

**NIGERIAN YOUTHS
IN THE FACE OF
MIGRATION,
DRUG ABUSE
AND
FUNDAMENTALISM**

"The fragile reed that is shaken but not broken" Pope Francis

Editor:
KANU Ikechukwu Anthony, O.S.A

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Dedication	-	-	-	-	-	-	vi
Note on Contributors	-	-	-	-	-	-	vii
Foreword	-	-	-	-	-	-	xi
Introduction	-	-	-	-	-	-	xiii
Theological Models of Youth in <i>Christus Vivit</i>							
<i>Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Towards a Theology of Migration							
<i>Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	19
Highlights Of <i>Christus Vivit</i>: Pope Francis' Apostolic Exhortation To Young People And To The Entire People Of God							
<i>Peter Okonkwo, CMF, Ph.D</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	41
Nigerian Youth and the Church: A Reflection and Evaluation from the Post-Synodal Exhortation - <i>Christus Vivit</i>							
<i>Charles Chukwuebuka Ugonwafor, OSA</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	75
Youths And Consecrated Life							
<i>OMOJOLA Immaculata Olu, (SSMA), Ph.D & Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	103

Youths And Consecrated Life

OMOJOLA *Immaculata Olu, (SSMA),
 Ph.D & Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA* - - 113

Nigerian Youths and Alcoholism

Scholastica I. Nwigwe (DMMM) - - - 123

Nigerian Youths and Drug Abuse

Innocent Ekeagwu, SMMM - - - 133

Nigerian Youth Migration: A Quest For Peace

Francis Iwuh, OSA - - - - 151

Youth Trafficking: Its Effects And Solutions

Winifred Eche, DMMM, Ph.D - - - 165

**When Home is no longer Home: Elucidating
 the Massive Exodus of Nigerian Youth out of Nigeria**

Victor Domshiwe Shehu, M.Afr - - - 183

**Entrepreneurship Education: A Panacea for Stemming
 the Tide of Poverty and Youth Migration**

*Maureen Anayo, Madu. Oliver Okechukwu, Okanazu
 Ph.D and Enyinnaya Justice Egbulonu* - - 191

**Grooming Young People for Ministry: Family
 and Societal Influence.**

Cecilia Omeife, EHJ, - - - - 211

**The Church of the Youth and the Youth of the
 Church: A Plea for the Present and Future of Christianity.**

Jean-Paul TAGHEU, OP - - - - 231

**Give Wings and Roots to Young People: The
Message and Implications of the Synod of
Bishops 2018 for Africa and Consecrated Life**
An exclusive Interview with Bishop John Akin OYEJOLA - 257

**Integral Formation, The Commitment And Witness
Of Young People And Consecrated Persons In Africa**
An exclusive Interview with Archbishop Anthony MUHERIA 275

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Dedication

To all Catholic Youths in Nigeria

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FOREWORD

At the closing Mass of the World Day of Youth, in Panama on Sunday, Jan. 27 2019, Pope Francis, in the presence of the presidents of Panama, Costa Rica, Colombia, Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, and Portugal, called on hundreds of thousands of young people from 155 countries as they waved flags of their home countries, to dream the dream that God dreamt for them. He told them, "Dear young people, you are not the future but the now of God and he invites you and calls you in your communities and cities to go out and find your grandparents and elders; to stand up and with them to speak out and realize the dream that the Lord has dreamed for you."

Drawing on the Gospel of the day which tells how, as a young man, Jesus began His public ministry when He went into the synagogue in Nazareth and stood up "and put into action God's dream" by "proclaiming good news to the poor... bringing liberty to captives and recovering of sight to the blind, setting at liberty those who are oppressed, announcing the year of the Lord's favor" (Luke 4.20-21). Pope Francis explained that "Jesus reveals the now of God, who comes to meet us and to call us to take part" in this same mission today, not tomorrow.

Pope Francis warned the youth against thinking that "your mission, your vocation, even your life itself, is a promise far off in the future, having nothing to do with the present; as if being young were a kind of waiting room, where we sit around until we are called."

This book on NIGERIAN YOUTHS IN THE FACE OF MIGRATION, DRUG ABUSE, AND FUNDAMENTALISM edited by Fr. Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA, the Executive Secretary of the Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria (Men) is the contribution of the Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria (Men) to waking up the youths to the reality of their place in the Church. It is a work of several chapters contributed by different authors, and remains a great accomplishment that has carefully reflected on the youths in relation to basic issues of concern. I, therefore, strongly recommend this book for all young people and for those who are into youth ministry.

Very Rev. Fr. Simeon Nwobi, CMF

President, Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria (Men)

October 24th, Feast Day of Saint Anthony Mary Claret

INTRODUCTION: THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF HUMANITY

The Holy Father, Pope Francis recognizes with sorrow that “many young people today live in war zones and experience violence in countless different forms: kidnapping, extortion, organized crime, human trafficking, slavery and sexual exploitation, wartime rape, and so forth. Other young people, because of their faith, struggle to find their place in society and endure various kinds of persecution, even murder. Many young people, whether by force or lack of alternatives, live by committing crimes and acts of violence: child soldiers, armed criminal gangs, drug trafficking, terrorism, and so on. This violence destroys many young lives. Abuse and addiction, together with violence and wrongdoing, are some of the reasons that send young people to prison, with a higher incidence in certain ethnic and social groups (Christus Vivit, no. 72).

Many young people, he observes further, are taken in by ideologies, used and exploited as cannon fodder or a strike force to destroy, terrify or ridicule others. Worse yet, many of them end up as individualists, hostile and distrustful of others; in this way, they become an easy target for the brutal and destructive strategies of political groups or economic powers. (Christus Vivit, no. 73). Even more numerous in the world are young people who suffer forms of marginalization and social exclusion for religious, ethnic or economic reasons. Let us not forget the difficult situation of adolescents and young people who become pregnant, the scourge of abortion, the spread of HIV, various forms of addiction (drugs, gambling, pornography and so forth), and the plight of street children without homes, families or economic resources. In

the case of women, these situations are doubly painful and difficult. (Christus Vivit, no. 74).

This in the perspective of the Holy Father, calls for a greater attention towards the youth. Pope John Paul II had earlier observed that the youth are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development: illiteracy, idleness, hunger, drugs. In order to meet these challenges, young people themselves should be called upon to become the evangelizers of their peers. No one can do this better than they. The *pastoral care of youth* must clearly be a part of the overall pastoral plan of Dioceses and parishes, so that young people will be enabled to discover very early on the value of the gift of self, an essential means for the person to reach maturity. In this regard, the celebration of World Youth Day is a privileged instrument for the pastoral care of youth, which favours their formation through prayer, study and reflection. (Ecclesia in Africa, No. 93).

Pope Benedict XVI adds voice to the message of his predecessor when he said that concern for young people calls for courage and clarity in the message we proclaim; we need to help young people to gain confidence and familiarity with sacred Scripture so it can become a compass pointing out the path to follow. Young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers. (Africae Munus, No. 61)

Over the years, the Conference of Major Superiors of Nigeria have published works that touch on issues that are of great concern in

the Church in Nigeria. Last year 2019, it was unanimously agreed at the Annual General Assembly to focus on the youth during the 2020 General Assembly based on the need to provide witnesses and teachers for young people, who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic and credible messengers. This book on NIGERIAN YOUTHS IN THE FACE OF MIGRATION, DRUG ABUSE, AND FUNDAMENTALISM is an attempt to provide a compass for young people in their search for meaning. It is a work of several chapters contributed by different persons from different perspectives. It is hoped that through this work, young people would be enabled to discover very early on the value of the gift of self, an essential means for maturity.

Rev. Fr. Kanu Ikechukwu Anthony, OSA
Executive Secretary CMSN (Men)

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THEOLOGICAL MODELS OF YOUTH IN *CHRISTUS VIVIT*

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Introduction

The exhortation *Christus vivit*, meaning, “Christ is alive” is a post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis, written in response to the 15th Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, on young people, faith and vocational discernment, held from 3 to 28 October 2018. It is addressed to young people and to the entire people of God. The Holy Father employed the concept “Christ is alive” to remind all of the fact that Christ brings hope to the young people of the world. The exhortation neatly divides into nine chapters and is addressed in a particular way to Christian young people. The document is dated 25 March 2019, the day on which Francis signed the original Spanish text while visiting the Basilica of the Holy House of Mary in Loreto, Italy, and published on 2 April, the anniversary of the death of Pope John Paul II, who was the first Roman Pontiff to address a letter to young people in 1985 and he was the Pope who began the World Youth Days.

These notwithstanding, this piece carves it niche by focusing on the theological models of youth in the document *Christus Vivit*. This would include a study of the Scripture, the Old and New Testaments as already contained in the document, a study of the Christological model of youth, focusing on the relationships of the life of Christ with youthfulness, a mariological model, which deals

with the relations of Mary, the Mother of Christ with youth, and lastly, the ecclesiological model of youth, which speaks of the relations between the Church and the youth. The purpose of this study to provide a theological basis for further study of the youth, and more importantly, to show in a theological way, the fundamental place that the youth occupy in the heart of Christ and His Church.

Biblical Model of Youth

The scriptural model of Youth would focus on the Old and New Testaments of the Scripture and their perspectives on youth.

The Old Testament

In the book of the beginnings of God's relationship with His peoples, Joseph, who was one of the youngest of his family (cf. *Gen 37:2-3*), was shown great things in dreams by God and when about twenty years old he outshone all his brothers in important affairs (cf. *Gen 37-47*). In the book of Judges, we have Gideon, in whom we see the frankness and inquisitiveness of young people, who are not used to sugar-coating reality. When told that the Lord was with him, he responded: "But if the Lord is with us, why then have all these things happened to us?" (*Jg 6:13*). God was not offended by that reproach, but went on to order him: "Go in this might of yours and deliver Israel!" (*Jg 6:14*)¹.

In the book of Samuel, Samuel was still a young boy, yet the Lord spoke to him. Thanks to the advice of an adult, he opened his heart to hear God's call: "Speak, Lord, for your servant is

¹ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 7-8

listening” (1 Sam 3:9-10). As a result, he became a great prophet who intervened at critical moments in the history of his country. King Saul was also young when the Lord called him to undertake his mission (cf. 1 Sam 9:2). King David was chosen while still a boy. When the prophet Samuel was seeking the future king of Israel, a man offered as candidates his sons who were older and more experienced. Yet the prophet said that the chosen one was the young David, who was out tending the flock (cf. 1 Sam 16:6-13), for “man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart” (v. 7). The glory of youth is in the heart, more than in physical strength or the impression given to others².

When Solomon had to succeed David his father, felt lost and told God: “I am a mere youth, not knowing at all how to act” (1 Kg 3:7). Yet the audacity of youth moved him to ask God for wisdom and he devoted himself to his mission. Something similar happened to the prophet Jeremiah, called despite his youth to rouse his people. In his fear, he said: “Ah, Lord God! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a youth” (Jer 1:6). But the Lord told him not to say that (cf. Jer 1:7), and added: “Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you to deliver you” (Jer 1:8). The devotion of the prophet Jeremiah to his mission shows what can happen when the brashness of youth is joined to the power of God³.

² Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 9-10

³ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 11

We have the story of a Jewish servant girl of the foreign commander Naaman intervened with faith and helped him to be cured of his illness (cf. 2 Kg 5:2-6). The young Ruth was a model of generosity in remaining beside her mother-in-law who had fallen on hard times (cf. *Ru* 1:1-18), yet she also showed boldness in getting ahead in life (cf. *Ru* 4:1-17).

The New Testament

In the New Testament, Jesus related with young people and made several references to the young in His parables. One of Jesus' parables (cf. *Lk* 15:11-32) relates that a "younger" son wanted to leave his father's home for a distant land (cf. vv. 12-13). Yet his thoughts of independence turned into dissolution and excess (cf. v. 13), and he came to experience the bitterness of loneliness and poverty (cf. vv. 14-16). Nonetheless, he found the strength to make a new start (cf. vv. 17-19) and determined to get up and return home (cf. v. 20). Young hearts are naturally ready to change, to turn back, get up and learn from life. How could anyone fail to support that son in this new resolution? Yet his older brother already had a heart grown old; he let himself be possessed by greed, selfishness and envy (*Lk* 15:28-30). Jesus praises the young sinner who returned to the right path over the brother who considered himself faithful, yet lacked the spirit of love and mercy⁴.

In the Epistles of Saint Paul, God's word asks us to "cast out the old leaven that you may be fresh dough" (*1 Cor* 5:7). Saint Paul invites us to strip ourselves of the "old self" and to put on a

⁴ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 13

“young” self (*Col 3:9-10*). In explaining what it means to put on that youthfulness “which is being renewed” (v. 10), he mentions “compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving each other if anyone has a complaint against another” (*Col 3:12-13*). In a word, true youth means having a heart capable of loving, whereas everything that separates us from others makes the soul grow old. And so he concludes: “above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony” (*Col 3:14*)⁵.

Jesus had no use for adults who looked down on the young or lorded it over them. On the contrary, he insisted that “the greatest among you must become like the youngest” (*Lk 22:26*). For him age did not establish privileges, and being young did not imply lesser worth or dignity. In fact, the word of God says that young people should be treated “as brothers” (*1 Tim 5:1*), and warns parents not to “provoke your children, lest they become discouraged” (*Col 3:21*). Young people are not meant to become discouraged; they are meant to dream great things, to seek vast horizons, to aim higher, to take on the world, to accept challenges and to offer the best of themselves to the building of something better. That is why I constantly urge young people not to let themselves be robbed of hope; to each of them I repeat: “Let no one despise your youth” (*1 Tim 4:12*)⁶.

⁵ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 14

⁶ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 15

However, young people are also urged “to accept the authority of those who are older” (1 *Pet* 5:5). The Bible never ceases to insist that profound respect be shown to the elderly, since they have a wealth of experience; they have known success and failure, life’s joys and afflictions, its dreams and disappointments. In the silence of their heart, they have a store of experiences that can teach us not to make mistakes or be taken in by false promises. An ancient sage asks us to respect certain limits and to master our impulses: “Urge the younger men to be self-controlled” (*Tit* 2.6). It is unhelpful to buy into the cult of youth or foolishly to dismiss others simply because they are older or from another generation. Jesus tells us that the wise are able to bring forth from their store things both new and old (cf. *Mt* 13:52). A wise young person is open to the future, yet still capable of learning something from the experience of others⁷.

In the Gospel of Matthew we find a young man (cf. 19:20.22) who approaches Jesus and asks if there is more that he can do (v. 20); in this, he demonstrates that youthful openness of spirit which seeks new horizons and great challenges. Yet his spirit was not really that young, for he had already become attached to riches and comforts. He said he wanted something more, but when Jesus asked him to be generous and distribute his goods, he realized that he could not let go of everything he had. In the end, “hearing these words, the young man went away sad” (v. 22). He had given up his youth. In the Gospel also speaks about a group of wise young women, who were ready and waiting, while others were distracted and slumbering (cf. *Mt* 25:1-13). We can, in fact, spend

⁷ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 16

our youth being distracted, skimming the surface of life, half-asleep, incapable of cultivating meaningful relationships or experiencing the deeper things in life. In this way, we can store up a paltry and unsubstantial future. Or we can spend our youth aspiring to beautiful and great things, and thus store up a future full of life and interior richness⁸. If you have lost your inner vitality, your dreams, your enthusiasm, your optimism and your generosity, Jesus stands before you as once he stood before the dead son of the widow, and with all the power of his resurrection he urges you: “Young man, I say to you, arise!” (*Lk 7:14*)⁹.

Christological Model of Youth

In the Christological model of youth, the scripture would be studied to see where the idea of youth relates to the person, nature and role of Christ. On the Cross of Calvary, Jesus “gave up his spirit” (cf. *Mt 27:50*) when he was little more than thirty years of age (cf. *Lk 3:23*). It is important to realize that Jesus was a young person. He gave his life when he was, in today’s terms, a young adult. He began his public mission in the prime of life, and thus “a light dawned” (*Mt 4:16*) that would shine most brightly when he gave his life to the very end. That ending was not something that simply happened; rather, his entire youth, at every moment, was a precious preparation for it. “Everything in Jesus’s life was a sign

⁸ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 18-19

⁹ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 20

of his mystery”¹⁰; indeed, “Christ’s whole life is a mystery of redemption”¹¹.

The Gospel tells us nothing of Jesus’ childhood, but it does recount several events of his adolescence and youth. Matthew situates the time of the Lord’s youth between two events: his family’s return to Nazareth after their exile, and Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, the beginning of his public ministry. The last images we have of Jesus as a child are those of a tiny refugee in Egypt (cf. *Mt* 2:14-15) and repatriated in Nazareth (cf. *Mt* 2:19-23). Our first image of Jesus as a young adult shows him standing among the crowds on the banks of the Jordan river to be baptized by his kinsman John the Baptist, just like any other member of his people (cf. *Mt* 3:13-17).

The Gospel says that at his baptism the Father rejoiced and was well pleased: “You are my beloved Son” (*Lk* 3:22). Jesus immediately appeared filled with the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the desert. There he prepared to go forth to preach and to work miracles, to bring freedom and healing (cf. *Lk* 4:1-14). Every young person who feels called to a mission in this world is invited to hear the Father speaking those same words within his or her heart: “You are my beloved child”¹².

Between these two accounts, we find another, which shows Jesus as an adolescent, when he had returned with his parents to

¹⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 515

¹¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 517

¹² Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no.25

Nazareth, after being lost and found in the Temple (cf. *Lk* 2:41-51). There we read that “he was obedient to them” (cf. *Lk* 2:51); he did not disown his family. Luke then adds that Jesus “grew in wisdom, age and grace before God and men” (cf. *Lk* 2:52). In a word, this was a time of preparation, when Jesus grew in his relationship with the Father and with others. Saint John Paul II explained that he did not only grow physically, but that “there was also a spiritual growth in Jesus”, because “the fullness of grace in Jesus was in proportion to his age: there was always a fullness, but a fullness which increased as he grew in age”¹³.

Taking from the Gospel, it can be said that Jesus, in the years of his youth, was “training”, being prepared to carry out the Father’s plan. His adolescence and his youth set him on the path to that sublime mission. In his adolescence and youth, Jesus’ relationship with the Father was that of the beloved Son. Drawn to the Father, he grew up concerned for his affairs: “Did you not know that I must be about my Father’s business?” (*Lk* 2:49). Still, it must not be thought that Jesus was a withdrawn adolescent or a self-absorbed youth. His relationships were those of a young person who shared fully in the life of his family and his people. He learned his father’s trade and then replaced him as a carpenter. At one point in the Gospel he is called “the carpenter’s son” (*Mt* 13:55) and another time simply “the carpenter” (*Mk* 6:3). This detail shows that he was just another young person of his town, who related normally to others. No one regarded him as unusual or set apart from others. For this very reason, once Jesus began to

¹³ Catechesis (27 June 1990), 2-3: *Insegnamenti* 13, 1 (1990), 1680-1681.

preach, people could not imagine where he got this wisdom: “Is this not Joseph’s son?” (Lk 4:22)¹⁴.

Jesus did not grow up in a narrow and stifling relationship with Mary and Joseph, but readily interacted with the wider family, the relatives of his parents and their friends. Hence we can understand why, when he returned from his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, his parents readily thought that, as a twelve-year-old boy (cf. Lk 2:42), he was wandering freely among the crowd, even though they did not see him for an entire day: “supposing him to be in the group of travellers, they went a day’s journey” (Lk 2:44). Surely, they assumed, Jesus was there, mingling with the others, joking with other young people, listening to the adults tell stories and sharing the joys and sorrows of the group. Indeed, the Greek word that Luke uses to describe the group – *synodía* – clearly evokes a larger “community on a journey” of which the Holy Family is a part. Thanks to the trust of his parents, Jesus can move freely and learn to journey with others¹⁵.

Ecclesiological Model of Youth

Pope Francis, relating the concept of youth to the church, describes youth as simply being more than a period of time; it is a state of mind. That is why an institution as ancient as the Church can experience renewal and a return to youth at different points in her age-old history. Indeed, at the most dramatic moments of her history, she feels called to return with all her heart to her first

¹⁴ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no. 28

¹⁵ Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation [Amoris Laetitia](#) (19 March 2016), 182: AAS 108 (2016), 384.

love. Recalling this truth, the Second Vatican Council noted that, “enriched by a long and living history, and advancing towards human perfection in time and the ultimate destinies of history and of life, the Church is the real youth of the world”. In her, it is always possible to encounter Christ “the companion and friend of youth”¹⁶.

The Church is young when she is herself, when she receives ever anew the strength born of God’s word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his Spirit in our lives. The Church is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source. Young people can offer the Church the beauty of youth by renewing her ability to “rejoice with new beginnings, to give unreservedly of herself, to be renewed and to set out for ever greater accomplishments”¹⁷. The elderly of the church need to find ways of keeping close to the voices and concerns of young people. “Drawing together creates the conditions for the Church to become a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity”¹⁸. We need to make more room for the voices of young people to be heard: “listening makes possible an exchange of gifts in a context of empathy... At the

¹⁶ SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, [Message to Young Men and Women](#) (8 December 1965): AAS 58 (1966), 18

¹⁷ SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, [Message to Young Men and Women](#) (8 December 1965): AAS 58 (1966), 18

¹⁸ SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, [Message to Young Men and Women](#) (8 December 1965): AAS 58 (1966), 1

same time, it sets the conditions for a preaching of the Gospel that can touch the heart truly, decisively and fruitfully”¹⁹.

The heart of the Church is also full of young saints who devoted their lives to Christ, many of them even to dying a martyr’s death. They were precious reflections of the young Christ; their radiant witness encourages us and awakens us from our lethargy. “Through the holiness of the young, the Church can renew her spiritual ardour and her apostolic vigour. The balm of holiness generated by the good lives of so many young people can heal the wounds of the Church and of the world, bringing us back to that fullness of love to which we have always been called: young saints inspire us to return to our first love (cf. *Rev* 2:4)”²⁰. Some saints never reached adulthood, yet they showed us that there is another way to spend our youth. Let us recall at least some of them who, each in his or her own way, and at different periods of history, lived lives of holiness.

Saint Sebastian was a young captain of the Praetorian Guard. It is said that he spoke constantly of Christ and tried to convert his companions, to the point that he was ordered to renounce his faith. When he refused, he was flogged to death. Saint Francis of Assisi, while very young and full of great dreams, heard Jesus’ call to become poor like him and to rebuild the Church by his witness. Saint Joan of Arc was born in 1412. She was a young

¹⁹ SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, [Message to Young Men and Women](#) (8 December 1965): AAS 58 (1966), 8

²⁰ [Prayer at the Conclusion of the Way of the Cross, XXXIV World Youth Day in Panama](#) (26 January 2019): *L’Osservatore Romano*, 27 January 2019, 167.

peasant girl who, despite her tender years, fought to defend France from invaders. Blessed Andrew Phû Yên was a young Vietnamese man of the seventeenth century. He was a catechist and assisted the missionaries. Saint Kateri Tekakwitha, a young native of North America, was persecuted for her faith and, to escape, walked over three hundred kilometres in the wilderness. Kateri consecrated herself to God and died saying: "Jesus, I love you!" Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus was born in 1873. At fifteen years of age, having overcome many difficulties, she succeeded in entering the Carmelite convent. Thérèse lived the little way of complete trust in the Lord's love and determined to fan with her prayers the fire of love burning in the heart of the Church. Blessed Ceferino Namuncurá was a young Argentinian, the son of the chief of a remote tribe of indigenous peoples. He became a Salesian seminarian, filled with the desire to return to his tribe, bringing Jesus Christ to them. Ceferino died in 1905. Other young saints include: Blessed Isidore Bakanja, Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati, Blessed Marcel Callo, Blessed Chiara Badano, etc²¹.

Mariological Model of Youth

In the heart of the Church, Mary shines forth. She is the supreme model for a youthful Church that seeks to follow Christ with enthusiasm and docility. While still very young, she accepted the message of the angel, yet she was not afraid to ask questions (cf. *Lk* 1:34). With open heart and soul, she replied, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord" (*Lk* 1:38).

²¹ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no.51-58

We are always struck by the strength of the young Mary's 'yes', the strength in those words, 'be it done', that she spoke to the angel. This was no merely passive or resigned acceptance, or a faint 'yes', as if to say, 'Well, let's give it a try and see what happens'. Mary did not know the words, 'Let's see what happens'. She was determined; she knew what was at stake and she said 'yes' without thinking twice. Hers was the 'yes' of someone prepared to be committed, someone willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she had, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise. So I ask each one of you: do you see yourselves as the bearers of a promise? What promise is present in my heart that I can take up? Mary's mission would undoubtedly be difficult, but the challenges that lay ahead were no reason to say 'no'. Things would get complicated, of course, but not in the same way as happens when cowardice paralyzes us because things are not clear or sure in advance. Mary did not take out an insurance policy! She took the risk, and for this reason she is strong, she is an 'influencer', the 'influencer' of God. Her 'yes and her desire to serve were stronger than any doubts or difficulties'²².

45. Without yielding to evasions or illusions, "she accompanied the suffering of her Son; she supported him by her gaze and protected him with her heart. She shared his suffering, yet was not overwhelmed by it. She was the woman of strength who uttered her 'yes', who supports and accompanies, protects and embraces. She is the great guardian of hope... From her, we learn how to say

²² [Address at the Vigil with Young People, XXXIV World Youth Day in Panama](#) (26 January 2019): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 28-29 January 2019, 6.

‘yes’ to the stubborn endurance and creativity of those who, undaunted, are ever ready to start over again”²³.

Mary was a young woman whose heart overflowed with joy (cf. *Lk* 1:47), whose eyes, reflecting the light of the Holy Spirit, looked at life with faith and treasured all things in her youthful heart (cf. *Lk* 2:19.51). She was energetic, ready to set out immediately once she knew that her cousin needed her. She did not think about her own plans, but went “with haste” to the hill country (*Lk* 1:39). When her young son needed protection, Mary set out with Joseph to a distant land (cf. *Mt* 2:13-14). She also joined the disciples in awaiting the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Acts* 1:14). In her presence, a young Church was born, as the apostles went forth to give birth to a new world (cf. *Acts* 2:4-11)²⁴.

Mary is the Mother who watches over us, her children, on our journey through life, often weary and in need, anxious that the light of hope not fail. For that is our desire: that the light of hope never fail. Mary our Mother looks to this pilgrim people: a youthful people whom she loves, and who seek her in the silence of their hearts amid all the noise, the chatter and the distractions of the journey. Under the gaze of our Mother, there is room only for the silence of hope. Thus Mary illumines anew our youth²⁵.

²³ [Prayer at the Conclusion of the Way of the Cross, XXXIV World Youth Day in Panama](#) (26 January 2019): *L'Osservatore Romano*, 27 January 2019, 12.

²⁴ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no.46-47

²⁵ Pope Francis, *Christus Vivit*, Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, March 2019, no.48

Conclusion

The Holy Father, Pope John Paul II had earlier observed that the youth are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development: illiteracy, idleness, hunger, drugs. In order to meet these challenges, young people themselves should be called upon to become the evangelizers of their peers. No one can do this better than they. He emphasized that the pastoral care of youth must clearly be a part of the overall pastoral plan of Dioceses and parishes, so that young people will be enabled to discover very early on the value of the gift of self, an essential means for the person to reach maturity²⁶. As part of the effort to help young people in their journey towards the discovery of the gift of self, the foregoing has studied the post apostolic synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis with the purpose of developing theological models of youth. From the document, Biblical model, Christological Model, Mariological Model and Ecclesiological Model of youth were developed from the deep theological insight of the Roman Pontiff, Pope Francis. In relation to these theological models, it is hoped that the youth will develop a stronger value of the self and be strengthened in their commitment to Christ and His Church.

²⁶ Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 93

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Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, No. 93

TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF MIGRATION

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Introduction

Etymologically, theology is from two Greek words Θεο (God) and λογία (study). Brought together, it means the study of God. Far back in history, Plato understood theology as an instrument for demythologizing the Greek Poets. Aristotle on his part saw theology as an aspect of philosophy that explains the cosmos in terms of an Unmoved Mover. When theology began to assume a Christian tone, Origen defined theology as a tool for expressing the Christian understanding of God as distinguished from Christian faith. St Thomas Aquinas used the concept in the context of a methodical elaboration of the truth of divine revelation by reason enlightened by faith (Kanu 2018).

St Anselm defined theology as “faith seeking understanding” (*fides quarens intellectus*). A branch of learning in which the Christian, using his reason enlightened by divine faith, seeks to understand the mysteries of God revealed in and through history (Ephesians 1:9). These mysteries encapsulate the revelation of God himself and his love for humanity – mysteries hidden in God but revealed to humanity through the spirit (1 Cor 2:7-16). Christian theology began with the Apostles, because the Apostles had to reconcile themselves with the message of Christ and because they had to preach the Good News. With the edict of Constantinople in

313, the Church acquired a legal status and its theology began to show the marks of the Church's new situation. As circumstances changed, so too did the character of theology. With the desolation of the Roman Empire in 476 and breakdown of traditional social and political institutions, theology passed to the Monasteries and to theologians like St Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, etc. Later, a new theological enterprise began to emerge from the universities headed by figures like Albert the Great. This spelled the emergence of scholastic theology.

As theology has been changed or molded by contexts and new circumstances of God's people, the question looming at the horizon of this research is: what has theology to say within the context of migration, which is a phenomenon that cannot be ignored? This piece will therefore go through the teachings of the Fathers of the Church, the Magisterium and Scripture to see what God is saying about the particular context of migrants, refugees and displaced persons of our time, and in this way, recast the migration issue theologically.

Migration- Trends and Dynamics

The word migration came from a Latin word *migrare*, which means to change one's residence. As the concept took centre stage in discourses after the First and Second World Wars, scholars have tried to define it from their specific perspectives. The geographers lay emphasis on the time and space significance of mobility; sociologists have laid stress on social consequences of mobility whereas importance to economic aspect of migration has been given by the economists (Ndubisi 2013). This notwithstanding, Bhugra and Becker (2019) define migration as

“the process of going from one country, region or place of residence to settle in another”. The duration of this new settlement varies, but the central focus is on those who move either semi-permanent or permanently to another geographical region.

Migration is the movement of a person or group of persons either across an international border or within a State. It is a population movement, encompassing any kind of movement of people, whatever its length, composition and causes. It includes migration of refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants and persons moving for other purposes including family reunification (Kanu 2019a).

Year	Number of migrants	Migrants as a % of world's population
1970	84,460,125	2.3%
1975	90,368,010	2.2%
1980	101,983,149	2.3%
1985	113,206,691	2.3%
1990	152,563,212	2.9%
1995	160,801,752	2.8%
2000	172,703,309	2.8%
2005	191,269,100	2.9%

2010	221,714,243	3.2%
2015	243,700,236	3.3%

UNDESA 2008 and 2015

▶ 2018- 258,000,000

▶ 2019- 272,000,000

While the proportion of international migrants globally has increased over this period, it is evident that the vast majority of people continue to live in the country in which they were born.

From the statistics of 2015, with 244 million international migrants out of a global population of 7.3 billion, it meant that 1 in every 30 people were migrants.

With world population at 7.7 billion (World Population Report 2019) and the number of migrants reaching 272 million, 1 in every 28 people are migrants.

Church Fathers on Migration

This section would focus on the thoughts of the Fathers of the Church that has relevance for our understanding of Migration within the parameters of theology.

a. The Epistle of Mathetes

“They dwell in their own countries, but simply as sojourners. As citizens, they share in all things with others, and yet endure all things as if foreigners. Every foreign land is to them as their native country, and every land of their birth as a land of strangers.” (Epistle to Diognetus 5, 1.5)

b. Origen's commentary on the Letter to the Romans

Origen writes on our duty towards being solicitous and active in offering hospitality: "When it says that we should be solicitous in hospitality (Romans 12:13), it doesn't only mean that we should receive guests who come to us, but also that we should seek them out, that we should be solicitous, that we examine and inquire diligently everywhere, lest by chance there be a guest in a public square who would have to sleep without a roof."

c. John Chrysostom on hospitality

"Think of this, then, regarding Christ. He is wandering and a pilgrim, needing shelter; and you spend your time adorning the floor, the walls, and the capitals of the columns, and hanging lamps with golden chains ... All of these treasures can be taken away ...; what you do for your brother who is hungry, an immigrant, or naked, not even the devil himself can take from you."

d. Saint Augustine on hospitality

"Let no one become proud because he welcomes an immigrant: Christ was a migrant. Christ, welcomed and aided, was greater than those who welcomed and aided him ... Let no one then, my brothers, be proud when he helps the poor, not even in his spirit."

e. Saint Ambrose of Milan

"We tried everything possible, striving, urging, entreating, pleading, and appealing directly to the heads of governments to prevent the disastrous war. Even when this tragic war broke out and spread horror throughout the world, we still sought by word and deed to mitigate and restrain it; as much as we could. In these

sorrowful circumstances, the Church, as a universal mother, failed neither in her duty nor in what was expected of her. She, the "Head of the universal society of love," became, as was her custom, a comfort for the afflicted, a refuge for the persecuted, a homeland for the exiled. No matter how enormous the difficulties that faced us and how impossible the times, we left nothing untried to bring some aid to our suffering sons, without discrimination as to their status or nationality" (Exsul Familia 3).

"We also exerted great efforts for the displaced Jews who were victims of the cruelest persecutions. We approved, initiated, and furthered many works of charity for the relief of countless untold wartime disasters and hardships from which practically no one escaped. But in all these works of charity, we were especially solicitous for prisoners of war, refugees, exiles and our other sons who, for whatever reason, had to wander far from their homelands. And along with these, our chief concerns were children and orphans. Yet this being well known to all, since the record is amply documented, there is no need to recount it further. We can however touch on a few specific items. We also appointed a number of other commissions, among them the commission for the victims of war, for civilian refugees and for those detained in custody. This one was later replaced by the Pontifical Commission for Relief for all those who were in need. Equally worthy of mention are the missions arranged by our Secretariate of State and sent more than once into Germany and Austria, chiefly to provide for the welfare of refugees and displaced persons. Then when peace was finally restored, at least in part, the necessity of providing for millions of refugees became daily more urgent" (Exsul Familia 18).

The Magisterium on Migration

This section would pay attention to major church documents and teachings that have consequences for migration.

a. Migration in *Exsul Familia*, 1952

In the apostolic exhortation *Exsul Familia*, 1952, Pius XII offers the Holy Family in exile in Egypt as the icon of massive forced migrations that we are seeing today: "The émigré Holy Family of Nazareth, fleeing into Egypt, is the archetype of every refugee family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, living in exile in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are, for all times and all places, the models and protectors of every migrant, alien and refugee of whatever kind who, whether compelled by fear of persecution or by want, is forced to leave his native land, his beloved parents and relatives, his close friends, and to seek a foreign soil."

"The migrant Holy Family of Nazareth, fleeing into Egypt, is the archetype of every refugee family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, living in exile in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are, for all times and all places, the models and protectors of every migrant, alien and refugee of whatever kind who, whether compelled by fear of persecution or by want, is forced to leave his native land, his beloved parents and relatives, his close friends, and to seek a foreign soil." (*Exsul Familia*, Introduction)

b. Vatican Council II, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World "Gaudium Et Spes" 27, 66 (Dec. 7, 1965).

"In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbor of every person without exception, and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old

person abandoned by all, a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee,...or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord, "As long as you did it for one of these the least of my brethren, you did it for me" (Matt. 25:40).

"... [W]hen workers come from another country or district and contribute by their labor to the economic advancement of a nation or region, all discrimination with respect to wages and working conditions must be carefully avoided. The local people, moreover, above all the public authorities, should all treat them not as mere tools of production but as persons, and must help them to arrange for their families to live with them and to provide themselves with decent living quarters. The native should also see that these workers are introduced into the social life of the country or region which receives them."

c. **Paul VI, "Populorum Progressio," 67, 69 (March 26, 1967)**

"We cannot insist too much on the duty of giving foreigners a hospitable reception. It is a duty imposed by human solidarity and by Christian charity, and it is incumbent upon families and education institutions in the host nations...[T]hey should be welcomed in the spirit of brotherly love"

"Emigrant workers should also be given a warm welcome. Their living conditions are often inhuman, and they must scrimp on their earnings in order to send help to their families who have remained behind in their native land in poverty."

d. **Pope Paul IV, "Octogesima Adveniens" 17 (1971)**

"Right to emigrate: We are thinking of the precarious situation of a great number of emigrant workers whose condition as foreigners makes it all the more difficult for them to make any sort of social vindication, in spite of their real participation in the economic effort of the country that receives them. It is urgently necessary for people to go beyond a narrowly nationalist attitude in their regard and to give them a charter which will assure them a right to emigrate, favor their integration, facilitate their professional advancement and give them access to decent housing where, if such is the case, their families can join them. Linked to this category are the people who, to find work, or to escape a disaster or a hostile climate, leave their regions and find themselves without roots among other people. It is everyone's duty, but especially that of Christians, to work with energy for the establishment of universal brotherhood, the indispensable basis for authentic justice and the condition for enduring peace: "We cannot in truthfulness call upon that God who is the Father of all if we refuse to act in a brotherly way toward certain men, created to God's image. A man's relationship with God the Father and his relationship with his brother men are so linked together that Scripture says: 'He who does not love does not know God' (I Jn. 4, 8)".

e. **Pope John Paul II, "Laborem Exercens" 23 (1981)**

"Man has the right to leave his native land for various motives--and also the right to return--in order to seek better conditions of life in another country. This fact is certainly not without difficulties of various kinds. Above all it generally constitutes a loss for the country which is left behind. It is the departure of a

person who is also a member of a great community united by history, tradition and culture; and that person must begin life in the midst of another society united by a different culture and very often by a different language. In this case, it is the loss of a subject of work, whose efforts of mind and body could contribute to the common good of his own country, but these efforts, this contribution, are instead offered to another society which in a sense has less right to them than the person's country of origin...

Every possible effort should be made to ensure that it may bring benefit to the emigrant's personal, family and social life, both for the country to which he goes and the country which he leaves. In this area much depends on just legislation, in particular with regard to the rights of workers. It is obvious that the question of just legislation enters into the context of the present considerations, especially from the point of view of these rights... The most important thing is that the person working away from his native land, whether as a permanent emigrant or as a seasonal worker, should not be placed at a disadvantage in comparison with the other workers in that society in the matter of working rights. Emigration in search for work must in no way become an opportunity for financial or social exploitation."

f. *Refugees and displaced persons in Ecclesia in Africa 1995*

"One of the most bitter fruits of wars and economic hardships is the sad phenomenon of refugees and displaced persons, a phenomenon which, as the Synod mentioned, has reached tragic dimensions. The ideal solution is the re-establishment of a just peace, reconciliation and economic development. It is therefore urgent that national, regional and international organizations

should find equitable and long-lasting solutions to the problems of refugees and displaced persons.(230) In the meantime, since the Continent continues to suffer from the massive displacement of refugees, I make a pressing appeal that these people be given material help and offered pastoral support wherever they may be, whether in Africa or on other Continents" (No. 119).

g. Message of John Paul II for World Migration Day, 1996-1997: "Faith Works Through Charity" 2, 4 (Aug. 21, 1996)

"The task of proclaiming the word of God, entrusted by Jesus to the Church, has been interwoven with the history of Christian emigration from the very beginning. In the Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, I recalled that 'in the early centuries, Christianity spread because Christians, traveling to or settling in regions where Christ had not yet been proclaimed, bore courageous witness to their faith and founded the first communities there.' This has also happened in recent times...Today the trend in migratory movement has been as it were inverted. It is non-Christians, increasingly numerous, who go to countries with a Christian tradition in search of work and better living conditions, and they frequently do so as illegal immigrants and refugees ... For her part, the Church, like the Good Samaritan, feels it her duty to be close to the illegal immigrant and refugee, contemporary icol of the despoiled traveler, beaten and abandoned on the side of the road to Jericho. (Lk 10:30)."

"This is the Church's missionary path: to go to meet women and men of every race, tongue and nation with friendship and love, sharing their conditions in an evangelical spirit, to break the bread of truth and charity for them.... It is the apostolic style which

shines through the missionary experience of the first Christian communities ... [Paul] active in the city of Corinth whose population was largely composed of immigrants working in the port, is urged by the Lord not to be afraid, to continue to 'speak and not to be silent' and to trust in the saving power of the wisdom of the Cross (1 Cor. 1:26-27)."

h. Migrants, displaced persons and refugees in *Africae Munus*, 2011

"Millions of migrants, displaced persons and refugees are searching for a homeland and a peaceful country in Africa or elsewhere. The scale of this movement, which affects every country, reveals the hidden magnitude of the different types of poverty produced by deficiencies in public administration. Thousands of people have tried and continue trying to cross deserts and seas, searching for an oasis of peace and prosperity, better education and greater freedom. Unfortunately, many refugees and displaced persons encounter all kinds of violence and exploitation, even prison, and all too often, death. Some states have responded to this dramatic situation with repressive legislation. The precarious situation of these poor people should awaken everyone's compassion and generous solidarity; yet it often gives rise to fear and anxiety. Many regard migrants as a burden and view them with suspicion, seeing them only as a source of danger, insecurity and threat. This perception provokes reactions of intolerance, xenophobia and racism. As a result, these migrants are forced, through the precariousness of their situation, to do low-paid work that is often illegal, humiliating or degrading. The human conscience can only respond with indignation to these situations. Migration inside and outside the

continent thus becomes a complex drama which seriously affects Africa's human capital, leading to the destabilization or destruction of families" (No. 84).

"The Church remembers that Africa offered a place of refuge for the Holy Family when they were fleeing the murderous political power of Herod, in search of a land that could offer them security and peace. The Church will continue to make her voice heard and to campaign for the defence of all people". (No. 85).

Theology of Migration

Theology of migration is simply a theological reflection on the issue of migration. It is a reflection that is based on the Christian spirituality. Theology supplies a way of thinking about migration that keeps the human issues at the center of the debate and reminds us that our own existence as a pilgrim people is migratory in nature (Groody 2018). Very often, migrants are criminalized and their human dignity diminished, theology bridges the gap between these stereotypes to create a civilization of openness, understanding and hospitality. Theology offers not just more information as do the economic, sociological and anthropological analysis of migration, but a new imagination that is profound, one that reflects at its core what it means to be human before God and to live together in community. Thus, *Groody (2011)* avers that the theology of migration crosses over several divides:

- a. First, a theology of migration crosses over the nonhuman-human divide and so brings out the dignity of the human person, especially those who, like migrants, are treated like insects, dogs or slaves.
- b. Second, it crosses the divine-human divide, and thus helps us see the utter gratuity of God, who moved from his homeland with a love that could not be limited by legal or political policies and reached out to those whose lives are most threatened – the sinner, the tax collector, the prostitute, the outsider and the poor.
- c. Third, it crosses the human-human divide, as is revealed in Jesus' ability to cross racial, religious, political, economic and social barriers to foster a vision of human solidarity that highlights our interconnection as one family of God.
- d. Fourth, it crosses the country-kingdom divide, where we begin to see beyond national identities in recognition that the Christian's true citizenship is in heaven; our true calling is to cross borders as agents of God's reconciliation (*Daniel Groody 2011*).

The Sources of the Theology of Migration

The sources of the theology of migration are basically the Scripture, the experience of migrants and the teachings of the Church.

1. Scripture

The Scripture is one of the most obvious sources of the theology of migration, particularly the Old and New Testaments. The church understands the two Testaments as having the same authority. According to Stinton (2004), the Scripture is the final authority on

religious matters. It is the final court of appeal and constitutes the common to all controversies in migration theology. It is literally and authoritatively definitive of all that is affirmed within migration theology. The Scripture thus stands out as the principal source of migration theology.

Sermons on passages of Scripture also contribute to the development of Migration theology. More effective in this regard are dialogical sermons, which allow for a high degree of interaction between the preached word and the congregation. Clarke (2011) states that it is through this dialogue between the preached word of God and the response of the congregation that the written word becomes the living word. Relevant scriptural passages include:

a. **Images of God:** In Genesis 1:26 we read that on the sixth day God said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth." This has implications for the dehumanization of migrants. They cannot be *Imago Dei* and yet be referred to as illegal.

b. **The Visitors of Abraham:** Scripture says: "The LORD appeared to Abraham near the great trees of Mamre while he was sitting at the entrance to his tent in the heat of the day. Abraham looked up and saw three men standing nearby. When he saw them, he hurried from the entrance of his tent to meet them and bowed low to the ground. He said, "If I have found favor in your eyes, my lord, do not pass your servant by. Let a little water be

brought, and then you may all wash your feet and rest under this tree. Let me get you something to eat, so you can be refreshed and then go on your way – now that you have come to your servant.” (Gen 18:1-15). It was a result of Abraham’s hospitality to these visitors that he was blessed with a child. This has consequences for receiving countries.

c. **The Call of Abraham:** In Genesis, “The Lord had said to Abram, 'Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you.

'I will make you into a great nation
and I will bless you;

I will make your name great,
and you will be a blessing.

I will bless those who bless you,
and whoever curses you I will curse;

and all peoples on earth
will be blessed through you." (Genesis 12:1-3)

Very interesting is the fact that Abraham was blessed in a foreign land. This tells the story of many migrants whom God has blessed abroad, far away from their homelands.

d. **The flight of Israel from Egypt:** The book of Exodus (Chap. 14) tells the story of the movement of the people of Israel out of the land of Egypt. The exodus was an escape, a struggle for freedom. This connects with the stories of migrants who have left their home lands in search for freedom and peace.

e. **Israel’s Wandering in the Wilderness:** Scripture says: “The Israelites had traveled in the wilderness for forty years until all

the men who were old enough to fight in battle when they left Egypt had died” (Joshua 5:6). In the wilderness, they ate manna and quail. They drank water from the rock. There were times of hunger and thirst.

f. **The Incarnation of the Son of God:** Scripture teaches that: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind... The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1-14) Here, Jesus who is God crossed the border between divinity and humanity; He, therefore, migrated to the human race where there was discord, disorder, division, hatred, etc. It was a migration that began a new history for humanity.

g. **Mary’s flight to Egypt:** Scripture says that “Joseph is warned by an angel in a dream to take Jesus and Mary to **Egypt** to escape King Herod’s wrath. They escape by night, just before Herod orders the murder of all baby boys born in and around **Bethlehem** during the last two years” (**Matt. 2:13-18**). Pope Pius XII interprets the flight of the Holy Family of Nazareth as the archetype of every refugee family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, living in exile in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are, for all times and all places, the models and protectors of every migrant, alien and refugee of whatever kind who, whether compelled by fear of persecution or by want, is forced to leave his native land, his beloved parents and relatives, his close friends, and to seek a foreign soil.

2. The Experience of Migrants

The historical experience of migrants is one of the basic sources of migration theology; it provides materials for theology of migration, and further shapes its construction. This is very significant, as migration theology is a lived theology. It is one in which God is revealed in the everyday life of the migrant. Some migrants left families behind, and sometimes with horrible experiences like war and persecution before migration. Many left home as a result of the failure of the government of their country of origin, corruption and greed. Many left home under compulsion. The experiences on the way are sometimes very horrible: experiences of harsh natural environment, violence and physical abuse, dehydration, dangerous transportation conditions, and sickness and lack of medicine, vehicle accident and starvation. On arriving their countries of destination, some are forced to work low-paying jobs that were very dangerous and impersonal with long hours. Some live in poverty, usually in tenements that were very unsanitary, overcrowded, and dangerous. Some new immigrants faced ethnic discrimination and hardship by nativists and hate groups. They were not valued as highly as the native population. Some immigrants have to learn a new language and the intricacies of a new culture and homeland. They greatly missed their homeland and the people that they left behind. If theology would be relevant, it cannot undermine the experience of migrants.

3. The Magisterium

Magisterium is derived from Latin word *magister*, which means "teacher" in ecclesiastical Latin. In the Catholic Church, it refers to the church's authority or office to give authentic interpretation of

the Word of God, "whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition." Christ has bestowed on His Church this revelation through the Apostles. They in turn have handed it down to their successors, the bishops, it is the responsibility of the **Magisterium** to interpret the teachings of the Bible and Sacred Tradition in such a way that it deal with modern issues more appropriately. Catholic Essentials (2008) holds that the magisterium of the Church teaches God's people in two ways:

a. Solemn Magisterium: is Church teaching which is used only rarely by formal and authentic definitions of councils or Popes. This includes dogmatic definitions by councils or Popes teaching "ex cathedra".

b. Ordinary Magisterium: this second form of Church teaching is continually exercised by the Church especially in her universal practices connected with faith and morals, in the unanimous consent of the Fathers and theologians, in the decisions of the Roman Congregations concerning faith and morals, in the common sense of the Faithful, and various historical documents, in which the faith is declared.

Conclusion

Theology would become abstract and irrelevant if it says nothing about the conditions of people. The development of a theology of migration is only another way of saving theology from abstractness and making it relevant to the conditions of people. This relevance is established in three ways: first is by making theology speak about the meaning of human life within the economy of creation and redemption- creation in the sense that

we have all been created in the image and likeness of God, and redemption which should usher in a new order of relationship among human beings. Second is, making theology to say something about the significance of the incarnation in the light of contemporary issues like migration, thus drawing from the relevance of Jesus' stepping out of eternity into time for migration. Third, the theology of migration is a way of speaking out the mission of the Church in a world of disordered political economy, hatred, racism, individualism and fear of the other.

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HIGHLIGHTS OF *CHRISTUS VIVIT*: POPE FRANCIS' APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION TO YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO THE ENTIRE PEOPLE OF GOD

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Introduction

This document began with the strong statement that Christ is alive and he is our hope. The Pope intends that this Apostolic Exhortation reminds the Christian Youth of certain convictions born of our faith and at the same time to encourage the Christian youth to grow in holiness and in commitment to their vocation. This document stipulates what youth ministry entails in the modern world. The Holy Father cited from the scriptures instances of God's personal encounters with various young people, starting from Joseph (Gen. 37:2-3; 37:47), Gideon (Jg 6:13-14), Samuel (1 Sam. 3:9-10), King David (1 Sam 16: 6-13); Solomon (1 Kg 3:7); Ruth (Ru.1: 1-18; 4: 1-17). In the New Testament we see Jesus and his parables (cf. LK15: 11-32). Jesus, himself eternally young, wants to give us hearts that are ever young. Cast out the old leaven that you may be fresh dough (1 Cor 5:7). St Paul in explaining what it means to put on youthfulness which is being renewed, mentions compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving each other (cf. Col. 3:12-14). For Jesus, the greatest among you must become like the youngest (Lk. 22:26).

Jesus Ever Young

The Lord gave up his spirit (Mt.27:50) on the cross when he was little more than thirty years of age (Lk. 3:23). It is important to realise that Jesus was a young person. He gave his life when he was, in today's terms, a young adult.

Jesus' life can prove inspiring for all those young people who are developing and preparing to take mission in life. This involves growing in a relationship with the Father, in awareness of being part of a family and a people and in openness to being filled with the Holy Spirit and led to carry out the mission God gives them, their personal vocation. None of this should be overlooked in pastoral work with young people, lest we create projects that isolate young people from their family and the larger community, or turn them into a select few, protected from all contamination. Rather we need projects that can strengthen them, accompany them and impel them to encounter others in generous service, in mission.

Jesus does not teach you, young people, from afar or from without, but from within your very youth, a youth he shares with you. It is very important for you to contemplate the young Jesus as presented in the Gospels, for he was truly one of you, and shares many of the features of your young hearts.

The Youth Of The Church

Youth is more than simply a period of time; it is a state of mind. The Church is young when she is herself, when she receives ever anew the strength born of God's word, the Eucharist, and the daily presence of Christ and the power of his spirit in our lives.

The Church is young when she shows herself capable of constantly returning to her source.

Certainly members of the Church should not stand aloof or apart from others. All should regard us as friends and neighbours, like the apostles, who enjoyed the good will of all the people (Acts 2:47; 4:21, 23; 5:13). Yet at the same time we must dare to be different, to point to ideals other than those of this world, testifying to the beauty of generosity, service, the purity perseverance, forgiveness, fidelity to our personal vocation, prayer, the pursuit of justice and the common good, love for the poor, and social friendship.

The young people can help keep the Church young. They can stop the Church from becoming corrupt; they can keep her to be poorer and to bear better witness, to take the side of the poor and the outcast, to fight for justice and humbly to let herself be challenged. Young people can offer the Church the beauty of youth by renewing her ability to rejoice with new beginnings, to give unreservedly of herself, to be renewed and to set out for ever greater accomplishments.

Those of us who are no longer young need to find ways of keeping close to the voices and concerns of young people. Drawing together creates the conditions for the Church to become a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity. We need to make more room for the voices of young people to be heard: listening makes possible an exchange of gifts in a context of empathy... at the same time, it sets the conditions for a preaching

of the Gospel that can touch the heart truly, decisively and fruitfully.

Even though to many young people, God, religion and the Church seem empty words, they are sensitive to the figure of Jesus when he is presented in an attractive and effective way. Therefore, the Church should always endeavour to reflect Jesus Christ. This means humbly acknowledging that some things concretely need to change, and if that is to happen, she needs to appreciate the vision but also the criticisms of young people.

The Synod recognised that a substantial number of young people, for all sorts of reasons, do not ask the church for anything because they do not see her as significant for their lives. Some even ask expressly to be left alone, as they find the presence of the Church a nuisance, even an irritant. This request does not always stem from uncritical or impulsive contempt; it can also have serious and understandable reasons: sexual and financial scandals; a clergy ill-prepared to engage effectively with the sensitivities of the young; lack of care in homily preparation and the presentation of the word of God; the passive role assigned to the young within the Christian community; the Church's difficulty in explaining her doctrine and ethical positions to contemporary society.

Along these lines, the Synod sought to renew the Church's commitment against all discrimination and violence on sexual grounds. This is the response of a Church that stays young and lets herself be challenged and spurred on by the sensitivities of young people.

You Are The Now Of God

The young people are the present of the world; even now, they are helping to enrich the world. The young people are no longer children. They are at a time of life when they begin to assume a number of responsibilities, sharing alongside adults in the growth of the family, society and the Church.

Anyone called to be a parent, pastor or guide to young people must have the farsightedness to appreciate the little flame that continues to burn, the fragile reed that is shaken but not broken (Is. 42:3). The ability to discern pathways where others only see walls, to recognise potentials where others see only peril. That is how God sees things; He knows how to cherish and nurture the seeds of goodness sown in the hearths of the young.

Young People In A World In Crisis

The Synod Fathers acknowledged with sorrow that many young people today live in war zones and experience violence in countless different forms: kidnapping, extortion, organized crime, human trafficking, slavery and sexual exploitation, wartime rape, and so forth. Other young people, because of their faith, struggle to find their place in society and endure various kinds of persecution, even murder. Many young people, whether by force or lack of alternatives, live by committing crimes and acts of violence: child soldiers, armed criminal gangs, drug trafficking, terrorism, and so on. This violence destroys many young lives. Abuse and addiction, together with violence and wrongdoing, are some of the reasons that send young people to prison, with a higher incidence in certain ethnic and social groups.

As a Church, may we never fail to weep before these tragedies of our young. May we never become inured to them, for anyone incapable of tears cannot be a mother. We want to weep so that society itself can be more of a mother, so that in place of killing it can learn to give birth, to become a promise of life. We weep when we think of all those young people who have already lost their lives due to poverty and violence and we ask society to learn to be a caring mother. None of this pain goes away, it stays with us, because the harsh reality can no longer be concealed.

At times, the hurt felt by some young people, for instance victims of sexual abuse, is heart-rending, a pain too deep for words. They can only tell God how much they are suffering and how hard it is for them to keep going, since they no longer believe in anyone. May all the young people who are suffering feel the closeness of a Christian community that can reflect those words of Jesus: 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted' (Mt5:4) by its actions, its embrace and its concrete help.

Ending Every Form Of Abuse

Recently, urgent appeals have been made for us to hear the cry of the victims of different kinds of abuse perpetrated by some bishops, priests, religious and lay persons. These sins cause their victims sufferings that can last a lifetime and that no repentance can remedy. The phenomenon is widespread in society and it also affects the Church and represents a serious obstacle to her mission.

The Synod reaffirms the firm commitment made to adopting rigorous preventive measures intended to avoid the recurrence of

these crimes, starting with the selection and formation of those to whom tasks of responsibility and education will be entrusted. At the same time the determination to apply the actions and sanctions that are so necessary must be reiterated and all this with the grace of Christ. There can be no turning back Abuse exists in various forms: the abuse of power, the abuse of conscience, sexual abuse and financial abuse. Clearly, the ways of exercising authority that make all this possible have to be eradicated and the irresponsibility and lack of transparency with which so many cases have been handled have to be challenged. The desire to dominate, lack of dialogue and transparency, forms of double life, spiritual emptiness, as well as psychological weaknesses,, are the terrain on which corruption thrives. Clericalism is a constant temptation on the part of the priests who see the ministry they have received as a power to be exercised, rather than a free and generous service to be offered. It makes the priest think they belong to a group that has all the answers and no longer needs to listen or has anything to learn. Doubtless, such clericalism can make consecrated persons lose respect for the sacred and inalienable worth of each person and of his or her freedom.

Together with the Synod Fathers, the Holy Father, thanks, the gratitude and affection, those who had the courage to report the evil they experienced: they help the Church to acknowledge what happened and the need to respond decisively. Particular gratitude is also due for the generous commitment of countless lay persons, priests, consecrated men and women, and bishops who daily devote themselves with integrity and dedication to the service of the young.

Thank God those who committed these horrible crimes are not the majority of priests, who carry out their ministry with fidelity and generosity. The Holy Father asks the young people to let themselves be inspired by this vast majority. And if you see a priest at risk because he lost the joy of his ministry, or seeks affective compensation, or is taking the wrong path, remind him of his commitment to God and his people, remind him of the Gospel and urge him to hold to his course. In this way you will contribute greatly to something fundamental: preventing these atrocities from being repeated. This dark cloud also challenges all young people who love Jesus Christ and his Church: they can be a source great healing if they employ their great capacity to bring about renewal , to urge and demand consistent witness, to keep dreaming and coming up with new ideas.

A Great Message For All Young People

a. A God Who Is Love

The first truth the Holy Father has for the young people is this: “God loves you,” It makes no difference whether you have already heard or not. He reminds the youth of it. God loves you. Never doubt this, whatever may happen to you in life. At every moment you are infinitely loved.

b. Christ Saves Us

The second great truth is that Christ, out of love, sacrificed himself completely in order to save you. His outstretched arms on the cross are the most telling sign that he is a friend who is will to stop at nothing: “having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end” (Jn, 13:1).

c. He Is Alive

Finally, there is a third truth, inseparable from the second: Christ is alive! We need to keep reminding ourselves of this, because we risk seeing Jesus Christ simply as a fine model from the distant past, as a memory, as someone who saved us two thousand years ago. But that would be of no use to us: It would leave us unchanged; it would not set us free. The one who feels us with his grace, the one who liberates us, transforms us, heals and consoles us is someone fully alive. He is the Christ, risen from the dead, filled with supernatural life and energy, and robed in boundless light. That is why St. Paul could say: "if Christ has not been raised your faith is futile" (1Cor. 15:7).

Youth Ministry

YOUNG PEOPLE THEMSELVES ARE AGENTS OF YOUTH MINISTRY. CERTAINLY THEY NEED TO BE HELPED AND GUIDED, but at the same time left free to develop new approaches with creativity and a certain audacity. Young people should use their insight, ingenuity and knowledge to address the issues and concerns of other young people in their own language.

Youth ministry involves two main courses of action. One is outreach, the way we attract new young people to an experience of the Lord. The other is growth, the way we help those who have already had the experience to mature in it.

Any educational project or part of growth for young people must certainly include formation in Christian doctrine and morality. It is likewise important that it has two main goals. One is the development of the kerygma, the fundamental experience of

encounter with God through Christ's death and resurrection. The other is the growth in fraternal love, community life and service.

On the other hand, any programme of youth ministry should clearly incorporate various means and resources that help young people grow in fraternity, to live as brothers and sisters, to help one another, to build community, to be of service to others, to be close to the poor,

Suitable Environment

We need to make all our institutions better equipped to be more welcoming to young people, since so many have a real sense of being orphaned.

Along these lines, our institutions should provide young people with place they can make their own, where they can come and go freely, feel welcome and readily meet other young people, whether at times of difficulty and frustrations, or of joy and celebration.

At this juncture we would like to look at more critically the phenomenon of the abuse of the minor and vulnerable adults and the guidelines for the protection of the minor and vulnerable adults in the Church.

Guidelines For Safeguarding Children And Vulnerable Adults

Before we delve further into the issues of the day 'sexual abuse of the minor and vulnerable adult and guidelines for safeguard of the children and vulnerable adults,' it shall be apposite to clarify and define certain terms to enable proper comprehension;

Who is a Child?

Article 1 of the United Nations convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Nigeria is a party, defines a child to mean 'every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier'. Section 277 of the Child's Rights Act 2003 defines a Nigeria child to mean any person under the age of 18 years.

Who is a vulnerable adult or who are the vulnerable adults'?

The answer could quickly be found in the legislation enacted by the National Assembly of Federal Republic on the 21st day of May 2015 and assented to by the then Commander in Chief/President, Dr. Goodluck Ebele Jonathan on the 26th day of May 2015 popularly known as Violence Against Persons (Prohibition) Act, 2015 (VAPP).

Under Section 46 (PART VI of the Interpretation Section) of VAPP, Vulnerable persons or groups means, "WOMEN, CHILDREN, PERSONS LIVING UNDER EXTREME POVERTY, PERSONS WITH DISABILITY, THE SICK AND THE ELDERLY, ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS MINORITY GROUP, REFUGEES, INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS, MIGRANTS AND PERSONS IN DETENTION". It is important to note that it is just for the above listed persons to say "I or we have been abused" it doesn't matter much to argue or say "but she or he consented by the way she/he responded either through bodily or physical expression" reason being that a vulnerable person may sometimes act in a way that may look suggestive though very unintentional while seeking a favor or showing appreciation for favor received. It is rather important that responsible behaviors should be

maintained while dealing with children and vulnerable persons and indeed every person.

Suffice also to state here that our responsible behaviour is equally important as regards use of computers and other electronic gadgets, for example a person who communicates information capable of being viewed in the opinion of the court as well as that of the right thinking members of the society as sexual harassment. Inducement or seduction through electronic means such as SMS, Email etc shall be liable for commission of offence as provided In **Section 84(1)(2a-d) of the Nigerian Evidence Act 2011** which provides "In any proceeding a statement contained in a document produced by a computer shall be admissible as evidence of any fact stated in it of which oral direct evidence would be admissible....."

What is child abuse?

According to the World Health organisation, Child Abuse is defined as: "All forms of physical and or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power." Harm is described as "the ill-treatment or the impairment of the health or development of a child. Whether it is significant, is determine by the child's health and development as compared to that which could be expected of a child of similar age".

The following definitions and forms are some of abuses taken from UNICEF/NIG LAW:

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse of a child/VP is defined as the intentional use of physical force against a child that results in - or has a high likelihood of resulting in harm for the child's health, survival, development or dignity. This includes hitting, heating, kicking, shaking, biting, strangling, scalding, burning, poisoning and suffocating. It must be noted that much physical violence against children in the home is inflicted with the object of punishing.

Position Of The Law

Section 33(1) of the 1999 constitution provides that 'every person has a right to life, and no one should be deprived intentionally of his life save in the execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offense of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria. It follows then that violence against children/Vulnerable Person constitutes threat to right to life since such violence could in most cases result to murder or grievous bodily harm. The consequences or punishment due for murder is capital punishment and in the case of grievous bodily harm, imprisonment of the accused for a number of years depending on the gravity of the offence. it is obvious that every person especially children and vulnerable persons need protection, as they are human beings with rights to self-dignity as enshrined in the constitution of Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (section 34 (l) (a-c) and are the leaders of tomorrow.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is defined as the involvement of a child/Vulnerable Person in sexual activity that he or she does not fully comprehend, is unable to informed consent to, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared, or else that violates the laws or social

taboos of society. Children can be sexually abused by both adults and other children who are by virtue of their age or stage of development in a position of responsibility, trust or power over the victim. Acts of child sexual abuse are committed by both adult males and Females. Child sexual abuse can be physical, verbal or emotional and includes: touching and fondling of the sexual portions of the child's body (genitals and anus) or touching the breasts of pubescent females, or the child's touching the sexual portions of a partner's body: sexual kissing, penetration, which includes penile, digital, and object penetration of the vagina. mouth or anus; exposing children to adult sexual activity or pornographic movies and photographs: making lewd comments about the child's body; having children pose, undress or perform a sexual fashion on film or in person (exhibitionism) 'peeping' into bathrooms or spy on a child (voyeurism). It also includes efforts to encourage children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child/VP in preparation for abuse (including via the internet). This broad definition of child sex abuse captures the complex and many ways that sexual behavior may harm a Child.

Spiritual Abuse

This takes the form of brain-washing the child or the vulnerable adult with adulterated word of God so as to satisfy the perpetrator sexual craves. For example spiritual directions that are aimed at harassing the victim with the word of God so as to sexually gain access or him/her. Abuse of minor/VP using scripture compel him her to the whims of the abuser.

Position Of The Law In Nigeria

- ✓ Section 20(b) VAP Act 2015 - '12years imprisonment without fine for offence relating to sexual assaults'.
- ✓ Section 2(c) VAP -joint/ gang rape: 20 Years imprisonment.
- ✓ Section 26(I)(2)(3); Indecent exposure of genital organs or part thereof - 1 year imprisonment; 500,000 or both
- ✓ Section 13(1) of NAPTIP 2003 as amended provides that any person who having the custody, charge or care of any person under the age of eighteen years causes or encourages the seduction, unlawful carnal knowledge or prostitution of or the commission of an indecent assault upon any person commits an offence and is liable on conviction to imprisonment for ten (10) years. See also (Section 18)
- ✓ Section 33(1) of the 1999 constitution provides that 'every Person has a right to life, and no one should be deprived intentionally of his life
- ✓ Section 34 (I) (a-c) provides rights to self-dignity to each person whether child or adult

Emotional And Psychological Abuse

Emotional and psychological abuse involves both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent or caregiver to provide a developmentally appropriate and supportive environment. Acts in this category may have a high probability of damaging the child's/Vulnerable Person physical or mental health, or its physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development. Abuse of this type includes: the restriction of movement; patterns of belittling, blaming, threatening, frightening, discriminating against or ridiculing; and other non-physical forms of rejection or hostile treatment. This is the most

difficult to identify type of abuse, this is because there are usually no outward signs of the abuse. It can be in form of intimidation and humiliation.

Position Of The Law In Nigeria

- ✓ Section 14(1) of VAP Act 2015 'a person who causes emotional, verbal & psychological abuse on another commits an offence and is liable on conviction to 1 year imprisonment/200,000 fine or both
- ✓ Section 34 of 1999 constitution 'every person is entitled to respect for the dignity of his person...no person shall be subjected to any form of torture or to inhuman degrading treatment

Neglect

Neglect includes both isolated incidents, as well as a pattern of failure over time on the part of a parent, caregiver or other family members to provide for the development and well-being of the child/Vulnerable Person - where the parent is in a position to do so - in one or more of the following areas: health; education; emotional development; nutrition; shelter and safe living conditions. The parents of neglected children are not necessarily poor, they may be financially well-off. This kind of abuse can occur when a child does not have adequate food, housing, clothing, medical care or supervision. Emotional neglect happens when a parent/guardian does not provide emotional support or deliberately and constantly pays very little or no attention to a child, this does not mean giving a child all that he/she wants such as phones, computers but rather to more basic need e.g. love, education. Food, medical etc.

Hate Crimes

This is another form of abuse that takes the form of hatred. It is usually directed at people; both children and adult just because of their race, religion, abilities, gender, ethnic group, in the recent time between the rich and the poor etc.

Position Of The Law

- ✓ Section 43(1) of the 1999 constitution as amended provides that “ a citizen of Nigeria of a particular community,ethnic group, place of origin, sex, religion or political opinion shall not by reason only that he is such a person - (a) be subjected either expressly by or in the practical application of any law in force in Nigeria or any executive or administrative action of the government, to disabilities or restrictions to which citizen of Nigeria of other communities, ethnic groups, places of origin, sex, religion or political opinions are not made subject.
- ✓ (2) No citizen of Nigeria shall be subjected to any disability or deprivations merely by reason of the circumstances of his birth.

Economic Abuse

This takes the form of exploiting a child/vulnerable adult; it could be best described as “gifts with strings/attachments”. **Section 46 (PART VI of the Interpretation Section) of VAPP** defines Economic abuse to mean ‘forced financial dependence’,denial of inheritance or succession rights, the unreasonable deprivation of economic or financial resources to which any person requires out of necessity including: household necessities, mortgage bond repayments or payment of rent in respect of a shared residence or

the unreasonable disposal or destruction of house hold effects or other property in which any person has interest’.

Position Of The Law In Nigeria

- ✓ Section 12(1) VAP - ‘a person who causes forced financial dependence or economic abuse of another commits an offence of imprisonment for 2yrs. 500,000fine or both
- ✓ A person who attempts to commit the offence is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to a fine not exceeding 200,000 or both
- ✓ A person who incites aids, abets or counsels another person to commit the offence is liable on conviction to a term of imprisonment not exceeding 1 year or to fine not exceeding 200,000 or both.

Most commonly form of abuse found among Priest/Religious are sexual abuse, economic abuse, Spiritual abuse and emotional abuse. All these abuses have dealt heavy blow to the child, the vulnerable adult and to the Church as an institution.

Psychological Effects Of Abuse

- ✓ Personality disorders
- ✓ Violence and crimes
- ✓ Dissociation
- ✓ Eating disorder
- ✓ Depression-negative self-image which Can lead to suicide, drug and alcohol abuse

Inter-Personal Relationship

- ✓ Difficulty with trust
- ✓ Difficulty in establishing boundaries
- ✓ Passive behavior
- ✓ Sense of powerlessness
- ✓ Most times engaged in abusive behavior
- ✓ Fear of intimacy

Effects On Sexual Life

- ✓ Experience negative feeling of anger, disgust or guilt
- ✓ Approach sex as an Obligation
- ✓ Lack of interest, fear and avoidance of sex
- ✓ Feeling of emotional distant or absent during sex
- ✓ Engage in compulsive or inappropriate sexual behavior
- ✓ Have difficulty becoming aroused or feeling sensation

Myth In Favour Of Abuse

In the recent time, many people have advanced argument in favor of abuse among the clergy and |Religious, they claim that some persons may not be able to desist from abusive behaviors particularly sexual abuse as a result of the following factors;

Genetic Determinism

This view held basically that the abusers of minors inherited such in their genes that they cannot help but be attracted to minors; that it is in their DNA

Psychic Determinism

This basically says that the upbringing of a person (cultural context), childhood experiences essentially laid out personality tendencies and character structure, for example some sexual

perverts (men/women) have claimed that they are products of their culture, that their culture influences their sexual behavior.

Environmental Determinism

Basically says in the case of the Priests and Religious that their sexual abuse of children and vulnerable adults is as a result of their mandatory celibate state which some people considered to be unnatural, therefore they should be allow to marry so as not to engage in sexual abuse anymore. (the proponents of these arguments, Prof. Des Cahill &Dr. Peter Wikinson (former Priests considered mandatory celibacy as one of the major risk factor for child sexual abuse) in their 384 pages of survey on 18" September 20 I 7 'Child Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church; An Interpretative Review of Literature & Public Inquiry Reports'

Scientific/Empirical Responses To The Myth

Based on the findings of the FRANKL VIKTOR, a psychologist; In the midst of stimulus and responses, men and women have the following options;

- ✓ The freedom to choose
- ✓ Conscience/a deeper inner awareness of right and wrong
- ✓ Independent will/ability to act based on self-awareness; free from all other influences

Therefore we are all called to responsible behavior as no amount of excuse will exonerate any form of abusive behavior from any person

Reasons For Safeguarding Children And Vulnerable Adults

1. To protect the children and vulnerable persons:

Children and vulnerable persons are so dear and central to the heart of God and according to one of the Biblical injunctions in Luke 18:15-16, Jesus said "let the children come to me and do not stop them for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. And Psalm 34 said that "the lowly one called and the Lord heard him". Therefore, the church and indeed all of us must ensure that our Parishes and our places of work such as schools, hospitals, orphanages, children choir. etc. are places where our children, vulnerable persons and indeed every person are welcomed, Cherished and protected. Aside from children being in the heart of God, they are also the future leaders of the church and of our country Nigeria. And Logically speaking, if a child/vulnerable person is abused, the church and the society are equally abused since every child/person is destined to play a particular role in the church and in the society. These and many more are reasons, the United Nations on the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Child's Right Act, 2003 in Article 3(1) and Section I respectively stressed that "in every action concerning a child, whether undertaken by an individual, public or private body, institutions or service, court of law or administrative or legislative authority, the best interest of the child shall be of primary consideration"

The Holy Father Pope Francis to buttress how important every human person is to God and indeed to the church particularly children and vulnerable persons; has on the 4th of June 2016, issued an Apostolic Letter (Motu Proprio) 'LIKE A LOVING MOTHER'. In this document the Pope said that "the church loves

all her children like a loving mother but cares for all and protects with a special affection those who are smallest and defenseless..... the church is especially vigilant in protecting children and vulnerable adults, the duty of care and protection devolves upon the whole church yet it is especially through her pastors that it must be exercised. Canon law already provides for the possibility of removal from ecclesiastical office "for grave reasons".

ARTICLE I. paragraph 1, the Diocesan Bishop or Eparch or one who even holds a temporary title and is responsible for a particular Church or other community of the faithful, that is, its legal equivalent, according to can. 368 CIC or can. 313 CCEO, can be legitimately removed from this office if he has through negligence committed or through emission facilitated acts that have caused grave harm to others either to physical persons or to the community as a whole... paragraph 3. In the case of the abuse of the minors and vulnerable adults, it is enough that lack of diligence be grave. Paragraph 4. The Major Superiors of Religious Institutes and Societies of Apostolic Life of Pontifical Right are equivalent to Diocesan Bishops and Eparchs.

ART. 5... Everything that I have deliberated in this Apostolic Letter given Motu Proprio must be observed in all its parts ...and I hereby set forth that it be published in the official records of Acta Apostolicae Sedis and promulgated in the daily edition of L'Osservatore Romano and enter into force on 5 September, 2016". Recently, in a bid to protect the children, the Irish Bishops (Irish Episcopal Conference) approved in M3) 2017 a guideline known as **"The Principles of Responsibility Regarding Priests who**

Father Children While in Ministry" which was written in consultation with Vincent Doyle, an Irish psychotherapist whose father was a Diocesan priest.

According to The Irish times, the guidelines Doyle helped develop attempt "to articulate a position based on natural justice and subsequent rights regarding the children of priests." They include five general principles.

1. The birth of a child to a couple brings into being a unique person with a mother and a father. The two parents have a fundamental right to make their own decisions regarding the care of their new born child.
2. In justice and in love, the needs of the child should be given the first consideration. In the case of a child fathered by a Catholic priest, it follows that a priest, as any new father, should face up in his responsibilities legal, moral and financial. At a minimum, no priest should walk away from his responsibilities.
3. Each situation requires careful consideration, but certain principles present themselves on which the decision of the priest should be made:
 - ✓ The best interests of the child;
 - ✓ Dialogue with, and respect for, the mother of the child;
 - ✓ Dialogue with Church superiors.
 - ✓ Taking into account civil and canon law

4. It is vital in discerning a way forward that the mother, as the primary care-giver, and as a moral agent in her own right, be fully involved in the decision.
5. In arriving at a determination regarding these cases, it is important that a mother and child should not be left isolated or excluded
This guidelines issued by the Irish Catholic Bishops Conference in 2017, may be applied internationally, both by individuals and religious organizations respectively. As of September 2017, the USG, a union religious orders worldwide comprising 200,000 Catholic Priests, ratified and adopted these guidelines for their members worldwide, who "will now apply them according to their Circumstances."

Aside all the injunctions of the church, Section 33(1) of the 1999 constitution provides that 'every person has a right to life, and no one should be deprived intentionally of his life save in the execution of the sentence of a court in respect of a criminal offense of which he has been found guilty in Nigeria. It follows then that violence against children/VP constitutes threat to right to life since such violence could in most cases result to murder or grievous bodily harm. The consequences or punishment due for murder is capital punishment and in the case of grievous bodily harm, imprisonment of the accused for a number of years depending on the gravity of the offence. **Again, implementation of safeguarding policies will help to curtail abuse.**

Abuses especially sexual abuse like rape is a killer as it is capable of destroying the whole human person whether male or female.

The traumatic experience in terms of psychological, emotional and other forms of psycho social problems associated with the victim who is abused sexual or raped cannot be overemphasized as the evidence is seen in the person's behavior such as unsteady relationships, difficulty in building marriage, imbalance relationship with the opposite sex, sleep disorder that is heavily imbued with nightmares, constant hallucinations, dropping out of school, low self-esteem, touting, doubting attitude, meaninglessness of life etc. all these and more happen to the abused but for a good justice system that protects the vulnerable, loving hands of good counsellors and the healing power of God which brings wholeness into the human brokenness.

2. To protect ourselves:

With reference to the document 'Motu Proprio' by Pope Francis, it then means that failure to institute the necessary polices and guidelines for safeguarding may pose a challenge to any person especially to the Priests and Religious who may inadvertently fall a victim either by omission or negligence.

Child/vulnerable person's abuse is a Criminal act on ecclesiastical level, a grievous fault, and the sentence punishment is immediate Suspension followed by investigation dismissal/removal based on the fact of each case, measures to be taken could be found in canon 1395, 1397 and 1398.

Again, it is important to state based on the provisions by the CDF (Congregation for Doctrine of Faith) that a person who has been sexually abused at a minor age may make a complaint/denunciation when he/she reaches the age of

majority/maturity, that is 18 years, where he/she could not do that, he/she will still have 20years from the age 18 to make the denunciation to the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith. However he/she can still make this denunciation by addressing same to CDF after his/her official time.

In Nigeria- there is no time limit, the matter (sexual offences) can be instituted at any time the victim wishes. In Central Africa the victim has 3 to 10 years to make denunciation, same also by his her parents/ guardian. A minor who is a victim under the age of 17 may also apply to juvenile Rights Association which will bring the case to trial but after 10 years, the matter becomes statute bar. **Again, emphasis on the protection of each and every one of us and the way forward is provision of the necessary policies and protocols.**

3. Protection of the church:

In our country here in Nigeria, there is a principle called **VICARIOUS LIABILITY**. The concept of vicarious liability connotes master-servant relationship which states that a master will be liable for any tort committed by his servant in the course of the servant's employment, irrespective of whether the master authorized or ratified the activity complained of, and even though he may have expressly forbidden it. So you can agree with me based on this principle that we need safeguarding policy that will ensure that persons working in the church or for the church whether as priests, religious, volunteers or employers will comply with so as to safeguard the children and vulnerable persons.

Persons in volunteer services In the church such as catechism teachers, choir masters, head of children's liturgy etc. may be meting out different kinds of abuses to the children/vulnerable person in the name of discipline and where abuses of these nature happen and the particular volunteer is sued, the church may be held responsible for the person's bad behaviour and if there are damages to be paid the church may be asked to pay same since the act in question is/was done in the course of the masters' employment, of course the money may be in millions

Guidelines For Safeguarding The Children And The Vulnerable Adults

There are seven acceptable standard for safeguarding children and vulnerable persons.

Standard 1: Creating And Maintaining Safe Environment

This entails developing a culture of safety that welcomes children and vulnerable persons.

The three approaches that ensure the achievement of creation of safe environment are:

1. Having clear guidelines on acceptable and unacceptable behaviors in areas such as:
 - ✓ Adult to child vulnerable persons behavior, e.g.; in the parishes where there is catechism classes, in the schools, hospitals, spiritual directions, etc.
 - ✓ Child to child behaviour how the children are to relate with one another including vulnerable adults.
 - ✓ Physical contact with children/vulnerable persons.
 - ✓ Anti -bullying strategic: and protocols.

✓ Whistle blowing

- A clean and comprehensive recruitment and selection policy (this is mostly important in all employment to be done in the parishes and in the different apostolates, thorough selection procedure regardless of who the applicant is) even conducting psychological assessment even in families
- Clear guidelines on how to organize safe activities with children and vulnerable persons carols, retreats, children's camping/choir exercises, catechism classes, school activities, medical checks etc.
- VETTING - the policy caters for a declaration for applicants to sign stating that there is no reason why they would be considered unsuitable to work with children. The policy shall also ask them to declare any past criminal convictions and pending cases against them.
- Signing of the indemnity form - solemn declaration and always being mindful of it.

NB: A good induction is essential and mandatory for all personnel engaged with children/vulnerable persons - these include creating basic awareness of the concept of safeguarding and protection (workshops seminars), introduction to safeguarding policy and procedures, procedures of dealing with grievances and allegations etc. On appointment, each person will be given:

- ✓ The name and contact details of the Designated Liaison Person and advised of his/her role.
- ✓ A copy of Code of Behaviour for working with Children/vulnerable persons.

- ✓ Regular updates or training when relevant.

Standard 2: Recognizing, Responding And Reporting

This section guides on how to recognize abuse and on how to respond to all concerns, suspicions, allegations or disclosures of abuse, whether current or historical.

Recognizing Child Abuse

In order to respond effectively to concerns, suspicions or allegations, all personnel must first be aware of the main forms of abuse: physical Abuse. Emotional Abuse, Sexual Abuse and Neglect.

In order to create awareness the leadership of places such as Archdiocese, parishes, schools, hospitals, etc. must ensure that appropriate training in recognizing and res[ponding to abuse will be organized for all priests, sisters staff and volunteers whose work brings them into contact with children/vulnerable person.

Standard 3: Care And Support For The Complainant

People who have suffered abuse as child/vulnerable persons should be received with compassion and must be offered appropriate support, advice and pastoral care in a nonjudgmental way.

The Church/diocese policy should be committed to establishing safe and caring environments where complainants can report abuse knowing that they will be listened to and heard. They and their families will be offered appropriate care and support at the

difficult time in their lives. All allegations will be reported at the statutory services.

Standard 4.Care And Management Of The Respondent

The impact of abuse on a child/vulnerable persons is recognized as having potentially serious lifelong consequences. Those who are accused of abusing a child/vulnerable persons have right to fair process in the investigation and management of any child/vulnerable person abuse concerns.

Where reasonable grounds have been established that abuse may have occurred, church must put in place a system of support, monitoring and supervision for those who have been accused so that everyone is appropriately protected and supported, to prevent further abuse of Children/vulnerable persons

Therefore there must be;

- ✓ Guidelines on leave from ministry/apostolate
- ✓ Guidelines on case management
- ✓ Guidelines on risk management
- ✓ Guideline on the sharing of information between dioceses when Priest or sister transfers from one diocese to another

Section 5: Training And Support For Keeping Children Safe

All priests/sisters/staff/volunteers/collaborators should be trained and Supported in all aspects safeguarding relevant to their role, to develop and maintain the necessary knowledge, attitude and skills to safeguard and protect children/vulnerable persons.

It is important to ensure that all training delivered is up to date and relevant. Attention must also be paid in developing a spirituality of safeguarding that roots the church's commitment to child safeguarding in her Christian faith. Resources should be developed that enable the church to reflect on this area and grow in understanding and nurture of compassionate and caring attitude.

It must be ensured that the following receive training appropriate to their role:

- ✓ Leadership
- ✓ Director of Safeguarding
- ✓ Advisory Panel
- ✓ Designated officer
- ✓ Support Person
- ✓ Adviser
- ✓ Local Safeguarding Representative
- ✓ Safeguarding Committee
- ✓ Trainers (where applicable)

Everyone in Archdiocesan owned and administered apostolate has a role to play in safeguarding Children. Everyone working in the Archdiocese in relation to the activities with children will receive an induction into the Archdiocesan Policy and Procedures. To carry out their role effectively, the Archdiocese should provide opportunities for personnel to be supported in acquiring and maintaining the necessary competencies in order to safeguard and protect children. All personnel should take a proactive approach to ensure that their specific training needs are identified and

adequately met and that they receive relevant support in their role.

Effective safeguarding requires working in cooperation and partnership within the Church and with other organizations particularly NGOs and Statutory Agencies. Participation in local and national training initiatives that meet recognised standards should be encouraged.

Standard 6: Communicating The Safeguarding Message

The policy and its procedures are only effective if every person, the priests, sisters, staff, volunteers, the children they care for, their families and any others with whom they interact, understand them and know how to use them. Communicating the policy for safeguarding Children/vulnerable persons is crucial then for its effective implementation and ultimately for keeping children/vulnerable persons safe. The following processes shall be in Place to communicate the Safeguarding Children/Vulnerable Person policy: Persons Policy:

- ✓ Ensure that policy is openly displayed and available to everyone.
- ✓ Everyone in the Archdiocese knows the name and Contact details of the Designated Officer(s), of local Child Protection services, such a Health and Social Services, Police. NGOs etc.
- ✓ Develop an annual communication plan detailing how the Safeguarding message will be communicated. This plan should indicate how the message is to be communicated in a child friendly manner and to people with special communication needs.
- ✓ Display clearly their safeguarding policy on their website

- ✓ Safeguarding is addressed in our internal newsletters/meeting point
- ✓ Have copies of their policy available to share with interested groups,
- ✓ JDPC/ JPIC coordinators share the policy with other groups

Standard 7: Implementation And Monitoring

Appropriate policies, procedures and plans have to be implemented across to keep children/vulnerable persons safe. In order to do this, the necessary human and financial resources must be allocated. Reviews and audits are also needed to ensure that this is happening consistently. The views of those involved within the Church as well as those in the statutory authorities or in relevant NGOs can help to improve the effectiveness of these measures taken to safeguard children/vulnerable persons.

It shall be important to;

- ✓ Develop a two/three year plan of action to implement and monitor the effectiveness of the steps taken to keep Children\vulnerable persons safe. This action plan is reviewed annually.
- ✓ Conduct self-audits annually using the self-audit form method or by any other relevant means.
- ✓ Explore ways of organizing an external review of safeguarding practices every two/three years (eg. peer reviews with other diocese)

NIGERIAN YOUTH AND THE CHURCH: A REFLECTION AND EVALUATION FROM THE POST-SYNODAL EXHORTATION – CHRISTUS VIVIT

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Introduction

Christ is alive! He is our hope... He is in you; he is with you and he never abandons you... When you feel you are growing old out of sorrow, resentment or fear, doubt or failure, he will always be there to restore your strength and your hope (Christus vivit, 1.2).

These are the opening words of the post-synodal apostolic exhortation of The Holy Father, which he addressed to the young people and the entire people of God. The Pope's words that I have highlighted above contain on one side the eternal image of youthfulness in Jesus Christ who is always alive in the notable choking-reality of the presence of sorrow, resentment, fear, doubt and failure, a reality that makes old age insipid. And on the other hand, is the affirmation of Jesus Christ always being there to renew our strength and our hope.

The post synodal exhortation came after the XV Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops from 3rd – 28th October, 2018 which was themed: "Young People, Faith, and Vocational Discernment" aiming to "accompany young people on their way

of life towards maturity so that, through a process of discernment, they can discover their life project and realize it with joy, opening the encounter with God and with men, and actively participating in the building up of the Church and society.” (San Martin, I. Next Synod of Bishops to focus on youth and vocations <https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2016/10/06/next-synod-bishops-focus-youth-vocations/> accessed 28/10/2019).

The Pope’s exhortation is directed to all Christian young people to remind them of the certain convictions born of our faith and to encourage them to grow in holiness and in commitment to their personal vocation (CV 3). The objective of this piece is to respond to two questions: the relevance of the post synodal exhortation for the Nigerian youth and the Church and secondly, how to apply the lessons deduced from the exhortation to the situation of the relation between the church and the youth.

A. SUMMARY OF THE POST SYNODAL EXHORTATION-CHRISTUS VIVIT

Chapter 1: Pope Francis began his post-synodal reflection taking inspiration from the Scripture, enumerating various instances of God drawing near to the young people to encounter them (CV 5). From the old testament, the Holy Father brings to shore several qualities of notable young persons that are of value: Joseph’s outstanding brilliance over his older brothers (Gen. 37-47), Gideon’s candor in the presence of God about the hostile reality in which Israel has found herself (Jdg. 6:13-14), Samuel’s assent to the wisdom and counsel of an elder that led him to respond adequately to the voice of God (1 Sam 3:9-10), David’s purity of heart that satisfied God’s desire for a King (1 Sam 16:7), the

display of sincerity of Solomon and Jeremiah in recognizing their youthful inexperience in the face of the daunting task of governance and mission, the generosity of Ruth to Naomi and her “show of boldness in getting ahead in life” (Ru 1:1-18; Ru 4:1-17) and conviction of Naaman’s servant girl in the god of Israel that heals (2 Kg 5:2-6) (CV 6-11).

In the New Testament there are references of realities that surround the youth in the message of Jesus Christ in the gospels, in the epistles of Paul and Peter. The parable of the prodigal son highlights the attitude of conversion, metanoia that sets the youth back on the right path from which he strayed that is, the valiant resolve to make a fresh start. St. Paul’s dichotomy between what is old and what is new where he chooses the latter over the former, makes us understand that being renewed, “putting on a young self” implies cutting from our lives egoistic and self-serving attitude since a young self is characterized by attitudes (kindness, compassion, humility) that are only made manifest when directed to others. On the treatment of the young people, Paul advises that they should not be discouraged nor be made to shy away from responsibilities and also that the Youth should seek the counsels of the elder, not to be distracted by foolery and material benefits as the young man of the gospel of Matthew 19:20.22. (CV 12-18).

Chapter 2: In this section the Holy Father mines conclusions from Christological, Ecclesiological and Mariological dimensions, and also from the lives of various young saints to help the youth reflect and take inspiration from them.

Pope Francis takes us through the life of Jesus Christ, a life that played its important role in the history of Man while he was still a

young adult (CV 23). It is important to highlight that the Holy Father, following the synod, reads in the life of Christ an example for the young people today in order to consecrate them to God (CV22). The consecration of the youth to God is an evident fact from what we know of in the life of Jesus Christ- that is, that the young adult life of Christ was lived as a total consecration to God and dedicated to the salvific mission that proceeds from the Father's will (CV 25-27).

This life of total consecration to his Father was not lived at the detriment of social relationship with his foster father, Mary and other members of his family. At this point, the Holy Father directs his view to the lessons that the youthful life of Jesus Christ teaches us the young people. These lessons involve a theological dimension that is demonstrated by our relationship with the Father, a dimension that is conscious of the social aspect of being part of a family and a community and finally a pneumatological dimension that opens us up to the Holy Spirit who leads us to carry out the God's mission in our personal vocation (CV 30). Jesus' life presents the struggle of the life of a youth but it is also important that his resurrection invites us to a new life clothed in his light (CV 32).

The Pope directs his attention to the youthfulness of the Church stating that its youthfulness is not so much about the period of time as it is about the state of mind (CV 34). Adopting Youthfulness as a state of mind, the church is and should be opened to renewal. A renewal that is not to be understood as "accepting everything the world offers her, thinking that she is renewed by setting her message and acts like everybody else" -

Her renewal proceeds from her relationship with Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist and by the power of his Spirit (CV 35). An important aspect is the role the young people of the church play in renewing with their beauty, the ability of the Church on one hand and on the other, the role of the older members in taking into cognizance the need to listen to the voices of the young ones so that the church becomes a place of dialogue and a witness to life-giving fraternity (CV 38).

The church also needs to present the figure of Jesus Christ in an attractive and effective way, this implies that her message be centered around and in the life and works of Jesus Christ (CV 39) and a Church that preaches Jesus Christ should listen more than condemn, give room to questions and not stay in the defensive shield of confronting reality. Failure to do this makes her lose her youthfulness and turns her into a museum (CV 41).

The light turns Mariological as the Holy Father presents the qualities and attitudes of Mary who, being a youth, took up the responsibility of collaborating in the salvific designs of God in her “Yes” to the message of the angel. Her Yes is for the youth an example worth emulating since she was “someone prepared to be committed, someone willing to take a risk, ready to stake everything she had, with no more security than the certainty of knowing that she was the bearer of a promise” (CV 44). Now in Heaven, she looks upon her children in their struggles to become our light of hope that illuminates anew our youth (CV 48). The Holy Father also cites examples of young saints from the 3rd century to the 20th century as examples and intercessors of the Church. “They were precious reflections of the young Christ; their

radiant witness encourages us and awakens us from our lethargy...Their example shows what the young people are capable of, when they open themselves up to encounter Christ" (CV 49-63).

Chapter 3: This chapter tends to respond to the present-day situation which the young people find themselves (CV64). The Holy Father cautions against rigidity and lack of depth in the relationship between the youth and the church, and also against the attitude of the adults who seek to search out the negatives and the defects of the youth today without looking at a possible positive aspect of the lives of the youth (CV 65-67). So, what are the experiences of the young people?

The Pope highlights that the young people today are affected by wars and conflicts, organized crimes, sexual exploitation and human trafficking (slavery). Some suffer persecution for their faith (CV 72). They are targets of brutal strategies of political and economic powers and groups, some are stigmatized because of sicknesses and addiction. The Pope invites the church never to fail to weep before these tragedies of our young, and she ceases to be a mother if she fails to be affected by these events, for by her show of concern and emotion the society at large can become transformed—"we can only help others from our heart once we can weep" (CV 75-76).

Furthermore, he highlights the cultural and ideological imposition perpetrated by international agencies and richer countries as a prerequisite to help poorer countries, the culture of cosmetic treatments used to defy the passage of time which in turn robs the

actual young people of their place as youths. There is also the distance between the adults and the young people because of the failure of the adult “to hand on basic values of life” in that the relationship is lived only on the affective level while cultural and educational aspects are left untouched (CV 77-80).

The Pope makes reference to the process of growth and identity that is affected by the factors of science and technology, sexuality and socio-cultural topics. In the face of the adverse effect of these, there are positives that indicate that the youth is open to do what it takes to be better (81-84). He outlined three aspects that affect the youth today.

First is the internet and the cyberspace that has made communication and bonding easy but also has its limitations as it has exposed youths to loneliness, manipulation, cyberbully and a bed for radical fundamentalism and hate. There is also a notable withdrawal from real relationships presented in the family caused by the phenomenon of digital migration. There is the need to find ways to pass from virtual contact to good and healthy communication (CV 86-90).

The second is the question of migration. The Pope states that those who leave their countries (affected by war, violence, persecution, natural disasters and extreme poverty) do this in search of opportunities for themselves and their families (CV 91). But some are drawn out to migrate for the wrong reasons of being “attracted by the western cultures and unrealistic expectations that expose them to grave disappointments” (CV 92). Being that young migrants experience separation from their origins, the Pope

believes that the Church should play the role of reference for the young members of these divided families (CV 93), she should play a prophetic role in the society with regards to the issue of migration because of the varied perspective of being in the countries of departure or of arrival (CV 94).

The focus turns on the cases of abuse that have rocked the Church. Abuses which range from abuse of power and conscience to sexual and financial abuse. The Pope believes that it is the wrong way of exercising authority, irresponsibility and lack of transparency and clericalism have caused priests to be involved in this issue (CV 98). While expressing gratitude to the victims who have reported “this evil they have experienced” and to the commitments of “countless lay persons, priests, consecrated men and women, and bishops” who serve the young with integrity and dedication (CV 99), the Pope reminds us that those who have committed this evil are not “the majority of priests, who carry out their ministry with fidelity and generosity” hence he asks the young people to let themselves be “inspired by this vast majority” and help in stopping the abuse by reminding the priest of his commitment to God and to his people (CV 100).

The Pope ends this chapter by drawing example from the life of the venerable Carlo Acutis, exhorting the youth to not be robbed of hope and joy or be drugged into being slaves of consumerism and distractions. They should recognize that a life of dedication, commitment and sacrifices are difficult but ultimately fruitful (CV 107-108).

Chapter 4: The Pope in this chapter passes on essential message to the youth, a message which contains three truths that should be heard and spoken of constantly (CV 111).

First is the affirmation that God is a loving Father. The love expressed is that of an affectionate Father who plays with his children, it is like the love of a mother to her children that makes it impossible for her to abandon them. The love of God demonstrates to the young people that they are important and worthy of the love which proceeds from God, a love which does not oppress nor overwhelm, it is rather a love that builds and raises one up, it enhances growth even in the face of challenges (CV 112- 117).

The second message is that of the salvation in Christ. This salvation is a feat attained by the sacrifice of himself on the cross, a clear demonstration of love that continues to have saving effect to this day, all that is needed is the acceptance to be saved from the part of the youth. The unmerited love and salvation in Christ are nothing but the affirmation that he has loved us first even before we did. All that is required is the acceptance to be saved, the confession of sins and the believe in his saving mercy (CV 118-123).

The personality of Jesus as one who saves is not to be seen as a model of the past, rather as one who is ever present because He is Alive. This is the third truth of the message. The one whose arms were outstretched on the cross did not remain dead, for he rose from the dead and he promised to be with his people till the end of age (cf. Mt. 28:20). Because of his presence, evil does not have

the last word, rather it is goodness that will have the upper hand in the face of challenges (CV 123- 129). The Pope highlights that the three truths invoke The Father and The Son, Jesus Christ but also The Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit draws us closer to Christ and keeps our alive our hope of salvation. It is He who helps us find what we need (CV 130ss).

Chapter 5: The Pope begins this chapter with the question of what it means to live the years of our youth in the transforming light of the Gospel (CV 134) in other words, the Holy Father is implicitly asking what the time of the youth means.

In the first instance, it is a time of dreams and decisions, a time in which the personality of the youth is developed and marked by dreams and choices. It is a time in which one builds the boldness to take on responsibility for a mission or a project. But the reality experienced about life has made a lot of youths to shy away from these responsibilities that come with this stage of life and therefore there is the presence of Fear of making life changing decisions, anxiety that makes the young person get impatient by the lack of result and then the temptation of giving up entirely. The Pope admonishes the young people to make the most of their youth and not be passive with the events of their life, they should be protagonists and not be afraid to take risks and make mistakes (CV 135- 143).

The time of the youth is also the time which the “young people have a powerful desire to experience the present moment, to make the most of the opportunities life offers” The Pope admonishes the young people in this second instance, that God desires of them

to enjoy the present moment with gratitude and responsibility. There is need to make good use of the time we have as youths; we are to learn from the experiences of the present moments and live them as “enthusiastically and fully as possible” (CV 144-148).

Furthermore, the time of the youth creates the space and ambience for friendship. It is one of life’s gift and a grace of God. Friendship with Jesus Christ is to be the objective of the young people, given that the friendship of Jesus is stable and faithful and this we concretize when we relate with him in our prayers, our means of communicating with Jesus Christ. (CV 150-157). The Pope makes reference to the fact that the time of the youth should usher the young people to grow in maturity, hence adulthood or growing older should not be seen as leaving behind the cherished and precious moments of our youth rather it is about preserving them, what should be discarded are the things which are not good. There is the need for self-discovery so as not to be led astray by the pace of others, developing one’s way of being holy and being more of oneself is what the Lord desires (CV 161-162). Our growth in maturity should reflect in our relationship with others and should help us recognize that they are children of God. There should be no room for individualism and in the time of hurt from others, we should listen to God’s call to forgiveness. “Our youthful spontaneity should find expression in fraternal love and a constant readiness to forgive, to be generous, and to build community” (CV 163-167).

Chapter 6: The Holy Father emphasizes on the need for the young people to have deep roots in their origin and background. The need to have deep roots is made obvious in the face of the

different manipulative ideologies that destroy differences by its rejection of history and the tactic of dismissing as contemptible and outmoded, all that is not young (CV 181-182). In the face of this situation, the Holy Father asks the young people to not let these ideologies blur the distinctive traits of each one of them, that is the historical and socio-cultural background of each them (CV 185-186) and importantly, to see the vital roles of the elders in their communities, as they hold key to understanding their past and the knowledge to face the future. The Pope pushes for an inter-generational relationship so that there would be a collective memory in communities (CV 187-191. 200ss).

Chapter 7: The attention is turned on the need to renew the youth ministry to make it effective and capable of dialogue with the contemporary youth culture. The youth ministry should have two main courses of action: OUTREACH and GROWTH (CV 209-215). There is a need to create a suitable environment, a home and a family in our pastoral institutions. It should be a place the young people can call their own, welcome and freely met other young people. The young people should be able to lead others in a genuine apostolate among their friends (CV 216-219). There should also be a presence of the youth ministry in educational institutions because this is where one can draw close to children (CV 221-223).

The Pope makes it clear that there should be no underestimation of the young people's openness to contemplative prayers, an attitude that is made to grow stronger by involving the youth to participate actively in the great moments of the liturgical year. Secondly, the youth can actively participate in the welfare service

of the church to the poor, in the choir, sports (CV 224-229). It is also important to realize the missional dimension of the youth ministry from the practical lives of the young people themselves and they are to be done with the guidance of qualified persons (CV 239-247).

Chapter 8: The Pope makes reference to vocation in that God calls each one of us to enter into friendship with him, and this is made manifest in the life and mission of Jesus Christ and his relationship with his disciples and others who encounter him (CV 250-252). The attention of the Holy Father is drawn especially on vocation as a call to missionary service to others in that one's life and work, although having a direct impact on the person's life, is channeled towards others and making the society better. This gives meaning to the existentiality of the person who serves, a life that is lived according to the plan of the Lord. To be able to serve others, we need to discover our true selves in the plan of God (CV 253-257). Our vocation as a service to others takes us to two concrete destinations: the family and the work place (CV 259-273). This missionary service also takes form in the consecrated life (CV 274-77).

Chapter 9: Discernment is a required instrument in a life that presents us with different choices and decisions, to assist us to make the best of what we make of our lives and for others in the society. It is an effort to discover one's personal vocation. In this discernment there is the need for solitude and silence that will help us listen to the voice of the Lord. This form of discernment requires that the right forms of questions be asked specifically about oneself as a servant to others (CV 283-285). Jesus helps us

discern and understand our vocation as a gift, a gift that requires our collaboration (CV 286- 290).

It is important to seek the accompaniment and counsel of qualified persons who can help with vocational discernment and it is important for these qualified persons to possess the ability of listening. This ability takes on three sensitivities: First is with respect to the individual, which requires unconditional attention and amplitude of time to the young person in question. Discernment to know what the other is saying is the second, this helps to sift the truth from illusions or excuses. The third aspect is the ability to perceive what is driving the other person, that is to know his or her ultimate intention (CV 291-298).

B. THE NIGERIAN YOUTH IN THE NIGERIAN CONTEXT.

The Pope's post synodal exhortation touched on various contexts in which the young people have found themselves in, one cannot be oblivious of certain events that put the young people at risks with respect to their lives or profession. In the context of Nigeria, we need to ask of how the society conditions the lives and aspirations of the young people and how they (young people) react to these social conditions.

The Population Reference Bureau puts the percentage of population in Nigeria under 15 years of age at 44%, while 3% accounts for the population from 65 years (<https://www.prb.org/international/geography/nigeria> accessed 30/10/2019) it is logical to posit that 53% of the population of Nigeria is occupied by those within the ages of 16-64, which implies that the youth (from ages 16 to 40) holds a great presence in the population of Nigeria. In this section I will be

referring to the Nigerian youth in general without trying to make any distinction as to whether I am talking about the catholic youth or not.

Nigeria is a country that is blessed with natural resources, and has had successful exploits in many different sectors of the world. The most populous African nation has produced eminent figures that have become world sensations and icons owing to many who are inspired by their story. There is the drive and the aspiration demonstrated by the average Nigerian youth to be better and to overcome challenges. The average Nigerian youth is hopeful that tomorrow's experience will be better than what he or she is passing through today. On the other hand, the Nigerian youth is also affected by the challenges which the Nigerian society throws at him or her, these challenges could go as far as cutting short the innocent dream of the youth.

The problem of unemployment seems to be a major cancer that eats and sucks out life from the aspirations of the youth. The African Development Bank stated that the unemployment rate in Nigeria is frightening, this coming from the statistics report from the National Bureau of Statistics that the rate of youth unemployment is at 29.7% (<https://punchng.com/nigerias-unemployment-rate-frightening-says-afdb/> accessed on 30/10/2019). A Nigerian youth that is found in the number of the unemployed can only do so much with his or her aspiration because there is no adequate room for him or her to develop and seek out fresh ideas and exercise creativity in the society. In this situation, the youth becomes a target, as the Pope mentioned (CV

72ss), for inhuman ideologies and become political pawns in the hands of the bigwigs of the society.

The reality of migration to Europe and other developed continents presents us the quest for a better life, the quest to find daily sustenance and find basic human necessities that are not easily acquired in the home country. The twist to this genuine desire is the risk involved for one before he or she gets to the desired destination, many neither reach their destination nor get the chance to return home!!! We have heard recent reports of returnees, especially females, who tell their stories of being deceived to travel so as to get a better life only to realize that they have been sold into sex slavery. The quest for a greener pasture, for survival at the heart of many average Nigerian youths has put a lot of them in harm's way.

The issue of security in the country has also had several damaging effects on the lives of the youth in the country. The infamous terrorist group, Boko Haram, the clashes between herdsmen and farmers in a community, the surge of cases of kidnap all take a dig at the lives of everyone in their paths, but most disheartening is the number of casualties at the wake of every attack. In the present situation of the country and her intent of her security agencies to mend the porosity of security, another opening has been unlocked on her citizens, especially the youth.

Our attention is to be drawn to the recent cases of brutality that is perpetrated by the officers of various security agencies. It is an ironic situation that the youths face at this point in time in the hands of those who are meant to assist in keeping them safe. The legendary hashtag #EndSARS which was convened by Segun

Awosanya in 2018, was directed at disbanding the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS) that has left so many Nigerian youth in no little state of shock and fear (The Guardian, Nigerian Presidency Has Received The #EndSars Petition- Segun Awosanya <https://guardian.ng/life/nigerian-presidency-has-received-the-endsars-petition-segun-awosanya/> accessed on 31/10/2019) The Amnesty International presented in 2016 a detailed report of findings that implicate the modus operandi of SARS and exposes illegal detention and financial extortion from innocent victims (Amnesty International, <https://www.amnesty.org/en/documents/afr44/4868/2016/en/> accessed 31/10/2019).

David Hundeyin compiled a report over the activities of female harassment by the Abuja Environmental Protection Board (AEPB). This report tells of the experience of ladies who have come in contact with the officers of this organization that have been raped and/or have parted ways with huge amount of money in order to regain freedom (Hundeyin, D. The untold story of the AEFB, Abuja's uniformed female harassment unit <https://newswirengr.com/2019/10/31/the-untold-story-of-the-aepb-abujas-uniformed-rape-syndicate/> accessed 30/10/2019).

We can also make reference to other situations in Nigeria that exist and that in one way or the other, take their tolls on the life of the youths of the country for example the pressure from the family circle on the youth to make life-defining decision in which most times the youth is not ready make. The rise of suicide, addiction to drugs and pornography, the growing culture of cyberbully and internet begging on social media. These and many

others are the realities the youth face constantly. The Holy Father's general presentation of the present day situation of the youth also has the Nigerian youth in mind, the Church must take note of these realities that the society presents to the youth and be a mother as the Pope admonishes, let the youth have a place they can call a home in the church.

C. THE PERCEPTION OF THE NIGERIAN YOUTH ABOUT THE CHURCH.

One of the captivating features that the parishes and various catholic ecclesial communities share is the large presence of the young people. This is an important note to take to heart at the time of reflecting on the Holy Father's post synodal exhortation, the large presence of the young people in our parishes today in Nigeria, makes it an imperative to be directly implicated in the suggestions and questions raised by the Holy Father.

The Catholic Church in Nigeria has offered various outlets in which the young people can relate with other young people as themselves and also be attached to the ecclesial community as a whole and so it is right to make the affirmation that Church in Nigeria, recognizes the presence of the young people in her care and also creates avenues in which their lives can be tailored to be ambassadors of the Church. This is on one hand. On the other hand, the Church needs to ask herself if all that she has put in place to reach out to the young people is yielding the expected result, she needs to ask what conception and image do her young children have about her.

In order to understand the perception of the young people about the catholic church, I created an online survey (<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1DcuMgOxSporD9BqlKDTX8b1zpWWf1gvXBleWADBiv9c/edit#responses>) of 13 questions to which the catholic youth was expected to give his or her response. The survey was created on the 16/10/2019 and was closed on 23/10/2019. The survey was created with the intention of getting to practicing catholic youths to give their opinion about the Church. The aim of the online survey, is to help me not to make baseless inferences that are either too good or too bad, and so with the questions and the responses gathered, one can actually have a perception of what a youth feels about the Church.

In this exercise, a total of 107 responses were gathered and out of the 95 responses as to whether they were practicing Catholics, 96.8% of these, affirmed their active status as Catholics, and 6.3% were baptized as adults. From the different responses as to what the Church is for the youth, we can summarize it as “a Congregation of the People of God, the body of Jesus Christ, a dwelling place of the Holy Spirit where the gospel of salvation is proclaimed. A place of worship, and where God is encountered by his people”.

The positive aspects of the Church can be grouped in three major standpoints: First is the spiritual benefits like the celebration of the sacraments, the liturgy, the proclamation of the gospel of Christ and the importance of prayer in the life of the believer. Second is the aspect of communion and unity that is not reduced to tribe or class. And the third is the emphasis on the moral life of the believer and the message of committing oneself for the good cause

of others. The responses that came under the part of the negative aspects of the Church revolved around clericalism, the emphasis on money, the shallow knowledge of the welfare of parishioners and the attitudes of other members of the community that are contrary to the Christian values.

As to their perception of whether the Hierarchy listens to the youth, 52.8% of the responses believe that the hierarchy actually listens to the youth meanwhile 20.4% believe that the hierarchy does not listen to the youth. Also with regards to the Church's moral teaching especially in sexuality, 55.6% of the responses are of the opinion that her teachings are adequate for our time but also, that there is the need for the Church to throw more light on delicate issues like this so that parishioners capture the underlying reason(s) of these teachings.

From the survey, it is obvious that the majority of the youths have a sound perception of what the Church is and can capture its positive aspects, aspects that have caused them to relate more with God and with others. It is also important to note that there is a need for the Church to do more in responding to the questions they asking or that the world is asking them. On the other hand, attention is to be paid on the aspects which some of these youths have considered negative in the ecclesial community, let importance be given to the evangelical and pastoral tasks, the liturgy should not be a means to start up different fundraising topics that take precedence over the message of Jesus Christ. Clericalism was also mentioned, it is important to recognize that to be a leader in an ecclesial community is also a vocation to service to the same community and not avenue to exercise

dominion or to abuse the power of service for personal gains. These observations made in the survey demonstrate the desire of the young people that are “longing for an authentic Church in which her hierarchy is transparent, welcoming, honest, inviting, communicative, accessible, joyful and interactive. A church that is rooted in Jesus Christ, that proclaims the joy of the gospel with the guidance of the Holy Spirit, a Church that responds to the questions of the youth about faith sincerely without watering down the essence of the response” (Final Document from the pre-synodal meeting, 2018 n. 11).

D. CHRISTUS VIVIT: POPE FRANCIS TO THE NIGERIAN YOUNG PEOPLE AND TO THE NIGERIAN CHURCH

I intend to highlight several key messages that the Pope directed to the young people and to the Church, and more specifically to the young people and the church that is in Nigeria. This is aimed at driving home my perception that the Pope’s exhortation has a great deal role of to play in the functioning organigram of the Church in Nigeria and of her young people.

TO THE YOUTH

JESUS IS YOUR FRIEND: Through the pages of the exhortation, Pope Francis does not fail to emphasize the importance of establishing a relationship with God. This relationship finds its bloom in the person of Jesus Christ. The youth should be able to look towards the Son of God, the Incarnate Word in order to live out the deepest and fullest meaning of the youthful experience (CV 150). Living out the fullness and the deepest experience of youthfulness in Christ is the effect of the reality of He who lives forever.

The concept of friendship in Nigeria seems utopic and unrealizable for so many youths today, this is as a result of rough experiences of betrayal and mistrust that overshadows what was once a perfect union between individuals. Today, there is the hunger and desire to be in the company of friends, to be identified with others who can lend comfort, laughter and share experiences but the sad reality is that, for some, a friend is difficult to come by. The effect of social media makes it look like the problem of friendship has been resolved but in reality, there is still a long way to go. The socio-economic stratification which divides the rich from the poor makes a friendly environment stunted in growth or at worst never get stimulated in the first place and this found even in our parishes and ecclesial communities!!!

To have Jesus Christ as a friend is to realize that He has always been there for us to make us realize that he called himself a Friend (Jn. 15,15) and that is the bedrock upon which the Nigerian Youth can appreciate friendship and at same time be a better friend to all who are in the need of friendship. It is in our friendship with Jesus that we can recognize that God has loved us first (cf. 1 Jn 4,9) and that should mean that He has always been a friend to us from the beginning.

MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR YOUTHFUL YEARS: The Pope Francis made mention of ideologies and cultural attitudes perpetrated by those in power to rub the youth of their time but the response to these ideologies requires that the Youth become protagonists of their dreams and decisions, to take responsibility (CV 136-138). The same should apply to the Nigerian Youth,

especially in the era when fellow youth are shying away from responsibilities due to fear and uncertainty of what their dreams could turn out to be. The Nigerian Youth should never be afraid to be critical of his or her environment especially in this time when religious and cultural fundamentalism is on the rise. The Nigerian Youth must take heed to the Pope's admonishment of not approaching the world as a 'tourist' or "confusing happiness with an armchair" (CV 143). The best things in life are materialized when one refuses to be kept on the periphery.

ESTABLISH STRONGER BONDS WITH THE FAMILY: The growth that the Nigerian Youth is to make in his or her life has to also reflect in the family from where he or she comes from. The Nigerian Youth should learn to see in the family as an important dimension of his or her life. The Family grants the youth the avenue to develop and build on the adequate image and character to enable a better society, it is also the cradle of experiencing love and care, of learning core moral values. It is, although, not all perfect in many families from which the youths come from and so it is difficult to talk about values, love and identity that makes the society better in these cases.

The Youth should not only consider the family from the biological lens of consanguinity, but also from the spiritual standpoint of baptism, the eucharist and the sacraments. The Church too (that is the immediate ecclesial community) is also a family to the youth and for the youth. The sacraments, the creed and liturgical celebrations all make it evident for the youth to perceive that closeness with Triune God and with other members of the church.

DO NOT BE AFRAID TO TAKE DECISIONS: In order for the youth to make a right decision there is the need to ask oneself the question that seeks out what really matters like the young man in the gospel who asked Jesus Christ what he must do to attain eternal life (cf Mk. 10,17).

Benedict XVI in his letter to the young people in 2010 made it clear that that the young man of the gospel story can be seen in many of the young people of the world today. Among the worries, uncertainties, anxieties, etc., it is noted that young people today, look for something that is not ephemeral and that gives meaning to their lives. The Nigerian Youth should not be afraid to ask this type of questions, because they give voice to the great aspirations that one has in his or her heart (Letter on World Youth Day, 2010. 4). This is what our concerns as young people should be, the concern of the things that really are worth our time and that matter to our lives. Therefore, in order to make life-defining decisions, the Youth must try to ask the fundamental questions in honesty and not shy away from the responsibility that comes with the responses to these questions.

TO THE NIGERIAN CHURCH

I draw attention to what could possibly be the Holy Father's admonition to the Church, through her hierarchy. I think there are various focal points that could be pointed to, as one reads the Holy Father's post synodal exhortation but I think one makes case for all of them and that is the image of motherhood. Pope Francis asks the Church to be a Mother and assume maternal attitudes especially to the Young people. It is important to note that referring to the Church as a Mother is an image that is frequently

used by the Pope himself and so it is not a new feature for him to use it in his post synodal exhortation.

In his General audience of 11 September 2013, he centered his catechesis on the image of the Church as a Mother, and presents the reality of what makes a mother. The image of the Mother stems from the role of The Blessed Virgin Mary and the Church is invited to adopt this image, assume this maternal identity for which she has been known to be. The Church as a Mother implies that the Church be considered fruitful because she births new offspring through the sacraments of initiation. But not only at birth, she also helps her children to grow, teaches them, accompanies them as they grow. All these she does through the sacraments and the proclamation of the word of God (General Audience, The Church is our Mother, 2 http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/audiences/2013/documents/papa-francesco_20130911_udienza-generale.html).

The relationship between the youth and the Church in Nigeria, should reflect the Mother- child union. This is important because it will create the ambience of trust, confidence and security. This would help the Church, through her hierarchy to actually listen to what the Young people are saying, to perceive their grudges and difficulties and reach them at their points of need. The Church in Nigeria should also be a Mother that teaches since she is the pillar and ground truth and helps Men in every age to find, in her, their own completeness in a higher order of living and their ultimate salvation (cf. Mater et Magistra, 1).

The Church in Nigeria as a Mother should also be prophetic in her message, calling out on the ills of the society and not to be

anesthetized to be remain behind her pulpits. She should uphold and teach her children the evangelical values of the followership of Christ. She should teach her young ones and protect them from those inimical religious and political ideologies that are not of Jesus Christ.

The Church should see to responding to the deep concern of doctrinal uncertainties that hovers over her young children in order to strengthen their faith. Questions of doctrinal nature are seldomly asked by the youth, not that they do not have these questions, but for two major factors, they never get to ask these questions and seek clarification. First factor is that there is a barrier that makes it difficult to reach out to those who should respond adequately to their questions. And the second factor is that those (The Bishop, The Priest and the Deacon especially) who should respond to their questions are not readily available due to engagements or other reasons and this is actually what creates the barrier for the first. I have made mention of clericalism in the foregone as one of the negative aspects from the online survey, the Holy Father mentioned this too (CV 98). I am convinced that an attitude of clericalism in the hierarchy makes is it difficult for there to be a strong communication of trust between the youth and the Church and therefore it is almost impossible to ask questions.

Most Rev. John Oyejola, asserted that “the gifts of the youth can be very beneficial to the evangelization of the mission of the Church and the common good of humanity, if properly utilized” (<https://www.cbcn-ng.org/newsdetail.php?tab=917> accessed on 7/11/2019) This assertion takes into cognizance the importance

and role of the Youth in the mission of evangelization of the Church. Therefore, the need arises to sideline the youth in this evangelical task of spreading the message of Jesus Christ. The Church should take keen interest in letting the youth play a vital role in this missional dimension of the life of the church, allow them to bring suggestions and strategies as they are the future of the Church and the aqueduct and conduit through which the church can be made young as she passes through time.

E. Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, Pope Francis' post synodal exhortation *Christus Vivit* has its strength in that in it, the Nigerian context and situation of the young people in the Church can also be seen. The document tries to take into its reflection all that could make reference to Youth in the relationship with God, the church, the family and society and finally the Youth's personal life and this gives the document its weight in the discussion that should be alive in the Nigerian Church's message and in various youth organizations and groups in the Church and also its feature of being easily studied and reflected upon. I think it is good that Parishes, ecclesial communities and the youths in particular get in line with the recommendations of the Holy Father in this task.

The relationship between the Nigerian young people and the Church, is not a reality that is ever statically defined and this is because, Time and History are always on the dynamic wave and both the Church and the Young people are form part of this dynamic movement, therefore it is important to reiterate those essential features that should be found in the relationship between the Youth and the Church.

For this to happen, it is required to have a free-flowing channel of communication from the part of the Church to the young people and vice versa, so that these young people not only will they hear but also, will understand and internalize the message passed on to them and the reasons for the said message. The young people should not be afraid to present their suggestions and use their talents especially in the pastoral ambience of the Church when called upon. The Church should also create the environment of mutual growth that involves recognizing worthy achievements of the young people, fraternal criticism and unwavering spiritual support.

YOUTHS AND CONSECRATED LIFE

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Abstract

This paper discusses youths and consecrated life. The ideal and rudiments of religious life is being represented in the vows of chastity, poverty and obedience. By these three evangelical counsels, one offers all he has to God; his exterior goods by poverty, his body by chastity, and his soul by obedience. These vows are to be lived in the community with other member that shares the charism and spirituality of the same congregation. The particular concern is how today's youths are responding to this type of life in this age. The fact that society is gradually influencing consecrated life through the recruitment of children of this time may make it loose its meaning. It is then suggested that reviewing and reexamining the relevance of consecrated life in this

generation may be urgent instead of professing what is no achievable.

Key words: Youths, Consecrated life, Chastity, Poverty, Obedience, Community life.

Introduction

The attention of this paper is drawn to the way today's youths are responding to the consecrated life. Speaking about youths in general and especially about youths of the 21st century without taking into account how globalization has really influenced the religious life may be a mistake. The consecrated life is normally called the religious life. This is a vocation and by its meaning, is essentially a call. A call is a voice that attracts someone's attention and demands a response. A call can assume a dialogue between two persons. God initiates every process of vocation. Every vocation in life is purposeful. Some people are called to the marital life, while some opt for the ministerial priesthood and some are called to the consecrated religious life. The consecrated life in particular is a life set aside to be lived in total dedication to God alone. It is a unique form of life. It is a life that is lived by professing the three evangelical counsels or vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience.

On chastity, we are told from the Holy bible, Matt 19:11-12:- Some people are born as eunuchs, while some are made eunuchs by others, and some assume the position of eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and let anyone accept this who can. By common understanding, a eunuch is a person who cannot procreate and thus has no flare for marriage. The evangelical vow

of chastity makes one assume this position. By implication, no marriage and any related enjoyment to marriage is forbidden.

On poverty, the religious is attracted to the word of Jesus in Lk 18: 29 where he says "And I assure you that everyone who has given up house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the Kingdom of God will be repaid many times over in this life, and will have eternal life in the world to come." Therefore the vow of poverty is emptying oneself of these conveniences. Attachment of any form is not allowed and accumulation of material things is not allowed.

On obedience, the self-will is addressed in this matter. It is a renunciation of self will to accept the will of others for the sake of the kingdom of God. This finds its bases in the attitude of Jesus as express by St Paul in Phil (2: from verse 5) which says, "Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus. Who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped. Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness, and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross. The vow of obedience is therefore important in responding promptly to the commands of the lawful superiors.

The consecrated life has its values in the following: total self-giving, freedom from attachment and freedom from anxiety. Total self-giving is reflected in the vow of obedience is in imitation of Jesus who was always doing the will of his father. "Jesus says to them: My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, that I may

perfect his work.” Jn 4:34. Freedom from attachment is in the vow of poverty where members are encouraged to restrict themselves from worldly desires. “Jesus said to him: If you will be perfect, go sell what you have, and give to the poor and you shall have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me.” Mt 19:21. The vow of chastity is imploring members to be free from anxiety by staying fully in the service of God without any intimate relationship with anybody. “But I would have you to be without solicitude. He that is without a wife is solicitous for the things that belong to the Lord: how he may please God...” 1 Cor 7: 32-34. Now, these vows are simply interpreted in not being ambitious for power and positions, not longing for money and living within ones approved income, not interested in marriage and all the enjoyment that goes with it, all in the name of witnessing to Christ.

Each religious congregation has a unique way of contributing to the life of the church in their charism. This charism is lived daily by all members in the community life and in their distinct life style. Each congregation also has their spirituality which expresses in an exciting manner the spiritual beliefs accepted by the members of the congregation and is being passed on to posterity. Men and women are called freely to this life, of witnessing to the gospel of Christ, reflecting in their living together as a community. Consequently, the vows are lived in the community. “A Religious Community is to live in a lawfully constituted house, under the authority of a superior designated according to the norms of law. Each house is to have at least an oratory, in which the Eucharist is celebrated and reserved, so that it may truly be the center of the community.” (CCL 608).

Apart from this, the community life is a reflection of what the early Christians practiced in Acts 4:32 “And the multitude of

believers had but one heart and one soul. Neither did anyone say that aught of the things which he possessed was his own: but all things were common unto them." In the light of this, the church therefore admonishes consecrated people to own things in common by praying together, eating together, traveling together whenever they are going to the same place, supporting one another in times of good and bad, and simply put, being your brothers and sisters keeper. This will enable members to live out the accepted charism and spirituality in the church. Nevertheless, it is clear that we are witnessing a profound change of values that is eroding not only the moral but also the natural principles.

Youths and Consecrated Life

At the initial stage of consecrated life, especially during formation, sweet words like these are used to present to intending members the importance of the consecrated life that should be lived in a community. "Our vocations are nurtured in community", The vows are better lived in the community" or "Religious life is lived in community, "Community is our home" "Community is the place of encounter with God and with one another" "Formation of each one of us takes place in community" and "Community is built day by day by the contribution of each member", "Community gives meaning to our consecrated life" and many more. Aside this, the master or mistress of novices may give further explanation quoting the Bible: "Like the early Christians, we gather in community to witness to the love of Christ Act 2:44 and 4:32.

This means that community is an essential aspect of religious life. The model or ideal of consecrated life is being presented in the above statements and many interested members embrace it and

strive day in day out to be perfect as it is in the value of the consecrated life. It will be an understatement to say that the consecrated life is changing by day. The standards, ethics and principles are no longer lived out as in the past. Great silence no longer taken seriously, telephones and use of computers to watch movies has replaced community sharing. The older members are wondering and want to know where they have gone wrong, while the younger generations are asking why things are so tight or why do we have tight rules?

From the experience of being a vocations director for eight years and being fully involved in regular recruitments, it can be concluded that today's youths are not finding the consecrated life very interesting. Their assessment of men and women religious they meet before desiring the consecrated life does not truly represent what we present to them as the true meaning of devoted life. Their values and interest are far beyond the ideal. The vows are perceived as one of those things which may be compared to "A drifts towards bourgeois values and moral relativism" that Rodé (2008) presents as two great dangers that weaken religious life," They are anxious to profess the vows and have positions where they can enjoy their freedom and this most of the time work for them, especially when they are close to the authorities. Nobody is ready to do any work that is not prestigious. So how then can the poor be helped and the needy be adequately attended to? Some congregations even abandon their charisms in the name of making more money. Accumulation of goods is the other of the day as against the vow of poverty. Selected few go to the extent of developing social relationship with the opposite sex that has even

cost them to be expelled or leave the consecrated life voluntarily after taking the final vows.

Community life is so weak that members find comfort outside. The entire congregation is broken into factions where those who are not a circle member may not find a space to be happy. This is relevant to the view of 58 year old religious that was interviewed by (Gray 1995) 'if you didn't have friends in the group, who would you, comes "home" to? There should be a "home" where you can come home, where you feel good, your friends are going to there.' By inference, the consecrated life is changing daily. Rodé (2008) again lists a number of ways in which this change is visible among members of religious communities as: "Freedom without constraints, a weak sense of the family, a worldly spirit, low visibility of religious clothing, a devaluation of prayer, insufficient community life and a weak sense of obedience".

The arguments of some people in relation to how today's youths are living the vows is that religious superiors are not paying attention to the needs of members like before. They feel that members may abandon their religious commitment for worldly desires if authorities are only interested in playing their role partially. Taking lead from some of the experiences of members of the religious life, it may be important to think twice. Imagine a superior general making a public address to her members that if they are kidnapped, they should remain in the dens of kidnappers because there is no money and if they think the congregation should pay; members should give names of the person or persons that will be responsible for payment. She added that members

should sign a document to show that agreed to this and they refused to sign.

Another situation is a community superior addressing her members that she sold the community car to buy her project car, therefore, the community has no car but she has. Can you picture a situation where a community superior declared kitchen free for a week because there is no money? Or how can members be committed to a community that will not have anything in common apart from daily three square meals? The worse part of it is Congregations asking members to sponsor themselves and when they are working, they remit their income to the congregation. Where is justice when obedience is turning to politics? There are lots and lots of lists of uncoordinated leadership styles that brought about the issue of consecrated people in this age leaving outside the communities.

The expression of the experiences of a 59 year old religious as Gray (1995) presented it may be relevant here. 'I felt alone and it was extremely painful. Support came from another member of staff. She taught me about not taking the law seriously-she was a free kind of person and I was not.' Many people find the life no longer thrilling and they change as in this expression. This is not in the plans of religious institutes from the beginning according to the mind of the Church. "The institutes must supply the members with **everything** that, in accordance with the constitutions, is necessary to fulfil the purpose of their vocation" Can 670. In the interpretation of this it covers education, conferences, retreats, adequate housing, clothing, professional updating, counseling etc.

Consequently, Paredes (2005) opines that consecrated life must be lived in a family spirit where sincerity and openness abides. "In our community, no one should feel censured, prevented from expressing himself the way he is. The community grows when an atmosphere is created in which we able to communicate not only what we see, but also what we think and even what we feel". Listening to all these, the question is: can we relate the above with Mt 24:12? "And because iniquity has abounded, the love of many shall grow cold."

Conclusion

The total gift of oneself to God, when accepted and confirmed by the Church, is a true consecration of the person to God. In the description of Catholic Encyclopedia, "The religious life which is pointed out to us by the Evangelical counsels is a life of charity and of union with God, and the great means it employs to this end is freedom and detachment from everything that could in any manner prevent or impair that union." Which means it is a life of devotion, a total giving and commitment. Consecrated members are then encouraged to attach importance to it in the light of Mt 24: 13 "But he that shall persevere to the end, he shall be saved."

In conclusion, the reasons presented here may seem negative, and in a way they are. However, they must be understood in a positive light; there is no point in giving things up unless one is seeking something better. It is therefore pertinent to begin to think of how to review and make critical evaluation of the consecrated life to suit what the society is offering it in today's youths, instead of professing what is not practicable or attainable.

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YOUTHS AND CATECHESIS

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Abstract

The youthful age is a period of trial and error. It is a phase of endless exploration, experimentation and enquiries. While some are being driven to Pentecostalism by the wave of the time, due to old method of teaching the faith; the Church must not relent in repeating the fact that the Catholic faith must be valued. On this, the catechetical model of Osogbo Diocese has been presented elaborately which to a large extent is meeting with the needs of today's youths in communicating the faith in its simplest form. At the end, it was suggested that other Dioceses should adopt these methods to keep the youths in the Catholic Church forever.

Key words: Youths, Catechesis, Church, Directorate of Religious Education, Osogbo Diocese.

Introduction

Catechesis is fundamentally linked with the evangelizing mission of the Church. It is an ongoing formation in the faith. Hence, dedicated lay faithful both men and women, who will devote themselves to handling on the faith are called to participate in it. Therefore they carry out the injunctions of Jesus Christ mandate in Mathew 28:16-20, Mk 3:13-14 to "Go make disciples of all Nations." For the purpose of this command, we need to place our time, our gifts and our talents at the service of the Christian community. Catechetics is "the act of teaching" and "the knowledge imparted by teaching", this term is synonymous with CATECHESIS and CATECHISM. This was often used in the New Testament, especially in the Pastoral Epistles. As we might expect, the Apostle insists upon "doctrine" as one of the most important duties of a bishop (I Tim., iv, 13, 16; v, 17; II Tim., iv, 2, etc.). The word catechesis means instruction by word of mouth, especially by questioning and answering. Though it may apply to any subject-matter, it is commonly used for instruction in the elements of religion, especially preparation for initiation into Christianity. Vatican II, document of the Church teaches that "Catechesis is an education of children, young people and adults in the faith, which includes especially the teaching of Christian doctrine imparted, generally speaking, in an organic and systematic way, with a view of initiating the hearers to the fullness of Christian life." CT 18.

This passing on the faith is done through various methods since there no formal or official school for it. It is thus done by organizing a giving time suitable to those to be catechized and their teacher to come together for instruction. The method for catechizing varies. It may be through the recitation of the letter of

the catechism, with an easy explanation of it by way of question and answer, the instruction; using examples and stories, the reading of the Gospel and the homily, admonitions, hymns and prayers. However, the first method is more traditional that is, recitation of the letter of the catechism, with an easy explanation of it by way of question and answer, which the Catholic Encyclopedia sustains. "When speaking of the history of catechetics we saw that, though the method was originally and properly oral, the custom soon arose of composing catechisms – i.e. short manuals of elementary religious instruction, usually by means of questions and answers." These methodologies especially the common and traditional method seems to be inadequate to today's youths. Consequently, new methods are being devised to meet the needs of the youth of the Church today.

YOUTHS AND CATECHESIS

Catholic youths down the history have been complaining of lack basic knowledge of the Catholic faith. This makes them move away to Pentecostal churches. At one of our interactive sessions with them, they categorically reported from their group gatherings that both the Church and their parents are guilty of their lack of commitment to the Catholic faith. Although in the mind of Ezech (2006) youths enter Pentecostalism as intention to seek a deeper awareness of God and fuller prayer life. Also, that Pentecostalism offers them warmth, care, and support in small and close-knit communities. She went further to say that "Pentecostalism has given encouragement to the empowered youth-they become deacons, evangelists, priests, and bishops." Hence, they prefer Pentecostalism to Catholicism. This appears to be another approach to the subject matter but by and large, they

leave the Catholic Church for poor catechesis and in search of better understanding of God. Whatever they are being offered afterwards should be considered secondary. Although Gouger (2013) warned that "We can't wait here and wonder where everybody is and why they're not coming to us, we need to go to where they are." Going to where they are in this statement may not necessary mean going to look for them at Pentecostal Churches but to device better and attractive means of keeping them enthusiastically in the Catholic Church. Akubeze (2018) alludes to this. "Catechesis seeks to aid the faithful to be active in living out their faith. Catechesis achieves this goal through the Christian life and doctrinal instruction."

There may be more challenges than parenting. The procedure of catechizing in the Church needs to be looked into. Some of the teachers of faith may not be lettered or the old methodology may not suit the present age. Although, Oyejola (2018) is of the opinion that "the old methods are good but already converted committed Catholic members need ongoing evangelization to keep them rooted in the household of faith and also to turn them to evangelizers." He then proposes additional methods of catechizing Catholic members as, evangelization in the family setting, parish evangelization to involve all groups differently like: Teenagers -School children, widowed, Young adults (18-25years of age), single parent families, young married couples (25-40 years of age), divorced/separated, elderly married couples (65 and above), sick/homebound elderly ones, single, young to middle-age, newcomers, single, elderly widows/widowers, unemployed. He added that, to reach out to others, our laity must be well grounded in the doctrines of the Catholic Church. They

must know what we believe and why we hold such beliefs. It is when they have sufficient knowledge of the teachings of the Holy mother Church that they can enlighten others about it.

Adesina (2019) identified the following as part of the problems of catechesis at least in Nigeria. To him, a great percentage of those who teach catechesis are not adequately trained; some are just doing it as an act of piety, participation of priests is low in most of the dioceses and almost non-existent in some, logistic of attendance may not be proper, catechesis is predominantly directed towards the reception of the sacraments, except in very few dioceses, insufficient materials for catechism, language barrier – on the part of minorities and in terms of materials in the local language and scriptural basis is minimal or non-existent in the ‘adopted’ syllabus of most parishes. Probably, this may be affecting 80% of the Dioceses in Nigeria. In the real sense of the matter, catechesis supposed to be an on-going program for church members and should be seen beyond preparation for the reception of the sacraments. Keeping in mind that one may study the catholic for a life time. Therefore, catechetical programs must be steady and systematic. In the view of Akubeze (2018), “Catechesis is broader than preparing candidates for Baptism, Confirmation, and First Holy Communion. Catechesis embraces the entire Christian life. Catechetical programs for families, youths, single persons, physically challenged, religious, priests, and bishops. Since Catechesis embraces the entire life of the faithful, there must be the first recognition that Catechesis is very important in the life of the Church. It is at the heart of the mission of the Church. Doctrinal instruction is part of Catechesis. This is the aspect that deals with establishing Catechetical program for

those preparing for the sacraments and helping those in the Church to grow in their understanding of the faith.”

Reflecting more on how to make today’s youths further committed and interested in the mission of the Church, the local ordinary of Osogbo Diocese- Most Rev John Akinkunmi Oyejola through the Directorate of Religious Education has device more active means of getting the Youths of the Catholic Church stay in the Church forever, especially in Osogbo Diocese. This approach is functional Catechetical programs that adequately respond to the Pastoral needs of the Diocese. These programs are, deepening the Faith, supported with various other publications like: Youth bulletin, children bulletin and Lenten reflections. This major catechetical program named deepening the faith which started in January 2018 can be viewed as post initiation catechesis. It has its format in production of a quarterly manual that carries a doctrinal topic per month, for example, Christian virtues, life after death or tithing and offering. Each topic is broken into sub topics for discussion on every Sunday of the same month. This manual is being produced by the Directorate of Religious Education Department after which the trained instructors coordinate the discussions with the parishioners one hour before or after Mass every Sunday in every church in the Diocese. It is step by step in structure. Facilitator introduces the theme for the week in step one. In Step two, specific Biblical passages are read. While member share their experiences in relation to the readings heard in step three. In case sharing is boring, there are questions from the manual that will guide the discussions for the day. In step four however, the instructor will encourage the audience in relation to the topic as documented in the manual. Step five is questions and

answers where any of the participants are allowed to answer. At the end of this a particular task is agreed upon which takes step six. After which there will be evaluation and concluding prayer as steps seven and eight. The methodology for this catechetical program is highly related to what Monye (2019) proposed "Adult faith formation should be offered in such a manner that the content relates to the life experiences of parishioners. To be effective, adult faith formation cannot just be classroom type lectures. No! Rather, it requires a comprehensive, multifaceted, and coordinated approach and various learning activities, which include: Participation in Liturgical experiences, Scripture reading, and study, Retreat, Prayer, Family or home-Centered activities, drama etc"

Igbekele 2019 named this program "Osogbo Model" and presents the following as the positives of this model "The Osogbo model is a veritable Sunday school because every Catholic believes that the Mass is the highest encounter and they may not come back in the evening for another program. The Osogbo model is therefore an advanced Sunday school program ...the Osogbo post-baptismal liturgical-catechetical model has the following:It is participatory. It makes use of and employs the services of many members of the people of God, thereby giving room for many members of the Church to participate, make contributions and ask questions for clarifications. All segments of the people of God are involved: bishop, priests, religious, and laity. The main drivers are the DRE, lay people and religious, especially professional teachers among the laity and religious. It has the support of the highest authority within the diocese and is well funded for it to achieve the objectives set for it." In his opinion, all Dioceses must use this model.

The questions generated during this program are collated for catechetical bulletin. It is broken into questions and answers form so that today's youths can read within thirty minutes and gain something. The responses of the youths of this Diocese have been so positive to the Program (deepening the faith) and to reading catechetical publications. Meanwhile, the local ordinary kept re-emphasizing the importance of it. They are allowed to make contributions, raise further questions and even interact with the catechetical commission members, through email for immediate answers to their questions. Seedling the faith program for children has the same layout but pay more attention to children where the Sunday liturgy is being presented in story and drama forms. It is done in parallel with the deepening the faith program. There is provision for children bulletin that responds to their catechetical needs as well.

This new method of catechizing the youths and the entire church members can has a lot of impact today. It is equally far better than leaving them to discover information by themselves or being led astray Pentecostal counterparts. This will help them to enjoy better catechesis that meet the need of this age and reduce their lack of interest in religious matters as Pilla (2018) observes "Many are detached from religious concerns and they often acknowledge that they have not been informed or educated in that respect. It could also be as a result of an education, schooling and sometimes a catechesis that does not adequately form their intelligence."

In emphasizing further on the methodology for catechizing the youths, Gouger (2013) suggests that proactive approach should be

used "...because fewer people are returning to the faith today than in years past. To counter that loss, Catholics have to meet their lapsed brothers and sisters wherever they can, reaching out through new technology such as social media, peer-to-peer invitations in programs such as the Fellowship of Catholic University Students and Theology on Tap, or simply knocking on doors."

Conclusion

Today's youths must be giving a helping hand to develop authentic relationship with God, and to become authentic witness for him. Youth Chaplains should be carefully appointed, trained and interested. Finally, attention should be paid to formation of youths, through regular catechesis, production of relevant publications and other relevant facilities. Also, religious education teachers should be well read and on-going formation must be made compulsory. A recommended year must be fulfilled by all candidates preparing for the sacraments-two years preferably. The small Christian communities must be strengthened. Above all, financial commitment and interest of the local ordinary will make it bear much fruits.

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NIGERIAN YOUTHS AND ALCOHOLISM

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Introduction

Alcoholism is a chronically relapsing disorder that has been characterized by the compulsive use of addictive substance despite adverse consequences to the individual and to the society (Koob, G. and Volkow, N., 2009). Many anti-social behaviours such as accidents, kidnappings, robbery, getting into fights leading to the destruction of life and property, especially during elections, capable of scuttling the dreams and aspirations of our youth today are associated with alcohol. This sociological problem is sometimes fuelled by, among other things, the vacuum created by the lack of focused leadership with its resultant effect on the army of unemployed youth who end up indulging in alcohol, the drug of their choice, as an escape route from reality (Pala, O., 1986). We shall try to understand what this phenomenon entails and highlight the possible causes and damaging effects on the Psychology, Sociology and physiology of individuals and the nation as a whole.

Alcohol And Alcoholism Among Youths

Alcohol is a drug found in all drinks designated as alcoholic, namely, beer, wine, spirits such as brands of vodka, Schnapps, Rum, whiskey, etc. Alcohol is a depressant drug. It slows down various sections of the brain and the central nervous system. This affects one's ability to control one's behaviour and one's bodily

functions, such as thinking, talking, walking and even breathing. Alcohol is also described as a psychoactive drug. This refers to drugs that affect the mind, or mental processes. While some drinks have more alcoholic content than others, the type of alcohol in all alcoholic drinks is the same – a type of alcohol called ethanol. Alcohol is a colourless, odourless and inflammable fluid. Alcohol is one of the most highly abused substances worldwide (Ali, et al 2011).

Alcoholism is the most serious form of abusive drinking and describes a strong, often uncontrollable, desire to drink. Sufferers of alcoholism will often place drinking above all other obligations, including work and family, and may build up a physical tolerance to it and experience withdrawal symptoms if they stop.

Our youths are our future and hope for tomorrow; they are the new face of Nigeria and they are our hope for a better tomorrow. They will become the leaders of tomorrow. One needs to pause and wonder what our Nigerian future might be in the face of the present situation of the increased youth addictions according to research and experience on a day to day base. It is very important to note that a healthy nation is a wealthy nation. It is also common belief that only the healthy can tend to the needs of others. According to the former Director General, National Drug Law Enforcement Agency, Mr Otunba Ipinmisho, about 40 per cent (40%) of our youths are on substance abuse. The percentage mentioned above is very disturbing and should be a matter of urgent concern for us, putting us all on a red alert on how best to halt, manage and prevent this crisis. The implications and effects of this to both individuals and to the nation cannot be

overemphasised. How could stability and growth of any kind such as economic, social, academic, etc. be expected in a sick nation? Each well-willing citizen should answer this question for himself/herself and sincerely look for solutions and a way forward.

The abuse of alcohol and alcoholism cause significant number of severe and fatal-health, social and economic problems in Nigeria. Alcoholism among youths can be very detrimental to not only to the abuser, but as well the immediate family members, friends, colleagues, and others who could in turn become victims of the abuser. The major victims of this physical violence which results from alcohol abuse or addictions include girlfriends, siblings, spouses and parents amongst others. This could be through fighting, nagging, apportioning blames, stealing, break down in families, carelessness, lack of coordination, loss of jobs, physical and sexual abuses and so on. Apart from affecting friends, siblings, spouses and parents, it seriously affects the entire nation because she begins to lose her citizens to alcoholism.

When our youths constantly abuse alcohol every day, they waste their future and the future of Nigeria. Unfortunately, not much of this epidemic is reported in the media or emphasised upon by opinion leaders who appear more concerned about enriching themselves through any means including politics. Yet the dangers of alcohol abuse of all sorts confront us every day on the roads, at the workplaces, schools, and at our homes among others. It is a thing to worry about.

Factors Encouraging Youth Involvement In Alcoholism In Nigeria

Keep in mind that alcoholism is a disease that does not discriminate and can impact on anyone – regardless of age, gender, ethnicity, body type or personal beliefs. Many studies have recently focused on the causes of alcoholism. Alcoholism is therefore influenced by a variety of factors such as psychological factors, personal choice factors, age factors, religious factors, educational factors, career factors, personality factors, social and cultural factors, environmental factors and family factors (Saheed, U., 2019). Alcohol manufacturers are also bombarding the general public with advertisements, many of which could be misleading, presenting drinking as an acceptable, fun and relaxing pastime. For these reasons and many more, youths believe that alcohol consumption can be used for fun during social gatherings which includes matriculations, convocations, parties, initiation into clubs, etc. There is also the peer factor influence which includes peer relations and pressures such as competitive drinking, betting, gangs, etc. Genetic and societal factors are also vital aspects because the kind of home and environment wherein one is raised contributes and somehow determines what they become for example, there is a greater probability that one raised by alcoholic parents/guardian will tend to become one in the future if there is no resilience or intervention. Unemployment is a major factor that contributes to alcoholism (Ojo, L., 2018). Jobless youths tend to while away their time by drinking and getting high in order to forget their plights and frustrations.

Effects Of Alcohol Psychological effects: There are two major psychological effects of alcoholism which are grouped into short- or long-term. It can be tricky to spot the signs of alcoholism as alcoholics can be secretive about it and can become defensive

when confronted. Some of these psychological effects includes difficulty focusing, reduced inhibitions, problems with memory, increased depression and anxiety, interrupted brain development, tolerance development and increased substance use, dependency (alcoholism), mood swings, change in sleep pattern, cognitive inhibition and so many others (Odejide, A et al, 1989). These could have lasting negative effect on the individuals.

Sociological effects: Alcohol consumption can have adverse social and economic effects on the individual drinker, the drinker's immediate environment and society as a whole. Indeed, individuals other than the drinker can be affected, for example, traffic accidents could be occasioned by driving under the influence of alcohol or violence due to reduced inhibition. Reduced inhibition due to alcoholism could lead to high risk sexual behaviour which could result in unwanted pregnancy and transmission of infectious diseases such as STDs, etc. alcoholism has a great impact on the society as well, in terms of resources required for health care and other social institutions. It also affects work performance in several ways such as frequent absences, work accidents, reduced productivity and unemployment. Alcohol abuse or alcoholism can impact on families by impairing a person's performance as a parent which can have lasting effect on their spouse and children. This can lead to breakdown in marital relationships and family life, accidents, poverty and violence (Ali, et al 2011). We cannot forget the fact that all these place an economic and financial burden on the nation.

Physiological effects: According to medical experts and researchers, alcohol has been known and identified to cause

adverse/serious damages to our body systems especially when consumed in excess. Alcohol's impact on the body starts from the moment the first sip is taken (Pietrangelo, A. and Holland, K., 2017). Below is a table illustrating the many parts of our body that can be affected by constantly consuming alcohol.

Table 1. some effects of excessive alcohol to the body system.

EFFECTS	EXPANSION
Brain shrinking	Long-term exposure to alcohol shrinks the frontal lobes of the brain
Blackouts	Alcohol interferes with how the brain makes memories
Dependence	When one becomes physically dependent on alcohol, it starts to affect one's ability to perform well
Behavioural changes	It can leave one without the mental clarity to make smart decisions
Hallucinations	There can be a serious effect such as hallucination
Slurred speech	This is one of the first symptoms of excessive alcohol consumption
Heart damage	Chronic heavy drinking is one of the leading causes of cardiovascular disease
Liver damage	This can damage the liver and prevent it from properly removing harmful substances from the body
Lung infection	Heavy drinkers have a hard time

	fighting off bacteria and virus, exposing them to TB and pneumonia
Cancer	Chronic drinkers are more likely to develop throat, mouth, oesophagus and breast cancers
Infertility	Drinking excess amounts of alcohol over a period of time may cause infertility
Sexual dysfunction	Men who have alcohol use disorder are more likely to experience erectile dysfunction
Birth defects	A pregnant woman's heavy drinking can increase a baby's risk for several conditions.
Diabetes complications	Excessive alcohol consumption prevents one's organs from properly balancing one's blood sugar levels

The list is endless as alcohol does much more than what we can see in the table above. There are other conditions such as stomach distress, malnutrition, muscle cramps, changes in coordination, fatigue, numbness, thinning bones, frequent diarrhoea, pancreatitis etc. It is just obvious and common sense that alcohol abuse is sickness and detrimental to the person, group or nation. It causes more harm than any good. It literally affects all parts of our bodies as individuals, groups or nation.

Recommendations And Conclusion

Alcoholism in general, but much specifically among our youths, is, no doubt, a socio-economic problem that requires prompt and constant attention because among other things, the future, health and strength of our nation depend on these young people. Now is the right time for everyone with or without interest in human dignity to articulate and advocate an alcohol education programme. Education in this regard means the intentional investment of time and resources by all especially those involved in decision making to teaching and counselling on alcohol, its use and abuse.

I strongly advocate that this training should be integrated into school curriculum and take multidisciplinary approach. Also, very importantly, young and middle-aged parents of youths from all homes should be involved in this education process. I recommend that awareness should be created in schools, churches, work places and all public and private sectors with the sole aim of constantly emphasizing the dangers and effects of alcohol abuse. I also strongly recommend the use of the media with its influence as popular platform of information for the young to create wider awareness. Any country that intends to reduce substance abuse and alcoholism among its youth should dedicate resources to project consistent on messages on the dangers of alcohol use to their youth through the media. All over the world, parents, teachers, religious leaders, and others are struggling to deal with the volume of misleading messages and negative influences that young people are exposed to through the media, especially when it comes to alcohol use. Anti-Alcohol Media

Campaigns are effective ways to push back against these negative messages and “unsell” the idea of alcohol use to young people.

The misuse of alcohol is dangerous to health. Alcohol consumption can cause or have adverse social and economic effect on the individual consumer, its immediate environment and the society as a whole. Let us therefore save ourselves, our environment and the whole society by avoiding the misuse of alcohol.

Save the young people, save our future: say ‘NO’ to alcohol abuse.

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NIGERIAN YOUTHS AND DRUG ABUSE

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Introduction

Genesis account of creation has it that God, after creating man blessed them, saying; increase and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it...and God saw all the things that He made, and they were very good (cf Gen. 1;28, 31). However, this goodness of God's creation was distorted on account of the sin of Adam and Eve when God stated "...cursed is the earth in thy work; with labour and toil shall thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shall eat the herbs of the earth (Gen 3:17ff). Hence paradise was lost to man and that state of goodness that was meant to pervade man was no longer to be. Rather than that state of goodness what we experience in life is, man changes and relapses as a result of sickness, mistakes and mood swing that characterizes man's life. The sickness, mistakes and mood swing could be understood as the thorns and thistles that result from man's toils and the herbs come to the rescue of man as he eats them. This condition dis-equilibrates man and because of God's grace to man of mastering and subduing the earth, man has, in the use and synthesis of the elements of nature discovered drugs which restores equilibrium in his life when sickness misbalances him. So Paradise is not totally lost. Man is still capable, through human intelligence, with the grace of God recreate the face of the earth.

What is drug abuse?

Drug has been defined according to Merriam Webster dictionary as a substance used as medication or in the preparation of medication. It is a substance intended for use in the diagnosis, cure, mitigation, treatment, or prevention of disease. It is also understood as a substance other than food intended to affect the structure or function of the body. Okoye (2001) as cited by Fareo (2012) defines drug as a substance that could bring about a change in the biological function through its chemical actions. Fawa (2003) defines drug as a substance which is used in the treatment or prevention of disease in man or animal. It alters the body function either positively or otherwise depending on the body composition of the consumer, the type of drug used, the amount used and weather used singly or with other drugs at the same time. Thus understood, drug is meant to alter the body system with the view of restoring bodily equilibrium. Drug in itself therefore does not constitute any danger because when drug is correctly administered is a blessing in restoring normalcy to man's health. Drugs could be identified in its natural form as in herbs, leaves and plants or in its synthetic form as manufactured substance that brings relief to health.

On the flip side drug abuse comes in the misapplication of drugs or deliberate use of drugs to elicit certain feelings and sensation that usher in a plethora of effects and consequences. Fareo (2012) has stated various definitions of drug abuse thus; NAFDAC (2000) as cited by Haladu (2003) explained the term drug abuse as excessive and persistent self-administration of a drug without regard to the medically or culturally accepted patterns. It could also be viewed as the use of a drug to the extent that it interferes

with the health and social function of an individual. World Book Encyclopedia (2004) defined drug abuse as the non-medical use of a drug that interferes with a healthy and productive life. Manbe (2008) defined drug abuse as the excessive, maladaptive or addictive use of drugs for non-medical purpose. Abdulahi (2009) viewed drug abuse as the use of drugs to the extent that interferes with the health and social function of an individual. Summarily the author states that; In essence, drug abuse may be defined as the arbitrary overdependence or mis-use of one particular drug with or without a prior medical diagnosis from qualified health practitioners. It can also be viewed as the unlawful overdose in the use of drug(s). There is no best accepted definition of drug abuse rather all the definitions serve their various intentions.

However, Mukhtar (2013) stresses a note of importance that substance and drug abuse are used interchangeably. Substance can be conceptualized from one of the following perspectives; legal, social, medical or pharmacology respectively. In law a drug or a substance is referred to as a chemical substance whose possession is against the law of the land. In sociology drugs are collectively defined as substances prescribed by the medical profession which includes other drugs, the production and use of are sanctioned by custom or law. In pharmacology, a drug is any substance, other than food, that by its chemical and physical nature alter structure and function of any living organism. What is clear from the various definitions of drug abuse and the concepts of drug and substance is that drug abuse or substance abuse does great harm to the psyche and functionality of the user and consequently the effects go beyond users, spiraling over into larger society, imposing social and economic consequences.

Types of drug abuse

There are various types or classifications of drug or substance abuse;

- i) There are drugs of plant origin like Datura Stramonium (Thorn apple), tobacco, opium, morphine, cannabis, heroin, cocaine etc. These kinds of drugs have abusive constituents and when taken can produce hallucination effect.
- ii) Breweries: Brewery products like alcohol, wine etc have their abusive constituents.
- iii) Prescription drugs: These kinds of drug are meant for the treatment of diseases but when taken overdose could cause delirium. Here you find Benyline with codeine, tramadol, morphine etc.
- iv) Sedative Hypnotics: These kinds of drugs, though prescription drugs for mental disorders, but others especially youths abuse it for euphoria or suppression of low esteem feelings. Under these categories of drugs we have valium for sedation for psychiatric patients and insomnias under prescription.
- v) Schedule II substances of abuse: This category of drugs or substances has high potential of abuse with use potentially leading to server psychological or physical dependence. These drugs are also considered dangerous. They include cocaine, metamphetamine, methadone, hydromorphone (dilaudid), meparidine (demerole), oxycodone (oxycotin), fentanyl, Dexedrine, adderall, ritalin etc
- vi) There are other drugs like heroin, marijuana and other unconventional substances people have initiated like lizard dung, plantain leaves, pit latrine inhalation, smoking burnt

old newspapers etc. These are consumed to produce hallucination effects in the user.

In Nigeria, the National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC, 2000) outlined categories of drugs that are commonly abused as cited by Haladu (2003);

1. **Stimulants:** These are substances that directly act and stimulate the central nervous system.
Users at the initial stage experience pleasant effects such as energy increase. The major source of these comes from caffeine substance.
2. **Hallucinogens':** These are drugs that alter the sensory processing unit in the brain. Thus, producing distorted perception, feeling of anxiety and euphoria, sadness and inner joy, they normally come from marijuana, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD) etc.
3. **Narcotics:** These drugs relieve pains, induce sleeping and they are addictive. They are found in heroin, codeine, opium etc.
4. **Sedatives:** These drugs are among the most widely used and abused. This is largely due to the belief that they relieve stress and anxiety, and some of them induce sleep, ease tension, cause relaxation or help users to forget their problems. They are sourced from valium, alcohol, promotazine, chloroform.
5. **Tranquilizers:** They are believed to produce calmness without bringing drowsiness; they are chiefly derived from librium, valium etc.
6. **Miscellaneous:** This is a group of volatile solvents or inhalants that provide euphoria, emotional dis-inhibition and perpetual

distortion of thought to the user. The main sources are glues, spot removers, tube repair, perfumes, chemicals etc.

In summary it could be adduced that types of drugs abused could be divided into three categories, namely; drugs that are either produced or processed from natural plant products, synthetically produced drugs and psychoactive pharmaceutical drugs that are abused as a result of being diverted from being licit use. A corollary inclusion is the miscellaneous substance inhalation that is unusually euphoric.

Theories of drug abuse

Many theories have been put forward to explain the abuse of drugs in the society. The US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA, 1980) has outlined a person-centric perspective of drug abuse, thus classifying these theories into four as; theories on one's relationship to self, theories on one's relationship to others, theories on one's relationship to society and theories on one's relationship to nature. On the other hand Eze and Omeje (1999) as cited by Fareo (2012) summarized the reasons why people abuse drugs with the following theories; personality theories of drug abuse, learning theory of drug abuse, biological theory of drug abuse and socio-cultural theories of drug abuse. These two perspectives of understanding drug abuse explain one and the same objective which is analyzing the motivation and reaction of man faced with abuse of drugs. However, in this work we will briefly describe Eze and Omeje (1999) view of drug abuse.

(a) Personality Theories of Drug Abuse: the main emphases of the personality theories are that there are certain traits or characteristics in the individuals that abuse drugs. Such

personality characteristics are inability to delay gratification, low tolerance of frustration, poor impulse control, high emotional dependence on other people, poor coping ability and low self esteem. Individuals with these personality characteristics find it difficult to abstain from drug abuse.

- (b) Learning Theory of Drug Abuse: This theory maintains that dependence or abuse of drugs occurs as a result of learning. The learning could be by means of conditioning, instrumental learning or social learning.
- (c) Biological Theory of Drug Abuse: The theory maintains that drug abuse is determined by the individuals' biological or genetic factors which make them vulnerable to drug addiction. Horvath, Misra, Epner, and Cooper (2019) argue that advancements in neurobiological research have changed the way we view addiction. Addiction is no longer limited to problematic substance use. We now know that certain activities can also be addictive (smoking, gambling etc). This is because addiction is a problem of brain functioning. We become addicted to the chemicals our brain releases, not the substance or activity that causes this release. Our genetics greatly determine our brain functioning.
- (d) Socio-cultural Theories of Drug Dependence/Abuse: These theories maintain that abuse is determined by socio-cultural values of the people. For instance, while certain cultures permit the consumption of alcohol and marijuana, other cultures do not. Among the Urhobo, Ijaw, Ibibio, Edo, Igbo, Yoruba and Itsekiri, alcohol, like Oogoro is used in cultural activities. In Northern Nigeria, alcohol is forbidden due to Sharia law.

The acquisition of any form of drug abuse depends on personal inclinations and environmental factors.

Causes of drug abuse

There are several causes of drug or substance abuse. These causes range from personality issues, family issues, genetic factors, environmental influences, socioeconomic factors, peer group influences, desire for excitement and experimentation, to escape or mask pain etc. In these entire cases one common factor that causes drug abuse is the belief that using the drug will make something better for the user.

- i. Personality problems arising as a result of socio-economic conditions:** Predominantly, youths having personality problems associated with socio-economic condition have been found to adopt abuse of drugs as an easy way out of the harsh reality of their life. With the prevailing poverty level in Nigeria (where about 86.9 million Nigerians are living under extreme poverty as at June 2018, thus qualifying Nigeria as the poverty capital of the world) and high unemployment rate of about 23.10 per cent in the third quarter of 2018, drug abuse becomes escape route for temporary relief. Therefore as our youths roam the streets looking for employment or resort to begging, frustration builds up and their susceptibility to drug or substance abuse grows. These situations have been aggravated by lack of skills to engage in other enterprises in the absence of paid jobs.
- ii. Curiosity of the youth:** There is an experimental curiosity-feeling that drives youths into wanting to have a taste of what

is regarded as taboo. The curiosity to experiment the unknown facts about drugs thus motivates adolescents into drug use. From this experimentation it turns into drug abuse due to youthful exuberance or other socioeconomic factors or environmental influences.

iii Peer group influence: Adolescents are always influenced by peer group influence. The reason behind this is that as adolescents are at the threshold of taking decisions for themselves and abandoning parental control they need another significant figure to look up to. As they try to depend less on parents, they show more dependency on their friends. In a situation where the experimental curiosity of the youth tends towards drug abuse the youth who finds himself/herself in such a group is most likely to compromise. In Nigeria, as other parts of the world, one may not enjoy the company of others unless he conforms to their norms. Peer group pressure plays a major role in influencing many adolescents into drug abuse. This is because peer group pressure is a fact of teenage and youth life.

iv. The drive to perform or work long hours: Most artists and celebrities are known to rely on some form of drug use to help them in their stage performances and these celebrities are idols of the youths, so the tendency to follow the life style of these celebrities lures some adolescents into drug abuse. On the other hand Fareo (2012) identify the downward turn of the economy as a contributing factor to drug abuse especially among adolescents as; the increasing economic deterioration that leads to poverty and disempowerment of the people has driven many parents to send their children out in search of

means of earning something for contribution to family income. These children engage in hawking, bus conducting, head loading, scavenging, serving in food canteens etc and these make them prone to drug consumption so as to gain more energy to work for long hours.

- v. **Mental and emotional problems:** There are cases of mental and emotional misbalance that lead to mood swing like bipolar disorder, borderline personality disorder and conduct disorder. Bipolar disorder is a mental illness marked by extreme shifts in mood. Symptoms can include an extremely elevated mood called mania. They can also include episodes of depression. Bipolar disorder is also known as bipolar disease or manic depression. People with bipolar disorder may have trouble managing everyday life tasks at school or work, or maintaining relationships.

Borderline personality disorder (BPD) is a mental illness that develops during adolescence or early adulthood. It's marked by a pattern of emotional instability, impulsive behavior, distorted self-image, and unstable relationships.

Conduct disorder is a group of behavioral and emotional problems that usually begins during childhood or adolescence. Children and adolescents with the disorder have a difficult time following rules and behaving in a socially acceptable way. They may display aggressive, destructive, and deceitful behaviors that can violate the rights of others. Adults and other children may perceive them as "bad" or delinquent, rather than as having a mental illness. If a child has conduct disorder, he/she may appear

tough and confident. In reality, however, children who have conduct disorder are often insecure and inaccurately believe that people are being aggressive or threatening toward them.

Effects of drug abuse

Given the lucrative nature of drug business especially illicit drugs that are abused, there is heightened interest on the part of stakeholders in the production, control and destruction of such drugs that are subject to abuse. The critical issue in the abuse of drugs is perhaps the effects and consequences of such abuse of drugs have on the user and others. There is a wide range of effects that drug or substance abuse could cause in a person and environment. These effects are multi-faceted hinging on health, economic and social.

There are physiological effects of abuse of stimulants such as amphetamines, which causes the nervous system to become more active, that a person feels more energy and mental excitement, which can lead to sleep delay and heightened mood which causes nervousness and anxiety in the user. Depressants, by contrast, impair mental and physical functions and slow neural activity in the brain. Narcotics such as opium or heroin can make the body build a tolerance level and adjust to it. Over time the body will require higher doses to maintain the same effect. When an abuser stops taking the drug the body experiences withdrawal symptoms such as feeling weak or sick.

The social effects of drug abuse impinge on the family. Drug abuse has been factored in divorces, violence in marriages and other related problems. The social effects include harms or

adverse effects to the user and others. As part of the survey in drug use carried out by United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) key informants were inter-viewed in the community and were asked, among other questions, their perceptions of the social problems they had observed as a result of drug use in their communities. These key informants considered that the use of cannabis, followed by non-medical use of pharmaceutical opioids and codeine based cough syrups, had caused the most problems in their communities. These social problems ranged from family issues (conflict or breakup), loss of work or employment, or legal issues (criminality or arrests) as a result of someone's drug use. Drug users among the general population reported missing school or work, poor performance at school or work, or neglecting their family or children, as some of the major problems they had experienced as a result of their drug use. While nearly half of the drug users reported problems at home, school, or workplace as the main problems, fewer drug users also reported being in physical danger, relationship issues within the family or with friends, or having trouble with law enforcement entities due to their drug use (UNODC,2019).

The economic effect of drug abuse and its attendant management is enormous in terms of cost to the society. The US National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA, 2019) indicates that the abuse of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs in terms of crime, lost work productivity and health care costs the US government an estimate of \$740 billion annually.

All these effects definitely militate against the growth, development and sustenance of the economy and society. Nigeria as an evolving market and precariously struggling to develop

cannot afford to gloss over the effective and efficient management of drug control.

Prevalence of drug abuse in Nigeria

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) undertook a study of drug abuse in Nigeria which has provided baseline information on drug consumption in Nigeria. According to UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division survey in 2017, there is an estimate of 98,882,000 people aged between 15-64 in Nigeria and about 14.4 per cent or 14.3 million of that population that used drugs excluding alcohol and tobacco in that year. According to the study, cannabis was the most widely used substance in the past year in Nigeria (2016), followed by pharmaceutical opioids (mainly tramadol, and to a lesser extent codeine or morphine) and cough syrups containing codeine or dextromethorphan. The study further indicates higher past-year prevalence of drug use among the southern geopolitical zones (range 13.8 per cent to 22.4 per cent) compared to the northern geopolitical zones (range 10 per cent-13.6 per cent). The high prevalence of drug use in the southern zones is driven primarily by Lagos and Oyo States. The zonal distribution of the prevalence is; North West zone prevalence is 12 per cent accounting for 3,000,000 people. North Central zone prevalence is 10 per cent accounting for 1,500,000 people. North East zone prevalence is 13.6 per cent accounting for 2,060,000 people. South West zone prevalence is 22.4 per cent accounting for 4,382,000 people. South South zone prevalence is 16.6 per cent accounting for 2,124,000 people. South East zone prevalence is 13.8 per cent accounting for 1,550,000 people. The study also indicates that out of every four users of drugs in Nigeria one is a female therefore indicating that

drug abuse is more prevalent among males. The extent of drug use in Nigeria is comparatively high when compared with the 2016 global annual prevalence of any drug use of 5.6 per cent among the adult population. The study also indicated that one out of every five user of drug in the past year is suffering from user disorders (UNODC, 2018). These statistics are danger signals to development of the Nigerian society that calls for urgent attention by all stakeholders.

Conclusion and recommendations

Considering the poverty and unemployment levels in Nigeria and the high prevalence of drug abuse, it is not a surprise that there is a major gap in availability and accessibility of drug treatment services in the country as contained in the survey report of UNODC (2018). The cost of treatment itself, limited number of interventions provided and the stigma attached to drug use are major impediments in provision of quality drug treatment services that can cater for a large segment of the drug using population in the country. Therefore, availability, accessibility, and coverage of quality and evidence-based effective treatment and care services for people with drug use disorders are priorities to be addressed in health administration in Nigeria. This is a major issue considering the size of the youthful population of Nigeria.

Pope Francis admonishes is instructive; ...it is necessary to confront the problems underlying the use of these drugs, by promoting greater justice, educating young people in the values that build up life in society, accompanying those in difficulty and giving them hope for the future. We all need to look upon one

another with the loving eyes of Christ, and to learn to embrace those in need, in order to show our closeness, affection and love." (CNS, 2016).

The government should as a matter of urgency scale up the programme of preventive health care delivery system in the country. Prevention of drug use aims to help people, not only those of younger age, to avoid or delay the initiation of use of psychoactive substances, or, if they have already started, to avert the development of harmful use and substance use disorders. Effective prevention involves the positive engagement of children, youth and adults with their families, schools, workplace and community. To maximize the utilization of resources for effective and science-based prevention interventions the UNODC International Standards on Drug Use Prevention provide the necessary guidelines. The evidence suggests that among the different prevention programmes, those with a focus on parenting, families, and life skills education at different levels of children's development (i.e. infancy, early and middle childhood, adolescence and adulthood), and their needs are more effective than other interventions. Efforts to support the prevention and treatment of drug use also include providing people who use drugs with the necessary knowledge and skills to prevent overdoses.

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NIGERIAN YOUTH MIGRATION: A QUEST FOR PEACE

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Introduction

Since the earliest times, humanity has been on the move. The earliest recorded movement in history is found in the Holy Book (Bible), “Yahweh said to Abraham, leave your country, your family and your father’s house, for the land I will show you (Gen. 12:1).” What follows is the reason for the movement, “I will make you a great nation (vs. 2).” Hence, people across the world have continued to move from place to place for so many reasons. Some people move in search of job or economic opportunities, some to join family, or to study, while others move to escape conflict, persecution, terrorism, human rights violations, natural disasters, or other environmental factors.

Historically, the movement trend from Nigeria could be traced to the slave trade period, when many able-bodied men and women were forcefully transported abroad to work in plantations in Caribbean islands and the United States. At the end of slave trade, this movement increased tremendously as many Nigerians had to go abroad for educational purposes, to acquire skills to replace the departing expatriates. Today, what one can consider as drivers of Nigerian youth migration, include the breakdown of the Nigerian educational system at virtually all levels, high unemployment and poverty rates in Nigeria, and a general disillusionment with the

country's political leadership. These have been the background for the influx of Nigerians to Europe and America.

It is the interest of this paper to generally look at migration amongst Nigerian Youth and particularly link the 'search for peace' as one of the major drivers of Nigerian youths to exit the country. Nigeria has a very vibrant youth population that is not well catered for by the Nigerian government. One imagines how the future of the country would be with the youth that are not empowered, exiting the country with their potentials. Nigeria, which was once tagged as one of the peaceful country has turn out to be a land of insecurity and abject poverty. The position of this paper is that structural violence is mostly the push factor for many Nigerian youths exiting the country.

Nigerian Youth

According to Nigerian 2009 National Youth Policy, "Youth in Nigeria includes citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria aged 18-29 years." What is of utmost important in this description of who a Nigerian youth is, "citizens of the Federal Republic of Nigeria" and not the age bracket because recently, in May 2019 to be precise, a revised National Youth Policy was launched in Akure, Ondo State. A major thrust of the current review is regarding the age bracket for the classification of youth from existing grading of 18-35 years to 15-29 years. The new age classification has raised a lot of questions and controversies one of the issues is that this age classification sets Nigeria apart from other countries of the continent that aligns with the age classification in African Youth Charter of 18-35 years. Responding to the reduction from 35-29 years, the Nigerian Minister of Youth

and Sport Development, Solomon Dalung said, “the review is informed by practical empirical analysis and the need to promote the appropriate targeting of desired beneficiaries of intervention programmes for the youth rather than adult masquerading as youth (Punch May 28, 2019).”

Accounting for the reduction from 18-15 years, UN Statistical consistency across regions defines ‘youth’ as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years, without prejudice to other definitions by member states. Similarly, the minimum Age Convention (1973) set the general minimum age for admission to employment or work at 15 years. The new age classification is also closely tied to the ‘Not Too Young To Run Act’ (age reduction) which was signed into Law in May 2018 (Punch May 28, 2019). Thus, Nigerian youths are young Nigerians between the age bracket of 15-29, who are agile, virile and are expected to be innovative within an enabling environment. However, Gotan gave a clear data of Nigerian youths saying “Nigeria has a youthful population of about 80 Million which is about 60 percent of her population” (2018, p.26). This is in consonant with “The CIA World Factbook, 2014” record that, “Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with one of the largest populations of youth in the world.”

Migration

Migration is the movement of people from one place to another with the intention of settling in the new location. It is a way to move from one place to another in order to live and work. Movement of people from their home to another city, state or country for a job, shelter or some other reasons has become so

common in recent times. In trying to define migration, the Nigerian National Migration Policy 2015 said, "Migration is a fundamental part of human nature (2015, p.5)." It went on to say that, "Essentially, migration is the process of temporary or permanent relocation of a person from his or her place of primary abode to another place, in search of better living, family reunification, further studies or other reasons (2015, p.5)." Emigration is not cheap and most of the people leaving are not poor by any standard, this is why it is mostly the rich and middle class that are leaving. It is an epidemic that force people who have lost hope to exit.

Frankly speaking, there are two factors that influence people's decisions to migrate; push and pull factors. The push factor occurs when people are forced to move away from their current/present abode. This could be caused by political unrest, lack of job opportunities or overcrowding. The pull factor occurs when people are attracted to migrate to another place to better their living conditions. Therefore, the reasons why people leave a place are called the push factor while the reasons why people are attracted to a new place to live are called the pull factors.

Migration can be of two types, internal and external (international) migration. Internal migration is the movement of persons within the country, which may be rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban and urban-rural migration. Of all these, rural-urban migration is most common as lack of access to social amenities, land and capital stimulate people to migrate from rural areas to urban centres. Many opportunities and attractions of the urban centres pull large numbers of people from rural areas.

Speaking on this, National Migration Policy, says, “some of the push factors prompting rural outmigration including poverty, poor agricultural yield and lack of quality and affordable education and health care. The pull factors include opportunities for employment access to higher and quality education, and better health-care services in urban areas (2015, p.6).”

External or international migration is the movement of migrants across the border of home country. This movement is often motivated by a good number of socio-economic factors. International migration is the movement from one country to another. People who leave their country are said to be emigrant while people who move into another country are called immigrants. Emigration of Nigerians is not only intra-regional within the ECOWAS community largely facilitated by the protocol on free movement of people, but also continental migration of Nigerians to Africa, America, Australia, Canada and Europe.

Causes of Migration

There are many reasons why people migrate from one place to another. In relation to Nigerian situation, this paper will limit itself to four.

1. Economic Migrants

Economic migrants are migrants who are attracted to another country because of the greater economic opportunities. The migrants are from less economically developed countries to more economically developed countries. People are often motivated to

leave their country to other countries because of the availability of job, good remuneration and better working conditions.

2. Educational Migrants

Due to break down in educational system of a country, a lot of people move to other countries to acquire education. Countries where there is good and quality education attract people especially children of the rich, who can afford going abroad for studies.

3. Political Migrants

Today, on like before, many people are forced to migrate because of war, civil unrest or state policies which discriminate against particular group of citizens or people. The crisis going on in many places today have placed many to countries they never wished or dreamt to go as refugee.

4. Family Reunion

Family reunion has also been a cause of relocation of people from one country to another. In this situation, friends, relatives, fiancée, spouses, children or parents move to meet one of their own who are resident in another country.

Quest For Peace

Peace and war are conceived as being two sides of the same coin. This has led to the popular definition of peace as the absence of war, and war as the absence of peace. This definition has been heavily criticized by scholars in peace parlance. Some of the critics ask, why must war be mentioned in defining peace? Ibeanu argues that, "...even common sense would suggest that peace

does exist independent of war. Thus, there can be peace even when there is war, as in situation when there are peaceful interactions between countries that are engaged in active war (2006, p.3).” To concretize his position, Ibeanu sighted Palestine and Israel as example of countries that have been able to establish peace with the use of water resources despite the serious conflict they are experiencing. Therefore, there can be a definition of peace without any reference to war. Adversely, it is very possible not to have peace even when there is no war. That was what was in the mind of Johan Galtung the Father of modern peace studies, when he coined the concept “structural violence.” Structural violence refers to a form of violence wherein some social conditions may harm people by preventing them from meeting their basic needs. These social conditions Ibeanu identifies as poverty, exclusion, intimidation, oppression, want, fear and many other types of psychological pressure (2006, p.4). It would be wrong to classify a country experiencing pervasive structural violence as peaceful.

Precisely, it is the feeling of a dismal future that fuels the desperation of Nigerian youths seeking greener pasture abroad. Because of the collapsed of these social conditions and psychological pressure that drive many young Nigerians to exit the country. This is totally against the misconception of many countries who at first contact with a Nigerian youth abroad thinks of him/her as nothing but criminal or one who has come to dispossess them of their land as in the South African case. Nigerian youth are hardworking ambitious, enthusiastic, promising and peace loving people, who migrate to other countries to better and improve their living conditions. Thus, it is the presence of this structural violence that has forced and will

continue to force Nigerian youths to exit the country to better their lives.

Prominent among the structural violence pushing Nigerian Youth is unemployment. Nigerian youths are increasingly becoming restless because of unemployment. Gotan (2018) noted that, "Nigeria has a youthful population of about 80 million which is about 60 percent of her population. It is disheartening to know that 70% of this population are unemployed after obtaining relevant work experiences and other qualifications necessary for the job (p.26)." for Kazeem (2019), "Nigeria's unemployment rate has climbed for 13 consecutive quarters and an ambitious four-year plan to boost the economy following a recession in 2016 is proving to be a failure." The situation is becoming worst and scary especially when one consider the data of students who gain admission to the university, graduate and even past out from National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) every year without any provision of jobs by the government. To this effect, Adepoju (2018) believes that, "The limited capacity of the country's labour market to absorb productively the annual cohorts of job seekers turns youths into potential emigrates....stressful economic conditions, especially the absence of sustainable livelihood opportunities, have fuelled the emigration of young educated persons in a desperate venture to enter the European Union countries (p.2)." More opportunities exist outside the shores of Nigeria for Nigerians. This is unfortunate but true. That is why Nigerian graduates who can barely earn enough money to sustain themselves in Nigeria will suddenly start sending thousands of dollars/euros home once they manage to move out of the shore of the country.

Nigeria has a very vibrant youth population that is not well catered for by the Nigerian government. One imagines how the future of the country would be with the youths that are not empowered, exiting the country with their potentials. In truth, the brain-drain and exodus of Nigerian youths is not exactly new after similar outward wave during military regimes in the late 1980s to early 1990s and also since the turn of civilian rule in Nigeria. The trend previously seemed restricted to people in specific professions, now it is more of a free for all especially with countries like Canada looking to fill several gaps in their workforce and are offering diverse opportunities from software engineers and accountants to cooks. The rate of employment is low and wages are not even commensurate with the economic demands of the people, thus the reason for young Nigerians searching for peace, going to places where their hopes are raised and their social needs met.

However, in some cases, the grass outside Nigeria is not as green as we perceive it from afar, some emigrants face real and expensive challenges of relocating, settling into a new country and starting all over. Many leave their lucrative jobs here in Nigeria to Europe, America, Canada, Australia and Asia for 3D (Dirty, Dangerous and Demeaning) jobs that their national scorn. As such, highly qualified individuals who leave high-level jobs in Nigeria often have to trade down to restart their lives. Despite the known challenges, the possibility of a higher quality of life and education for their children remains a strong pull for several middle-class Nigerians who can afford to move. Some only realize their mistake after arrival but would not return because they have found the peace they lack in Nigeria.

Education is the engine for peace and development of any nation. The deteriorating nature of Nigerian educational system has also been a major contributor for young Nigerians to exit the country. The standard of education has drastically fallen; the constant strike, which has caused the uncertainty of year of graduation, teaching input and output of students has been deteriorating in quality overtime. Lack of modern training and learning facilities, equipment and motivation amongst teachers are really driving Nigerian youths away. More worrisome is the existence of cultism, “sex-for-grades” and “money-for-grades” which has also been a major contributor to Nigerian youth leaving the country to acquire education and even after education, due to lack of employment; stay back and work in these countries causing brain-drain in Nigeria. National Migration Policy 2015 agrees with this position saying, “Thousands of Nigerian students have sought admission to universities abroad and then stayed on to secure employment, thus depriving Nigeria of their skills and education. Between 60,000 and 80,000 Nigerian students are currently studying abroad (pp.61-62).”

Furthermore, the lack of faith in Nigeria’s political leaders and their inability to reverse the decline in the educational sector is such that many of the young Nigerians making the exodus to Europe and America do not trust the situation will change soon. The looming big picture for Nigeria is that many who either have emigrated or plan to, are unlikely to return and neither are the children they raise in their new countries of residence. There, there is the access to opportunities that become available to the children on the back of the education they have. The range of

opportunities that are available to children in Nigeria is limited because the range of education is limited.

Insecurity as a breach of peace is presently a thing of concern to migration. The incessant destruction of lives and properties in Nigeria recently is a major cause of migration of Nigerian youths. Security is important for national growth, peace and sustainable development. The Boko Haram insurgency, farmers/herders conflicts in the North spreading through North central to the Eastern Nigeria, the Niger Delta militants in the South has almost crippled economic activities in the country. Kidnapping and arm robbery all over the country is on the increase. The security apparatus seems to have been severely weakened, overpowered and rendered ineffective by these rascals. To this effect, many young Nigerians especially the privilege few exit the country not because of unemployment or education but to look for a safe haven.

Conclusion

From all indications, Nigeria has become a den of lion. The creation of structural violence by the leaders is forcing young Nigerians to exit from the country. Like the famous Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau would say, "man is born free, but he is everywhere in chains." Nigerians have wake up to the reality that we are actually living in bondage; we are chained in every aspect of our lives. The only means of escape Nigerians have discovered is to travel and settle abroad to search for peace eluding the whole system. Nigerians are happy people, who would not allow systemic challenges; abject poverty, crime, social inequality and the legacy of political instability rob them of their peace. It seems

natural to say that all these factors would put a damper on Nigerian cheerfulness. Rather, as the Frenchman would say, “*joie de vivre*” is the obvious. Interestingly, a global survey has confirmed it: in a 53-country Gallup poll, Nigerians were rated at 70 points for optimism, it is an optimism born of hope (Adewunmi, 2011). Nigeria is a nation of hope.

However, I think it is imperative for young Nigerians to consider vocational education; skill acquisition can empower young Nigerians to meet their needs. We need to take a leaf from Chinese people where young people who have taken to different vocations produce many of the things we buy and use in Nigeria, whereby contributing to their economic. Considering the on-going debate over minimum wage between the Federal Government and the Labour Union, Nigerian youths should be pro-active and innovative in creating job for themselves rather than waiting for the government to provide jobs that will pay them meager. Migrating to ‘already made’ countries will not proffer solution to our problems, the future leaders of the country need to stand and fight for their future. Therefore, the quest to fight poverty, hunger, unemployment and insecurity, among other reasons, is the quest for peace.

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YOUTH TRAFFICKING: ITS EFFECTS AND SOLUTIONS

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Introduction

Trafficking according to Cambridge Dictionary means, “the act of buying or selling goods illegally, for example, arms/drugs trafficking or the act of buying or selling people or making money from work they are forced to do, such as hard labour, sex work”²⁷ etc. The second definition is the concern of this paper. Youth/human trafficking therefore becomes the action or practice of illegally transporting people from one country or area to another, typically for the purposes of forced labour or sexual exploitation. Furthermore, “Human trafficking involves recruitment, harbouring or transporting people into a situation of exploitation through the use of violence, deception or coercion and forced to work against their will.”²⁸ Human traffickers are different from smugglers, even though it could equally be attributed as one of the forms of trafficking, because sometimes its result is unfavourable. Smugglers collect money from those concerned and smuggle them across borders, once they are crossed, they are free, while human trafficking is basically exploitation of people. In human trafficking, the victims operate

²⁷ Cambridge Dictionary

²⁸ Anti -Slavery International/ Registered Charity 1049160. Available at <http://www.antislavery.org>> slavery-today>human-trafficking. Sourced 9/11/2019

both internally and externally. It is a global phenomenon. What this means is that it can be happening around you, in your village or community, state or country. This is one of the worst evils happening to humanity, it is man's inhumanity to man. Even though efforts are being made to eradicate it, but the efforts need to be increased. This work therefore joins many other voices in the world to bring to the awareness of Nigerian youths precisely that this evil is going on everyday and its implications are not what wishing an enemy.

Forms Of Youth/Human Trafficking

There are different types of human trafficking, few of them will be discussed in this paper.

1. Trafficking for forced labour, which is "basically exploiting someone for the purpose of labor and services."²⁹ The Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 (TVPA) defines labor trafficking as: "The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud or coercion for the purpose of subjection to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage or slavery."³⁰ In most cases, they are recruited and trafficked using deception, lies and other forms of coercion

²⁹ Brendan Reynolds, (2019). "Identifying the types of human trafficking". Available at <https://www.localdvm.com/infocus-2/identifying-the-types-of-human-t...> Sourced 9/11/2019

³⁰ National Human Trafficking Hotline. "Labor Trafficking". Available at <http://humantraffickinghotline.org/type-trafficking/labor-trafficking>

and find themselves held in conditions of slavery in a variety of jobs in many industries. They are forced to work against their will. Sometimes they make them work round the clock without pay and most times with meager payment. The common types of labor trafficking include people forced to work in homes as domestic servitudes, farmworkers that is agricultural coerced through violence as they harvest crops, or factory workers, such as construction works, mining and fisheries. These are held in inhumane conditions with little or no pay. Many Nigerian youths are victims of these in Dubai and other parts of the world. About eight of them were sent back to Nigeria in February this year 2019 by a company because they complained about the treatment being given to them by the managers of the construction company they were working for.

2. Trafficking for forced criminal activities: Many youths are involved in this type of crime. Most often, they are introduced to this crime by the criminal rich men and women in the society, promising to help them. Sometimes some of them are aware of the nature of the business, while most times they are used unknowingly. These can include theft or arm robbery, drug cultivation, selling counterfeit goods, or forced begging. Victims often have quotas and can face severe punishment if they do not perform as expected by their masters.
3. Trafficking in women for sexual exploitation: This refers to the recruitment and transportation of women across national or international borders either voluntarily or involuntarily, for sexual or domestic purposes. It also includes

the purchase, sale, transfer, receipt or harboring of young girls and women through deception for the purpose of subjecting the women and girls to involuntary servitude.³¹

Female youths and children are the most vulnerable of this evil especially those of them from developing countries. They are easily lured into this business through making of promises by the traffickers of decent employment into leaving their homes and travelling to what they consider will be a better life. They are often provided with false travel documents and an organized network is used to transport them to the destination country. Reaching there, they find themselves forced into sexual exploitation and held in inhumane conditions and constant terror without any opportunity to refuse. Refusal most often had led to the death of many.

4. Trafficking for the removal of organs: this is another lucrative crime going on in the world today. There are many people in different parts of the world who are in need of kidney transplant or any other organ of the body. They have money but no spare organ. Hospitals have promised of such transplants when available. So, there is a long waiting list. Criminals in different parts of the world have seized this opportunity to exploit the desperation of patients and

³¹ Linus Akor, (2011). "Trafficking of Women in Nigeria: Causes, Consequences and the Way Forward", in *Corvinus Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* Vol.2. pg. 94.

potential donors. Thus, many youths have fallen victims to this. They promised them of giving them jobs, sometimes, they pay for their travel expenses, when they arrive to their destinations, they are made to donate their organs. Many of them lose their lives in the process.

5. Forced marriage: I once witnessed in Italy a Nigerian couple whose age difference between the man and the girl was alarming, when I was opportune to teach marriage course in one parish. I thought that the girl was the man's daughter, she was below 18years while the man was above 50 years. During counselling, the girl was lamenting how she was deceived into marrying her father's age mate. Her story was so pathetic. This is happening everyday both locally and abroad.
6. Domestic servitude: many children or youths are also victims of domestic servitude. In Nigeria today, many boys have served "rich men" in order to learn trading from them and ended up leaving their masters frustrated and ruined. There is always an agreement between their masters and the family members to settle them with money or begin a business of their own after the years of service. But the stories most times is unbelievable. The slave boys will be doing well until the last year of their service, the story changes, that most times, they are sent back to their homes with allegations, which most times are frameup stories. Similar to that are the "housemaids" who go through different kinds of torture in the mistress's or master's house. They deny them access to school or leaning of hand works, no good meals and wears.

They work without rest and receive beating over any slightest mistake.

Causes Of Youth/Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a heart-breaking plague that has so much affected our society. It is a reality too hard to believe but it is living with us and is happening every day in different parts of the world. Anyone can become victim of this plague especially the youths. It affects the youths more because of some of the factors discussed in this paper. They are: traffickers, poverty, unemployment, lack of education, displacement, broken families, greediness etc.

1. Traffickers

Indeed, as presented by Richmond, “the root cause of human trafficking is traffickers”³² Traffickers are not among the poor in the society. To be a trafficker, you must have the means, which means that it is some of the rich people that are involved in this business. As earlier mentioned, this is a new version of slave trade, which was condemned as inhuman treatment against humanity. Some persons use the opportunity of hardship in Nigeria and many parts of the world to take advantage of the vulnerable in our society. According to Hartmann, “traffickers’ prey on others’ weaknesses, unfortunate circumstances, unfamiliarity, and

³² John Cotton Richmond, (2017). “The Root Cause of Trafficking is Traffickers”. The Human Trafficking Institute. Available at [https://www.traffickinginstitute.org>the-root-cause-oftrafficking-is-traffi....](https://www.traffickinginstitute.org>the-root-cause-oftrafficking-is-traffi...)

Sourced 15/11/2019

inexperience. Traffickers are trained to identify vulnerability and use expert manipulation tactics to persuade and control their victims. They identify a void and offer to fill it.”³³

2. Unemployment

Many youths in Nigeria for example, who have finished their studies and have been carrying their certificates from one place to another seeking for employments without result. Some of them their families are living in difficult conditions, many become desperate, and that desperation makes them vulnerable to traffickers. Their desperation gives the traffickers opportunity to strike.

Poverty is one of the factors that is encouraging human trafficking in Nigeria. Poverty makes people vulnerable to this evil. For example, a young man or woman who cannot comfortably afford a good meal in a day and someone comes with promises on how to give such person brighter future, if such appears to be his or her only option, such a person may gladly accept the offer and be willing to do whatever he or she is asked to do.

3. Displacement

Displacement is another factor that has brought a rapid growth in human trafficking. Many parts of Nigeria have

³³Micah Hartmann, (2018), “Causes &Effects of Human Trafficking”. Available at [http:// blog. Theexodusroad .com>causes-effects-of-human-trafficking](http://blog.Theexodusroad.com/causes-effects-of-human-trafficking). Sourced 15/11/2019.

experienced a good number of IDP camps which means Internally Displaced Persons. “The number of internally displaced persons in Nigeria is approximately a third of the IDPs in Africa and 10 per cent of IDPs in the world. The report ranked Nigeria 3rd. with 3.3 million displaced persons, behind Syria and Columbia which have 6.5 and 5.7 million IDPs respectively.”³⁴ Many States in Nigeria have been heavily affected, for example “the North East and North Central states have been the hardest hit. Zamfara, Borno, Yobe and Adamawa in the North East, and Plateau, Nasarawa, Benue, Taraba in North Central.”³⁵ This is due to constant attack of Boko Haram, herdsmen clashes with farmers and ethno-religious violence. These instabilities have led to escape of many youths in the hands of human traffickers, while searching for safety and survival. Below is the statistics of people displaced due to the above-mentioned factors between 2016 and 2018.

States	No of IDPs in 2016	No of IDPs in 2018
Adamawa	265,782	164,150
Bauchi	70,078	53,309
Benue	175,070	122,000
Borno	1,434,149	1,364,539

³⁴ *Nigeria Civil Society SITUATION ROOM, (2019)*. “IDPs and the 2019 Elections”. Available at <http://www.placng.org/situationroom/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/ID...>

³⁵ *Nigeria Civil Society SITUATION ROOM, (2019)*

FCT	11,680	
Gombe	25,332	31,909
Kaduna	36,976	
Kano	9,331	
Nasarawa	37,553	
Plateau	77,317	38,000
Taraba	50,227	63,272
Yobe	131,203	105,311

In recent years, the States of Kaduna, Plateau, Nasarawa and Benue have also experienced a rise in the incidence of internal displacement. Between January and June 2018, led to the displacement of 417,000 people in the Middle Belt.³⁶ Apart from the above-mentioned causes of displacement, natural disaster like water is also another factor that is responsible for displacement even though minimal comparing to Boko Haram insurgency and the Fulani herdsmen attacks.

4. Ignorance

Most times ignorance can be an instrument to human trafficking. It could be because of lack of education or lack of awareness or Inexperience. According to Hartmann “a teenager who is approached by a trafficker may accept an attractive job offer, seeing it as a great opportunity at such a young age. An immigrant who arrives in a foreign country may not understand his or her rights, may be unfamiliar with the nation’s laws, or may

³⁶ *Nigeria Civil Society SITUATION ROOM, (2019)*

not know the national language. A trafficker will quickly take advantage of these types of situations.”³⁷

5. Greed

Greediness can be a major factor that contributes to human trafficking. Most youths and families have been informed by reliable sources about the danger of allowing oneself or one’s children to travel either to cities or abroad on the promises of getting a job for them. Sometimes, such advice is ignored. People want to become rich overnight; this ambition has destroyed many youths in Nigeria.

6. Broken Families/ Death

Families that parents are divorced because of one problem or another, are sometimes victims to this modern slavery called human trafficking and sometimes youths who have lost a mother or father or both parents and are in the mercy of relatives to train them. Some of them are cast out of their homes, abandoned, or placed into the child welfare system. While some due to challenges at home may run away from their homes These groups can be forced to do anything for survival either by their guardians since they are not their biological children or by themselves. Experience of “homelessness, and those who live in isolation are often targeted by traffickers. When someone feels alone or

³⁷ Micah Hartmann, (2018), “Causes &Effects of Human Trafficking”. Available at [http:// blog. Theexodusroad .com>causes-effects-of-human-trafficking](http://blog.Theexodusroad.com/causes-effects-of-human-trafficking). Sourced 15/11/2019.

unloved or has been abused in the past, they may be willing to take great risks. They may feel as though they have little to lose or may even find comfort living with their traffickers. Some traffickers offer love and acceptance to lure individuals to work for them.³⁸ There are many other factors which are not discussed in this paper, some of them are, political situations of different countries, war, social/cultural practices.

The Effects Of Trafficking On The Victims

The concern of this paper is to discuss the consequences of trafficking on those who are being captured or deceived or manipulated and tortured by their fellow human beings not on the traffickers themselves. Few of such effects are discussed below.

7. Psychological Effect

Most of those trafficked go through serious mental trauma. The traffickers dehumanize the victims and are used as objects. When a human being is objectified, such a person loses his or her sense of innate power and dignity. The person feels useless in life. The experience they go through causes traumatic stress. Some of them will find it difficult to trust people again, which may lead to difficulty in relating with people, depression, anxiety, fear, guilt and shame and other mental. These effects can hurt the victims throughout their lives.

³⁸ Micah Hartmann, (2018), “Causes & Effects of Human Trafficking”

8. Physical/Health Effects

Many victims experience physical injuries. Many are sexually abused by their traffickers and customers. They may be raped, beaten, and subjected to abuse over a long period of time. There is a risk of contracting sexually transmitted diseases, infections, and other sicknesses, such as eye damaged, lung diseases etc. Many lose their lives in the process. Look at this story sent on one of the social medias by Dr. Veronica, a member of APAS. She said that last night, my nineteen-year-old daughter got a mouthwatering offer for an ushering job. The pay was N10,000 per day. It was for 3 days. She and her friends were excited about the offer. We had been talking about discerning spirit and she just felt all wasn't right. When something is too good to be true then it is. She said one of the things that struck her was when he offered her VIP section to usher and she asked if the pay was different, he said no so she opted for regular. She then googled the event the guy mentioned. There was nothing on the net about the event. For a big company like Coca Cola there should be some hype about their launch but that wasn't the case. There was nothing about it on social media or their site. She became suspicious. The address he also dropped was bogus too. She called the guy to ask questions he couldn't answer. When they were too much, he blocked her. She quickly notified her friends and one of them called him. Guess what, he was arranging a hookup for them for the weekend. Imagine! If the girls had shown up, they would have been lured for hookup. But was it really hookup? The kidnap spree now is no more to get money but for organ harvesting. People are disappearing especially young girls and it is because they are lured with financial gains. Imagine making N30k in a weekend for standing for six hours. Many young girls will jump

at it, but these are ways of trafficking girls into prostitution or get their organs.

Those who are involved in hard or forced labour, may be working in dangerous conditions for hours without rest and payment. For example, those working in construction factories, they may also be exposed to dangerous contaminants or work with heavy equipment. As a result, many are subjected to serious infections, respiratory problems, injuries, impairments, and exhaustion.³⁹ Even poor habitations and poor diet can cause malnutrition to the victims. The victims are not given any medical attention. “Those recruited in chemical factories are treated like modern-day slaves and when they succumb to occupational diseases, are quickly replaced by another batch of victims.”⁴⁰

9. Substance Abuse

This is one of the terrible effects of human trafficking. Trafficked victims may be subjected to substance abuse by their traffickers. Some are “forced to use drugs or alcohol to ensure their compliance and to enable them to take on more clients, work longer hours or perform objectionable or risky acts. When they become used to the drugs, they will hardly do without them. They will also sometimes be using them to alleviate the pain of their

³⁹ Micah Hartmann, (2018), “Causes & Effects of Human Trafficking”

⁴⁰ Urvashi Pokharna, (2018). “The Devastating Effects of Human Trafficking”. Available at <https://opinionfront.com/effects-of-human-trafficking>. Sourced 22/9/2019.

situation, often resulting to addiction, organ damage, malnutrition, needle-induced infections, overdose and death. ⁴¹

Solutions On How To Help To Stop Youth/Human Trafficking

As earlier mentioned, human trafficking affects both the young, old and children in the society, but the highest group is the youths. Those who are involved in these ill's lives among us. Therefore, people should first be conscious of their environment. Parents should take the training of their children serious. Show your children love. Train them in a way that they will be free with you to communicate things happening to them. Build trust in them. Family is the first classroom and the most important. Parents should train their children to be satisfied with what they have not wanting to be like Mr. A or B. It is good to work hard but not envying people whom they are not aware of the source of their wealth.

Greediness both on the path of parents and the youths is one of the major causes of trafficking. One becomes a victim because of one's ambition to be like his or her friend. There is need to have patient in life. Quick money has led many youths to doom, so they should learn to be patient in life. Many of our youths do not want to learn hand work or trade. They do not want to be taught by

⁴¹ United Nations, *An Introduction to Human Trafficking: Vulnerability, Impact and Action*. United Nation, New York, 2008. Pg. 85.

someone. They want to be master of their own as fast as they can make it. It is not a way of survival. So, to avoid falling prey to the traffickers, they need to humble themselves. Greediness go with pride; therefore, they need to know that greediness makes one vulnerable to traffickers. Comparison destroys humans, and youths are fond of this, this paper advises the youths to stop comparing themselves with others. Be yourself, be focus, struggle and you will succeed.

Another crucial point that need to be watched is the use of social media. As good as social media is, it has its disadvantages. We know that 85-90 percent of those patronizing the social media are the youths. We need to educate the youths on the dangers of social media. Traffickers use mostly the internet and other social media and websites to recruit victims or sell trafficked services online. Youths should be careful on who to accept as a friend on your Facebook page. Be slow in accepting friend request from those you do not know or engaging in personal discussions. You make be risking your life by doing so. Therefore, wise use of the social media is very important.

This problem is affecting everyone in one way or the other, so we all need to add our voices to numerous others to create awareness about the ills of human trafficking through the media, in schools, churches, mosques and other avenues. People should be discouraged from travelling abroad for jobs they are not sure of. Programs should be organized in schools and churches to emphasize on this evil of modern slave trade.

Parents should send their children to school, where they cannot afford, States and Countries should be able to give their citizens free education to a particular level. In school, children should be taught rights education. Knowing one's right in particular will help both youth and children to understand their legal and human rights, so they can make good decisions and keep themselves safe. According to Jessinia Ruff, "by educating children and families about their rights and the dangers of human trafficking, children will be less likely to be manipulated or forced into the industry. Children will also be more likely to stay in school, enabling them to eventually get a good job that provides a fair wage."⁴² There are so many other ways of stopping human trafficking, which were not written in this paper. No matter the area we are looking at it, the most crucial way is education and awareness. Everybody has a role to play in fighting human trafficking and it is important we work towards increasing education and creating awareness. Governments have the responsibility of protecting their citizens and are encouraged to do so.

Conclusion

Why is human trafficking t1ncreasing everyday both in developing and developed countries? Simply the answer could be

⁴² Jessinia Ruff, (2017). "How educating children on their rights can prevent human trafficking". Available at

<http://www.onedayswages.org>2017/08/08>rights-education>.

Sourced on 26/11/2019

that the world is facing the following problems: moral problem, criminal problem migration problem, human right problem etc. it is also a fact that human trafficking thrives because it generates lot of money for the traffickers. Apart from the selfish desire of the traffickers, the victims fall prey because of the desire to improve the standard of living and social status. Indeed, human trafficking is one of the worst criminal activities that has affected our world. "It is one of the wicked acts that have made the lives of millions as worse as the hell. This kind of modern slave trade has washed away the humanity among those who are being involved. Human beings have been treated like mere objects by their fellow human beings because individual interest and pleasure. The victimization of poor and vulnerable masses has excluded them from the human race and commodified them like animals and vegetables in the market. The right and access to justice has no significant meaning and worth for them. The paper therefore calls for vigilance and solicit for the help of everyone to assist the world in eliminating this evil.

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WHEN HOME IS NO LONGER HOME: THE MASSIVE EXODUS OF NIGERIAN YOUTHS OUT OF NIGERIA

Victor Domshiwe Shehu M.Afr

Introduction

The teeming population of young Nigerians at various embassies (and High Commissions) in Lagos and Abuja complemented by their counterparts at various land borders crossing into neighboring countries gives an indication that all is not well in Nigeria. Why does everyone want to leave? Is there any place better than home? Is Nigeria no longer home to Nigerians? Why risk it all to get out of your home? In this write up, I attempted to answer these questions and also highlight the reasons for the massive “exodus” of Nigerians into Europe and America and of recent, Asian and even Neighboring countries.

The variables that combine to explain why Nigerian nationals choose to leave their country of origin are complex and specific and sometimes complementary but cannot be generalized (Isiugo-Abanihe & IOM Nigeria, 2014). Existing literature identify structural factors such as economic hardship, politics, population upsurge and unemployment among others as the forces that combined to chase Nigerians out of their own home land (see Düvell et al, 2016). Interacting with a number of young Nigerians in Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana and Germany, many mentioned reasons amongst which were economic decline supervised by poor leadership and pervasive corruption among politicians and public sector workers, the marginalization of youths, increasing inequality, escalating tensions due to differences and resource

sharing between Muslims and Christians in northern parts of Nigeria, Islamic insurgency, intergenerational conflicts related to family and marriage, religious obligations, lack of livelihood opportunities as well as tensions around religious and fraternity affiliations leading to physical violence.

The international Organization for Migration (2014) also identified enduring outbreaks of intra-state violence in the forms of ethno-religious, political, criminal and resource struggles as key drivers in the decision of many young Nigerians to look outside for survival. Duvell et al (2016) further mentioned the rising human insecurity epitomized by heightened activities of the Islamic sect, Boko Haram in the north and a protracted herdsmen-farmers clash in North Central Nigeria also explains migration.

Crawley et al (2016) observed that Migrants rarely name a single reason or trigger why they migrate since motives and aspirations often change and evolve in the course of the journey. Many migrants cannot name one specific push factor of migration but it suffices to say most of the reasons are economic in nature or are inherently tight to economic reasons. A report by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicates that Nigerians are often motivated by the success stories of those who have made it outside Nigeria but ignore the failure stories and are ready to risk it all even if they are fully informed about the dangers of embarking on such adventures. 'The report concludes that the cultural family setting from which Nigerian migrants originate is often marked by a tendency to ignore known risks when considering migration' (Ellis, et al., 2011 pg. 227).

It is sufficient therefore to say that the frequent exodus of Nigerian youths is driven by a mix of aspiration to maximize income but also the pressure to support one's family. In Nigeria migration is often associated with remittances. As a result, it has become customary for families to squeeze out water out of stones in order to invest in the emigration of at least one family member (IOM, 2016). The presumptions that wages are much higher abroad make many families to sacrifice all to send at least one household member to Europe or America. This belief is adequately complemented by the erroneous perception that anyone who travels outside is more likely to succeed than those who remain in Nigeria. For many people, emigration also provides opportunities acquire status symbols such as land, houses or cars which are expressions of successes in many societies within Nigeria (Carling, 2006). As Castle (2004) observed that developing countries often see migration as a household strategy to maximize income, a culture of emigration seems to emerge. Especially for the lesser educated population, migration is more or less synonymous to a survival strategy or as a way to gain social prestige (see Huddleston, Karacay, & Nikolova, 2014).

Where do Nigerian Youths Migrate to?

At first, data showed that the preferred destination for Nigerian youths are countries within Europe and America. In a study about the famous destination countries within Europe, Eurostat (2017) revealed that in 2016 a total of 48,725 Nigerian nationals applied for asylum in the European countries of Germany, Austria, France, United Kingdom, Switzerland and Norway. In recent times, however, Nigerians seem to be scattered across the world with Central and Western Asia playing a host to many of them. At

the regional levels, Nigerians are ubiquitous in all the countries within Africa with Ghana, South Africa and Kenya being their preferred destinations.

Banulescu-Bogdan & Fratzke (2015) observed that the main migration routes towards Europe are the Western route within Africa towards Libya and the Central Mediterranean route from Libya towards Europe. It is however observed that the Libyan route has become less attractive due to rising insecurity in Libya and the reports of torture and enslavement, the Eastern Mediterranean route is being maintained as the primary maritime route since 2017. Whichever route is taken, the journey to Europe, particularly, for those moving by land, consist of many different risks.

What are the risks Involved?

Malakooti (2016), observed that from the onset, crossing the border into Niger is met with extortions from border management agencies as migrants may not have the travelling documents that are required. These extortions may reduce the cash on them making them more vulnerable to smugglers. The journey from Niger to Libya is even more chaotic. Migrants are required to pay a minimum of \$200 from Niger to Libya. People are loaded on the trucks like animals and could fall off the truck at any time. Again Migrants travel through a long distance of deserted land where they become dehydrated, hungry and may fall sick and die. Malakooti (2016) observed that sometimes sick migrant are thrown off the truck and allowed to die or eaten by wild animals. The International Organization for Migration (2015) observed that besides dehydration, starvation and the risks of falling off the

truck, migrants are subjected to inhumane treatment by smugglers such as detention, being exposed to exploitation and abuse by smugglers, robbery, and kidnapping for a ransom during their journey. Makooti (2016) increases the list of risks to include sexual violence against women and in some cases even being sold into slavery. He insists that crossing to Europe for those who make it to Libya comes with even a greater risk. According to UNHCR data (2014), the deaths occurring in the Mediterranean make up 73 percent of the total number of deaths at sea globally. The increase of sea crossings to Italy has been accompanied by a rising death toll. In 2013 around 600 migrants lost their lives, in 2014 an estimated 2,993 migrants died attempting to reach Europe and in early 2016 the annual number was estimated to be close to 4,000 migrants (IOM, 2017).

The list of risks could go on and on and it is not limited to those going out of Europe alone. The recent xenophobic attacks in South Africa had Nigerians more targeted than any other nationality. From my personal experience of visiting several African and other countries, when you visit prisons in the neighboring ECOWAS and other African countries, you will be greeted with a growing population of Nigerian migrants. Some Nigerians are widely associated with crimes and there is a general fear of Nigerians in what could be best described as “Nigeriophobia”. Upon all these Nigerians still prefer to live as second class citizens elsewhere than to be first class citizens in their country. Many attribute this to the reasons already mentioned earlier. The question now is what can be done to reduce the out flux of Nigerians to other countries?

In my opinion, I feel the Federal Government can take drastic measures to combat human insecurity and provide a congenial and peaceful environment where people can feel secured and work their way to self-actualization. The rising unemployment among youths can also be curtailed by the Federal Government by increasing efforts at fighting corruption, clientelism and nepotism in the public sector. Nigerian youths could also be reoriented to see life in a different perspective rather than reducing life to mere materialism characterized by the pursuit of wealth and fame. The issue of the basic human needs (such as electricity, health, food security, education, good roads etc) could be seriously taken and tackled by the Government. Our formal education should not only teach our youths how to look for “white collar” jobs but also to use their talents and gifts in order to earn a living for themselves. The common says ... “e go better one day!”

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ENTERPRENEURSHIP EDUCATION: A PANACEA FOR STEMMING THE TIDE OF POVERTY AND YOUTH MIGRATION

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Abstract

This study centred on entrepreneurship education as a panacea for stemming the tide of poverty and youth migration in Nigeria. Two research questions guided the study. The study used survey research design and was carried out in South-East States of Nigeria. The population was 134 entrepreneurship experts. Questionnaire was used for data collection. The instrument was validated by three experts. Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used and an overall reliability coefficient of .87 was obtained. Data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Generally, the study found out that adequate entrepreneurship education when acquired has the capacity to reduce poverty and youth migration. The paper recommended among others that entrepreneurship education programme at all levels of education should be made encompassing to provide youths and other recipients with the needed entrepreneurial abilities

that will emancipate them from the shackle of poverty and unwarranted migration.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Entrepreneurship Education, Poverty, Youth, Youth Migration

Introduction

The need to be employed and earn a living has pushed many youths to the drive of where to make it quick and big. Unemployment crisis pushes millions of people, especially youths (women and men) toward the decision to migrate with the purpose of seeking alternative job prospects. Many of them migrate to urban areas and big cities within their countries or seek new opportunities in foreign countries. According to the statistics of African Research Review (2009), millions leave their countries of birth in search of employment in international countries which lead to international migration. International migration can bring new opportunities in terms of employment and training though young men and women and those in irregular situations face challenges and vulnerabilities. Migration is the movement of people from one place to another International Labour Organization (ILO, 2013). To the author, migration can be permanent, temporary, volunteer or forced.

Permanent migration is when someone moves from one country to another and has no plan to return to his/her original home. Temporary migration is limited by time. This could be for seasonal employment or other reasons. Similarly, Forced migration involves compulsory movement where the individual involved have no choice of his or her leaving while voluntary

migration is done by self-need without force, (ILO 2013). Migration is a complex process that has been a feature of human societies for many centuries. There are many reasons why people choose to migrate which include and not limited to; poverty, armed conflict, social strife, political turmoil, economic hardships among others, (United Nations 2011). People have moved from their home countries, for all sorts of reasons. Some are drawn to new places by `pull` factors, others find it difficult to remain where they are and migrate because of `push` factors. These have contributed in recent time to the movement of people which is also the reason why people have emigrant to other countries. The labour migration experiences has ended up representing either an opportunity or a risk to youths which may lead them to either decent work or dehumanizing work which in turn accelerates their poverty.

Poverty means different things to different people. It has aspects, faces and causes. What poverty means to a child orphaned by AIDS or abandoned by his father maybe different to the widowed grandmother unable to work and take care of five grandchildren, or to a youth who has just graduated with nobody to turn to for help, (United Nations 2011). Poverty means fear for survival, sponsorship, fear that the family would not survive; fear that someone may take the children away, extreme vulnerability and greater risk of exploitation Poverty is hunger, lack of shelter, being sick and not being able to see a doctor, not having access to school, not having a job; in fact, it is fear for the future, living one day at a time (Adejo 2006). To the author, poverty is losing a child to illness brought about by unclean water; it is powerlessness, lack of representation and freedom. Generally, poverty encompasses

living conditions, inability to meet basic needs like food, clean drinking water, proper sanitation, education, health care and other social services. Poverty starts with the fear for the future and broadens to include dependence, oppression and exploitation. Poverty is a global problem as such World Bank developed indicators to assess the non-income dimensions of poverty to include poor access to education, health, social services, vulnerability, social exclusion, and poor access to social capital which can only be curbed through employment of the unemployed. (World Youth Report, 2013).

The concern of unemployment over time has been one of the most discoursed of nations in recent years. Institutions has been turning out graduates that clog up the labour-market without job, thereby increasing the growth rate of unemployed youths in nations. Unemployment is viewed as an economic condition in which individuals seeking for jobs remain un-hired, (Nwosu and John 2017). It is the share of the labour force that is without a job/work but is available for employment. The rising incidence of unemployment results in loss of income for individuals, reduces revenue for governments, hinders economic growth, and increases pressure on youths to migrate for better option in advanced countries. According to Nnazor (2005), the complexity of modern society calls for the services of a multiplicity of diverse occupations, which demands the preparation of our youth for different occupation or skill through education.

Education is one of the instruments needed for human and societal development; no nation can achieve an appreciable level of development beyond the level of her education (Adekola &

Kumbe, 2012; Orji & Job, 2013). Education is central to the training and development of human resources of any nation, through impartation of suitable skills, knowledge, capacity building, attitude and value re-orientation employed in the transformation of individuals, communities and nations at large (Rae & Carswell, 2001 ; Boyi, 2014). Education is seen as the most important instrument of any fundamental change, particularly with regards to the achievement of economic goals such as job creation, poverty eradication and entrepreneurship development (Okoli, 2017; Olorundare & Kayode, 2014, Agi & Yellowe, 2013). The role of education in entrepreneurship development cannot be overemphasized; as such there is need for youth entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurship as a concept has recently gained wide popularity and means different things to different individuals. Entrepreneurship means the willingness and ability of an individual to seek for investment opportunities, establish and run an enterprise successfully (Suleiman, 2006). To the author, entrepreneurship spirit which is required for the overall economic growth of any nation especially developing ones like Nigeria is a pre-requisite to an entrepreneurial society, culture and entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship education to Fayolle and Gailly (2004) is any pedagogical programme, associated with inculcating entrepreneurial skills and qualities in the learners. Similarly, Ooi, Selvarajah, and Meyer (2011) described entrepreneurship education as the scope of lectures, curricular and programmes that aimed at providing learners with the necessary

entrepreneurial competencies, knowledge and skills, geared towards the pursuit of a career in entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship education is designed to develop entrepreneurial attitudes for future entrepreneurs. It stimulates young people to think about entrepreneurship and the role of the business community in economic and social development. Students get an opportunity to analyze rapid changes taking place around them which eventually encouraged them to consider self employment and enterprise creation as a career choice. Manish (2015) stated that entrepreneurship education has the mandate to equip the youth with functional knowledge and skill to build up their character, attitude and vision. Entrepreneurship education is very important for graduates of tertiary institutions as it help them to develop into successful entrepreneurs upon graduation from school. Ordv (2010) sees entrepreneurship education as the type of education given to a set of people to be able to instill in them the principles, skills and practices required to see and evaluate business opportunities, to gather the necessary resources and the desire to take advantage of them as well as initiating appropriate action to ensure success in any chosen profession or occupation. In fact entrepreneurship education is the foundation for developing flexible skills needed to participate in knowledge economy. Most definitions of entrepreneurship education, agree that its' main goal is to inculcate entrepreneurial skills in individuals thus, reducing poverty and high youth migration.

The rate of youth poverty and migration differs in terms of educational background, level of skills, [legality](#). Youth migrants from poorer economic backgrounds with fewer skills and

educational attainment are likely to migrate. Even in circumstances that put their health and lives at risk which often end up in indecent working conditions, research has shown that youth (men and women) from poor and developing countries like Nigeria migrates to western countries in search of better job opportunities due to inadequacy in facilities like good roads, electricity, access to information, quality health care, quality education, clean water supply, training, skills acquisition among others that has bedeviled their country of origin. Also, problem relating to political instability, terrorism/insecurity, human trafficking, religious crises, corruption among the elites, and economic instability confronting the developing countries are catalyst for youth migration. It is against this backdrop that this study examined entrepreneurship education as a panacea for steaming the tide of poverty and youth migration in Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to examine Entrepreneurship Education as a Panacea for Steaming the Tide of Poverty and Youth Migration in Nigeria. Specifically, the study determined:

1. How entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration in Nigeria
2. Challenges faced in entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria

Research Questions

This research was conducted to investigate and answer the following research questions.

1. How can entrepreneurship education be used to steam poverty and youth migration in Nigeria?

2. What are the challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria?

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive survey research design and was carried out in entrepreneurship centers in Public Universities in South-East States of Nigeria. The population of the study comprised of 231 entrepreneurship experts drawn from entrepreneurship centers in Public Universities in South-East, Nigeria. The entire population was used for the study. The instrument for data collection was a 23-item structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was structured on a 4 point rating scale of Strongly Agree (SA); Agree (A); Disagree (D); and Strongly Disagree (SD) with corresponding values of 4, 3, 2, and 1 respectively. The instrument was validated by three (3) experts. Cronbach Alpha method was used in ascertaining the internal consistency of the instrument with overall coefficient of .72. The instrument was administered to the respondents with the aid of trained research assistants. All the 131 copies of the questionnaire administered were retrieved representing 100% return rate. Mean and standard deviation was used to answer the research questions.

Results

Research Question 1: How entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration in Nigeria?

Table 1: Mean Responses on how entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration in Nigeria

S/N	Item Statements on how entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration through:	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
1	Creation of willingness in individual to seek for investment opportunities	3.54	.58	SA
2	Creation of willingness and ability of innovativeness and creativity on youth	3.59	.55	SA
3	Creation of willingness to undertake personal and financial risks	3.52	.43	SA
4	Creation of skill for seeing an opportunity where others fail do so	3.58	.62	SA
5	Creation of pedagogical programme, associated with inculcating entrepreneurial skills and qualities in the learners.	3.56	.37	SA
6	Creation of programmes that	3.59	.51	SA

	provide learners with the necessary entrepreneurial competencies			
7	Designing and developing entrepreneurial attitudes for future entrepreneurs.	3.54	.56	SA
8	Stimulating young people to think about entrepreneurship and the role of the business community in economic and social development.	3.54	.48	SA
9	Creation of opportunity to analyze rapid changes taking place in entrepreneurial environment.	3.58	.35	SA
10	Encouraging youth to consider self employment and enterprise creation as a career choice.	3.54	.28	SA
11	Exposing youth to practices/skills required in evaluating	3.55	.38	SA

12	business opportunities Encouraging youth to engage in vocational training	3.93	.31	SA
13	Provision of foundations for developing the flexible skills needed to participate in knowledge intensive economic activity.	3.54	.14	SA
14	Creation of ability in having a vision matched with focus and determination of building an enterprise.	3.97	.36	SA
Grand Mean		3.35	.44	SA

Table 1 reveals the mean rating and standard deviation of the respondents on 14 identified items ranges 3.52-3.97 are within the boundary limit of 3.49 -4.00. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed that the 14 identified items are means by which entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: What are the challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria?

Table 2: Data on the challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria

S/N	Item	Statements	on	\bar{x}	SD	Remarks
	challenges		facing			
	entrepreneurship		education			
	delivery		in			
	in		Nigeria			
1	Poor capacity of lecturers and instructors that anchors entrepreneurial studies in most Universities lead poor quality delivery			3.06	.39	A
2	Dearth of lecturers and instructors with practical training in entrepreneurship education			3.13	.42	A
3	Lack/absence of a curricular guide that inform a pedagogical delivery in the methodology of entrepreneurship education			3.58	.59	SA
4	Huge capital required to procure infrastructures needed to deliver quality and practical oriented entrepreneurship education			3.27	.58	A
5	Inadequate funding in entrepreneurship education			3.43	.51	A

	programmes			
6	Poor infrastructural support needed to deliver quality entrepreneurship education.	3.64	.42	SA
7	Lack of adequate policy framework that serve as facilitator for the entrepreneurial skills acquired	3.35	.54	A
8	Mechanical delivery method of entrepreneurship education	3.37	.58	A
9	Absence of research support and linkages	3.50	.59	SA
	Grand Mean	3.37	.51	A

Table 2 shows the mean ratings and standard deviation of the respondents on 3 out of 9 items in the Table with mean value range of 3.58, 3.64 and 3.50. This indicated that the respondents strongly agreed that the identified items are challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria. On the other hand, the mean ratings of the remaining 6 items are 3.06, 3.13, 3.27, 3.43, 3.35, and 3.37 respectively and fall within the boundary limit of 3.00 - 3.49. This indicated that the remaining 6 items were agreed challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery in Nigeria.

Discussion

The findings of this study with respect to the first research question revealed how entrepreneurship education can be used to steam poverty and youth migration to include; Creation of willingness in individual to seek for investment opportunities,

Creation of willingness and ability of innovativeness and creativity on youth, Creation of willingness to undertake personal and financial risks, Creation of skill for seeing an opportunity where others fail do so, Creation of pedagogical programme, associated with inculcating entrepreneurial skills and qualities in the learners, Creation of programmes that provide learners with the necessary entrepreneurial competencies, Designing and developing entrepreneurial attitudes for future entrepreneurs, Stimulating young people to think about entrepreneurship and the role of the business community in economic and social development, Creation of opportunity to analyze rapid changes taking place in entrepreneurial environment, Encouraging youth to consider self employment and enterprise creation as a career choice, Exposing youth to practices/skills required in evaluating business opportunities, Exposing youth to practices/skills required in evaluating business opportunities, Provision of foundations for developing the flexible skills needed to participate in knowledge intensive economic activity and Creation of ability in having a vision matched with focus and determination of building an enterprise.

These findings corroborated with the report of Ooi, Selvarajah, and Meyer (2011) that described entrepreneurship education as the scope of lectures, curricular and programmes that attempt to provide learners with the necessary entrepreneurial competencies, knowledge and skills, geared towards the pursuit of a career in entrepreneurship. Nwangwu (2006) viewed entrepreneurship education as the willingness and the ability of an individual, a firm or an organization to identify an environmental change and exploit such an opportunity to produce goods and services for

public consumption. Similarly, Ordv (2010) sees entrepreneurship education as the type of education given to a set of people to be able to instill in them the principles, skills and practices required to see and evaluate business opportunities, to gather the necessary resources and the desire to take advantage of them as well as initiating appropriate action to ensure success in any choice profession or occupation. It is the foundation for developing the flexible skills needed to participate in knowledge intensive economic activity.

The findings of research question two revealed the challenges facing entrepreneurship education delivery to include: Capacity of lecturers and instructors that anchors entrepreneurial studies in most Universities lead poor quality delivery, Dearth of lecturers and instructors with practical training in entrepreneurship education, Lack/absence of curricular guide that inform a pedagogical delivery in the methodology of entrepreneurship education, Huge capital required to procure infrastructure needed to deliver quality and practical oriented entrepreneurship education, Inadequate funding in entrepreneurship education programmes, Poor infrastructural support needed to deliver quality entrepreneurship education, Lack of adequate policy framework that serve as facilitators for the entrepreneurial skills acquired, Mechanistic delivery method of entrepreneurship education, Absence of research support and linkages.

The findings of this study is in consonance with the study of United Nations (2011) who stated that there are many reasons why people choose to migrate which include and not limited to; poverty, armed conflict, social strife, political turmoil, economic

hardships among others. People have moved from their home countries, for all sorts of reasons. Some are drawn to new places by `pull` factors, others find it difficult to remain where they are and migrate because of `push` factors. These have contributed in recent time to the movement of people which is also the reason why people have emigrant to other countries. The labour migration experiences can end up representing either an opportunity or a risky to youths and can lead them to decent work or it's very opposite; depending on policies and measures supporting them in such country as poverty has always been the reason behind their action. Similarly, Nwosu and John (2017) stated that the concern of unemployment in recent time has been one of the most discoursed of nations. Institutions has been turning out graduates that clog up the labour-market without job thereby, increasing the growth rate of unemployed youths in the nation. Unemployment is viewed as an economic condition in which individuals seeking jobs remain un-hired. It is also seen as the share of the labour force that is without work but available for seeking employment. The rising incidence of unemployment results in loss of income for individuals, reduces revenue for governments, hinders economic growth, and increases pressure on youths to migrate for better option in advanced countries.

Conclusion

Youth migrants constitute more than 40 per cent of the overall 232 million international migrants, and, being the most mobile social group; young people comprise the bulk of annual migration movements. While international migration represents an opportunity for youth to provide a better life for themselves and their families, pursue educational aspirations, improve their

professional skills and prospects, or satisfy a desire for personal development through the adventures and challenges that come with living abroad, the migration of youths takes place in the context of high youth unemployment and lack of decent work creation at home. The unemployment rate among youth in almost all the countries (Nigeria inclusive), is at least twice that of the general unemployment rate (ILO 2013). Unfortunately, as a result, many young migrants frequently get trapped in exploitative and abusive jobs, including forced labour, human trafficking and prostitution among others. In the context of this study, it is expected that entrepreneurship education which has the ability to instill in its recipients the principles, skills and practices required in seeing and evaluating business opportunities, gathering necessary resources as well as initiating appropriate action to ensure success in any choice profession or occupation has the capacity to stem the tide of poverty and youth migration if embrace.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Youth should be exposed to various entrepreneurship education programmes at all levels of education so as to emancipate them from the shackle of poverty and unwarranted migration.
2. There is need to create willingness in youth to seek for investment opportunities, innovativeness and creativity in business so as undertake personal and financial risks
3. Youth should be encourage to consider self employment and enterprise creation as a career choice through exposure

to practices/skills required in evaluating business opportunities

4. There should be adequate infrastructural support needed to deliver quality entrepreneurship education to the youths that will provide them with teaching, research, and engagement.
5. Relevant stakeholders should provide adequate policy framework that facilitates entrepreneurial skills acquisition among youth to curb migration and create identity affinity for the youth.

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GROOMING YOUNG PEOPLE FOR MINISTRY: FAMILY AND SOCIETAL INFLUENCE

Cecilia OMEIFE, EHJ

Abstract

Children, as we know, are very impressionable, so they deserve to be presented with what is virtuous and true during their formative years. The family and the larger society owe it a duty to influence young people positively while preparing them for their mission on earth. The truth taught to the child begins and is completed by introducing the child to God right from infancy. Parents must themselves be first of all those who uphold Christian values by their very lives so they can impact positively on the child who is now ready to be launched into the larger society. Growing up and interacting with his siblings, the young person is able to learn and acquire virtues such as: forgiveness, compassion, honesty, respect and piety and are able to uphold these as values. This learned behaviour is a positive contributory factor that can launch young person into ministry whatever state of life they choose or are called to. Society is both teacher and beneficiary of good formation of young minds and character, because it is these that in turn build and develops society. The peace and development a society enjoys is the fruit of society's investment in its citizens' moral, social and spiritual welfare particularly the training and welfare investment in its young population. Grooming young people for ministry is a worthwhile enterprise because family, church and society are the better for it to the glory of God.

Introduction

The concern for young people participating in the evangelical ministry of the church in response to Christ's mandate to the church to evangelize the whole world is borne out of the conviction that all – young and old alike, are invited to participate in the church's mission to evangelize the whole world. Making disciples of all nations is not in any way limited to the adult world. The church baptizes infants, making them members of the church (the Body of Christ) and Christ's disciples, therefore, children have the right to be introduced to the Christian life by their parents and all who are responsible for the formation of children so that they in turn begin to learn to share the Good News with others, starting with their peer. We cannot leave young people out of the Christian Ministry of evangelization – a mandate Jesus gave to his Church and he expects every member of his body (the Church) to be a part of it; Jesus himself said: *"Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these"* (Mt. 19:14). The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that *"the role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute, the right and the duty of parents to educate their children is primordial and inalienable ... showing themselves obedient to the will of the Father in Heaven. Parents educate their children to fulfil God's law."*⁴³

This teaching of the Church applies to both the content of the faith, which is the light under which all other knowledge is taught, and to the moral formation of children. The duty of

⁴³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, revised edition, Paulines/St. Pauls

parents and faith Formators of young people, as laid out in Pius XI's Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth, "consists essentially in preparing man/woman for what he/she must be and for what he/she must do here below, in order to attain the sublime end for which he/she was created. It is clear that there can be no true education which is not wholly directed to the human person's last end, and that in the present order of providence, since God has revealed Himself to us in the Person of His Only Begotten Son, who alone is 'the Way, the Truth and the Life', there can be no ideally perfect education (for Christians) which is not Christian Education." This therefore suggests that holistic formation and adequate information is crucial to preparing young people to participate zealously and courageously in the ministry of spreading the good news.

Ministry

Talking about ministry, our attention is immediately drawn to the priesthood and consecrated life; rightly so, because these states of life are specifically and uniquely offered to and assumed by persons called to share in the church's mission of evangelization by proclaiming the Gospel. Other states of life such as marriage and single life, even professional life also offer opportunities for evangelization and preparation for ministry. Ministry means service and it defines mission. We have established from the foregoing that Christian ministry of evangelization has no age definitions. From speechless infants to exuberant youth, witnessing to Christ can be achieved. In the Scriptures, Daniel is presented to us as an example of a young person who was nurtured in the ways of God and lived it out with great conviction and courage. Young people do not hide what they know; they

always want to showcase their knowledge and potentials. In the same vein, the gospel is to be spread like the fire that Christ has come to cast on the earth and wish it were blazing already. We can trust the firebrand enthusiasm of young people to help with the spread the gospel. The ministry of evangelization is fruitful and successful when convictions are built with the help of role models who themselves live with conviction the gospel values they profess.

Children, as we know, are very impressionable, so great caution should be applied when we present values and discipline to them during their formative years. This is particularly very important, because innocent and trustful as they are, children look up to us as persons they want to emulate; they trust the strength of our moral judgement to support them in accomplishing their beautiful life's ambitions so they deserve to be presented with what is virtuous and true. The family and the larger society owe it a duty to influence young people positively while preparing them for their mission on earth, this is because they have the right to be exposed to the truth and taught to live it with courage (cfr. *Mt. 10: 7-8*). It is the responsibility of the family and the larger society to model an authentic way of life for young people this will help to achieve positive influencing. We shall now explore how the family and society influence the readiness of young people for ministry.

A. Family influence

God wants us all to be the leaven in the dough of society; in the same way, he wants us to do this when we are properly prepared. The job of parents and teachers in this exercise is to prepare their children to be ready for the service to which God will call them.

Here then, the need for furnishing the children with authentic truth must of necessity be fully implemented, so that they may speak “in season and out of season” of the faith they have imbibed. To do this properly, children need to be given both the information and the intellectual formation which will enable them to answer the assaults on their religious practices and understanding that will inevitably occur. Their ability to tackle such assaults will strengthen their convictions, and make it possible for them to evangelize the world when the time for that comes.⁴⁴ The family plays this role in several ways that we shall now examine.

Family as First school of evangelization

The family must educate the children for life in such a way that each one may fully perform his or her role according to the vocation received by God.⁴⁵ Christian families offer a special contribution to the missionary cause of the Church by fostering missionary vocations among their sons and daughters and more generally, by training their children from childhood to recognize God’s love for all people.⁴⁶ We must believe that children understand when we speak to them, all we need to do is to trust that they are listening to us when we speak to them about the need for their participation in talking about their Christian faith by teaching and sharing it with others especially among their peers, by so doing we build their sense of responsibility and

⁴⁴Pope Pius XI, *Encyclical on the Christian Education of Youth*

⁴⁵Pope John Paul II, *The Family in the Modern World*, Encyclical Letter (*Familiaris Consortio*); Paulines Publications Africa.

⁴⁶*Ibid.*, pg. 67

confidence and help them to joyfully take up the challenge to evangelize.

Family as Teacher of Values

When parents live with conviction the good values they teach their children, young persons imbibe these values, making it their very personal life forming principles to such a point that they now become staunch witnesses themselves. Convinced of what they now know to be good values, they take it with them wherever they go. Though they may feel embarrassed and disappointed, they are not deterred by the bad example of people from whom they expect the 'golden' behaviour. Within the family, there are two major key players as far as the family influence is concerned; they are parents and siblings. It is important to acknowledge also that grand-parents play very important roles in directing the child's developmental inclinations towards the good, the true and the beautiful; and also, may be stronger influence in supporting and nurturing vocation to the priesthood and consecrated life, especially since children generally adore their grand-parents particularly grand-mothers. Grannies have the tested and trusted experience that help them appreciate the potentials of their grand-children and they actually have a keen understanding of their interesting questions, genuine confusions and beautiful aspirations, they enter into dialogue much more readily with their grand-children than do parents with their children. Many of us owe our generous response to embrace our vocation to the influence of our grand-parents who made us develop a strong sense of commitment toward God and towards the things of God. Our grand-parents taught us piety and the fear of the Lord with great ease, good rapport and utmost gentility. We seem to have an

'automatic' level playing ground where even parental discipline coming from them is heartily welcomed.

Having said this, let us take a closer look at the relationship and influence of parents and siblings on the missionary vocation of young persons.

Parent's Factor

Parents provide the home, which is the basic nursery for the child, and they are expected to give nurturance to a child's potential and direct it along the path of personal growth, such directives will not only develop the child, but also contribute to the overall good of society. Expectations are to be matched with what efforts are made to build the child's personality and character. Parents should be exemplary. They must lead the child out from ignorance to the Truth, providing them with education that not only acquires knowledge, but one which helps them cultivate virtue and opens their mind to the reception of truth. When this is done, the young person is able to establish personal guiding principles for himself. "The parent's ministry of evangelization and catechesis ought to play a part in their children's lives during adolescence and youth, when children as often happens, challenge or even reject the Christian faith received in earlier years"⁴⁷

The truth taught to the child begins and is completed by introducing the child to God right from infancy. Inculcating religious values in a child sets the pace for training and discipline in the right direction. Parents must themselves be first and foremost those who uphold Christian values by their very lives,

⁴⁷*Ibid.*, pg. 66

because their lives well lived, is the truth the child needs to know to help him build his own convictions and guiding principles, and from the home, the child is ready to be launched into the larger society. That is why “Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the ‘first heralds’ for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church. A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith and remain a support for it throughout one’s life.”⁴⁸ “Parents should welcome and respect with joy and thanksgiving the Lord’s call to one of their children to follow him in virginity for the sake of the Kingdom in the consecrated life or in priestly ministry.”⁴⁹

Parents have the duty to raise their children with keen appreciation and attention to each child’s unique nature and temperament and this goes a long way to affect how the children in the family relate to and influence each other, we realise also that siblings’ influence on each other is as important as the relationship between parents and children so we take a look at siblings’ influence on each other with particular reference to how each child develops a mature and healthy social relationship that is required for a fruitful endeavour in evangelization.

Sibling’s Factor

The first experience of community for a young person is the family. Apart from our parents, we have our brothers and sisters

⁴⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, revised edition, Paulines/St. Pauls

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, #2233

together with whom we are raised. Our siblings have particular influence on each one of us, because more often than not, we spend more time with our siblings during our formative childhood years than with our parents. "Connections with our siblings may be the only intimate connections that last. Sibling relationships continue for better or for worse. Your brother will always be your brother and your sister will always be your sister."⁵⁰

In an ideal setting where siblings grow up together and must necessarily acquire and practice certain virtues if they are properly guided and supported, relating with his siblings and peers, a child develops his ability to live his life with consideration for others. "Siblings can add so much to life. For instance, they teach one another important social skills. If the family unit is healthy, brothers and sisters create opportunities to learn to get along with others. Siblings learn how to use power, to give and take, to communicate and to get along with someone different from themselves. They learn just how far they can go in dealing with someone and what they can get away with. All of this is preparation for adult life."⁵¹

When properly guided and mentored, siblings are able to learn and acquire virtues such as forgiveness, compassion, honesty, respect and piety and are able to uphold these as values. This learned behaviour is a positive contributory factor to launching young persons into ministry whatever state of life they choose or

⁵⁰H. Norman Wright; *Sisters and Brothers forever; Bond or Bondage*

⁵¹*Ibid.*, pg. 23

are called to and this further enriches the general society into which these young persons bring their potentials harnessed from their home of nurture.

The society in turn has the capacity to influence young persons, it either helps them sustain already learned behaviour or deviate from it, and thus it is expedient that societal influence is given consideration.

B. Societal Influence

The family, being the first setting where the child learns social interaction, prepares the child to be launched into the larger society as its integral member and an essential contributor to its growth. It is in this connection that the society plays the role of both teacher and beneficiary of good formation of young minds and character, because it is these that in turn builds and develops society. Order and discipline in society is not achieved in isolation of proper formation of the character of young people. The peace a society enjoys is the fruit of society's investment in its citizens' moral, social and spiritual welfare, particularly the training and welfare investment in its young population. For instance, in our Nigerian society, the training of a child used to be considered the duty of the community; each person's child is everyone's child. This duty used to be discharged with a great sense of commitment and responsibility, but this is seen to be disappearing from our so-called modern culture; to the extent that correcting another person's child has become a thing considered unwarranted interference, yet we all in some way or the other must pay the price for unruly youth behaviour. Nonetheless, if the society expects good and holy men and women to minister to them as consecrated persons and clergy, the society must understand that

it is its primary duty to train young people well. What is required are the first basic lessons in obedience, chastity, generosity, sacrifice and a life of prayer, because every young person is an ambassador of his family and the society he comes from.

The church has always been at the forefront of reminding and educating parents about their role in the proper upbringing of their children, she has never relented in this effort because she recognizes her role in building citizens for heaven and it starts with grooming young people for ministry.

Role of the Church-as-Family of God (Ecclesial Community) in grooming young people for ministry

The church cannot afford to be unconcerned about what happens in society or where society is headed with its self-destructive philosophies. She is an integral part of society as much as the spiritual forms an important aspect of the holistic nature of the human person. It behoves the church community therefore to form and also enhance the ongoing formation of the whole human person, directing his growth towards eternal life. This formation starts from even before a child is born. The adult persons coming together as man and wife to form a family is prepared by the church to see themselves as collaborators with God in his divine act of creation. The church anticipates the birth of a child as much as does the expectant parents. When the child is born, he is received by both parents and church community as not only God's gift to the family and the church, but as a new member with innate potentials, rights and subsequently, duties towards the biological, social and ecclesial community. It is for this same reason that the church baptizes infants trusting that parents will

help them grow in the faith into which they have been baptized and when they grow up, will themselves hand on the faith with a sense of responsibility and commitment towards the advancement of God's Kingdom.

Necessity for ongoing formation of young persons

Ongoing formation of the individual is a participation in the recreation of the individual and renewal of society, the church achieves this through catechesis and the exemplary life of its clergy and consecrated persons whom the people look up to as role models. They are particularly referenced to young people as persons who should be admired and imitated. Priests and consecrated persons are inserted into the society as leaven so that by their word and example they may present the gospel and its values as a way of life that should be followed. Young persons these days want to be taught a way of life that is authentic and true, and they want to live this life radically. They do not want mediocrity, they do not want their potential for growth to be limited, and neither are they hoping to meet with disappointments. They simply want to go all the way to living fully the life presented to them as the way to live. Young people dare to believe that they can 'do all things.' They see themselves as the revolution the world needs, so that things will be as they ought to be. Needless to say, that the world is facing moral and spiritual poverty of severe magnitude; this is in addition to the material poverty that is globally prevalent. Our Nigerian society has its own share of this poverty and we seem to be giving up on the young as our 'bright future.' Come to think of it! How much attention and character formation have we given to the young

members of our society? It appears they are left to determine for themselves what way of life is the best.

Now, concerning the high rate of crime and kidnapping in our society; who is to blame? Material poverty seems to be the main reason proffered. While we can argue that material poverty has a role to play, we cannot deny the fact that moral decadence and spiritual poverty are major factors engendering the high rate of crime among young persons in our society today. If the government of our nation decide to neglect their duty to provide an enabling environment for the holistic formation and growth of young persons; the Nigerian Church cannot afford to shy away from its responsibility of grooming young people for ministry. The poor must see in us a sign of hope. We ought to do everything we can to alleviate the poverty of the people. While it is the duty of government to provide food, shelter and other basic social amenities for its citizens, we cannot afford to fail in our own responsibility to enrich young persons in other important areas of their lives - sound spiritual and moral character. This is why we think that material poverty is not sufficient to turn a person into a notorious criminal, but spiritual and moral poverty can, even in the midst of material wealth.

When the fear of the Lord ceases to exist or to rule the lives of people, we can expect the worse. Young Persons suffer these, largely because the adult community and all who should know have swept the fear of God under the carpet. Those of us who should be living and modelling a life of simplicity now live ostentatious lives and the poor live beside us and are watching! Before their very eyes, we use what we do not really need and we

waste what others could benefit from; 'deprived' of their rights, the poor get angry and plan 'vengeance' and when they begin to unleash this, we all suffer - good and bad alike. Young persons are more vulnerable to becoming a dangerous threat to the security of society because they are the ones that feel neglected with respect to social security. It is necessary that every civil policy drawn should always take into consideration Youth development and empowerment; this will ensure that they always have a fertile ground to release their innate potentials.

Launching young people into ministry

Young people are the best for evangelizing themselves, but they have to be properly groomed and their potentials nurtured for ministry. Working with young people has armed me with great faith and hope in their potential as ambassadors for Christ. Young people are not essentially 'rebels,' they have potential energies ready to erupt! Properly channelled, their energies become a ready tool for effective evangelization.

Let us quickly examine the various developmental stages of a young person considering its importance in grooming young people for ministry.

Infants: Young people are prepared right from infancy for the ministry that is the fruit of their Christian vocation. Infancy is the stage in the life of the young person when he learns the basic rudiments of the faith from his parents and family environment. The child learns to see God as a loving and provident Father in heaven to whom the child learns to turn his heart. The child learns to say short simple prayers as dialogue with this hidden God

whose word he will soon begin to hear. It is a work of prime importance. It demands great love and profound respect for the child who has a right to a simple and true presentation of the Christian faith.⁵²

Children: the school-age young person begins to be taught the Christian life in such a way as to prepare him to become inserted into the life of the Church. The child is prepared for the celebration of the sacraments through catechesis which communicates to the child the joy of being a witness to Christ in ordinary life.⁵³ At this stage, when properly mentored, the child learns to speak the truth. He learns not to lie and to avoid other vices commonly found among children and they influence their peer to toe the same path.

Adolescents: it is the time of discovering oneself and one's own inner world, the time of generous plans, the time when the feelings of love awaken with the biological impulses of sexuality, the time of desire to be together, the time of a particular intense joy connected with the exhilarating discovery of life.⁵⁴

Required at this stage is a catechesis capable of leading the adolescent to re-examine his life and to engage in dialogue, a catechesis that presents Christ as a Friend, Guide and Model, capable of being admired and imitated.⁵⁵

⁵²Pope John II, *Catechesis Today*, Apostolic Exhortation (Catechesis Tradendae); Paulines Publications Africa

⁵³*Ibid.*, pg. 34

⁵⁴*Ibid.*, pg. 35

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, pg. 35

The Young: this is the moment of great decisions. Although the young may enjoy the support of the members of their family and their friends, they have to rely on themselves and their own conscience and must ever more frequently and decisively assume responsibility for their destiny.⁵⁶

Catechesis then takes on considerable importance, since it is the time when the Gospel can be presented, understood and accepted as capable of giving meaning to life and thus of inspiring attitudes that would have no other explanations, such as self-sacrifice, detachment, forbearance, justice, commitment, reconciliation, a sense of the Absolute and the unseen. All these are traits that distinguish a young person from his or her companions as a disciple of Jesus Christ.⁵⁷

Catechesis thus prepares the young person for the important Christian commitments of adult life. For example, it is certain that many vocations to the priesthood and religious life have their origin during a well-impacted catechesis in infancy and adolescent. From infancy until the threshold of maturity, catechesis is thus permanent school of the faith and follows the major stages of life, like a beacon lighting the path of the child, the adolescent and the young person.⁵⁸

⁵⁶*Ibid.*, pg. 36

⁵⁷*Ibid.*, pg. 36

⁵⁸*Ibid.*, pg. 36

Challenges

The society in which we live, to a large extent often neglects its duty to train and empower young people and this constitutes one of the several challenges to grooming young people for ministry as outlined below:

- Some parents are not good character formators, either because they were not well formed themselves or they never internalized good formation.
- There are too many distractions these days that parents need to work extremely hard to make sure their children are not lost in the midst of these distractions
- These young ones are confronted by multifaceted challenges especially challenges to their faith as Catholics
- Growing moral decadence in the society, wrong use of the internet and social media, all pose very important challenge to good character formation
- Education these days, stress academic excellence at the expense of spiritual and good moral formation
- Too much reliance by parents on school and catechism classes for the training of their children
- A good number of Parents spend so much time running around to be able to fend for their families, hence the inadequate/low quality time spent with children at home leading to increased number of miscreants among the young population.

Coping with the challenges

We cannot give up; there will always be more ways than one to solving a problem. The prevailing challenges must be faced with courage and the determination to win the battle against juvenile

moral decadence, as such, all hands must be on deck to help children and young people build up their own personal principles and groom them for ministry. In scripture, God tells us that we should train up a child in the way he will go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. We must see the overwhelming importance of our role as educators of our children, both in terms of their intellectual and their moral formation, and give ourselves wholeheartedly to this task. This will not provide us with a life of easy luxury, but it will provide us with a life work deserving of the expenditure of all our gifts.

1. We must give them good conscience formation since they are in a society that is fast losing sensitivity of conscience
2. They want to hear something said to them - something practical and practicable
3. There is need to engage them frequently in maturity drilling conversations, this will help them nurture a morally sound, spiritually edifying and intellectually sound argument and judgement.
4. We need to make sure they are not just regurgitating what they hear on TV, Films, and Radio etc.
5. They should be taught to consider prayer time as sacred and precious
6. We should help them to learn how to say and value private prayers and devotions. They should be encouraged to have their own private altars for their personal and private prayers.
7. Difficult children could be God's way of telling us that we are not perfect, so we ought to be highly dependent on him. It trains us in acquiring the virtue of patience, while we keep

teaching and training until God allows our efforts to yield fruit.

Conclusion

The work of handing on the faith to children, in the sense of facilitating its expression and growth, helps the whole family in its evangelization mission. They naturally begin to spread the faith to all around them, even outside of the family circle. Children who grew up in missionary families often become missionaries themselves; growing up in warm and friendly families, they learn to relate to the world in this way, without giving up their faith or their convictions.⁵⁹

The greatest legacy the older generation can leave to the younger generation, is the good example of their lives, only then that they can have the courage to say ‘we are handing over heritage to younger ones’, because they trust the generation they have formed in good life just as Christ taught his disciples by the example of his life, and was not afraid to commission them to continue his work on earth. “The family is thus an agent of pastoral activity through its explicit proclamation of the Gospel and its legacy of varied forms of witness, namely solidarity with the poor, openness to a diversity of people, the protection of creation, moral and material solidarity with other families, including those most in need, commitment to the promotion of the common good and the transformation of unjust social structures, beginning in the territory in which the family lives,

⁵⁹Pope Francis, *The Joy of Love*, Apostolic Exhortation, (*Amoris Laetitia*); Paulines Publications Africa

through the practice of the corporal and spiritual works of mercy.”⁶⁰Young people will always honour noble heritage; and as we have seen, there is need to always furnish children’s minds and hearts with *the true, the good and the beautiful*, therefore every effort at every level that is put into grooming young people for ministry is a worthwhile enterprise because family, church and society are the better for it to the glory of God.

⁶⁰*Ibid.*, # 290

**THE CHURCH OF THE YOUTH AND THE YOUTH OF THE
CHURCH:
A PLEA FOR THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF
CHRISTIANITY**

Jean-Paul TAGHEU, OP

Abstract

If we consider the average age ratio of the population, the Church of Africa is also a young Church with many young people. She can even be said to be the Church of the youth. But on the ecclesiological, pastoral, political, economic and social side, there can be some concerns and uncertainties to question and address, for the youth to be the present and future of Christianity in Africa. How can the African youth be the present and the future of the Church? This is the main question treated based on the two African synods held so far.

Keywords: Church, youth, education, transmission, future of Christianity, holiness and witness, African humanities and antiquities.

Introduction

If we consider the nineteenth century as the time frame of the modern age for the systematic Christian mission and evangelisation all over Africa, it can be said that the African continent is entering its third century of Christianity. Comparing to Europe, which has two millennia Christianity, African Christianity is still very young. Besides, if we consider the average age ratio of the population, the Church of Africa is also a young

Church with many young people. She can even be said to be the Church of the youth. For “Young people make up the majority of Africa’s population.”¹

According to the UN’s Population Commission Report, there is an immense population growth in Africa. As for the statistic of The World Bank, the population of people living in cities in Africa will double in the next 25 years reaching 1 billion in 2040, and tripling its current population by 2050. In 2017, for instance, 60% of the population in Africa was under 25 years of age. By an estimated projection, in 2100, Africa will be 4.2 billion people, representing around 80% of the global population.

Looking only at this African population rate, through the games of number and quantity, it is good news to have such a Church in Africa made up, in the majority, by youth. The match, in terms of the future, is then already won. But on the ecclesiological, pastoral, political, economic and social side, there can be some concerns and uncertainties to question and address. How are the youth of that African Church? Do young people really have the feeling of belonging to their Church? Are they fully integrated and participative in the life, action and mission of the Church? What does that mean to be young in the Church today? In the context of African political, economic and social poverty, how can a Church be built for the youth and the youth for the Church?

¹ Benedict XVI, Post-synodal Exhortation *Africae munus* On the Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 2011), 60.

Our aim is to propose some suggestions for the building of a Church for the youth or the youth for the Church as being the present and future of Christianity. It is not an easy task. In engaging this issue, our reflection consists mainly of re-reading the two African synods on the parts concerning the youth in the Church of Christ. It is to see the concern for and the call up of the youth in the teaching *magisterium* so far, so as to prospect new provisions and focuses for the betterment of the Church's young men and women in the twenty-first century.

In the first part, we shall speak of the two synods of the young African Church as way to state their contents regarding the youth. The second point shall address some worrisome problems of the youth today, in the socio-political and economic context. In other words, being a young Church and young people in the young African Church has some challenges. The question of the youth as the present and the future of the Church shall our concern in the third part. For the youth to be the present and the future of the Church, we need a certain theology of the youth, of their education in the Church and a good ecclesiological and pastoral program for the care of the youth. That is why, in the four parts, we speak of patrimony, transmission and reception. The last part of our reflection proposes an integral human education for our youth, with an attention to ecology, African history, antiquities and humanities.

Two Synods For The Young African Church Since Vatican II Council

The Youth in the Magisterium of the African Synods

Despite the fact that, Africa is said to be the future of the humanity,² since Vatican II Council (1962-1965), only two synods of Bishops were held in Africa. This is a sign of her neglect by the elder and mother Church. The first synod was held in 1994, on mission and inculturation. The outcome was this famous apostolic exhortation: “The Church in Africa and its Evangelizing Mission Towards 2000”. The second synod took place 15 years later, in October 2009 under the theme justice, peace and reconciliation. The post-synodal exhortation outcome was: *Africae munus* or The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace. “You are the salt of the earth ...You are the light of the world” (Mt. 5: 13-14)”.

Ecclesia in Africa, the very first post-synodal exhortation, given at Yaoundé on the 14th of September 1995, is made up of 144 paragraphs. It contains 21 times the word “young”, among which 12 pertains to the youth. Seven times we have the words “youth”. Only number 93 is devoted to young people.

Africae munus: post-synodal exhortation given at Ouidah, in Benin Republic on the 19th of November 2011. Even though shorter in length compared to the first post-synodal exhortation, it is a made up of 177 paragraphs. Of the whole book, 5 numbers are devoted

²See Abdou Diouf, “Afrique, le Continent du Futur”, in René Dumont, *L’Afrique Noire est Mal Partie* (Paris : Seuil, 2012), Préface, x.

to the youth (nos. 60-64). The exhortation counts 4 times the term youth and 27 times the term “young”, among which about 24 are related to the youth. This already shows, since then, less consideration for the young or the lack of a proper theology on the young, in the teaching magisterium of the Church. Added to this is the age rank of Cardinals. Though we are having more and more young bishops, it is not the case among the Cardinals, especially regarding African Cardinals.

In fact, after the consistory of 28th June 2018, the Church counts now 224 Cardinals among which 124 are electors and 100 non electors. Of these 124 electors, 16 are from Africa representing 13%. Fifty three from Europe representing 42%, 13 from North America representing about 10%, 16 from Asia representing about 13%, 22 from South, Central America and the Carrabian Islands representing 17%, and 4 from Oceania representing 3%³. None of the 124 Cardinal electors, is less than fifty. The youngest is Cardinal Dieudonné Zapalainga from Central Africa Republic, who is 51; followed by Konrad Krajewski (55 years of age), and Soane Patiti Paini Mafi from Tonga, Oceania, who is 57. The majority of them are above 70. This configuration does not really favour the youth in the Church, in terms of age, nor does it favour the ecclesiology of justice and communion, in terms of their apportionment per continent.

³ See “Composition actuelle du collège Cardinalice,” https://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Composition_actuelle_du_Coll%C3%A8ge_cardinalice (accessed September 10, 2018).

For an African Council

In fact, because of the Global South, that is, the global shift of the gravity's centre of Christianity from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere,⁴ Africa is not only the crib of humanity, but now also the present and future of Christianity. In regard to this, there is a need today for the universal Church, for Rome (the seat of the Roman Catholic institutions) to invest in the Church in Africa. This demands to cast a deep look into African political, social and economic predicaments for the sake of the universal Church. In the context of neoliberal capitalism, with the flames and smokes of secularism, de-christianisation and atheism, somehow fostered and carried out under the wind of globalization, the Church's survival and revival lies in the Global South, mainly in Africa, Latino-America and some parts of Asia. It is especially for young people of Africa that the horizon and zenith of the Church is shining, so as to rekindle the world of Christianity and the Churches of old Christendom, in Europe and North America, gravely marked by the post-Christian age of secularisation.

On this, we address a new appeal not only for other significant African Synods, but especially for an African Council (Africa I Council), in order to respond to this sign of times in the universal Church; to listen to this new wind of Pentecost of which this global shift is about. This appeal for an African Council was already launched in the seventies by theologians like Eboussi-

⁴Cf. Jean-Marc Ela, *Repenser la Théologie Africaine* (Paris : Karthala, 2003), 164 ; *Ma Foi d'Africain* (Paris : Karthala, 2009), 148 ; Walter Kasper, *L'Église Catholique* (Paris: Cerf, "Cogitatio Fidei", 2014), 58.

Boulaga⁵, supported by Pierre Meinrad Hebga, and some other theologians following the dynamic of reflections inaugurated under the impulse of Alioune Diop.⁶ This council, if accepted and held, will help us to re-organize the Church and the battle of survival and revival of the entire Church from the South. Pope Francis' papacy is under what he called: a poor Church for the poor, meaning a great new beginning of mission and evangelisation, no more from the centre, but from the peripheries⁷ or from the "underworld", the less privileged and the marginalized.

The world is turning the more and more its attention to Africa, often quoted as the continent of the future. It is one of the reasons why some rich countries's economic programs are organized considering human and natural opportunities found in Africa. What they are doing at the political and economic levels are also possible at the ecclesiological and Christian ones. The universal Church should also be involved.

⁵Fabien Eboussi-Boulaga, *A Contretemps. L'enjeu de Dieu en Afrique* (Paris : Karthala, 1991), 71.

⁶See Jean-Marc Ela, *Repenser la Théologie Africaine*, 392.

⁷This was already the intuition of Jean-Marc Ela in the eighties and nineties. See Jean-Marc-Ela, *Ma Foi d'Africain*, 188-193 ; *Innovations sociales et renaissance de l'Afrique noire. Les défis "du monde d'en-bas"* (Paris : L'Harmattan, 1998).

Youth, Politics, Economy And Society: Some Worrisome Problems

African Youth: inheritances of debts, poverty, and misery

Since the year of independences in the sixties, the political and economic mismanagement of the African nations' affairs brought about discouragement of young people in political commitment, and a total despair in the future. Since the dawn of the years 2000, great are the numbers of African young people whose dream is to travel oversea, so as to flee from misery and poverty in their own nations and continent. Many of them landed in the Mediterranean Sea, where they died and were buried, as they could not cross. Between 2000 and 2015, about 23, 000 people died when trying to cross the Mediterranean Sea to Europe⁸. Among them were about 3, 000 African young people, exiling from hunger and misery. Indeed,

The economic situation of poverty has a particularly negative impact on the young. They embark on adult life with very little enthusiasm for a present riddled with frustrations and they look with still less hope to a future which to them seems sad and somber. That is why they tend to flee the neglected rural areas and gather in cities which in fact do not have much more to offer them. Many of them go to foreign countries where, as if in exile, they live a precarious existence as economic refugees. With the Synod Fathers I feel the duty to plead their cause: it is urgently

⁸See Cardinal Woelki, "Allemagne: les Cloches Sonnent pour les Réfugiés Morts en Mer," <https://fr.zenit.org/articles/allemande-les-cloches-sonnent-pour-les-refugies-morts-en-mer/> (accessed June 18, 2015).

necessary to find a solution for their impatience to take part in the life of the nation and of the Church.⁹

More than twenty years after the first African Synod, this situation has not changed. It has become even worse, with civil wars, wars of minerals,¹⁰ wars of petroleum, of political and economic interests like those of South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Côte d'Ivoire, not to mention more others. Besides the secular trauma and the after-effects of the slave trade, imperialism, the apartheid, colonization and the post-colonial dictatorial regimes, there is a raise of new forms of political and social oppressions and enslavement all over Africa coming from the West and from within Africa itself. This is why the second African post-synodal exhortation stated: "Africa's memory is painfully scarred as a result of fratricidal conflicts between ethnic groups, the slave trade and colonization. Today too, the continent has to cope with rivalries and with new forms of enslavement and colonization."¹¹

Worthy of note, the African youth of today and tomorrow has, as their main inheritances: sorrows, worries, wars and their inherent consequences of exile, constant transhumance, historical wounds and memory's wounds, debts, etc. African political rulers have eaten their daily bread and stolen that of the future generation. They have stolen and kept for themselves alone the public goods

⁹John Paul II, Post-synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* on the Church in Africa (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 2015), 115.

¹⁰Mgr François-Xavier Maroy, "Aidez l'Afrique à Combattre les Causes des Migrations", in *La Documentation Catholique* no. 2528, Octobre 2017, 126.

¹¹Benedict XVI, *Africae munus*, 9.

and resources of their people. They have handed on as legacy to their youth debts to pay for years.

Being Young in an Impoverished and Very Indebted Continent

Somewhere else, young African people are the prey for religious fanaticism like Boko Haram, Al Shabab, Daesh or ISIS where they are often recruited for terrorist and kamikaze missions. Part of the reasons for this can be listed out as: the unemployment, the lack of good education, social integration and fittings for self-development; malnutrition, the lack of health care and social services, the widespread deterioration in the standard of living,¹² and some other settings for poverty and misery. Young African people are today also the easy prey for opportunism, careerism, and some cultic societies and cultic practices like homosexuality for which they are conditioned to get jobs and offices of little or great scopes.

There are still some other factors added; like: nepotism, non-respect of constitution, election rigging, corruption of politics and economy, neo-political and economic colonization of some western and now Asian countries. "Against the background of widespread poverty and inadequate medical services the Synod considered the tragic scourge of AIDS which is sowing suffering and death in many parts of Africa,"¹³ especially among young people. As such, one can have some concerns. What is the political, economic and social future of the young people, when some African leaders and governors were born in power, gets

¹²See John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 114.

¹³John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 116.

hold of the power and do not want to release offices for the youth? What is the political, economic and social future of the young people in Africa, when many of their corrupt elders have misused and embezzled public funds and national resources? How can they be youth in a Church living within so poor and very indebted countries?

With regard to this, *Ecclesia in Africa* stated some twenty three years ago: "In the present world order, the African nations are among the most disadvantaged."¹⁴ She is one of the most disadvantaged continent and yet the most rich continent in the world, in terms of natural resources. Thus, it is wrong to consider Africa as a very poor and indebted continent. Rather it is good to say a continent impoverished and indebted by some inhumane agents of human destruction. Due to the world's political, economic and social injustices, Africa is still like a feast's cake enriching other nations and continents to her own detriment. At the first African Synod, Africa was compared to the young man whipped, robbed, stripped and abandoned half dead (cf. Lk 10: 30-37).¹⁵ Some rich countries of the West with the complicity of some African leaders maliciously support and favour Africa's underdevelopment rather than her real development.

In Africa many youth are not scholarised. Those who went to school and even graduated are unemployed. Those who are employed are not paid accordingly. It was against this background that the second African Synod for Bishops stressed on

¹⁴John-Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 114.

¹⁵See John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 41.

the questions of justice, reconciliation and peace. For the future of the young generation is sacrificed at the altar of injustices, wars, dictatorship, corruption, theft, embezzlement and similar predicaments. Hence, there is a need for a just order in African Nations, and between Africa and western Nations concerning the politics, economic relationships and social affairs.

“In the first place it involves working for improved socio-political relations among nations, ensuring greater justice and dignity for those countries.”¹⁶ Secondly, it involves a new generation of African leaders arising from the youth with a new way of politicizing, with a focus stretched on the pursuit of common good, social justice, equity, human dignity and integral human development. In this regard, we propose education and conversion of mind and life; a proper theology of the polis and of citizenship as one of the ways out of these challenges. Today, the hope and the restoration of hope for the future of this continent lies mainly on the African youth, if only they are well oriented, trained and empowered to carry out their responsibilities regarding challenges for which they are called to accept.

Youth: The Present And Future Of The Church

The Church of a Young Man: Christ

At the start of what would become the Church was a baby named Jesus, Emmanuel, Son of God and Son of man, born for the world from a young Virgin called Mary (cf. Lk 1:26; Ga 4:4). The Baby-Son-of-God and Son-of-Man grew up. He established the Church (cf. Mt 16: 16), loved her and gave himself for her as a spouse to

¹⁶John-Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 114.

his beloved (cf. Ep 5: 23-30). Jesus was about thirty when He started his ministry (cf. Lk. 3:23). Companions He chose to help out his mission were also mostly young, many of them still living with their parents (cf. Mk 1: 19-20; Mt 4: 21-22; Mt 20:20).

Being young, the years of his ministry were also very short: three years organized around three Jewish Pasch (cf. Jn 2: 13; 6:4; 12: 1; 19: 28, 31). With this at hand, it is neither pretentious nor fallacious to state that the Church was founded by a young man of about 30-33 years old, who loved her and died young because of her. Being a young founder of the Church and to later on die for her, is very significant to the youth of today, in terms of identification with the Church and commitment to her mission. The Church belongs to a young man, the eternally young man,¹⁷ Christ, just as young people belong to Christ.

In this sense, Christ's exhortation and command that we should let the children come to Him (cf. Lk 18: 16) also connotes that we should allow the youth to come to Him. The fact that "young people make up the majority of Africa's population"¹⁸ is, therefore, an important opportunity to seize, in terms of theology and ecclesiology of the youth, in the universal Church. "This youthfulness is a gift and a treasure from God for which the whole Church is grateful to the Lord of life. Young people should be loved, esteemed and respected."¹⁹

¹⁷See Paul VI, "Message aux Jeunes," in *Vatican II: Les Seize Documents conciliaires*, (Montréal/Paris: Fides, 1966), 653.

¹⁸ Benedict XVI, *Africae munus*, 60.

¹⁹ Benedict XVI, *Africae munus*, 60.

We are accustomed with the saying that the youth are the future of the world and the society. In claiming this, it is as if, we are excluding and depriving them from the present. Yet they also belong to the present. Young people are not only the future of the Church and of the world. They are the present of the Church and of the world, insofar as the future starts with the present. “The Church in Africa knows well that youth are not only the present but above all the future of humanity.”²⁰

Ecclesiology of the Youth and the Youth in Ecclesiology

Through the youth of the Church, the Church is, though old, forever young. If not for the youth, the Church would never have had any hope in history. With her youth, the Church is old or older regarding her past, yet like a baby in a crib, a young person regarding her present and future. Through and with her youth, the Church has a vocation of constant renewal. A “renewal within tradition”²¹, that is, a renewal of continuity in the tradition she carries along with her.²² Just like a tree which constantly renews its leaves and rejuvenates itself through them, so does the Church with her young people.

Our duty is to awake in young people the image of a Church that ensures, and shows them the way which gives meaning to their lives. The future of the Church and of Christianity should be prepared with the youth, insofar as they are to the Church like the

²⁰ John-Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 93.

²¹ Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering, *Vatican II. Renewal Within Tradition* (Oxford: University Press, 2008).

²² Benedict XVI, “A Proper Hermeneutic for the Second Vatican Council,” in Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering, *Vatican II. Renewal Within Tradition*, ix-xv.

spring's bud to the threes. They constitute the new leaves and leaven for the mission and growth of the Church in the world. Thus, we should not put them aside from the decision making of the Church as we usually do. They should be part of the decision making of the Church at the lower and higher level, in their parishes and in their dioceses, in diocesan curia just as in the Roman curia. Thus, it is not an exaggeration to call that Rome should create a sacred congregation for the youth of the Church with a young cardinal as prefect. If it is impossible to have an entire congregation fully dedicated to the youth, we should at least create a pontifical council for youth.

The youth of the Church are in view to rejuvenate her and her institutions. That is why we speak of the ecclesiology of the youth and the youth in ecclesiology. For if the youth is the future of the Church, the Church also is the future of the youth because of her enduring patrimony; and because of Christ her Head, who "is the same yesterday and today and forever." (Heb 13:8).

Patrimony, Transmission And Reception: From One Age To Another Patrimony and Transmission

The Church's Crypt: The past of the Church is not obsolete or out of use. The Church's crypt contains an enduring treasury for an everlasting age, because Christ is an ever ancient, an ever new and an eternal treasury in the Patrimony of the Church He transmitted to the Apostles. This treasury has been handed on through ages. That is why, at the inaugural Mass of his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI called upon the youth to have the courage of accepting Christ and to give up everything to Christ. He said:

“Dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ – and you will find true life.”²³ Christ gives everything, because He Himself is everything good a human being can need and long for; He gave all because He is all.

With this regard, rejuvenate the Church does not mean changing or destroying her root and source. The leaves rejuvenate a tree without cutting off its roots. Thus, what we need, is to have the wisdom of the past, the realism of the present and the intelligence for the future. In short, being the present and the future of the Church means renewal within tradition, renewal in continuity and permanence of the Source. It is an arm against the spirit of *tabularasa* of modernity and of the denial of all that was before hand.

In fact, modern people have the temptation to start everything fresh, as if the world just began with them. Yet, according to Alfred de Musset, we came and were born later in a so old world.²⁴ In other words, the Church did not begin with us and shall not cease after us either. She has a very long and furnished *curriculumvitae* (life’s profile) throughout the ages and human history. She has an everlasting history, which can trace back to God Himself through Christ, her alpha and omega, her beginning and ending (cf. Rev 1: 8; 21:6; 22:13). The present youth of the Church have to write their own history after the footsteps of all

²³ Benedict XVI, *Africae munus*, 64.

²⁴ See Alfred de Musset, “Rolla”, in *Poésies Nouvelles* (Paris : Charpentier, 1857).

the saints of the Church counted in thousands of thousands. Thus, being young in the Church does not mean ignoring the root and source of the Church; the root and source we all come from as Christians.

However, young people cannot transmit what they do not receive, nor forward very well what they have not be well forwarded. That is why there should be an intergenerational policy, both in the Church and in society. Some African countries and some African dioceses fall into crises after the passing away of their heads of state or the retirements of their bishops respectively, just because the succession was not well prepared.

As noted by Ela, “the future belongs to those who shall know to hand on to the present generations the reasons to live and to hope.”²⁵The youth of the Church can properly effect this only with a life of witnesses and witnessing of Christ’s life and Gospel, as the Saints did. Christ, the Owner and Founder of the Church, was very young. He was and is “the companion and friend of youth.”²⁶Following and imitating Him in His apostolic life and holiness, young people can make changes and transformations in the Church and the world. That will be the youth’s own way to renew and refresh the Church from within.

With regard to this, the recent papal exhortation is calling to holiness as way of happiness and freedom.²⁷ Preaching the Gospel

²⁵ Jean-Marc Ela, *Ma foi d’Africain*, 194.

²⁶ Paul VI, “Message aux Jeunes,” 654.

²⁷ Francis, *Gaudete exsultate* (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 2018), 100-102, 108.

in its radicality, today, means to join holiness to our words. Holiness has authority and power in the preaching and transmitting process. We cannot be a preaching men and women of God if we are not ready to sign up our preaching with holiness. Being ready for holiness, in today's context of terrorism and Christian persecution, also means to face and suffer martyrdom, individualism, secularism, indifference, relativism, refusal to social commitment and some other plagues mutilating the heart of the Gospel proclaimed.²⁸

As the Church, we cannot be, or claim to be, cantors of tradition and transmission, but being absent from the web's world of digital communication and information. Young people are a great opportunity to mark the Church's presence in this new world's media of digital technology, which constitute another means for transmission and education.

An Integral Human Education Of The Youth To Prepare the Present and Future: Teaching the Youth

In the address to the youth at the closing of Vatican II Council, it was said: It is you who are to receive the torch from the hands of your elders and to live in the world at the period of the most gigantic transformations ever realized in its history. It is you who, receiving the best of the example of the teaching of your parents and your teachers, are to form the society of tomorrow. You will either save yourselves or you will perish with it.²⁹

²⁸ Francis, *Gaudete exultate*, chapter three.

²⁹ Paul VI, "Message aux Jeunes," 653.

Preparing the present and future of the Church means teaching the Youth. If we teach the youth today, we are preparing their future and ours. We are preparing the future of the Church. Even when they are still delinquent and prodigal, we still need to implore God's mercy upon them and strive for their education. They are hardened of heart and wasteful today, just as tomorrow they might become blessed heralds of the Gospel and heroes Church.

The question of education was boldly highlighted in the two African synods. Education is the key to the present and future of each human institution and society. If you teach your child, s/he will teach the future. But if he or she remains uneducated, similarly his/her future too will remain uneducated. He or she will make the future analphabetic.

In a great number, the poor of the future will mostly be counted among those who did not go to school, to the true school of integral humanism. Many of them are found in Africa. Yet, it is through education that we hand over patrimony received. Hence, there is a link between education and transmission, education and tradition. In other words, without the education of young people, the Church cannot pass on the treasure of revelation received from Christ to the coming generation.

To succeed in this, "young people need witnesses and teachers who can walk with them, teaching them to love the Gospel and to share it, especially with their peers, and thus to become authentic

and credible messengers.”³⁰Hence, the famous statement of blessed Paul VI is still current. “Modern man [or woman] listens more willingly to witnesses than to the teachers, and if he [or she] does listen to teachers, it is because they are witnesses.”³¹

Catholic schools and education should be at the fore-front of education as proposed by *Ecclesia in Africa*.³²Many of the first African leaders were trained by the missionaries. In training them, missionaries did not only transmit intellectual and moral education, but also that of spirituality and theology, a certain integral human formation. But today, missionary schools are among the most expensive schools in Africa. The poor cannot afford tuition in Catholic schools today, whether at the primary, secondary or higher levels. If, for example, the very first batches of African leaders freely benefited from Catholic education in the sixties and seventies, today, with neoliberal capitalism, it becomes difficult, especially for the Catholic schools, to train for free as it was formerly. The Church is challenged by a growing materialistic society, with its dictatorship of money that makes the cost and standard of life beyond the reach of the poor. Catholic schools of or for charity become less and less possible, and the poor are the first victims.

³⁰ Benedict XVI, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini* on the Word of God (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 2010), 104; and *Africae munus*, 61.

³¹ Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii nuntiandi* on the Evangelisation (Vatican City: Libreria Edictrice Vaticana, 1975), 41.

³² See John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 102.

An Integral Human Education of the Youth

The education of the youth has to be holistic and integral. It should be considered according to a wholly human dimension. It should be an integral human education bringing together the intellectual, moral, technical, economic, social and spiritual aspects of education. In fact, the youth of today are living in a cosmopolitical environment. The Nations of this global world are more and more interdependent. The destinies and problems, concerns and joys of different people are also interconnected.³³

In this regard, the youth should be taught human ecology, in which the dignity of the human person is rediscovered and valued in the image of God. They should be taught interreligious and ecumenical dialogue. They are called to the culture of political, religious and cultural differences, especially within the context of tribal and ethnic groups which, sometimes, bring about tribal and ethnic violence in some parts of Africa. For about three decades now, there has been an escalating growth of wars and violence. As such one may call the youth of these decades the generation of war and terrorism. But the culture of diversity and complementarity, in a global and multipolar world, might arm them against religious intolerance, fanaticism, and terrorism, not without shaping in them the spirit of human pacific coexistence. In fact, given the prevalence of violence and barbarity of their time, some young people praise more a warrior's victor than a peace-doer. Therefore,

³³ Cf. John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 114.

The *pastoral care of youth* must clearly be a part of the overall pastoral plan of Dioceses and parishes, so that young people will be enabled to discover very early on the value of the gift of self, an essential means for the person to reach maturity. In this regard, the celebration of World Youth Day is a privileged instrument for the pastoral care of youth, which favours their formation through prayer, study and reflection.³⁴

In his “seven necessary wisdoms for educating the future”, Edgar Morin speaks of teaching the human condition which is complex, multiplex or multidimensional.³⁵ For him, integral human education also underlines the question of teaching human earthly identity,³⁶ which demands to take into consideration the question and planetary destiny of the human being, so that it should have a global and planetary consciousness. Human earthly citizenship signifies to study and comprehend humanity as planetary destiny.³⁷ Indeed, ecological and planetary crises gush forth from a certain lack of sufficient understanding of the human global and earthly identity.

The youth of today is or has to be concerned with the questions of climate change and ecological challenges. It is to echo this that Pope Francis speaks of “ecological education and spirituality.”³⁸

³⁴ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 93.

³⁵ See Edgar Morin, *Sept Savoirs Nécessaires Pour l'Éducation du Futur* (Paris: Unesco, 1999), chapter 3, in <http://www.agora21.org/unesco/7savoirs> (accessed March 18, 2018).

³⁶ Morin, *Sept Savoirs*, chapitre 4.

³⁷ Morin, *Sept Savoirs*, chapitre 7.

³⁸ Francis, *Laudato si*, chapter six, 202-246.

This education has in view an alliance or connectivity between humanity and natural environment.³⁹This earth is humanity's first fatherland or motherland. It is part of human condition, because of what it provides. Human global and planetary consciousness would help us to avoid some predicaments related to racism, ethnicism, xenophobia, contempt, hatred and many other discriminatory acts in human relations and interrelationship.⁴⁰ What is at the root of these plagues is human incomprehension. So, in fostering and teaching human mutual comprehension, humanity as body would live and trek towards a true pacific coexistence.

Rediscovering and Teaching African History, Humanities and Antiquities

As much as possible, African humanities and antiquities should be rediscovered and taught to young African people, so as to build and boost African and national patriotism; to help them love and value their numerous and rich cultures.⁴¹ Gustavo Gutiérrez calls it a liberation by faith, in order to drink from one's well.⁴² In fact, it is a holistic liberation, which will rise up from a deep African conscientiousness intake or undertaking, that our future and destiny is not in the past, present, values and culture of other people,⁴³ no matter how beautiful and better they might be.

³⁹ Cf. Francis, *Laudato si*, 209-215.

⁴⁰ See Morin, *Sept Savoirs*, chapitre 6.

⁴¹ Read on this Jean-Philippe Omotunde, *Manuel d'Études des Humanités Africaines*, volume 1 (Paris : Menaibuc, 2007).

⁴² Gustavo Gutiérrez, *La Libération par la Foi. Boire à son Propre Puits*, 2^{ème} édition (Paris : Cerf, 1988), 22.

⁴³ Fabien Eboussi-Boulaga, *A Contretemps*, 13.

Apart from the poor political, social and economic contexts in Africa, the tragic flux of African youth to Europe and for ventures of fortune and hazard, all over the world, are also due to cultural alienation and a certain lack of African self-esteem. *Ecclesia in Africa* has already made an appeal in that direction to the youth: "Dear young people, the Synod asks you 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 Christianity."⁴⁴

Conclusion

The Church is the Church of the youth. She belongs to them as their mother, as the house for the Kingdom of God in which young men and maidens together, old men and women, children are called to praise and worship (cf. Ps 148:12). The youth are the youth of the Church. They belong to the Church as her children, the bud for her present and future. The Church cannot survive without the youth, nor the youth without the Church.

To build a Church with the youth means to look into some worrisome problems at political, economic and social levels, such as corruption, bad governance, dictatorship, war, social justice, unemployment, etc. African leaders should not transform the political office as their sick bed and grave, to the detriment of the

⁴⁴ John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 115.

young generation. This is why there is a need for justice, in politics, economy and society; and the politics, the economy and society of justice with common good, human dignity and human divine vocation as its focal point.

Finally, for youth to be the present and future of the Church and of the world, integral human education should be fostered and implemented in the formation of the youth. This presupposes rediscovering and teaching African history, humanities and antiquities. As such, if the youth is the present and the future of the Church, the Church also is the present and the future of the youth.

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GIVE WINGS AND ROOTS TO YOUNG PEOPLE: THE MESSAGE AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS 2018 FOR AFRICA AND CONSECRATED LIFE

An exclusive Interview with Bishop John Akin OYEJOLA (Catholic Diocese of Oshogbo, Nigeria, and a delegate of Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria at the Synod of Bishops 2018).

The Catholic Voyage: *Good afternoon! Thank you for the opportunity for The Catholic Voyage to discuss with you about the Synod of Bishops on the Young People, Faith and Vocational Discernment. We would like you to share with us your thoughts on this Synod and some aspects of its message, and help our readers to better understand it especially in relation to the young people and the Consecrated life in Nigeria and possibly Africa.*

Bishop John Oyejola: Thank you. It is my joy to share my views with you.

The Catholic Voyage: *What are your general impressions of the journey of this Synod of Bishops, which is now coming to its conclusion?*

Bishop John Oyejola: It has been an interesting, challenging, brain storming experience and it spurred lots of reflections. I am very positive and optimistic about it, because it is a way of building future Church. We focussed on exploring deeper and showing that the youths are grace, strength and blessing for the Church. We therefore must seek to deepen their faith and build their capacity to be credible witnesses and productive citizens.

The Catholic Voyage: *Shortly before the Synod began; we heard in the news media that some groups say their voices are not represented in the Synod. From your experience, knowing the happenings inside the Synod, as a matter of fact do you think the voices of the youth are being heard at the Synod?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Absolutely! It is not possible to consult every person. However, many groups of young people were consulted, and all the five continents were represented. Even the bishops were represented throughout the five continents. And we spoke for our continents. So, all our youths were brought in to the table and the young people made interventions; we discussed issues that are facing them today.

The Catholic Voyage: *As you listen to the other Synod Fathers and participants in the Synod, have there been some proposals in particular that have struck you concerning how the Church-as-Family of God can effectively transmit the Catholic faith to young Africans today?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Yes. Basically, we discussed more in depth the issues facing our young people. They are issues like the breakdown of marriage and family life, sexuality crises, the lack of jobs to do, the lack of good governance cascading into more complex issues such as compulsive migration, loss of hope and violence. These are issues that really affect young people.

The Catholic Voyage: *There have been many Synods of Bishops since Vatican Council II. What, if any, do you see as being unique about this particular Synod? Practically what is the relevance of this Synod to Nigeria and its young people?*

Bishop John Oyejola: What I see as unique about this Synod is the desire to go out and work, to put into practice our resolutions. We made some concrete proposals on what to be done. Part of it is that they expect dioceses to have youth centres, places where the youth can come together. They expect us to go back and see how we can start creating jobs in a little way for our young people, to make them committed and see how we can equip them into the faith, and help to strengthen and deepen their faith as well.

The Catholic Voyage: *Some young consecrated persons are also participating in the Synod. This is encouraging in the sense that the Church thus recognises the presence and role of young consecrated persons in society and church. They represent all young consecrated persons in Africa and the world. What do you consider the key message of this Synod to Consecrated Persons, at least in the present-day Nigeria?*

Bishop John Oyejola: One of the main issues raised about consecrated life is that those who are gaining admission into Institutes of Consecrated Life are members of the youth, they are young people. So, they should let them have the same mind that they are missionaries as well. Because they are very special to God's mind, they should see themselves in the image of Jesus when he was their own age. Jesus was already acting, bringing the Gospel to everyone. Young people, too, are challenged to behave like Jesus, not to look or focus at failures of those who are ahead of them but they must to look at Jesus as their ideal and live that life.

The Catholic Voyage: *One of the essential topics in the Synod's Working document is "discernment". Does theme appear as a key issue during the discussions at the Synod? If so, what in your view are the requirements and practical implications of discernment in the accompaniment of young people, including candidates in formation for Consecrated Life and Priesthood and in the diocesan pastoral ministry?*

Bishop John Oyejola: We talked about *discernment* not on its own alone, in abstract as it were, but in line with accompaniment, a journeying with. So, discernment is in two ways: you discern and I discern, and you tell me what you want to do. And I look at you, what is happening in your life, and help you to see things, assisting you to look at issues in this way or may be in other direction. So, we journey together, accompanying the individual. So, discernment is a process which you do, not just once but throughout the journey, as you journey together, in truth and mercy. That can be done in the atmosphere of friendship, care, openness prayer, and so on. These are some of the things that were suggested.

The Catholic Voyage: *I am curious from the viewpoint of pastoral experience. You have been a priest for many years now and you are a young Bishop. Pastorally, is there something in particular that gives you hope for the future of the Church in Nigeria, particularly in relation to the young people in Nigerian dioceses?*

Bishop John Oyejola: This question is of personal interest to me. I have been a youth Coordinator for my diocese and when I came into the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, I was chosen as Episcopal Chaplain for the Youth in the country, and that is the

reason why I am in this particular Synod. Yes, I am very optimistic about the future of the Church in Nigeria. In Nigeria, there are many dioceses that have their chaplain for Youth. Even the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria has an office for the youth. And there is a priest there coordinating the programs for the youth throughout the country. We have a kind of outlined programs, such as: the training of chaplains, the training of the president, secretary and treasurer of youth groups in all and each dioceses together, to empower them, to give them a sense of leadership. In many dioceses they are doing a lot of great things for the youth. Take Oshogbo for example, we are doing so much. Recently, because of the situation in the country, we have started a Catering Centre for young people. Almost all the first set got jobs instantly with pay above the minimum wage in Nigeria. The first set comprised of 32 people, the 2nd group had 47 people enrolled, and now we have 65 people doing the course. They are growing in number. The elite people in the region need persons to assist them. For example, families need person to take care of their children, or take care of the house for them. However, they need people who are trained. Not just trained, but trained from good centres, such as are the Catholic training centres. So, people appreciate that the Catholic training centres offer quality training and they are ready pay money for the services offered. Graduates from these centres, once employed, would have free housing as well, and they have one month salary free during their holiday period, making it thirteen months' salary in a year. So, it is a good package for them. If they are able to manage and save money very well, in no time they can start their own business as well. So, this is really helping young people. This idea is coming up also in the area of agriculture. Part of what we discussed at the Synod is:

How can we get financial support for those who have plans so as to help them carry out such plans? For example, for such program, in the case of my diocese, I need tractors. One tractor will cost me about sixteen million Naira (which is about US\$40,000) in Nigeria. If I can get somebody who can get me two tractors, in five years time I would have produced more than forty young people who will be self-sustained, having their own farms. This has a ripple effect, because it's going to produce more food for the country, they are already self-employed and gradually the problem of unemployment, the lack of jobs, will reduce; there will be enough food for many regions of the country, and we shall have more peace.

The Catholic Voyage: *Let us talk about the Catholic Youth Organization of Nigeria (CYON), present in many dioceses. The Synod of Bishops is challenging to all countries of the world. But in Nigeria particularly, how will the Synod help to revamp, renew and reinvigorate the CYON such that it can produce creative and courageous initiatives, and be more practical and solution-oriented?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Young people in Nigeria are very vibrant and active. What we need to do more is for the Bishops to have more interest in it, by training more priests for that purpose. Right now, in Oshogbo diocese for example, we are training two priests. One of them is at the Salesian Pontifical University, Rome, and another is in Kenya, such that one is coming back next year and the other is spending another two years before returning. When they come back, they will be two priests fully assigned to that particular apostolate. They will know what to do because they are trained for that particular apostolate. You do not send just

anybody for that such special apostolate; no, send someone who is already skilled in that apostolate, prepared for that mission. Because it is a serious mission. I will try to sell that kind of idea to other bishops: please train people for that area and bring them to that job. Even when they finish training, do not immediately take them away; rather, let them go and practice that apostolate, let them do work a long time in that field. But it is not enough to train people. They need resources, too. Youth apostolate is a kind of venture on which you have to spend money. In the long run, it will yield interest for the Church. This is very important.

The Catholic Voyage: *For nearly over fifty years or so the Church in Africa has been talking about money for its evangelizing mission, particularly in terms of ensuring her financial self-reliance and self-sustenance. African theologians and pastors have discussed it. Some had even proposed a moratorium of the Churches in Africa on the financial request and dependency on funds from abroad. Obviously, the urgent appeal for financial self-reliance -- which is understood to be complementary to Christian solidarity -- is in addition to the equally widespread felt need for cultural self-reliance and self-reliance in personnel. And you have just referred to this problem now: the need for money. Money influences people's way of thinking and their planning and execution of projects. Now, while it seems the Catholic Church in Africa has by-and-large obtained the self-reliance in personnel, the other serious questions remain. Where will the money for pastoral care of young people and for other apostolates come from? Concretely, what are the specific measures, and the strategic plans and policies of the Church in Nigeria, indeed in Africa, so that in the next 20-40 years, the Church in Nigeria would not still be in the situation we are today but rather, as a matter of fact, she will financially rely on and sustain herself and her evangelizing mission, at least for the most part?.*

Bishop John Oyejola: Attaining self-reliance for a local Church is determined mainly by the prosperity of the local people otherwise the Church would have stopped being a local church. It is they who would enrich the church. Our effort has been to improve the lot of our people. If we don't invest on them, we would eventually spend whatever we invest elsewhere on them except we are no longer the compassionate face of Christ. The kind of governance in Africa is not helping issues at all. Many dioceses are trying their best. As said earlier, in my diocese we have gone into farming in order to attract and support the local people in farming. There is land everywhere. We train farmers free of charge to improve their yield and marketing skills. An interesting part of it is that when we train these young people, some money will come into the diocese. We are even thinking of the area of agricultural value chain. In this way the church can buy their produce at fair price to process or store in order to reduce the loss suffered by farmers from unfair middlemen. We continue to lobby the government to look into the unfair market situation for rural farmers through relevant policies and initiatives.

Also, we face a lot of challenges. We have to pay the school fees of some of the children, then also the hospital bills. We cannot close our eyes to some of these problems when the government is not doing its part. So, there are lot of areas or avenues through which the little money we have goes out. But many dioceses in Africa, particularly in Nigeria, are making efforts to be self-reliant and self-sustaining. Truly, it is not a good thing that we are always going out to beg for funds. Yes, this frequent practice does not give you, as Africans, dignity and sufficient freedom.

The Catholic Voyage: *In what concrete ways do you suggest Bishops and the Religious women and men can collaborate in the pastoral care of young people in the evangelization of Nigeria, since we all are co-responsible for it?*

Bishop John Oyejola: In this sphere of youth apostolate, I see that Priests and Bishops are men. If we can have more female religious who can collaborate in that area of apostolate, it will be better. When I was a chaplain the young ladies will come and talk to me about things that have to do with women. I had to say, "Come and talk to the Rev. Sister here". It is only on one-on-one, because the Rev. Sister is easy for me to approach. But if a Sister is not there, and the young girls need help, it may become difficult to accompany. This is one of the areas of ministry where collaboration is necessary. The Religious Superiors could allow the Sister to work in the diocese in the youth ministry. The Religious Institute can either train them and allow them to work in that apostolate in the diocese; or the bishop trains them and give the trained Sister a sufficient time to do the apostolate in the diocese. It is not just nor proper that the Bishop trains a Sister, and then immediately after her Superiors come to say they need her for other place or/and apostolate. So, if the Bishop trains a person, her Institute should give the person the opportunity and time to actualize the goal, the purpose of the training and see the result for which the person was trained. No doubt, there are many other areas of apostolate where Bishops and the Religious can and should work together in the diocese. It is not enough to be praying. Prayer is very important and necessary. But prayer without work is dead.

The Catholic Voyage: *Most of us know the story of the young African St. Augustine and his conversion. But, today, it may be asked: Who are other models, if any, of holy life that we can present to the young people in the Africa?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Of course, there are people whom we can present to young people in the area of holiness and sainthood. The purpose of church naming saints is to challenge people, as she says: "Look, these people we are proclaiming saints were once human beings like you. He or she lived a holy life, following Christ. It is now your own turn to be likes that person". There are lot of people you see as ideal people: we have St. Kizito, St. Mother Theresa of Calcutta, St. John Paul II.... In our own areas, too, in Africa, there are lot of people living among their parents and families. They know those who are living an exemplary, holy life. The children and young people see us; you can't hide from them. They know our sincerity. That is why many of them, when they see how sincere you are they open up themselves to you for help. They know there are lot of people who are making efforts every day to be holy. They are making effort in the right way and people know it. And these young people see them and they try to emulate them and model their life after them. So, you see them coming for prayers, for pilgrimages, for adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and so on: it is because they are encouraged by other people's lives which are modelled after Jesus' life and the life of other saints, too.

The Catholic Voyage: *What is your dream, if you have one, for this Synod and for Nigeria? As a pastor, what do you envisage as the more important and outcome of this Synod of Bishops for the Africa?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Yes, I have a dream. As a pastor I dream always. My first dream is that I want to see the local church giving wings to our young people to fly, and giving them roots to be firm on ground. It simply means spurring them to have the confidence to explore life and the same time be firmly rooted in the faith to be resilient in the face of difficulties and be able to witness even unto death. That is, I will ground them in their faith, no matter what the challenges are, because we cannot live as Christians without challenges. It is normal to have a cross; everything has its own trademark. The only trademark of a Christian is the cross. When we have a challenge, that is our own cross. So, we have to encourage our young people to know that when they have challenges, they are not to run away from them; they are to face the challenges with the hope that they are going to overcome them. They must trust in Christ, because Christ is the Emmanuel: he is always with us, till the end of time. That is my dream.

The Catholic Voyage: *All the themes of the Synod are important for the universal Church. Though you may have hinted at it, one must ask: specifically, what issues raised at the Synod do you consider more relevant and urgent for the Church in Nigeria of our time?*

Bishop John Oyejola: I have mentioned some of them: attending to challenge of loss of hope issuing from break down in family life, poverty, war, violence, immigration and environmental degradation. For instance many young people from Benin City, Nigeria, are a case in point. Recently some Rev. Sisters went to give a workshop to children and young people in Benin City concerning migration. Many of the girls are still saying, "Let us go and experience what others are experiencing abroad" Even when these girls are told that it is dangerous, very risky, they still wish

to go out. And I read in the news yesterday that the Government officials are even doing home-to-home education, asking families not to let their children migrate abroad. In fact, when they migrate they are not prepared psychologically for it. They don't have the proper skills. When they get there, they are not going to get a job; so, what are they going to be doing there? Often, they become prostitute, and this go along with human trafficking. These are the major issues in Africa: attending to poverty; how to help us reduce war and violence, and then migration of our young people and thus they lose their faith, lose their cultures, and lose their lives as well.

The Catholic Voyage: *This year, 2018, we celebrate the golden Jubilee of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM). Africa is blessed with having a very large percentage of young people in the world and in the Church; the number is growing. In your view, in what ways can the Church-Family of God in Nigeria, including Consecrated Persons, concretely receive and advance the implementation of the Synod of Bishops on young people? Are there going to be strategic plans by the Bishops and their dioceses in this regard?*

Bishop John Oyejola: One issue we have in Africa is the language. We are already talking in that area. We see that the President of SECAM should try to call all, or at least the representatives of each country in Africa together, table this matter and let us have concrete plan. It should not just be a concrete plan: there should be a follow up to it, an evaluation of it after some years, to see: How far have we gone? What have we achieved? Where do we want to go? This is exactly what we have in mind.

The Catholic Voyage: *You highlighted the important and necessary issue of strategic planning and periodic evaluation by the SECAM after this Synod. At the same time, consider that, hopefully, very many people (even outside the Catholic Church) will read the final document and message of the Synod from different perspectives and contexts. As an African, what particular issues do you see that young people should be engaged with, and committed to? What do you consider to be their own roles, what should they expect from the Church? The diocesan Bishops will do something in favour of the youth, but what are the young people to do?*

Bishop John Oyejola: What we expect from the young people is to co-operate with the plan of the Church. Young people can dream very big. They want to become President of the nation in two or three years. Let them dream, but they should listen to experience of life, cooperate with the plan that the Church is already putting in place for young people. As I said earlier, I am happy that among those I trained as a caterer one of them was a graduate. I was happy; he came to me to say thank you very much. I said to him, now with this your new certificate, if one certificate is not working, the other will work for you. In the same way, if some of the young people can humble themselves and be open to corrections and directions, I think they will do very well.

The Catholic Voyage: *in what practical and specific ways do you envisage and hope that the diocesan Bishops and the Religious Institutes can work in collaboration to facilitate and effectively advance the reception and implementation of the deliberations of this Synod the pastoral care of young people?*

Bishop John Oyejola: The first thing is for each diocese to have diocesan pastoral plan. The Pastoral plan is a roadmap developed together. In my diocese, all the Religious have a copy of the Pastoral Plan. They know where they have to come in; and after finishing that, we had a meeting with all the priests, and a meeting with all the Religious men and women. Everybody knows where they come in. That gives direction to all pastoral initiatives. But if there is no kind of specific pastoral plan, a road map, there will always be a problem. I think every diocese should have the Pastoral Plan, as a road map. In this way you do not start afresh every time. Our diocesan Plan lasts for five years. After five years, we will do evaluation, and then rewrite and update, considering: What have we done? What have we not done? What are the ways forward? We draw a new pastoral plan for another five years, If possible, we organize a Diocesan Synod where everybody participates for us to grow, and move forward.

The Catholic Voyage: *In the light of the interventions at the Synod of Bishops, what do you think are the possible implications and prospects of the Synod for (a) the formators in our Formation Houses and Seminaries, and (b) Vocations Directors?*

Bishop John Oyejola: Of course, the Synod dwelt on this issue. A particular view was pushing everything to the seminary and formation houses, it appears that there will be too many programs for the Seminary and they will not have enough time to carry out these programs. The formators themselves must be ready to take the work of formation as a real vocation. It is like Eli and Samuel. They are to *discern* with the young people; they are to journey with them. Not all of them will become priests or Brothers, or

Sisters. But let them see that, yes, you are good person; however it is not in this place you are going to thrive or blossom. The candidates themselves must be ready, and be open; they have to be "friends" in the journey, not a kind of master-slave relationship, but friends, those who are working together, in accompaniment. This is very important. And we expect them to be well prepared; not everyone should enter the seminary. Those who have the aptitude, the skills, and the interest are to be considered. All this, of course, also applies to those who aspire to enter into Formation Houses of Religious institutes.

The Vocations Director, too, has a responsibility. The Vocations Director should not have a particular interest in this or that person. There should be no God-fatherism there, and no tribalism. That is why we talk about accompaniment and discernment. Even if it is my brother who wants to enter the seminary or the Formation house but does not have the aptitude and other important requirements, I will have to tell him, "Brother, this is not your way. You will not be happy here. Everybody is looking for happiness".

The Catholic Voyage: *You made an intervention on Formation and empowerment of Catholic Youths in Africa. What did you tell the members of the Synod?*

Bishop John Oyejola: I have shared a part of what I said at the Synod during this conversation. Here is my intervention (*He shows the written text of his intervention at the Synod, which is completely presented below. Ed.'s Note*):

As many African states (Nigeria inclusive) are still in the process of maximizing their full economic potentialities, the Church in Africa is also consistently growing as the faith is taking firmer root in the continent.

Both the African state and Church, however, are confronted with a threat that might not only shatter her dream but also pose a serious crisis to the entire globe. I am referring to the tragic condition of youths in Africa.

Youths and children make up about 63% of our population. Unfortunately, up to 71% of them are confronted with the threat of uncertain future as they languish in pitiable conditions. Most of them work hard to secure not just their own future but those of their families as their aging parents are frequently denied of their pensions and very few are capable of providing for the family. It is sad to mention that even though Africans have strong bond with their root and heritage as a people, over 60% of African youths are convinced that migrating to the western world is the sole security for their future and that of their families.

Almost 7 or 8 out of every 10 young people believe that migrating away from home holds the key to their future. A considerable number of these youths lack formidable formal education and knowledge of technical skills. A number of them lack the proper mental, physical and social preparation for migration. Yet they are often desperate and determined to do so through often life-threatening means, due to the dire economic and political situation of the continent.

The conditions in which many of these young and vibrant Africans migrate are miserable and inhuman. In the search for greener pastures, there is often the loss of core cultural values and moral principles. They become easy pawns for abuses of every sort and are often victims of traffickers and captives of modern slave traders *cum* owners.

I am of the opinion that more pastoral aid and support should be given to the youths. The youths should be better catechetized and well-grounded in the social teaching of the Church in a manner that they are able to make mature decisions and learn to turn deserts into lush gardens. The Church has to find means of providing technical support for skilled and unskilled youths, thereby filling up the gaps created by successive political administrators. A wholesome mental formation and reorientation will go a long way in producing creative and passionate youths who will be totally dedicated to the task of building their nations and correcting the mistakes of the past.

The Catholic Voyage: *Finally, what word of advice and encouragement do you have for the Formators in the Formation Houses and seminaries, the Vocations Directors, and Christian youth leaders in Nigeria drawing from your experiences these weeks of the Synod of Bishops?*

Bishop John Oyejola: First, for the formators. Formation can be challenging. When I was a youth chaplain, I would not take nonsense; and so they gave me a nickname: "Marshall", a difficult man. Yet, they will still come back to me, when they want the truth. Many of them did not like me. So, I was not doing things

for them to like me. I was doing things for them to be good people. But in the long run, they not only like me, they love me. So, I will encourage the formators not to do things to make them become popular among the seminarians or among candidates for Consecrated Life. But they should do things that would make young people and candidates in formation see the Formator as somebody who is truthful, sincere and direct. Because you cannot lie to young people. If you lie to them today, tomorrow when they discover you have lied to them, they will hate you forever. But today, when you are doing the right thing they may not like you, while in the long run they will see you did the right thing and will come to love you. In a word, formators may find some challenges in their apostolate, but they should not give up but must continue to strive and do the best they can.

So also for the Vocations Director, and the Youth Leaders. They should just do the right thing. All of us are called to be witnesses to the truth. There is only one Truth, and that is Jesus Christ.

The Catholic Voyage: *Thank you for the time and the opportunity to share with us your thoughts concerning the Synod of Bishops on young people as it relates to Africa, especially Nigeria, and the Consecrated Life today.*

Bishop John Oyejola: It is my joy, Fr. Ogunu.

INTEGRAL FORMATION, THE COMMITMENT AND WITNESS OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND CONSECRATED PERSONS IN AFRICA

*An exclusive Interview with Archbishop Anthony MUHERIA
(Catholic Archdiocese of Nyeri, Kenya, and a Delegate of the
Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops at the Synod of Bishops,
Vatican City, 2018)*

The Catholic Voyage: What is your general impression of the Synod of Bishops now approaching its conclusion?

Archbishop Anthony Muheria: First and foremost, the Synod is a good experience. From all over the world we are able to share ideas and experiences. We see the Church in a wider context. Certainly, it has been a very good, positive experience. As well, the presence of other auditors has added a bit of spice to the Synod. You are able to see and hear the presence of young people, who also helped us in the moment of discernment. We have spoken a bit about that. It is a very good experience.

It is a wake-up call to us bishops, because I think it has been an abandoned sector of our pastoral. So to pay attention to them in a very specific way, and not merely pay attention to them as just a sector of the pastoral but thinking specifically that it is they who are going to carry the Church into the next level or frontier. Therefore, it is either we are going to strengthen their faith, so that it gets stronger, and so we are going to have better families; or, on the contrary, we don't do it and the Church will suffer the consequences of malnutrition of the next generation. So, the

Church must take to heart the issues of: how do we meet the needs of the pastoral care of the young people; how do we change the methods and means of the pastoral care of young people; and how we give them a central role in the efforts to organize it. So, the Synod has been a very good experience for reflection and, as I said, it is wake-up call to bishops, it gives us time to think, so that when we go back to our Bishops' Conferences, we are ready to start some of the things we have heard here (at the Synod) while we await whatever will come from the Holy Father.

The Catholic Voyage: African young people are awaiting and expecting a lot from this Synod. What are the reality and principal problems of young people in Africa, say as distinct from other regions? What specific relevance has this Synod to young people of at this time in Africa, at least in Kenya?

Archbishop Anthony Muheria: My thoughts are both on Kenya and, even though it is difficult to speak of the whole of continent, I know the feel in Africa is more or less very similar. The reality of the Church is a mosaic; the problems of Europe are very different from the problems of Africa. But we need to listen to other parts because now the global world is inter-connected. We must also contribute the many good experiences we have had in Africa. In Africa the principal problems that worry young people are: formation for vocations, employment, and education.

At the same time, in Africa we have many young people who are in the Church, who are close it; they are very happy, and are proudly aware that they an integral part of the Church. Young people are the joy of Africa. Remember that the huge percentage

of the youth in the Church today is from Africa – and from Asia, if we may add. So, the future of the growing church is in Africa. Thank God, the young people are not running away from our Churches in the strict sense. They are still connected to us. The years of youth must be years of joy. We must take away all this pessimism and negativity, and give optimism, hope, happiness so that they can enjoy their youth, with its problems, but be on top of them. Pope Francis is talking about accompaniment.

African young people face some unique and concrete problems, distinct from those of Europe. First of all, there are many young people in the Church in Africa, who are happy in the Church; we have vocations. The problem is to form those vocations, to give them hope when there is hunger, when there is poverty.

In addition, employment is a very big problem in Africa. Young people don't have jobs, so they don't have hope. Africa's young people also have the problem of ethnic hatred, which is very strong. We must talk to them about that, about the need to live charity, to accept others, even if they are different, of other ethnic groups.

Thirdly, there is the problem of Education. Many of them don't have an adequate level of education. They haven't gone beyond primary and secondary school. The majority of young people do not have career. That's a big problem for their ideals and their dreams. In addition to these concrete things, there are also problems of corruption in Africa. They have been seen; they are introducing them to corruption, into a structure of corruption,

into a government of corruption.... They see it as a normal thing; this is another problem.

Fourthly, there is the problem of the many emigrants in Africa. We have had this problem for more than ten years. And they come from countries of Africa: the Congo, Rwanda, many from Sudan, many from Somalia. There are many we receive there, but they live in very poor situations, without hope, without education. This problem is quite big. The United Nations helps us, but the aid that comes is very limited. It's not help to live, but help to survive. Then they try to survive up to a moment when they lose hope. Some have been in those camps for over 10 years; they don't know a normal life. Children who were born there, then even family life becomes difficult because people have nothing to do; then there are bad habits of life also.... etc... It's a very big problem, but unfortunately, no one talks about it. There is no talk of the problems we have in Africa. Until there is a disaster in Africa, they won't talk about these problems in the press. They talk about Africans that emigrate from Africa to Europe, from Iraq, OK, they are many, but we have a far greater problem there.

But another set of realities are the obstacles the young people face, namely, the easy lure to go into new churches, new Pentecostals, new prosperity Gospel... In other words, they are not firm enough in the faith, to stand up, with conviction, for what they believe in.

I would quickly notice and hope that, as an immediate effect, we are going to dedicate more time to form them; that we are going to affirm them; that we are going to mentor them; and hopefully give

them the tools so that they can go through the new situation when they find themselves faced by other religions who try to seduce or convince them, or by the society of secularisation, or even by the greed that has come along with prosperity gospel and other ills that have come with it. Therefore, we must make them true witnesses. The Church in Africa was evangelised by very young people. The missionaries were very young when they came to evangelize Africa. And they were courageous, mature and they were able to do great things. Even now, the young people in Africa can take up that role in Africa if we assist them, so that they can rejuvenate the Church, by standing firm and making our Church even stronger in Africa, both in faith and knowledge but also in action, in self-giving in their mission.

The Catholic Voyage: *The Catholic Voyage* team knows that there some young Consecrated persons participating at this Synod. This is an encouraging thing: the Synod is also for your young Religious women and men. What is your message, invitation -- or even questioning, if you wish - to young consecrated persons in Africa today?

Archbishop Anthony Muheria: The Consecrated persons in Africa have always been a great example. The missionaries came and gave a great example of self-giving. They gave their lives. Many died. You remember that when they were coming, some died after one or two years, but they never relented, they went for the Gospel. They stayed with us, they gave out themselves, they taught us total, radical self-giving. I think that is what the young people look for.

Young people have very lofty ideals. We can't give them half-baked ideals or faith. Young people exact the highest justice. We also have the highest Truth, and we can't dilute it for them, and it is the same thing also for the faith. Then we must think about how to "package" how to "wrap" it better for them. It must be sold well; we must try to communicate well, ever better, the Christian Faith and morals to young people and others. At the same time, however, young people must see it "pure" with their own eyes. And that's difficult. They are idealists who want something that is worth giving their lives for. We pray the Holy Spirit to illumine and guide us also in this regard.

So, I encourage the young Religious men and women and also the young priest not to dilute their self-giving. The real satisfaction comes from a real giving fully. When we start half-giving, then it becomes very difficult for us to be faithful to the mission. We have great mentors and we have great heroes, whom we must emulate. So, the young Religious and the young priest must look up to those young missionaries who came to Africa. And also to Blessed Cyprian Iwene Tansi who, as you know, was a young priest who gave a tremendous example of holy life and witness to the Gospel. It is not outdated. Today we need similar self-giving. Not necessarily martyrs in the sense of killing, shedding of blood. We have saints like St. Theresa of Lisieux to emulate.

If we are willing, we can be formed. Not only the young religious women and men, but also the priests, even we the bishops, must be ready to give a more radical self-giving in the service of the Gospel. And we need those heroes more than even now. The young people are capable, perhaps more than we the older ones.

Because they have more energy, because they have more conviction, they are more driven, they are more enthusiastic. When age comes we lose a bit of enthusiasm, but these young people have it. I hope that that will bring a new rejuvenation to the action of the Church. Not just because they think they know more than the older ones, but because God counts on them now. This is their moment, this is the opportune time!

The Catholic Voyage: Kenya happens to be a privileged country in terms of growing number of Religious men and women, of Institutes of Consecrated persons, universities, and so on. These can contribute very much to the formation, isn't it?

Archbishop Anthony Muheria: Yes. We must very much thank God for the number of vocations in Africa. We must not take it for granted. We must form the young vocations. It is a great blessing now that we have them. Most probably we are going to be the ones to send missionaries back to other countries of older Christianity. But we must form them well in Christ. We must form them not in some half-baked Christianity, but in solid Christianity. At the same time, Christianity is not just knowledge; it is Christianity in life, it is a radically lived Christian life. And that is what we need a lot of formation for. We thank God for the vocations. We do not need to take it for granted. We must ask the Lord to send us more vocations, but we must form them – initial and permanent formation. This is true for the Religious, for the priests, the Bishop: it is necessary to form them in the seminary and formation houses, form them in the love of God, form them in virtue, form them in charity, form them in the virtue of chastity for God. This is not without struggle. Form them in truth and

mercy, such that we must be ready to reach out to the people where they are, not just waiting for them to come, not just condemning them, but mercifully going out for them. Then, also form them in accompaniment, meaning being there for them humanly, being father or mother for them.

The Catholic Voyage: Thank you for granting us this opportunity and for sharing your thoughts.

Archbishop Anthony Muheria: You are welcome.