetical figures are called numbers, which can be integral or fractional, whereby integral numbers can in turn be odd or even and made of one or more digits, thus integral odd number made of one digit is e.g. 3, or made of more digits is e.g. 35, or integral even number made of one digit is e.g. 2, or made of more digits is e.g. 24, or 246; and similarly fractional numbers can in turn be odd or even numbers made of one odd number and one even number, e.g. $\frac{2}{5}$, or made of two odd numbers, e.g. $\frac{3}{5}$), 3dc) algebraic figures are called equations or formulae, it follows 4) that Man as 'an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance, making him similar to themselves', whereby Man who therefore, by nature, thinks in images (creates images, and acts in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance), 4a) can think in, and is to think in, literary figures (like metaphors and similes, proverbs and parables) that are symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance and to the three of whom as a triad he is similar, 4b) can think in, and is to think in, technical figures (images made with *techne*', craftsmanship, skill, technique, the technical know-how of producing material objects similar to those created by the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, e.g. 'statues carved out of wood or out of stone by someone versed in the knowledge of carving in wood or in stone') that are symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and, hence, inseparably united persons in one God, 4c) can think in, and is to think in, mathematical figures as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, and which embraces: 4ca) thinking in geometrical figures as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and, hence, inseparably united persons in one God as in diagrams, diagrammatic illustration or symbolization of shapes, forms, structures, statures, in curves (hence in perfect curved geometrical figures, namely in spheres)

or in lines (hence in perfect linear geometrical figures, namely in right-angled triangles), or in mixtures of curved and linear geometrical figures (e.g. cones, cylinders, polygons), as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and, hence, inseparably united persons in one God, 4cb) thinking in arithmetical figures (called numbers) as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, in numbers made of one or more digits as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, and 4cc) thinking in algebraic figures (called equations or formulae) as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God. And as long as 1) Man is an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance, making him thereby to be similar to themselves who always stay together and act together and always do the same thing but diversely and Man (since the order or structure or nature of acting follows, derives from, that of being, '*agere sequitur esse*') therefore, by nature, creates images (and acts in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God), but 2) Images are figures, and 3) figures, by kind, can be 3a) literary figures (like metaphors and similes, proverbs and parables), or 3b) artistic figures (like pictures drawn and painted), or 3c) technical figures as images made with *techne*, craftsmanship, skill, technique, technical know-how of producing material objects (e.g. 'statues carved out of wood or out of stone by someone versed in the knowledge of carving in wood or in stone'), or 3d) mathematical figures embracing 3da) geometrical figures as diagrams, diagrammatic illustration or symbolization of shapes, forms, structures, statures, in curves (hence 'complex curved geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect curved geometrical figure, called the sphere, or the imperfect curved geometrical figures, called circles and spirals) or in lines (hence 'complex linear geometrical figures, e.g. the perfect linear geometrical figure called the right-angled triangle, or the imperfect linear geometrical figures like angles, the isosceles or equilateral or obtuse triangles, the quadrangles - rectangles, squares, parallelograms, rhombuses, trapeziums - as well as prisms and pyramids of triangular or rectangular base'), or in 'mixtures of curved and linear geometrical figures, e.g. cones, cylinders, and polygons'), 3db) arithmetical figures, called numbers, numbers made of one or more digits', and 3dc) algebraic

figures, called equations or formulae, it follows 4) that Man as 'an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance, making him similar to themselves', whereby Man who therefore, by nature, creates images (and acts in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance), 4a) can create, and is to create, literary figures (like metaphors and similes, proverbs and parables) that are symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance and to the three of whom as a triad he is similar, 4b) can create, and is to create, technical figures (images made with *techne*', craftsmanship, skill, technique, the technical know-how of producing material objects similar to those created by the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, e.g. 'statues carved out of wood or out of stone by someone versed in the knowledge of carving in wood or in stone') that are symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and, hence, inseparably united persons in one God, 4c) can create, and is to create mathematical figures as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, and which embraces: 4ca) creating geometrical figures as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, figures as diagrams, diagrammatic illustration or symbolization of shapes, forms, structures, statures, in curves (hence in perfect curved geometrical figures, namely in spheres) or in lines (hence in perfect linear geometrical figures, namely in right-angled triangles), or in mixtures of curved and linear geometrical figures (e.g. cones, cylinders, polygons), as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, 4cb) creating arithmetical figures (called numbers) as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, in numbers made of one or more digits as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, and 4cc) creating algebraic figures (called equations or formulae) as symbols of these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God. And as long as 1) Man is an image of the three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God that have jointly created him in their image and resemblance or similarity

similar to them and as one who, therefore, by nature, should act in similarities to these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, 2) but 2a) on the one hand the Son of God has commanded His followers to learn from Him, to imitate Him, to trust in God and trust in Himself, and has assured them that whoever believes in Him would perform the wonder works that He has performed and even more than He has performed, and 2b) on the other hand the same Son of God has commanded His followers to be perfect as their Heavenly Father is perfect and God Himself has commanded all the children of the Church as of the house of new Israel, the family of the new people of God, to be holy because Himself the Lord their God who has created Man in His own image and resemblance so that they be similar to Him, is holy (cf. Lev 19:2), 3) it follows that Man has to imitate these three distinct but intertwined and hence inseparably united persons in one God, thereby 3a) imitating their being (esse), imitating their being perfect and holy that Man may become perfect and holy, and 3b) imitating their acts, actions, activities, and their way of acting (modus operandi), to reproduce their works, to produce new human works that are similar to their divine works as to the Masterpieces, the wonder works of the Master as of Him who is the Master of works (*Magister operum*).

- ii). The point of departure of the undertaken Geometrization of the Christian doctrines as translation of Creeds (articles of faith) as religious symbols into geometrical as scientific symbols is the field of good relationship that by nature exists between Religion and Science (as shown already above at the beginning of this third as last Part of the present Reflections). whereby generally Religion inspires Science, while Sciences are used to justify Religious tenets (which belongs to the task of Theology as Science), and particularly Sciences are used to fecundate the believed Supernatural Truths of the Christian Religion (which belongs to the task of Theology as Technoscience), by first 1) getting such Truths as Religious Symbols translated into Mathematical - i.e. geometrical, arithmetical, algebraic – as metaempirically Exact-scientific Symbols, and then secondly 2) deducing from such mathematical, especially geometrical, as metaempirically Exact-scientific symbols those typical laws of stability and of dynamism that are symbols (reflexes, images and resemblances) of those proper inner-divine as prototypical laws of stability and of dynamism that regulate that ordered life of eternal peace

and mutual love and of eternal joy and mutual glorification going on inside God among the three persons in one God and for the purpose of Man's participation in which God has since Creation begun to prepare Man by creating Man in His image (cf. Gen 1:27) precisely by Man's being made in their own image and resemblance (cf. Gen 1: 26) by the three distinct but inseparably united and mutually equal and mutually inherent persons (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church nn 253-255) in the numerically one God (Is 44:6), a participation which constitutes for Man that eternal banquet to which God has invited him (cf. "Behold the Lamb of God, behold him who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb" as said by the Priest to the People at the time for Communion during the Eucharistic Celebration as devotional Tradition of the Church people of God) and which is the apex of that Salvation which God wants everyone together with everyone's reaching the knowledge of the whole truth, (cf. 1 Tim 2:4), according to the Christian Religion, and then thirdly 3) applying these laws in the field of the Natural Sciences, 3a) be it by applying them in the field of the biological Science embracing 3aa) the botanical world, where to apply the laws of stability to all those plants and trees that, according to the Christian Religion, God the Creator has told Man to use them as source of the nutrition of the human being as a living being, namely to all the seed-bearing plants that are upon the whole earth and all the trees with seed-bearing fruits (cf. Gen 1:29), in order to produce - through mixing elements of such 'seed-bearing plants' and such 'trees with seed-bearing fruits' with one another according to the terms of the laws of stability - some material goods for feeding the human being and for defending and promoting his health, and 3ab) the zoological world, where to apply the laws of dynamism to all those animals moving in the waters, or in the air, or on the ground of the earth, namely the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven and all living animals on the earth that, according to the Christian Religion, God the Creator has told Man to be their Masters (cf. Gen 1:28), i.e. to have mastery over them, to master them, to know well how to handle them, to put them under his control, to explore them and make use of them, to reproduce them, in order to produce works that are means of mobility and similar to those animals created by God through inserting the laws of dynamism into a static object that man invented by replacing different parts of a certain animal with man-made objects that are analogous both in shape and in function to those parts of the animal that

are being replaced with them, 3b) be it by applying them in the field of the Physical and Chemical Sciences dealing with existing but not living material things embracing material created objects like the stones (i.e. salt, diamonds) and metals (silver, gold, iron, electrons, etc.), cosmic phenomena which comprise the elements (i.e. water, fire, the air, the wind, the soil, the mountains, the forests, deserts, etc.), the firmaments (i.e. light and the sun, the moon, the star, the cosmos, system of the planets), the natural phenomena (i.e. the clouds, the rain, the rainbow, the seasons), and the colours. Supernatural realities in general can be contemplated in the mirror of Metaempirical Sciences. Particularly Christian doctrines of the Faith on the structure of supernatural beings, persons, things as objects or as events and processes can be contemplated in the mirror of the meta-empirically Metaphysical Sciences (called 'General Metaphysics', and 'Special Metaphysics, or Ontology') the objects of which are 'the being of the being and the hierarchy of the existing beings' and 'the hierarchically structured ontological, i.e. cause-effect-related, requisites for the existence of the created, God-made, existing beings'). And especially the Christian Dogmas on the triune God and His divine Trinity and on His incarnate Word as Godman and the duality of the divine and human natures that He has in the only one divine person that He is, can be contemplated in the mirror (speculum) of meta-empirically Exact-Sciences, called Mathematics and Logic, the objects of which are abstract creativities of Man (the symbols abstracted by man from the concrete empirical realities, systems of figures as numerical and structural symbols, or arithmetical and geometrical symbols, invented or fabricated by man, to reflect meta-empirical realities). This contemplation of the Trinitological and Christological Dogmas in the mirror of mathematical as scientific Symbols into which the numbers and structure of supernatural realities – or into which religious symbols (creeds, articles of faith)- have been translated, differs from the contemplation of Supernatural Realities in the mirror of the Empirical Sciences, hence it differs from the contemplation of the real presence of the heavenly Christ in the mirror of the Sacrament of His Body and blood (the Blessed Sacrament, the Most Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist), which is like the contemplation of the Sun shining from up there above, whereby the Sun, which is otherwise not accessible to the naked human eyes on account of its dazzling rays, is contemplated by looking rather at the image of its face that is reflected in that mirror which the limpid,

sparkling, mirror-like, crystal-clear waters down here is, an image that is sunken into the water and sustained therein by the rays that brought the image with them from the face of the Sun that emits them and from which they emanate, whereby both the Water-masse, the Light and the Sunrays all belong to the object of Physics as empirically Natural Science. The Mathematical Science embraces Geometry, Arithmetic and Algebra. Geometry occupies itself with the form and structure - the linear or curved shape - of the container-component of the Reality under contemplation in the system of perfect linear or curved geometrical figures as in a mirror, wherefore Geometry is called the Science of Forms and Structures as of the principle of intelligibility. Arithmetic occupies itself with the quantum - the how much, the numerical strength, of the unions among the constituents - of the Content-component of the Reality under contemplation in the system of perfect numerical figures as in a mirror, wherefore Arithmetic is called the Science of Numbers. Algebra occupies itself with the conditions for the container to contain the content adequately, wherefore Algebra is called the Science of Equations as formulae, symbols of the formulated conditions put in the form of equalities, Equivalences). The Mathematical as meta-empirically Exact-Science (to the object of which belong geometrical figures or symbols, arithmetical figures or numerical symbols, and algebraic equations or formulae) is the mirror (mirror) in which can be contemplated that proper image (comprising both 'the contours on the face' and 'the curves and the lines constituting the shape') of the triune God which is His Trinitarian structure. This relationship between the Trinity and Geometry, or between the Trinity and Arithmetic, or between the Trinity and Algebra, is thus called 'speculative' in so far as Geometry or Arithmetic, or Algebra, is the mirror (speculum) in which the image of the Trinity is reflected and is the Science into which the religious symbols (namely creeds, articles of faith) concerning the divine Trinity are translated. An example of such creed, or article of faith, is that: of the three persons in one God, only the first of whom, the Father, has no origin, while the second, the Son, originates from only the Father through being generated from the substance of God and being born of God such that His being generated from the substance of God makes Him an image of the divine substance, hence a substantial image of God that is of the same substance with God, co-substantial with the Father, a Son of God, whose generation and birth by God makes God a Father, hence makes Him be called God

the Father, while the third person, the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, with the consequence that the three persons in one God are in one another. This speculative (i.e. mirrored) relation between the Trinity and Geometry, the Trinity and Arithmetic, the Trinity and Algebra, is particularly that in which the latter (Geometry or Arithmetic or Algebra) is the mirror (speculum) in which the former (the doctrines of faith on the inner-divine originations of the second person from the first person and of the third from the first and the second persons together, the image of the Trinity is reflected and can be contemplated, is the general requisite for the translation of the Trinity into a system of spheres as of perfect curved geometrical figures, or into a system of right-angled triangles as perfect linear geometrical figures, or into a system of arithmetical figures, or into algebraic equations. The translation of the creeds as religious symbols of the Supernatural truths into mathematical as exact-scientific meta-empirical Symbols aims at making it possible for the human spirit to see, through (in and with) those laws of stability and of dynamism derived from the system of complex geometrical or arithmetical figures or algebraic equations which reflect (and on which are reflected, and which are the images of) the laws of stability and of dynamism that are found inside God and that regulate the stability and dynamism within God, define the relations among the components of God, and describe the movements going on inside the one and triune God as in a living Being. On the basis of the good relation between Religion and Science, and hence between the divine Trinity and Arithmetic as Science of Numbers (numerical strength, figures and digits), the Christian doctrines on the divine Trinity and on the incarnate Word of God can be translated into a system of arithmetical figures as into a mirror, and the Christian faith is formulated in numerical terms and categories: there is numerically only one God, and this one God is in three persons, namely the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, and there are only these three persons in the numerically one God. The one God, His only-begotten Son, who is God and has become Man without ceasing to be God, and is thus both God and Man, the only one God-man, in whom there are two natures, the divine and the human, but only one person, the divine, and who has revealed to us that and how there are in God three persons but only one nature, and has instituted the only one Church and seven sacraments and sent to us the Holy Spirit whose gifts are seven, and by whose grace we live out the eight beatitudes and whose fruits are nine,

and by whose power we keep the ten commandments that have come down to us, through the twelve Apostles of Christ chosen out from that ancient Israel, Old People of God, that was made up of twelve tribes. On the basis of the good relation between Religion and Science, and hence between the divine Trinity and Geometry as Science of forms (structure, image), the most fundamental truths of the Christian faith, the two key-dogmas of the Christian Religion, namely the dogma on the Trinity of the triune God, the dogma on the divine-human duality of natures in the one person of the incarnate Son of the living God, Jesus Christ as Godman (Theandros) - a dogma on which is built also the dogma on the Eucharistic Sacrament as Sacrament of the real, substantial and true presence and continued salvific activity on earth from heaven of the ascended Christ - are teachings on the structure (as on the principle of the intelligibility of the Word) of God, of God's incarnate Son as the God-man, the God-with-us, the Emmanuel, the God-with-us-humans, the God-in-union-with-us-humans, the God-in-solidarity-with-us, in the one divine person of Jesus Christ (and hence of the intelligibility of the Eucharistic Sacrament instituted by Christ who is actively present in it). And since the structure of thought must correspond to the structure of the object of thought in order to be adequate, our systematic-theological thinking together with our theological thought on the Triune God and His divine Trinity and on His incarnate Son Christ as the Godman (Theandros) is structurally Trinitarian-theandric. Our structurally Trinitarian-theandric model of systematic-theological thinking is that i) to which (ex parte Dei) the Spirit of truth spurs on the mind and ii) which (ex parte hominis) aims at the exploration of the interior of the supernatural realities (God as the triune God, the incarnate Son of God as the God-man, the Blessed Eucharist as the Most Holy Sacrament of the salvific presence of God among men) as the proper objects of theological thinking. Such are the supernatural realities into the interiority of which the intellect gains access through speculative penetrations of the doctrines (as the taught supernatural, hence sacred, truths of faith) of the Church on such realities. And such penetrations are those effected through searching in mirrors (specula) in which the images (imagines) – as figures (figura) and signs (signa) and, hence, as symbols, and in fact as symbols of some sacred reality, therefore as sacred symbols, hence as sacraments (sacramenta), thus as mysteries (mysteria) - of the taught sacred truths of faith are reflected. And such mirrors are not so much the

empirical or the metaphysico-metaempirical creatures of God, in which the images as mysteries are reflected, as all the more (since the proper structure of any instrument of truly salvific work must be divine-human, comprising not only divinely created as natural but also humanly fabricated as invented components) the exact-metaempirical (i.e. mathematical and logical) creativities of man, especially the mathematical (i.e. geometrical, arithmetical, algebraic) symbols, that reflect the mysteries. For, the Spirit-propelled penetration is such that opens the gate and the eye to vast horizons for seeing and contemplating the fascinating mysterious interior: the contemplation of the transparent bosom of the Deep; the contemplation of the logicity, unity and power and beauty of the stable structures - as well as of the lively movements going on - inside each supernatural reality which account for (the stability of) the logicity, ever infallible unity, ever efficacious power and ever immutable beauty – as well as for (the dynamism of) the development, promotion and progress - of what that reality says and does, or of how that reality acts inwardly (ad intra) as well outwardly (ad extra); a contemplation of the mysteries, especially the mysteries peculiar to that reality, a mystical contemplation from which the human spirit passes over smoothly to the irresistible adoration of the Lord and prayer to Him and friendship with Him as that Spirit-worked holy habit in which we indulge as our daily delight. Our Trinitarian-theandric model of systematic-theological thinking is one characterized by speculative penetration and mystical contemplation and fuelled by the ever increasing fascination for God as the triune God and for His divine Trinity, as well as for the incarnate Son of God (the incarnate Word, the Godman), Jesus Christ, as the presence of God in human flesh (and for the Blessed Sacrament, the Most Holy Sacrament, the Eucharist, instituted by the earthly Christ as the Sacrament of the real, substantial and true presence of the heavenly Christ in the midst of men on earth, particularly in the midst of the pilgrim and missionary people of God on earth, the presence of the God-man both with His humanity and with His divinity). Our structurally Trinitarian-theandric model of systematic-theological thinking is a growth from our African natural religiosity into a spiritual- intellectual fascination for God as the triune God and for His divine Trinity. And it is such fascination that logically leads our meditative hearts and contemplative minds to speculative penetrations of the doctrines of the Church on the divine Trinity. And such penetrations

are effected through searching in geometrical symbols as in a mirror (speculum) that reflects the images (imagines) – thus mysteries (mysteria) - of the taught sacred truths of faith; whereby the Spirit-propelled penetration opens the gate and the eye to vast horizons for seeing and contemplating the fascinating mysterious interior: the contemplation of the transparent bosom of the Deep, the contemplation of the logicity, unity and power and beauty of the stable structures - as well as of the lively movements going on - inside the divine Trinity which account for (the stability of) the logicity, ever infallible unity, ever efficacious power and ever immutable beauty – as well as for (the dynamism of) the development, promotion and progress - of what the triune God says and does, or of how He acts inwardly (ad intra) as well outwardly (ad extra); a contemplation of the mysteries, especially the mystery of 1) how three persons can each be truly God but without the three of them being altogether three gods but rather one God in three persons that are the only three persons in the one God, and 2) how three persons the first of whom, namely the Father, has no origin, the second of whom, namely the Son, originates by generation from only the first, while the third, namely the Holy Spirit, originates by procession only from the first and from the second together, can, contrary to the usual hierarchical relationship between an offspring and its origin, be 2a) eternally penetrating and dwelling in one another, and 2b) even eternally equal in every value, hence be equivalent, to one another, without rendering one another superfluous (since beings are not to be unnecessarily multiplied - entia non sunt multiplicanda sine necessitate); 2ba) how the three can be equal in priority and in majesty - none is prior to, nor greater (major) than, any of the rest two, or prior to, nor greater than, all of the two together, 2bb) how the three can be equal in power (such that none is more powerful or less powerful than any of the rest two or than all of the two together), since usually the Origin is greater than its offspring, the Father than his child (cf. 'My Father is greater than me', even though 'My Father and I are one'), and 2bc) how the three can be equal in being (such that none is older nor younger than any of the rest two or than all of the two together), since usually the Origin is older than its offspring, 2bd) how they can be equal in goodness, equal in being good and in doing good (such that none is better or does better, nor is less good or does less good, than any of the rest two or than all of the two together), 2be) how they can be equal in trueness, equal in being true

(such that none is truer or less true, than any of the rest two or than all of the two together), 2bf) how they can be equal in beauty, equal in being beautiful (such that none is more beautiful nor less beautiful than any of the rest two or than all of the two together), and in sum 2bfg) how it is possible that none is greater nor less, major nor minor, in goodness, in trueness, in beauty, than any of the rest two or than all of the two together, rather all the three are equal to one another in being and in doing, hence in being good and in doing good, in being true and in being beautiful; a mystical contemplation from which the human spirit passes over smoothly to the irresistible adoration of the triune God and prayer to Him and friendship with Him as that Spirit-worked holy habit in which we indulge as our daily delight. Our structurally Trinitarian-theandric model of systematic-theological thinking is a growth from our African natural religiosity into a spiritual-intellectual fascination for Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of the living God. And it is such fascination that logically leads our meditative hearts and contemplative minds to speculative penetrations of the doctrines of the Church on Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God as the God-man, as long as the incarnate Son is the incarnate Word as that Word of God in person who is God and has become man but without ceasing to be God and who, hence, ever since His incarnation took place on earth, is both God and man in one person, not in two persons. And such penetrations are effected through searching in geometrical symbols as in the mirror (speculum) that reflects the images (imagines) – thus mysteries (mysteria) - of the taught sacred truths of faith. And the Spirit-propelled penetration opens the gate and the eye to vast horizons for seeing and contemplating the fascinating mysterious interior: the contemplation of the transparent bosom of the Deep; the contemplation of the logicity, unity and power and beauty of the stable structures - as well as of the lively movements going on - inside the incarnate Word which account for (the stability of) the logicity, ever infallible unity, ever efficacious power and ever immutable beauty – as well as for (the dynamism of) the development, promotion and progress - of what the incarnate Son of God as the God-man says and does, or of how He acts inwardly (ad intra) as well outwardly (ad extra); a contemplation of the mysteries, especially the mystery of the interior of the Son of the living God (the Son constituted by His being 'the substantial Image of the Father', 'the Wisdom and Power of God' and 'the Logos, i.e. the eternal creative Word of God, in contrast to Mythos, i.e.

the temporal descriptive-narrative word of men'), the mystery of the interior of the incarnate Word of God constituted by 'three divine elements (called the divine Logos, the divine Life and the divine Will) and three human elements (called the human body, human soul and human spirit)', mystical contemplations, especially of the mystery of the presence of God in human flesh, of the plurality (duality) of natures and singularity of person, since the Logos remains a divine person of divine nature even after He has been made flesh by assuming the human nature and has become a human being but without losing His divine nature and without assuming the human personhood, thus without becoming a human person, the contemplation of the mystery of how, in the God-man, not only the Logos of divine nature is united with the flesh of human nature but also the divine nature of the Logos is united with the human nature of the flesh, hence iii) for the contemplation of the mystery of how someone that, though He has two natures, the divine and the human, can have only one personhood, the divine, and not also the human personhood, hence how someone can be a true human being, having the human nature, but without being a human person; iv) for the contemplation of the mystery both of the total exclusion and absence of any mistake, imperfection, inconsistency, and of the total inclusion and presence of every correctness, perfection, consistency in the God-man, the mystery of His being ever coherent, logical and infallible, a logical coherence that in turn gives no room in Him for any self-contradiction, neither in His thinking nor in His words nor in His actions, an infallible coherence that leads to His reliability, hence v) for a contemplation in search of knowledge of the ultimate reasons why Jesus is so coherent, logical, infallible and reliable as He always is, and in search of rational justification and verification of the teachings of the Church on Christ. Our researches have meanwhile come to the insight that such coherence results, as the logical consequence, from two particular premises: the inherence of the divine Logos in the human flesh to perfect the flesh, and the adherence of the human flesh to the divine Logos to participate in the life and mission of the Logos. Our structurally Trinitarian-theandric model of systematic-theological thinking is a growth from our African natural religiosity into a mystico-theological fascination for the Blessed Sacrament, the Most Holy Sacrament, the Eucharistic Sacrament as the Sacrament of the real, substantial and true presence of the heavenly Christ in the midst of men on earth, the presence of the God-man both

with His humanity and with His divinity in the midst of the pilgrim and missionary people of God on earth. 'With His humanity' means: with His human body and blood (blood as visible sign of the invisible soul and spirit) as spiritual food (in the form of material bread) and spiritual medicinal drink (in the form of material wine). 'With His divinity' means: with 'the eternal creative Word, the Logos that He is' and with 'the irreprehensible divine Will of the Father on the holy basis of which the Word was made flesh, the incarnation took place', and hence, with 'the divine Trinity' – since the Logos is inseparably united with the Wisdom and Power of God and with the substantial Image of the Father to constitute the Son, and the Son is united with the Father and with the Holy Spirit and with the one ineffable divine thing that the three divine persons own together and that unites them and is united with them into the triune God who, with His divine Trinity, irresistibly fascinates us. And it is such fascination that logically leads our meditative hearts and contemplative minds to speculative penetrations of the doctrines of the Church on the presence of the heavenly, and hence invisible, Christ as of the all-redeeming and all-healing Saviour in the visible bread and wine - bread that signifies the true body of Christ as spiritual food for eternal life', and wine that signifies the true blood (visible sign of the invisible human soul and spirit) of Christ as spiritual drink and medicine for resurrection from the dead on the last day'. And such penetrations are effected through searching – not in geometrical symbols, but rather - in the deposit of the truths of faith (*depositum fidei veritatum*), namely in the Holy Scripture and Tradition of the Church, as in the mirror (*speculum*) in which is reflected that truth of the Word of God which the Holy Spirit entrenched in the Scripture and Tradition and the infinite presence of which therein He sustains, like that image of the face of the Sun which the Sunrays coming from the Sun bring with them and to sink it into the limpid sparkling, mirror-like, crystal-clear waters and sustain its presence therein. And such penetrations are those that open the way and horizon for mystical contemplations, especially for the contemplation of the mystery of the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the true body and true blood of Jesus the Christ, Christ the Emmanuel, Emmanuel the Saviour: the 'true body and true blood' of Christ as 'spiritual food and spiritual drink and medicine' with which Christ the Good Shepherd, through (Peter on whom He has founded) His Church, not only 'nurtures and strengthens and renders more robust' but also 'heals and renders more

lively' His flock comprising both His sheep (as those men who love the incarnate Son of God and with their words and actions believe in Him and for whom He prays to the Father that they be preserved from the Evil One, cf. Jo 17:15) and His lambs (as those men who shall believe in Him with their words and for whom He prays to the Father, cf. Jo 17:20b) as He leads them safely home. And such 'spiritual food and spiritual drink and medicine' are the means with which the Church alimts and keeps healthy the soul and spirit of those who, still on earth, are, under the illumination and guide of the Holy Spirit, travelling towards God who, as the heavenly and generous Father and King of eternal glory, has invited them to banquet in His house up there where His banquet with them will eternally take place at the end of times. And such true body of Christ is the proper spiritual food to quench man's spiritual 'hunger' for eternal life as the full life and, with it, the fullness of life, and thus for a truly fulfilled life, hence for divine donation of the divine life as the eternally full and fulfilled immortal life. And such true blood (visible sign of the invisible human soul and spirit) of Christ is the proper spiritual drink and medicine to heal man's 'physical and psychical' infirmities and 'moral and religious' sicknesses, and thus redeem man from the danger of 'material and spiritual' death and to quench man's spiritual 'thirst' for 'the beatific vision (as seeing the eternally living three divine persons and as man's full knowledge of God) at the end of the earthly life' as well as for the resurrection from the tomb, for union with the divine Trinity as with the source of eternal life and for the eternal banquet (as man's participation in the divinely donated divine life as the life of eternal mutual love, eternal mutual glorification, eternal joy at one another and eternal peace with one another going on inside God among the three divine persons) at the end of times and of the world.

- iii). Man's logical and mathematical way of thinking The expression in signs (symbolic articulation, formulation into literary or mathematical or artistic symbols) or in words (verbal articulation, formulation in words, Logoi, verba, verbalization, Logicalization) of the results of the reflection in their togetherness with, or in their separateness from, the reflected perceived reality, is such that 1) when and where the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality are expressed in signs, precisely in logical symbols, to think (thinking) is said to consist in the Logicalization of the

results of the reflection on the (perceived and reflected) reality, and 2) when and where the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality are expressed in signs, precisely in mathematical symbols, to think (thinking) is said to consist in the mathematization of the results of the reflection on the (perceived and reflected) reality. Logical thinking passes through analogies and syllogisms: 1) analogies in structure or function between two realities that are noticed from the common experience of men to be similar to one another and, only so, to be comparable with one another, a similarity noticed again from the common experiences of men to be on account of a certain genetic relationship between the two compared realities (like between a parent and their child, or like between two children of the same parent) or on account of a certain typological connection as connection between a type and its prototype or archetype as the two compared realities (like the anticipation of the prototype by the type as by that forerunner or precursor of prototype that must cease to function, but without ceasing to exist, when the predicted, foretold, or pre-announced and expected prototype arrives, or like the cohesion or coherence between the two the first of which namely the Prototype inheres beforehand in the second, namely in the type, while the type adheres afterwards to the Prototype upon its arrival, or like the correspondence or conformity of the type to the Prototype); 2) syllogisms as inductive or deductive forms of argumentation that uses the common sense of men to argue from two premise to arrive at a logical conclusion such that when the human reason proceed from particulars (be it as a hypothesis as in the case of a philosophical reasoning, be it as a thesis as in the case of a theological reasoning) to a general conclusion (assertion, judgement, statement) as to an affirmative synthesis (synthesis of a certain silent or latent question and an answer that is in the affirmative to such question and is directly or indirectly formulated in almost all the very words or terms in which the question was formulated). Mathematical thinking, on its own part, passes from 1) the arithmetization of the content-component of the structured reality which consists in the translation of the numerical strength as the quantity of the content of that reality into arithmetical figures symbolizing the numerical strength of the reality concerned, through 2) the geometrization of the container-component of the structured and, only

so, intelligible reality, which consists in the translation of the shape or figure or stature or form of that container into a geometrical figure that symbolizes the shape of the container-component of the structured reality and from which i) laws of stability as those laws regulating the stable relationships among the various components of the geometrical figure which recapture, reflect, represent the proper laws regulating the stable relationships among the various components of that particular reality that is symbolized by the geometrical figure, and ii) laws of dynamism as those laws that regulate the perfect movements that can be made along the various components of the geometrical figure and which recapture, reflect, represent the proper laws regulating the perfect movements that are being made as life processes among the various components of that particular reality that is symbolized by the geometrical figure, to 3) the algebraization of the conditions for the container-component of the reality to contain the content-component in an adequate manner which consists in the formulation of the required condition into an algebraic equation called formula made up of constants and variables and as symbol for the product arising from the multiplication of an arithmetical figure (the multiplicand symbolizing the constancy of the structure of the container-component) by a letter of the alphabet (the multiplier symbolizing the variability of the numerical strength of the content-component). In short: the mathematization of the results of the reflection on the (perceived and reflected) reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality comprises the arithmetization, geometrization and algebraization of the result of the reflection on the perceived reality. The arithmetization of the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality consists in the translation of such results into a system of arithmetical figures as numerical symbols. The geometrization of the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality consists in the translation of such results into a system of geometrical figures as diagrammatic symbols. The algebraization of the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality consists in 'the translation of such results into a system of algebraic symbols as a system of algebraic equations called formulae that express the laws regulating (the satisfaction of) the

conditions for the containing component of the perceived reality to contain the contained component of that reality in an ad-equate manner', Hence the algebraization of the results of the reflection on the perceived reality in their separateness from the reflected perceived reality as 'the translation of such results into a system of algebraic symbols as a system of algebraic equations called formulae that express the laws regulating (the satisfaction of) the conditions for the containing component of the perceived reality to contain the contained component of that reality in an ad-equate manner can be said to consist in 'the formulation of the laws regulating the satisfaction of the conditions for the containing component of the perceived reality to contain the contained component of that reality in an ad-equate manner', with the result that the formulae are in the form of equations expressing equivalency (the equality in value) of things that can replace one another or be exchanged with one another. As a result, to think the Reality God (Theos), is to mathematize the particular truths contained in the word of God spoken by Him through the successors of the Apostles of Christ in the post-biblical doctrinal Tradition of the Church and taught by the ecclesiastical Magisterium to be divinely revealed supernatural truths required to be believed in their entirety and by all the faithful. Theological thinking must proceed from geometrizing the dogmas by the Pontifical or Conciliar or Synodal Magisterium about God as the untriune Lord, namely the Lord that is one and triune, the oneness of the numerically one God as of the container-component of the Reality God having a trinitarian structure that is somewhat different from the trinity of the triune God, the divine Trinity, as the content-component of the Reality God , to be able to contain divine Trinity adequately.

- c. Theological thinking hence has to proceed: from 1) geometrizing - i.e. translating into systems of perfect curved geometrical, hence spherical, figures (since the sphere is the only one perfect curved geometrical figure) and of perfect linear geometrical, hence right-angled triangular, figures (since the right-angled triangle is the only one perfect linear geometrical figure) as into scientific symbols - the magisterial doctrines, namely the magisterially taught supernatural truths - of the Christian faith, put into Creeds called religious symbols concerning A) the two most primordial productions that exist namely A1) the passive origination of the Son from only the Father through the generation of the Son from the substance of God

the Father by God the Father, the Father who, being God, is eternal Light and shines by emitting eternal rays that He casts not on any other being than Himself (since before the creation of the world and History, hence before all ages, ante omnia saecula, there was not yet existing any other being except God) but rather that He casts on Himself, on His innermost Self, on His very substance as on His own Gene, to generate thereby an image of His substance, an image that is called the Son of God the Father (because such image is not a shadow as a dark thing that has no substance but rather is a lucid person that has a substance, a substance that is neither different from, nor equal to, but rather identical with the one and indivisible substance of God the Father, and A2) the active origination of the Holy Spirit from only the Father and the Son together through the procession of the Holy Spirit - as the Breath of Life breathed by the Father contemporaneously in from the Son and out to the Son at the same time that the Son is breathing the same Breath of Life contemporaneously in from the Father and out to the Father - from the two together (because between the two persons there is no interval of space) and contemporaneously (because between the two persons there is no interval of time); for - as long as God is eternal, has no beginning and no end and hence there is in Him 'no interruption, no interval of space nor of time, no discontinuity, but rather continuity - there is no division, but rather union, hence no separation, but rather inseparability and unity, and hence no succession, no coming or going of one before or after the other, but rather contemporaneity' between any two realities inside God, neither between any two persons, nor between any person and any thing, nor between any two things as objects or as events, hence none between the act or process of breathing in and the act or process of breathing out the Breath of life by any of the eternal persons, hence none between the proceeding of the Breath of life from the Father to the Son and the proceeding of the same Breath of Life from the Son to the Father, B) the intertwining relationship (perichoresis) that arises among the three persons in one God not only B1) from the togetherness of these two diverse originations according to which the second person (the Son) originates passively from the first (the Father who Himself does not have any origin, does not originate from any person, nor from any thing), by being generated from the substance of God the Father by God the Father as by eternal Light, while the third person (the Holy Spirit) originates actively from the first person and the second person together (since there is no interval of space between the two) and contemporaneously (since there is no interval of

time between the two inside the numerically one eternal God), but also and moreover B2) from the omnipresence - presence in all realities, in all persons, in all things, at the same time at all times - of each of the three persons as true God (as long as the person is united with the one and indivisible divine essence to be a divine person, an eternal and omnipotent and omnipresent person and, so-with, truly God). For as long as God the Father being omnipresent, is in God the Son and in God the Holy Spirit at the same time at all times, and God the Son, being omnipresent, is in God the Father and in God the Holy Spirit at the same time at all times, and God the Holy Spirit, being omnipresent, is in God the Father and in God the Son at the same time at all times, it follows that three are intertwined, C) the trinitarian structure that arises from this intertwining relationship among these three persons in one God who Himself is said to be triune as long as these three persons are united with the one and indivisible divine essence; for, the numerically one God (whose oneness is the container-component of the Reality God) is one in essence, three in Persons, contains one essence and three Persons, whereby this one essence and those three persons are inseparable from one another and united with one another (since there is no interval of space between them as realities contained in the eternal God) and contemporaneous with one another (since there is no interval of time between them as realities contained in the eternal God), and in the unity resulting from this union and inseparability and contemporaneity of the three persons and the one divine essence consists the divine Trinity, the trinity of the triune God, wherefore the (oneness of the) numerically one God (as the container-component of the Reality God) is said to contain the divine Trinity (the trinity of the triune God), hence the divine Trinity (the trinity of the triune God) is said to be the content-component of the Reality God, in short : the object of the geometrization is 'the pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator'; D) 'the incarnational Theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, Theandros, and Bringer of the salvation from God to Man as to the only being created in the image and likeness of God'; E) the Trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour as the Unity resulting from the mediated union of 'the pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator' and 'the incarnational Theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, Theandros, and Bringer of the salvation from God to Man as to the only being created in the image and likeness of God' through 'the eternal creative Word of God, the Logos, as the uniting common element of the divine Trinity and the

Godman'); through 2) deducing from such geometrical figures certain laws of stability and of dynamism in the form of algebraic equations in which are formulated on the one hand i) 'the conditions for the possibility of the container-component of the Reality God to contain the content-component of the same Reality God in an adequate manner', 'the conditions for the equality in value and in power, in other words, for the equivalence and the equipotence and thus for mutual replaceability or substitution', and 'the conditions for the balance of forces, in other words, for the equilibrium among the forces in the whole of a system' as the tripartite law of stability, namely the law regulating the stable relations of the components of that system of perfect geometrical figures which symbolizes the pre-incarnational 'trinitarian', the incarnational 'Theandric', and the post-incarnational 'trinitarian-theandric' structures of the Reality God, and, on the other hand, ii) 'the condition for equal distribution of the values and powers or for distributive justice, hence for equity' among the constitutive elements of the reality (whereby that equality in the distribution of the common good among the various members as constitutive parts of the whole of the Reality concerned which is called distributive justice, or equity, is one of those conditions for the container to contain the content adequately and an indispensable requisite for governing that reality well and for peace between the governing and the governed members, and among the governing members, and among the governed members of that Reality), as the proper law of dynamism, namely the law regulating the pairs of perfect movements that can be made within that same system of perfect geometrical figures which symbolizes the structure of God in His pre-incarnate, His incarnate, and His post-incarnate state; to 3) the application of these laws of stability and of dynamism on the objects of the Natural Sciences (particularly Physics and Chemistry, the objects of which are the existing but not living creatures, and Biology the object of which is the living but not intelligent creatures called plants and animals) to produce through such application material goods for the defending and promoting, conserving and propelling, the progress or advancement of the development of the seven innate capacities of every human being as a living being to their perfection, fullness, and hence to the fulfilment of the human creature to the glory of the Creator that has willed such fulfilled life to every living human being, by: 3a) uniting - according to the terms of the laws of stability (derived from the geometrical symbol of the Trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour as from the Unity resulting from the mediated union of 'the pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God

the Creator' and 'the incarnational Theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, Theandros, and Bringer of the salvation from God to Man as to the only being created in the image and likeness of God' through 'the eternal creative Word of God, the Logos, as the uniting common element of the divine Trinity and the Godman') - pertinent elements of those 'seed-bearing plants' and of those 'trees with seed-bearing fruits' which the Creator God has given to Man at creation to take as source of human nutrition (Gen. 1: 29), to produce - through such union of such elements according to the terms of such laws of stability - abundant material goods as objects like foods and drinks and medicine for the defence and promotion of the human natural life as of the capacity to nurture oneself and reproduce oneself - hence the production of foods and drinks to overcome the hunger for what to eat and drink among the peoples in the nations and of medicine for combating sterility and frequent mortality and for fostering fecundity and longevity among them; 3b) uniting 3ba) those pairs of laws of dynamism as of perfect movement that have been derived from the geometrical symbol of the Trinitarian-theandric structure of God the Saviour (as from the Unity resulting from the mediated union of 'the pre-incarnational Trinitarian structure of God the Creator' and 'the incarnational Theandric structure of the incarnate Word of God as the Godman, Theandros, and Bringer of the salvation from God to Man as to the only being created in the image and likeness of God' through 'the eternal creative Word of God, the Logos, as the uniting common element of the divine Trinity and the Godman'; with 3bb) those static objects that are invented or fabricated through Man's reproduction of the Creator's models of creativity in those living animals moving in the air or on the ground or in or upon the waters which the Creator has also given to Man at creation to be masters of them (cf. Gen 1: 28), in other words, to have mastery of how they live, especially of how they make their movement, or nurture themselves, or reproduce themselves, and mastery of the laws that regulate the movements they make, or regulate their self-nutrition, or regulate their self-reproduction, to learn from them, to take inspiration from God's creativity in them, thus to imitate the Creator's models of creativity in them as in living, hence diverse moving - be it flying, be it crawling or creeping, walking or running, be it swimming or floating - beings, in order through such imitation to reproduce them, whereby the imitation consists in replacing or substituting the natural components of the animal with rather humanly invented or fabricated objects that are analogical both in

form and in function to those natural parts of the animal required to be algebraically substituted, and so-with produce static objects similar to them as to the products of the creative God their Creator), 3bc) after inserting those pairs of laws of dynamism or of perfect movements into these invented or fabricated static objects - to produce (through such union of fabricated static objection with such pairs of laws of dynamism and of perfect movements diverse means of movement or mobility like trains, cars or bus, submarine ships or boats for the facilitation of travels and transportation defence and promotion of the human natural life as of the capacity to make movements - hence the production of vehicles, automobiles, aircrafts, etc., to overcome the fatigue inherent in long travels and the difficulty inherent in carrying or transporting heavy loads from place to place among the peoples in the society.

Studies and Perspectives

**Africa and the Future of Catholicism:
Critical Considerations on the Formation of Candidates
for Consecrated Life and Priesthood**

Sr. Dr. Olisaemeka Rosemary Okwara, DDL¹

In the face of a vibrant Christianity, the hope is that the Church in Africa will contribute substantially to the future of Catholicism. Nonetheless, a deeper examination of the challenges facing Catholicism today, and a critical engagement with Christianity in Africa would expose a number of challenges, which the African Church must confront for a truly meaningful enrichment of Catholicism. This paper examines some of the factors that shape Catholicism today and the place of the African Church within these factors. It premises this exploration on the thesis that cultivating grounded-dialogic and inculturated faith could be a credible resource for attaining the required task of Africa's role in the future of Catholicism, and that without such dialogic-grounded faith in the formation of candidates for Priesthood and Consecrated life, its enrichment of the global Church might be jeopardised. I begin by analysing two primary factors

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that are determinant of the Catholicism of today, taking up a prognosis of their implication for the future of Catholicism. Following this analysis, I will give a concise account of their implications for Christianity in Africa, and indicate possible paths to formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life in view of Africa's place and role in a dialogic world-church. analysis, I will give a concise account of their implications for Christianity in Africa, and indicate possible paths to formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life in view of Africa's place and role in a dialogic world-church.

1. *Unity and Diversity, Mission and Dialogue*

Catholicism may be defined as “the traditions, beliefs, way of life, institutional allegiance and coherence, worship and moral standards of those communities of Christians which maintain full institutional communion with Rome.”² Catholicism is also closely bound with the quality of catholicity, namely, “the quality of being universal, complete or all embracing.”³ The early Fathers of the Church, Ignatius of Antioch and Cyril of Jerusalem used the idea of Catholicism and catholicity to designate the whole Church, as Catholic, whereby the local and particular Churches participate in the catholicity of the whole. At Vatican II, a Church characterised by unity and diversity through dialogue became a defining mark which adorns the Catholicism of the Church. Avery Dulles attests that the council documents “represent the church as a diversified unity, made up of distinct local and regional Churches, each having its own proper characteristic and gifts to contribute to the whole.”⁴ In virtue of its

²Monika Hellwig, “Catholicism,” in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Joseph Komonchak et. al. (Dublin: Gill& Macmillan, 1987), 167.

³Avery Dulles, “Catholicity,” in *The New Dictionary of Theology*, ed. Joseph Komonchak et. al. (Dublin: Gill& Macmillan, 1987), 172.

⁴Dulles, “Catholicity,” 173-4.

Catholicity each individual part brings its particular gifts to the other parts and to the whole Church, so that the whole and the individual parts are enriched by the mutual sharing of gifts and the striving of all for fullness in unity... (LG 13).⁵

The ability to uphold Catholicism's unity and diversity is one of the determinant issues challenging Catholicism. Shaped historically in Mediterranean and European patterns of life, worship and organisation, Catholicism has been challenged to open itself to other cultures and traditions. As noted by Rahner, the most significant things about Vatican II was the shift it occasioned in Catholic self-understanding to being a genuinely world-church.⁶ The result is that the Church opened itself up and recognises the essential differences of the other cultures in which it belongs as a world-church.⁷ The novelty of a world-church perspective could be seen in the Church's renewed self-understanding of mission, ministry, salvation from a perspective of dialogue and the appraisal of the values of other religions and cultures within the divine creative and redemptive plan. Furthermore, this world-church is characterised as “consisting not in uniform repetition and the exporting of an 'hegemonic universality'..., but as living between a centripetal gathering in communion and a centrifugal dispersal throughout the diverse localities of the world.”⁸

⁵All reference to the Documents of the Second Vatican Council is from: Norman Tanner and Giusseppe Alberigo, eds., *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils: Trent to Vatican II*, vol. 2 (London: Sheed & Ward, 1990). The documents will be cited in text using the Latin abbreviation and article number.

⁶Karl Rahner, “Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council,” in *Theological Investigations, XX: Concern for the Church*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1981), 86.

⁷Rahner, “Basic Theological Interpretation of the Second Vatican Council,” 86.

⁸Johanna Rahner, “A Less Eurocentric Theology: Advantages, Tasks, and Challenges”, in Staf Hellemans & Peter Jonkers, *Envisioning Futures for the Catholic Church*, (Michigan, Washington D.C: CRVP, 2018), 160.

The various ways in which Catholic life, language, and liturgy have been adapted to local cultural norms, encouraged by Vatican II and Pope Francis' *Evangelii Gaudium* 117&127 among others, are recorded milestones. The diversities and multiplicities of Catholicism can be seen from attempts by indigenous and grassroots communities – and not by expatriate missionaries – to contextualize the Christian faith.⁹ The inaugural encyclical letter of Paul VI *Ecclesiam Suam* 1963, refocused the missionary outreach from “one simply seeking conversion to Catholicism to a concern primarily with dialogue in quest of greater depth and breadth in the understanding of the truth of revelation.”¹⁰ Furthermore, in their important work on Vatican II, Richard Gillardetz and Catherine Clifford understood mission more along the lines of “living out the rich tradition of the church's social teaching.”¹¹ Hence, mission in the present Catholicism of the world-church involves a living witness to the doctrine and praxis of the Church everywhere.¹² As Paul Murray remarks, this expression of particularities should also take place “in the articulation of Catholic teaching in a manner fitted to the specificities of the context.”¹³

In its renewed evangelisation and mission, dialogue, fraternity and justice are surely the condition for the possibility of believable faith. External emphasis on Catholicity concerns its relation and dialogue with non-Christian religions and the effort to balance doctrine and the

⁹Peter Phan, “Doing Theology in World Christianities: Old Tasks, New Ways,” in *Relocating World Christianities: Interdisciplinary Studies in Universal and Local Expressions of the Christian Faith*, (Leiden, Brill:2017), 117.

¹⁰Hellwig, 172.

¹¹Richard Gillardetz and Catherine Clifford, *Keys to the Council: Unlocking the Teaching of Vatican II* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2002) 87-97.

¹²Stephan Bevans, “Revisiting Mission at Vatican II: Theology and Practice for Today's Missionary Church,” in *Theological Studies* 74, (2013):261-283, 261.

¹³ Paul Murray, “The Reception of Vatican II in Systematic Theology,” in Catherine Clifford & Massimo Faggioli, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Vatican II*, (Oxford: University Press, 2023), 396-417, 415.

human contexts in which the Church exists. Internally, the Church maintains its relation with the other Churches through ecumenism, and a relationship between the local and the universal that makes up its Catholicity. The joys, the hopes, the griefs, and the anxieties of humanity everywhere are to be the same for Christians everywhere. This is a sure ground for the preaching of the gospel and work for justice, even in a world that is greatly divided by religious, cultural, ideological, political, economic and social stratifications.

Having explained the basic qualities of Catholicism, I will look at the next point which is a call to renewal of life, doctrine and praxis in today's context.

2. A Call for Renewal of Faith

Among the most urgent challenges within Catholicism itself, Gerald O' Collins names “encouraging everywhere a radical conversion to Jesus Christ” as the most significant.¹⁴ The turn of events in present times demonstrate that radical conversion to Christ and renewal of faith is another imminent determinant issue for the future of Catholicism. The idea of a New evangelization is prompted by Vatican II but deeply developed by John Paul II and post-conciliar Popes – Pope Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and Pope Benedict, and is presently being reaffirmed and advanced by Pope Francis. However, with the so-called end of mission land and the establishment of interreligious dialogue which implies acceptance of non-Christians as legitimate believers in God, the New evangelisation was misunderstood and replaced with the concern “to make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the gospel to the people of the twentieth century.”¹⁵

¹⁴Gerald O' Collins, *Catholicism: A Very Short Introduction*, (Oxford: University Press, 2008), 123.

¹⁵Avery Dulles, “Vatican II and Evangelisation,” in Stephen Boguslawski and Ralph Martin eds. *The New Evangelisation: Overcoming the Obstacles* (New York: Paulist Press, 2008), 1-2.

Thereby, the call for renewal and holiness became misplaced with institutional renewal and restructuring.

Catholicism roots its self-understanding in the message of the incarnate Word of God and the corresponding human response of faith to God's self-communication. As such, it is an interpersonal-relational faith. In this interpersonal view of faith, creation, human beings, community, relationship are factors for articulating the event of the incarnation which as it were, is the summit of the Christian faith. The sacramental principle which is founded on the incarnation points to the divine presence in the world of human beings, in human experiences, in *signs of the times* and the sacramentality of created reality.¹⁶ Above all, the human person, history and creation form part of the medium of faith and mediates reception of the revealed God. The mediation of the revelation of God which takes place in human response of obedience of faith opens the reality of grace in created realities and human experience.

In the Western world and elsewhere, millions of Catholics have disengaged themselves and no longer share in the Eucharist. They have been alienated from the Church by poor homilies, rules and norms that do not conform to living situations of people and that estrange spirituality from actual life context, and other defective features of Catholic life and worship. Secularisation is a real challenge to Catholicism and is also taking place presently in Africa even without a clear and distinct declaration or defined evolvment as in the western world. A level of disenchantment among young people, uncritical faith that emerges in uncritical Pentecostalism and materialism are aspects of secularism. Furthermore, the clamour for individualism is a concrete faith challenging issue of our times. Pope Francis listed some of the

¹⁶The document of the International Theological Commission (ITC), *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles and Criteria* (March 8, 2012), nrs.4,5,6,51.

anti-gospel behaviours in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (10&11) naming “the tendency of our times to regress into conflicts, myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalism, a loss of social and communal sense that undergirds a defence of national interest, fragmentation, and lack of fraternity. How does Christian faith stay in respect to these issues?

Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* introduced a renewed understanding of evangelisation beyond mere conversion of the Non-Christians to re-evangelisation and renewal of faith in all Christian contexts (71). That is why it takes the adjective “new” evangelisation or renewal of faith. It was on this note that he offered the oft cited expression: “Modern man listens more willingly to witnesses than to teachers, and if he does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses” (41). Pope Benedict deepened this aspect on the emphasis that the Church must bring to a disenchanted and suffering world the good news that is Jesus himself. The Pope points out that:

More than ever, humanity needs Catholics and other Christians whose lives are totally centred on Jesus. Without such a conversion, any reforms in the Catholic Church will remain at best merely cosmetic decoration. By sharing through Christ ever so much more in the ecstasy of love that is the life of the tripersonal God, the Church will be enabled to bring to the whole world the faith, justice, and peace that it so urgently requires.

This call for a new evangelisation was greatly misunderstood, and not adequately implemented. One of the reasons, some argue of a missed opportunity in re-evangelisation in Europe. Most of the reason for this was the confusion on what the meaning of renewal to Christ and the message of Christ mean and on what it hinges. For instance, in his homily at the inaugural Mass of 24 April 2005, Pope Benedict XVI took up his ministry as successor of Peter very much in terms of turning

to Christ: 'If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful, and great.' The Pope ended his homily with words that echoed John Paul II and sum up the central message of Catholicism: 'Open wide the doors to Christ, and you will find true life.'¹⁷ But what is the difference between the new evangelisation and what was previously proclaimed?

The renewal of the New Evangelisation was introduced some time ago in the seminary formation in Enugu diocese, in Nigeria by Bishop Anthony Gbuji. Nevertheless, like the call for new evangelisation of John Paul II, it didn't live long. First there was no previous education of the people on what the New evangelization means and why it was necessary for priestly formation. Seminarians simply narrated how the bishop made them to walk rather than use a bike or car. They must go from house to houses preaching like Pentecostal pastors and engage in some self-renunciation. They have to practice some sort of poverty and community living even as candidates for diocesan priesthood. This warranted the second reason in my view, why this New evangelisation did not last in Nigeria. Secondly, there was no organised and systematic execution of it through theological education, catechesis and workshops in Parishes. Consequently, the New evangelization came to be misunderstood, castigated and despised.

From the events taking place in Catholicism today, one can assert that the present time is the era of retrieving the meaning of the gospel on fraternity, solidarity, justice, spirit of poverty and service in Africa. The idea of a New evangelization advanced by Francis' own pastoral approach is novel for our times.¹⁸ The message is that the whole Catholic Church needs a radical conversion to the gospel in the light of

¹⁷O' Collins, *Catholicism*, 127-128.

¹⁸The Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate, on the Call to Holiness in Today's World* is a masterpiece on the meaning of Holiness in a holistic sense of it. In my view, this document is a must read for candidates for Priesthood and the religious life.

Christ the master. It is a call to “going against the flow” of “contemporary Gnosticism,” “an intellect without God and without flesh”, “a doctrine without mystery,” “contemporary Pelagianism,” “a will lacking humility,” etc. In the light of Christ, the master, he summons a renewal rooted in the spirit of the beatitude, “ideologies striking at the heart of the Gospel” and “the worship most acceptable to God.”

The renewal turn of Pope Francis is also visible also in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* and especially in the global appeal from a perspective of theological *ressourcement*, a “return to the sources.” He calls for a church that is more faithful to the original message than to the social, political, and cultural aspects of more recent times.¹⁹ The liturgy as a centre of Christian faith holds the keys to authentic renewal of faith. A true return to the sources looks at Jesus Christ – his message, his life and his mission as a resource for the liturgy in all its aspects. It also implies that contrary to traditional or orthodox thought patterns that has colored Christian theology, theology's thinking as reflection on the revealed word of God and as faith seeking understanding must be underlined by “our cultural quirks, historical wounds, and other vagaries of our social identities.”²⁰ Prayer, praxis and proclamation must be given room in the celebration of the liturgy. Spirituality must engage with the concrete existential life of worshippers and engage these in active conversation since favouring one aspect over the other brings nothing less but a disoriented personality or empty faith. This warrants the next important point on enculturation.

¹⁹Massimo Faggioli, “*Evangelii Gaudium* as an Act of Reception of Vatican II,” in Gerard Mannion, ed. *Pope Francis and the Future of Catholicism: Evangelii Gaudium and the Papal Agenda*, (Cambridge: University Press, 2017), 54 citing from Chapter IV of *Evangelii Gaudium*.

²⁰ Veli Mitova, “Decolonising Knowledge Here and Now,” *Philosophical Papers* 49 (2020): 191–212, 191.

3. Formation of Candidates for Priesthood and Religious Life in view of upholding the Catholicism of the Church

To be sure, the lack of vocation to priesthood and religious life in the west and the declining of faith in previously vibrant areas are issues of debates in Catholicism. Two points are often focused on: the first is the fundamental question about the traditional priesthood, the inability to participate in the Eucharist due to the lack of vocation to priesthood and the essence of the religious life. The fact is that most regions in Europe and America are aversive to taking non-Indigenous priests and even more, Africans to make up for the scarcity of priestly ministers of the eucharist. Most others prefer alternative forms of priesthood such as women ordination, married deacons, pastoral ministers. In this case, the “importation” of priests is viewed as a hindrance to these new approaches to Catholic ministry, the pattern of celebration of the eucharist and inclusive ministry/authority. Hence, mission to these regions constitute perhaps one percent of Africa's contribution to the future of Catholicism. The second, is the conception that socio-economic status is one of the reasons for vocation boom in Africa. Consequently, the belief in most western ideology that the tide will surely turn when the third-world countries attain a good economic and social status for all.

One way to go about this debate is to work towards building up the faith and renewal in the spirit of the gospel. The decline of Christianity in parts of Europe and America is not caused by socio-economic situation as the quality of Christian faith and praxis. Christianity thrived as a religion of the rich in Europe and America. Up till today ardent rich Catholics are handy in these regions. More than economic and social emancipation, the enlightenment (*aufklärung*) which began with the scientific discoveries and historical consciousness, leading to the questioning of the Christian doctrines and self-understanding was instrumental to the decline of faith. Furthermore, the scandals caused

by the gap between the gospel message and Christian moral and ethical presumptions and its practice by Christians, especially within the leaders, and strict institutionalism that relegated the weak and the poor, (being the basic Christian message), weakened the believability and authenticity of the Christian teaching and praxis. These were the major reasons for the failure of Christianity in Europe and North America. These regions paid deaf ears to the reality of the times and could not respond to the enlightenment through adequate contextualisation, renewal and praxis. Consequently, more than the socio-economic aspect of vocation boom in Africa and other parts of the world, the assessment of faith in Africa and the future of Catholicism must take the issues of believable faith and authenticity into consideration. My view is that a renewal of faith and deepening of the received faith to have root in the African way of life and custom can be a backbone for facing the challenges to future Catholicism in Africa.

Having said the foregoing, I admit that Catholicism in Africa is facing a serious challenge, especially in the face of globalisation and secularisation. It calls for authentic renewal. It is like Jesus' challenge to his Apostles in the Gospel (Matt 15,16): And you, who do you say that I am? And so, I throw the question back to Christianity in Africa: Africans' who do you say that I (the gospel of Christ) am?²¹ This is a question challenging African Christianity to self-redefinition. If mission is not the major contribution in a Catholicism that seeks for alternatives to traditional male-clerical priesthood, what then would be the contribution of Christianity-its booming vocation to the Church? Second, how is African Christianity – its vocation and faith authentic to the gospel of Christ and assured of a lasting future? Third, what could

²¹Refer my essay: Okwara, Olisaemeka, R., "Africans, 'Who do you say I am? Addressing the Challenges of Inter-Cultural and Religious Dialogue in *African Christianity in the Light of Nostra Aetate and Evangelii Gaudium*," in Ogonnaya, Joseph/Orji, Cyril, eds., *Christianity and Culture Collision. Particularities and Trends from the Global South*, (UK: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2017), 68-88.

African religious and human cultures, philosophy and worldview offer in the contemporary crisis of faith in Christianity in the context of priestly and religious vocation. I argue, that the relevance of the Church in Africa in the future of Catholicism could be much more than missionary work of priestly and religious vocation. Given the turn of events, priests and the religious people could contribute to the quality of faith - faithfulness to the gospel of Christ, a dialogic-and grounded faith that could withstand the test of the present times. In what follows, I examine how the formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life could imbue these qualities for in formandees.

3.1. Deepening of Faith through Inculturation, Contextualisation and Dialogue with the Signs of the Times

Two issues are at stake at the present times of Catholicism, namely, the necessity of renewal of faith towards its root in the message of Jesus Christ and his pattern and dialogue with the signs of times. Vatican II was emphatic about bringing the Christian faith in conversation with its historical and cultural contexts through inculturation and dialogue with the *signs of times* (*Gaudium et Spes* 4&11). The opening address of John XXIII to the Council, *Gaudet mater ecclesia* expressed a continuous call to dialogue and renewal. In the Pope's words, doctrines are not engravements, rather they have life in the interpretation we give to them.²² Formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life, as members of the local and universal Church, share the concerns of the church in these levels.

In the face of a secularised faith in Europe and North America, inculturation or contextualisation of the Christian faith in Africa could deepen the meaning of the gospel in the everyday life of people – in relationship, community, vulnerability, poverty, hope and love. The

²² Pope John XXIII, "Speech at the Solemn Inauguration of the Second Vatican Council *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*," 11 October 1962, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 786-795.

cultural and religious features of our context such as hospitality, fraternity, love of neighbour, long suffering, communal life, sense of sin and the sacred, taboo, faith, hope and love, constitute critical issues in formation of candidates for the Priesthood and religious life today. Today, the question extends to how cultures support and nurture human potentials and their flourishing. Cultures from the customs and traditions of their people, from their learning, from their arts and sciences, which can contribute the preservation of the Christian life as the message of salvation and liberation and fullness. When properly integrated, will deepen the biblical witness and the witness of the early fathers and theologians and the church's tradition.

Inculturation and contextualisation of faith could also be significant in combating the loss of indigenous cultures warranted by globalisation and the erstwhile missionary evangelisation and foster a balance between identity and *otherness*. The turn of events in our world today points to the one fact that human beings are rooted in their world and that authentic development begins with this root.²³ The question of inculturation and contextualisation is more urgent for the world today in need of dialogue and rootedness. In the wake of globalisation, secularisation and the Media, human beings have become like tools to a fast-moving economy and media, and are stripped of the quiddity of their existence by visual connections with the internet. The import of the signs of the times for formation of candidates for priesthood and religious life follows the central view that theology is not done in a vacuum, rather, the existential contexts of human beings as anthropological entities are the *dramatis personae* for the Word of

²³ Compare the meaning of Life world in Jurgen Habermas, Jurgen Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action (Vol. II): The Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Translated by Thomas McCarthy. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1987), 138. Ude Donald C., *The Idea of Interconnectedness in Igbo Subaltern Knowledges: A Quest for Identity in Response to Modernity*. (Unpublished Dissertation, KU Leuven Humanities and Social Sciences Group Institute of Philosophy, 2021), 137.

God. The formation of candidates for priesthood and religious must be rooted in the pressing issues in the global Catholicism as well as their local contexts.

The essence of contextual theology is not to regress into an isolated colony, but rather to bring contextual issues in dialogue with the global Church and see how the particularities can enrich each other as a learning process. The inculturation of dancing in liturgy, nor the one that achieves a momentary illusion and forgetting of existential realities and issues lacks the true meaning and role of inculturation. True inculturation is attentive to the message of Christ as a message of liberation and wholeness (Jn 10,10).²⁴ Elochukwu Uzukwu a South-eastern Nigerian has devoted much work on the Church as a listening Church and with the notion of 'large ears' as a way of inculturation of the teaching and learning Church.²⁵ Unfortunately, these aspects of renewal and inculturation receive greater attention in academic theology without exploring its potential as a core structuring principle for a renewed Catholic ecclesiology and ecclesial practice. These texts could form part of the reading and learning for the candidates for Priesthood and religious life. They are concrete ways of inculturation. The Church, in the words of Ormond Rush, is a community of reception, continually receiving the living tradition afresh in the lived faith of the Church.²⁶

Inculturation is an important aspect of the present and future of Catholicism. In the African context, merely dancing and clapping

²⁴ Elochukwu Uzukwu, *God, Spirit, and Human Wholeness. Appropriating Faith and Culture in West African Style*, (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 4-9.

²⁵ Elochukwu Uzukwu, "Ministry with Large Ears," in Peter De Mey & Wim François, eds. *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda: Renewal and Reform Beyond Polemics* (Leuven: Peeters, 2020).

²⁶ Ormond Rush, *The Eyes of Faith: The Sense of the Faithful and the Church's Reception of Revelation* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America, 2009). See Murray, *The Reception of Vatican II*, 413.

during the liturgical celebration cannot fulfil the demands of inculturation. One of the reasons for setback to developing a critical and liberative faith in the African context as Elochukwu Uzukwu argues, could be aligned with inculturation as tantamount to drumming, clapping and dancing. Hence, people at liturgy easily experience momentary joy and fulfilment but get home to face their problems as they were. Uzukwu's observation is correct when one considers for example, the number of Adoration ministries existing in Nigeria. The young priests wishing to secure their parish members from these ministries of exuberance also convert the mass and eucharistic adoration to these patterns of dancing and drumming. Uzukwu's view is that inculturation should bring faith into life of people in a critical and liberative manner. But inculturation requires intense work by those responsible for the liturgy, the priest, bishops and theologians.

Cultivation of a dialogic approach to formation through inculturation could possibly abate the tendencies to legalistic clericalism and inculcate the attentiveness to the experiences of people beginning with themselves.²⁷ Following its hegemonic past, most regions that form parts of the Church received a traditional Christianity – clerical, patriarchal, white and a *bourgeois* Church. Faith was communicated at the expense of true human development - cultures and identities were destroyed at the expense of the “true religion.” In the present times, the Church battles with the two extremes: on one part, rejection of Christianity as received faith by those intellectuals ready for progress and liberation. On the other part and in regions such as Africa, another group of bishops would like to maintain the statuesque based on tradition, authority and orthodoxy. The excessive clinging on authority

²⁷ Agbonkhanmeghe Orobator, “The Impact, Reception and Implementation of Vatican II in Africa” in Catherine Clifford & Massimo Faggioli eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Vatican II*, (Oxford: University Press, 2023), 657-675.

hampers the progress of inculturation and liberation as aspects of the renewal of Catholicism. As *Lumen Gentium* 12 puts it, “the infallibility of the Church 'in matters of belief' fundamentally pertains to the 'whole body of the faithful' on the basis of their 'supernatural appreciation of the faith.’”²⁸ These ways of appreciation of the faith enables the church or formators to know where the received faith is in the service of spiritual and human wellbeing of people and where not.

3.2. A Renewal of Priesthood and Religious Life towards the Gospel

Africa, through the vocation to religious and priestly life, can contribute in sustaining unity in diversity, the call for renewal in the spirit of the Gospel and holiness in Catholicism. The state of consecrated life comprises the religious institute and the secular institutes. The religious institute bind themselves to observe the three evangelical counsels by means of vows (can. 607.2) and their religious state requires fraternal life in community, and also a degree of separation from the world in conformity with the character and purpose of the individual institute (can. 607.2 and 607.3). Secular institutes observe the three evangelical counsels by means of a sacred commitment like the religious institute. Uniquely, they fulfil their dedication to Christ and to the Church, by devoting themselves to the sanctification of the world, particularly by working within the world (can. 710). The word “secular” is meant to underline the fact that the persons who make profession in this state of consecrated life do not change the status they have as in the world, and they continue to live and to work in the midst of the people of God in the normal conditions of their own social setting (can. 711; can. 713.2) according to the secular style of life which is proper to them. Societies of apostolic life is described in the 1917 Code of Canon Law as men or women who live in

²⁸Paul Murray, “The Reception of Vatican II in Systematic Theology,” 412.

common without vows whereas in can. 731.1 and 731.2 of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, they are those who without religious vows pursue the particular apostolic purpose of the society, live in common according to a particular manner of life, and strive for the perfection of charity through the observance of the constitutions.

The state of priesthood is assigned an important role in the daily increasing difficulty in the renewal of the Church in Vatican II's decree on Priestly formation and the Ministry of Priesthood, *Presbyterorum Ministerium et Vita* (PO)). Priests are promoted to, and share in the service of Christ the teacher, priest and king by the sacred ordination and mission they receive from their bishop. The decree on the ministry and life of priests emphasized the aim of the priesthood “to build up the church here on earth into the people of God, the body of Christ and the temple of the holy Spirit” (PO,1) Vatican II incorporated a wider issue of the human context into its understanding of the nature and ministry of priesthood in the Church. Under the model of Jesus, the Son of God, a man sent by the Father to humankind, who lived among his brothers and sisters, and like the apostle Paul, who became all things to all, that they might be saved through his exemplary life of faith and good work. In their ministry in which the priests are in “not to separate themselves from that people or from any individual person, but to devote themselves wholly to the task for which God chooses them (PO,3). The footnote to this article explains further that the church is stimulated by circumstances outside itself and cannot remain unaffected by changes in the human condition and cannot be indifferent to them

Consecrated life has its significance for the Church at Vatican II's Renewal of Religious Life. The primacy of the spiritual life was taken up in Art. 6 on the religious life. Here, the old text proposal was substantially expanded with emphasis on daily nourishment through union with God, prayer, the reading of Scripture and the celebration of the liturgy. The goal is “to live more and more with the Church and to

surrender oneself completely to its mission.” Art. 8 first makes the Pauline doctrine of charisms its theme. The apostate and apostolic spirit must permeate the whole life of the members of these institutes and demand love of God and neighbour. Hence, the religious life fulfils the gospel call to faith as spirituality in praxis. Already, Paul VI’s 1971 exhortation *Evangelia testificatio* appropriation of the religious vows set a pace for its deep rootedness in the life of the Church, the gospel and concrete faith.²⁹ The Pope interpreted chastity as being based on a loving relationship with God. Living poverty, which is realised in different ways depending on the type of institute, must be a genuine witness in the present tension between the cry of the poor and the temptations of the material: “It is a central task of your poverty to bear witness to the profoundly human meaning of work done in inner freedom and which has its natural meaning in being a help for subsistence and service,” ET, 20. Religious obedience, with all the justification of fraternity, has its deepest meaning in the Paschal Mystery, thus also in sacrifice and suffering. For the Pope, it was important not to lose sight of the “mysteriously necessary connection between renunciation and joy, sacrifice and greatness, discipline and spiritual freedom” ET 29.

The liberative character of the Christian faith is, as it stands, a core vocation of priesthood and consecrated life. To bear authentic witness in the world of today, in a liberative way, priesthood and religious life requires the formation of mature-dialogic and grounded human beings. Faith becomes liberative when it fulfils the core human aspirations which is a closeness with God and life of justice.³⁰ Identity and self-

²⁹ Latin Text in AAS 63 (1971) 497-526.

³⁰ Justice in this case is more than a mere juridical aspect. Rather a justice that is accompanied with love, mercy and righteousness. For this understanding of just-mercy see my article: “Bearing witness to Mercy and Justice in the Context of the Community Life,” in: Iwuji, Paulinus/Abasili, Alexander/Okanumee, Simon-Peter eds., *Mirrors of Justice and Mercy. Critical Reflection on Justice and Mercy, Leadership and Membership*, (Umuahia: Sons Digital Press), 2021, 36-63.

giving in the ministry of priesthood and the religious life begins with writing a concrete manifesto for one's goal in life. One asks the questions: Who am I in the universe of God? What could be my own contribution in the universe? From this personal manifesto the question of the essence of one's vocation takes its meaning? In the process of self-realisation, candidates must be made to understand that it is their own individual journey. The formator as a moderator and a witness must be well equipped for human and spiritual formation of candidates. Forming people who are envoys of God's love and mercy means they must be also merciful and loving, have the capacity to forgive injuries, love themselves and others, have empathy, live in peace with others, accept human weakness while having the courage to challenge themselves every day, show respect for God's people and creation, love the Church and exhume ardent faith, hope and love.

A sincere interest in the signs of the times is important for authentic renewal of priesthood and religious life. This means being well equipped to know the advantages and disadvantages of globalization and the media effects. Studies have shown that the underdeveloped regions are more prone to be exploited by the architects of globalisation because they are the victims – ignorant of the wheels on which globalisation turns. As prophets of justice and life, religious and priests are to educate themselves on these matters so as to be able to assert themselves in the contexts around them and be salt of the earth in educating and interacting with people. The *signs of times* further warrant a Christian anthropology that looks at the human being in its entirety. Practically, it is necessary to give time for reading and internalising of knowledge; and cultivating the art of questioning and thirst for knowledge in the formation process. Formation of mature minds through dialogue also has social, political, religious and spiritual qualities. It is the ability to transcend the I and to engage the other in sincere openness. A renewal towards the gospel message as Pope

Francis' *Gaudete et Exultate* affirms, and the spirit of the founder/foundress is sure to offer a sure compass for adequate spirituality, justice and mercy in the journey to self-discovery and self-giving.

Conclusion

Revisiting the future of Catholicism with particular reference to Africa, and examining critical issues in the increase of vocations and the formation of candidates for consecrated life and priesthood in this paper, is both a challenging and enriching task, particularly in this time of seismic complexity of global Catholicism, qualitative, quantitative and geographical shifts in Christian population and crises of ideologies, doctrine and praxis. Such a complexity and shift call the church in every part of the world and in every unit to realize its essential character in a way that embraces the present challenges of unity in diversity, renewal, dialogic-grounded faith, and dynamic engagement with *signs of the times*. In line with the exposure on challenging factors to the role of Africa in the future of Catholicism, it may be argued that the real contribution will depend on the renewal of faith and inculturation as a way of deepening and enriching the Catholicism of today and the future – its structures, doctrine and praxis.

Church Life In Africa Project

Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria, 27th July 2023

Keynote Address

by

+John Cardinal Onaiyekan, CON

Archbishop Emeritus of Abuja

Introduction

I thank Fr. Kenneth Amadi sincerely for dragging me in to become part of this wonderful project taking place for a couple of days here in the Catholic Secretariat Conference Center, on Church Life in Africa. I have been asked to give a keynote address without any specific topic. I will therefore talk generally about Africa, the church in Africa and hopefully some ideas of what we could do or what young people could do to make a positive impact on Africa.

1. I will start first with a general reflection on what I call “the enigma that is Africa”.
2. Then I will speak about the futile efforts made to make Africa rise.
3. Then I will speak about the African church in history.
4. Thereafter, I will cast a general view on the church in Africa today.
5. This will be followed by some reflection on Africa in the world church.
6. We shall then assess the African church as witness to and in service of the African continent.

7. Finally, I will make my contribution to how I see the relationship between the USA Church and Africa

My remarks on each of these topics will be rather brief, nothing profound but rather simple, more like a conversation.

1. The enigma that is Africa

The continent of Africa is generally believed to be the cradle of humanity. We were told that it was in Africa that the intelligent human being first emerged, in the long millions of years history of human evolution. Beyond that, human civilisation itself also very probably has its origin in our continent of Africa, because the Egyptian civilisation seems to be the oldest in our planet. There are also glories of African culture and nations beyond Egypt, either in West Africa or in Southern Africa and perhaps in Central Africa. Egypt and the North Africa was part and parcel of the ancient Mediterranean world of the Greek and Roman civilization.

Sub-Saharan Africa however, has its own history quite different. The first contact between Europe and sub-Saharan Africa that is on record, can be traced to the efforts of the Portuguese maritime explorers to discover a route to India and the far East round the coast of Africa. It was this that brought the Europeans into first contact with the African continent, stopping over places like Senegal, Ghana, Nigeria, Congo, Angola, South Africa, Mozambique and all on the way to India. This first contact was more or less on the basis of relative equality. This was mainly because the standard of living in Europe at that time was not much better than the standard of living in the African Kingdoms with which they had contact. The Europeans that visited Warri and the Benin Kingdoms in the 15th to 16th centuries, came as visitors on equal footing. They respected the local authorities under whose power they operated.

The ignominious phenomenon of slave trade came later, resulting not only in the massive deportation of millions of Africans to far off Americas but also in the very serious depreciation of the dignity of the black man, who was seen as inferior merchandise to be bought and sold and used as beast of burden. Following slavery was also the phenomenon of colonialism. This practically meant that for the European nations gathered in a conference in Berlin in 1884, the entire African continent was a no-man's land, which they shared among themselves, drawing lines on inaccurate maps of Africa, ignoring the existence of empires, kingdoms and cultures. The colonial era continued into this past century. Africa then graduated away from colonialism in the 1960s. All these negative historical events had an impact on the image of the continent and people of Africa, even as we speak today.

This is why I talk about the enigma that is Africa. It is a continent that is politically independent but economically dependent. It is rich in human and natural resources but at the same time full of poverty and misery, due to bad human management. It would seem as if the continent is doomed to remain a backward continent. But we should not allow ourselves to be caught in such pessimism. We must continue to believe that the destiny of our continent is still in our hands. We have hope for the future.

2. Futile efforts for Africa to rise

We compare ourselves with our global neighbours in the Asian continent and we wonder how come many of the Asian nations have taken their rightful place in the community of nations while we still remain lagging behind. Many political plans and ambitions have been laid out for the emancipation of Africa but somehow, they have remained futile efforts. We give just a few examples. The ambitious project of a unity of African nations that started with the Organisation

of African Unity, (OAU) which recently was transformed into the African Union (AU), continues to be a brilliant idea whose ultimate objective is to create a United States of Africa that would be a force to reckon with in our modern world. That political project has remained largely unrealised. We heard about the NEPAD, a new partnership for African development, a beautiful project which did not take off as expected. There was the idea of African Peer Review, whereby African leaders would help one another by reviewing their performances for mutual encouragement. It started and has never moved anywhere. Of recent we are hearing of efforts to improve trade across the continent of Africa. All these appear to be like simply theoretical projects, with very poor results.

The reason for all these failures is not farfetched. We must admit that Africa is still riddled by its internal mismanagement. Few countries are well managed. Then within a global environment, where external forces are not always in our best interest, the continent continues to be on the receiving end of hostile international policies. We have been lamenting the nefarious neo-colonialism from the western former colonial masters, mainly Europe, America and maybe Australia and New Zealand. But it is not only such neo-colonialism that Africa now has to contend with. Our relationship with the East has not been mutually enriching. You have the Middle East, where our relationship with the Arab nations has been rather ambiguous. When we look at the Far East, we see the Asian Tigers, Japan, Korea, Malaysia and the huge China that seem to be simply preying on Africa that is unable to defend itself. That gives us a rather gloomy picture of our continent. And this is the continent in which the Church grew up and is growing and operates.

3. The Church in Africa: its history

Here, I will only speak in broad terms. We can say that the history of the Catholic Church in Africa is a story of a miracle of grace and growth.

We must start with the beginning in our ancient heritage in North Africa and Egypt, where Africa featured prominently as a major centre of the Christian faith at the very beginning of Christianity. Alexandria, Hippo, Cartage were all big centres of the Christian Faith. Africa gave the Church not only great theologians and Patriarchs but also monks and martyrs. Pope St. John Paul II has given us a beautiful summary of the glory of the Church in Africa in the first centuries of Church history in *Ecclesia in Africa*, the Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation after the First African Synod in 1994. With this ancient African Church, is also the history of the church in Ethiopia and in the nearby Nubia. While the church in Maghreb Area of Algeria, Libya and Tunisia suffered heavy loss in the hands of Islam, Egypt survived to some extent even till today. Ethiopia is also an example of a Christian community that has survived the onslaught of Islam.

The first major wave of Catholic evangelisation in Sub-Saharan Africa dates back to the 15-16 centuries, with the Portuguese adventures of exploration of a sea route to India. The Portuguese traders and explorers had some missionaries on board who evangelised various points along the coast of Africa. Nigeria is part of the beneficiary of this contact in the story of the journey of Warri and Benin of the 15th century, a Church that unfortunately practically went out of existence. The same applied to efforts on the coast of Ghana and Senegal. On the other hand, Cape Verde, Angola and Mozambique were areas where the Portuguese first evangelisation did not completely disappear. Some years ago, these countries were celebrating 500 years of unbroken presence of the church in their lands.

At that time, we in Nigeria were celebrating only the first centenary in many places. That was the second evangelisation that started at the end of the 19th century. The first evangelization involved only Catholic missionaries since protestant reformation had not started. The second missionary presence in Africa, on the other hand, was characterised by

the divided Christian Church involving Protestant and Catholic missionaries. It was also linked with the colonial enterprise. These two elements, dividedness and colonial era, had their negative impacts on the results of the missionary activities of the Europeans in our Continent. However, despite all these negative influences, the miracle of God's grace worked for the Catholic Church in Africa throughout this period. The Nigerian story is the most typical case where, between the year 1900 and the year 2000, the Church has grown tremendously, a growth that is generally agreed to be a record in the entire history of Christian evangelization globally. That is the history of the Christian Church in Africa.

We must not forget what we have said that the Christian Church that was brought to us, especially in Sub-Sahara Africa, was a divided Church, by Catholic and protestant missionaries. This was later made even more complex by the emergence of various forms of African Instituted Churches, which in Nigeria we used to call the Aladura Group of Churches, or White Garment Churches. Then in the last couple of decades, we are witnessing the explosion of the Pentecostal movement, whose membership are mainly poached and drawn from the existing Christian Churches. The result is the Christian Church in Africa that is very badly divided almost a tower of babel. The Nigerian situation is a typical scenario.

4. The African Catholic Church Today

The Catholic Church started in Africa as a *missionary Church*, namely, a church founded and run by foreign missionaries, who courageously and zealously worked for the conversion of our continent. Here, we must remember, recognize and celebrate the hard work of the classical missionary institutes who took on the burden of evangelization all over Africa, with the direction and support of the Propaganda Fide Congregation. Worthy of mention is also the fact that the missionaries

worked under the umbrella of the different colonial powers. This was in some places positive and some other places negative.

But whatever the case, the church took root and gradually grew from missionary church to become known as *young churches*. This referred to the fact that the hierarchy was local and new, and the membership was largely of young people. This was the situation of the Church just before and during the independence movement in Africa in the 1960s.

Today however, we can no longer call ourselves a young Church. We are an *adult Church*. Most of the hierarchy in Africa now are from the indigenous clergy, both circular and religious. We now know that we can stand on our own as an adult Church, not waiting to be spoon fed by anyone. It is also a Church that has firm structures. We need to see how the number of dioceses has continued to grow and each diocese has established regular diocesan structures; Church buildings, educational institutions, religious institutes, seminaries and religious formation centres: all these have been spreading all over Africa. The example of Nigeria again is more than typical.

The first African synod of 1994, was a providential opportunity to put our ideas together. That synod came out with the notion of the Church as Family of God. Thus, the Church in Africa sees itself as a family with different members; clergy, religious, and laity. And it has also become a Church that is missionary, ready to spread the faith, starting from Africa following the challenge of Pope Paul VI in 1969 that Africa should be missionaries to herself. And so African priests and missionaries are now moving across the African nations on the project of missionary work and evangelisation. The African Church has also launched into missionary work *Ad Gentes*, not minding the needs of our own Church and not allowing our poverty to stop us from carrying out God's work.

The Church in Africa tries to seek common grounds to work with other religious communities, in the service of our people in need. In this regard, we mention three areas:

- i. The African Traditional Religion. Whether they are well organised or not, we must acknowledge the importance of the ATR which are the carriers of the African religious values and culture. In this regard therefore, the Christian Church should not deny or destroy anything that is good, true and valuable in the culture of our people. Indeed, it is part of our evangelisation process of inculturation to highlight these values and promote them in the life of the Church in Africa.
- ii. Then there are the other Christian groups who are operating in Africa as mentioned already above. It is not always easy to find common ground with many of the protestant Churches, especially the more recent “Pentecostal” groups. Everywhere effort is being made to work out some form of common structures for common witness and life. This has various levels of success. In Nigeria, we have the Christian Association of Nigeria, (CAN) which is an important forum for all Christians to try to work together. We know of course these efforts are always full of challenges but we cannot give up on the ecumenical imperative wherever we are.
- iii. Finally and most significantly, is the world of Islam. In some countries, it is the dominant religion, in other places they are in the minority. In a place like Nigeria, we have a 50-50 relationship between Christians and Muslims. For a long time, the Christian faith carried out its activities along with Muslims, targeting largely the large number of adherents of our traditional religion. Now, more and more, most of them are taking a position for either Christianity or Islam. Now, the pool

of Traditional Religion is fast drying up. This means that we can no longer avoid direct relationship with Islam, if we are to avoid direct clash and confrontation with them. Our experience in Nigeria in this regard is instructive. I have been involved in this effort for more than 50 years. And I am sorry to say that things were easier 30 years ago than they are now today. There is a fear that polarisation between Christianity and Islam is growing rather than reducing. This is largely due to the activities and utterances of the extremist religious groups, especially those who are armed groups, like **Boko Haram** and other bandits. If government were to carry out its own duty of ensuring peace in the nation, most of these problems would be easier to handle. We cannot give up the efforts; the reality is before us. The good news is that the vast majority of Christians and Muslims in Nigeria and beyond really wants to live together in peace. The minority of fanatics, who don't believe in harmony and living together in peace, must not be allowed to have the upper hand or the final say.

5. Africa in the World Church

The rest of the Church has taken note of the phenomenal growth of the Church in our Continent; how vibrant it is, the growth of membership, and the increasing structures that we are able to show. This is so much that Pope Benedict once ventured to call Africa the “spiritual lung of the Church”. That lung unfortunately can be infected and perhaps is already being infected. But whatever the case, Africa has become an adult member of the Church family of God. We have begun to think for ourselves. The idea of an African theology, and an African way of living the Catholic faith is no longer contested. The only problem is that we are not making enough effort to show what we are. I believe that no one is stopping us from building our own identity. From my own

experience, I can say that even the Holy See and the Vatican have given wide range for us to do our own theology, provided it is done with full sense of responsibility.

Africa also has entered into the missionary movement of the universal Church. The first entry of the African Church in this regard was when Africans became members of missionary institutes that sent missionaries to different lands starting with Africa itself. We now have many Africans in groups like the Spiritans, Oblates of Mary Immaculate, the white Fathers, Dominicans, Jesuits, Claretians etc. We notice, for example, that Africans are involved in the leadership positions in these international missionary societies. The present Superior General of the Holy Ghost Fathers is an African, just as that of the Missionaries of Africa, also called the “White Fathers”. What we say of priests can be said also for the female religious. For example, an African sister, a Nigerian, has been the superior general of the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus, with generalate in Rome. In other words, we are at home in the church of God. By the same token, even in the very leadership of the Universal Church, the record of our senior brother, the late Cardinal Gantin and our illustrious uncle Cardinal Francis Arinze, has shown that Africa can be effective at the highest level in the church life. We have also had other cardinals who have been at the head of major dicasteries of the Holy See; Peter Cardinal Turkson at the dicastery for Integral Human Development and Robert Cardinal Sarar, who took charge of the Congregation for Divine Worship for quite some years. In the same vein, we are watching with admiration and pride the growing number of Africans featuring in the College of Cardinals. It will no longer be a surprise if an African were to emerge on the Cathedra of Peter.

6. The African Church: Witness to and Service of the African Continent

In the light of the above assertions, the question then arises: “If the church in Africa can be seen to be vibrant, growing into an adult Church, what impact is it having on the continent of Africa that is so much in need of redemption and rescue?”

In many countries, when everything seems to have broken down, it is often only the church that is left with a minimum of order and service. The responsibility on the church is great to be witness to how our society is to be managed. There is also a responsibility, in the language of Vatican II *Lumen Gentium* to be a Sacrament of Salvation to our people; Sacrament in the sense of sign and instrument. As sign, people should see in the church how the society ought to be, especially in terms of solidarity, honest management of resources and the upholding of the dignity of the human person. The church must also be an instrument of the salvation of our people by being actually involved in this regard.

It must be put on record that right from the beginning, even in the earliest time of the missionaries in Africa, the church has always been involved in human development of the people. The church not only preached the gospel and established Catholic communities but also served the entire community, not only those who accept the message of faith that we preached.

Nigeria is a good example. The church started the whole project of schools to educate the young elements. Education for the girl child, women education was largely pioneered by our Catholic female religious. In Nigeria, the record of the good old Catholic schools, especially in Eastern Nigeria, has remained very well known. Therefore, the Church has not been idle.

Of recent, the Church in Africa has tackled African issues head on. This is very clear in the two African synods, the first in 1994 and the second

in 2009. The emphasis was not only on the proclamation of the Gospel but also on good governance, reconciliation, and peace. Both synods made these issues of capital importance. The SECAM, which is the Episcopal body that speaks and works for the church in Africa, has always been involved in issues that concern our continent. SECAM has been involved in advocacy visits to countries of Europe and America, advocacy for better treatment and greater justice in the international relations. Much has been done by SECAM to plead for reduction, if not outright cancelation of unjust burden of debt on our people.

Today, SECAM has established a formal relationship with the African Union in Addis-Ababa, which gives it a forum for interfacing with our political leaders. I am not too familiar however with how much is going on at that level. But the Church in Africa must continue to give prophetic witness in our continent that is so poorly managed. We are part of the people that is on the receiving end of poor government. We have therefore the right and duty to speak out against injustice and dishonesty. We should also seek ways and means of reaching out with our hands of fellowship to our political leaders, in the context of our own principled positions. Unfortunately, our political leaders often find it difficult to welcome the partnership of the church, precisely because of their reluctance to accept certain basic values which we insist upon. It is important however, that we continue to find ways and means of getting involved, for the sake of the people. Here we have to be as wise as serpents and as simple as doves.

Africa needs the Church because if the Church does not reach out, who else would, especially in the area of promoting justice, peace and unity in Africa? Here we must stress the importance of the African laity. In these matters, the Church cannot be the clergy, less still the bishops. It is the lay faithful who are supposed to be the Church in those arena where issues of peace, justice, unity and political harmony are discussed and decisions taken. This is why it is important that the

African lay faithful are well trained in the Catholic-social doctrines and are empowered to act on their own informed initiative, knowing that in these areas, they are the Church. The lay faithful should not be waiting for instructions from the bishops in the area of political engagement. They ought to know what the Catholic social doctrine is and act accordingly. In this regard it seems we still have a long way to go.

Similarly, the African laity should do all they can to work in solidarity and collaboration with others in the nation in order to promote the spiritual values which we have in common with other religious communities. In this, we think of both fellow Christians and where it is appropriate also with Muslims who are citizens of same nations with us. In most countries, Catholics alone cannot win the political battle because we don't control majority votes. But the church can always be effective and active anywhere, even when we are in the minority because the principles of the Catholic social doctrine are not doctrines for Catholics alone, but for the common good of our nations. We should not hesitate to propose those values to others, so as to help to rescue our nations.

7. The Church in Africa and the United States of America

This program, Church Life Africa, is interested in raising also the issue of relationship between the church in Africa and the United States. Here we have a major reference point in the 2001 document of the United States Bishop's Conference called "A Call to Solidarity with Africa", a very beautiful document which even after 20years is still very valid and very useful. It is interesting and encouraging that only last year, the same agency of the USA Bishops Conference has come out with another follow up document; "Renewed Call to Solidarity with Africa". This second document simply reminded the American Church of the commitment made 20 years ago, showing that still much needs to be done.

In the meantime, there has been quite a lot of contacts between the Church in Africa and the Church in the USA. Much of the contacts however, have not been on the level of continent to continent as one would have wanted. But many Bishops' Conferences in Africa have established formal relationships in one form or the other with the US Bishops' Conference. The USA Bishops conference agency for development, the famous "Catholic Relief Services" (CRS) is operating in many parts of Africa. Through it, the American Church has continued to support the efforts of the Church in Africa. But even this too needs to be more clearly defined. In other words, it must be clear that the Catholic Relief Services, as an agency of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the USA, is indeed working also in the name of the Catholic Church in Africa, not just as an international NGO that is doing its own thing. I must say that the more recent country representatives of CRS in our country are well aware of this and are trying their best to maintain good contact and relationship with the Catholic Church here in Nigeria, through the Bishops' Conference. That is how it should be. That does not stop them from helping or serving people who are not Catholics. After all, we too serve non-Catholics in our social services.

In the meantime, since the beginning of this millennium, we have had more reasons to talk about the presence of Africans and the African Church in the United States. At first, we were mainly concerned with African clergy or religious who are working "on mission" in the United States. They are supposed to go there as missionaries. But are they seen as missionaries? That is a big question. It is important that the hierarchy of the United States and the hierarchy of Africa come out with a transparent blue print and guideline on this issue. This is so that the African priests or religious male and female who are working in dioceses in America are not seen simply as African immigrants looking for job. They ought to be welcomed as missionaries who are in America to serve and help the American Church in the task of evangelization. On

this, there is need for an open discussion and common reflection between the Church in Africa and the Church in the United States.

But I believe that the discussion should go beyond clergy or religious working in church circles in the United States. We must also take note of the many African lay faithful who have moved to the United States on their own and are well integrated into the American environment. Many of them are performing admirably well and giving a good name for their African homelands in America. Some of them manage to organise themselves as African communities and in some cases have pastoral care given to them. We commend those American Bishops who take this matter seriously. We believe that they should recognise that the African lay Catholic who lands in the United States is generally very deeply religious. His or her presence in the local Catholic community should be encouraged, so that they can be quiet and effective missionaries in the environment in which they find themselves. For this to happen, there should be deliberate effort to give warm welcome to all Catholics who find themselves in local churches in the United States. I do not know whether the US Bishops Conference has any policy on this matter. The Nigerian or the Kenyan or any English-Speaking African fits generally well in the local parish community. But many do have some peculiar pastoral needs that should be acknowledged and addressed. Failure to do this generally discourages them from continuing to be active in the Catholic Church. The result is that we have cases of many of them who simply fall back on the many Nigerian and African Pentecostal churches that have taken root in the United States. This matter requires urgent attention.

Conclusion

The challenges facing the Catholic Church in Africa have been the subject of many meetings, conferences and seminars since many years. But most of these forums have been under the auspices of formal

ecclesiastical organisations. On the level of the hierarchy, there have been regular meetings; national, regional and continental. Associations of religious institutes of consecrated life have been doing their own reflections on similar topics and issues. Copious materials have emerged from the meetings of our theological, biblical and pastoral professional study sessions, with volumes of publications and reviews, most of which are sitting on shelves in private and public libraries. Ideas are not lacking; only concrete implementation remains problematic.

But this Church Life project is a conference with a difference, especially with its target and focus on the youth and the laity. We have good reasons to hope that this project will engender a robust discourse on practical and accessible levels that will produce fruits, fruits that will last. May the Lord give success to the works of your hands and minds.

Discernment of Vocations to Religious Life and the Departure Challenge

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Abstract

The discernment of vocations to religious life is a complex process. It involves a deep consideration through prayer of one's call to follow Christ in a radical and communal way. One who feels called to live a religious life is accompanied by a formator whose duty it is to observe the facts and confirm the existence of authentic vocation, and to assist in forming the person for the life.

Departures from religious life nowadays are not few and insignificant. We need to reflect to find out the factors that contribute to these departures, as well as the best ways to stop the malady and foster perseverance in religious life.

This paper, which explores the discernment of vocations to and departures from religious life in the light of recent research, using expository and analytical methodology, will be divided into three main sections. The first section will provide an overview of the discernment process, highlighting some signs of authentic vocation. The second section will discuss some possible reasons for departures, drawing on both research and personal experience in the pastoral life of the Church. The third section will offer some suggestions on how to support those called to religious life to live the life joyfully and to persevere in it.

The paper will conclude by arguing that departures are contradictory to the “stable nature of religious life,”¹ and hence members and institutes should work hard to foster happiness and fulfillment in religious life on the one hand and should avoid whatever can lead to desertion of it on the other hand.

Key Words: Vocation, Religious Life, Formation, Discernment, Departure.

Outline:

- ·Introduction
- ·Divine Origin of Vocation to Religious Life
- ·Formation and Discernment of Vocation to Religious Life
- ·Causes of Abandonment of Religious Life
- ·Proposal and Recommendation for Fidelity and Perseverance in Religious Life
- ·Conclusion

Introduction

The issue of departures from religious life is of great concern to the Church. It is a worrisome phenomenon that makes the following questions come to mind: what could be the cause or causes of this desertion? Could it be that the initial discernment made that led to the decision to join religious life was mistaken? Can God call one to a particular state of life and later change his mind and call the person to a different state of life? What could be done to prevent this problem? These are the issues this paper seeks to address.

Our focus is on religious life which is a species of consecrated life. We shall start by highlighting the concept of vocation and its origin. Then we shall discuss formation and discernment of vocations to religious

¹Cf. Can. 573, 1.

life. The second and the third parts of the work will focus on the possible causes of abandonment of religious life, proposal and recommendations for perseverance in religious life.

Religious life is known for its perpetuity,² hence, departure from it contradicts its nature and it gives concern to the mother Church and the entire people of God. Pope Francis raised concern over the issue of abandonment of consecrated life. He said: “We may well say that at this moment faithfulness is being put to the test [...]. We are facing a 'hemorrhage' that is weakening consecrated life and the very life of the Church. The abandonment of consecrated life worries us.”³

The Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, (=CICLSAL) worried by the problem of departures within consecrated life has issued a document called the “Gift of Fidelity, Joy of Perseverance” in which it offers guidelines on the basis of the Code of Canon Law and the practice of the Dicastery to confront this challenge and to foster fidelity and perseverance of those called to consecrated life.⁴

Any institute experiencing defection or abandonment by its members should question its formation process, and lifestyle (*modus operandi*) seriously, to find out why this is occurring. The CICLSAL sees it as a sign of hope the “progressive overcoming of a mentality that tended to place the blame on those who left consecrated life, denying any responsibility to the Institute.”⁵ The Congregation notes that, “Every

²What is meant by this will be discussed later.

³Francis, Address to participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Vatican City, 28 January 2017, cited in The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Gift of Fidelity, Joy of Perseverance, Guideline, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2020, n. 2. Hereafter, Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance.

⁴Cf. Gift of Fidelity, Joy of Perseverance, 3.

⁵Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 49.

request to leave should be an occasion for the entire community, and superiors in particular, to seriously question themselves about their own responsibility.”⁶

God is faithful to his words and his call to anyone to a particular state of life is for the most part permanent. When someone who has made perpetual commitment and has been in an institute for many years leaves the institute as it is the case in some defections, it is a sign that something is wrong somewhere. This study is an attempt to explore the contributing factors for departures from religious life, to proffer means of curbing the problem and to promote fidelity and perseverance in religious life.

Divine Origin of Vocation to Religious Life

No one becomes a consecrated person just because he or she wants to; the person has to be called by God. St. John Paul II talked about the divine and Trinitarian origin of consecrated life as follows:

Many of the baptized throughout history have been invited [by God] to live [consecrated life] “in the image of Christ.” But this is possible only on the basis of a special vocation and in virtue of a particular gift of the Spirit. For in such a life baptismal consecration develops into a radical response in the following of Christ through acceptance of the evangelical counsels, the first and essential of which is the sacred bond of chastity for the sake of the Kingdom of Heaven. This special way of “following Christ,” at the origin of which is always the initiative of the Father, has an essential Christological and pneumatological meaning: it expresses in a particular vivid way the Trinitarian nature of the Christian Life and it

⁶Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *New Wine in New Wineskins. The Consecrated Life and Its Ongoing Challenges since Vatican II, Guidelines*, Paulines Publications Africa, Nairobi, 2018, 21. Hereafter *New Wine in New Wineskins*.

anticipates in a certain way that eschatological fulfillment towards which the whole Church is tending.⁷

Vocation to religious life is a mystery; it is a divine gift to the Church.⁸ The Code of Canon Law affirms this fact when it states: “The evangelical counsels, based on the teaching and example of Christ the Master, are a divine gift which the Church received from the Lord and which by His grace it preserves always” (Can. 575).

“At the origin of the religious consecration there is a call of God for which there is no explanation apart from the love which he bears for the person whom he calls. This love is absolutely gratuitous, personal, and unique. It embraces the person to the extent that one no longer pertains to oneself, but to Christ. It thus reflects the character of an alliance. The glance which Jesus turned towards the rich young man has this characteristic: “Looking on him, he loved him” (Mk 10. 21).⁹ Religious life is rooted in Jesus special love for an individual and the person's deep personal ardent love and attraction to the person of Christ. The first step in the journey to religious life is taken by one who has heard about Jesus Christ, felt attracted by him and has decided to follow him.”¹⁰

The most Holy Trinity is involved in every vocation to consecrated life. The Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit have specific roles to play. “God the Father through the action of the Holy Spirit stimulates in the soul of the religious the ardent love for Jesus Christ and desire to follow him

⁷ John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Consecrated Life and Its Mission in the Church and in the World, *Vita Consecrata*, (25 March 1996), 14. Hereafter, *Vita Consecrata*.

⁸ Cf. The Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Adaptation and Renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, (28 October 1965), 1; can. 574, 1,2.

⁹ Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Society of Apostolic Life, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya 2012, 8.

¹⁰ Cf. George Ukken, *Come and See: Formation for Discernment of Vocation*, Pauline, Mumbai, 2019, pp. 8, 21.

and offer one's life for the work of the kingdom. The Holy Spirit “shapes and molds the hearts of those who are called, configuring them to Christ, the chaste, poor and obedient One, and prompting them to make his mission their own. By allowing themselves to be guided by the Spirit on an endless journey of purification, they become, day after day, conformed to Christ, the prolongation in history of a special presence of the Risen Lord.”¹¹

The Holy Spirit molding and shaping the hearts of the religious and configuring them to Christ entails making them to assume the mind and heart of Jesus Christ which is essential for them to live the evangelical counsels of poverty chastity and on obedience in imitation of him.

Formation and Discernment of Vocation to Religious Life

Religious life implies “a consecration of the whole person,” which “manifests in the Church the marvelous marriage established by God as a sign of the world to come. Religious thus consummate a full gift of themselves as a sacrifice offered to God, so that their whole existence becomes a continuous worship of God in charity” (can. 607, 1). The Members of a religious institute “pronounce public vows and live a fraternal life in common” (can. 607, 2).

Formation in religious life is above all a pedagogy of configuration to Christ. The more decisive duty of formation is to lead the candidates gradually towards a full identification with Christ in the Gospel, helping the person to assume with a sense of responsibility the program of life that corresponds to the call of Jesus to leave all and follow him.¹² According to C. Serrao, formation is a rich complex process. He noted that it is difficult to find one word that can express adequately the reality of formation in all its aspects.¹³

¹¹ *Vita Consecrata*, 19.

¹² Cf. A. Pardilla, *La Forma di Vita di Christo al Centro della Formazione alla Vita Religiosa*, Editrice Rogate, Roma, 2001, p. 208.

¹³ Cf. Charles Settao, *Il discernimento della vocazione religiosa*, Edizioni OCD, Roma, 2006.

Formation is something very important in religious life because “the proper renewal of religious institutes depends chiefly on the formation of their members.”¹⁴ During the period of formation, candidates for religious life are made to “acquire greater understanding of their divine vocation,” and of the vocation to their proper institute. They “are to experience the manner of life of the institute and form their minds and hearts in its spirit” (can. 646).

The immediate end of formation according to the CICLSAL is to introduce new members to religious life and to make them aware of its specific character within the Church, and to assist them primarily to realize their unity of life in Christ through the Spirit, by means of the harmonious fusion of its spiritual, apostolic, doctrinal and practical elements.¹⁵

Discernment implies the act of going through “certain relevant stages in order to judge and make decision.”¹⁶ Discernment is very important as it helps one to go beyond mere good intentions to the deep discovery of one's inner yearning and be able to read the reality of one's life in the light of the Spirit,¹⁷ and to act according to the divine will. Discernment in religious life has to do with discovering the call of God to the life.

To make a good discernment of vocation to religious life, it is necessary that one is spiritually free and has right disposition required to make right decision. What is this right disposition? The person must have strong desire to know and do the will of God, and should also be open to the formators, and not hide from them what they should know.¹⁸

¹⁴Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes*, Paulines, Nairobi, 1990, 1).

¹⁵Cf. CICLSAL, *Directive on formation*, 1; cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 18.

¹⁶Guy Lespinay, *Vocation and Their Formation Today*, St Pauls Alba House, New York 2009, 19.

¹⁷Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Gaudete et Exsultate*, (19 March 2018), 169.

¹⁸Concealment of one's incorporation in an institute of consecrated life or society of apostolic life to a new institute one joined invalidates the person's admission into the novitiate. Cf. cann. 63,1; 643,5.^o

Our Lord Jesus Christ when on earth did always the will of his Father which he regarded as his food (Jn. 4: 34). The essence of Christian perfection is doing the will of God in all circumstances. A good discernment also demands that there is no pre-judgment. One cannot make up one's mind and then start discerning because that will mean lack of openness to God's will.¹⁹

The period of formation to religious life is a period of discernment in which the candidate is to get to clarify if he or she has vocation to religious life and seeks signs of this vocation. The formators likewise are faced with the same question and are instruments to help him or her discern whether or not the person is called to religious life, by trying to identify signs of vocation in the life of the candidate.²⁰

The goal of the discernment-accompaniment is for the right formation of conscience and the capacity to discern. Discernment is a process that is geared towards personal self-understanding and choice making in which one is able to listen to one's affection, and feelings in all sincerity.²¹

Before one chooses careers like engineer, nurse, lawyer, medical doctor, or teacher, the person considers the advantages and disadvantages, and personal aptitude. The choice of vocation to religious life is not limited to the above considerations. Religious life is chosen above all based on one's ardent love for the person of Jesus Christ and the desire to dedicate the whole of one's life to his service. Even though the person like other young people might have dreams

¹⁹Cf. George Ukken, *Come and See: Formation for Discernment of Vocation* p. 145.

²⁰Cf. George Ukken, *Come and See: Formation for Discernment of Vocation* p. 9. For Guy Lespinay, signs of authentic vocation to religious life can be identified in the following: Desire to encounter God, desire to live in a group, conversion of life to the Gospel, trust in the future, capacity for renunciation, taste for knowing and learning, generosity, and the quest for an institutional form of life. See Guy Lespinay, *Vocation and their Formation Today*, pp. 19 – 42.

²¹Cf. Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 50, 51.

about love, family, and successful career, right within the person he feels more attracted to the person of Jesus Christ, because having met him, one discovers in him the source of living water which can quench all one's thirst for love, happiness, and fulfillment. This gives the person courage to be able to leave behind all the objects of one's youthful dreams and follow Jesus. The burning and ardent love one nourishes for Jesus is what will then sustain the person throughout the course of religious life and enable the person to withstand the difficulties and problems that might arise along the journey of religious life.²²

Causes of Abandonment of Religious Life

Desertion of one's state of life as a religious is a worrisome phenomenon as it contradicts the nature of perpetuity of consecrated religious life. Making perpetual/final profession in a religious institute entails a “total lifelong gift” of oneself to God in imitation of Christ for the service of his Kingdom.²³ Consecrated Life through the profession of the evangelical counsels according to the prescription of the Code of Canon Law is “a stable form of living, in which the faithful follow Christ more closely under the action of the Holy Spirit, and are totally dedicated to God, who is supremely loved” (can. 573). Consecrated life by its nature is not a life lived only for some period of time, rather it has character of perpetuity once one makes final commitment in an institute. When we answer God's call to religious life, “we begin a road with no turning back and with a process in which each day His presence spurs us on and supports us in responding to new challenges and living our vocation passionately.”²⁴

²² Cf. George Ukken, *Come and See: Formation for Discernment of Vocation* p. 10.

²³ Cf. *Perfectae Caritatis* 1; can. 607, 1.

²⁴ Alvaro Rodriguez Echeverria, “Vocational Fidelity” in *Fidelity and Abandonment in Today's Consecrated Life*, Litos editorial, 11.

By religious profession a religious enters into spousal covenant and mystical union with Christ which supposed to last the whole of one's life. In fact, the first motivation of one who leaves his/her father's house to the convent is to give one's life totally to God. The person is not thinking of going back even though his or her vocation is still to be discerned and confirmed by the institute.

The Council Fathers demanding that those called to consecrated life should persevere in their God-given vocation affirmed: "Let each of the faithful called to the profession of the evangelical counsels, therefore, carefully see to it that he persevere and ever grow in that vocation God has given him. Let him do this for the increased holiness of the Church, for the greater glory of the one and undivided Trinity, which in and through Christ is the font and source of all holiness."²⁵

As affirmed before, when one embraces the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity and obedience one gives oneself totally to God to work for his kingdom following the footsteps of Christ. Unfortunately, some vocations suffer shipwreck along the way.

Presently, some possible causes of desertion of religious life can be both internal and external. The internal causes could be wrong motivation in embracing religious life, lack of authentic vocation/mistaken discernment; crisis of faith and decrease in the original love and attraction for Jesus Christ. A number of external factors can be responsible for the desertion of religious life. These factors are: Influence of the contemporary culture, inadequate initial formation, wrong exercise of authority, and unhealthy, unsupportive community.

²⁵Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (21 November 1964), 47.

a. Internal Causes

i. Wrong Motivation and Mistaken Discernment

Someone may enter religious life with wrong motivation attracted by something else other than the ardent love for God and desire to dedicate the whole of one's life to the service of his kingdom. When these wrong motivations are not purified in the process of formation and the person embraces religious life, such a person will not have true joy and fulfillment of religious life. A story was told of someone who entered priesthood to please the mother, and after the death of the mother left priesthood. In that case he did not enter with right intention and freedom. Departure from religious life can be an act of coherence when a person discovered after serious discernment, that he or she never really had vocation to religious life.²⁶ In this case what people sometimes refer to abandonment is having the courage to embrace the truth. The grace of God is required to admit the truth.

ii. Crisis of faith and decrease in the original love and attraction for Jesus

Living authentic religious life and persevering in it requires the three theological virtues. One being in love with Christ enters religious life, leaving all she has behind to entrust her future in faith to God who is calling and hoping in attainment of his promises. The presence of the three theological virtues of love, faith and hope, is also indispensable for perseverance in religious life. "Certitude is a sign of vocation. "I have come to give you life, life everlasting." Anyone without such ultimate hope for something better will not be able to persevere amidst the hardships of religious life. A hope, a vision for the future, is required."²⁷ One's deep ardent love and attraction to the person of Jesus Christ drew the person to embrace religious life. The same love is

²⁶ Cf. The Gift of Fidelity. The joy of Perseverance, 2.

²⁷ Guy Lespinay, Vocation and Their Formation Today, p. 35.

required for one to be able to withstand and face challenges that come with living the vows in community with others. This idea is beautifully put by Alvaro Rodriguez as follows:

When we say “for all my life,” we are not affirming that we will remain faithful during a very long period of time. Rather we are expressing the depth of our commitment and its quality. Certainly there is value in the length of time, but there is greater value in the depth, quality or intensity of our love which makes us to go on dying to some of the values most prized in life in order to go on living for Someone who has captivated us. Consecration is not a contract. It is a life in Christ. The crisis of consecration is, above all the crisis of the depth and quality of our love for Christ. Fidelity is only possible where there is an ardent passion – a passion for Christ, a passion for humanity.²⁸

Ardent love and passion for Christ and for souls is the basic motivation for embracing religious life and this ardent love and passion²⁹ is required for one to be able to accept sacrifices that the life entails and to persevere trusting in God's supporting grace and hope of obtaining his promise of eternal life for those who persevere in his service. Religious life is a journey of faith, love and hope.

b. External Causes

i. Influence of the Contemporary Culture

In this post-modern era, despite the laudable growth of humanity in the area of science and technology, and means of social communication, there is perturbing issue of disinterestedness in the transcendental, moral values and an increase in process of secularization. This fact is

²⁸ Alvaro Rodriguez, “Vocational Fidelity,” p. 12.

²⁹ See Passion for Christ. Passion for Humanity, “Working Paper” Acts of the Congress on Consecrated Life, Paulines Publications Africa, Kenya, 2005, p. 21.

wide spread and does not spare the so called “third world” as a result of globalization. Such environment does not provide the required incentive neither for perseverance in religious life nor for initial embracing of the life. Pope Francis referring to the influence of the culture today on consecrated life which he calls “culture of the provisional” affirms: “it is more difficult to live as a consecrated person in today's world. We are aware that today's culture of the provisional influences our life choices, and the very vocation to consecrated life. This culture can cause a precarious fidelity.”³⁰

“Today's socio-cultural context is characterized by an openness, willingness, readiness to embrace ever-new opportunities. As a consequence, a life decision is often postponed, if not completely removed, in the illusion of being able to reach personal fulfillment, regardless of a commitment that may fully involve one's existence. A definitive decision reached in those cases often appears to be disturbingly fragile. Considering consecrated life in particular, the times and ways in which many consecrated men and women decide to abandon the vocation chosen as definitive, even after a long and demanding formative journey, and also after significant stages in one's experience of consecrated and priestly life [...] are disturbing.”³¹

Religious life which is a structured and stable form of life is negatively affected in an environment where people are constantly hungry to have a taste of something else. Young religious of today are coming from this environment of ever new opportunity and are not exonerated from its influence. They want change of places of apostolate and change of authority personnel. It is difficult to change this mindset. They want to follow signs of time, to be fully human and do what others are doing.

³⁰Francis, *The Strength of a Vocation, A Conversation with Fernando Prado*, USCCB, 2018, Washington, DC, pp. 39, 53; cited in “The Gift of Fidelity. The Joy of Perseverance,” 1.

³¹Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 56.

ii. Inadequate/Ineffective Initial Formation

The initial formation in an institute is supposed to help introduce the members into religious life, the life of the institute and to imbibe the spirit and charism of the institute, thereby acquiring their specific identity and sense of belonging. When this is not the case, the institute is weak in structure and whereby the members are lacking in sense of belonging at any little challenge they may bow out. To make the members feel sense of belonging, each institute should try to inculcate its values in the initial stage of their formation and to strengthen it through adequate process of ongoing formation. Members are also to be made to feel sense of belonging by taking care of their needs holistically; and giving them listening ears when they are confronted with any problem.

Formative years should be used for what is meant for. Canon Law prescribes that the period of novitiate mentioned in can. 648, 1 “is to be set aside exclusively for the work of formation” (can. 652, 5). This prescription of law should be strictly adhered to and the practice of using postulants or novices to meet up with demand of work in an institute is to be avoided.

iii. Wrong Exercise of Authority

Failing to understand that authority is service “is not excluded from the ongoing crisis affecting the consecrated life.”³² Exercise of authority in disregard for the principle of subsidiarity, and co-responsibility can destroy the “communion of charism within institutes and negatively affects the members' sense of belonging.”³³

Authoritarianism contributes in the abandonment of religious life. CICALSAL on this fact emphasizes: “It must be stated clearly that

³²Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, *New Wine in a New Wineskin*, Guideline. Pauline Publications Africa, Kenya, 2018, n. 19.

³³*New Wine in New Wineskin*, 20.

authoritarianism weakens the vitality and fidelity of consecrated persons!”³⁴ Highhandedness and inhuman, heartless command in the name of obedience is among the reasons why some religious abandon religious life. Authority is wrongly used when it becomes means of manipulation and treatment of one's brothers and sisters as robots. Referring to wrong exercise of authority CICLSAL highlights:

In recent years, especially in institutes that have been recently founded, there have been episodes and situations of the manipulation of the freedom and dignity of persons – not only by reducing them to a total dependence that belittles their dignity and even at times their fundamental human rights, but also by leading them, through various deceptive means and with the pretext of fidelity to God's plans through the charisma, to a form of submission that touches even on the area of morality and sexual intimacy which brings great scandal for all when the facts come to light. To be avoided in the daily exercise of authority is constantly asking for permission to carry out normal everyday tasks. Those who exercise power must not encourage infantile attitudes that can lead to irresponsible behavior. It is difficult to lead people to maturity in this way. Unfortunately, it needs to be acknowledged that these kinds of situations are more common than we are willing to accept or denounce, and that these are more prevalent in institutes of women. This is one of the reasons that seems to motivate numerous members to [abandon religious life]. For some, [leaving] is the only way to respond to situations that have become unbearable.³⁵

It is important to let superiors and others know if one is to travel outside where the community is located. But it will be exaggerated for superior

³⁴ New Wine in a New Wine skin, 21.

³⁵ New Wine in New Wine Skin, 21.

to expect to be informed for daily outing within the locality of the community. Religious are to be accorded space as responsible adults.

“There is a widespread impression that the evangelical foundation of fraternity is often missing in the superior-subject relationship. More importance is accorded to the institution than the persons who compose it. It is no coincidence that among the principle motivations for leaving, according to the experience of this Congregation, are the weakening of the vision of faith, conflicts in the common life, and a fraternal life that lacks humanity.”³⁶

The institute should not be managed in a way that could be detrimental to the good of the members; nothing should be put ahead of their well-being. “The institute must supply the members with everything that, in accordance with the constitutions, is necessary to fulfill the purpose of their vocation” (can. 670). Religious need stable structure, adequate accommodation, balanced nourishing food, adequate health care facility, professional training for their apostolate, and a serene peaceful environment to live the consecrated life, happily. And it is the duty of the institute through the superiors to make all these available to the members.

iv. Unhealthy, Unsupportive Community

Canon 619 expresses the obligation of the superiors and members to build a fraternal community where God is sought and loved above all. The fraternal community which the legislator has in mind is one in which as a special family in Christ there is fraternal love, care and support among the members in living their consecration.³⁷ This is not the case in some religious communities where members live in indifference to one another and lack love and respect towards each other. Such community rather than be a support turns out to be a

³⁶New Wine in New Wineskin, 24.

³⁷Cf. Can. 602.

hindrance in living the life and some who are unable to bear the weight of the unhealthy atmosphere might find their way out as their heart might no more find happiness and fulfillment in the life.

Difficulties in interpersonal relationship among members of a community can trigger discomfort and solitude. Indifference to others and division into cliques in the community can bring about isolation, dissatisfaction and sadness that gives rise to resentment, complaint and boredom.³⁸

Having reflected on the possible causes of departure from religious life, we now proffer preventive measures which in our opinion can foster fidelity and perseverance of those called to religious life.

Proposal and Recommendation for Fidelity and Perseverance in Religious Life

i. Adequate Initial, Ongoing Formation and Process of Discernment

There is need to offer solid formation that is adapted to the youths knocking at the door of the convent today as “weak formation predicts hard falls.”³⁹ Good and solid initial and ongoing formation of the candidates for religious life and those already professed can go a long way towards assuring fidelity in religious life. A type of formation that “touches the person profoundly and achieves the necessary maturity” will be the best intervention for the problem of defection from religious life.⁴⁰

³⁸ Cf. Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 19.

³⁹ Jose Maria Fernandez-Martos, “Pursued Fidelity. Cherished Fidelity” in, *66 Conventus Semestralis, Unione Superiori Generali, Fidelity and Abandonment in Today's Consecrated Life*, Litos editorial, p. 42.

⁴⁰ Cf. Jose Maria Arnaiz, “Fidelity and Abandonment in Today's Consecrated Life,” Litos editorial, p. 9.

To forestall the phenomenon of desertion of religious life, there is need for adequate formation and process of discernment of vocation. This will enable the institute to discover and select candidates who have vocation to religious life. The process will equally aid the individual to discern their vocation and those who are sincere can equally bow out on their own at the end of such formation, having discovered through the tools offered to them that religious life is not their call. Candidates to be selected for religious life should be those who have qualities required for a life in common, and have adequate human and spiritual maturity demanded by life in common.

On-going formation is of great importance as it “urges both the consecrated person and the institute to “a continual examination regarding fidelity to the Lord; docility to His Spirit [...] constancy in the giving of self; humility in bearing with adversities.”⁴¹

Formation and accompaniment should not be limited to the time of entrance into religious life. Members are to be encouraged to engage in continuous ongoing formation by attending seminars, workshop and each should have a spiritual director as a companion in the journey of faith in religious life.⁴² This is not only necessary for religious under temporal vows but for all religious at different levels.

Selection of personnel for formation should be carefully done and those who have required qualities are to be appointed and formed for the work. Giving effective and solid formation for the members of the institute is not possible without formators that are well prepared for the

⁴¹Congregation for institutes of consecrated life and societies of apostolic life, *Potissimum Institutioni*. Directives on Formation in Religious Institutes (2 February 1990), 67.

⁴²Given the facts that there have been serious problems in recent years, the church needs to put in place structures to guide against abuses in spiritual direction.

task of accompaniment, be it at the initial stage of formation or for ongoing formation.⁴³

ii. The Primacy of Prayer

Undoubtedly, the call to religious life is a call for mission but “the first and foremost duty of all religious is to be the contemplation of divine things and assiduous union with God in prayer” (Can. 663, 1). Hence, union with God in prayer should be given priority in the life of a religious. Crisis in religious vocation can be result of neglect of prayer. Consecrated life needs to be nourished through union with God.⁴⁴ Prayer go deeper than the liturgical ritual. It entails personal communication with God.

Sometimes apostolic work crushes the prayer aspect of the life of a religious and it should not be so. In everything a religious does she should pray but there must be time set aside for personal prayer. A religious need to put on guard the danger of activism. Religious life is a supernatural life that needs grace for it to endure. It is not a life that is lived in the flesh. It needs the grace of God which one can receive through prayer. Jesus gave us example of how to integrate prayer and work. Despite his busy schedule he will still withdraw to a lonely place for prayer and communion with his father and sometimes he used to spend the whole night in prayer.⁴⁵ Jesus integrated well his prayer life

⁴³ “Various institutes lack members who are adequately prepared for the task of formation. This shortage is rather widespread, particularly in smaller institutes that have expanded their presence in other continents. It must always be kept in mind that formation cannot be improvised and that it demands both long-term and continuous preparation. Without a solid formation of formators, it would not be possible to provide a true and promising accompaniment of the youngest members by brothers and sisters who are truly prepared for and can be relied on for this ministry.” *New Wine in a New Wine Skin*, 16.

⁴⁴ Cf. Commentary on canon 663, in the *New Commentary on the Code of Canon Law*, John P. Beal et al., editors, Theological Publications in India, Bengaluru, 2019, 829.

⁴⁵ Cf. Lk 6: 12-13.

and preaching. This example should be emulated by consecrated persons for them to persevere in their call.

One will be able to persevere in religious life by keeping alive the original ardent love that attracted one to the person of our Lord Jesus Christ. To keep this love alive and burning, a religious should map out daily personal spiritual programme and be faithful to it. The spiritual programme necessary to nourish one's spiritual life is delineated in canon 663 and 664 of the Code of Canon Law and it include: contemplation of divine things and assiduous union with God in prayer, daily participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice, reception of the sacred Body of Christ, adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament, reading and meditation on the sacred scripture, and mental prayer, worthy celebration of the liturgy of the hour as prescribed by proper law, devotion to our Blessed Mother Mary through the rosary, attendance of annual retreat, daily examination of conscience and frequent confession.⁴⁶ Reading spiritual books and lives of the saint is also a good practice to nourish one's spiritual life.

For perseverance and fidelity consecrated persons are to pray continuously for the grace of fidelity which God does not deny to those who seek for it with sincere heart.⁴⁷ The document "Starting Afresh from Christ," highlighted the role of the Holy Spirit in the perseverance of consecrated persons. It urges them to be open "to the life-giving breath of the Holy Spirit, who becomes the author of the consecrated person's necessary perseverance."⁴⁸ The action of the Holy Spirit is at the beginning of the journey of consecrated life and he is the one that

⁴⁶ Cf. Cann. 663, 664.

⁴⁷ Cf. Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 39; Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, Decree *Presbiterorum ordinis*, 16.

⁴⁸ Cf. Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, Instruction Starting Afresh from Christ. A Renewed Commitment to Consecrated Life in the Third Millennium, (19 May 2002), 10; cited in Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 39.

sustains this vocation to the end by helping a religious to live a life of intimate union with Christ.

iii. Building a Strong Culture by the Institute

Culture has to do with mentality, criteria for evaluation, models of behavior, the personal and community style, the way of being. Unlike weak culture in an institute which does not strengthen fidelity nor attract vocation, a strong culture in an institute can help one to overcome weaknesses, promote vocational fidelity, attract young candidates, foster pastoral effectiveness and the significance of their presence.⁴⁹ An institute with strong culture is one whose lifestyle is coherent with its charism and values of consecrated life; and fidelity in living the demands of the evangelical counsels is a means of making consecrated life attractive and it helps the institute to fulfill its prophetic role. This fact is underlined thus:

Throughout its secular history consecrated life has shown an ever-renewed ability to attract those who, searching for meaning, find in it a significant reference model. This attraction needs to be rediscovered and encouraged “in its original attractiveness, as an antidote to the 'paralysis of normality' and as openness to grace that turns the world and its ways of thinking upside-down. Rekindling the allure of evangelical radicalism amongst young generations, so that they can rediscover the prophetic value of chastity, poverty and obedience as a harbinger of the Kingdom and the complete fulfilment of their lives is something that cannot be neglected at a time dominated by consumeristic and commercialistic mindsets.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Cf. Francesco Cereda, “A Search for Signs of Vitality in Consecrated Life” in *Fidelity and abandonment*, 93.

⁵⁰ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 9.

Men and Women of consecrated life have to rekindle the attractiveness of the radical nature of the Gospel and increase in vitality, “which is perceived as something obscure both from inside and outside” of them.⁵¹ Francesco Cereda suggested four paths through which an institute can build strong culture which are: 1) Giving God and his Kingdom primary position in their life; 2) Prophetic Witness; 3) Gift of Communion; 4) Formation Commitment.⁵²

iv. Building Enabling Supportive Fraternal Community

Among the reasons which those who left religious life do give is the problem of conflict, misunderstanding and, incoherence in living the values of the institutes by some members of the institute. The Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life on this affirms:

With healthy realism, we must note first of all the persistent high number of those leaving the consecrated life. It is important to shed light on the main reasons for these departures which are happening not only among those after initial stages of formation [profession, ordination], but also among those who [have been in priesthood or in the institute for many year]. This phenomenon is now observable in every cultural and geographical context. It must be clearly stated that this is not only and always crises of an affective nature [such as falling in love with somebody]. These crises are often the results of some outlying disappointment at living an inauthentic common life. The deviation between what is proposed in terms of values and what is actually lived can even lead to a crisis of faith. There is the risk that an excessive number of perceived pressing and overvalued activities neither allow for a solid spiritual life nor nurture and sustain the desire to remain faithful.⁵³

⁵¹ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 10.

⁵² See Francesco Cereda, “A Search for Signs of Vitality in Consecrated Life,” pp 94, 95.

⁵³ New Wine in New Wineskins, 12.

Living common life is obligatory for the religious. However, common life is not an end in itself but a means to an end of supporting one another in living proper vocation for growth in holiness and for the attainment of the apostolic goal of the institute. There is need for mutual love and communion among the members for the existence of authentic religious community. Common life loses meaning where there is no fraternal love and mutual support. Consequently, Canon Law prescribes that, “The life of brothers or sisters proper to each institute, by which all the members are united together as a special family in Christ, is to be defined in such a way that it becomes a mutual support for all in fulfilling the vocation of each. Moreover, by their communion as brothers or sisters rooted and founded in charity, members are to be an example of universal reconciliation in Christ” (can. 602). Every religious institute is a spiritual family constituted by the possession of the same charism and one apostolic goal. Such family is to be characterized by unity of mind and purpose, charity, mutual trust and support. Individuals who are in religious life need a peaceful and serene environment to live their life of consecration with joy in order to be effective in their apostolic life.

A community where there is no fraternal love but rather hatred, mistrust, malicious criticism, and quarrelling can be discouraging, as it drains one's physical, spiritual and psychological energy, which can lead to abandonment of religious life. Alluding to the negative effects that a conflict community can have on those who have embraced religious life Guy Lespinay asserts: “Daily contact with difficult cases weakens those young people who enter our communities; and in the long run can discourage them. The multiplicity of problems and conflicts results in the depreciation of religious life and heightens distaste for common life. These situations initiate the loss of the original enthusiasm and invite apathy and mediocrity. Indifference

settles in and the individual will override submission to [one's] superiors and to the Gospel. The rule of life loses its significance.”⁵⁴

For the most part, desertion of religious life is due to inability of some individuals to cope with community life which in some cases becomes more strenuous and energy sapping because of the lifestyle of the members where the ego is much alive and in control. Religious community should be imbued with fraternal love, trust, understanding, mutual help and support. When this is lacking, only the one who is solidly built in Christ, and has strong mental capacity will still find reason to continue and will be ready to pay the price. The call to follow Christ as consecrated person in the religious life, no doubt demands carrying one's cross daily and follow Christ (Lk 9: 23), but Jacob reminds us if I drive my sheep too hard, they might all die in one day.⁵⁵

Jesus is the center of religious life and all forms of consecrated life. Jesus came that humanity would have abundant life.⁵⁶ Those who have embraced religious life should be marked with the search for excellence, fullness, richness and quality of life. Francesco Cereda rightly affirms that, “To give or to give back “spirit and life” to our institutions seems to be the privileged way to face the challenges of vocational fragility of today's young consecrated members as well as the difficulties in the vocational fidelity of consecrated people of all ages. Alive, vivacious and vital environment stimulates the interest, fascination and attractiveness of the call; but it especially generates fruitfulness, authenticity and total response. Life generates life. The fullness of life in a community or a province strengthens the vocation of the weak and helps to live fidelity with imagination.”⁵⁷

⁵⁴ Guy. Lespinay, *Vocations and Their Formation Today*, p. 131.

⁵⁵ Cf. Genesis 33: 13.

⁵⁶ Cf. Jn 10:10.

⁵⁷ Francesco Cereda, “A Search for Signs of Vitality in Consecrated Life,” in *Fidelity and Abandonment*, p. 71.

Fraternity is a great support to perseverance of the religious in their vocation. Hence, Pope Francis invites religious to create a home, to let prophecy take flesh, to make their home and days less cold, less indifferent and anonymous.⁵⁸ In other words to be one another's keeper. "To create a home is to create bonds by simple, everyday acts that all of us can perform. A home, as we all know, demands that everyone work together. No one can be indifferent or stand apart, since each is a stone needed to build the home."⁵⁹

"Within a truly fraternal community, each member has a sense of co-responsibility for the faithfulness of the others; each one contributes to a serene climate of sharing life, of understanding, and of mutual help; each is attentive to the moments of fatigue, suffering, isolation or lack of motivation in others; each offers support to those who are saddened by difficulties and trials."⁶⁰

"The most effective atmosphere to encourage the individual consecrated member to grow in his own vocation is found in a truly fraternal community that enjoys a serene family atmosphere, one of welcome and faith, that has a participative style in the internal organization of the community where there is a true sharing of life, prayer and apostolate, co-responsibility, understanding and mutual help."⁶¹

A loving caring community is a great help towards fidelity and perseverance in religious life. Pope Francis urges "communities throughout the world to offer a radiant and attractive witness of fraternal communion. Let everyone admire how you care for one another, and how you encourage and accompany one another."⁶²

⁵⁸ Francis, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christus vivit*, (25 March 2019), 217.

⁵⁹ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 59.

⁶⁰ Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Society of Apostolic Life, Fraternal Life in Community, *Congregavit nos in unum Christi amor*, Paulines, Nairobi, 2004, 57.

⁶¹ Francesco Cereda, "A Search for Signs of Vitality in Consecrated Life," pp. 97 -98.

⁶² Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World, *Evangelii Gaudium*, (24 November 2013) 99, cited in *New Wine in New Wine Skin*, 24.

A healthy, supportive, fraternal religious community is one filled with joy and Holy Spirit (Acts 13: 52); where there is mutual love, care shared responsibility, forgiveness, and communication.⁶³ “Such communities become places of evangelization, “places of hope and of the discovery of the Beatitudes, where love, drawing strength from prayer, the wellspring of communion, is called to become a pattern of life and source of joy.”⁶⁴

Religious are to foster peace and serene atmosphere in their common life by resolving conflicts and tensions as soon as they surface to prevent them from degenerating into open conflict and fueling dissatisfaction among the members of the community.⁶⁵ Forming people properly to live community life has a lot to contribute in the perseverance of the consecrated persons in their vocation.

v. *Right Mode of Exercise of Authority*

According to the mind of the Church, “Superiors are to exercise their power in a spirit of service [...]. They are to govern their subjects as sons or daughters of God and, promoting the voluntary obedience with reverence for the human person [...]. Superiors are to strive to build a community of brothers or sisters in Christ, in which God is sought and loved before all things.”⁶⁶

Religious superiors exercise their authority in the spirit of service and docility to the will of God by consulting the members and carrying them along in the affairs of the community and institute. They treat the members of the community as adults by using persuasive method rather than engaging in authoritarian governance.

⁶³ Cf. John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Vita consecrata*, (25 March 1996), 45.

⁶⁴ *Vita consecrata*, 51; Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 42.

⁶⁵ Cf. Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 20.

⁶⁶ Cann. 618-619; cf. *Perfectae Caritatis*, 14; New in a New Wineskin, 24.

Religious community requires the presence of a superior who is available, supportive, transparent, and has ability to create friendly, personocentric atmosphere, who sees members of community as friends and his/ her own brothers or sisters; and uses authority as service for the vocational growth of the members of the community through listening, dialogue, encouragement, and communal discernment.⁶⁷

“Goodness and fidelity characterize the nature of God and all His actions towards the chosen people, but also towards creation.”⁶⁸ When God called one to a particular state of life, he does not change his mind but one can lose grace of the call through carelessness and infidelity to the demands of the call. The person can accept the call or rejects it but God remain faithful. God desires that we are faithful but faithfulness cannot be achieved only from our human effort but requires the grace of God through personal encounter. “The encounter with God touches the totality of the person. In this encounter we are called to live the total surrender of ourselves: intellect and will, mind and heart, with the firmness and sweetness of our consent. Faith is the mystery of the encounter generated by the Spirit, between the Father and the Son in the heart of every person who welcomes the Word and accepts to be conformed to Him.”⁶⁹

“In perseverance authentic love for Christ is revealed, a love that fixes the eyes of the heart and mind on Him, as an athlete does when fixing his eyes on the finish line. When life has no purpose, everything becomes heavy, devoid of meaning and love shows its instability.”⁷⁰ Fidelity and perseverance in one's vocation is an act of love and faithfulness to God. The perseverance of consecrated persons is also a

⁶⁷ Cf. Francesco Cereda, “A Search for Signs of Vitality in Consecrated Life,” 98.

⁶⁸ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 24.

⁶⁹ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 26.

⁷⁰ Gift of Fidelity. Joy of Perseverance, 28.

gift of the God of the covenant: “the unspoken but eloquent witness of religious to the faithful God whose love is without end.”⁷¹ Persevering in one's vocation is a task, and it requires on the part of the religious, ability to overcome difficulties, to walk in the right direction and in a good company.⁷²

Conclusion

We set out in this study to highlight the nature of religious vocation, formation and discernment of vocation to religious life; to examine the possible causes of departure from religious life and to make suggestions towards solution to the problem. Vocation to religious life is a divine call, and God's call is permanent, hence departure from it after one has made final commitment contradicts the nature of the call. God is always faithful but the individual is not always faithful and that is where the problem lies. Each one made by God has special function to perform for the good of humanity through the state of life to which he calls him/her.

Formation which implies a process of configuration to Christ has two major goals: discernment of vocation to religious life and accompaniment of those called to religious life. One who shows sign of authentic vocation which primarily is ardent love for Christ and desire for total dedication of one's life to the service of God's kingdom, is admitted to first and final profession in religious life. We have seen that there are various factors internal and external that can be responsible for the desertion of religious life.

⁷¹Congregation for the Institutes of Consecrated Life, Societies of Apostolic Life, *Essential Elements in the Church's Teaching on Religious Life as Applied to Institutes Dedicated to Works of the Apostolate*, Rome, (31 May 1983), 37.

⁷²Cf. Jose Maria Arnaiz, “Fidelity and Abandonment in Today's Consecrated Life,” p. 3.

To prevent the problem of departures from religious life, both the individual and institute have work to do. On the part of the individual, to preserve in one's vocation as a religious, one needs to be prayerful and faithful to the institute's rule of life and constitution approved by the Church; and also observe the prescriptions of the Church Law on the obligations and rights of the religious.

Each institute, in order to promote happy and fulfilled life of its members and foster perseverance, should give enough space for personal and community prayer in planning their daily programme of life; they are to build a strong culture by its fidelity to the founding charism, offer adequate initial and ongoing formation, foster fraternal community life and exercise the service of authority in a way established by Canon Law and their Constitution. Both institute and member should give primacy to prayer. Religious life is a life of grace and can only be lived well and to the end by God's help which comes through prayer.

One who embraced religious life after a period of formation and discernment of the vocation should try to persevere in the call, as it is difficult for one to affirm with all assurance after perpetual profession that he or she has no vocation. God does not change his mind when he calls someone to a particular state of life but he respects the person's freedom to accept or refuse the call. One can, out of one's negligence in prayer and observance of the obligations of the proper state of life, lose the grace of the vocation.

In order to be fruitful in one's vocation and persevere to the end one needs the presence of Holy Spirit and to be close to Jesus (cf. Jn 15:5). One originally embraced religious life because of the burning and ardent love one had for Jesus stimulated by the Holy Spirit, the same love and passion for Jesus is indispensable throughout the course of religious life to enable a religious withstand the difficulties and problems that might arise along the journey of religious life. The

consecrated person should realize that this cannot happen without the power of the Holy Spirit.

We have talked in this paper about initial and ongoing formation but another important area to explore is ongoing discernment of vocation which can help in resolving some of the conflicts for one to take right decision but that will be object of further research.

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Intergenerational Dialogue towards Building of Synergy in Consecrated Life in Nigeria

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Introduction

We can look at intergenerational dialogue as referring to the exchange of ideas and experiences between individuals from different generations and age grades, such as a conversation between a toddler and his/her Aunty in her mid 30s, or a teenage grandchild and her grandmother. From my understanding, synergy refers to the idea that when different individuals work lovingly together, their combined output is greater and more beautiful than the sum of their individual input. We must also at this stage note the three key stages of the human life. We must also at this stage note the three key stages of the human life. 0-35/40 - good morning stage, 40-65/70 - good afternoon, over 70 - good evening.

At good afternoon stage the power of youthfulness is dwindled, possibility of failures in life begins to show itself, the dreams of early years tend to be shallow and pointless, then follows the proper old age (good evening). If the first two stages were not lived well, the 3rd stage will be problematic. Our past remains the greatest influence on how we deal with ourselves, others and God. Each of the above stages is complete in itself, but one affects the other.

Consecrated Life: Fostering Synergy through Intergenerational Dialogue

There are several Institutes of Consecrated Life in our country Nigeria. Let me attempt to list some of them, especially the female Religious Institutes: Sisters of the Sacred Heart, Daughters of Mary Mother of Mercy, Handmaids of the Holy Child Jesus, Sisters of the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus, University Sisters of Assumption, Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Mother of Christ, just to mention a few. Intergenerational dialogue holds great relevance for fostering synergy within these religious communities of Consecrated Life in Nigeria, and in every country of the world. Consecrated life refers to a state of life in the Catholic Church in which men and women who live together commit themselves to live the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience in a radical way. That Consecrated persons live communal life does not suggest that they all have the same wealth of experience or have become mates. The African adage that says, “What an adult sees sitting is not seen by a child standing on top of a tree” holds an everlasting truth. In other words, experience matters a great deal. Another proverb says, “A child can never have as many ragged clothes as an adult”. What these two proverbs are emphasizing is the non-debatable wisdom and experience of the elderly.

What Intergenerational Dialogue is not

It is important to take cognizance of the fact that intergenerational dialogue in consecrated life must involve meaningful conversations and interactions whose aim is to bridge the generation gap and foster understanding, collaboration, and mutual respect. It must be life giving.

- It is not intergenerational dialogue when one group talks down on another and badmouth them.

- It is not intergenerational dialogue when one group says they lived in the best times, and the other is of a perverse generation.
- It is not intergenerational dialogue when the young tell the old “Welcome to the floor of temporary amnesia”
- It is not intergenerational dialogue when the reason for conversation is not to learn, but to judge and condemn.
- It is not intergenerational dialogue when conversation follows the argumentative pattern.

What else is intergenerational dialogue not? The list goes on.

Intergenerational dialogue is something beautiful. It is always lovely to see the young and old having a loving conversation. It is a wonderful to behold a young Sister not getting agitated, but patiently teaching an elderly Sister how to navigate the settings of her new gift of phone, and the elderly one telling her about how the European Sisters who formed them taught them how to prepare rose pancake. This type of interaction usually result in a wonderful synergy.

The Synergy We Need

In simple terms, synergy means that when people collaborate, they can achieve more than what they could achieve on their own. Imagine that you have two friends, Sr. Desire and Sr. Desola. Sr. Desire is good at speaking, and Sr. Desola is good at writing poems. Individually, Sr. Desire can make up beautiful speeches, and Sr. Desire can write fantastic poems. But when they work together, Sr. Desire can illustrate Sr. Desola's poems. The combination of their talents can result in the creation of a meditation book that is much more captivating and appealing than if they had worked separately. The book's success is an example of synergy. Synergy can be seen in various situations. In a team, each member brings their unique skills and expertise. When they collaborate effectively, their collective efforts produce better outcomes and solutions than if each person had worked alone.

Existing Synergies

Synergy can also be observed in business partnerships, where Institutes of Consecrated life combine their resources, knowledge, and strengths to achieve shared goals and generate greater success. The NCWR Secretariat, Iva Valley, Institute for Formators, Du, ASEC Learning Centre, Du and COSUDOW are examples of synergy. African Sisters Education Collaborative (ASEC): ASEC is an organization that works with Catholic religious congregations in Africa, including Nigeria, to provide educational opportunities and leadership training for women religious. Their programs bring together older and younger members of religious communities, fostering intergenerational dialogue and mentorship. Through these initiatives, younger Sisters gain guidance, skills, and support from more experienced Sisters, ensuring a smooth leadership transition and the preservation of tradition while embracing innovation. Ultimately, synergy highlights the power of cooperation and how working together can create results that are greater than the sum of their parts. These examples highlight the importance of intergenerational dialogue in various religious contexts. They demonstrate how intentional initiatives and organizations can create platforms for meaningful dialogue, mentorship, and collaboration between older and younger members, leading to mutual understanding, growth, and the fostering of synergy within religious communities.

Intergenerational Dialogue and Synergy in the Bible

There is no specific Bible passage that mentions "intergenerational synergy" as a phrase. However, the Bible does contain teachings and principles that relate to the idea of intergenerational collaboration and the importance of unity across different generations. One such passage is: "Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of

good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned,having nothing evil to say about us." (Titus 2:2-8). This highlights the mutual responsibility and influence between older and younger individuals within a community, and the importance of older individuals providing guidance and positive examples to the younger ones. At the same time, younger individuals are encouraged to listen, learn, and exhibit self-control, while honoring and respecting their elders. The passage promotes synergy and unity between generations for the overall well-being and growth of the community. Psalm 145:4 "One generation shall commend your works to another, and shall declare your mighty acts." This verse speaks of the responsibility and privilege of passing down knowledge and faith from one generation to another. It emphasizes the importance of sharing God's works and testimonies, fostering a sense of continuity and unity between different age groups.

Generation Gap: A Challenge to Intergenerational Dynamics

In Nigeria, the consecrated life faces various challenges concerning intergenerational dynamics. These challenges impact the synergy and unity within religious communities. Addressing these challenges require a concerted effort from both older and younger members of religious communities. One of the primary challenges is the generation gap between older and younger members of religious communities. The generation gap within the consecrated life in Nigeria reflects the differences in values, perspectives, and approaches to religious life between older and younger members. These gaps can pose challenges but also offer opportunities for growth and synergy. By acknowledging and understanding these differences in values, perspectives, and approaches to religious life, the consecrated life in Nigeria can embrace the opportunities for growth and collaboration that arise from intergenerational dynamics. Engaging in open dialogue, mutual respect, and a willingness to learn from one another can bridge these

gaps and foster synergy that enriches the consecrated life, ensures its relevance, and strengthens its impact in the Nigerian context.

Values

Different generations often hold varying values shaped by their unique experiences and societal contexts. Older members may emphasize traditional values such as obedience, humility, and reverence, which have been passed down through generations. Younger members, influenced by contemporary culture, may prioritize values like social justice, inclusivity, and environmental stewardship. These differing values can lead to tensions and require intentional dialogue to find common ground and shared values that align with the mission of the consecrated life.

Perspectives

Each generation brings its own perspective on religious life, spirituality, and engagement with the world. Older members may have a more inward focus, emphasizing personal holiness, contemplation, and ascetic practices. Younger members, influenced by a changing society, may have a more outward focus, emphasizing social activism, outreach, and engagement with pressing societal issues. Combining these perspectives can enrich the consecrated life and foster a holistic approach that encompasses both contemplation and action.

Approaches to Community Life

Different generations may approach community life differently. Older members may prioritize hierarchical structures, strict obedience, and adherence to established rules and customs. Younger members may seek more participatory decision-making, collaboration, and a sense of shared ownership. Balancing these approaches is essential for creating a healthy and inclusive community where all members feel heard and valued.

Engagement with Technology

Technological advancements have a significant impact on intergenerational dynamics within religious communities. Younger members, having grown up in a digital age, are often more tech-savvy and comfortable with technology. They may embrace social media, online communication, and digital tools for ministry and outreach. In contrast, older members may have less familiarity and be less inclined to adopt these technological advancements. Bridging this technological divide and finding ways to leverage technology for the benefit of the consecrated life can enhance collaboration and communication across generations.

Intergenerational Dialogue is Essential for Building Synergy in Consecrated Life

Intergenerational dialogue is essential for building synergy in consecrated life for several reasons. It enables the sharing of wisdom, fosters mutual understanding and respect, harnesses the synergy of diverse gifts and talents, ensures continuity while embracing adaptation, supports leadership development, and promotes growth and renewal within the community. By actively engaging in intergenerational dialogue, religious communities can thrive and fulfill their mission in a dynamic and changing world.

Wisdom and Experience

Intergenerational dialogue allows for the exchange of wisdom and experience between older and younger members. Older members have a wealth of knowledge and insights gained through their years of commitment to religious life. By engaging in dialogue with younger members, this wisdom can be shared and utilized to guide the community's decisions, practices, and responses to challenges. Younger members, in turn, bring fresh perspectives and innovative ideas that can invigorate and inspire the community's mission.

Knowledge Sharing

Intergenerational dialogue facilitates the sharing of knowledge and insights across generations. Older members possess a wealth of experiential wisdom gained from their commitment to religious life. By engaging in dialogue with younger members, this wisdom can be imparted, benefiting the community as a whole. Simultaneously, younger members bring fresh ideas, perspectives, and knowledge influenced by their generation's experiences. This exchange of knowledge enriches the community, broadens its collective understanding, and encourages

Preservation of Tradition

Intergenerational dialogue plays a vital role in preserving the tradition and heritage of religious communities. Older members carry the wisdom of the past, the practices, and the values that have shaped the community. Through dialogue, these traditions can be passed on to younger members, ensuring their continuity and relevance. By understanding and appreciating the rich traditions, younger members can engage with them authentically and contribute to their preservation, fostering a sense of identity and rootedness within the community.

Mutual understanding and Respect

Intergenerational dialogue fosters mutual understanding and respect among members of different generations. It creates an environment where individuals can listen to each other's perspectives, values, and concerns without judgment. This understanding leads to stronger relationships, improved communication, and a sense of shared purpose. When different generations feel heard and valued, they are more likely to work together harmoniously and support one another's growth and development.

Synergy of gifts and talents

Each generation possesses unique gifts, talents, and strengths. Intergenerational dialogue enables the identification and utilization of these diverse qualities within the community. By appreciating and combining the talents and expertise of both older and younger members, the community can achieve a higher level of synergy. This synergy allows for the collaborative pursuit of the community's mission and the fulfillment of its charism.

Continuity and Adaptation

Intergenerational dialogue ensures both continuity and adaptation within the consecrated life. It facilitates the passing on of traditions, values, and practices from older members to younger ones, preserving the community's identity and heritage. Simultaneously, dialogue allows for adaptation to the changing needs and contexts of the times. The insights and perspectives of younger members can help the community remain relevant and responsive to societal challenges, ensuring the continuity of the community's mission in an ever-evolving world.

Personal and Spiritual Growth

Intergenerational dialogue offers opportunities for personal and spiritual growth among community members. Engaging in dialogue with individuals from different generations expands one's understanding, challenges assumptions, and broadens one's perspective. Through dialogue, older members can witness the passion, idealism, and dedication of the younger generation, renewing their own sense of purpose. Simultaneously, younger members can benefit from the wisdom, guidance, and mentorship of older members, deepening their spiritual journey and fostering a sense of continuity with the community's legacy.

Suggestions on Practical Strategies for Fostering Intergenerational Dialogue Within the Consecrated Life in Nigeria

Active listening, respect, and openness is expected from all community members. Fostering intergenerational dialogue requires an ongoing commitment and intentional effort. The consecrated life in Nigeria can cultivate an environment that values intergenerational collaboration, understanding, and synergy. Fostering intergenerational dialogue within the consecrated life in Nigeria requires practical strategies and methods that create a supportive and inclusive environment for all members, such as: Establishing Intergenerational Committees that consist of representatives from different generations within the community. These groups can be responsible for organizing intergenerational activities, workshops, and discussions to ensure a diversity of perspectives and ideas that cater to the needs and interests of all generations. Another strategy is to organize intergenerational prayer reflection sessions and sharing. These sessions can take place during community gatherings or retreats and provide an opportunity for members of different generations to share their insights, stories, and reflections. We can facilitate these sessions by using prompts or questions that encourage open and respectful dialogue. Design liturgical services or prayer gatherings that involve members from different generations in the planning and execution. This can include readings, reflections, and music selections that resonate with various age groups, ensuring a sense of inclusivity and shared worship experiences.

Conclusion

Intergenerational dialogue plays a pivotal role in building synergy within the consecrated life in Nigeria. By bridging the gap between generations, it promotes understanding, collaboration, and the preservation of tradition while embracing innovation. Through open

and respectful communication, the barriers of age, values, and perspectives can be overcome, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose. Intergenerational dialogue allows for the exchange of knowledge, experiences, and insights, enriching the spiritual and vocational journeys of all members.

In Nigeria, where the consecrated life is deeply rooted in tradition and facing evolving societal challenges, intergenerational dialogue is particularly crucial. Let us recognize the immense value of intergenerational dialogue in the consecrated life in Nigeria. By organizing intergenerational committees and prayer sessions, fostering open communication, creating safe spaces for dialogue, and promoting inclusivity, we can build synergy that transcends generational boundaries. Together, we can create a vibrant and harmonious community, embracing the richness of our collective wisdom and ensuring the enduring legacy of the consecrated life in Nigeria.

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The Communicative Dimensions of the Church's Vision of Migrants and Refugees: An African Perspective

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A Paper delivered at the Signis Africa Workshop for Catholic Journalists,
Held at St. Mary National Seminary, Gaba Kampala, Uganda, July 10-16, 2023,
on the theme: “Effective and Efficient Reporting on Migrants and Refugees”.

Preamble

(*Note: I have done this long historical part for the sake of many journalists who would read this paper independently and who might not know the development of the Church's vision on migrants and refugees).*

“We would have before our eyes not numbers, not dangerous invaders, but the faces and stories, gazes, expectations and sufferings of real men and women to listen to.” (Pope Francis, Message of His Holiness Pope Francis for the 56th World Day of Social Communications, 2022).

In the present context, it is imperative to remember what happened ten years ago. If we don't remember, we won't know at what point we are now. We need to avoid slogans and speak with our hearts and share to make things move” (Dr. Paolo Ruffini, the Vatican Prefect of the Dicastery for Communications speaking to Vatican News, Andrea de Angelis on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of Pope Francis visit to Lampedusa on July 8, 2013 in solidarity with the migrants who perished trying to cross the Mediterranean into Europe)

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I am glad to participate at another *Signis Africa* workshop, this time on the Migrants and Refugees question. I thank the migrant section of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development for the great work it is doing and for supporting this workshop. I also thank Signis World present here in the person of Ms Helen Ousman its president and her husband John for joining us as wella as all Signis International officials. I congratulate the President of Signis Africa, Rev Prof Walter Ihejirika and all Signis Africa officials and collaborators for putting this together. I thank the Uganda Bishops Conference through its President, Bishop Anthony Zziwa for hosting this important assembly. I welcome all participants and trust that your presence will enrich you and enrich this workshop.

The topic I have: “The Communicative Dimension of the Church's vision of Migrants and Refugees: An African Perspective” invites us to expose the Church's vision on migrants and refugees and asks us to confront the often-sad reality of migrants and refugees of the African continent with the vast possibilities of our calling as communicators In the Church in Africa.

1. The Vision of the Church up to Pope Francis

The above citations above from the Holy Father, Pope Francis and from the prefect of the Dicastery for Communications seem to me to give a clear view of where we should be headed, a world with a heart open to all and which treats all as brothers and sisters irrespective of the situation in which they are found. The messages of the pope to the media on Word Communications Day in the last three years provide us with a roadmap for our communications strategy. In 2021, he urged the catholic media to always to “Come and See”, in 2022 he asked that we “Listen with the ear of the heart” and in the current year to actually “Speak with the Heart”. All this, put together, express somehow “the

pontificate of inclusion” which pope Francis has pursued in the Church in his time.

Pope Francis has clearly led the Church further on the road of the civilization of love, promoting encounter and social friendship with the needy, the less privileged and others who do not share our status, situation, and condition. He has sought to increase universal solidarity and welcome especially through his apostolic exhortation, *Evangelium Gaudium* on the joy of the gospel and the encyclical, *Fratelli tutti*, on fraternity and social friendship. He has written many messages on the necessity of listening with the heart to the plight of others, seeing with the eyes of compassion and identifying with the condition of the down trodden. That agenda has culminated in the ongoing synodality process which insists that the mission of evangelization in the Church must embrace inclusion, carrying everybody along and not leaving anyone behind.

With the earlier landmark action of the Holy Father's pontificate to reconfigure the Dicastery of Justice and Peace into a new framework of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development we got an early indicator. That Dicastery, has a section that deals specifically with issues concerning migrants, refugees and victims of slave trade, human trafficking, giving necessary attention to issues pertaining to the needs of those who are forced to abandon their countries or those who are without one.

While the world of today closes itself in against migrants and refugees through policies and action, the Church reacts differently. This year 2023 we celebrate the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees on Sunday, 24 September with the “politically incorrect” theme: "Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay." It provides another occasion to express support and concern for people who are forced to flee their homes, to encourage Catholics worldwide to remember and pray for those displaced by conflict and persecution, and increase awareness

about the opportunities that migration offers. The Church is not about to relent in her advocacy and work in favour of migrants and refugees anytime soon.

Christianity, from its patriarchal origins to Jesus Christ, is a migrant religion. Going by the Christian eschatological faith, we are all on a pilgrimage to heaven and none has a permanent home in this world. Abraham our father in faith had to migrate from Ur of the Chaldeans to a place where God would show him. Can we say that God who followed his people from Egypt to the promised land is also a migrant God? Jesus Christ himself, faced with the threat of King Herod, became a refugee in Egypt. That is why Pope Pius XII already in 1952 taught: The exiled Holy Family of Nazareth, fleeing into Egypt, is the archetype of every refugee family. Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are thus the models and protectors of every migrant, pilgrim, and refugee.

2. Key Elements of the Church's Vision on Migrants and Refugees

On broad lines, the Catholic Church's teaching on migrants and refugees establishes:

- That all are obliged to welcome the stranger. That such welcome is an opportunity to practice the commandment of love (Mark 12:29-31) and the work of mercy. That Christ has in some way united himself to every person especially those in need (cf.Mt.25:31ff)
- That all peoples have the right to live a dignified life in their homeland.
- That people have the right to migrate to sustain their lives and the lives of their families, and to seek asylum:
- That anyone whose life is threatened whether because of persecution, armed conflicts, natural disasters, or economic

conditions or physical integrity has the right to support and protection.

Catholic teaching on migrants and refugees is therefore informed by:

a. *The human dignity principle*

Human life is sacred because each person is created in the image and likeness of God. Human dignity is inalienable. The human dignity and human rights of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers must be respected, regardless of their citizenship, visa status or mode of arrival. In addition, the Catholic Church teaches that the demands of human dignity always take precedence even over national interest.

b. *Devotion to humanity*

Countries have the right to regulate their borders and to control immigration meaning that all nations have a right to regulate migration across their borders. This right is however mitigated by the duty of nations to protect and help innocent victims and those fleeing for their lives. The right of nations to regulate their borders is an extension of the right of all persons to live a dignified life in their community. Borders are for the protection of people, not for the exclusion of people seeking protection.

c. *The prerogative of justice and mercy*

The purpose of the law is to serve justice and mercy (cf. Matthew 23:23). Laws which subject immigrants and asylum seekers to arbitrary and prolonged immigration detention or banish them from seeking protection, fail to uphold justice and mercy and are immoral. It is not illegal to seek asylum. Many asylum seekers are survivors of crimes, torture, and trauma. Indefinite detention increases their stress and suffering, impacting on their mental and physical health. The Church advocates the implementation of just and rapid procedures to determine each person's claim for protection if only out of mercy.

d. *Solidarity*

The most vulnerable people are not simply those who are in a needy situation to whom we kindly offer an act of solidarity, but are members of our family with whom we have a duty to share the resources we have. Solidarity towards migrants and refugees is inscribed in the common membership of the human family.

e. *The right to be part of any community*

The Catholic Church teaches that all people have the right to be part of a community. Asylum seekers who have been forced from their homeland have a duty to integrate into their host community. We must favour this integration by helping migrants to find a place where they may live in peace and safety, where they may work and take on the rights and duties that exist in the country that welcomes them.

f. *The intrinsic value in human migration*

This also makes it imperative that we recognize and value how much migrants can contribute to the process of building of the society and church community. They might be foreigners, not invaders or destroyers, but willing labourers who rebuild the walls of the new Jerusalem, that Jerusalem whose gates are open to all peoples (cf. Is 60:10-11). The arrival of foreigners is a source of enrichment (cf. Is. 60:5).

g. *The need to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate*

Pope Francis' mantra for sane attitude towards migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons has become the catchphrase for a healthy attitude to the phenomena under scrutiny. His elucidation of the concepts in Fratelli Tutti reinforces the imperative of a civilization of love in the Church's vision.

3. The Challenge to African Church Communication

Last month, June 2023, the prefect of the Dicastery for Integral Human Development, Cardinal Michael Czerny, speaking as papal representative at the 140th anniversary celebration of the evangelization of the Congo, highlighted the link between evangelization and the promotion of the human person and the social magisterium of Pope Francis, which appears especially in the Apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* and the encyclicals *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*". He said:

"It is the encounter with Christ, and not an ideology or a sociology, that generates the preferential option for the poor. Let us regain compassion and solidarity and express them daily. Let us develop true development. Let us generate responsibility and mutual accountability between the individual, society, the state, and the religions,"; I see this challenge as fully applicable to the theme of migrants and refugees in Africa.

4. Human Mobility and the Church in Africa

We must continue to interrogate the popular assumption that Africa is a continent on the move to the outside world. One of the implications of that myth is that too many push factors provoking this abound on the continent and that the youthfulness of its population makes Africans aggressive, and adventurous. Less cited but better researched data show that most migrations in Africa are driven by economic considerations and study. Not for nothing that the highest concentration of migrations within Africa are in economically and educationally viable countries like Ivory Coast, Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria, and South Africa (*African Migration Trends to Watch in 2023 by Africa Center for Strategic Studies*, Infographic January 9, 2023). The Bishops of Africa under the umbrella of the Symposium of

Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) have been concerned about African migrants and refugees, and have done considerable work through their secretariat, especially through their Justice Peace and Development Office.

However, many African migrants languish and suffer because of discrimination, racism, disinformation, xenophobia and sheer indifference. The refugee and migrant situation in Tunisia, Morocco, Eritrea, Sudan, Ivory Coast, South Africa, Nigeria, Somalia, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Congo even here in Uganda and elsewhere continue to cry for attention. In July 2022 the Bishops of Africa studied the phenomenon of migration on the continent during their plenary assembly at Accra, Ghana. Cardinal Lopez Rome Cristobal of Rabat, Morocco provided some working insights at the assembly. He cited contemporary data that 1 out of every 30 people in the world is a migrant. This adds up to about around 258 million people, about 50 million of whom are children. He therefore confirmed that migration is not an African but a global phenomeon and should be seen as a human phenomenon or a social reality rather than as a problem. He emphasized that in Africa most migrations are done intra continentally and are done legally. Studies as cited above have shown that the contemporary myth that Africans in their millions are waiting to invade Europe or America is simply not true. What is true is that only 14 percent of the global migrant population is African, compared to 41 percent and 24 percent for Asia and Europe respectively. (Africa and Europe: Facts and Figures on African Migrations, by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation and Africa Europe foundation). The Bishops of SECAM strongly counseled that all who would migrate in Africa strive to do so only through legal means.

Nonetheless it is true that the wars, the political and religious conflicts, hunger, the north-south dichotomy, human misery, the ecological crises, and bad governance etc. push many in Africa to relocate and

seek greener pastures and security away from their countries of origin. This is the original sin of the refugee situation. As is often said, even in Africa, if jobs, wealth, and security are not found where people are, people will go where jobs, wealth and security are found. Well-to-do people, can generally circulate all over the world freely without hindrance. What is rejected is more than not, the poverty not the migrant. Even in Africa, hardly anybody not even government complains when a billionaire superstar decides to live in another country other than his.

In Africa like elsewhere in the world, migration provides manpower and expertise, promotes growth and development both in the countries of departure and in the countries of destination or welcome. In 2017 alone migrants (all over the world) sent to their country of origin an estimated 450 billion dollars, which was thrice the sum of development aid which all the rich countries sent to other countries. That figure becomes even more relevant considering that migrants spent an estimated 85per cent of their income in the countries which welcomed them. In fact, migrants are not rejected because they are migrants but because they are poor.

Cardinal Cristobal noted that migration and the refugee phenomenon is also fuelled in Africa largely by:

- The ignorance of those who migrate about the laws of where they are going and the reality of life there,
- The brutal but effective work of the cabals that profit from migrations
- The disinterest of national authorities in discouraging migrations, believing that the more people move, the lesser mouths there are to feed
- Ignorance of religious organizations about the real situation and their unwillingness to get involved with migrants and refugees

- The attraction of the loudly-proclaimed success of a few migrants who make it and the silence of many who fail or die trying to move.
- Ignorance of the Church's solid teaching on human dignity and the right of migrants and refugees to seek security and livelihood anywhere possible.

The foregoing then seems to me to be the important areas of focus for Church media intervention if the situation must change. How the African Catholic media professionals can contribute with their skills to the amelioration of the situation seems to me to be the task around which we are assembled,

5. The Communicative Dimension: What Must Be done

5.1. Evolve alternative media tools and strategies

The entire communication apparatus of the Church in Africa is challenged to feed, sustain, and support the vision which the Church embraces. The vision of the Church characteristically challenges all predominant nationalist and protectionist stance and policies which many countries and institutions of the Western world operate today. African migrants and refugees also suffer from such restrictive policies. Institutions and governments which operate such policies are generally supported by their own cooperative, sensationalist media. Since media eventually define communion and influence community, the Church media and press in Africa must challenge the agenda set by the “cooperative” media which amplify, restrictive anti migrant and refugee policies. There might be a call to duty here to evolve an “African lexicon” of terms and phraseologies informed by Christian vision and values that Christian journalists can adopt in order to educate, inform, critique, and influence governmental policies and institutions. They can over time use such a lexicon, to set an alternative, welcoming agenda for migrants reporting and self-regulation.

5.2. Amplify Church Teachings and Related Declarations

To feed the Church's vision Catholic communicators need to know that vision in the documents and teachings of the Holy Father, and of the competent offices and officials within and outside the Church. Making them more diffused and breaking them down into catchy digestible messages that impact into society and people is also necessary. Messages given during special occasions like the United Nations World Refugee Day each year and the Church's own World Day of Migrants Day and Refugees have such quality content. Such must be exploited to celebrate the heroism, talents, strength, and courage of African peoples who are forced to flee from their homes and thus improve public perception, understanding and solidarity for their situation.

In Africa where the Church has configured herself as “The Church Family of God,” catholic journalist would do well to help bridge the gap between policy and action. African governments and institutions generally agree that mobile populations should be treated with dignity and compassion but for various reasons, lack the memory, the will and capacity to make this happen. Journalists are known to take on with their skills, issues that politicians would generally rather avoid. The four favourable concepts of Pope Francis about migrants and refugees, to welcome, protect, promote, and integrate migrants and refugees can be a useful tool for this task.

5.3. Interrogate Current Paradigms

Sensationalist media reports, reinforced by politicians and even partisan scholars about masses of Africans dying to get out of Africa, to populate the West need to be challenged. (How diffused for example, is the information that 86 percent of migration within Africa is not related to conflict but to education and the search for a better life? And is it not true that much of the refugee crises in Africa is caused by exploitation and interference from outside Africa?) We must discard what has been

referred to as Africa's chronic, psychotic addiction to definitions that originate from the West, about Africa and African life because he who defines the subjects determines the understanding of the same.

According to a Zimbabwean lawyer's submission on African migration, African communication professionals must change current narratives about migrants and refugees in order to modify public perception of the realities which migrants and refugees go through. The only way to make this happen is to control the narrative in both analogue and digital forms. Only by so doing can we interrogate the data and statistics imposed on these phenomena. Accordingly, we must take control of the digital platforms which determine how much importance and coverage is given to the positive contributions of African migrants and refugees wherever they are found. Only in this manner can we begin to correct the Western supremacist views about the contributions of black people to the entire world economy and secure more public sympathy for migrants, and refugees.

5.4. Engage the Digital Transformation of Our world to Give Migrants a Voice

Digital transformation in the world is today reversing the personal and social effects of language, by diminishing, or even eliminating the responsibility of the individual from human affairs. Church media must engage this world and promote a process that evolves language that helps to restore responsibility for the other, for the neighbour as well as give a voice to those we seek to help. Migrants and refugees need to be heard in the management of the space and issues that concern them. It might be necessary to launch something like a “Be Fair, Be Bold, Speak Up and Be Blessed” program for migrants, and refugees to express themselves. The journalist can help by creating engaging, empathetic digital stories that favour the experiences of the migrants and refugees. In doing this, the energy and the skills of the young generation, indigenes of the digital media, need to be coopted. The document

recently released by the Dicastery for Social Communications entitled: “Towards Full Presence: A Pastoral Reflection on Engagement with Social Media” speaks to this need. In it the dicastery emphasized how important it is for Catholics to engage the digital space and turn it into a co-created space where it is possible to provoke communion with and responsibility for others. Catholic communicators and especially the youth must become active participants not marginal ones in the digital conversation. On this I commend and encourage the Citizen Journalism initiative of Signis Africa to give young people in the church the skill and confidence to be part of the conversation around them. Such a presence can serve as a catalyst for giving voice to migrants and refugees and secure their inalienable rights and dignity.

5.5. Appropriate Pacts and Treaties Outside the Church

Conversations are continually taking place about migrants and refugees. It is important for Church communicators to know about various multilateral pacts, agreements, treaties that are produced from time to time on the migrants and refugee issues. Even though the problem of non-commitment and double standards may be real and discouraging, the content of such accords can provide inspiration and resources for decisions and policies at various levels. Most of such multilateral treaties, even when signed are not legally binding, but it is helpful to know them because that they can be referred to as evidence of concern on the part of countries and governments that sign them and the content of the issues confronted. One good example of such is the Marrakesh pact which is an agreement by leaders from 64 countries in a global pact to prevent suffering and chaos for global migration. It deserves to be better known. Although some countries like the United States withdrew from it and it contains a clause that it is not legally binding, it did call on states that host migrants to respect their rights, give them basic services and help them to flourish economically. Such positive undertakings which coincide with the Church's vision for

migrants, even if having no legal force at present, can eventually seep into initiatives of groups and nations down the years in favour of migration.

5.6. *Compile Database Prioritize Networking of Catholic Resources*

To do any battle it is necessary to know one's resources. (Lk 14:31) A credible database would be a firm support for Catholic journalists and a mine of information for reporting on migrants and refugees. Such a database would be a strong resource for the work of the Church in other areas as well because it would be a link platform for higher and more competent platforms and collaboration with the Dicastery for Communications.

5.7. *Reinforce Existent Communication Structures in the African Church*

In relation to the above, the Church in Africa must put its resource where its mouth is and invest more in communication personnel and skills. This must be done through adequate budgeting and funding of communication plans, processes, and personnel at all levels. This will help strengthen existent structures of church communications in Africa through greater capacity building, commitment, training, and coordination. What we are doing here is part of this. Often, access to information can not translate to social transformation because the capacity for implementation is lacking. Journalists need both, given the dynamic nature of the communication field itself. Another welcome development is the newsletter of SECAM programs and initiatives, recently revived by the secretariat. Such an organ, well supported, will help the collaboration and patronage of African journalists in their work with migrants. CEPACS of which I am President, was established in 1973 to support the work of SECAM and play the role of nurturing and coordinating the pastoral communication structures, personnel,

and resources available to the Church in Africa. It was to work through the eight regions into which SECAM is configured. Despite many bright years of existence, especially around the Synod of Bishops for Africa in 1994, it has also had many dormant ones. Fortunately, there is now a big push to evaluate its 50-year journey and relaunch it on the path of future effectiveness during its forthcoming golden jubilee assembly in November, 2023. All African journalists should support such a revival in the interest of their work.

5.7. Research and Study: Capacity and Coordination

Whoever must control narratives and data needs to do much study and research and constantly build up capacity in order to access and effectively use available data. It is obvious that African Catholic journalists need deliberate research and study to aid the communication dimension of the vision which we aim to promote. Outside of Church circles, the United Nations, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and similar platforms, all offer a rich mine-resource for useful information and contacts. The support of partner agencies is seriously required in this capacity need. Within the Church, the considerable work already being done by the Church in Africa especially through its SECAM secretariat as earlier mentioned can be a great incentive but is largely unknown. Such information could energise and inspire initiatives and collaboration at many levels and serve to ameliorate the plight of migrants. Here is a summary:

Brief Report on SECAM Migration Activities

1. In 2019, SECAM organized a pastoral collaboration on the migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea between the Bishops of West Africa, North Africa, and Europe. The bishops were accompanied by representatives of the International Catholic

- Migration Commission (ICMC), Regional Secretaries of RECOWA, and CERNA. The meeting was hosted by Cristóbal Cardinal López Romero, the Archbishop of Rabat, Morocco. The bishops had an opportunity to interact and visit migrant transit centres in Tangier and Rabat, and commended the Catholic Church's pastoral engagement with the migrants in transit. SECAM plans to continue such collaborations in future.
2. SECAM continues to collaborate with the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), particularly in the area of the promotion of the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees. In the focus for 2023, ICMC intends to aid the SECAM working group by helping them become more acquainted with the Global Compacts and offering them assistance in comprehending their present state of implementation in Africa.
 3. SECAM is also collaborating with Caritas Internationalis Geneva Office and Caritas Africa to empower Caritas Offices and Departments on the continent on submission of the Universal Peer Reviews (UPRs) on the status of migrants and other human rights-related issues. For 2023, the plans include the organization of capacity-building workshops for those countries whose UPRs will be reviewed this year and in 2024.
 4. SECAM enjoys a cordial working relationship with the African Union CIDO, through its observer status that was obtained in 2015. SECAM representative at the AU is Berhaneyesus Cardinal Demerew Souraphiel, the Archbishop of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. One of the staff of the AU Commission is a member of the SECAM Working Group on Migration and Human Trafficking.

5. The SECAM Migration and Human Trafficking Working Group recently (on 20th April 2023) organized a continental online conference on Statelessness, where the Most Rev. Buti, the Archbishop of Johannesburg gave a Key Note Address. The Conference was called to reflect on the magnitude of statelessness on the continent and what the Church could do to address this perennial challenge affecting people on the move. The conference, inspired by Pope Francis' 2023 theme on migrants "Free to choose whether to migrate or to stay" was one of the SECAM events to commemorate the 109th World Day of Migrants and Refugees World Migrants Day to be held on Sunday, September 24, 2023. Among the key issues stressed for action included the need to continue raising awareness about birth registrations, advocating for policy reforms and laws, providing humanitarian aid to stateless individuals, and offering emotional and spiritual support to those affected by statelessness.

Through the Department of Justice, Peace, Development and Good Governance project, between 2016 and 2021, SECAM has strengthened its collaboration with the African Union, with which it has signed an MOU specifying several areas in which the two institutions will work closely together to promote justice, peace, and human rights on the African continent.

Since 2022, the Working Groups (Good Governance, Environment and Migration) have been revitalized and many people have joined the networks that have been set up to promote the participation of everyone and at the same time strengthen collaboration with the regions.

The novelty in 2022 is the partnership agreement signed between SECAM and the Dicastery of Integral Development regarding the creation of an office at SECAM that deals with the regional

coordination of the activities of women's congregations related to the pastoral care of migrants and refugees. According to the recommendations of the Dicastery, the new coordinator (a religious woman belonging to a local congregation) will carry out data collection and plan a series of training sessions for the religious women as part of their capacity building.

Another agreement was signed between SECAM and SIMI (Scalabrini International Migration Institute) which is one of the partners of the Dicastery. The purpose of this MoU concerns: collaboration between the two institutions in several fields, in particular research and the publication of works on problems linked to migration, cooperation at the academic level, the organization of workshops and training for educational purposes, information exchange, international collaboration program

In Conclusion

All in all, Church media in Africa must exploit all perspectives and dimensions that can help the Church to increase awareness, reawaken consciences and revive brotherly responsibility and sensitivity about migrants and refugees. As we meet, there are migrants expelled from Tunisia, barred in Libya, drinking seawater, in the scorching heat, injured people with no shelter, helpless women and children pouring out of Syria. Migrant issues in Tunisia, Morocco, Congo South Africa, Ethiopia, Egypt condemn widespread global indifference and handwringing while migrant ships filled with African people get missing on the high seas. Catholic Communicators in Africa must be of the general disposition to put their skills and technology as well as values at the disposal of the Church's vision to mitigate the situation, engender a fraternal and friendly society and build a welcoming for all. Thank you for your attention.

The Inculturation of Consecrated Life in Africa: Towards a Logic for Promoting and Safeguarding Indigenous Gifts of Fidelity

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Abstract

As many religious institutes and societies of Apostolic life in Africa are celebrating their hundred years of existence on African soil, questions have begun to arise as regards to what extent these religious institutes have been made to feel at home in Africa. These questions spring from the genuine need for authentic dialogue between the Christian faith and the religio-cultural and philosophical values of the African people. While many works have been written on inculturation theology, less attention has been paid to the possible relationship between the theology of consecrated life and African indigenous perspectives. The present work, therefore, focused on the theology of consecrated life as it relates to the possibility of inculturation. To address this, the Igwebuiké indigenous theoretical framework was adopted, while the hermeneutic, comparative, and analytical methods of inquiry were patronized for the development and achievement of the objective of the investigation. The paper established the possibility of the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa, and further provided the possible areas where this inculturation could take place. The paper discovered that

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the inculturation of consecrated life is possible within the context of the vows (chastity, poverty, and obedience) and community life.

Keywords: Consecrated Life, Inculturation, Africanization, Christianization, Igwebuiké

Introduction

During the 20th century, there emerged a strong need among African scholars and missionaries for the expression of the Christian faith within indigenous categories, to achieve the Christianization of the African culture and the Africanization of the Christian faith. This concern has endured until the 21st century, especially as many religious institutes and societies of apostolic life in Africa are celebrating the hundred years of their presence on African soil. There is now the question of the extent to which these religious institutes have been made to feel at home in Africa. This is a question that does not only border on the nature of their existence but on the future of their existence, given that their ability to adapt will determine the quality of their ability to endure into the future. The 1974 Synod of Bishops on Evangelization was particularly concerned about the superficiality and shallowness of the Christian life in Africa:

Our theological thinking must remain faithful to the authentic tradition of the church and at the same time be attentive to the life of our communities and respectful of our traditions and languages, that is our philosophy of life. Following this idea of mission, the Bishops of Africa and Madagascar consider as being completely out-of-date the so-called theology of adaptation. In its stead, they adopted the theology of incarnation (cited in Shorter 1988, p. 213).

A cursory glance at existing literature reveals that many works have been written on inculturation theology, that is, the insertion of the

Christian faith into particular cultures in such a manner that faith becomes culture and culture becomes faith; however, less attention has been paid to the possible of the inculturation of the theology of consecrated life in Africa. The present paper, therefore, discusses the theology of consecrated life as it relates to inculturation.

Establishing a Theological Framework

The theological theoretical framework for the understanding and interpretation of the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa is the Igwebuiké theological framework. In Igbo-African ontology, Igwebuiké is understood as a unifying concept, especially, that aspect concerning the human person's conception of the spiritual and material universe in which he or she lives. It is an explanatory theory or principle that interprets the puzzle of our complex relationships with the non-corporal world and human social life, that is, major social institutions that ensure social continuity and group identity, and further, underpins the epistemological manifestations of the human person's universe. The Igwebuiké theological framework is *apropos*, given that the consecrated speaks of a spiritual dimension in terms of understanding and life, and also given that a contextual approach is required of this study. Igwebuiké presents a complementary concept of the relationship between faith and culture.

However, within an integrated systematic framework, Igwebuiké strives beyond all forms of particularities, peculiarities, paradoxes, and contradictions and espouses the path of complementation, therefore, showing how realities can relate to one another in a mutually harmonized non-absolutistic mode. Thus, Igwebuiké explores methods and principles for the mediation, coalescing, and comprehension of the different units of reality: ideal and real, universal and particular, progressive and conservative, necessary and contingent, transcendent and immanent, essential and inessential, and other units of reality

within the same framework. It treats all units, fragments, or components of reality, no matter how minute as units and combinations, or missing links that are necessary for the conceptualization of reality as a whole.

Going back to the origin of the word, *Igwebuike* is a combination of three Igbo words. It can be understood as a word or a sentence: as a word, it is written as *Igwebuike*, and as a sentence, it is written as, *Igwe bu ike*, with the component words enjoying some independence in terms of space. *Igwe* is a noun that means number or multitude, usually a large number of population. The number or population in perspective are entities with ontological identities and significance, however, part of an existential order in which every entity is in relation to the other. *Bu* is a verb, which means *is*. *Ike* is a noun, which means *strength* or *power* (Kanu 2016). *Igwe, bu, and Ike* put together, means 'number is strength' or 'number is power' (Kanu 2017). However, beyond the literal sense of *Igwebuike*, it means *otu obi* (one heart and one soul) – *cor unum et anima una*. It is capable of concatenating forms, symbolism, signs, media, meaning, anthropology, universal cosmic truths, functions, semantic powers, physics, phenomena, faculties, and environmentalities.

The *Igwebuike* perspective is anchored on the fact that the universe in which the human person lives is a world of probabilities. An Igbo proverb says: “If a thing remains one, then nothing remains”. This is because the power or strength generated by a person is not strong enough to withstand the existential gamble of life, as the chances of being overcome are on the high side; thus the need for existential backing. In a metaphoric sense, *Igwebuike* within the Igbo linguistic setting refers to relational engagement in the world, accomplished in solidarity and complementarity, and the powerful and insurmountable force therein (Kanu 2016). The closest words to *Igwebuike* in English are complementarity, solidarity, and harmony.

The mutual relations and complementarity that *Igwebuiké* conceptualizes are steadied on the following basic human conditions:

- a. The world in which we live is one in which we encounter several needs, however, with very few resources to take care of the needs. This limitation calls for the mobilization of other forces outside of the self, a social fellowship for the satisfaction of particular needs.
- b. Nature has placed in us the likeness for fellowship. This is based on the fact that we were created by God in His image and likeness.
- c. Although we are equal essentially, we have different gifts and abilities. What I may be able to do another may not be able to do, meaning that my relationship with the other completes what is lacking in me.
- d. Collaboration with the other is a ground for becoming, as everything takes a bit of another to make itself. It is a ground for staying alive and transforming the universe (Kanu 2016).

This idea of mutuality, complementarity, solidarity, interrelationships, and relationality is the ontological logic that *Igwebuiké* provides for a discourse on the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa. It is a value that makes the consecrated life feel at home in Africa and the African people feel at home with the consecrated life.

Inculturation Theology

A historical analysis of the evolution of the Church reveals that the idea of inculturation is a new one, but again it is as old as the Church. It is thus not surprising that Onwubiko (1997) said that inculturation is a new vision of an old problem in the Church or a new approach to a solution to an old problem. It appeared in missiological discussions not so long ago. According to Metuh (1993), the concept was probably first

used in a theological sense by Joseph Masson, a professor at the Gregorian University of Rome. Mason (cited by Metuh, 1996), argues that there is a more urgent need for a Catholicism that is inculturated in a variety of forms.

Schineller (1990) avows that the exact origin of the word as it functions in the theological community is unclear, but he points to its use by Cardinal Sin of Manila at the Synod on Catechesis held in Rome in 1977 and its first insertion into Papal Documents by John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis on October 1979. Since then, the concept has become commonplace and was frequently used by John Paul II during his visits to Africa.

Metuh (1996), views the origin of the concept of inculturation from a secular perspective. He maintains that the term is borrowed from cultural anthropology where it denotes the process by which a person is inserted into his culture. This, however, has been given a slight change in its missiological use as a process by which the church becomes inserted into a particular culture. It is in this regard that Schineller (1990) says that “at its best, the term combines the theological significance of incarnation with the anthropological concepts of enculturation and acculturation to create something new” (p. 21).

A definition of the theological content of inculturation can be considered from a variety of angles. However, from whatever angle you choose to approach it, the theological content remains the same.

According to Walligo (1986),

Inculturation means the honest and serious attempt to make Christ and his Gospel of salvation ever more understood by peoples of every culture, locality, and time. It is the reformulation of Christian life and doctrine into the very thought patterns of each people.... It is the continuous endeavor to make Christianity 'truly feel at home' in the cultures of each people. (p. 11).

In the contention of Arrupe (1990),

Inculturation is the incarnation of Christian life and of the Christian message in a particular cultural context, in such a way that this experience not only finds expression through elements proper to the culture in question but becomes a principle that animates, directs, and unifies the cultures, transforming it and remaking it so as to bring about a new creation. (p. 6).

From this perspective, inculturation becomes a process that plies the pattern of the 'Word made-flesh', which would involve the gospel taking life and flesh in the beliefs of people who welcome Christ and the values of the gospel. Just as Christ became man to win salvation for all, the gospel must become 'culture' to win the heart of 'local people'. John Paul II (cited by Udoidem, 1996) shares the same sentiments with Arrupe when he defined inculturation as “the incarnation of the gospel in autochthonous cultures, at the same time, the introduction of these cultures into the life of the church” (p. 2). He further stresses the need for reciprocity in the relationship between the gospel and cultures.

Crollius (1986) adds a new dimension to our concept of inculturation when he defines it as,

The integration of the Christian experience of a local church into the culture of its people in such a way that the experience not only expresses itself in elements of this culture, but becomes a force that animates, orients, and innovates this culture to create a new unity and communion not only within the culture in question, but also as an enrichment of the church universal. (p. 43).

This notwithstanding, when all is said about inculturation, it must not be forgotten that it is a conscious and conscientious effort to help the people of Africa be converted down to the very roots of their culture. As its prospect, it strives to attain a confluence between the conversion of

mind and the conversion of the way of life, so that African Christians would be able to live their faith in all its depth and be able to give it expression in their way.

According to Metuh (1996), some concepts may suggest the same meaning at the pragmatic level with inculturation but are neither fully synonymous in conceptual content nor compatible in their theological or ideological implications. These concepts include interculturalization, enculturation, acculturation, indigenization, Africanization, contextualization, adaptation, and reformation. Amidst all these concepts, inculturation is chosen by the researcher as a veritable instrument for post-missionary evangelization in Africa because, as a concept, it possesses a wholeness that would enhance intensive evangelization in Africa.

Theology of Consecrated Life

Consecrated persons are the members of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life (Kanu 2015). The Code of Canon Law (1983) teaches that they are lay persons or clerics who assume the evangelical counsels using a sacred bond, and become members of an institute of consecrated life according to the law of the church. They dedicate themselves to God to pursue perfection in charity by faithfully embracing the evangelical counsels of poverty, chastity, and obedience. In this sense, consecrated persons respond freely to the invitation of the Holy Spirit to follow Christ the poor, the celibate, the obedient son, more closely, thus becoming in this life a sign of the life to come. *Lumen Gentium* (1964) maintains that:

The evangelical counsels of chastity dedicated to God, poverty, and obedience are based upon the words and examples of the Lord. They were further commanded by the Apostles and Fathers of the Church, as well as by the doctors and pastors of souls (No. 43).

These counsels in the contention of Fleming (1990), are referred to as evangelical because the religious vows are central to the life of Jesus and his message and also because religious consecration is founded on baptismal consecration. The consecrated life is also traceable to the post-apostolic church, especially to those early Christians who dedicated themselves to a gospel-oriented lifestyle, to a radical following of Jesus Christ. The first person in this line was Anthony of Egypt. He was followed by a line of disciples until it became an institution in the Church (Nwachukwu 2010).

Very significant to the understanding of consecrated life is the idea of consecration. It is derived from the word 'holy' or 'holiness'. In Hebrew it is *qadash* and in Greek *Hagios*; these are translated to mean 'to consecrate' (Leviticus 15:31; Ezekiel 14:7). In Numbers 6:5-7, 12, the Nazirites were referred to as consecrated because they vowed to God. This makes the person holy, a consecration that separates the person from others. Thus the word consecration implies a setting apart or a separation. This separation for Mayers (1987) does not in any way imply superiority or complete severance from those the consecrated are called to serve.

Lumen Gentium (1964) teaches that, “The state which is constituted by the profession of the evangelical counsels, though it does not belong to the hierarchical structure of the church, nevertheless, undeniably belongs to the life and holiness of the church” (No. 44). The document continues, “The holiness of the Church is fostered especially by the observance of the counsels proposed in the gospel by the Lord to his disciples. An eminent position among these is held by virginity or the celibate state” (No. 42). Thus, *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965) exhorts consecrated person: “Members of each institute should recall first of all that by professing the evangelical counsels they responded to a divine call so that by being not only dead to sin but also renouncing the world they may live for God alone. They have dedicated their entire lives to

his service. This constitutes a special consecration, which is deeply rooted in that of Baptism and expresses it more fully” (No. 5).

Theological Rationales for the Inculturation of Consecrated Life

This section of the paper is burdened with the task of establishing the rationale for the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa, and it is *apropos* to begin such a discourse from the documents of the Second Vatican Council.

When the Second Vatican Council was formally inaugurated on 11th October 1963 by Pope John XXIII with different continents in attendance, Rahner (1986:77-89) describes it as “the beginning of a tentative approach by the church to the discovery and official recognition of itself as world-church.” At this Council, the Church treated as a major issue the need for building a bridge between Christian perspectives and indigenous knowledge systems.

It is within this context that the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (SC), the first conciliar document that was approved by the Second Vatican Council and promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 4, 1963, favored the revision and adaptation of the liturgy into particular circumstances and cultures. This was necessary given that the Christian faith implanted in mission territories could no longer be confined to Euro-centric cultural manifestations (Sacrosanctum Concilium 2010). The Church saw the need for people to hear God speaking to them in their tongues and languages (Acts 2:16). Rahner (1981:80) describes the Vatican II event as “the coming-to-be of a world church, with its particular churches each existing... in its cultural group.”

Gaudium et Spes, promulgated on December 7, 1965, by Pope Paul VI gave the highest attention to the topic of faith and culture, and thus provided room for the dialogue between the faith and the cultural

values of different cultures. The document rightly notes that “the human person can achieve true and full humanity only using culture.” (Gaudium et Spes 2010) It did not only recognize the importance of culture within the church but also outside the Church. It holds that human identity and transformation are deeply rooted in culture.

The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, promulgated by Pope Paul VI on December 7, 1965, uses the analogy of incarnation to justify the church among cultures. It states that:

Christ's incarnation is the paradigm for the young churches, insisting that if the church is to be in a position to offer to all the mystery of salvation and the life brought by God, then it must implant itself among every group of people in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of the people among whom he lived (No. 10).

At the closing session of the First Plenary Assembly of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) on evangelization and the cultural adaptation of faith in 1969, Pope Paul VI recognized the diversity of cultures and thus urged African Bishops to recognize that:

An adaptation of the Christian life in the fields of pastoral, ritual, didactic, and spiritual activities is not only possible, it is even favored by the church. The liturgical renewal is a living example of this and in this sense you may and you must have an African Christianity (p. 129).

Pope Paul VI in 1975 issued an Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelisation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*. In this document, he shows how the gospel message could be integrated within any given culture by bringing the Good News of Christ into all the strata of humanity so that humanity itself becomes a new creation. The Roman Pontiff teaches that:

Evangelization loses much of its force and effectiveness if it does not take into consideration the actual people to whom it is addressed if it does not use their language, their signs, and symbols if it does not answer the questions they ask, and if it does not have an impact on their concrete life (p. 63).

Saint Pope John Paul II was known for his extensive travels to the local churches around the world. These travels afforded him a firsthand encounter with diverse cultures. He is the champion of a dialogue between Christianity and the various religious cultures of the world. He established “the Pontifical Council for Culture to help the Church be involved in the saving exchange in which inculturation of the Gospel goes hand in hand with the evangelization of cultures.” (No. 26)

Saint Pope John Paul II on 6 January 1993, announced a Special Assembly for Africa. In the *Instrumentum Laboris*, the Holy Father states that the *telos* of the synod will be:

To assist the Church in Africa to deepen, her commitment to the mission of evangelization, taking into account her history and development as well as the whole cultural, social, political, and economic context in which she lives. (No. 1)

The synod was held in Rome from April 10th to May 8th, 1994 and it represented the most important ecclesial gathering for Africa since Vatican II. It was the first time that the pastors of Africa gathered *cum et sub-Petro* to reflect on new ways and means of carrying out the evangelizing mission of the church on the continent (Chianain, 2018:32).

From the first document to the present, there has been a consistent emphasis on the need to build a bridge between faith and the cultures of local peoples. It is these perspectives that provide the theological foundation for the discourse on the indigenous logic for the inculturation of consecrated life in Africa.

Possible Areas for Inculturation

The possible areas for the inculturation of the consecrated life include the vows- the vows of poverty, obedience and chastity, and community life. There are other possible areas for inculturation, however, this paper will focus on the following four:

a. Vow of Chastity

The vow of chastity in *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965) is understood as a means through which the religious frees his or her heart in a unique fashion (cf. 1 Cor. 7:32-35) so that it may be more inflamed with love for God and all men and women. Thus, it not only symbolizes singularly the heavenly goods but also the most suitable means by which religious dedicate themselves with undivided hearts to the service of God and the works of the apostolate. In this way, they recall to the minds of all the faithful that wondrous marriage decreed by God and which is to be fully revealed in the future age in which the Church takes Christ as its only spouse. Through the vow of celibacy/chastity, religious give themselves in love to God in a way so total that the pursuit of union with God makes it impossible for anything or anyone to be more central. Their heart is free to love God above all and to love all men and women for the sake of God. Celibacy is embraced not because marriage is not desired but because the union with God and the work of God is greatly desired.

The inculturation of the vow of chastity is anchored on the African philosophy of sexuality, which is often misrepresented because it is viewed from the Western perspective. Before the advent of Christianity, the African people had traditional customs of chastity. Through parables, proverbs, songs, etc., they have been able to teach their children high moral values, which are passed down from one generation to another. For instance, the Swazi people in South Africa uphold *Umcwasho* custom, which is a system of chastity that restrains

young females and males who have not reached the age of puberty from being involved in sexual activities, for a time usually determined by the king. Society, family, and friends of the young boys and girls, treasure and value the significance of the conservation of the virginity of children above all things. Therefore, beginning from an understanding of the value of chastity from within the African culture is likely to drive a better understanding of the vow of chastity. Chastity and the value of virginity is not foreign to the culture of the African people.

b. Vow of Obedience

In professing obedience, *Perfectae Caritatis* (1965) teaches that the religious offer the full surrender of their own will as a sacrifice of themselves to God and so are united permanently and securely to God's salvific will. After the example of Jesus Christ who came to do the will of the Father (cf. John 4:34; 5:30; Heb. 10:7; Ps. 39:9) and “assuming the nature of a slave” (Phil. 2:7) learned obedience in the school of suffering (cf. Heb. 5:8), religious under the motion of the Holy Spirit, subject themselves in faith to their superiors who hold the place of God. Under their guidance, they are led to serve all their brothers and sisters in Christ, just as Christ in obedience to the Father served His brethren and laid down His life as a ransom for many (cf. Matt. 20:28; John 10:14-18). through obedience, the religious are closely bound to the service of the Church and strive to attain the measure of the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). The vow of obedience, helps the religious to make decisions in tune with God's Will, which is often mediated for them through the authority of their congregation.

The inculturation of the vow of obedience is anchored on the African philosophy of obedience which constituted authority and those who are older than one. The understanding of the authority of the king, the father or mother, or the first son, etc., and obedience to them is not only understood in a physical sense, there is a spiritual backing to this authority which is handed down to every generation. This

understanding of authority and the absolute obedience that follows is a structure around which the vow of obedience can be weaved. It also reminds us that obedience is not a practice that is alien to the African people. There are a retinue of stories and proverbs that teach the value of obedience.

c. Vow of Poverty

Perfectae Caritatis (1965) presents religious poverty as a share in the poverty of Christ who for our sakes became poor, even though He was rich so that by His poverty we might become rich (cf. 2 Cor. 8:9; Matt. 8:20). About religious poverty, it is not enough to use goods in a way subject to the superior's will, but members must be poor both in fact and in spirit, their treasures being in heaven (cf. Matt. 6:20). By the vow of Poverty, Religious own everything in common, share possessions and live simply.

The inculturation of the vow of poverty within the context of the African worldview is possible from the angle of the African's emphasis on the value of the human person and not on the value of what a person has or possesses. This has promoted a sense of selflessness among the African people even before the advent of Christianity. The spirit of sharing among the African people is also significant in a discourse about the inculturation of the vow of poverty. Life for the African is a life of sharedness. And there are several African stories that help the young to understand the consequences of pursuing wealth at the expense of one's dignity, and also the importance of sharing what one has with the other given that the other is a part of me. These can be instruments for the communication of the idea of the vow of poverty to the African people.

d. Community Life

Fraternal life in common is a distinguishing feature of Religious Institutes (Can. 607). According to John Paul II (1996) in his *Vita*

Consecrata, fraternal life understood as a life shared in love is practiced in Religious Institutes, Societies of Apostolic life and it is also not alien to Secular Institutes, or even to individual forms of Consecrated Life. A religious community is a community of grace that God has called together. It is not based on natural bonds and blood relationships but on a new relationship rooted in Christ, who calls them to live among themselves. A religious community, according to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, is established and endures not because the members find that they are happy staying together due to an affinity in thought or character, but because the Lord has brought them together and unites them all by a common consecrated and for a common mission in the Church.

Hence, the religious community before being a human construction, is a gift of the Spirit. Therefore, it is impossible to understand a religious community unless we begin with it being a gift from God and deeply rooted in the very heart of the Trinity. Religious are bound to reside in their own religious house, observing the common life. They are not to stay elsewhere except with the permission of the superior (Can. 665.1). In the newly amended Canon 694 of the Code of Canon Law amended by Pope Francis on March 19, 2019, A religious must be held as dismissed *ipso facto* from an institute who has been illegitimately absent from the religious house, under can. 665 §2, for 12 consecutive months, taking into account that the location of the religious himself or herself may be unknown (Can. 694.3).

The inculturation of the idea of community is made easy by the fact that the idea of community is central to the African people. This is obvious in African proverbs such as: “I am because you are, and since you are, therefore, I am”; “A tree cannot make a forest”, etc. This identity of the African people is reflected in the complementary philosophies that have emerged in recent times in African philosophy, such as Igwebuiké philosophy, Ibuanyidanda philosophy, philosophy of Belongingness,

Ujamaa philosophy, philosophy of negritude, etc. The African concept of community life is a strong basis for the inculturation of community life within African categories.

Conclusion

The foregoing is a response to the emerging questions within the parameters of both inculturation and the consecrated life. Consecrated persons are beginning to ask questions as regards how the manner of life that they have freely chosen can be made to feel at home in their particular cultural environment. They are also asking questions regarding how this manner of life can be interpreted from an African perspective or employ the categories that are specific to the African people. These concerns are emerging from genuine thoughts about the promotion and safeguarding of consecrated life in Africa.

The Igwebuiké theological framework establishes the possibility of a complementary relationship between the African culture and the theology of consecrated life, in such a manner that neither of the two dimensions are diminished. The idea of inculturation becomes a tool for the realization of this need, and, therefore, forms a very important dimension of this work. It provides a basis for the adaptation of consecrated life and the 'consecration' of the African culture or categories.

This notwithstanding, there is always the challenge of a misunderstood concept of inculturation not only among theologians but also among the regular lay faithful. This is not in any way to undermine the position of many who look forward to a genuine encounter between faith and the culture of the African people. Despite the challenges, there are many opportunities that it promises: it would to a great extent guarantee the future of consecrated life in Africa; it would also give consecrated life in Africa the unique identity of an African consecrated life. This

identity does not in any way affect or detract from the primary identity of consecrated life in general.

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Documentation

Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria

**POLICY ON SAFEGUARDING MINORS AND
VULNERABLE PERSONS, 2023**

DRAFT

Decree of Promulgation of Policy on Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons for the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria

The Holy Father, Pope Francis on May 7, 2019 in his Motu Proprio, *Vos Estis Lux Mundi* (“You are the light of the world”), announced measures that will further the protection of children and vulnerable persons in the Catholic Church.

The new norms will serve to strengthen the measures of accountability, reporting, and prevention of the sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons, as well as those perpetrated through abuse of authority.

We are grateful to Pope Francis and enthusiastically welcome the new norms as part of the Church's continuing worldwide response to the evil of sexual abuse.

In compliance with article 2 §1 of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, we hereby decree that this policy be made for all the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria.

The present policy is approved *ad experimentum* for three years.

We establish that the present policy be promulgated by means of publication in our Journal, *The Catholic Voyage*, entering into force on 1st October, 2023.

Given on the 25th Day of March 2023, the Memorial of Annunciation, at the Secretariat, National Secretariat, Iva Valley, Enugu, Nigeria.



Very Rev. Fr. Prof. Anthony Kanu, OSA
Prior Provincial, Order of Saint Augustine
President,
Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria (Men)



Rev. Sr. Regina Oke, OLA
Superior General, Our Lady of Apostles
President, Nigeria Conference of Women Religious

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Title A: Statement of Commitment

Art 1

- §1. This policy regards only the members of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria.
- §2. This Policy reflects our Catholic belief that every human being has dignity that we recognise as coming directly from God's creation of male and female in God's own image and likeness.
- §3. The Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria are committed to safeguarding minor and vulnerable persons.
- a) “minor” means: any person under the age of eighteen, or who is considered by law to be the equivalent of a minor;
 - i. A minor before the completion of the seventh year is called an infant in law and is considered not responsible for one (*non sui compos*), Canon 97§2.
 - ii. With the completion of the seventh year, a minor is presumed to have the use of reason, Canon 97§2.
 - iii. Whoever habitually lacks the use of reason is considered not responsible for oneself (*non sui compos*) and is equated with infants in law, Canon 99.
 - b) “vulnerable person” means: any person in a state of infirmity, physical or mental deficiency, or deprivation of personal liberty which, in fact, even occasionally, limits their ability to understand or to want or otherwise resist the offence.

Title B: Scope of Application

Art. 2

- §1. The policy applies to reports regarding members and personnel of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life concerning:
- a) delicts against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue consisting of:
 - i. forcing someone, by violence or threat or through abuse of authority, to perform or submit to sexual acts;
 - ii. performing sexual acts with a minor or a vulnerable person;
 - iii. the production, exhibition, possession or distribution, including by electronic means, of child pornography, as well as by the recruitment

of or inducement of a minor or a vulnerable person to participate in pornographic exhibitions; “child pornography” means: any representation of a minor, regardless of the means used, involved in explicit sexual activities, whether real or simulated, and any representation of sexual organs of minors for primarily sexual purposes.

- b) conduct carried out by the Superiors, consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil investigations or canonical investigations, whether administrative or penal, against a cleric or a religious regarding the delicts referred to in letter a) of this paragraph.
- §2. Sexual abuse can be defined as any sexual act or solicitation made by an older person, an adult, or a person in authority with a child or vulnerable person
- §3. Sexual abuse acts include, but are not limited to:
- 1° Penetrative sex, including oral sex;
 - 2° Sexual touching of any part of the body, clothed or unclothed;
 - 3° Performing lewd acts and indecent exposure;
 - 4° Encouraging a minor/vulnerable person to engage in sexual activity, including masturbation;
 - 5° Intentionally engaging in sexual activity in the presence of a minor/vulnerable;
 - 6° Showing minors pornography, or using minors to create pornography;
 - 7° Encouraging a minor/vulnerable person to engage in prostitution;
 - 8° The acquisition, possession, or distribution of pornographic images of minors for purposes of sexual gratification, by whatever means or using whatever technology.

Title C: Application to Personnel

Art. 3

§1. The policy will apply to all the members and personnel of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life in Nigeria:

- a) All members of the Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, both temporary and perpetually professed;
- b) All paid personnel in the offices, houses/communities and parishes of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life;

- c) All volunteers in the offices and institutions who work with minors and vulnerable adults in the Institutes and Societies;
- d) Such other personnel as designated by the Superiors.

Title D: Expectations of all members and personnel in the Institutes and Societies

Art. 4

- §1. Members and Personnel in the Institutes and Societies shall conduct themselves in a manner that is consistent with the discipline and teachings of the Catholic Church and Consecrated Life and hence exhibit the highest Christian ethical standards and personal integrity.
- §2. Members and personnel shall accept their personal responsibility to protect minors and vulnerable persons from all forms of abuse.
- §3. Members and personnel shall share concerns about suspicious or inappropriate behaviour with the Superiors and Superiors' delegates.
- §4. Members and personnel shall not physically, sexually, or emotionally abuse or neglect minors or vulnerable persons.
- §5. The Institutes/Societies shall offer pastoral and spiritual support to victims and their families.
- §6. The Institutes/Societies shall cooperate with the proper civil authorities in matters regarding the allegations of abuse of minors and vulnerable persons.
- §7. The pastoral care of victims and good of the Church and its ministries remain of utmost importance irrespective of the statutes of limitation as found in SST (2010) art. 7 and Nigerian Criminal Laws.
- §8. Member or personnel who either has admitted or is found guilty of allegation of sexual abuse with a minor or vulnerable person shall not serve in any ministry or office in the Institute/Society.
- §9. In the case of a person who is a member of Institute of the Consecrated Life or Society of Apostolic Life and the allegation is reported to a Bishop, the Bishop shall inform the major superior of the accused and remain in dialogue and consultation with the major superior regarding the case and its outcome and consequent actions. It is the responsibility of the Major Superior to handle the case.

Title E: The Superior's delegate and the Committee

Art. 5

- §1. The Superior of each Institute/Society shall appoint a member for safeguarding who shall be known and called the Superior's delegate for safeguarding.
- §2. His / Her name, address, phone number and email address should be available in the Institute's/Society's Directory and the Catholic Directory of the Church in Nigeria.
- §3. The Superior's delegate for safeguarding shall chair the Committee for Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons.
- §4. He / She shall be appointed for a term of four years and may be renewable for another term of four years.
- §5. There shall be a Committee to be known as Committee for safeguarding minors and vulnerable persons and to be constituted by the Superior and Council.
- §6. The committee will include priests, religious and laity some of whom should be experts in the following areas: Clinical Psychology, Counselling, General Medical Practice, Protection of minors and vulnerable persons, Canon Law and Civil Law.
- §7. The members of the committee shall be appointed for a term of fours and may be renewable for another term of four years.
- §8. The Ex-officio members of the Committee are the Superior and Council.
- §9. The meetings of committee shall be at the Generalate.
- §10. The Committee are:
 - 1° to ensure that adequate measures in relation to the protection of minors and vulnerable persons are put in place in houses/communities, parishes, schools, hospitals, offices, institutions and agencies of the Institute/Society;
 - 2° to ensure that houses/communities, parishes, schools, hospitals, offices, institutions and agencies of the Institute/Society comply with policies and directives on safeguarding of minors and vulnerable persons coming from the Institute/Society; the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria and the Holy See;
 - 3° to collect relevant information regarding the complaints or allegations; request information from individuals and institutions that are able to provide useful elements for the investigation; and hear from the minor or vulnerable person involved while taking into account his or her status;

- 4° to ensure that reported cases of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons are promptly, equitably and justly treated;
 - 5° to organize regular seminars on matters of the protection of minors and vulnerable persons for all levels of members, personnel and groups in the Institute/Society;
 - 6° to facilitate the provision of pastoral care of persons and communities affected by sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons. These include the victims and their close relatives; the accused; and faith communities affected by the abuse;
 - 7° to ensure that the Institute/Society adopts policies and best practices in the area of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons and to update such when necessary;
 - 8° to provide expert advice to the Superior in the area of safeguarding of minors and vulnerable persons.
- §11 To facilitate the effective fulfilment of the functions referred to above, a sub-committee may be constituted to take care of §10 4°, 5° and 6°.
- §12. By the virtue of Article 2 §2 of *Vos Estis Lux Mundi*, the committee members shall take the Oath of office. The Oath of office shall be taken before the Superior or his delegate within one month of the constitution.

Title F: The Right to Report

Art. 6

1. Anyone sexually abused, or who knows about a case of sexual abuse, can make a report.
- §2. Anybody has the right and duty to make reports to a 'designated representative' in any ecclesiastical establishment who should immediately transmit the report to the Superior's delegate.
- §3. The responsibility of a designated representative ends with the transmission of the report to the Superior's delegate.
- §4. Whenever a member of an Institute of Consecrated Life or of a Society of Apostolic Life has notice of, or well-founded motives to believe that member or personnel has carried out any of the prohibited sexual misconducts listed in Article 2, §3, they are obliged to report it immediately. Same applies to any conduct of the Superior consisting of actions or omissions intended to interfere with or avoid civil or canonical investigations, whether

administrative or penal, against a member or personnel regarding the offenses referred to in Article 2 §§ 2 and 3.

- §5. The report can also be made directly to the Holy See or through the Papal Nuncio.

Title G: System for submission of report and data protection

Art. 7

1. The complaints and allegations can be made to the Superior's delegate whose name, address, phone number and email address are available in the Institute/Society Directory and the Catholic Directory of the Church in Nigeria.
2. The complaint or allegation is protected and treated in such a way as to guarantee its safety, integrity and confidentiality.

Title H: Commencement of Pre-investigation and gathering of facts

Art. 8

- §1. Once a complaint or allegation is received, the Superior's delegate shall consider if the complaint or allegation has some basis.
- §2. If the complaint or allegation is manifestly baseless, he/she shall not convene the committee but not without informing the Superior of such a complaint or allegation before dismissing it.
- §3. If the complaint or allegation has some basis, he/she shall convene the committee members without delay to commence investigation and gathering of facts.
- §4. The report shall include as many particulars as possible, such as indications of time and place of the facts, of the persons involved or informed, as well as any other circumstance that may be useful in order to ensure an accurate assessment of the facts.
- §5. Information can also be acquired *ex officio*.

Title I: Transmission of the report to the Superior

Art. 9

- §1. After identifying the credibility or otherwise of the allegation, the committee through its chairman (the Superior's delegate) shall transmit the findings to the Superior.

- §2. After receiving the report, the Superior shall transmit it without delay to the Ordinary of the place where the events are said to have occurred, as well as to the Ordinary of the person reported, who proceed according to the law provided for the specific case.
- §3. If the person reported is a non-cleric or member, the Superior himself shall constitute an administrative penal process.
- §4. Where the events are said to have occurred in the Institute/Society and he/she is the ordinary/Superior of the person reported; and if the findings transmitted to the him/her is credible and the abuse substantiated by his/her judgment, the Superior must immediately transmit the report, along with his/her *votum* to the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) directly or indirectly through the papal nuncio *in situ*.

Title J: **Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF)**

Art 10

- 1 The CDF will review the case and indicate the further steps and appropriate measures to be taken. In relation to such further steps, there are various possibilities, which include the following:
 - 1°. The CDF could authorize the Superior to proceed with a judicial process locally.
 - 2°. The CDF may authorize the use of the administrative penal process in cases where the evidence of the possible commission of sexual abuse is stronger.
 - 3°. The CDF could hold a trial in the Vatican City.
 - 4°. In very grave, clear and most exceptional cases, the CDF could refer the matter to the Pope for immediate dismissal of a member (*ex officio* dismissal).
 - 5°. The CDF may ask for more information before making a decision.
 - 6°. The CDF may decide that there is not enough evidence to substantiate the commission of the crime.
- §2. If the CDF asks the Superior to conduct an administrative penal process in accord with can. 1720 CIC and art 21 §2 of *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (SST)*, 2010, then the Administrative penal process shall follow:
 - 1°. In an administrative penal process, the Superior himself/herself makes the decision regarding the charges brought against the accused.

- 2°. He/she considers the evidence with the help of two persons called assessors.
 - 3°. The assessors are experts in Canon Law evidence.
 - 4°. The accused also has the opportunity to offer a defense.
 - 5°. The Superior then issues a decree with his/her decision and suggested penalty (if he/she finds the accused guilty).
 - 6°. This decree is sent to the CDF for confirmation.
 - 7°. The accused has the right of appeal to seek reconsideration of the outcome.
- §3. If the CDF asks the Superior to conduct a judicial penal process, then the judicial penal process shall follow:
- 1° In a judicial process there is a panel of three judges who hears the case.
 - 2° The accused has an advocate (expert in Canon Law) to assist in his defense.
 - 3° A promoter of justice is present to ensure the pursuit of justice.
 - 4° Witnesses are called to testify, including possible victims.
 - 5° Other forms of evidence are gathered such as letters that might have been written.
 - 6° After this, the advocate of the accused and promoter of justice submit written arguments (*restrictus*) of their sides of the case.
 - 7° The judges then review the evidence carefully, deliberate together, and issue a verdict.
 - 8° This is sent to the CDF for confirmation.
 - 9° The accused has a right to appeal the judgment, which would be forward to the Holy See along with the acts of the case.

Title K: Imposable Penalties and Fate of the Accused found Guilty

Art 11

- §1. If a member is judged to be guilty of sexual misconduct or abuse of minors and/or vulnerable persons, two dimensions of penalties would be applicable.
2. To show the seriousness of such misconducts, the offender may be asked to resign, retire, or personally seek dismissal from the Institute/Society and dispensation from the Vows.
- §3. The Superior may request in his *votum* that the proven offender be dismissed from the Institute/Society, even without the consent of the said member.

- §4. Alternatively, he/she may be dismissed from the Institute/Society outrightly following the policy of zero tolerance or he/she could be confined to a life of penance in the monasteries.

Title L: Care of the victim and the accused during investigation and trial

Art. 12

- §1. The Superior through the committee is to respond pastorally both to the complainant/victim and the accused member or personnel during and after canonical procedure.
- §2. The rights of a Complainant to seek justice in the matter of an allegation of sexual abuse involving a minor must always be respected.
- §3. While respecting the judicial process, the Superior through the committee should respond immediately in a pastoral way to the expressed need of the Complainant by providing an opportunity for professional counselling and/or spiritual direction.
- §4. A primary pastoral concern must be for the complainant and, depending upon the case, possibly the complainants' family.
- §5. There must be concern for their rights, reputation, healing, and spiritual welfare.
- §6. Counselling services, spiritual guidance, and pastoral assistance will be offered to victims of sexual misconduct.

Title M: Assistance and Care to the victim and the accused person after the judgment

Art. 14

- §1. The accused member who is found guilty of the offense should be given a pastoral care.
- §2. If, in any case of sexual abuse allegation, the respondent in question is proven innocent, everything must be done to restore his/her reputation.
- §3. The accused should always be given a just and fit sustenance.
- §4. The cost of legal representation, if the persons in question hired one and subsequently is cleared of the charges or that there is no sufficient evidence for charges to be filed, the Institute/Society may defray the cost of his or her representation.

§5. Counselling services, spiritual guidance, and pastoral assistance will continue until either the complainant or the family has determined that such services are no longer reasonably necessary, or the complaint is found not to be substantiated.

Title N: General norms

Art. 15

At any stage of the process, the Superior can withdraw the member from active ministry, while the personnel (not a member, may be a worker) can be temporarily removed from Institute's/Society's responsibilities and duties. Whenever this precautionary measure is taken, the public is to be informed of the presumption of innocence of the accused.

Art. 16

All investigations shall be properly documented and be put in the secret archive.

Art. 17

If an accusation is false, any damage to the good name of the accused is to be repaired.

Art. 18

If an abuse is confirmed after investigation, the lay personnel will be subject to termination, and where required a report will be made to civil authorities. If it is a member that is involved, the provisions of the universal and particular ecclesiastical law will be applied.

Art. 19

Necessary accomplices shall be subject to the same penalties as the principal offender or to others of the same gravity. Secondary accomplices shall be subject to penalties of lesser gravity (Can. 1329 §1).

Art. 20

The process outlined herein is to be observed also in cases of sexual abuse of minors and vulnerable persons that took place before the coming into effect of this policy.

Art. 21

All parties involved in the process are to be informed that:

- §1. The observance of the process outlined above shall be without prejudice to the requirement of civil law.
- §2. An acquittal in a criminal proceeding or decision not to prosecute by civil authorities will not terminate the Institute's/Society's investigation or its right to take all necessary actions to protect minors and vulnerable persons.
- §3. Where the civil process is initiated, the canonical process is not to commence until the completion of the civil process. And where the civil process is initiated after the canonical process has commenced, the canonical process is to be suspended and resumed after the civil process is concluded

Art 22

Throughout the investigation, the Superior's delegate shall monitor compliance with all restrictions on the accused's ministry and other limitations imposed on the accused by the Superior or other appropriate supervisory personnel. Failure to comply with the established restrictions or guidelines will subject the accused to further disciplinary action.

Art. 23

When the report concerns one of either Cardinal, Nuncio, Archbishop, Auxiliary Bishop or any Bishop, the stipulations of the *Motu Proprio Vos Estis Lux Mundi* and the Policy on Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons by CBCN shall be followed.

Title O: Amendment and interpretation

Art. 24

- §1. The Superior or President of Male and Female Conference of Major Superiors may amend this Policy should, in his opinion, such amendment be deemed necessary.
- §2. The Superior has the authority to interpret the meaning and application of this Policy, in accordance with the norm of law, in all situations in which their meaning or application is doubtful.
- §3. This Policy will be adopted upon the approval of the Superior.

Title P: Relationship to other Church Legislations

Art. 25

- §1. This policy presupposes and complements prescriptions of the 1983 Code of Canon Law, Apostolic Letter issued Motu Proprio by Pope Francis, *Vos Estis lux Mundi*, *Sacramentorum Sanctitatis Tutela (SST)*, 2010 and Policy on Safeguarding Minors and Vulnerable Persons by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria, (CBCN).
- §2. Some provisions of both universal and particular Canon Law are repeated in order to give them greater emphasis, or to make these laws more accessible to the Institutes/Societies.

Title Q: Communicating this legislation

Art. 26

- §1. A copy of this policy shall be made available to every member and personnel of the Institutes/Societies. Furthermore, in order to make this policy accessible, an authentic copy of this policy will be posted on the website of the Conference of Major Superiors.



Very Rev. Fr. Prof. Anthony Kanu, OSA
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NOTE:

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