

**John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin
Faculty of Theology**

Father Vitus Chibisi Eke

Student Index Number: 139967

**Spiritual, Practical and Doctrinal Ecumenism
in the Anglican-Roman Catholic Relations in Nigeria**

Doctoral dissertation

Written for the seminar in dogmatic and ecumenical theology

With the supervision of Rev. dr. hab. **Przemysław Kantyka**, prof. KUL

LUBLIN 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	7
BIBLIOGRAPHY	10
1. Primary sources	10
1.1 Documents of the Anglican Communion	10
1.2 Documents of the Roman Catholic Church	10
2. Secondary sources	12
2.1 Documents of Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue	12
2.2 Documents from Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations	12
Primary Literature	13
Secondary Literature	15
INTRODUCTION	17
General introduction	17
Problems	27
Aims and purposes	28
Sources	29
Methodology	32
Structure of the research	34
Chapter One	
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF ANGLICANISM AND CATHOLICISM IN NIGERIA: GROWTH AND CHALLENGES	36
1.1 Anglicanism and the Church of Nigeria	41
1.1.1 Origin of Anglicanism	41
1.1.2 Basic theological traditions in Anglicanism	42
1.1.2.1 <i>Supremacy and sufficiency of Holy Scriptures for salvation</i>	43
1.1.2.2 <i>Corporate faith and doctrine of justification</i>	43
1.1.2.3 <i>Moral teaching</i>	44
1.1.2.4 <i>Ecclesiological teaching</i>	45
1.1.3 The Church Missionary Society	46
1.1.4 Anglican missionary activities in Nigeria	47
1.1.5 Establishment of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion	48
1.1.6 Church of Nigeria Missionary Society	51
1.1.7 Conservative nature of the Church of Nigeria	52
1.2 The Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria	54
1.2.1 Advent of the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria	54
1.2.1.1 <i>Portuguese missionary activities in Nigeria</i>	54
1.2.1.2 <i>French missionary activities in Nigeria</i>	55

1.2.1.3 <i>Irish missionary activities in Nigeria</i>	56
1.2.2 The missionary principles adopted by Roman Catholic Mission in Nigeria	57
1.2.3 School apostolate and the growth of Catholic Church in Nigeria (1890-1970)	58
1.2.4 Challenges faced by the Roman Catholic Mission	59
1.3 The first century of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria, 1885-1985	61
1.3.1 Cordial relations between Church mission society and Roman Catholic mission	63
1.3.1.1 <i>Mutual competitive efforts for conversion</i>	63
1.3.1.2 <i>Mutual cooperation between Church Missionary Society and Roman Catholic Mission</i>	64
1.3.2 Conflicts and rivalries between Anglican and Roman Catholic Missionaries	65
1.3.2.1 <i>British-colonists' background to conflicts between the Church Missionary Society and the Roman Catholic Mission</i>	65
1.3.2.2 <i>Struggle for prominence between the two missionary societies</i>	66
1.3.2.3 <i>Conflicts on Christian beliefs and practices</i>	68
1.3.2.4 <i>Territorial disputes between Anglicans and Roman Catholics</i>	72
1.3.2.5 <i>Rivalry on system of education as means of evangelization</i>	73
1.3.2.6 <i>Rivalry on health-care system of evangelization</i>	78
1.3.2.7 <i>Rivalry on the socio-political engagement</i>	82
1.3.3 Evaluation of a century of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations	83
Chapter 2	
ANGLICAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL, PRACTICAL AND DOCTRINAL ECUMENISM	86
2.1 Anglican principles of ecumenism	89
2.1.1 Ecclesiological principles of Anglicanism	89
2.1.1.1 <i>Principles of Communion in Anglicanism</i>	90
2.1.1.2 <i>Theological understanding of 'Church'</i>	91
2.1.1.2.1 <i>A Church: national or regional</i>	91
2.1.1.2.2 <i>The Church universal</i>	92
2.1.1.3 <i>Theological understanding of full communion and visible unity</i>	92
2.1.2 Four principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism	95
2.1.2.1 <i>The goal of the ecumenical movement</i>	96
2.1.2.2 <i>The task of the ecumenical movement</i>	98
2.1.2.3 <i>The processes of ecumenism</i>	99
2.1.2.4 <i>The content of Church unity</i>	101
2.1.3 Practical principles of ecumenism in Anglican tradition	101
2.1.3.1 <i>Principles of spiritual ecumenism</i>	101
2.1.3.1.1 <i>Unity and communion in the Church as divine gifts</i>	102
2.1.3.1.2 <i>Healing wounds of division by mutual repentance</i>	103

2.1.3.1.3 <i>Mutual recognition of shared fellowship in Christ</i>	103
2.1.3.1.4 <i>Sacramental sharing and communion</i>	104
2.1.3.2 <i>Principles of practical cooperation</i>	105
2.1.3.3 <i>Principles of doctrinal ecumenism</i>	106
2.1.3.3.1 <i>Foundations to Anglican doctrinal formulations</i>	106
2.1.3.3.2 <i>Ecumenical engagements through doctrinal dialogue</i>	108
2.1.3.3.3 <i>Inter-relations between fullness of truth and fullness of unity</i>	109
2.2 Roman Catholic principles of ecumenism	110
2.2.1 Principles of spiritual ecumenism	113
2.2.1.1 <i>Church's visible unity and communion as gifts of the Holy Spirit</i>	113
2.2.1.2 <i>Renewal of the Church</i>	115
2.2.1.3 <i>Conversion of heart and holiness of life</i>	116
2.2.1.4 <i>Public and private prayer for Christian unity</i>	117
2.2.1.5 <i>Common Bible study</i>	120
2.2.1.6 <i>Common participation in the sacraments of the Church</i>	122
2.2.1.6.1 <i>Common participation in baptism</i>	122
2.2.1.6.2 <i>Common Eucharistic celebration and Holy Communion</i>	123
2.2.1.6.3 <i>Celebration of mixed marriages</i>	125
2.2.2 Principles of practical ecumenism	126
2.2.2.1 <i>Scriptural basis for practical cooperation</i>	128
2.2.2.2 <i>Practical cooperation as common witness in charity</i>	129
2.2.2.3 <i>Practical cooperation as expression of faith communion</i>	129
2.2.2.4 <i>Council of Churches and Christian council</i>	130
2.2.3 Principles of doctrinal ecumenism	131
2.2.3.1 <i>Dialogue and ecumenism</i>	132
2.2.3.1.1 <i>Dialogue of truth</i>	133
2.2.3.1.2 <i>Dialogue of conscience</i>	134
2.2.3.1.3 <i>Dialogue of conversion</i>	134
2.2.3.1.4 <i>Dialogue of charity</i>	134
2.2.3.2 <i>Theological and doctrinal dialogue</i>	135
2.2.3.2.1 <i>Relationship between unity and truth against false irenicism</i>	136
2.2.3.2.2 <i>Priority of hierarchy of truth</i>	137
2.2.3.2.3 <i>Objective considerations of various doctrinal formulations</i>	137
2.2.3.2.4 <i>The necessity of good will and sense of realism</i>	138
2.2.3.3 <i>Receptive ecumenism</i>	139
2.2.3.4 <i>The goal of ecumenical dialogue</i>	141
2.3 Progress and difficulties in Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations	142
2.3.1 Progress in Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue	143
2.3.1.1 <i>Anglican-Roman Catholic agreed principles of Church as Communion</i>	144
2.3.1.2 <i>Baptism as basic bond of unity and Communion</i>	146
2.3.1.3 <i>Eucharist as effectual sign of koinonia</i>	147
2.3.1.4 <i>Relations between Eucharist and ministry in service of koinonia</i>	148
2.3.1.5 <i>Primacy as visible sign of unity and koinonia</i>	150
2.3.1.6 <i>Divergences in Anglican and Catholic theological formulations</i>	152

2.3.2 Challenges and obstacles to full communion	154
2.3.2.1 <i>Episcopal ordination of women and priests in homosexual relationship</i>	155
2.3.2.2 <i>Catholic response to episcopal ordination of women</i>	157
2.3.2.3 <i>Catholic response to ordination of priests in homosexual relationship</i>	158
2.3.2.4 <i>Ecumenical implications of recent developments in Anglicanism</i>	159
2.3.3 Principles for the establishment of Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans	160
2.3.3.1 <i>Norms establishing the Ordinariates</i>	160
2.3.3.2 <i>Juridical framework for Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans</i>	161
2.3.3.3 <i>General response to establishment of Ordinariates for Anglicans</i>	162
Chapter 3	
APPLICATION OF ECUMENICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE NIGERIAN ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS	164
3.1 Ecumenical structures in Nigeria	165
3.1.1 Early stages of ecumenical consciousness in Nigeria	165
3.1.1.1 <i>Ecumenical engagement among protestant Churches in Nigeria</i>	165
3.1.1.2 <i>Initial participation of Anglicans in ecumenical activities</i>	166
3.1.1.3 <i>Formation of Christian Council of Nigeria</i>	167
3.1.2 Ecumenical structures for Anglicans and for Catholics in Nigeria	168
3.1.2.1 <i>Ecumenical structures for Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion</i>	169
3.1.2.1.1 <i>Directorate of ecumenism and inter-faith</i>	169
3.1.2.1.2 <i>Church of Nigeria's commitments to ecumenical partners</i>	169
3.1.2.2 <i>Ecumenical structures for the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria</i>	170
3.1.2.2.1 <i>The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria</i>	170
3.1.2.2.2 <i>Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria</i>	170
3.1.2.2.3 <i>Department of Mission and Dialogue</i>	171
3.1.3 Ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria	173
3.1.3.1 <i>Formation of the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission</i>	173
3.1.3.2 <i>Annual activities of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission</i>	175
3.1.3.3 <i>Anglican-Catholic collaboration on socio-political matters in Nigeria</i>	176
3.2 Application of principles of ecumenism in the Nigerian context	178
3.2.1 Spiritual ecumenism	178
3.2.1.1 <i>Conversion of heart</i>	178
3.2.1.2 <i>Mutual confession and mutual pardon</i>	179
3.2.1.3 <i>Common prayer</i>	181
3.2.1.4 <i>Bible sharing</i>	182
3.2.1.5 <i>Reciprocity in sharing of spiritual resources</i>	183
3.2.1.6 <i>Sacramental sharing between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria</i>	184
3.2.1.6.1 <i>Common Baptism</i>	184

3.2.1.6.2 <i>Eucharistic Communion</i>	186
3.2.1.6.3 <i>Mixed marriages in the Nigerian Context</i>	189
3.2.1.6.3.1 <i>Religious difficulties inherent in mixed marriages</i>	192
3.2.1.6.3.2 <i>Norms for valid celebration of mixed marriages</i>	193
3.2.2 <i>Practical cooperation</i>	195
3.2.2.1 <i>Establishment of Christian Association of Nigeria</i>	195
3.2.2.2 <i>Christians' cooperation on socio-political and moral issues</i>	198
3.2.2.3 <i>Cooperation on religious activities - pilgrimages to the Holy Land</i>	199
3.2.2.4 <i>Cooperation on health-care services</i>	200
3.2.2.5 <i>Cooperation on various issues concerning educational policies</i>	200
3.2.3 <i>Doctrinal ecumenism – dialogue and formation</i>	202
3.2.3.1 <i>Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission's approach to receptive ecumenism</i>	203
3.2.3.2 <i>Dialogue on Eucharistic doctrine</i>	204
3.2.3.2.1 <i>Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's statement on the Holy Eucharist</i>	205
3.2.3.2.2 <i>Church of Nigeria, Anglican, perspective on Eucharistic doctrine</i>	206
3.2.3.2.3 <i>Roman Catholic perspective on Eucharistic doctrine</i>	208
3.2.3.2.4 <i>Resolutions of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Eucharistic doctrine</i>	210
3.2.3.3 <i>Dialogue on morals, communion and the Church</i>	212
3.2.3.4 <i>Ecumenical formation</i>	213
3.3 Recommendations to foster unity in the Nigerian Anglican-Catholic Relations	215
3.3.1 <i>Necessity of living shared faith in truth and charity</i>	215
3.3.2 <i>The necessity of family for ecumenical formation</i>	217
3.3.3 <i>Necessity of joint ownership of academic and health-care institutions</i>	218
3.3.4 <i>Direct and active ecumenical engagement at the parish level</i>	219
3.3.5 <i>Joint ecumenical formation for lay faithful</i>	220
3.3.6 <i>Joint theological research as means to overcome conservatism</i>	220
3.3.7 <i>Comprehensive Biblical studies as means to overcome fundamentalism</i>	222
3.3.8 <i>Christian unity and evangelization.</i>	224
CONCLUSION	228

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACC	Anglican Consultative Council
APA	Anglican Province of America
ARCJPC	Anglican - Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission
ARCIC	Anglican Roman Catholic International Commission
ABMA	American Baptist Missionary Society
BRNC	British Royal Niger Company
CBCN	Catholic Bishops Conference of Nigeria
CSN	Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria
CAN	Christian Association of Nigeria
CCN	Christian Council of Nigeria
CHAN	Christian Health Association of Nigeria
CMS	Church Missionary Society
CNMS	Church of Nigeria Missionary Society
CBF	Colonial Bishoprics Fund
CSSP	Congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers
CANA	Convocation of Anglicans in North America
DAPNE	Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism
DoU	Deed of Union
EAG	Ecumenical Advisory Group
ECUSA	Episcopal Church in the United States of America
EUSN	Evangelical Union of Southern Nigeria
ECWA	Evangelical Church of West Africa
EFN	Evangelical Fellowship Nigeria
FCOAC	Four Instruments of Communion operative in Anglican Communion
GAFCON	General Anglican Future Conference of Nations

IASCER	Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations
IASCUFO	Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order
IARCCUM	International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission
IDPB	Internally Displaced People of Biafra
IMC	International Missionary Council
IR	Indaba Reflections
LWFRCDJF	The Lutheran World Federation-Roman Catholic Joint Declaration on Justification by Faith (JD-1998); it has provided a context from theological dialogue to ecclesial action.
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MWMS	Methodist Wesleyan Missionary Society
NARCC	Nigerian Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission
NBTC	Niger (British) Trading Company
NCMAC	Northern Christian Medical Advisory Council
OIAC	Organization of Instituted African Churches
OIC	Organization of Islamic Countries
OACNA	Orthodox Anglican Church in North America
PAEE	Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism
PCLCCAC	the Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion
PEE	Public Education Edict
PFN	The Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
REC	Reformed Episcopal Church
RCC	Roman Catholic Church
RCM	Roman Catholic Mission
RLC	Resolutions of all Lambeth Conferences

SMS	Scotland Missionary Society
SMA	Société de la Mission Africaine (The Society of African Mission)
SAS	Substantial Agreed Statements
UCN	United Church of Nigeria
SCC	Small Christian Communities
UPE	Universal Primary Education
WCC	World Council of Churches
WMC	World Missionary Conference
WOWICAN	Women Wing of Christian Association Nigeria
YOWICAN	Youth Wing of Christian Association Nigeria

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Primary sources

1.1 Documents of Anglican Communion

ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, *the Lambeth Conference, Resolution Archive from 1998*, London: Anglican Communion Office, 2005.

ANGLICAN CONSULTATIVE COUNCIL, *the Principles of Canon Law Common to Churches of the Anglican Communion*, London: the Anglican Communion Office, No. 276591, 2008.

THE CHICAGO-LAMBETH QUADRILATERAL OF 1888,
http://anglicansonline.org/basics/Chicago_Lambeth.html, accessed on 12th September, 2016.

INDABA REFLECTIONS, 77, www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/2008, accessed on 11th October, 2016

LAMBETH INDABA, Capturing Conversations and Reflections from the Lambeth Conference, *Equipping Bishops for Mission and Strengthening Anglican Identity*, 3 August 2008,
http://www.anglicancommunion.org/media/72554/reflections_document_-final-.pdf, accessed on 10th October, 2016.

1.2 Documents of the Roman Catholic Church

BENEDICT XVI, Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum Coetibus*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, promulgated by John Paul II, Rome: Citta del Vaticano, 1992.

CODEX IURIS CANONICI (English Edition), Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983.

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Declaration in Defense of the Catholic Doctrine on 'the Church' Against Certain Errors of the Present Day', *Mysterium Ecclesiae*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1973.

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Declaration on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, *Inter Insigniores*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1976.

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, Letter to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on some Aspects of the Church Understood as Communion, *Communio Notio*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992.

FLANNERY, AUSTIN. (Editor) *The Second Vatican Council; the Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1988.

FRANCIS, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 24th November, 2013.

FRANCIS'S Address at the end of the Divine Liturgy in the Church of St. George, Istanbul, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2014.

JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic exhortation, *Familiaris Consortium*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1981.

JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Constitution, *Spirituali Militum Cura*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1986.

JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio Sacerdotalis*, to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1994.

JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic letter, *Novo Millennio Ineunte*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, January, 2001.

JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical letter, *Ut Unum Sint*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995.

JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter, *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2003.

JOHN PAUL II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995.

PAUL VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975.

PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter, *Motu Proprio: Matrimonia Mixta*, on Mixed Marriages, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1970.

PAUL VI, Encyclical letter, *Mysterium Fidei*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965.

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1993.

PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN UNITY, *Relations with Anglican Communion*, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_anglican-comm.htm, accessed on 12th December, 2016.

2. Secondary sources

2.1 Documents of Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC JOINT PREPARATORY COMMISSION, *Malta Report*, Malta: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2nd January 1968.

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (I), Agreed Statement on, *Eucharistic Doctrine*, Windsor, 1971.

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (I), Agreed Statement on, *Ministry and Ordination*, 1973.

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (II), Joint Statement on *Salvation and the Church*, September, 1986.

ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION (II), Agreed Statement on, *Gift of Authority (Authority in the Church III)*, 1998.

ANGLICAN - ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION (II), Joint Statement on, *Church as Communion*, 1991.

INTERNATIONAL ANGLICAN – ROMAN CATHOLIC COMMISSION FOR UNITY AND MISSION (IARCCUM), Agreed Statement on, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican -Roman Catholic Dialogue*, 4th October 2006.

RATZINGER, JOSEPH. *Dialogue on the Papacy and Ecumenism*, between the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the faith and Rome's Waldensian Community, Rome: 1993; (Between Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and Professor Paolo Ricca. Chaired by Bruno Corsani); <http://www.stucom.nl/document/0141uk.pdf>, (accessed on 10 August, 2017)

2.2 Documents from Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical Relations

BENEDICT XVI. Address to the Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace, Dr. Rowan Williams, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006.

KASPER, WALTER. Address at the Lambeth Conference, *section I on Overview of Relations in Recent Years*, and *section II on Ecclesiological Consideration*, Lambeth Conference; July 30, 2008.

KASPER, WALTER. *Mission of Bishops in the Mystery of the Church: Reflections on the Question of Ordaining Women to Episcopal Office in the Church of England*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006.

COMMON DECLARATION OF POPE PAUL VI AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, DR MICHAEL RAMSEY, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 24th March, 1966.

COMMON DECLARATION OF PAUL VI AND DR DONALD COGGAN, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 29th April, 1977.

COMMON DECLARATION OF POPE JOHN PAUL II AND THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, DR GEORGE CAREY, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 5th December, 1996.

COMMON DECLARATION OF HIS HOLINESS, POPE FRANCIS AND HIS GRACE, DR. JUSTIN WELBY, Archbishop of Canterbury, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 5th October 2016.

PAUL VI, Response to the Letter of His Grace, Most Reverend Dr. Frederick Donald Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury, *on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood*; Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 30th November, 1975.

NICHOLS, VINCENT GERARD, (Archbishops Of Westminster). AND WILLIAMS, ROWAN, (Archbishops Canterbury). Joint Statement on *Consequence of Ecumenical Dialogue*, 20th October 2009; in “L’Osservatore Romano”, weekly edition in English, Baltimore: the Cathedral Foundation, 2009.

3. Primary literature

ANGLICAN COMMUNION AND ECUMENISM, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican_Communion_and_ecumenism, accessed 10th December, 2016.

ADIELE, N. SHED. *The Anglican Church in Nigeria; Trend, Issues and Activities*, IkotEpena: Cclean House Production, 2001.

BAUR, JOHN. *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: an African Church History*, Kenya: Paulines Publications, Africa, 1994.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria, <http://www.cbcn-ng.org/>, accessed on 14th January, 2017.

CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT OF NIGERIA, *Mission and Dialogue*, <http://www.csnigeria.org/>, accessed on 14th January, 2017.

CHAPMAN, MARK. *Anglicanism: a very Short Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006.

CHURCH OF NIGERIA, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Nigeria, accessed on 22th march, 2016.

- CRAMPTON, EDMUND PATRICK THURMAN. *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979.
- DULLES, AVERY. *Models of the Church*, New York: Image Book, Doubleday Publ., 2002.
- Educational Impact in Eastern Nigeria, 1886-1950*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989.
- EKECHI, FELIX. *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, London: Frank Cass, 1972.
- EKPUNOBI, EMMANUEL. *We are Closer Than We Think: an Analysis of Contemporary Issues in Ecumenism*, Enugu: Rabboni Publisher International 2001.
- GROS, JEFFREY. MCMANUS, EAMON. AND RIGGS, ANN. *Introduction to Ecumenism*, New York: Paulist Press, 1998.
- IJEZIE, LUKE. E. AUDU, STEPHEN. AND ACHA, AGNES. I. (Editors), *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, Lagos: CATHAN Publ., 2015.
- JONES, SARAH ROWLAND. *Anglicans and Ecumenism: the Ecumenical Review*, 2009,
http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2065/is_3_61/ai_n39371701/?tag=content;coll
 and subsequent pages – Vol 61:4, accessed on 15th November, 2016.
- KALU, OGBU. UKE. *The Divided People of God: Church Union Movement in Nigeria 1857 -1966*, New York: Nok Publishers International Ltd, 1978.
- KANTYKA, PRZEMYSŁAW. *Autorytet w Kościele (Authority in the Church): Dialog Katolicko-Anglikański na forum światowym*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2004.
- KASPER, WALTER. *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, New York: New City Press, 2007.
- KASPER WALTER. *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, London: Burns &Oats, 2004.
- KUNUBA, AGATHA. *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria in the light of the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism*, Enugu: Black Belt Konzult, 2012.
- MAKOZI ALEXIUS. OBABU. AND OJO, J. G. AFOLABI. *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, Lagos: Macmillan Nig. Publ., 1982.
- NWAKA, JACINTA CHIAMAKA. *The Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Beginning of Organized Lay Apostolate Groups among the Igbos of Southeastern Nigeria*, <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/507378>, accessed 14th November, 2016.
- NWANKITI, BENJAMIN. *The Growth and Development of the Church of Nigeria, Owerri*: Ihem Davis Press, 1996.

OBI, CELESTINE A. NWOSU, VINCENT. EKE, CASMIR. ONWUBIKO, K.B.C. AND OKON, OKON F. K. (editor), *A Hundred Years of The Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885-1985*, Onitsha: Africana-FEP Publ. 1985.

OBORJI, FRANCIS ANAKWE. *Trend in African Theology since Vatican II; a Missiological Orientation*, Rome: Leberit SKL press, 2005.

OKEKE, HILARY. ODILI. *Milestones in Ecumenism: Evolution in Canonical Legislation in Ecumenical Matters*, Enugu: Think Ltd, 1996.

OMENKA, NICHOLAS. I. *The School in the Service of the Evangelization: the Catholic Educational Impact in Eastern Nigeria, 1886-1950*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989.

OXFORD MOVEMENT, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford_Movement, accessed on, 25th November, 2016.

SYKES, STEPHEN. AND BOOTY, JOHN. *The Study of Anglicanism*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.

UGORJI, LUCIUS IWEJURU. *That They May Be One: Anglicans and Roman Catholics Overcoming their Division*, Enugu: SNAAP press LTD, 2000.

OMONOKHUA, CORNILIUS AFEBU. AND IGBARI, SOLA. (Editors) *Proceedings of the Nigeria Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC): the Eucharist*, vol. 1.1, Abuja: Mac Pama, 2010.

WILLIAMS, O. CHARLES. *Note on Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)*, Lagos: Fami commercial works, 2004.

4. Secondary literature

ANGLICAN DOCTRINE, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican_doctrine, accessed on 20th December, 2016.

ANGLICAN–ROMAN CATHOLIC INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican%E2%80%93Roman_Catholic_International_Commission, accessed on 8th January, 2017.

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN NIGERIA, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_in_Nigeria, accessed on 30th October, 2016.

DOGMA IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dogma_in_the_Catholic_Church, accessed on 10th December, 2016.

ECHEVERRIA, EDUARDO. *Receptive Ecumenism and the Ecumenical Significance of Pope Francis*, https://www.academia.edu/Documents/in/Receptive_Ecumenism, accessed on 24th October, 2016.

ERIVWO, U. SAMUEL. *History of Christianity in Nigeria, the Urhobo, the Isoko, and the Itsekiri*,
<http://www.waado.org/UrhoboCulture/Religion/Erivwo/HistoryOfChristianity/ChapterFour.html>, accessed on 14th November, 2016.

EZEKWEM, OGECHUKWU CHRISTIANA. *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*,
<https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/26260/EZEKWEM-MASTERSREPORT-2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, accessed on 15th November, 2016.

GROVES, CHARLES PELHAM. *The Planting of Christianity in African*, 1878-1914, Vol.3, London: Lutherworth Press, 1955.

KATELE, BRYSON. M. *Fellowship: Its meaning and its demand*,
<https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2003/06/fellowship-its-meaning-and-its-demand.html>, accessed on 7th December, 2016.

NWABARA, SAMUEL. *Iboland: A Century of Contact with Britain 1860-1960*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977.

OKWU, AUGUSTINE. *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957: Conversion in Theory and Practice*, Maryland: University Press, 2010.

THE INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON AFRICAN/NIGERIAN/YORUBA CIVILIZATION, <http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20120502015605zg/nm-projects/christianity-projects/the-influence-of-christianity-on-african-nigerian-yoruba-civilization/>, access on 23th October, 2016.

WEBBER, L. CHRISTOPHER. *A Brief History of the Lambeth Conference Part I and IV in Episcopal life*, <http://episcopalchurch.org/ELifeFocus>, accessed on 13th December, 2016.

INTRODUCTION

General introduction

Concepts such as the Church, her unity and communion complement one another and are born together by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:1-13). It means that “unity and communion” are basically the *esse* (actual being and existence) of the Church as well as her *bene esse* (well-being). This is obvious in the Council of Nicaea’s (325 AD) definition of the four marks of the Church as “One, holy, catholic, and apostolic”.

These marks of the Church also capture the ecumenical perspectives of the Church. The Church as “One” and “Catholic,” correspond to her dynamics of mission and expansion, unity and universality: primarily, “One” refers to unity and all-embracing character of the Church which are stressed even more in the predicative, “Catholic”, which underscores her universality.

The Church as “apostolic,” refers to the dynamics of Church’s growth *ad extra* with focus on the essential elements of Christian community – sharing of one faith and sacraments, participation in one Spirit and worship. The mark of “holiness” means that the Church is a community of believers who imitate the spirituality of Jesus Christ, by participating in God’s holiness and in the wholeness (unity and communion) of one in three divine persons.

The Greek word, *ekklesia* describes the nature of the Church as one characterized by coming together “in one place” (Acts 2:1) and ‘holding everything in common’ (Acts 2:42-46; 4:32). This notion of the Church underscores common participation in charismatic gifts and in the Eucharist meal (1 Cor. 11:20; 14:23), which are regarded as important for sustaining unity and communion in local Christian communities, and in the universal Church.

Therefore, from the earliest centuries of Christianity, unity of all believers is understood from two perspectives: First, preservation of integrity of the existent community - unity of faith, and communion between the members. From this perspective, the Church overcomes internal division and sectarian tendencies. Second, unity provisions a missionary and ecumenical outreach of the Church to all people who

are yet to join in full communion with her in order to overcome the existent divisions among Christians.

Right from the earliest stages of Christianity, the Church has continuously experienced fissure among her members as the gospel encounters variety of cultures of the Mediterranean basin and later, in Armenia, Persia, India, Gaul, Britain and Ethiopia (Africa). J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs buttress this fact thus: “As the Church encountered different cultural, linguistic, and socio-political situations, the several emphasis within Christianity introduces fissures which, if not grounded in common faith, were capable of producing profound divisions”¹.

For instance, the Scriptures acknowledge disputes between Hebrew and Hellenist Christian converts, and between Christians of Jewish and Gentile origin (Acts 6:1; 11:1-3; 15:1-2,5). In each of these cases, the apostles, through prayers and dialogue, resolved and reunited all believers. By their actions, they enunciated the essential characteristics of unity and communion in the Church as follows: “They (all believers) devoted themselves to the teaching of the Apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of bread and to prayers (Acts 2: 42).

From the 4th to the 11th centuries, ecclesiastical differences and theological disputes between the Greek East and Latin West predated the formal rupture that occurred in 1054. Thus, the Eastern Orthodox broke communion with Roman Catholic Church. Even after the great schism of 1054, the Church of the Latin West was not spared of further division such as: The Western Schism of 1378 to 1417; the wave of reformation movement, the 16th Century separation of the Church of England from the See of Rome; and the rise of Protestantism in general.

Hence, for centuries, division within Christianity continuously multiplied as several Churches and Ecclesial Communities emerge and spread to different part of the world. Although, they still profess common faith in Christ, baptism and Scripture, only a few (like Anglican Communion) share real, yet imperfect communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

In the 19th century, the gospel message reached the shores of Africa, and Nigeria in particular, through missionary activities pioneered by both the Church Missionary Society of Anglican Communion and Roman Catholic Mission. Thereafter, the seed of faith was successful planted in the hearts of many, though followed by many challenges.

¹ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, New York: Paulist Press, 1998, pp. 9, 19.

Therefore, it can be said categorically that Christianity in Nigeria is indebted and forever grateful to the outstanding contributions of the following missionaries: The Methodist Wesleyan Missionary Society (1842); The Church Missionary Society (CMS) of Anglican Mission (1842 and 1857); the Scotland Missionary Society (SMS) that established Presbyterian mission (1846); The American Baptist Missionary (1849); Society of African Mission (Société de la Mission Africaine – SMA) and the Congregations of the Holy Ghost Fathers of Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) (1885). Notwithstanding these efforts, like the parable of the wheat and the darnel/weed (Mathew 13:24-30), Christianity in Nigeria inherited the good seed of faith alongside with the weeds of divisions among Christian believers.

Christian missionary era in Nigeria, dominated by CMS and RCM employed education and healthcare or hospital apostolate as major missionary tools and means of evangelization. With these, they penetrated the hinterland and converted many adherents of African traditional religion to Christianity. Despite the enormous missionary success recorded within short space of time, Anglican and Catholic missionaries, alongside their converts, disagree on several issues. They were set apart under the influence of the same cause of division, and disunity that led to severed relationship between the Church England (See of Canterbury) and the See of Rome.

Therefore, as these missionaries worked hard to win converts by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ which centres on peace, love, and charity, the division between Catholic and Anglican missionaries became a source of contradiction and scandal to the evangelized². As John Paul II observed: “Christians cannot underestimate the burden of longstanding misgivings inherited from the past and the mutual misunderstandings and prejudices. Complacency, indifferent and insufficient knowledge of one another often make this situation worse”³.

Notwithstanding the burden of division, the Church continuously derive her impetus to search for unity from the prayer of her master and Lord, Jesus Christ: “that all may be one ... as we are one” (John 17:21-22). Vatican II acknowledges the global yearning for unity of all Christians thus: “In recent times more than ever before, he has been rousing divided Christians to remorse over their divisions and to a longing for

² The Second Vatican Council Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*, no. 1, Rome, November 21, 1964; states: (For further citation: UR).

³ John Paul II, Encyclical Letter: *Ut unum sint*, no. 2, May 25, 1995, Libreria Editrice Vaticana; (for further citations: UUS).

unity. Everywhere large numbers have felt the impulse of this grace, and among our separated brethren also there increases from day to day the movement, fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of unity among all Christians. This movement toward unity is called ‘ecumenical’”⁴.

In the context of this doctoral thesis, the concepts; ecumenism and ecumenical relations, are to be applied in accordance with the Roman Catholic understanding of those terms: According to Second Vatican Council; “ecumenical movement’, indicates the initiatives and activities planned and undertaken, according to the various needs of the Church and as opportunities offer, to promote Christian unity. These are: first, every effort to avoid expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness and so make mutual relations with them more difficult”⁵.

Joseph Ratzinger also describes ecumenism as an underlying attitude and a way of living Christianity in and out of love. Thus, he further states: “The desire for unity, the commitment to unity belongs to the structure of the same act of faith because Christ came to reunite the children of God who were scattered. So the fundamental characteristic of ecumenism which is theological and not political is the willingness to be together and walk together, even in diversity which has not been resolved”⁶.

In the view of Gros, McManus, and Riggs, “the call for Christian unity is a call to conversion and openness to love of other Christians and their Churches”⁷. Therefore, “Ecumenism is a reform and renewal movement within the Churches that is rooted in a search for a common mission, is nurtured by a common spirituality, is lived in common service and is developed in the variety of cultural context in which the Church of Christ finds itself incarnated”⁸.

Hence, true ecumenism is a participation in Christian spiritual life, theological dialogue and practical cooperation as forms of common witness. It is a movement or journey undertaken by Christians of various faith traditions to develop closer

⁴ UR, no. 1.

⁵ UR, no. 4.

⁶ Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Dialogue on the Papacy and Ecumenism between the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and Rome’s Waldensian Community, Rome, January 29, 1993, (Meeting between Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger and Professor Paolo Ricca. Chaired by Bruno Corsani); <http://www.stucom.nl/document/0141uk.pdf>, (accessed on 10 August, 2017).

⁷ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 1.

⁸ *Ibid*; p. 3.

relationships and better understandings with the ultimate aim of visible unity that makes full communion in the Church a reality.

The 1910 World Missionary Conference, the World Conference of Life and Work of 1925 held in Stockholm, Sweden, and the 1948 first meeting of the World Council of Churches in Amsterdam provided a platform for Christians within the Anglican, Protestant, and Orthodox Churches to consider the unification of all Christian Churches as form of witness to the gospel.

Therefore, from the Anglican perspective, ecumenical movement is grounded in her commitment to mission, According to Stephen Sykes and John Booty, “Anglican claim to continuity of faith and order of the primitive Church and the distinction between fundamentals and non-essential matters of faith were seen as a possible basis for fruitful ecumenical endeavour”⁹.

As a follow up to the Edinburgh Missionary Conference in 1910, and at the end of the Lambeth Conference of 1920, Anglican bishops issued an “Appeal to all Christian People” to “unite in a new and great endeavour to recover and to manifest to the world the unity of the body of Christ for which he prayed”. They further affirm “believe that it is God’s purpose to manifest this fellowship, so far as the world is concerned, in an outward, visible, and united society ... using God given means of grace, and inspiring all members to the worldwide service of the kingdom of God”¹⁰. It is by means of this vocation to the world that the Anglican Communion are energized to work for and journey together with other Churches to achieve visible unity.

Building on this foundational commitment, Anglican bishops, at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, reaffirm Anglican commitment to the full, visible unity of the Church, both as the goal of the ecumenical movement, and as “foretaste of God’s Kingdom”. Visible unity, according to the Anglicans, entails a rich diversity as a necessary result of the Gospel being lived out in specific cultural and historical contexts. It also “entails agreement in faith together with the common celebration of the sacraments, supported by a united ministry and forms of collegial and conciliar consultation in matters of faith, life and witness ... For the fullness of communion all these visible aspects of the life of the Church require to be permeated by a profound

⁹ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988, p. 44.

¹⁰ Lambeth Conference 1920, Section IX of Resolution 9, cited in An Agreed Statement by International Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM), *Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue*, 4 October 2006, no. 129; (for further citation: *Growing together in Unity and mission*).

spiritual communion, a growing together in a common mind, mutual concern and a care for unity (Philippians 2: 2)”¹¹.

On the other hand, the Second Vatican Council of 1962 to 1965, represents the Roman Catholic response and full participation in global ecumenical movement. The Council provided grounds as well as enabling environment for her active participation and engagement with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities in ecumenical activities and in theological dialogue.

Various documents issued at the end of the Council reflect the Church’s commitment to the visible unity: The Council dedicates the document, *Unitatis Redintegratio*, to enunciate the “Roman Catholic Principles of Ecumenism”. This document describes the Church’s guidelines and mode of participation in all ecumenical movement, and also enumerates four major principles of ecumenism as Trinitarian, Ecclesiological, Ethical and Practical Principle.

In its discussion on Trinitarian principle, the council considers the “sacred mystery of the unity of the Church” as “a mystery that finds its highest exemplar and source in the unity of the persons of the Trinity: The Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, one God”. The unity of the Church is actualized in Christ and through Christ, as the Holy Spirit energizes its various functions. The Trinitarian principle of ecumenism is vividly expressed in the prayer of Jesus Christ thus: “May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I in you, so that they also may be in us” (Jn. 17:21).

According to Vatican II, the basic theological and ecumenical principles contained in Jesus’ prayer is that in it, “he (Jesus) implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons (“as we are one”), and the unity of God’s sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself”¹². Therefore, all ecumenical movements is a call to the Trinitarian act of love.

Based on ecclesiological principles, the Catholic Church acknowledges many of the significant elements of salvation that exist outside the visible boundaries of the Church; yet, “it is only through Christ’s Catholic Church, which is ‘the all-embracing means of salvation’, that they can benefit fully from the means of salvation”. Therefore,

¹¹ Lambeth Conference of 1998 (official report), Resolution IV.1, ‘*Called to be One: Section IV Report*’, p. 232; cited in *Growing together in Unity and mission*, no. 131.

¹² The Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et spes*, no. 24, 7th December, 1965; (for further citation: GS).

she teaches that as Christ entrusted to his apostles and their successors the task of teaching, ruling and sanctifying, “bishops with Peter's successor at their head have the mandate to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments, govern the Church and perfect Church’s fellowship in unity”¹³.

The moral/ethical principle of ecumenism prescribes that “all who believe in Christ and have been justified by faith in baptism have right to be called Christians”. Therefore, “the Catholic Church embraces upon them as brothers (and sisters), with respect and affection”. The Council maintains that although, “men of both sides” (all Christians) share in the blame for the dissensions that led to “sin of division”; Yet “the Children who are born into these Communities and who grow up believing in Christ cannot be accused of the sin involved in the separation”¹⁴.

The “practical principles of ecumenism”, which is the major concern of this doctoral thesis, embodies three components that constitute main subjects for discussion, namely, – principles of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism. As components of “practical principles of ecumenism”, they express concrete means of application of all theological principles, and describes ways for the Catholic Church to actively engage in ecumenical relations and dialogue with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Hence, spiritual ecumenism is considered as the soul of ecumenism; doctrinal ecumenism is undertaken through theological dialogue and discussions; and practical ecumenism is also rendered as ecumenical cooperation. Gros, E. McManus, and Riggs describe the necessity of a unified form of application and practice of these three components of “practical principles of ecumenism” as follows: “Ecumenical relations are a complex and delicate reality which requires study and theological dialogue, fraternal relations and contact, prayer and practical collaboration. We are called to work in all fields. Being limited to one or another of them while neglecting the others can never produce result”¹⁵

The necessity of spiritual ecumenism is based on the fact that unity of all Christians is a divine gift which is derived from the loving communion with Father, Son and Holy Spirit; as the Holy Spirit energizes the various functions of ecumenical movement. This means that the impetus for all ecumenical endeavour cannot be derived merely and solely from human undertaking, but ultimately and basically from divine

¹³ UR, nos. 2, 3.

¹⁴ Ibid, No. 3.

¹⁵ Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 94.

source. Thus, spiritual ecumenism emphasize private and public prayers as participation in the priestly prayer of Jesus (John 17:21) and as a means to obtain the grace of unity¹⁶. It also prescribes renewal of the Church, interior conversion of hearts as well as holiness of life as the soul of ecumenical movement¹⁷.

Other aspects of spiritual ecumenism include Common bible study and sacramental sharing: The Holy Scripture remains the common heritage of all Christians; and by sharing in sacrament of baptism, the sacramental bond of unity of all Christians is established. Baptism is oriented towards Eucharistic communion which is inseparably linked to visible full ecclesial communion¹⁸.

Doctrinal ecumenism is characterized by common quest for understanding of divinely revealed truth through theological dialogue and discussions. It is the ability to discover and discern the truth of the gospel of Christ and to adopt discovered truth as one's own. Dialogue on doctrinal matters requires equal consideration of all issues in order to arrive at "truer knowledge and just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both Communions"¹⁹.

Furthermore, doctrinal ecumenism aims at visible unity based on collective search for objective content of revealed truth, and thus, emphasize the relationship between unity and truth. In comparing doctrines, the norm of "hierarchy of truth"²⁰ is observed to the extent that the primacy of the truth of divine revelation cannot be compromised in the search for visible unity.

Practical ecumenism which is also rendered as ecumenical/practical cooperation refers to actions of fraternal communion by which Christians bear common witness to the gospel. It promotes fraternal love, charity, justice and peace among Christian and in the society at large. For this reason, it merits the name, "ecumenism of charity" as it is rooted in the mission and actions of Christ (Matthew 25:35).

The importance of these three components of "practical principles of ecumenism" in ecumenical relations is emphasized in the joint declaration of Pope Benedict VI and His Grace, Rowan Williams as follows: "True ecumenism goes beyond

¹⁶ UR, no. 4; "under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit many efforts are being made in prayer, words and actions to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires".

¹⁷ UR, no. 8.

¹⁸ Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, Vatican City: Vatican Press, 1993, no. 129 (for further citation: *Ecumenical directory*).

¹⁹ UR, no. 4.

²⁰ UR, No. 11.

theological dialogue; it touches our spiritual lives and our common witness. As our dialogue has developed, many Catholics and Anglicans have found in each other a love for Christ which invites us into practical co-operation and service. This fellowship in the service of Christ, experienced by many of our communities around the world, adds a further impetus to our relationship”²¹.

At the end of the Second Vatican Council in 1965, its statements on ecumenism arouse among Christ’s faithful, Catholics as well as Anglicans, greater concern and desire for Christian unity. Its “decree on ecumenism” also creates opportunity for self-understanding of the Church. Hence, the historic visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966 initiates subsequent visits of that nature. The meeting of 1966, was complemented with the establishment of the “Anglican - Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission” (ARCJPC) in 1967 which produced the Malta Report.

The first phase of “Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission” (ARCIC) started in 1969, and between 1970 to 1982 engaged in theological dialogues on themes such as: ‘Eucharistic Doctrine’ (1971), ‘Ministry and Ordination’ (1973), ‘Authority in the Church I’ (1976) and ‘Authority in the Church II’ (1981). The second phase ARCIC (1983 to 2005) undertook theological discussions on ‘Salvation in the Church’ (1986), ‘The Church as Communion’ (1991), ‘Life in Christ’ (1994), ‘The Gift of Authority’ (1999), ‘Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ’ (2005). The third phase ARCIC began 2011 till the present time.

In 2000, ARCIC II endorsed the establishment of “International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission” (IARCCUM). The aim was to discover ways for the implementation of ‘Substantial Agreements’ reached and submitted by ARCIC which have been accepted by the two Communion. IARCCUM began its official meetings in 2002 and in 2007 issued its report titled, “Growing Together in Unity and Mission”.

IARCCUM’s report summarizes nine ‘Agreed Statements of ARCIC’. In its report, IARCCUM urges Anglicans and Roman Catholics to discover together how the ministry of the bishop of Rome, as universal primate which is in accordance with Christ’s will, might be offered and received in order to assist the two Communion to

²¹ Benedict XVI, *Address to the Archbishop of Canterbury, His Grace, Rowan Williams*, Vatican, 23 November 2006, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

grow towards full, ecclesial communion and truth²². It is recommendable that through the process of 'receptive ecumenism', the achievements of ARCIC and other international ecumenical commissions may be studied and assimilated by various structures of the Church, both at the national and local levels.

All these Commissions serve as organs by which Anglicans and Catholics work together towards achieving 'full visible unity'. Therefore, the concept of the Church as communion underlines ARCIC deliberations on *koinonia* in which the Eucharist is described as effectual sign of *koinonia* and while the *episkope* serves the *koinonia*, the primacy is considered as its focus. It means that *koinonia* is the goal of full, visible unity²³. As the two Churches work for and journey towards full, visible unity, they are guided by all the theological and practical principles of ecumenism. So far, the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges real but incomplete communion with Anglican Communion.

In the Nigerian context, faced with the challenges of evangelization of the vast mission land, the need to unite all who profess faith in Jesus Christ was felt by all Christians. As a result of this, between 1911 and 1970, the early missionaries to Nigeria made several efforts to unite all Christians by mutual recognition of common mission and purpose. In 1947, attempts were made to organize missionary conference in Onitsha (South-Eastern Nigeria) with representatives of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Qua Iboes.

When this attempt failed, another effort was made in 1965 to form 'United Church of Nigeria' (UCN) as national body to facilitate Church Union. This initiative also failed as a result of personality conflict, interdenominational antagonism, and lack of defined ecumenical ideology. The Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) was later established to comprise members of Anglican, Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian Churches as well as Qua Iboe, and Salvation Army. Its objectives was to create opportunity to foster fellowship and unity of Churches in Nigeria. It was in 1970 that the Roman Catholic Church began collaboration with other Ecclesial Communities in Nigeria to establish the Christian Conference in Nigeria which metamorphosed into Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) as it is known today.

²² Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican%E2%80%93Roman_Catholic_International_Commission, accessed on 8th January, 2017.

²³ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*; p. 386.

From the perspective of the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria, after careful study of the Malta reports and documents of ARCIC I and II, Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria were motivated to jointly establish similar commission to address their collective spiritual, theological and social questions through common prayer, theological discussions and collaboration in social work. The Catholic bishops' conference of Nigeria (CBCN) earnestly took interest to journey with its Anglican counterpart to heal the old wound of division and strive, and to work for visible unity of the two Churches.

One major factor to the establishment of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) was the book published by Most Rev. Lucius I. Ugorji, Catholic bishop of Umuahia diocese, in the year 2000 and titled, "That they May be One". In this book, he made clarion call to all Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria to come together to study and implement the Malta report.

Thus, L. Ugorji suggested the establishment of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC), as a national ecumenical commission for the two Churches. He also enumerated terms of reference for the national commission as follows: To implement the *Malta Report*; to study, promote and monitor the reception of and responses to the agreed statements of ARCIC. These terms of reference constitute major objectives of the commission after its inauguration on July 22-24, 2003.

The NARCC is composed of representatives of the two Churches and since after inauguration, fosters bilateral ecumenical relationship between the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria and the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) with the goal of visible unity. It does these through study and reception of Agreed Statements of ARCIC, by means of theological dialogue and discussions.

Problems

In this doctoral thesis, in order to undertake detailed academic investigation and analysis of the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria, with particular reference to spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism, it is important to address this problem: How are principles of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism applied and realized through the Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations in Nigeria? This main

problem further engenders series of questions: What issues arouse the necessity for Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria to adoption and practice of ecumenism?

The collaboration between these two Churches in Nigeria to promote Christian unity suggests an existent division, what are the historical background to the division, rivalry and antagonism between these two Churches in Nigeria? What is the overall reaction of the authorities of the two Churches in Nigeria to the Malta report? How do Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria accept, assimilate and implement the achievements – Agreed Statements, Joint Statement, and Substantial Statements – of ARCIC and IARCCUM? Are there necessary ecumenical structures and commission to facilitate the practice of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism in the relationship between the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria?

Furthermore, how does joint commission assist these Churches concern in the process of “receptive ecumenism”, and particularly dialogue? Are there benefits and achievements that accrue from this ecumenical relations and the activities of the Joint Commission? Are there challenges and prospects in this relations? What necessary recommendations can further strengthen ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria?

Aims and purposes

The above problems expressed in form of questions point the direction of interest for the research undertaken in this doctoral thesis. They show that the main focus of discussion in this thesis is the ecumenical activities between the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria, in terms of their practice of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism.

This study is of importance for the following reasons: First, the two Churches were among the first to evangelize and plant the Christian faith in Nigeria, therefore, they have large and widespread members across every nook and cranny of the country; second, the Malta report as well as statements issued by ARCIC and IARCCUM provided grounds that make it imperative for dialogue and cooperation between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria like in other countries of the world; third, presently only Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria have so far develop strong ecumenical structures, dialogue and cooperation that fulfil requirements of norms and principles of ecumenical engagement.

Therefore, the aims and purpose of this academic study and investigation are as follows: first of all, to carry out a historical study and analysis of the ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria amidst other ongoing ecumenical movement in the country; to make a review of the activities of the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) which serves as ecumenical commission for dialogue, spiritual and practical cooperation between the two Churches; to study how these ecumenical activities and relations between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in Nigeria comply with the norms of spiritual, doctrinal and practical cooperation; to discuss in details achievements and challenges as well as prospects of Anglican-Catholic relations in Nigeria; to study the ecumenical activities of relevant structures particularly the commissions and secretariats.

Since Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria are directly linked to other international ecumenical joint Commissions and Conferences for Anglican Communion and Roman Catholic Church, this research also extends its study to cover relevant achievements deriving from Malta report, ARCIC, and IARCCUM. It studies also some achievements of Lambert Conferences. It also considers the principles guiding establishment of Anglican Ordinariate as Anglican-Catholic response to ordinations of women and gay bishops in Anglican Communion.

Sources

To address these questions raised, and to achieve the purpose of this academic investigation, many Church documents and relevant literatures are selected as sources. These sources are classified under primary sources (Church documents), and secondary sources (documents of ecumenical dialogue and other forms of ecumenical discourse); primary literature (which include published and online books, and articles) and secondary literature.

Among the primary sources of this doctoral thesis are the following Church documents: Catechism of the Catholic Church of 1992; *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1983 (English Edition); Relevant documents of the Second Vatican Council; Constitution on Sacred Liturgy; *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (1963), Decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio* (1964), Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen Gentium* (1964), Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes* (1965), Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, (1965), Declaration on

Human Freedom, *Dignitatis humanae* (1965), Decree on pastoral Office of Bishop in the Church, *Christus Dominus* (1965).

Other primary sources of this thesis include Papal pastoral documents which are as follows: Paul VI's Encyclical letter, *Mysterium fidei* (1965); his Apostolic Letter, Motu Proprio: *Matrimonia mixta*, On Mixed Marriages (1970); and his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi* (1975). In addition to these are: John Paul II's apostolic exhortation, *Familiaris Consortio* (1981) and *Ecclesia in Africa* (1995); apostolic constitution, *Spirituali militum cura* (1986); his apostolic letters; *Ordinatio sacerdotalis* (1994) and *Novo millennio ineunte* (2001); as well as his encyclical letters, *Ut unum sint* (1995), and *Ecclesia De Eucharistia* (2003). Among them also are: Benedict XVI's Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus*; and Pope Francis' apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium* (2014).

Most relevant to this research undertaken in this doctoral thesis is the document of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, (1993). Others are documents published by Congregation for the Doctrine of The Faith such as: *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (1973), declaration in defence of the Catholic doctrine on the Church against certain errors of the present Day; *Inter insigniores* (1976), declaration on the question of admission of women to the ministerial priesthood, and *Communione notio* (1992), letter to the bishops of the Catholic Church on some aspects of the Church understood as Communion.

As regards documents of the Anglican Communion which are considered relevant to this thesis are as follows: The Lambeth Conference, Resolution Archive (1998); the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral (1886, 1888); the *Principles of Canon law common to Churches of the Anglican Communion* (2008), by the Anglican Consultative Council; and Lambeth Indaba, *Capturing Conversations and Reflections from the Lambeth Conference* (2008).

The secondary Sources are documents of dialogue between Anglican Communion and Roman Catholic Church and they include: Malta Report (1968); some of the Agreed Statements of ARCIC I such as, *Eucharistic Doctrine* (1971), *Ministry and Ordination* (1973); also some Joint Statements of ARCIC II like, *Church as Communion*(1991) *Salvation and the Church* (1986); *Gift of Authority* (1998) and the Joint Agreed Statement of IARCCUM titled, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican-Roman Catholic Dialogue* (2006).

Others are documents of common declaration between the Holy Father and Archbishop of Canterbury which include the following declarations between: Paul VI and Dr Michael Ramsey in 1966; Paul VI and Dr Donald Coggan in 1977; John Paul II and Dr. George Carey in 1996; Pope Francis and Dr. Justin Welby in 2016; Paul VI, Response Most Reverend Dr. Frederick Donald Coggan, on the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood in 1975; and Benedict XVI address to the His Grace, Dr. Rowan Williams in 2006.

There are literature (books and articles) that serve also as primary sources of this thesis. These comprise the following books and articles that describe nature and authority in Church such as: Avery Dulles' *Models of The Church* (2002); Przemysław Kantyka's *Autorytet W Kościele, (Authority in the Church): Dialog katolicko-anglikański na forum światowym* (2004); Mark Chapman's *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction* (2006); Stephen Sykes and John Booty's *The Study of Anglicanism* (1988). The second set of literature provide sources for discussions on the meaning, nature and practice of ecumenism in general and they include: Jeffrey Gros, Eamon McManus, and Ann Riggs' *Introduction to Ecumenism* (1998); Walter Kasper's *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism* (2007), and *That They May Be One; The Call to Unity*, (2004).

The third set of literature cover the historical background of Christianity in Nigeria with particular reference to missionary enterprise and evangelization, division and rivalry, competition and antagonism, as well as subsequent ecumenical initiative. These include: John Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity In Africa: An African Church History* (1994); Alexius Makozi, and AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria* (1982); Celestine Obi (editor), *A Hundred Years of The Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885-1985* (1985); Felix Ekechi, *Missionary enterprise and rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914* (1972); Nicholas Omenka, *The School in the Service of the Evangelization: The Catholic Educational Impact in Eastern Nigeria, 1886-1950*, (1989); Ogbu Kalu, *The Divided People of God: Church Union Movement In Nigeria 1857 -1966* (1978); Shed N. Adiele, *The Anglican Church in Nigeria; Trend, Issues and Activities* (2001).

The following literature provide sources for discussions on ecumenical activities and relations in Nigeria between Anglican and Roman Catholic Churches and they are as follows: Lucius I. Ugorji, *That they may be one: Anglicans and Roman Catholics overcoming their division*(2000); Cornilius Omonokhua, and Sola Igbari (editors), *Proceedings of the Nigeria Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) on the*

Eucharist (2010); Charles Williams, *Note on Christian association of Nigeria (CAN)* (2004); Agatha Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria in the light of the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism*,(2012); Luke Ijezie, Stephen Audu, and Agnes Acha (editors), *the Church In Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*,(2015); Hilary Okeke, *Milestones In Ecumenism: Evolution In Canonical Legislation In Ecumenical Matters*, (1996); Francis A.Oborji, *Trend in African Theology since Vatican II, A Missiological Orientation* (2005).

The Secondary Literature are mainly online Sources such as: Eduardo Echeverria, *Receptive Ecumenism and the Ecumenical Significance of Pope Francis*; Sarah Rowland Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism: The Ecumenical Review*(2009); Jacinta Chiamaka Nwaka, *the Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Beginning of Organized Lay Apostolate Groups among the Igbos of Southeastern Nigeria*. Others are online articles on the following topics: Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission; Anglican Communion and ecumenism; Catholic Church in Nigeria; Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion; the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria

Methodology

To address these problems expressed in form of questions, and to achieve the purpose of this research work with available literary sources (Church documents and literature), relevant research methods are to be employed in the collection and study of necessary facts or information. These methods are required to process and articulate all facts and information to be gathered. Hence, for the effectiveness of this research work, the following research methods and strategies are basically to be employed: ecumenical method, fundamental, historical, and analytical method of research, among others.

Very important for study and discussions in this thesis is the ecumenical method of research by which data and information derived from various Church documents and documents of dialogue are considered equally without prejudice to the particular ecclesiality from which the document emanated. On the other hand, the fundamental, historical, and analytical method of research which are classified under qualitative research method, are to be systematically employed in the context of this thesis for the collection, study and theoretical analysis of facts and information, on the basis of previous case study and established ecumenical principles.

In the context of this thesis, these methods are to be understood as follows: Fundamental or basic method of research assist to expand knowledge in specific research area; in analytical method of research, facts or information that are already available are analyze in order to arrive at critical evaluation of the subject matter, and in order to explain complex phenomenon.

The historical method of research provides means by which past and present events are discussed in terms of origin and development in order to derive primary historical data and information. With these primary historical data, possible answers and solutions to current problems are sought for and provided. The historical method of research is a process by which facts and principles are established through reference to chronology and to the evolution or historical course of what is been studied.

In the course of discussions on the topic of this doctoral thesis, namely: “Spiritual, practical, and doctrinal ecumenism in the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria”, historical method of research is to be employed to trace the root cause of the problem between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria back to the missionary era. It will also help to emphasize the historical antecedents of the ecumenical movement at the global level which serves as both impetus and bedrock for ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria.

Historical and analytical methods will assist to discover reasons for division, rivalry and antagonism between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria during the first century of Christianity in Nigeria and prior to the establishment of national ecumenical relations between the two Churches. It follows that division and antagonism between these two Churches in Nigeria necessitate the establishment of Nigeria Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC). These research methods will help to analyze conditions of the ecumenical movement in Nigeria as a response to and a receptive action to fraternal relationship between Rome and Canterbury. It also serve as follow-up to activities of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission.

Fundamental and analytical methods provide scientific tools for the systematic study and critical evaluation of some basic subjects, namely; spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism. They also help to evaluate the application of these subject matter to Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations in Nigeria. These methods will further help to study and analyze the overall “four principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism” so as to deduce from them elements of spiritual, practical and doctrinal

ecumenism which are embedded in the Anglican ecumenical teachings, since these are not systematically defined as in Catholic principles of ecumenism.

Structure of the research

The overall structure of this doctoral thesis comprise of three main chapters according to the different stages of development of the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria, and according to the research methods to be employed. In the first chapter, fundamental and historical methods will be applied to establish the historical basis of the problem-in-relations (division) which necessitated the establishment of joint ecumenical commission between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria.

Therefore, the historical background of Christianity in Nigeria with regards to its missionary progress, growth and challenges, will be discussed in the first chapter with reference to the first century of their existence in Nigeria (1885-1985). The discussion in this chapter will cover the strength, achievements and weaknesses of this missionary era.

The first chapter is divided into three parts: Part one of the first chapter will focus on the basic tenets of Anglicanism which explains Christian religious principles on which the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) is founded. In this part, further discussion will describe the activities of the “Church Mission Society” (CMS) as missionary agency that introduced Anglican faith into Nigeria.

Part two of the first chapter will focus on the missionary strategies of the “Roman Catholic Mission” (RCM) in Nigeria as catechesis, healthcare system (hospital apostolate) and education system (school apostolate) among others. These helped early Catholic missionaries (the Portuguese, French, and the Irish) to successfully plant the seed of Catholic faith in Nigeria.

Detail discussions on first century of encounter between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria (1885-1985) will constitute the part three of this chapter. This part covers details of relationship of cooperation as well as conflicts between CMS and RCM; –conflicts on religious practices, use of school and hospital apostolate as means of evangelization, and struggle for dominance on socio-political matters.

The discussion in chapter two will centre on the analysis of Roman Catholic and Anglican principles of ecumenism. This chapter will also be divided into three parts. The first part will focus on the Roman Catholic principles of ecumenism; that is, her

understanding of the 'Church', 'Communion', 'hierarchy (ministry)', her teachings on the ecclesiality of the separated brethren and salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church. This is to highlight, in particular, the Roman Catholic's view on the ecclesiality of the Anglican Communion as the basis of their ecumenical relations. Most importantly, this part will take care of detail discussion on the practical principles of ecumenism according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, namely; Spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism.

The second part of chapter two will elaborate the "four principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism" which embody major Anglican ecumenical teachings as follows: first, the goal of ecumenical movement; second, the task of ecumenical movement; third, the processes of ecumenism; and fourth, the content of Church unity. From these Anglican ecumenical teachings, the three principles of spiritual, doctrinal and practical ecumenism are to be deduced to provide common ground for discussions on Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in general.

The third part of this chapter will discuss the overall relations between the two communions with regards to achievements of ARCIC and IARCCUM. The discussions in this section will extend to the principles of Church as communion in reference to Anglican-Roman Catholic relations. The establishment of the personal (Anglican) Ordinariate will be considered as a land mark achievement of theological dialogue and ecumenical encounters between the two communions.

The third chapter, which is also divided into three parts, will focus on the practical application of the ecumenical principles in the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in the Nigerian context. The first part will highlight the established ecumenical structures of the two Churches in Nigeria in accordance with stipulations in the "directory for the application of the principles and norms of ecumenism". Part two of this chapter will discuss various ways in which Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria adopt, apply and practice these principles of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism. To foster greater fraternal relations between Anglicans and Roman Catholics in Nigeria, the third part of this chapter will enumerate some recommendations, which in the same vein, open doors for further discussions and research.

CHAPTER ONE

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF CATHOLICISM AND ANGLICANISM IN NIGERIA: GROWTH AND CHALLENGES

Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, describes evangelization of Africa according to three phases of her historical developments which are as follows: “The first century of Christianity saw the evangelization of Egypt and North Africa. A second phase, involving parts of the Continent south of the Sahara, took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. A third phase, marked by an extraordinary missionary effort, began in the nineteenth century”²⁴.

In the above statements, John Paul implies that while Africa was among the few privileged continents of the world to receive the message of the gospel in the first century of Christianity, nevertheless, the most systematic, wide spread and enduring evangelization of Africa took place during the third phase of evangelization of Africa, that is, in the nineteenth century. It was during this period in history that Christianity came through the West Coast of Africa to Nigeria.

In the fifteenth century, many Europeans made frequent visits along the West coast for commercial purposes. It was during this period that European missionaries, who came along with trading companies, presented Christianity to Africans, but more like a Western tradition and as adjunct of the commercial enterprise. Their method of evangelization did not appeal to the people in Africa whose religious world view revolve around divinity rather than commerce. Africans could not comprehend a religion mixed with commerce²⁵, and that was the major setback on evangelization of Africans in the fifteenth century.

²⁴ John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995, no. 30; (for further citation: EA).

²⁵ The Influence of Christianity on African/Nigerian/Yoruba Civilization, <http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20120502015605zg/nm-projects/christianity-projects/the-influence-of-christianity-on-african-nigerian-yoruba-civilization/>, access on 23th October, 2016.

It was in the nineteenth century that systematic evangelization of Africans took place. Two factors facilitated Christian missionary activities of the nineteenth centuries: First, the movement for abolition of slavery; and second, colonial rule. But these were not ultimately responsible for successful evangelization of indigenous people of West Africa.

The significance of the abolition of slavery to the evangelization of West Africa was that it provided conducive atmosphere as well as African personnel for missionary activities: the movement for abolition of slavery which was vigorously promoted by European Christian missionaries, sent clear signal to indigenous people of Africa of the dawn of physical, mental and spiritual emancipation of the region.

This new development was significantly expressed by the inclusive missionary activities; that is, by incorporating African ex-slaves as Christian missionary personnel. Many African ex-slaves who converted to Christianity facilitated the growth and the spread of Christian faith in many parts of West Africa, though not without some challenges.

Another factor that provided conducive environment for the growth and the spread of Christianity in West Africa was colonial rule. The common notion was that, “with the coming of colonial rule, a *symbiotic* relationship developed between colonial rulers and Christian missions. Colonial rule provided a politically peaceful and supportive environment for the work of Christian missionaries.

Although colonial governments saw Christian missionaries as important allies; nevertheless, the truth remains thus; “while European colonialism facilitated the work of Christian missionaries, these missionaries did not come to Africa because they were invited by colonial government. The primary agenda of the missionaries was to spread Christianity through the conversion of as many people as they could reach with their (gospel) message”²⁶. Hence, the central mission of Christian missionaries was to make converts and win as many souls as possible for Christ.

To achieve the aim of converting Africans from traditional religious worship to Christianity, missionaries made effort to learn African languages and to translate the Bible to local languages. This was to enable Africans read the Bible in their local languages. But to read and write, Africans were to be trained according to the 19th century system of education.

²⁶ Ibid.

This new development means that Western style of literary and school-based education for indigenous African people was imperative, and thus, became additional goal for missionaries. Hence, schools were established, and in addition to school apostolate, hospitals and clinics were opened in rural areas. Nigeria, which forms part of West Africa, participated as well as benefited from the missionary activities of this era.

The Portuguese Catholic missionaries made the initial attempt to establish Christianity in Nigeria in the Fifteenth Century (between 1474 and 1480) through Benin and Warri areas of southern Nigeria. But those attempts failed because they focused more on trade and commerce than on preaching the gospel. With the abolition of slavery in 1807²⁷, many freed slaves settled in Badagry (south-west Nigeria) which was point of entry for ex-slaves into present day Nigeria.

Since these slaves had prior contact with Christianity while serving their slave-masters in Europe and had also received Western education before regaining their freedom, they became instrumental to evangelization. Therefore, with their fair knowledge of English language and Church doctrines, some of them worked as catechists, instructors and interpreters behalf of European missionaries.

The slave-factor for missionary work was extensively used by the Church Missionary Society (CMS)²⁸ of Africa than by the Roman Catholic mission (RCM). For instance, in 1842, when the Church of England through the CMS established what was originally called Yoruba Mission²⁹ in Nigeria, it was Rev. Henry Townsend who led the team of missionaries to establish it. When they wanted to extend the missionary work to the Niger area³⁰ in 1857, late Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, an ex-slave, led the group of missionaries who comprised other African ex-slaves. This missionary strategy worked for the CMS to some extent.

The use of ex-slaves as missionaries had its advantages and disadvantages in pluralistic and diverse traditional cultures of Nigerian society, and precisely in Igbo³¹

²⁷ Celestine A. Obi, Vincent A. Nwosu, Casmir Eke, K. B. C. Onwubiko and F. K. Okon, (editors), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885-1985*, Onitsha: Africana-FEP Publ. 1985, pp. 3-4.

²⁸ The Church Missionary Societies of Africa was established in England and sent to establish Anglican Faith in Nigeria.

²⁹ Yoruba Mission refers to a Missionary activities that concentrated around the south-western Nigeria mainly Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta.

³⁰ Niger area covered both the upper and lower Niger which is identified around the south-east, south-south and north-central in the present day geographical locations of Nigeria.

³¹ Igbo people belong to an ethnic group living in the south-eastern part of Nigeria. They are very enterprising, and industriously seek adventure in all spheres of life.

culture. The advantages of the use of ex-slaves as missionaries included the fact that since those freed slaves were Africans and Nigerians as well, they adapted easily to the African climatic conditions, spoke local languages and were quite familiar with local cultures. In addition, they had the advantage of prior contact with Christianity and Western education while they served their European slave-masters.

Despite these positive aspects of the engagement of ex-slaves as missionaries, disadvantages of employing them as Christian missionaries were enormous and hindered progress with regards to the conversion of indigenous people of Nigeria. For instance, according to traditional Igbo culture that was practiced during the missionary era, a slave or ex-slave did not have religious relevance in traditional worship ceremony and had no social status as *nwa-Idiala* (free-born or son-of-the soil). He or she had no right of inheritance and could not be entrusted with renowned responsibility in traditional communities. Slaves could not speak authoritatively and would not be given any traditional title even after regaining freedom. There were many other restrictions against slaves before and during this era.

Other challenges that emerged as a result of the engagement of ex-slaves in missionary work were as follows: first, majority of them were not top rated and trained missionaries. Some of them did not receive formal training in either missionary or theological studies before being sent to Nigeria. They were considered for the mission because of their familiarity with the terrain, culture and language, as well as because of their zeal for the mission. But when fully engaged in the mission, few succeeded while many others became liabilities as they could not properly discharge their duties as religious teachers and as interpreters to the local Christian communities; translating to vernacular what European missionaries taught in English.

The Roman Catholic Mission (RCM) did not experiment with ex-slaves, they employed trained missionaries to evangelize different parts of Nigeria, while the Church missionary Society (CMS) of England sent ex-slaves like S. A. Crowther to evangelize upper and lower Niger. Thus, C. A. Ebelebe described the CMS missionary work as follows: “an experiment in African initiative and independence”³².

³² C. A. Ebelebe, *Missionary-Era Animosities as Impediments to Ecumenism Among the Churches in South-Eastern Nigeria*; in L. E. Ijezie, S. Audu, and A. I. Acha (editors), *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, Lagos: CATHAN Publ., 2015, p. 600: with the exit of Henry Venn, the visionary CMS Secretary General, the mission came under severe criticism for being unproductive. A recommendation was made on how the mission would be turned around; and that was to replace African Agents with Europeans. That was how the tempo of CMS mission was increased to be more efficient.

Historians were of the opinion that the use of ex-slaves as missionaries contributed to the slow-in-progress of the CMS missionary activities. This line of argument could be considered from the fact that though the CMS missionaries arrived in 1857 to Nigeria, and worked for twenty-seven years before the arrival of the RCM, they were overtaken by the RCM who arrived in 1885 in terms of conversion of indigenous people.

Nevertheless, it is widely acknowledged that all the missionaries that worked in Nigeria made outstanding contributions. Missionaries like: The Methodist Wesleyan Missionary Society (MWMS) led by Rev. Thomas Birch Freeman who arrived to take care of the freed slaves at Badagry and Abeokuta on 24 September 1842; The Church Missionary Society (CMS) who worked in the South-Western Nigeria starting from 17 December, 1842, and in the Niger area in 1857 to established an Anglican Mission; the Scotland Missionary Society (SMS) that established Presbyterian Mission through Calabar (South-South) axis under the leadership of Rev. Hope Masterton Waddel and Mary Slessor in In 1846;

Furthermore, the American Baptist Missionary Society (ABMS) established the Baptist mission in Northern Nigeria on February 1849 through the help of Thomas T. Bowen, Harvey Goodale and Robert F. Hill; Société de la Mission Africaine (SMA) – The Society of African Mission – who took charge of the vicariate Apostolic of Dahomey in the West Coast of Africa from 1856 to 1888³³ and worked alongside with the Congregations of the Holy Ghost Fathers who arrived in 1885 to establish the Roman Catholic Mission in the Southern and Northern Nigeria.

Although in Nigeria today, the CMS and RCM stood out as those that have the largest number of adherents of Anglicanism and Catholicism respectively, the efforts of all missionaries that worked to established Christianity in Nigeria are commendable.

The main focus of this chapter, however, is to study objectively, the establishment, growth and challenges of Christianity in Nigeria with emphasis on the missionary activities of CMS who represented Anglican mission and RCM, who represented Roman Catholic mission. This main focus of this study are areas of cooperation as well as areas of conflicts between CMS and RCM as they traverse the mission land in Nigeria to plant the seed of Christian faith.

³³ *The Influence of Christianity on African/Nigerian/Yoruba Civilization*, <http://www.nigerianmuse.com/20120502015605zg/nm-projects/christianity-projects/the-influence-of-christianity-on-african-nigerian-yoruba-civilization/>, access on 23th October, 2016.

1.1 Anglicanism and the Church of Nigeria

Anglicanism is a Christian tradition that emerged during the Reformation of sixteenth century and broke away from the Roman Catholic Church. The word, 'Anglicanism', appears in the English Christian lexicon as Anglican Churches in different parts of the world that developed new ways of co-existing with the political authorities, sometimes quite different from the model provided by the settlement in England³⁴. J. H. Newman referred to the term Anglicanism in 1838 to distinguish the type of Christianity which owe its origins to the Church of England which is different from Protestantism.

According to Mark Chapman, major outstanding feature of Anglicanism is thus: "while (regional or national Anglican) Churches might have owed their origins to the Church of England, they were forced by their particular (and peculiar) political circumstances to adopt new constitutions and forms of authority. Many began to enjoy the benefits of independence. In this way, Anglicanism became very different from the Church of England"³⁵.

This form of Christian tradition that started in England adopted a position of "*via media* between the different teachings and practices of Reformed Churches in Europe (Protestantism, Evangelicals and Puritans) on the one hand and Catholicism on the other hand"³⁶. Therefore, within the Anglican Communion there are Anglo-Catholicism and Evangelicals; High Churchman and Low Churchman.

1.1.1 Origin of Anglicanism

King Henry VIII's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon (his wife) in order to marry Anne Boleyn precipitated the break of the English Church with Rome³⁷. In its early stages, the English reformation undertook more of political rather than religious reform. Later on, the religious dimension of English reformation took place mainly as liturgical reform rather than doctrinal changes.

³⁴ M. Chapman, *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press Inc., 2006, p. 8.

³⁵ Ibid, p. 3.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 10.

³⁷ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988, p. 6.

It was the Act of Restraint of Appeal (1533)³⁸ that instituted the King's control of a single administrative structure of both political government and the religious life of the people, as independent jurisdiction of the mediaeval Church was abolished. Hence, the clergy submitted publicly to the Crown and had no jurisdiction to convoke a meeting, conference and synod or enact laws without royal approval: to a large extent, the English Church was made to be the servant of the Crown and state.

The spread of the English reformed Christian tradition began as English explorers, traders, colonists and missionaries travelled abroad. From the sixteenth century onwards, missionaries from England successfully established Anglican faith and traditions in colonies or countries where British personnel worked as businessmen explorers and colonists.

By the early nineteenth century, Anglicanism was already established in the North Atlantic Coast, while the Archbishop of Canterbury exercises supervision over these Churches though with minimal jurisdiction. Therefore, the media through which Anglicanism spread across nations and was established in different parts of the world were missionary activities, commerce and colonization. It was through these same means that Anglicanism was established in Nigeria³⁹.

1.1.2 Basic theological traditions in Anglicanism

Discussions on the basic tenets of Anglicanism within the context of this doctoral thesis is not aimed at systematic analysis of Anglican theology, but to highlight those basic theological principles upon which Anglican faith and doctrine are founded. Anglican theology, worship and doctrine are based on the Scriptures and the Book of Common Prayer.

The Book of Common Prayer, with its thirty-nine articles, provides guideline on what clergy and laity must teach and believe. As a collection of prayers, it contains daily offices for morning and evening prayer, forms for the administration of the Eucharist, Baptism, catechism, litany, and Ordinal. It also establishes the fundamental outline of Anglican theology and practice of faith. For instance, in the Article VI of the

³⁸ Ibid, pp. 6-8.

³⁹ Ibid, pp. 37-38.

Thirty-nine Articles entitled “Sufficiency of Holy Scripture for Salvation”, explains the central role of the Holy Scripture for Christians to attain salvation⁴⁰.

1.1.2.1 Supremacy and sufficiency of Holy Scriptures for salvation

In the study of Anglican theology, it is generally acceptable tradition that thus; “Holy Scripture contains all things necessary for salvation so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby is not to be required by any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith or thought to be necessary to salvation”⁴¹. The Holy Scriptures, therefore, is the norm of faith by which other norms, (like creed, tradition and ethical behaviour) are judged; and tradition, no matter how true, cannot establish belief necessary for salvation.

While Anglicanism emphasize the sufficiency and the supremacy of Scripture, nevertheless, it allows variety of interpretations and application of Scriptural teachings to contemporary life. According to Stephen Sykes and John Booty; “the political and social process of the formative century of Anglicanism established a national Church unique in the reformation era. Incorporating the fundamental insights of the continental Reformers, the Church of England grounded its religious unity, not in a confessional statement, but in (1) the supremacy of the Scripture, allowing for varying interpretations of its application to contemporary moral and Church life and (2) an agreed liturgy which, with many implicit theological perspective, contained as explicit doctrinal standards only the ancient creed and a brief children’s catechism”⁴². Therefore, Anglican faith and doctrinal teachings which are founded solely on Supremacy of the Scripture; while the faith, moral life and doctrinal teachings of the Roman Catholic Church are founded on the Scriptures, *Magisterium* and Tradition.

1.1.2.2 Corporate faith and doctrine of justification

In Anglicanism, the faith professed is corporate faith and not a private matter between God and the individual believer: corporate faith in this instance means that it is

⁴⁰ Ibid, pp. 54-56, 121 ff.

⁴¹ Ibid, p. 82 refers to Article VI of the Thirty-nine Articles entitled “of the Sufficiency of Holy Scripture for Salvation” as it is contain in the Book of Common Prayer; this is also referred to as *Articles of Religion*.

⁴² S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, p. 14.

the common faith of the Church in which members are baptized, and thus, participate in the paschal mystery⁴³. This corporate faith is articulated in the Book of Common Prayer and celebrated in the liturgy – unity of faith and praise.

Hence, salvation in Anglican Theology involves not only forgiveness of sins but also call to holiness of life which is fundamental aspect of the Anglican doctrine of justification. Since the fruit of God's gift is sanctification, that is, to live in God's transforming grace, the visible means of God's grace are the sacraments because of the dynamic relation between sacraments and faith. Without faith, the liturgical rites, including the sacraments, are mere external forms⁴⁴.

Anglican theological understanding of faith, sanctification in connection with sacraments are described by S. Sykes and J. Booty thus: "Every sacramental action is first of all an expression of God's initiation, and the context of our response is always shaped by the cultural and historical realities of the Church's life at a particular time and in a particular place... but to recognize in the Church's sacraments the signs of God's active gift of grace is to discover their purpose as his instruments for building the Body of Christ"⁴⁵. Therefore, "the relationship between worship (liturgy) and belief (faith) is discussed under the title: *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of praying in the law of faith)"⁴⁶.

1.1.2.3 Moral teaching

With regard to Anglican moral teaching, there are no uniform moral theory and practice, although morality has been the preoccupation of the Anglican tradition. The principle of *via media* is often applied to establish an identity which is both Catholic and Reformed tradition, yet in real sense it is neither of the two. Anglican tradition seeks middle ground between authority and liberty⁴⁷.

⁴³ Ibid, pp. 52-54.

⁴⁴ Ibid, pp. 64-70.

⁴⁵ Ibid, p. 73.

⁴⁶ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, p. 174.

⁴⁷ Ibid. p. 325.

1.1.2.4 Ecclesiological teaching

Basic ecclesiological principle in Anglicanism arose as Anglican communities were established in different countries in the world. This development led to the question of how each Anglican community relates with other communities in different parts of the world. This gave rise to two aspects of Anglican ecclesiology: first, the autonomy of the national Churches⁴⁸ in different countries to order their own affairs; second, the interdependence of the national Churches often described as loosed federation of Churches in communion with the See of Canterbury.

The inter-relationship of various Anglican Communities with one another constitute what is known as Anglican Communion. According to S. Sykes and J. Booty; “The Anglican Communion or Anglicanism viewed as a global phenomenon, is not, as the name implies, a unified Church or even a number of Churches controlled by an authoritative body. It is made up of a loose federation of Churches which are in communion with the See of Canterbury. The constituent Churches acknowledged the fact that they have emerged from the Church of England, and the Christian doctrines and practices they exemplify proximate closely to those of that Church”⁴⁹.

According to Sykes and Booty, the significance of the concept, ‘loose federation of Churches’ or ‘autonomous national Churches’, is thus; “the Anglican Communion as an autonomous federation of Churches has no authoritative power to determine doctrine, ritual and policy, which is in any way binding on its members. Each (national) Church is responsible to itself and governs itself in its own particular way according to a great variety of constitutions. The only factor which binds the Churches together is loyalty to a heritage which is bound up with the Church of England”. Therefore, “the authority of each meeting (conference, synod) is limited to the inherent wisdom of its deliberation. Any statement made possessed only the authority of those bishops who put their names

⁴⁸ National Churches: this is used to refer to member Churches within the Anglican Communion in particular country or region and to indicate their autonomy to a large extent in matters of faith and moral. “National Churches are quite independent of one another. What united them was a doctrinal, liturgical, and historical memory, and (in most Churches at least) a sense of Englishness” M. Chapman, *Anglicanism*, p. 115.

⁴⁹ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, p. 364.

in it. The Church conference could make recommendation, but it was up to the member Churches to judge their worth and take whatever action they deemed appropriate”⁵⁰.

1.1.3 The Church Missionary Society

The spread of the English reformed Christian tradition began as English explorers, traders, colonists and missionaries travelled abroad. To establish Anglicanism in different parts of the world, some missionary societies were employed and assigned to work in many countries where British personnel worked as colonists and there also carried out their commercial activities. One of the leading missionary societies that took charge of African West Coast and, particularly, Nigeria was the Church Missionary Society (CMS).

It was CMS leadership that introduced new missionary plan that contributed to changes in administrative structure of all Churches of Anglican Communion; thus, that later resulted to the idea of independent Churches or national Churches. The CMS was the first to experiment on the concept of ‘native Church under native leadership’ which later gave birth to independent Churches.

The idea of independent Churches started in the nineteenth century as a form of Oxford movement known as Tractarianism⁵¹. This movement emerged in England with the consciousness of ecclesiastical independence under the leadership of bishops. In 1840, the then bishop of London, Charles Blomfield, who was responsible for the Church overseas, opened discussions on the need to support Anglican Churches throughout British Empire.

Hence in 1841, the ‘Colonial Bishopricks Fund (CBF)’ was established. Through the large amount of fund raised by the CBF, fifteen dioceses were founded in British colonies by 1853. Hence, self-government was both a practical necessity and a divine prerogative.

⁵⁰ Ibid. pp. 367, 228.

⁵¹ “The Oxford movement, which later evolved into Anglo-Catholicism comprised of members of the Church of England and considered Anglicanism, along with Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism form the three branches of One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Thus, the movement was for reinstatement of some older Christian traditions of faith into Anglican liturgy and theology. Their philosophy was known as Tractarianism. A name which came from its series of publications, the Tracks for the Times (1833 to 1841). The well-known Tractarians included, John Henry Newman, Edward Bouverie Pusey, John Keble, Charles Marriott, Richard Froude, Robert Wilberforce, Isaac Williams and Willlliam Palmer. Their interest in Christian origins caused them to criticize theological liberalism. Cf. *Oxford Movement*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oxford_Movement, accessed on, 25th November, 2016.

Based on experiences of the personnel of CMS who worked in West Africa in 1799, Henry Venn, who was the then secretary of CMS, proposed the establishment of Churches in mission land as independent “national Churches responsive to their local conditions and should seek civil protection from the colonial legislatures”⁵². They were to raise clergy and leaders from within. Venn was of the view that these national Churches were to be founded on the basis of ‘three selfs’: ‘self-extension, self-support, and self-governance’; they were to be administered by indigenous bishops and clergy.

1.1.4 Anglican missionary activities in Nigeria

Since many European missionaries that worked in West Africa, and Nigeria in particular, succumbed to tropical illness sooner after arrival, Henry Venn proposed the use of indigenous African personnel for evangelizing mission in West Africa and in Nigeria. Therefore, young Africans, mostly ex-slaves, were also sent to take charge of missionary movements in Nigeria. Although there were challenges following the engagement of ex-slaves as missionaries, suffices to say that these African ex-slaves, had easier contacts and communications with the indigenous local communities since they had advantage of fluency in most Nigerian languages.

The missionary strategy of the CMS which anchored on principle of “native Church under native pastors and native episcopate” produced Samuel A. Crowther who was ordained bishop in 1864 and sent to open the first mission station in the area of Niger Delta in Nigeria⁵³. Although the progress made by the CMS personnel at the early stages of the mission was slow, as years went by, the ‘native Church of Nigeria’ emerged to become a national Church, but far from being fully inculturated.

Therefore, how much of Africans could be found in these native Churches established by African missionaries? To answer this question, M. Chapman writes thus: “A critical defect within Venn’s scheme, was the fact that it proposed an indigenous Church imprisoned within decidedly European patterns and expectations. The Church of the ‘three-selfs’ was envisioned as merely an extension or out-post of a European model, with no separate organic spiritual life of its own”⁵⁴.

⁵² M. Chapman, *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*, pp. 105-106.

⁵³ *Ibid*, pp. 106-107.

⁵⁴ *Ibid*, p. 108.

Another outstanding error of engagement of indigenous missionaries was the mis-placement of African missionary personnel. For instance, missionaries from a particular ethnic group or tribe in Nigeria were sent to another cultural environment they were not familiar with, and to people of another ethnic group or tribe whose language they could not speak and understand.

For instance, S. A. Crowther, a Yoruba ex-slave, who was consecrated bishop for 'Niger mission' in 1864, was sent to work in the south-east Nigeria, among the Igbo ethnic group. Therefore, challenges of working in unfamiliar territory, among Igbo and Ijaw people of south-east and south-south Nigeria respectively, affected the progress of his mission. The CMS missionary approach also suffered setbacks because some European missionaries had reservations on entrusting missionary lands to African ex-slaves. For them it was like 'giving school children control of their master'.

Nevertheless, according to Mark Chapman; "the success of the Niger Delta Pastorate was undeniable. With Crowther and others, including James Johnson, the precedent had been set: Churches could raise their own clergy and might challenge the prevailing model ... even if Nigeria had to wait until 1952 for its next African bishop, this experience proved that a local elite could produce new varieties and adaptations of Christianity"⁵⁵.

1.1.5 Establishment of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion⁵⁶

As personnel of CMS carried out their activities in the African West Coast, through Badagry, they successfully established the Anglican faith and tradition in Nigeria. The activities of the CMS in Badagry, and later in Niger axis, were facilitated by the presence of many ex-slaves already settled in Badagry⁵⁷. In Badagry, the Church

⁵⁵ Ibid, pp. 109-110.

⁵⁶ Anglican Communion: "The name given to the collection of 'particular or national Churches' in communion with the Archbishop of Canterbury ... The 'Communion' began to develop some form of organization from the first Lambeth Conference of 1867. Some Churches (like the Spanish Church) have 'joined' the Communion, without ever having been Anglican". Cf. M. Chapman, *Anglicanism*: 2006, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁷ Badagry which presently extends to Lagos area in the south-western Nigeria served as point of entry for ex-slaves into Nigeria, prior to missionary era. Cf. Celestine A. Obi, *et al.*, (editor), *A Hundred Years of the Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885-1985*, pp. 3-4.

of England, through CMS, opened what was originally called Yoruba Mission⁵⁸ in 1842, under the leadership of Rev. Henry Townsend.

Fifteen years later, that is, in 1857, the Church of England, following Venn's missionary principle of establishing a native Church with native leadership, incorporated and trained an African ex-slave, who was originally from south-west Nigeria, Rev. (Bishop) Late Samuel Ajayi Crowther, to establish Anglican mission alongside with other African missionaries in the Upper and Lower Niger. His first point of call in the Niger axis was Onitsha, south-eastern Nigeria, where he opened the first Anglican station. Bishop Benjamin C. Nwankiti described the event as follows: "Whereas the stimulus for the Yoruba Mission came from the freed slaves of the Yoruba origin in the Sierra Leone, and that of the Niger Mission came directly from the Church in London"⁵⁹.

This could not be said of the Anglican missionary activities in the northern Nigeria which suffered so much setbacks as a result of many factors such as: first, Islamic religion was well established in northern Nigeria for centuries before the advent of Christianity to the country, and majority of people living in northern part of the country had already embraced Islam before the arrival of CMS; second, Anglican mission arrived in the northern Nigeria almost at the same time as the establishment of the British Protectorate of Nigeria in 1900. As a result this coincidence, Anglicanism and colonialism were seen as one and the same by many in the north, and thus, viewed with suspicion. Therefore, early missionaries to the north were poorly received and in most cases suffered hostilities from people in local communities. In effect, this limited the range of missionary activities in northern Nigeria until the 1930s.

Despite the Challenges faced by the CMS in northern Nigeria, the growth of Anglicanism in Nigeria was commendable compared with her growth in other parts of West African. To buttress this fact, records show that before the province of West Africa was inaugurated in Freetown, Sierra Leone in April 1951, the Yoruba mission was already raised to become the diocese of Lagos in 1919. Also on 24th February, 1979, Anglican province of Nigeria was formally inaugurated with sixteen dioceses

⁵⁸ To explain Yoruba and Niger Delta Mission - Yoruba Mission referred to missionary activities that concentrated around the south-western Nigeria mainly Badagry, Lagos and Abeokuta; the upper and lower Niger Mission referred to missionary activities that took place around south-south, south-east and the north-central part of Nigeria.

⁵⁹ B. C. Nwankiti, *The Growth and Development of the Church of Nigeria, Owerri*: Ihem Davis Press, 1996, p. 21.

already in existence and Rev. Timothy O. Olufosoye, then Bishop of Ibadan, became the first Archbishop, primate and metropolitan of the province of Nigeria. By the year 2000, Most Rev. Peter Akinola became the Archbishop of Abuja, and Primate of the Church of Nigeria.

The Inauguration of the Province of Nigeria, raised her to the status of a national Church. Therefore, the Anglican province of Nigeria is presently referred to as 'Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion'. Having acquired the status of a national Church, she becomes independent and autonomous Church according to the Anglican ecclesiological principle. The creation of the Anglican province of Nigeria as national Church facilitated her growth over the years. This is confirmed by Shed N. Adiele thus: "The creation of the Church of Nigeria was like a catalyst as it increased religious consciousness within Anglican Communion"⁶⁰. Therefore, the Church of Nigeria and her members are invigorated to work assiduously for the growth of Anglicanism.

The growth and expansion of Anglicanism in Nigeria is obvious from the following statistics: "Between 1979 and 1988, eight dioceses were created, while between 1988 and 1999, forty-four dioceses were established. In 1989, the diocese of Abuja was created as the administrative headquarters of Church of Nigeria. As a result of this expansion, in 1997, the Church of Nigeria was divided into three internal ecclesiastical provinces: Province 1, consists of dioceses in the West; Province 2, consists of the Eastern dioceses; Province 3, consists of the Northern dioceses.

In 2002 the Church of Nigeria was once more reorganized into 10 ecclesiastical provinces. The rapid expansion continued, and as of 2012 there were 14 metropolitan archbishops who headed 14 ecclesiastical provinces, with a total of 161 dioceses"⁶¹. The number of dioceses and bishops within these provinces increased from 91 in 2002, to 161 as at January 2013. The then Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Dr. George Carey, once described the Church of Nigeria as the fastest growing province of all regional Churches of the Anglican Communion.

The Church of Nigeria, also known as 'the Anglican Province of Nigeria', is presently described as the second-largest province in the Anglican Communion after the Church of England with its current membership set at over 20 million out of the total Nigerian population of 180 million. This growth is confirmed by M. Chapman thus:

⁶⁰ S. N. Adiele, *The Anglican Church in Nigeria; Trend, Issues and Activities*, Ikot Epe: Clean House Production, 2001, p. 38.

⁶¹ *Church of Nigeria*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Nigeria, accessed on 22nd march, 2016.

“While the Church of England might still claim to be the largest of the Anglican Churches, with stated figures of 26,000,000 ... Kenya claims 2,000,000 active members; Uganda 8,000,000; and Nigeria a staggering 17,500,000. The only ‘European’ Churches to come close to resembling these figures are in Australia, with about 4,000,000, and the USA, with about 2,500,000”⁶².

Furthermore, to understand the missionary commitment of the Church of Nigeria, it is necessary to observe that she established a missionary body known as ‘Church of Nigeria Missionary Society (CNMS)’ to take charge of various aspects of evangelization. Concerning the nature and identity of the Church of Nigeria, she maintains a conservative position in terms of observing basic tenets of Anglicanism against the liberal Anglicanism practiced in most other countries. The Church of Nigeria follows the traditional teachings of Anglican faith and doctrine in matters of faith and moral. Therefore, she insists on the supremacy of the Holy Scriptures. Through her leaders, she criticized the emerging liberal attitude and interpretations of Anglican doctrines.

1.1.6 Church of Nigeria Missionary Society

The Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion established a surrogate missionary society called the ‘Church of Nigeria Missionary Society’ to continue her missionary activities in Nigeria. Three factors are responsible for the missionary consciousness among Anglican members in Nigeria: the first reason is in obedience to the missionary mandate of Christ according to the Gospel of Matthew 28:19-20⁶³; the second is as a response to the 1988 Lambeth conference which declared 1990 to 2000 as “the decade of evangelization”; the third factor is to counter the rapid spread of Catholicism in Nigeria which has well established several missionary bodies.

Shed Adiele, in his book, *The Anglican Church in Nigeria*, confirms that the wide spread of Roman Catholic Mission through various missionary societies that receive constant support from Rome is a big challenge to Anglicans in Nigeria. This has redefined Anglican missionary commitment and spurs their missionary zeal.

⁶² M. Chapman, *Anglicanism*: 2006, p. 9.

⁶³ Mt 28:19-20; “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations; baptize them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commandments I gave you. And look, I am with you always, yes, to the end of time”.

Thus, Adiele writes: “It is alleged that the Roman Catholic Church has as many as forty societies on active service in Africa at the point in time. Beside the old time societies such as the Dominicans (1216), Franciscans (1288) and Jesuits (1534) among others, there were the Holy Ghost Fathers Society (1841), the Society for African Mission (SMA 1858) and the White Fathers Missionary Society (1861)”⁶⁴. As this statement is considered by its facticity, the establishment of the CNMS by the Anglican community is to counter the well-articulated missionary influence of the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria.

1.1.7 Conservative nature of the Church of Nigeria

In their practice of Anglicanism, members of the Church of Nigeria adhere strictly to the Resolutions of the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888 which presents four elements held as overall basis of Anglican faith and doctrine. They are as follows: (1) the Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary for salvation, (2) the creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith, (3) the sacrament of baptism and Holy Communion and (4) the historic episcopate⁶⁵. Since Anglican tradition permits varied interpretations of these basic principles and elements of Christian faith according to various socio-religious circumstances of all independent nation Churches of Anglican Communion, the Church of Nigeria, as an independent national Church, adapts these teachings of Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral according to her religious and socio-cultural needs, but from the conservative point of view.

Therefore, the Church of Nigeria maintains a traditional position, and insists on supremacy of the Scriptures as the foundation of faith and doctrines. For this reason, she is often described as theologically conservative Church that maintains the historic faith, doctrine, sacrament and discipline of the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church.

According to available information, “the Church of Nigeria has continuously opposed the liberal inclinations of the Episcopal Church of the United States of America (ECUSA) and the Anglican Church of Canada (ACC), which led to the acceptance of non-celibate homosexuality and non-celibate homosexual clergy. The former primate,

⁶⁴ S. N. Adiele, *The Anglican Church in Nigeria*, pp. 37-38.

⁶⁵ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, p. 40.

Peter Akinola, become prominent as a leader of conservatives within the Anglican Communion”⁶⁶.

Hence, on matters of faith and moral as well as the life and works of the Anglican Communion, the Church of Nigeria condemns practices which she considered to be contrary to the historic faith, and doctrine of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church. For instance, after the ordination of a partnered gay man, Gene Robinson, as a bishop of the diocese of New Hampshire in the United States of America, the then primate of the Church of Nigeria, archbishop Akinola, observed that such liberal practices could split the Anglican Communion.

To this effect, therefore, “the Church of Nigeria took further steps and declared herself in ‘impaired communion’ with the Episcopal Church in the United States of America (ECUSA) on 21 November 2003. In September 2005 she re-worded her constitution to redefine, from its point of view, the Anglican Communion, no longer as ‘provinces in communion with the See of Canterbury’, but instead ‘all Anglican Churches, dioceses and provinces that hold and maintain the ‘historic faith, doctrine, sacrament and discipline of the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church’; and on November 12th, 2005, she entered into a *Covenant of Concordat* with the Reformed Episcopal Church(REC),and with the Anglican Province of America (APA), who were two orthodox Anglican groups outside the Anglican Communion which do not recognize the ECUSA”⁶⁷.

Furthermore, “In October and December 2006, several Episcopal Churches in Virginia joined to declare themselves out of communion with the ECUSA due to their opposition to the homosexuality union and joined the Church of Nigeria through the Convocation of Anglicans in North America (CANA), a mission originally started by the Church of Nigeria to support Nigerian Anglicans in the United States... The Church of Nigeria is currently in full communion with the Orthodox Anglican Church in North America (OACNA), founded in June 2009, of which the CANA is an affiliate jurisdiction; launched as an orthodox alternative to the liberal tendencies of the Episcopal Church of the United States and the Anglican Church of Canada. The first of four new American dioceses for the CANA established by the Church of Nigeria, under the oversight of the missionary bishop of CANA, was the Missionary diocese of the

⁶⁶ *Church of Nigeria*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Nigeria, accessed on 22nd march, 2016.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

Trinity which was inaugurated on 19 August 2012 by Archbishop Nicholas Okoh the current primate of the Church of Nigeria”⁶⁸.

The Church of Nigeria is an outstanding member of *General Anglican Future Conference of Nations* (GAFCON) whose aim is to guard and proclaim the gospel and, through faithful preaching and teaching, witness to Jesus Christ in all the world. The second conference of GAFCON of 2013, was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2013, at which out of over 1,300 delegates, the Church of Nigeria had 470 members delegation led by Archbishop Nicholas Okoh.

1.2 The Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria

The Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria remains under the leadership of Jesus Christ, but manned by the Catholic Bishop’s Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), and she is in full communion with the See of Rome. She abides by the doctrinal and moral teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, and retained the Roman liturgy in prayers and worship. She holds tenaciously to the profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ according to the traditional teachings of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church.

1.2.1 Advent of Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria

There are two major Roman Catholic missionary epoch in Nigeria which are mainly in the fifteenth and in the nineteenth centuries. The fifteenth century missionary activities, that later failed, was spearheaded by the Portuguese missionaries from Lisbon, while the nineteenth century missionary endeavour, which established the existing Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria, was undertaken by French missionaries, with later support from the Irish missionaries.

1.2.1.1 Portuguese missionary activities in Nigeria

The history of Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria began in the fifteenth century (in the year 1472) when Portuguese missionary priests of the diocese of Lisbon made initial effort to establish Catholic faith in southern Nigeria through Benin and Warri

⁶⁸ Ibid.

axis. During the era of exploration (between 1472 to 1621), and precisely from 1515 to 1555, Catholic faith was taught in Benin and Warri kingdom.

The attempt by Portuguese missionary priests to establish Catholic faith in Nigeria failed because, despite their goodwill to evangelize indigenous people of Benin and Warri kingdom, Portuguese missionaries were merely representatives of King of Portugal who was to expand his commercial empire to Africa and Nigeria in particular: because by the Papal Bull of Demarcation of the Holy See, Portugal was given the monopoly of commercial and spiritual influence over the continent of Africa⁶⁹.

The Portuguese missionary strategy was to convert the Oba (the kings) of both Benin and Warri Kingdom in view that since they were the traditional rulers, that is, custodians of the traditional custom and religious life of the people, both Oba (kings) would impose Catholicism as religion of their kingdom.

This missionary strategy failed because the missionaries *ab initio* condemned the religious practices of both Kingdoms of Benin and Warri as fetish and idol worship; thus, indirectly condemned the custodians of these religious practices and customs, the Oba. The perceived religious bias aroused suspicion among indigenes of Benin and Warri kingdom, particularly, traditional rulers (Oba) of these two kingdoms. This was to the effect that the entire members of the two communities refused to cooperate with the missionaries. By 1733, these kingdoms turned their back against Christianity⁷⁰.

Other factors that were responsible for unsuccessful missionary activities during this epoch were as follows; lack of indigenous missionary priests, unfavourable climatic conditions for Portuguese missionaries, as well as slave trade which was still ongoing in the fifteenth and sixteenth century. Also the inability of Portuguese missionaries to openly accommodate Catholic missionaries from other countries deprived them of the mission land, Nigeria.

1.2.1.2 French missionary activities in Nigeria

After the Portuguese missionary activities failed, several attempts were made by other missionaries to establish Catholicism in Nigeria, but none, except that of the French and Irish missionaries yielded positive results. According to A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo; “the beginning of what is today known as (Roman) Catholic Church

⁶⁹ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, 1982, p. 3.

⁷⁰ Ibid, pp. 1-3.

in Nigeria was the pioneering work of a missionary congregation founded in Lyons, France, on December 8th, 1856 by Bishop Melchior de Marion Bresillac”.

When Bishop Melchior – a member of Société de la Mission Africaine (SMA), that is, Society of African Mission–settled in Sierra Leon, he sent SMA priests of French extraction, led by Father Francesco Borghero to Lagos in 1863. It was there that these SMA priests founded the first mission Church in Nigeria. Again, in 1870, through hard work, the SMA founded the Vicariate of the Bight of Benin in Nigeria⁷¹.

1.2.1.3 Irish missionary activities in Nigeria

After a while, it became necessary to replace French missionaries in Nigeria with the Irish missionaries since Nigeria was a British colony and not a French one. The presence of these French missionaries in British colony was not a welcomed development for British government in Nigeria who feared that France might extent their colonial influence and, particularly, their commercial activities to Nigeria through French missionaries. Also communication between French missionaries and British government personnel was impaired as a result of language differences.

According to Felix Ekechi: “neither France nor England was prepared to see the other assume a more preponderant influence there. This struggle also extended to the religious realm which led to the replacement of French missionaries with the Irish missionaries (Holy Ghost Fathers) between 1902 and 1905 ... (England) perceived the Roman Catholic penetration and spreading to Niger area as a continuation of the French drive to Challenge British interest”⁷².

Hence, in 1885, when it was obvious that French missionary priests could no longer function efficiently in Nigeria, the congregation of the Holy Ghost Fathers

⁷¹ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, 1982, pp. 8-10.

⁷² F. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, London: Frank Cass, 1972, p. 69-72. This follows the fact that in the struggle for who will control the affairs of Nigeria, France lost to Britain. This was a disadvantage for the French dominated Holy Ghost Missionaries working for the Roman Catholic Mission in the south-east of Nigeria. When education became the preferred strategy for making evangelization, English became a necessity for effective missionary apostolate. Therefore, the Holy Ghost Missionary headquarters responded to this challenge by gradually replacing the French Speaking Missionaries with the Irish Missionaries. Though that was not the best move knowing the political relationship between Ireland and Britain at the time, but it was the only and best option. Ireland was the only English-speaking province of the Congregation at the time. With the arrival of the Irish missionary who were good in English language, the atmosphere, of competition and rivalry was charged. The political animosity between the Britain and Ireland was deeply felt even at the Christian-religious level.

(CSSP) sent Irish missionary priests to replace French missionaries. Irish missionaries established their first Roman Catholic mission in Onitsha, south-eastern Nigeria.

According to Alexius O. Makozi and G. AfolabiOjo; “on December 1885, Father Joseph Lutz travelled from the vicariate of Gabon into the commercial town of Onitsha (of Igbo ethnic group) to begin the Holy Ghost Mission in eastern Nigeria. For four years the Holy Ghost mission spread like wild fire in eastern Nigeria and in July 1889, the Prefecture of the Lower Niger was founded”⁷³.

Thence, Catholic faith, teachings and tradition spread very rapidly like wild fire to the extent that by the end of nineteenth century, many local Churches and dioceses, provinces and the episcopal conference of Nigeria were already established. Consequently, numerous indigenous religious congregations emerged and began to send missionaries to various parts of the world; and several Catholic seminaries, convents and institutions of higher learning came into existence.

1.2.2 The Missionary principles adopted by Roman Catholic Mission in Nigeria

The missionary principle that was adopted by Portuguese missionaries in the fifteenth century was that of “patronage” (*Padroado*) which afforded foreign missionaries the total control and administration of mission land. The system changed with French and Irish missionaries who employed the missionary principle of *ius commissionis*.

With the Second Vatican Council teachings on evangelization, inculturation and ecumenism, the Catholic faith in Nigeria received a boost and made great impact on lives and cultures of the indigenous people. This was as a result of Vatican II’s teaching on evangelization through the principle of *mandatum*.

According to F. A. Oborji: “some shifts took place in the evangelization of Nigeria in regard to the missionary juridical system used in each epoch. In the first phase (16th– 18th centuries) was the system of patronage (*padroado*⁷⁴); in the 19th century *ius commissionis*⁷⁵, and with the Vatican II, the *mandatum*”⁷⁶.

⁷³ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p. 11.

⁷⁴ *Padroado* was the privilege of patronage granted by Popes to the Portuguese Kings over the mission in Africa. This means that the Kings were patrons who assigned and approved missionaries to be sent to West Africa.

⁷⁵ ‘*Ius commissionis*’, was in force since 1622 when Gregorius XV founded the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of faith, also called ‘Propaganda fidei’. Hence, superiors general could send missionaries

Agather C. Kunuba further explains the idea of *mandatum* taught by Vatican II as follows; “rediscovery of the theology of reciprocity which is based on the gospel image of the sowing of the Good News (establishment of the local Church) ... the Council’s system of *mandatum* empowers the local bishops as fully responsible for evangelization in their dioceses while missionaries are to enter into contract (agreement) with the bishop in whose diocese they wish to serve”⁷⁷. This reduced the foreign missionary patronage or total control of the mission land, rather they were to work with the indigenous clergy and laity in spreading the gospel.

1.2.3 School apostolate and the growth of Catholic Church in Nigeria (1890-1970)

The growth of the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) in Nigeria surpassed other Christian denominations in Nigeria. The growth was rapid such that by 2016, there were an estimated number of 27.3 million baptized Catholics in Nigeria. Catholic Church in Nigeria is composed of 9 ecclesiastical provinces with 45 suffragan dioceses and two apostolic vicariates. She experiences boom in vocation to the priesthood from the early twentieth century and has sustained this till date. Presently, she sends missionaries to different parts of the world. Catholic faithful in the south-eastern Nigeria (especially among the Igbo ethnic group) accounts for over 60 percent of the country's Catholic population⁷⁸.

The most remarkable growth of the Catholic Church in Nigeria during the missionary era was possible through school apostolate. From the moment when bishop Joseph Shanahan of the Holy Ghost Fathers took over the Prefecture of the Lower Niger, instead of continuing with his predecessor’s (father Carlo Zippa) method of

wherever no dioceses governed by bishops had yet been established. Those superiors would have full ecclesiastical powers over those territories and could delegate their powers to the religious whom they put in charge of the missions. In such cases, these ecclesiastical superiors, as vicar apostolic or apostolic prefect, acted not as residential bishops, but on behalf of, and under the supervision of, the ‘Apostolic See’. Therefore, in the territories assigned to them, superiors and their delegates preach, hear the confessions, administer the sacraments, dispense from impediments, impose ecclesiastical punishments, and absolve from them, commute vows, give blessings that are reserved for bishops, bless and reconcile Churches and regulate divine worship.

⁷⁶ F. A. Oborji, *Trend in African Theology since Vatican II, A Missiological Orientation*, Rome: Leberit SKL Press, 2005, p. 51.

⁷⁷ A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria in the Light of the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism*, Enugu, Black Belt Konzult, 2012, p.46; cited by F. A. Oborji, *Trend in African Theology since Vatican II*, p. 53.

⁷⁸ *Catholic Church in Nigeria*, accessed on 28th November, 2016; accessed 30, October, 2016.

buying back slaves to confine them in 'mission village', he built several schools across south-east of Nigeria which served many religious purposes including daily liturgical celebration, religious education and training colleges for teachers and catechists.

The educational system was and it is still an efficient and effective instrument of evangelization for the RCC. Each school building serves as hall for both teaching and as a place for liturgical worship on Sundays⁷⁹. The curriculum for Catholic schools includes religious, moral instruction, and often, catechetical instructions. This means that Catholic school system is considered as avenue for winning souls for Christ.

More often, children from non-Catholic families embrace Catholic faith through attending Catholic education system. According to Makozi and AfolabiOjo: "conversion from one Church to another was a common phenomenon ... the Catholic missionaries appeared to many local people as different kind of white men: a kind who came for the welfare of the people"⁸⁰. As more indigenous people were converted to Catholic faith, Catholic Church faced so much antagonism, and discrimination. The rivalry between Catholics and Anglicans increased to the point of occasional conflicts and confrontation.

1.2.4 Challenges faced by Roman Catholic Mission

Common problems which all European missionaries – Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants – encountered in the course of their missionary work in Nigeria, and Africa in general, was the challenges of working in strange and difficult terrain amidst completely new cultures and traditions, harsh climatic condition and incurable diseases, suspicion and hostility from indigenous people of the land. Thus, many of the European missionaries suffered and died of tropical diseases, particularly malaria, to the extent that Africa was often described as "white man's grave yard". This notwithstanding, not even fear of death could deter these selfless missionaries from conquering the mission land, Nigeria, with the word of God, with love and charity for the indigenous people. In the face of imminent danger of death, they showed great commitment for their zeal for souls.

One the other hand, there were challenges that arose from inter-relations between missionaries from different Christian denominations that worked together on

⁷⁹ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History Of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, 1982, p. 11.

⁸⁰ Ibid, p. 40.

the same mission land, Nigeria; particularly, between the Church Missionary Society of Anglican tradition and the Roman Catholic Mission. There were series of conflicts between them.

The Catholic missionaries did not enjoy the monopoly of missionary work in Nigeria. On arrival in the southern Nigeria, they observed an already existent Christian missionary activities systematically organized by CMS and Protestant Churches. These missionaries had the support and protection of the colonial officials. Celestine A. Obi, the editor of the book, *A Hundred Years of The Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria*, acknowledged this thus: “already in 1883, the Spiritans in Gabon had trekked to various distant outstations in south-west Nigeria. They later decided to focus their work of evangelization on eastern Nigeria as from 1885. Of course, missionaries of various Christian denominations were now operating at Onitsha up to Lokoja and enjoyed the protection of the European trading companies, colonial officials and Royal Niger Company”⁸¹.

Furthermore Obi observed thus: “the Vicariate of southern Nigeria was in fact at this time full of many Christian sects, each teaching different doctrines... These different Protestant sect help one another to set up their schools, colleges and hospitals. Some of them have seminaries for training their clergy and evangelists, professional schools of Stenography, domestic science, blacksmithery and hostels for young women”⁸².

The above statements from Celestine Obi confirm that Catholic missionaries faced two main initial challenges in the relations with other Europeans in Nigeria: first, the presence of the CMS and other Protestant Missionaries whose doctrines and faith traditions were already imbibed by many people from the local communities; Second, the presence of the Niger (British) Trading Company who gave missionaries from CMS protection as against RCM.

The presence of missionaries of different Christian denominations and traditions, antagonism and rivalry that issued from their inter-relations as well as the conflicting interpretations of the same gospel message was a great concern to the evangelized; these missionaries preached ‘perspectives Gospel’ with varied interpretations of a given gospel passage that confused the indigenous people from local communities. According

⁸¹ Celestine A. Obi, et el. (editor), *A Hundred Years of The Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria 1885-1985*, Onitsha: Africana-FEP Publ. 1985, p. 10.

⁸² Ibid, p. 155.

to C. A. Obi; “the villagers being evangelized were sometimes confused by the various brands of, often conflicting and contradictory, doctrines. These problems notwithstanding, the Catholic missionaries recorded some successes”⁸³.

The idea of ‘perspective gospel’ or ‘different gospel perspectives’ preached by different Christian denominations shows the necessity for Christian unity and mission in general. This fact makes ecumenism an imperative because when Christians proclaim the gospel message in conflicting forms, it creates confusion in the minds of the listeners and might not achieve the desired goal – salvation.

Catholic missionaries made several attempts to evangelize the northern Nigeria. For instance, in 1850, Italian Franciscan, Father Philip of Segni, arrived in northern Nigeria and made considerable impart. But the most systematic evangelization of northern Nigeria came with the assistance of missionaries who already worked in the southern Nigeria, precisely Lagos. In 1884, Father Chausse and Holley opened a new mission in Lokoja. Later on, in 1907, the SMA fathers established in the Shadam (north) and carried out a systematic evangelization that endured till date. The greatest Challenge of the Roman Catholic Mission in the northern Nigeria was and still is the presence of Islamic religion that established centuries before Christianity.

1.3 The first century of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria, 1885-1985

Christianity in Nigeria is indebted ultimately to God and to the sacrifices made by European missionaries. This is so because, while these missionaries worked hard to plant the Christian faith among the indigenous people of Nigeria, many of them paid the ultimate price with their lives. And as they carried out their missionary work under unfamiliar and unfriendly climatic condition, they suffered various kinds of illness and yet doggedly struggled to win souls for Christ.

Nevertheless, it is also observed that the gospel message they brought to Nigeria suffered setbacks because of the influence of the same form of division within the Christian Churches of the West that reached climax in the sixteenth century with the English reformation that tore apart the seamless Body of Christ, the Church, and caused a crack on the administrative and religious wall that once guarded the unity of

⁸³ Ibid, p. 157.

Christendom: there emerged many reformed Ecclesial Communities that preached ‘perspective Gospel’ and taught different doctrines⁸⁴.

Hence, disunity among Churches and Ecclesial Communities that exist in Europe translated into rivalries and conflicts in the mission land, among missionaries that represented these Churches and Ecclesial Communities. Nigeria, as a mission land, had a lion share of these ‘inherited conflicts and rivalries’ among Christians since she was evangelized by missionaries from Europe and America.

Therefore, the seed of the gospel that was planted in the Nigerian soil carried along with it disunity, rivalry, and competition. According to A C. Kunuba, “the Church (and Ecclesial Communities in Nigeria) grew in confusion, narrow-mindedness, and prejudices; with preconceived notion of intolerance, impetuous and rash judgment about one another”⁸⁵.

As earlier observed, the Anglican Community in Nigeria traces her origin to the English Church. Anglicanism was established in Nigeria through activities of the Church Missionary Society, while the Roman Catholic Church was established in Nigeria mainly by French and Irish missionaries. Therefore, religious, social, economic and political rivalries as well as conflicts of interest which characterized relations between these European nations – Britain, Ireland, and France – in the nineteenth century spilled over to Churches and Ecclesial Communities their missionary personnel established on mission land – Nigeria⁸⁶.

According to Edmund Patrick Thurman Crampton, “the political and religious rivalry between Britain and France especially in the colonial territory which took place before the twentieth century was clearly expressed by the CMS of Anglican communion and French missionary fathers of Roman Catholic Mission. This was also extended to the Irish missionary fathers of RCM who came from the section of the Ireland where religion is closely linked with bitter politics with Britain”⁸⁷.

To buttress these facts, Felix Ekechi observed that in the eastern Nigeria where Christianity flourished exceedingly during the missionary era, there were political rivalries and struggles for dominance in the Niger area between English and French

⁸⁴ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, 1988, pp. 6-8.

⁸⁵ A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria in the Light of the Vatican II Decree on Ecumenism*, Enugu: Black Belt Konzult, 2012, p. 68.

⁸⁶ Ibid, p. 68.

⁸⁷ E. P. T. Crampton, *Christianity in Northern Nigeria*, London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1979, p. 172.

trade Companies. Thus, he writes: “Neither France nor England was prepared to see the other assume a more preponderant influence there. This struggle also extended to the religious realm which led to the replacement of French missionaries with the Irish missionaries (Holy Ghost Fathers) between 1902 and 1905. Also, the CMS who first arrived in 1857 perceived the Roman Catholic penetration and spreading to Niger area as a continuation of the French drive to Challenge British interest. Thus, the CMS viewed with suspicion the activities of RCM as she spread rapidly”⁸⁸.

To further understand the relationship and encounters between the RCM and CMS during the missionary era, the remaining part of this Chapter will discuss Roman Catholic and Anglican relations in terms of cooperation as well as in terms of conflicts and rivalries between the two Churches in Nigeria.

1.3.1 Cordial relations between Church Missionary Society and Roman Catholic Mission

It is a fact that CMS and RCM missionary activities were prominent in southern Nigeria. During the nineteenth century missionary activities, Anglicans arrive first to Nigeria and establish along Lagos axis in 1842 as well as Niger area in 1857; while Catholic faith and tradition was later established in 1863 at Lagos, and in 1885 at the lower Niger region (south-eastern Nigeria). The implication is that CMS of Anglican mission existed and worked for more than two decades (about 21 years) in Nigeria before the arrival of the RCM. Hence, the tasks faced by RCM were obvious; first, to convert indigenes from traditional worship to Christianity; second, to teach Catholic doctrines amidst the prevalent Anglican and Protestant doctrines that were already taught and imbibed by indigenous people.

1.3.1.1 Mutual competitive efforts for conversion

The positive aspects of encounters between CMS and RCM on the same mission land was that the presence of one Christian tradition spurred the other to put more efforts to win converts. For instance, when CMS personnel arrived in the Niger area, they concentrated only in communities and developed areas where Royal (British) Niger

⁸⁸ F. Ekechi, *Missionary enterprise and rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, p. 69-72.

Company had well established themselves; this was for them to continue to enjoy the protection and support of British personnel. Therefore, their missionary spread was slow until the arrival of the Holy Ghost Fathers of RCM. The presence of the Holy Ghost Missionary Fathers in 1885 challenged and spurred CMS personnel to put more efforts to penetrate hinterland and to make more converts: that was immediately implemented in order not to be overtaken by Catholic missionaries.

In a competitive spirit to win more converts, the presence of a particular mission society in a given locality motivated others to establish mission stations too. For instance, where CMS established mission stations, the RCM made efforts to establish presence too and vice versa. Therefore, on a particular instance, Bishop Joseph Shanahan of RCM once appealed to Paris: “We cannot afford to let the Protestant establish everywhere before us; give us the resources and no fever, no fatigue, not even death can stop the march of our Holy Religion. It is the soul of all the people in the country that is at stake”⁸⁹

1.3.1.2 Mutual cooperation between Church Mission Society and Roman Catholic Mission

At the early stages of encounters between RCM and CMS personnel, there were significant cooperation among them. For instance, the kind gesture of Bishop Ajayi Crowther, the first Anglican bishop in Nigeria, was remarkable; a kind of an inter-denominational cooperation. It was observed that when Catholic missionaries arrived Lokoja for the first time, “as land for Catholic Church was difficult to get, bishop Crowther offered the use of his Church, so that Catholics and Anglicans shared the same building for many years”⁹⁰. Bishop A. Crowther of CMS offered this kind gestures because of his conviction that he acquired mission land for God’s course, so it is open for use for God’s work by all denominations.

This cordial relationship was followed up with exchange of visits between Catholic and Anglican missionaries as was testified by a Catholic eyewitness thus: “at the end of the month, bishop Crowther visited us together with his catechist of Onitsha ... from time to time we also visited Mr. Astrop, an influential man of the

⁸⁹ A. S. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957: Conversion in Theory and Practice*, Maryland: University Press, 2010, p. 161.

⁹⁰ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, 1982, p. 57.

country”⁹¹. The RCM reciprocated by offering free medical treatments to both Catholics, Anglicans and Protestants through the services of Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny.

1.3.2 Conflicts and rivalries between Anglican and Roman Catholic Missionaries

Change in the colonial-political situation in Nigeria became obvious in the 1885. Though the influence of Britain had been in Nigeria since 1807, the political situation of what is today called Nigeria changed from 1885 when Britain occupied and ruled the Southern and Northern Protectorate of Nigeria through the British Royal Niger Company (BRNC)⁹².

1.3.2.1 British-colonists’ background to conflicts between the Church Missionary Society and the Roman Catholic Mission

The RCM personnel were European missionaries drawn mostly from southern France (SMA) and from Ireland (CSSp); while the makeup of CMS personnel were drawn from England (like Rev. Henry Townsend) and from ex-African-slaves (people like Bishop Samuel A. Crowther). Hence, the CMS mission enjoyed the protection as well as other privileges from the British-colonists who considered CMS as one of their own. But their Catholic counterparts were treated by colonists with mixed feelings and with suspicion.

Samuel N. Nwabara, in the book, *Iboland: A Century of Contact with Britain*, recalled occasions where British military outfits escorted members of CMS and paved the paths for them to establish Anglican communities. On the other hand, CMS missionary activities assisted colonists to subdue indigenous people of southern Nigeria, spiritually and religiously, before imposing colonial rule.

To buttress this claim, S. Nwabara writes thus: “As British soldiers fought their way into southern Igbo towns, the missionaries followed in their wake, endeavouring to establish mission stations among the peoples. Prior to this time, even the CMS had not

⁹¹ Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, *Religion and African Culture: Inculturation, a Nigerian Perspective*, Enugu: Spiritans Publ., 1988, p. 117; in L. E. Ijezie, et al. (editors), *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, p. 599.

⁹² British Royal Niger Company is a trading company that took charge of governance and commercial activities in Southern Nigeria on behalf of the British colonial government.

infiltrated the interior, but with the imposition of a colonial government which saw Christianity as a tool for subduing the people, the CMS was encouraged by the British High Commissioner to move inland”⁹³.

The CMS was also recognized as the official Christian denomination that represented colonial government. According to Makozi, “antagonism from Protestants was not the only immediate disability suffered by the pioneer Catholic missionaries. Being non-British nationals⁹⁴, they (French and Irish Catholic missionaries) were suspected by the British trading companies of possibly becoming a threat to their commercial and political interests in the area ... the CMS missionaries did not have to face this problem. Rather they got protection and patronage from the British trading company who often used their gun-boats to silence any ‘trouble-maker’ among the local people”⁹⁵.

Therefore, the CMS of the Anglican Communion, led by Rev. Henry Townsend and Rev. Samuel Ajayi Crowther, enjoyed advantages of priority not only from the host communities, but also from colonists and agents of the Royal Niger Company; they quickly began winning converts through regular Sunday school activities. The news of the arrival of Holy Ghost Missionary Fathers in 1885, which was supposed to be received with enthusiasm, was considered a threat by colonists, members of CMS and other Christian denominations.

1.3.2.2 Struggle for prominence between the two missionary societies

The Roman Catholic missionaries were seen as threats and as intruders on arrival. The situation grew worse, later on, when Catholic faith and tradition began to gain ground and spread like wild fire: From thence, jealousy against the quick progress and successes of RCM grew into antagonism, rivalries, conflicts of interest, and malice; while comical and derogatory languages were used by one Church against other.

⁹³ S. N. Nwabara, *Iboland: a Century of Contact with Britain 1860-1960*, London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1977, p. 54; cited by O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of south-eastern Nigeria*, <https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/26260/EZEKWEM-MASTERSREPORT-2014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>, accessed on 15th November, 2016.

⁹⁴ With the arrival of the French and Irish Catholic missionary, the atmosphere of competition and rivalry was charged. The political animosity between the Britain and Ireland was deeply felt even at the Christian-religious level.

⁹⁵ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, 1982, p. 39.

To buttress this facts, Makozi writes thus: “There is no question that the coming of the Catholic missionaries had seriously shaken the security of the Protestants and especially the Church Missionary Society. To many Protestant⁹⁶ missionaries, Catholic missionary presence was an ‘intrusion’, one with ‘pernicious influence’⁹⁷. And M. Chapman also confirmed above claims thus: “There had been conflict between the CMS missionaries and the French Catholic White Fathers. Tucker described the situation in December 1890 as ‘like a volcano on the verge of an eruption’. Political events quickly made this situation even more complex – in the end, the CMS had to organize a collection to protect Christians with force”⁹⁸.

As these missionaries progressed and found their way into the hinterland, conflicts among them multiplied. It was increasingly difficult for CMS and RCM missionaries to work hand in glove. The bitter struggle for the mission land was noted in their journals and letters to their superiors. Therefore, breakthrough into the hinterland arouse rivalries among the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian missions. Although these rivalries were more pronounced between the CMS and the RCM since all decisions made by CMS became foreshadowed by the presence of the RCM⁹⁹.

The members of CMS were startled by the Roman Catholic Mission’s inroads into their presumed mission fields, and conveyed their dismay to their London headquarters. Thus, O. C Ezekwem observed that A. Crowther, “warned that the Roman Catholics would secure CMS converts if London failed to send more missionary staff and resources to occupy strategic locations. Similarly, Catholic presence in Onitsha was

⁹⁶ The term ‘Protestant’ was used extensively and in the wide sense within the Nigerian context during the missionary era to refer to all other Christian denominations that are not in full communion with Roman Catholic Church including Anglicans. This is still the case in Nigeria even up till present times. Although in the strict sense Anglicans are not regarded as Protestants, it is common saying in Nigeria to classify other Christians, except Catholics, as Protestants.

⁹⁷ A. O. Makozi and G. J. AfolabiOjo, *The History of the Catholic Church in Nigeria*, p.39. As a result of conflicts among Christian missionaries in Igbo land, a conference of missionary societies was summoned by the Rev. T. J. Dennis of the CMS. The conference held in Aba between January and February 1917, and was attended by the 27 protestant missions. In the meeting, the boundaries of each mission were delineated. Boundary questions, however, persisted among missionaries up to Nigeria’s independence. Cf. also F.W. Dodds, the Secretary of the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society in London, *Resolution of a Conference of Protestant Missionary Committee, held at Aba, Southern Nigeria, 30 January – 1 February 1917*; cited by O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*.

⁹⁸ M. Chapman, *Anglicanism: A Very Short Introduction*, p. 109.

⁹⁹ CMS, *the Church Missionary Gleaner*, Salisbury, London, June 1, 1915, p. 86.

spurred by the realization that the CMS were well established in the area. They, therefore, did not want to be outdone”¹⁰⁰

To this effect, Augustine S. Okwu recalled the story narrated by his father concerning an incident that took place in 1935. In this story, his father (Okwu), alongside some of his colleagues, were “at the instigation of the town’s CMS leaders, arrested and locked up at the police station at Owerri for allowing the RCM to open a station in the village”¹⁰¹. This incident describes the extent of confrontations between RCM and CMS, and how difficult it was for representatives of the two mission societies to co-habit in a particular community; in any locality where a particular mission society considered as its stronghold, the presence of any other mission society provoked conflicts.

The south-eastern Nigeria (Igbo-land) was the hub of missionary activities as well as rivalries between Catholics and Anglicans. In the south-eastern Nigeria, Catholics and Anglicans rival one another on provision of school system of education and healthcare (hospital) services. These were considered, at the time, as major means of evangelization. On the other hand, all communities in the south-east wanted school halls to be sited close to their locality. To this effect, tensions arose among missionary societies regarding which denomination would be the first to establish school hall in any locality. Later on, the struggle extended to socio-political control of the mission territory. In addition to these, there were misunderstanding, and misrepresentation of each other’s doctrines, religious beliefs and practices. Therefore, in every social or community gathering, the disunity between Catholics and Anglicans was obvious, and on many occasions degenerated into open conflicts and physical combat.

1.3.2.3 Conflicts on Christian beliefs and practices

Many aspects of Christian practices are common to both Anglicans and Catholics. Practices such as: profession of faith (Creed) in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, the Scriptures as the word of God, and the Sacrament of Baptism and Eucharist. Nevertheless, Anglicans and Catholics differ in their theological and

¹⁰⁰ O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*.

¹⁰¹ A. S. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957: Conversion in Theory and Practice*, Maryland: University Press, 2010, p. 152.

doctrinal teachings, interpretations and understanding of these subject matter, which are the bane of disunity among them that often degenerates to religious tension and confrontations among their members.

From time to time, experiences show that Catholic faith and practices are constantly criticized by members of other Christian denominations, even during sermon. This attitude can be traced back to the missionary era, when particular Christian missionary society considered others as rivals and attempted to discredit their teachings as unchristian. For instance, CMS and RCM were constantly at each other's neck. Anglicans, represented by CMS, accused Catholics of expressing superiority over other Christian denominations on matters of faith, doctrines and morals.

To state the obvious, there is no doubts that prior to the Second Vatican Council, and the ecumenical movement, Catholic theological teachings expressed her faith and doctrines as an exclusive means for salvation. This convictions was as a result of the teaching of the pre-Vatican II Council; *extra ecclesia nulla salus*, that is "outside the Church there is no salvation". Theological teachings such as this created dichotomy between Catholics and other Churches.

On several occasions, misrepresentation and misinterpretation of the faith and religious practices occur between Catholic and Anglicans. For instance, S. A. O. Okwu observed thus; "the Protestants (including Anglicans) were called the disobedient rascals (*ndinnupuisi*) by the Roman Catholics, who were in return referred to by the former (Protestants) as "women worshipper" (those who worship female god) because of their reverence for the Blessed Virgin Mary"¹⁰².

Anglicans and other Protestants regarded Catholics as those who do not study the Bible, and as such, who do not know or practice what is in the Bible. They consistently engaged Catholic lay faithful to provide biblical background for all Catholic doctrines. They did so to establish that Catholic doctrines are false and lack biblical basis. They also referred to Catholics as idol-worshippers because of their reverence for sacred images, and because of their devotion to Blessed Virgin Mary; sacramental were misrepresented as devilish charm and amulet. Thus, with religious propaganda and calumny, Catholics were ridiculed for what they believe.

The disunity and disagreements among Christian missionaries negatively affected how the evangelized perceived Christianity; while confrontations and

¹⁰² A. S. O. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957*: p. 171.

antagonism among them scandalized adherents of traditional religion who could not comprehend how those who believe in the same Jesus Christ fight one another. Conflicts among Christian Churches is considered more scandalous by the fact that even adherents of various traditional religions, who worship different deities according to the needs of a local community, do not fight over their gods or what each chose to believe.

Therefore, people from local communities were confused as they observed with dismay how missionaries and their converts antagonize themselves. They wondered how these missionaries, the supposed bearers of Good news (*ozioma*) about the new religion (Christianity) that preaches love of neighbour, charity and forgiveness, as well as kingdom of peace and justice, could at the same time be agents of division, segregation, conflicts, hatred and intolerance.

Thus, following questions arise, why would they fight for dominance, prominence and control of territory that does not belong to any of them? Why would Christians fight themselves to defend the same God and His teachings? No doubt, even British administrators might have wondered why there were so much disagreement and skirmishes among missionaries and why they could not co-habit peacefully.

To preserve the traditional practices and faith of the Church against serial attacks from Protestants and Anglicans, members of the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria developed a defensive (but not aggressive) mechanism and forbade their members from participation in any protestant and Anglican forms of worship.

Therefore, Catholics were neither allowed to sing songs nor use prayers from Anglican (and Protestant) hymnals and prayer books during Catholic liturgical worship. Furthermore, Catholic faithful could not participate in any Anglican and Protestant worship or 'Sunday service', as it was called, to avoid being lured to Anglicanism or Protestantism respectively. Catholic defaulters received "*opipia*" (penance) from resident priest(s) and from other local Church members.

These prohibitions, though not an official decree from the Catholic leadership in Nigeria, were vigorously enforced by lay faithful through different organizations within the Church. The most severe prohibition was ban on Catholic women from marrying non-Catholics. Although some argued that the ban from marrying non-Catholics was as a response to Anglican plot to convert Catholic women to Anglicanism through marriage. While the truth of this claim might not be easily verified, the prohibition was enforced with vigour by Catholic lay faithful. Thus, mixed marriages were not

acceptable to many Catholic families to the extent that Catholic women that married non-Catholics were considered as *lost in faith* (o tufuolaokwukweya).

Before the Second Vatican Council and the 1983 New Code of Canon law, marriages between Catholics and a non-Catholic spouses suffered serious setbacks especially in the emerging Christian country like Nigeria. The missionary era which lasted up to 1970 in Nigeria, held on to the teachings and the canonical legislations of the pre-Second Vatican Council. The 1917 code of canon law provided that marriage between a Catholic and baptized non-Catholic, 'if there is perversion of the Catholic spouse and Children, is forbidden even by divine law'.

Hence, Catholic faithful discouraged their children from mixed marriages whenever possible. Since already there were existing rivalries and misunderstandings between Catholics and other Churches, this section of 1917 code was given strict interpretation. Although the 1917 code provided grounds on which a Catholic could enter into marriage validly with a baptized non-Catholic¹⁰³, yet none of the practicing Catholic parents desired to give their daughter(s) in marriage to non-Catholics.

The situation was more complicated in the south-eastern Nigeria and the ban was strictly implemented there. For instance, at occasions where Anglican or other non-Catholic men proposed to marry Catholic women, such move generated crisis not only for individuals (Catholic women) concern, but largely for their entire immediate and up to extended families. Proposal of this kind received outright refusal and utmost rejection. Many Catholic women remained unmarried beyond their reproductive age because they never had Catholic suitors. The same situation could applied for Catholic men who proposed to marry non-Catholic women, but in this circumstance, the resistance from the Catholic side might not be sustained for long because it could be seen as a way of converting the non-Catholic to Catholic faith.

When prohibitions on mix-marriages are considered from the social point of view, they present serious problems in pluralistic society like Nigeria where, in every local community or urban area, people of different Christian denominations and ethnic groups live side by side. Naturally, most associations between people of opposite sex would evolve to intense desire to live together for-ever in marriage. Yet, because of the

¹⁰³ Cf. 1917 c. 1060-1065, (1917) (1) Just and grave cause so urge; (2) The non-Catholic spouse gives a precaution to remove a danger of perversion from Catholic spouse, and both spouses (promise) that all children will be only Catholics and educated; (3) there is moral certitude the caution will be implemented; also cited in L. E. Ijezie, S. Audu, and A. I. Acha, (editors), *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, p. 503.

foreseen complications and difficulties of perfecting such relationships, those who are involved tread with caution.

On the other hand, most Catholic women would not wish to be exposed to the ridicule of losing their faith. In some parts of Nigeria, parents whose daughters married members of Anglican or Protestant community were denied privileges of full participation in some rites of the Church. On several occasions, they were ostracized by various pious organizations or Church sodality where they belonged. Such stringent measures were meant to serve as deterrent to others. These severe penance (*opipia*) caused lots of anxiety and led many Catholic lay faithful to abandon the Church. The situation could be worse when parties concerned die without being reconciled; that could cause serious crisis of faith to their entire family members.

1.3.2.4 Territorial disputes between Anglicans and Roman Catholics

One of the major reasons for conflicts between RCM and CMS included struggle for acquisition of mission land; that is, piece of land where missionaries could erect Church building and school halls. Land dispute in Africa and in any part of Nigeria was and is still a matter of great concern. It is a serious issue that requires caution. It often leads to physical combat that can claim lives of innocent people. Any land dispute lingers beyond expectations of those involved. For these reasons, land disputes among missionaries of different denominations were automatically carried on by indigenous converts, and often led to physical struggle or fight for the ownership. This notwithstanding, missionaries needed land to establish mission schools and Church buildings; it was not just any land, but those located in strategic places and in commercial cities. Therefore, on several occasions, the bone of contention is the location or site of the preferred land.

Communities in the southern Nigeria, especially in Igbo communities, donated land generously to the missionaries. At early stages of missionary work in Nigeria, acquiring mission pieces of land from local communities was easy and free of charge. Local Igbo communities donated portions of land to those missionaries they accepted without any charge. At the same time, some missionary societies also willingly shared acquired pieces of land with missionaries of other denomination. At this stage, situations arose when the CMS and RCM shared a piece of land and Church structures. But as consciousness of denominationalism grew and the usefulness of these pieces of

land became obvious, that is, particularly when pieces of land were acquired to build schools and hospitals (as means of winning converts), the rivalry and conflicts over acquisition of mission land began. Hence, every Christian denomination sought to acquire a piece of land in strategic location for the erection of school hall and hospitals.

1.3.2.5 Rivalry on system of education as means of evangelization

‘Mission schools’ apostolate was a major means of evangelization that was adopted by both Church Mission Society and Roman Catholic Mission. It was an effective means of evangelization in southern Nigeria because people from this part of the country craved for (and still long for) Western education. They had intense desire to learn and to speak “white men’s language” (English), and get “white collar job” (*orubekee* – white man’s job).

Hence, both CMS and RCM’s missionary strategy was to encourage their members to embrace Western education in order to read and write; especially to read the Bible, and to empower them to get ‘white-collar job’ which was regarded as prestigious. For these reasons, mission schools were established as focus of evangelization, and for Catholic mission, they included primary, secondary and teacher training college.

When Bishop Joseph Shanahan of Holy Ghost Missionary Society took charge of the vicariate of lower Niger in 1905, instead of buying back slaves, free them and convert them to Christianity as his predecessors did, he adopted a different missionary strategy. That is, he introduced school system of education as a means of evangelization. According to A. Kunuba, bishop Shanahan considered education as an, “effectual way of establishing Catholic presence through the region. By doing so, he predated both the Methodists and Anglicans by establishing a whole network of schools and by 1920 the Catholics had 559 primary schools with 33,700 pupils”¹⁰⁴.

Anglican and Protestant Christian communities were rather suspicious of this new Catholic mission strategy. Yet, they considered the expansion and spread of Catholic mission schools as threat to their own mission work. They feared that the Christian faith and communities they establish in Nigeria might be extinguished with the spread of Catholic school education. The reality is that Catholic school system of

¹⁰⁴ B. Sundkler and C. Steed, *A History of the Church in African*, United Kingdom: University Press, 2000, p. 740; cited in A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria*, p. 72.

education, with its excellent curriculum, attracted both Catholics and non-Catholics who later embraced Catholicism.

The success of Catholic educational system was attributed to the systematic method applied in teaching and learning that served the purpose of the missionary era. According to J. C. Nwaka, the major reason for the success of Catholic education system was as follows: “given that the CMS schools taught in the vernacular and the Catholic schools used English¹⁰⁵; the Igbo sent delegations to the missionaries asking for mission schools in their towns and villages. Thus, education was effective instrument for accessing the interior part of Igboland from Onitsha. By 1964, the Church (Catholic) was the sponsor of more than one-third of the elementary schools in the Eastern Region”¹⁰⁶.

According to Augustine S. Okwu, Catholic education system succeeded because its curriculum covered “industrial education program”, like English Language, algebra, Latin and the vocational courses¹⁰⁷. Although the Anglican community considered such RCM curriculum of education as too secular, ambitious and unpopular; nevertheless, Igbo people who craved for Western education wrote severally to the leaders of RCM and invited them to open mission schools in their locality. Okwu also described an instance where the High Commissioner, Sir Ralph Moore, in 1901, commended the high performance of the RCM schools and “invited the Catholic mission schools to Onitsha to participate in schools general competition in the protectorate; and also recommended the industrial education curriculum of the prefect Apostolic to the government of the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone”¹⁰⁸.

¹⁰⁵ When RCM established primary and secondary schools, the emphasis was on teaching the English language. Since the CMS discouraged instructions in English, students who graduated from the CMS infant schools, move to RCM elementary and secondary schools in order to learn English language. There they were easily re-baptized and converted into the Catholic faith. The growth of the Catholic missions through education alarmed the CMS and caused them to abandon their lukewarm attitude towards education. They believed that the RCM’s domination of the education sector would enable them to produce enough educated elites to dominate the country’s political and economic future. Cf. F. Ekechi, *Missionary enterprise and rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, pp. 175-194; also see, O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of The Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*, 2014.

¹⁰⁶ Of about 5986 primary schools in the eastern region in 1964, the Catholic Church operated more than 2406; see Eastern Nigeria Ministry of Education, *Directory of Elementary Schools in Eastern Region*, 1964 (Enugu, Nigeria, 1965); cited by J. C. Nwaka, *The Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Beginning of Organized Lay Apostolate Groups among the Igbos of Southeastern Nigeria*. <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/507378>, accessed 14th November, 2016, p. 1.

¹⁰⁷ A. S. O. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957*, p. 144.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*

In addition to the use of systematic education program, the RCM under bishop J. Shanahan adopted other strategies that maintained the following features: first, cordial relationship between the local or host communities and the RCM; second, free education in almost all the schools owned by Catholics; third, there were no admixture or confusion of evangelization with commerce as previous missionaries did. Therefore, the natives saw them as different kinds of ‘white’ people who were not there to make personal gain but for the welfare of the host communities.

The RCM aggressive methodological school system of evangelization suffered resistance and hostility from the Anglican community to the extent that Anglicans and Protestants in general were protective of the area in which they had the privilege of precedence of arrival on site. Catholics were seen as rivals and as domineering.

Consequent upon these developments, the CSM acknowledged that RCM educational program would possibly empty many Anglican communities if not urgently addressed. Thus, in annual report, Rev. Strong of Anglican mission wrote; “They have taken from our school about a dozen children over whose parents they have exercised some influence through medicines (medical treatment), and presents of various kinds were benevolently and liberally given and by this they are hoping to become strong. Our school children living with them have all been re-baptized”¹⁰⁹. On another report, Archbishop Johnson of the Anglican Church wrote that, “our school at Onitsha is half ruined, because the children are enticed away by promises of clothing, and by the certainty of being fed gratis.”¹¹⁰

It is necessary to acknowledge that the CMS also introduced system of education for their members, but what CMS adopted initially was Sunday school. On arrival to mission land in south-east Nigeria, the CMS established Sunday schools and elementary classes mostly in the Church premises. The aim of Sunday school program was to teach converts how to study the Bible independently and in local languages. Pupils who attended CMS Sunday schools studied the Bible in vernacular.

In Sunday school curriculum of studies, English language and secular courses were excluded because, members of the CMS believed that studies in secular courses will distort the work of evangelization¹¹¹. According to Okwu, CMS considered

¹⁰⁹ C.M.S. G3/A3/0, *Annual Report of Onitsha Station*, 1886.

¹¹⁰ O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*.

¹¹¹ After decades of emphasis on Sunday school, the CMS changed their education objective to secular and secondary education following the model set by the RCM. This decision was strategic to meet the

“introduction of secular courses as a perversion of people’s spirituality which will draw them away from the Church to the company and trade, and to high missionary job that will be detrimental to the interest of the British”¹¹². With this method of evangelization and school system, the only people the CMS could gather were young girls because parents banned their male children from attending Sunday school classes.

After many years, CMS reacted to the persuasive RCM system of education in proactive manner. The Anglican mission in Nigeria quickly changed her Sunday school method of education. Thus, Anglicans adopted a methodological system of education and introduced some of the industrial courses. According to Okwu, England directed CMS, “to establish schools to resist the ambition of the Spiritans (the Holy Ghost Missionary Society) and to relax the unpopular ban on the teaching of English so as to overcome the challenges posed by RCM schools and meet the demands of the local people of the Anglican Church”¹¹³.

Furthermore, in 1962, the Christian Council of Nigeria, a Christian body that comprised of mainstream protestant communities, and also included Anglican community, noted in its report the far reaching RCM system in education. This report reads in part: “Many Roman Catholic schools were located almost adjacent to the already established Protestant schools. Protestant groups may establish missions or schools in areas where there is no Roman Catholic Church work, but almost immediately the Roman Catholic Church will become active in the same area, with the same people, in a highly organized manner ... Roman Catholic competition in eastern Nigeria has not been unmixed in its effect; it has been filled with possibilities for both good and evil”¹¹⁴. The above statements are proves of the spirit of competition and rivalry among Christian communities in Nigeria during the missionary era.

Thus, with many changes introduced by the CMS and other Protestant communities in their system of education, from 1905 Anglicans “had a clear edge over

demands of the Igbo people of the south-eastern Nigeria who considered education to mean empowerment and offered opportunity for ‘white-collar job. Cf. (F. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, p. 194.

¹¹² A. S. O. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957*: pp. 145-146.

¹¹³ Ibid, p. 145.

¹¹⁴ Christian Council of Nigeria, *Christian Responsibility in an Independent Nigeria*, Ibadan: Abiodun Printing works, 1962, p. 106; cited in, A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria*, p. 72.

the Catholics in the area of secondary education while the Catholics dominated at the primary level and training colleges”¹¹⁵.

This notwithstanding, in 1950s, Catholics began noticeably to blunt this Anglicans’ edge over them in secondary education. According to the Annual Report of the Eastern Ministry of Education for 1956 which released the following statistics on secondary education as thus; “out of 7 secondary schools opened in that year, 5 were Catholic, and 17 out of the 29 Grade 2 and 3 Teacher Training Colleges were Catholic. For the Protestants, this upsurge in post-primary education was bad news”¹¹⁶.

The division and dichotomy between CMS and RCM which arose out of rivalry and competition in school system of evangelization degenerated to the point of intolerance of one another’s education institutions; that is, members of a particular Christian denomination did not permit their children to attend schools owned by other denominations. For instance, Catholic families from various local communities which did not yet have Catholic secondary schools established in their localities forbade their children from attending Anglican secondary school and vice versa. Many children trekked more than 5 miles on foot in order to attend schools owned by their own Church denomination.

Such rivalries extended to the establishment of Catholic institutions of higher learning and formation houses such as convents and seminaries. Wherever Catholic institutions were erected in any town or locality, the prominence of these institutions worried Anglican community there so much so that they attempted to build the same type of institution nearby. For instance, Catholic faithful built a minor seminary in the eastern Nigeria and handed such over to the bishop of the diocese, Anglican were challenged by this gesture and so did the same. For this reason, some Anglican girls’ secondary schools and juniorates were located side by side with Catholic girls’ secondary schools.

In another development, Nicholas Ibeawuchi Omenka observed how the idea of establishing Catholic university in south-eastern Nigeria between 1960s and 1970s was vehemently opposed by the Christian Council of Nigeria¹¹⁷. Omenka described the

¹¹⁵ Nicholas I Omenka, *The School in the Service of Evangelization: the Catholic Educational Impart in Eastern Nigerian, 1886-1951*, Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989, p. 251.

¹¹⁶ L. E. Ijezie, , S. Audu, and A. I. Acha, (editors), *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, pp. 602-603.

¹¹⁷ Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) comprised of various “Protestant Churches, notably; Anglican Community, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterian, Qua Iboe, and Salvation Army. Cf. H.O. Okeke,

situation thus; “the attitude of the Christian council of Nigeria epitomized denominational rivalry at its worst. There was nothing in the proposal to found a university for Nigerians that was out of character with the educational objectives of these renowned ‘preaching politicians’, or with the aspirations of the nationalist movement, except that it was Catholic ... In their preference of a regional university under state control to one of Catholic auspices, they manifested the tendency of the Protestant mission to see secularized education as less evil than Catholic domination”¹¹⁸.

On January 1957, the government of the eastern region introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) in attempt to halt the expansion of schools under private agencies (and Churches) and to secularize education in the region. According to Jessica Nwaka, “the Catholic faithful viewed this move as a conspiracy against the Church from a government led by Nnamdi Azikiwe and dominated by non-Catholics”¹¹⁹.

After several failed attempts to takeover mission schools in order to control the spread of Catholicism, “on December 31, 1970, Ukpabi Asika, the administrator of the East Central State, issued Public Education Edict (PEE) No. 2. This edict brought all schools in the region under government control – a serious blow to religious organizations, particularly the Catholic Church, which ‘served the cause of educating the people more energetically than all other mission groups in [the] eastern region’”¹²⁰. Although the government ‘take-over’ of mission schools was a deep blow to both Catholics and Anglicans, Anglicans and other Protestant communities could not hide their delight at this dismantling of the Catholic educational edifice in the south-eastern Nigeria.

1.3.2.6 Rivalry on health-care system of evangelization

Other effective means of evangelization employed by Holy Ghost Fathers in different parts of Nigeria were free healthcare system and charitable work. Therefore,

Milestones in Ecumenism: Evolution in Canonical Legislation in Ecumenical Matters, Enugu: Think Ltd. 1996, p. 216.

¹¹⁸ Nicholas I. Omenka, *The School in the Service of the Evangelization*: 1989, pp. 251-252; also in L. E. Ijezie, S. Audu, and A. I. Acha, (Editors), *The Church In Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, p. 603.

¹¹⁹ J. C. Nwaka, *The Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War, and the Beginning of Organized Lay Apostolate Groups among the Igbos of Southeastern Nigeria*, accessed 14th November, 2016, p. 1.

¹²⁰ L. E. Ijezie, S. Audu, and A. I. Acha, (ed.), *The Church In Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, p. 604.

Catholic missionaries evangelized by words and deeds: that is, as they proclaim the gospel message of the kingdom of God, the kingdom of truth and love, peace and justice, they expressed their words through acts of charity. In practical terms, Catholic missionaries provided free medical treatment to the sick and cared for the needy in many local communities.

Hence, indigenes from these local communities were expectant of the missionaries and on several circumstances, indigenous people officially invited missionaries to their communities for free medical treatment. Felix Ekechi expressed the attitude of the people towards free healthcare services as follows: “these health facilities provided many service which generated competition in many towns and villages as people requested for the missionaries’ presence in their midst and missionaries won converts to the Church”¹²¹.

The free healthcare and charity work were also strategies used to win more converts. According to O. C. Ezekwem: “Having decided to settle in Onitsha, the Catholic mission had to overcome Anglican opposition. Therefore, they laid emphasis on works of charity, portraying the image that they had come for the people’s welfare. They provided medicine and other items to the people in order to lure them to the Roman Catholic faith. As a precondition to providing medical care to sick children, they were baptized. These priests argued that baptism would ensure that those children would not die in sin. In reality, they hoped that the children would become converts of the Catholic religion and therefore be lost to the Protestant faith”¹²². These forms of missionary approach to evangelism helped many outcasts and the destitute to embrace Christianity.

Many Igbo communities that received these healthcare services were grateful to the Spiritans. On the other hand, Igbo communities expressed their dissatisfaction with the ineptitude and insensitivity of Anglican missionaries. A. Okwu noted the people’s reactions as follows: “on a certain instance, the people of Ossomari wrote to Father Bubendoff in 1898 and expressed discontentment with the CMS: ‘We no longer want the Protestant...they are only liars who have come in order to make money. As for you, we have seen that you love us, that you are for our welfare’”¹²³.

¹²¹ F. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, p. 93.

¹²² Ibid, p. 75.

¹²³ A. S. O. Okwu, *Igbo Culture and Christian Mission; 1857-1957*, pp. 175-178.

As was expected, the discontentment expressed by the indigenous people of southeast Nigeria over the ineptitude of the CMS aroused jealousy and worsened situations of rivalries, antagonism and conflicts of interest between these two Christian communities – Catholics and Anglicans. People from local communities continuously showed marked preference of RCM over CMS and that deepened the enmity between the two missionary societies.

The RCM personnel were not deterred by the feud but continued to upgrade their healthcare system to modern medical facilities, but not without assistance from Rome. Therefore, the impact of the Catholic free healthcare and charitable program was so overwhelming that the native people turned to the Catholic mission en masse. The development was contained in the CMS annual report of missionary activities in Onitsha station written by the then Anglican Secretary, A. C. Strong in 1885. That report stated thus: “Here in Onitsha (Onitsha) one great difficulty we have already felt is this; we are daily coming across cases of persons who now are Roman Catholics. In each case, the means used to draw our people has been medicine. Father Lutz is the director of the whole town ... our converts have gone over after receiving attention and kindness from Roman (Catholic) fathers and sisters”¹²⁴.

Faced with these developments, the necessity of a healthcare system in mission territories became obvious to the CMS and they went ahead to propose to the London headquarters to establish medical facilities in Igbo land to offset the activities of the Roman Catholic Church and stop members from moving to RCM for medical treatment.

According to O. C. Ezekwem: “By accepting medical rivalry as a tool of evangelism, the CMS abandoned its policy that the use of temporal means for spiritual ends was unacceptable. They justified their new approach by hailing the work of mercy as worthy of Christian pursuit. They argued that Jesus’ work on earth included the saving of souls and healing of bodies, but it was quite clear that this change of attitude was a result of the Roman Catholic Mission’s use of medicine to attract adherents. From the resultant rivalry, dispensaries and health centres were established by the (Anglican) missions. Hospitals were built in Onitsha, the most notable of which was the CMS’s

¹²⁴ A. C. Strong, *Annual Report of Onitsha Station*, 1885, CMS Archive: G3/A3/O. cited in O. Kanu, *The Divided People of God, Church Union Movement in Nigeria, 1875-1966*, New York: Nok Publ., 1978, p. 6; also in A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria*, pp. 74-75.

IyiEnu Hospital, Ogidi. The CMS further, appointed medical superintendents to oversee the activities of its medical mission”¹²⁵

The RCM medical and charitable program worked very efficiently between 1967 and 1969 during the Nigeria-Biafra war. Caritas and many other Catholic agencies were readily available with reliefs to feed the hungry, take care of the sick and the wounded. The Nigeria-Biafra war which lasted for thirty months from 1967 with its devastating effect on Biafrans caused great suffering for the people of south-east Nigeria – sufferings such as homelessness, poverty, starvation, sickness and massive unemployment.

For instance, at the end of the civil war, the then “East Central State could only reabsorb 34,000 workers, out of 800,000 unemployed. Out of 2 million people who returned to the region in 1966 (shortly before the war began), only one third could be supported by their families while the rest were housed in refugee camps, schools, and town halls. There were over 33,000 disabled persons, 44,000 orphans, and 89,000 destitute individuals who required services at the end of the war”¹²⁶.

The people of the south-eastern Nigeria were devastated during and after the civil war. The Roman Catholic Church in eastern Nigeria faced complex and difficult situation in ministering effectively and efficiently to the Internally Displaced People of Biafra (IDPB): Church and school buildings were used as shelters for the homeless and the clergy and lay faithful provided physical and spiritual nourishment to revive those starved¹²⁷.

Because of the important role of the Catholic Church during and after the civil war, in which she protected, provided and cared for many IDPB in south-east of Nigeria, who were predominantly Christians; the then Nigerian government that was controlled by the Hausa-Fulani Muslims from northern Nigeria took stringent measures to extinguish the influence of the RCM in the eastern region, and if possible, end Catholicism in Nigeria. Some of such steps which they took was to expel all European missionaries from the south-eastern region of the country. The then Nigerian government further confiscated all mission schools in the country. Hence, on December

¹²⁵ F. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprise and Rivalry in Igboland 1857-1914*, p. 77; in O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*.

¹²⁶ J. C. Nwaka, *The Catholic Church, the Nigerian Civil War*, pp. 3-5.

¹²⁷ This is because *ab initio*, Catholic mission in Nigeria was founded on charity works such as care of lepers, outcasts, slaves, and other destitute class. O. C. Ezekwem, *Missions and the Rise of the Western Maternity among the Igbo of South-Eastern Nigeria*.

31, 1970, (shortly after the war), the government of Nigeria issued Public Education Edict No. 2 that confiscated all mission schools and turned them into government owned schools.

This developments resulted to shortage of missionary personnel and clergy working in Nigeria, especially in the southern region. But that did not discourage the leaders of the Catholic Church in the country. Rather, to meet the demands for missionary personnel and clergy, Catholic bishops in Nigeria developed better strategies by encouraging more young indigenous people to embrace vocation to priesthood and religious life. They also encouraged lay apostolate. Thus, the expulsion of foreign missionaries became blessing in disguise.

Hence, many minor and major seminaries sprang up alongside indigenous religious congregations. These are to the extent that by the end of twentieth and beginning of twenty-first century many dioceses in the south-east Nigeria celebrated vocation boom¹²⁸. This boom extended to lay apostolate which provided the much needed assistance in charity apostolate and catechism. Societies like Guild of St. Anthony of Padua, St. Jude's Society, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Block Rosary Crusade and Legion of Mary made a significant contributions to evangelization of the poor and charitable work in the post-war era.

1.3.2.7 Rivalry on socio-political engagement

Right from inception, members of the CMS in Nigeria worked in close alliance with the British Royal Niger Company (BRNC) that represented and served the interest of Britain in their ruler-ship of Nigeria. This is because, both the CMS personnel and British colonists shared something in common: that is, CMS and British colonists traced their ancestral root and sponsorship back to England and the Crown. Therefore, the CMS enjoyed the protection and preference of the BRNC.

Furthermore, under British government in Nigeria, many members of Anglican Communion and Protestants occupied significant position in civil offices. They were prepared, educated and trained to take over leadership in the Nigerian government after colonial era: For examples, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, an Anglican, became the first

¹²⁸ *Catholic Church in Nigeria*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Catholic_Church_in_Nigeria, accessed on 30th November, 2016.

ceremonial President of Nigeria immediately after independence in 1960, and Michael Okpara, a Protestant, became the Premier of eastern region in the mid-1960s.

Aside from enjoying the protection of British government, Anglicans took advantage of the fact that members of Roman Catholic Church, particularly the clergy, were discouraged from partisan politics. Therefore, during the period when they had an edge over RCM in the secondary education system (as mentioned above) they used the opportunity to train their members to dominate the political class¹²⁹. Hence, they were found in strategic positions in government and thus, instituted anti-Catholic policies.

When Catholics later came on board socio-politically, they upturned the political, economic, social and civil structures that was instituted by the CMS. From thence, the struggle for the control of the political, economic and social systems continued till date in many parts of the southern Nigeria. Efforts by Anglicans and Protestants to minimize or totally eradicate Catholic influence as well as Catholic dominance is still noticeable even in Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) and it is still part of major challenges facing ecumenical engagements in Nigeria.

1.3.3 Evaluation of a century of Anglican-Roman Catholic relations

In the course of an oral interview, Prof. Roseline Okpete Kanu draws from her wealth of experiences as someone who witnessed most activities that took place during the missionary era, and enunciates various encounters between members of different Christian denominations, particularly, between the CMS and RCM. Thus, she says; “it was a severely divided Christianity that came among Nigerian people in the 19th century through the agency of various Christian Missionary Societies, namely, the CMS, RCM, Wesleyan Methodist, Baptist and CSM. Each sought superiority over one another. Their representatives ‘rushed’ across southern Nigeria opening one-room stations in close proximity to one another. The stations served both as Churches and schools for adults and children who soon doubled as evangelists and catechumens of various doctrinal orientations and religious practices of their mentors. In this situation of serious competitions for adherence from Nigerians, all the leading missionary societies turned to the use of serious propaganda of misrepresentation of the doctrines and practices of one another. The CMS taught their adherents that Catholics worship was pure idolatry

¹²⁹ L. E. Ijezie, et. El. (editors), *The Church In Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, p. 603.

and falsified Catholic liturgy... Catholic taught their adherents that Protestants were hell bound and their places of worship (are) clear entrances into hell. So strong and effective was the force of this propaganda warfare that youths needed exceptional courage to over-ride the resultant social (and religious) bridge and relate seriously with peers of denominations other than their own. Thus, there was enthroned deep-seated religious division amongst Christians in Nigeria that remains till date. Christianity in Nigeria was built on falsehood. Ecumenism, as a state of unity among Christian Churches must begin from open confession of sins against one another by leaders of leading Christian denominations. Ecumenism is vital ingredients for a Christendom based on the truth of the Gospel which is love and respect of all people”¹³⁰.

It is evident from the foregoing that from inception, relationship between Catholic faithful and Anglicans has never been cordial. Although it is an inherited sin of division from Christian Churches in the West, Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria will never be exonerated from its guilt and blame because of their active participation in nurturing this sin of division. Therefore, urgent ecumenical attention is imperative.

The impact of teachings from the Second Vatican council is already being felt in ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria. It is remarkable to observe the extent Church’s teachings on ecumenism have transformed the living faith of the people. Her teachings on spiritual ecumenism, doctrinal ecumenism and practical cooperation have begun to bridge gap and to mend broken down walls that once separated Christians from one another. Although the journey is still ongoing, the current mutual relations between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria raise hope for the future.

Rivalries and antagonism among Christians in Nigeria are still noticeable in all forms of social and religious meetings and gathering; in nuclear family, at extended family meetings, village or local community gathering, age-grade meeting, village union, public offices, market places and public institutions of learning. These continuously affect children born into both Churches. Although a lot has changed recently, and Christians have healthier relationship with one another; yet, much still needs to be done to bring about full visible unity for all Christian Churches.

¹³⁰ An oral interview with Roseline Okpete Kanu, a professor of History of Education at Abia State University, Uturu, Nigeria. She witnessed the peak of these rivalries among Christians of different denominations in Nigeria.

It is very important to note that the aim of this historical background on social, political, ideological, and religious conflicts and rivalries among Christians in Nigeria is not to undermine the efforts and dedication of early missionaries or the activities of those Churches and Ecclesial Communities they established. According to A. Kunuba, “the missionaries were men and women of their time”¹³¹. By taking notice of areas of conflict and rivalry between Catholics and Anglicans during the first century of evangelization in Nigeria, actions that sustain disunity is properly studied, and the achievements of the current ecumenical movements in Nigeria is appreciated.

¹³¹ A. C. Kunuba, *The practice of Ecumenism in Nigeria*, 2012, p. 80.

CHAPTER 2

ANGLICAN AND ROMAN CATHOLIC PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL, PRACTICAL AND DOCTRINAL ECUMENISM

The history of relations between the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion is linked to religious patrimony that binds the See of Rome with the See of Canterbury, and which began over 1,400 years ago after Pope Gregory the Great sent Saint Augustine to evangelize the land of the Anglo-Saxons. But the English Reformation of the 16th century severed this relationship. Hence, the Church of England lost full communion with the Roman Catholic Church.

By the second half of the twentieth century, Catholics and Anglicans began to journey together to heal the wound of this ‘division’ which, according to the Second Vatican Council; “openly contradict the will of Christ, scandalizes the world and damages the Holy cause of preaching the Gospel to every creature”¹³². What this means is that after four centuries of severed relationship that was sealed with the Act of Restraint of Appeal (1533), Anglicans and Catholics began ecumenical journey in pursuit of full, visible unity between the two Communion. The ecumenical journey between the two Communion is a mission that is based on the gospel and ancient common tradition.

This quest for visible unity between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion was initiated by the visit of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966. This meeting between Dr. Michael Ramsey and Paul VI drew inspiration from St. Paul’s letter to the Philippians, where he said: “Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Phil 3:13-14). Therefore, the Archbishop and the Pope declared: “All those

¹³² UR, no. 1.

Christians who belong to these two Communion may be animated by these same sentiments of respect, esteem and fraternal love”¹³³.

The outcome of the meeting provided required basis for the establishment of various ecumenical commissions that comprise representatives of the two Churches. These commissions are to study and to recommend ways to achieve full communion of the two Churches. Hence, Anglican-Roman Catholic International Joint Preparatory Commission (ARCIJPC) was established. And later on, from 1970, Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC I and II) was also established. Since then, ARCIC I and II have produced series of Substantial Agreed Statements (SAS) that serve as guideline as well as provide principles for ecumenical relations between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion.

Anglican ecumenical teachings, and her commitments to achieve visible unity with other Christian Churches, and Catholic Church in particular, are elaborated in various resolutions of successive Lambeth conferences. At each of those conferences, representatives of different provinces of Anglican Communion articulated principles for Anglican ecumenical engagement with other Churches, and at the same time, prescribed means to strengthen communion among various regional and provincial Churches within Anglicanism.

Therefore, principles of Anglican ecumenical engagement are contained in many documents such as: Resolutions of all Lambeth Conferences (RLC) – particularly, Resolution II of 1888 Lambeth Conference, Resolution 9, of 1920 Lambeth Conference, Resolution IV.1-3 of 1998 Lambeth Conference – the Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion (PCLCCAC), and Indaba Reflections (IR).

The Roman Catholic teachings and principles of ecumenism are clearly defined in the Second Vatican Council’s decree on Ecumenism, *Unitatis redintegratio*. Her teachings on ecumenism are also contained in other documents of Vatican II: for instance, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et spes*; Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, *Lumen gentium*; Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*; and the Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis humanae*.

¹³³ Common Declaration by Pope Paul VI and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Reverend Dr. Michael Ramsey, Rome; 24th March, 1966.

Other Church's ecumenical teachings are enunciated in Papal documents such as John Paul II Encyclical letter, *Ut unum sint*; and in the document of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity called *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* of 1993. It was Pope John XXIII who established the Secretariat for Promotion of Christian Unity in 1960, years before the beginning of the Second Vatican Council.

In this doctoral thesis, discussions in the first and the second segments of this chapter will focus on the Anglican principles of ecumenical engagements and the Roman Catholic principles of ecumenism. All the ecumenical principles will be elaborated under the following headings: spiritual ecumenism, practical cooperation, and doctrinal ecumenism.

Since the goal of practical application of norms and principles of ecumenism is to achieve visible unity and full communion of the two Churches, the following terms; 'communion', 'full communion' and 'visible unity' are to be enunciated according to different understandings, definitions and applications in the Roman Catholic tradition as well as in Anglican tradition.

Discussions in the third segment of this chapter will examine achievements as well as challenges of the ecumenical journey so far undertaken jointly by the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion. Achievements of the ecumenical relations and dialogues between the two Churches are to be studied through the review of various documents of the ARCIC and that of the International Anglican Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCUM). This review and study are aimed to further discuss principles of "the Church as communion" as elaborated in the document of IARCUM.

In addition to this, discussions in the last section of this chapter covers some of the recent challenges and obstacles to full communion such as the episcopal ordination of women as well as priests living in active homosexual life. While Church's clarifications on ministry and ordination serves, in this context, as her response to these challenges. Further discussions will centre on the Church's prescriptions for establishment of 'Personal Ordinariate for willing Anglicans' who seek full communion with the Roman Catholic Church either as individual or corporate group.

2.1 Anglican Principles of Ecumenism

Anglican principles of ecumenism do not necessarily follow the same pattern of categorization like in Catholic principles: that is, Anglicans do not explicitly define principles of ecumenism in terms spiritual, practical, and doctrinal ecumenism. Yet, most elements of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism are spread across and implied in various Anglican teachings on ecumenism. In other words, Anglican Communion follow different line of arguments while enunciating her ecumenical norms and principles.

2.1.1 Ecclesiological principles of Anglicanism

There are two basic aspects of Anglican Ecclesiology: first, the autonomy of the national Churches in different countries to order their own affairs; second, the interdependence of the national Churches which is described as ‘loosed federation of Churches’ in communion with the See of Canterbury. The inter-relationship of various national Churches within Anglicanism constitutes what is known as Anglican Communion.

According to S. Sykes and J. Booty: “The Anglican Communion or Anglicanism viewed as a global phenomenon, is not, as the name implies, a unified Church or even a number of Churches controlled by an authoritative body. It is made up of a loose federation of Churches which are in communion with the See of Canterbury. The constituent Churches acknowledged the fact that they have emerged from the Church of England, and the Christian doctrines and practices they exemplify proximate closely to those of that Church”¹³⁴.

The significance of these concepts, ‘loose federation of Churches’ and ‘autonomous national Churches’, are explained by Sykes and Booty as thus, “the Anglican Communion as an autonomous federation of Churches has no authoritative power to determine doctrine, ritual and policy, which is in any way binding on its members. Each (national) Church is responsible to itself and governs itself in its own particular way according to a great variety of constitutions. The only factor which binds

¹³⁴ S. Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988, p. 364.

the Churches together is loyalty to a heritage which is bound up with the Church of England”¹³⁵.

Therefore, Anglican Communion as loose federation of Churches implies thus; “the authority of each meeting (conference, synod) is limited to the inherent wisdom of its deliberation. Any statement made possessed only the authority of those bishops who put their names in it. The conference could make recommendation (or resolutions), but it was up to the member Churches to judge their worth and take whatever action they deemed appropriate”¹³⁶.

This Anglican form of Church structure or ecclesiology presents many challenges in her ecumenical engagement with other Churches who have defined and systematic ecclesiology, particularly, Roman Catholic Church. Since Anglican norms and doctrinal formulations are not universally agreed or accepted article of faith by all national Churches within the Anglican Communion, consensus reached during doctrinal dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion at the international level is not binding on member-regional or national Churches within Anglicanism.

For instance, any outcome of theological dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria and the Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion is not binding on all dioceses and local communities that make up Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion. For this reasons, Anglicans continuously work to achieve perfect communion among Churches that make up Anglicanism, as well as strive to arrive at full communion with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities. How, then, is the concept of communion understood and applied in Anglicanism?

2.1.1.1 Principles of Communion in Anglicanism

The term ‘communion’ is used in two ways in Anglican tradition: First, it is used to describe the ‘Bond of Affection’ among national or regional Churches of Anglican Communion; and second, it refers to her relations with other Christian Churches.

This means that basically ‘bond of affection’ refers to the fellowship and Communion of twenty-five autonomous provinces in various parts of the world which help to maintain the internal unity of the Anglican Communion. It provides ground for

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 367.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p. 228.

listening to the concerns of the various Anglican national Churches in different parts of the world. There are instances where the principles of ‘Bond of Affection’ was exercised such as during the Lambeth Conference of 1888 which upheld the collegiality of the Bishops, and the Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) of 1954 which provided inter Anglican solidarity of Clergy and laity¹³⁷.

The *Principles of Canon Law Common to the Churches of the Anglican Communion* prescribes that in Anglican Communion, the autonomy of the national or regional Churches are legal autonomy. The legal autonomy of regional Churches are considered thus: “As means to provide the greatest possible liberty (so as) to order its life and affairs (in a way that is) appropriate to its people in their geographical, cultural and historical context,(and) in living in inter-dependence with other Anglican Churches who share the same historic identity and calling ... The Archbishop of Canterbury remains the focus of unity within this inter-dependent Communion of Churches, assisted by its ‘instruments of communion’, the Lambeth Conference, the Anglican Consultative Council and the Primates’ Meeting. Each of these enjoys the degree of binding authority (if any) given to them by each of the Churches”¹³⁸.

2.1.1.2 Theological understanding of ‘Church’

2.1.1.2.1 A Church: national or regional

In accordance with Anglican tradition, ‘A Church’ stands for an autonomous territorial unit of ecclesiastical jurisdiction which may be national, regional and provincial unit¹³⁹, and which is expected to be in fellowship with other Churches within the Anglican Communion. Hence, instead of ‘Anglican Church’, Anglican Communion is used to refer to confederation of Anglican national and regional Churches through which Anglican faith and tradition are expressed.

It mean that to be in full communion with the Church of England, each national Church must maintain the essence of the Anglican faith and tradition as what offer them

¹³⁷ Sykes and J. Booty, *The Study of Anglicanism*, p. 388.

¹³⁸ The Anglican Consultative Council, *The Principles of Canon Law Common To The Churches of The Anglican Communion*, London: The Anglican Communion Office, 2008, p. 23; (This Compilation was made available through discussions between members of the Anglican Communion Legal Advisers’ Network; Professor Norman Doe And His Colleagues, Canon John Rees Secretary Lyn Hester, Canon Gregory Cameron); (Further citation: *The Anglican Principles of Canon Law Common*).

¹³⁹ Ibid, principle 15 on *Ecclesiastical polity*, nos. 1-2.

the full character of Catholicism. Therefore, as far as each national or regional Church witness to the same apostolic faith, she is in communion with other Churches within Anglicanism, and thus, possess the fullness of Catholicity. In this case, they can recognize one another to be in communion with the same Church of Christ, guided by the same Spirit¹⁴⁰. The term “A Church” cannot be used to refer to the Communion at global level. To do so is to make an impossible ecclesial claim, because Anglican Communion is a confederation of Churches.

2.1.1.2.2 The Church universal

Just as ‘A Church’ means an autonomous national, regional and provincial unit (and cannot be used to refer to the universality of Anglicanism), the term ‘the Church’ when used in Anglican ecclesiological lexicon stands for ‘the Church universal’, and refers to the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church. According to The Principles of Canon Law Common to Anglican Communion; “The Church universal’ is indivisible and it is the will of God that separated Churches should share a more visible Communion that exists in one with another. The mission of “a Church” is part of the wider mission of all Christians. ‘A Church’ should promote mutual understanding, foster reciprocal fellowship, seek ecumenical co-operation, and strive for visible unity amongst the separated Churches”¹⁴¹.

2.1.1.3 Theological understanding of full communion and visible unity

Concerning the theological understanding of ‘full Communion’ in Anglicanism, the Anglican Principles of Canon Law states thus: “Ecclesial Communion between two or more Churches exists when a relationship is established in which each Church believes the other to hold the essentials of the Christian faith and recognizes the apostolicity of the other. (Therefore) ‘Full communion’ involves the recognition of unity in faith, sacramental sharing, the mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries, (as well as) the reciprocal enjoyment of shared spiritual, pastoral, liturgical and collegial resources. ‘Inter-communion’ is an ecclesial relationship in which at least one but not all of the elements of full communion is present. ‘Churches in communion’

¹⁴⁰ This is drawn from the presentation made by the Anglicans in WCC 5th Assembly Nairobi, 1975.

¹⁴¹ *The Anglican Principles of Canon Law, Principle 93, on Ecumenical Responsibility*, nos. 1-3.

become inter-dependent but remain autonomous. The ‘relationship of communion’ does not require the acceptance of all theological opinion, sacramental devotion or liturgical practice characteristic of another Church”¹⁴².

From the above statements, The Anglican principles of canon law made distinction between different understandings of Communion in Anglicanism: ‘full Communion’, ‘inter-communion’ and ‘relationship of communion’. In the case of ‘full Communion’, all the essential elements of the Christian faith are required.

These essential elements must be present and recognized by all Churches in communion and they are: unity in faith, sacramental sharing, mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries, as well as reciprocal sharing of spiritual, pastoral, liturgical and collegial resources.

In the case of ‘inter-communion’, it is enough for one or more of these essentials elements of Christian faith to be present and recognized by participating Churches. In this is case, regional Churches remain autonomous. In ‘relationship of communion’, a Church is not required to share with and accept theological opinion, sacramental devotion or liturgical practice that characterize other Churches.

Therefore, in ecumenical discussions, Anglicans prefer to use the phrase ‘visible unity of the Church’ to describe the ultimate goal of ecumenism instead of the term "full communion". Visible unity is understood as ‘reconciled diversity’ between continuing parallel ecclesial jurisdictions, or even organic unity between two or more partners.

On the other hand, Full communion, as earlier explained, involves the recognition of unity in faith, sacramental sharing, mutual recognition and interchangeability of ministries, and reciprocal enjoyment of shared spiritual, pastoral, liturgical and collegial resources between two or more Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Anglicans use the term ‘communion’ to explain ‘fellowship’ of all Christians in Christ through baptism. According to Indaba Reflections: “We recognize that all the baptized are brought through their grafting into the body of Christ, into a relationship of communion with one another. The vocation of the Anglican Communion and the ecumenical vocation are, therefore, one and the same: to deepen our expression of the

¹⁴² Ibid, principle 94: *Ecclesial communion*, nos. 1-5.

gift of full communion imparted to us already through our communion with and in Christ”¹⁴³.

Anglicans understand communion to be one of the many stages to full, visible unity of the Church to which they are committed to. Basically, Christians’ communion with the Trinitarian God is a divine gift received through faith which obliges all Christians to grow into fullness of communion. This position was upheld in Lambeth Conference 1998 Resolution IV:I and reaffirmed in 2008, in *Indaba Reflections*, 71.

Full communion entails full interchangeability of ministry and membership. This understanding was clarified by Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Ecumenical Relations (IASCER). The commission defines full communion as follows: “We share with those fellow members of the body of Christ of the first and second centuries a vision that finds practical expression in the unity in faith of all the people of God in one place, gathered around their bishop in one Eucharistic fellowship, and so sharing together in God’s mission to God’s world”¹⁴⁴.

Resolution 9 of the 1920 Lambeth Conference considers fellowship (communion) among all Christian Churches as willed by God and manifested in Christ. It further acknowledges that Anglicans share communion of faith and tradition with the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, it declares: “We believe that God wills fellowship. By God’s own act this fellowship was made in and through Jesus Christ, and its life is in his Spirit. We believe that it is God’s purpose to manifest this fellowship... in an outward, visible, and united society, holding one faith, having its own recognized officers, using God-given means of grace, and inspiring all its members to the world-wide service of the Kingdom of God. This is what we mean by the Catholic Church ... This united fellowship is not visible in the world today. On the one hand, there are other ancient episcopal Communion in East and West, to whom ours is bound by many ties of common faith and tradition”¹⁴⁵.

¹⁴³ *Indaba Reflections*, 77, available at www.lambethconference.org/resolutions/2008, accessed on 11th October, 2016.

¹⁴⁴ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism: The Ecumenical Review*, 2009, pp. 4, 9-10, http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2065/is_3_61/ai_n39371701/?tag=content;col1 and subsequent pages – vol. 61:4, accessed on 15th November, 2016.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid*, p. 4; cf. Resolution 9, 1920 Lambeth Conference, on ‘*Appeal to all Christian People*’.

2.1.2 Four Principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism

Anglican ecumenical activities started during reformation in the sixteenth century whereby she held dialogues with Orthodox and Lutheran Churches. As already mentioned in chapter one, the rise of Oxford movement in the nineteenth century led to greater concern to work towards full communion with other Churches. It was as a result of this that Lambeth Conference was organized in 1888 to define basic principles of communion within and outside the Anglican Communion. Hence, nine out of the nineteen resolutions of the 1888 conference took ecumenical dimension.

To be precise, in Resolution 11, known as the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888 enumerates standards or principles of ‘*reunion*’ as follows: “the sufficiency of the Scriptures, as the ultimate standard of faith, the historic creeds, the two dominant sacraments, and the historic episcopate ... as the basis for Church unity, a basis on which approach may be, by God's blessing, made towards Home Reunion”¹⁴⁶. Major achievement of these resolutions was that reasonable number of national Churches within the Anglican Communion entered into communion with Christian communities, like Evangelical Lutheran Church of America and Canada, who have neither Anglican origin nor tradition.

After the 1888 Lambeth conference, subsequent Lambeth conferences showed significant commitments on ecumenical matters, and gave guidelines on the nature of this universal call to unity. For instance, Resolution IX of 1920 Lambeth conference was titled *Anglicans and Ecumenism*. It was this resolution that proposed the establishment of ‘Anglican Consultative Council’ (ACC). ACC is to acts on behalf of the Anglican Communion in coordinating ecumenical dialogue and conversations with other Christian Churches. The 1966 Lambeth conference confirmed and rectified this proposal.

Four out of the eight point of reference for the ACC are as follows: “(1) To keep before national and regional Churches the importance of the fullest possible Anglican collaboration with other Christian Churches; (2) to encourage and guide Anglican participation in the ecumenical movement and the ecumenical organizations, (3) to co-operate with the World Council of Churches and the world confessional bodies on

¹⁴⁶ *Anglican Communion and ecumenism*,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican_Communion_and_ecumenism, accessed 10th December, 2016;
see also The Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral 1886, 1888,
http://anglicansonline.org/basics/Chicago_Lambeth.html, accessed on 12th September, 2016.

behalf of the Anglican Communion, and to make arrangements for the conduct of pan-Anglican conversations with the Roman Catholic Church, the Orthodox Churches, and other Churches; (4) to advise on matters arising out of national or regional Church union negotiations or conversations and on subsequent relations with united Churches; to advise on problems of inter-Anglican communication and to help in the dissemination of Anglican and ecumenical information”¹⁴⁷.

The Resolution IV.3 of 1998 Lambeth Conference adopted the proposal to establish the Inter-Anglican Standing Commission on Ecumenical Relations (IASCER) to take the place of Ecumenical Advisory Group (EAG) following its (IASCER) endorsement by Anglican Consultative Council (ACC) in Panama (Resolution 16)¹⁴⁸. Within nine years, that is, from 2000 to 2008, the IASCER studied and reviewed ecumenical developments at the international bilateral and multilateral levels, and at the regional and local levels with aim of achieving Christian unity wherever possible.

IASCER also focused on consistency in theology and practice in all ecumenical discussions, in production of guidelines for the study of various agreements and in the development of set of principles for Anglican ecumenical participation. It considered those principles as valuable resource for Anglican relations with other Christian traditions.

IASCER also articulated principles for Anglican ecumenical participation in Resolution 17.08 under the following heading: *Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism (PAEE)*. The commission hopes that this idea will be developed by Inter-Anglican Standing Commission for Unity, Faith and Order (IASCUFO)¹⁴⁹. Hence, four *Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism* are as follows: first, the goal of the ecumenical movement; second, the task of the ecumenical movement; third, the processes of ecumenism; fourth, the contents of Church unity.

2.1.2.1. *The goal of the ecumenical movement*

Anglican tradition does not consider itself as "self-sufficient" Christian community. Rather she believes that though it has much to share with others (that is her

¹⁴⁷ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism: The Ecumenical Review*, p. 2.

¹⁴⁸ Anglican Consultative Council, *The Lambeth Conference*, Resolution Archive from 1998, Published by the Anglican Communion Office, 2005, Resolution IV, 3.

¹⁴⁹ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 3.

distinctive aspects, that to a considerable degree, authentically reflect elements of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church), she continuously strive for fullness of ecclesiality as long as Christianity remains divided in the profession of faith and Christian practices. Therefore, the goal of Anglican Communion in ecumenical engagement is to realize ‘the full, visible unity’ of all the Churches, which is both a vocation and a gift¹⁵⁰.

Hence, Anglican Communion, as federation of Churches, believes and teaches that the universal vocation of all Christians to the full, visible unity of the One, Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Jesus Christ is an expression of divine purpose to reconcile all things in himself (cf. Ephesians 4:3)¹⁵¹. Anglican commitment of full visible unity of the Church is rooted on the traditional understanding of unity in the Church which developed through the writings of Ignatius of Antioch.

According to the teaching of Ignatius of Antioch: “all the people of God in one place gathered around their bishop in one Eucharistic fellowship, sharing one proclamation of one faith, with one ministry in the service of the gospel, and oriented towards mission”¹⁵².

The goal of ecumenical relations which is to realize full, visible unity of the Church is considered, in Anglicanism, to be in accordance with the will of God, and as also a gift from God. In this case, Catholics and Anglicans share common view on Christian unity as divinely willed and as divine gift. For Anglicans, the elements of visible unity are: common baptism and profession of one apostolic faith, common Eucharistic communion and belief in the gospel of Christ, common worship and corporate life, common witness and service.

These elements of visible unity are clearly stated in the principles of Anglican ecumenical engagement as follows: “The unity which is both ‘God's will and his gift’ to his Church is being made visible for all in each place who are ‘baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord’ and Saviour are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed ‘fellowship’, holding the one ‘apostolic faith’, preaching the ‘one gospel’, ‘breaking the one bread’, ‘joining in common prayer’, and having a ‘corporate life’ reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with

¹⁵⁰ Anglican Consultative Council, *The Lambeth Conference*, Resolution IV, 1.

¹⁵¹ Ephesians 4:2, “With all humility and gentleness, and with patience, support each other in love. Take every care to preserve the unity of the Spirit by the peace that binds you together”.

¹⁵² Cf. Ignatius of Antioch, c. 100; in S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 4.

the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such wise (way) that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people”¹⁵³.

2.1.2.2 The task of the ecumenical movement

In the second segment of the principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism, Anglicans express their openness and willingness to strive for visible unity of all Churches in order to fully realize the “Catholicity of the Church’. Anglican obligation to strive for and grow into full communion is derived from communion with the Trinitarian God and it is considered as a gift that is made possible by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, IASCER proposes thus: “The task of ecumenism is for us to "recognize and receive" these elements from one another, and through this to grow together in the unity of the faith we profess. In this, we believe that the best and most authentic aspects of each will be preserved as we journey ever more closely with one another. We are not in pursuit of some "lowest common denominator" across the whole spectrum of Christian expression. Rather, each in our partialness can expect freely and joyfully to be enriched by our increasing mutual openness and closeness, as we learn better to share the gifts of God... for building up the Body of Christ until we all of us come to unity in faith and knowledge and to maturity in Christ our Lord (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:7-13)”¹⁵⁴.

Furthermore, in Resolution IX of 1920 Lambeth Conference, Anglican Communion considers her task to visible unity as to make the Church more Catholic in order that, within the visible unity of the Church, all the treasures of faith and order bequeathed as a heritage by the past to the present shall be possessed in common and made serviceable to the whole Body of Christ¹⁵⁵. Its task includes also to see that the outcome of every ecumenical commitment is felt at all levels of Anglican Communion, from the global, regional, national to local levels.

¹⁵³ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 3; Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism presented in the World Council of Churches 3rd Assembly, New Delhi, 1961.

¹⁵⁴ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 8; see also ‘Resolution 17.08 of Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, cf. Resolution IX of 1920 Lambeth Conference with the title; ‘*Appeal to all Christian People*’.

2.1.2.3 *The processes of ecumenism*

In Anglicanism, the process of ecumenism means the process of striving towards visible unity which unfold in stages. In Decision 15.01 of the IASCER's theological discussions with its Methodist and United Reformed partners, it states the importance of (A) seeking unity by stages. This means that theological agreement is reached at each stage. It also recognized that ecumenical progress is not always sequentially linear. (B) It is necessary to avoid short-cuts in ecumenical dialogue¹⁵⁶. The idea of 'unity by stages' requires moving step by step and avoiding short-cuts since progress in ecumenical relations can often encounter new obstacles.

IASCER's endorsement of 'unity by stages' in ecumenical endeavour is because of its conviction that partners at each stage must be clear of their goals as well as that which they share in common before engaging in further ecumenical dialogue. Thus, it is always necessary to begin with what is realistic, especially when goals are too broadly and appear unachievable within given context.

While proceeding by stages, discussions and subsequent agreements between ecumenical partner-Churches must be compatible, consistent and coherent with one another. This is possible by taking into consideration how elements that established relations or communion between A and B have consequences for relations between B and C, and also between A and C. This is technically referred to as 'questions of transitivity'¹⁵⁷.

This implies that participating Churches would, at each stage, consider engaging in 'expressed degree of recognition of communion' as necessary step to full, visible unity. Expressed degree of recognition of communion is a form of agreement of 'mutual recognition' which permits 'full inter-changeability of ministry and membership' among participating Churches. For this reason, Anglican Communion strives to live in and to maintain 'the highest degree of communion possible'¹⁵⁸ with member Churches.

¹⁵⁶ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 10.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁵⁸ The concept of "the highest degree of communion possible" was originally developed by The Eames Commission in the context of intra-Anglican conversations in view of potential divisions which might arise as a result of or in response to the ordination of women to priesthood or episcopate. The aim was to find ways for Anglicans, faced with the issue of the ordination of women and gay to priesthood and/or episcopate, to be able to maintain "the highest degree of communion possible". "Proceeding by stages"

Anglican Communion also strives to participate in the ‘greatest possible practical expressions of the communion’ with her ecumenical partners.

The degree of expression of communion is considered as gift from Christ to his Church which must never be impaired, and it means; admission of all baptized and communicant members of Trinitarian Churches to participate or share in the Eucharistic hospitality in Anglican Churches at the early stage of ecumenical relations¹⁵⁹.

Anglicans believes that Communion with other Christians of non-Anglican origin is based on communion with Jesus Christ which is established by incorporation into his Body through baptism. Therefore, mutual recognition of baptism is the basic (first stage) step to full, visible unity and that makes the Eucharistic hospitality possible. Another level of agreement is the Churches commitments to cooperation in mission of fellowship and worship.

The other aspect of process of ecumenism in Anglicanism is to live with the ‘degree of bearable anomaly’: that means that the present or current differences in faith and practice are tolerated, provided there are efforts as well as commitment to resolve and overcome principal anomaly to disunity in order to arrive at visible unity¹⁶⁰.

The long lasting division within the Body of Christ is considered as the bearable of all ecumenical anomalies. Lambeth Conference of 1998, in Resolution IV. 1, acknowledges thus: “the process of moving towards full, visible unity may entail temporary anomalies, and believes that some anomalies may be bearable when there is an agreed goal of visible unity, but that there should always be an impetus towards their resolution and, thus, towards the removal of the principal anomaly of disunity”¹⁶¹.

To overcome anomalies requires two principles, according to IASCEC, and they are: ‘precedent and tradition’. These should be considered as basis for communion than constraint on innovation. Although carefully thought out imaginative initiatives might often provide new and helpful precedent.

and to maintain co-operation in mission, in fellowship, in the sharing of worship, of Eucharistic hospitality and of Eucharistic sharing in advance of the recognition of full communion.

¹⁵⁹ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*. p. 5.

¹⁶⁰ Lambeth Conference 1998, Resolution IV.1.

¹⁶¹ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 11.

2.1.2.4 *The content of Church unity*

The content of Church unity, in Anglican understanding, is the same as content of common faith, that is, the celebration of common sacraments and the exercise of a common ministry shared by all Christians. It is in these contents of faith that high degree of convergence and agreement are possible. In line with principles formulated in 1886 by Chicago Missionary Conference, and in Resolution II of Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888, the following were adopted as content of faith and consequently as basis for 'reunion' or unity between Churches: The Holy Scriptures as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as the norm and ultimate standard of faith; the Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed, as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith; the two sacraments, Baptism and the supper of the Lord, ordained by Christ himself, and ministered with his unfailing words of institution; the historic episcopate, locally adapted in its administrative to the needs of the peoples called of God into the unity of his Church¹⁶².

Hence, IASCER considers the norms of faith adopted in 1888 the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral as necessary principles of Anglican ecumenical engagement. It is considered as sufficient statement of the Christian faith. Therefore, IASCER continuously refers to the 1888 conference, which was reaffirmed in Resolution IV.1 of 1998 conference, as what provides the framework for the search for full, visible unity of the Church.

2.1.3 Practical principles of ecumenism in Anglican tradition

2.1.3.1 *Principles of spiritual ecumenism*

Spiritual ecumenism is referred to in Anglican parlance as spiritual engagement. It is based on the principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the law of praying in the law of faith) which establishes relationship between worship (liturgy) and belief (faith). Spiritual ecumenism, in Anglican tradition, emphasizes Church's life as dependent on the indwelling of the Holy Spirit among Christians; that is, the life of the Church is

¹⁶² Cf. Resolution II, of 1888 Lambeth Conference.

nourished and sustained by the same Spirit who directs and inspires all Christians that participate in ecumenical engagement.

Therefore, all structures and procedures of ecumenical relations among Christians Churches cannot suffice to reach the ecumenical goal of full, visible unity except they are nourished by the spirituality of ecumenical engagement, such as: conversion of heart and repentance for the sin of division, humility to seek and accept the truth of the gospel as sufficient for salvation, search for unity as a fulfilment of God's will for his Church through common prayer, shared worship and bible study.

Just as in Catholic principles of ecumenism, prayer in common is considered a vital aspect of ecumenical engagement in Anglican tradition. It is believed that the search for unity as mission and vocation of the Church obliges Christians to continuously strive for full, visibly unity, not only by professing apostolic faith, preaching the gospel and celebrating sacraments, but most importantly through common prayer.

Hence, the principles of Anglican engagement in ecumenism state: "The unity which is both God's will and his gift to his Church is being made visible to all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and confess him as Lord and Saviour, are brought by the Holy Spirit into one fully committed fellowship, holding the one apostolic faith, preaching the one Gospel, breaking the one bread, joining in common prayer ..."¹⁶³.

2.1.3.1.1 Unity and Communion in the Church as divine gifts

Principles of spiritual ecumenism or engagement, in Anglican tradition, derives impetus from the belief that visible unity of the Church is a gift from God which he offers in accordance to his will. This is because God, in the fullness of time, plans "to bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth" (Ephesians 1:4-10). Unity and communion as divine gifts are modelled after Trinitarian Communion. The starting point of Church unity is baptism.

Spiritual ecumenism, therefore, is grounded on Anglican conviction that Christian unity is God's will for all who are called to repentance and salvation in Christ through baptism and brought into one fellowship by the Holy Spirit. Through baptism

¹⁶³ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 3; see also *Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism* presented in the World Council of Churches 3rd Assembly, New Delhi, 1961.

all are called to form one body in Christ, and are brought into one fellowship by the grace of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, baptism by which Christians are incorporated into the Church, and made one with Christ, is at the centre of Anglican principle of spiritual ecumenism.

2.1.3.1.2 Healing wounds of division by mutual repentance

Just like her Catholic counterparts, Anglicans believe that division among Christians is a sin against God's will and plan for his Church. Sin against division is considered to be rooted in human pride and causes wound on the body of Christ, the Church. Therefore, ecumenical endeavour, as articulated by IASCER in the principles of Anglican engagements, requires healing of past memories of division and disagreement. The processes of healing these memories of division, are proposed by IASCER as follows; first, repentance from every action that causes and still sustains this division, and second, humble acceptance of human fallibility, acceptance of error in teaching and in interpreting the deposit of faith contained in the Scriptures.

Thus, Sarah Rowland Jones in her article, *Anglicans and Ecumenism: The Ecumenical Review*, writes: "Though not made explicit within these principles, IASCER recognized that humility in the face of human fallibility, and repentance for the sin of division and all that follows from it, are unavoidable and necessary elements in ecumenical processes. In our own dialogues with others, and in others' dialogues, during recent years there has been a growing willingness to make such admissions, and to address specific pains and hurts between Christian traditions ... Healing of memories is a necessary part of reconciliation"¹⁶⁴.

2.1.3.1.3 Mutual recognition of shared fellowship in Christ

In addition to humble acceptance and repentance for the sin of division, Sarah Jones also refers to other elements of spiritual ecumenism that are proposed by IASCER as follows: first, sharing our 'faith journeys', that is, mutual recognition of experiences

¹⁶⁴ Ibid, p. 11; This proposal of IASCER for all ecumenical endeavour was a central issue in ecumenical work undertaken by the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC on the theme; "The Cloud of Witnesses".

of Christian life and that God is at work in each Christian community; second, mutual recognition of shared fellowship in the gospel.

Thus, S. Jones further explains the significance of the above mentioned elements of spiritual ecumenism: “A particularly significant development has been an engagement in what might be called ‘spiritual ecumenism’. There has been a growing realization that through sharing our ‘faith journeys’, that is, experiences of the Christian life, people from different traditions can recognize that God is graciously at work in one another in ways we often had not previously appreciated. We have learned that recognition at this affective level of our shared fellowship in the gospel can provide a compelling glimpse of the unity to which we are called, and offer a powerful stimulus to the pursuit of this vocation, as well as broadening and strengthening our traditional modes of encounter”¹⁶⁵.

An all embracing Anglican ecumenical engagements are supposed to cover all levels of ecumenical activities. Hence, the task of Anglican participation in ecumenical movement is basically to ‘recognize and receive’ those elements of Catholicism, as the one true Church, which Anglicans may encounter in their ecumenical partners. This is supposed to promote ecumenism at all levels, not just in doctrinal dialogue, but also in shared Christian life and worship, common Bible study and prayer, as well as other aspects of Christian spirituality which include common mission and witness.

2.1.3.1.4 Sacramental sharing and communion

As regards sacramental sharing, Anglican traditional teachings differ to a large extent from the Roman Catholic teachings: Anglican members and ministers are encouraged to collaboration with members and ministers of non-Anglican Communion by mutual participation in sacraments. Thus, according to Anglican traditional teachings; “(Anglican) ministers should minister to members of other faith communities if authorized by the discipline of their own Church and of the other community. If called upon to provide ministry, such as pastoral care or at a baptism, wedding, or funeral, for persons belonging to another faith community. Ministers should...consult with a minister of that community for advice, and consult within their own Church. Ministers

¹⁶⁵ Ibid, p. 9.

may approach colleagues in another faith community to minister to a member of their own Church only in exceptional cases at the request of that member”¹⁶⁶.

On the question of Eucharistic hospitality, *the Principles of Canon Law Common to all Anglican Communion* prescribes as follows: “Communicant members of ‘a Church’ (national or regional Church) may receive Holy Communion in a Church not in the Anglican Communion, which subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity and upholds the apostolic faith, in such circumstances as are permitted by the discipline both of their own Church and of the host Church. They (members of non-Anglican Communion) may be admitted to the Holy Communion in a Church (of Anglican Communion), to the extent permitted by its discipline, (that is) baptized persons who are communicant members of good standing in a Church not in the Anglican Communion which upholds the apostolic faith and subscribes to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity”¹⁶⁷.

For a member of non-Anglican Church to take part at holy communion in a Church of Anglican Communion, it is basically required that the non-Anglican party should provide evidence of his or her membership to a Christian community that upholds the apostolic faith and the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. This is to be presented before a regular Anglican communicant(s). Nonetheless, this sacramental collaboration is not supposed to be used as means to solicit for membership into Anglican Communion from a member of another faith community.

2.1.3.2 Principles of practical cooperation

Principle 95 and principle 98 of the Anglican canon law, which respectively discussed ‘ecumenical freedom’ and ‘ecumenical collaboration’, prescribe that members of the national and regional Churches of Anglican Communion are to freely collaborate and co-operate as ecumenical partnership with non-Anglican Churches of Christian traditions.

Hence, principle 98 prescribes as thus: “For the visible unity to which Christ calls all the faithful, ministers should seek to foster and participate in ecumenical partnership with faith communities of other Christian traditions, especially those with which their Church already has formal relations, to the extent permitted by the discipline of each Church involved. Ministers should in ecumenical affairs collaborate,

¹⁶⁶ *The Anglican Principles of Canon Law Common*, principle 98, on *Ecumenical Collaboration*, nos. 3-5.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*, principle 100: on *Eucharistic Hospitality*, nos. 1-3.

co-operate and where appropriate consult with ministers of other faith communities and corporate traditions”¹⁶⁸.

Practical ecumenical cooperation is also described in Anglican traditional parlance as “corporate life”. According to the Anglican teaching, it is by means of ecumenical collaboration or “corporate life” that Anglicans reach out in witness and in service to all humanity. It is a life of unity of purpose in fellowship with Christians of non-Anglican Churches everywhere, to act and speak together as occasion requires for the mission of Christ in service to the world.

According to IASCER’s discourse on the *Principles of Anglican Engagement in Ecumenism*: “The unity which is both God’s will and his gift to his Church is being made visible as all in each place who are baptized into Jesus Christ and... joining in common prayer, and having a corporate life reaching out in witness and service to all, and who at the same time are united with the whole Christian fellowship in all places and all ages in such way that ministry and members are accepted by all, and that all can act and speak together as occasion requires for the tasks to which God calls his people”¹⁶⁹.

It is, therefore, through recommendations from IASCER that the 1998 Lambeth Conference resolved that at any appropriate time and place, members of the Anglican Communion, at the national, regional and provincial Church level, are to actively participate in joint social, ministerial and theological formation with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities they have ecumenical relations with. They are to join with other Christians to witness to justice and peace, as well as to moral, social and environmental concerns¹⁷⁰.

2.1.3.3 Principles of doctrinal ecumenism

2.1.3.3.1 Foundations of Anglican doctrinal formulations

Unlike Presbyterian Westminster Confession and the Roman Catholic *magisterium*, Anglican Communion does not practice confession of faith that is

¹⁶⁸ Ibid, principle 98: *Ecumenical Collaboration*, nos. 1-3.

¹⁶⁹ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ Anglican Consultative Council, *The Lambeth Conference, Resolution Archive from 1998*, Resolution IV, 4.

generally agreed-upon by her member Churches. What is universally acceptable in Anglicanism as sources of Anglican doctrine are: The two creeds of the early ecumenical Councils – the Apostles’ and Nicene Creed – the principles laid down by Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral of 1888, and authoritative resolutions of the four Instruments of Communion operative in the Anglican Communion (FICOAC) – Archbishop of Canterbury, Lambeth Conference, Primates’ meeting and Anglican Consultative Council.

Other sources of doctrinal development are: Historical formularies like the Thirty-Nine Articles of Religion authored by Thomas Crammer, prayer-books, ordinals, the ‘standard divines’, and the principle of *lex orandi, lex credendi* that stipulates contents, forms and rubrics of liturgy¹⁷¹.

The Resolutions of 1888 Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral stand as principles that guide Anglicans on the path to ‘reunion’ among Churches. They are as follows: first, the Holy Scriptures contains all things necessary to salvation. It is the norm and ultimate standard of faith by which other norms, (creed, tradition and ethical behaviour) are judged. The sufficiency of the Scripture is to the extent that despite how true tradition may be, it cannot establish belief necessary for salvation; second the Apostles’ Creed, as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of the Christian faith; third, the two sacraments, baptism and the Lord’s supper instituted by Christ himself; fourth, the historic episcopate.

Hence, in Anglican traditional teaching, neither doctrine nor liturgy is ‘free-floating’. What is universally acceptable is that the authority of the Anglican doctrine is derived from the Scriptures and affirmed by the historic Catholic creeds and Anglican formularies. Traditional Anglican doctrine is drawn from two sources; Catholic doctrine (mainly from doctrinal formulations of the first four ecumenical councils) and protestant reformed teachings (Calvinism and Lutheranism).

The English reformation retained many core Catholic beliefs such as the Trinitarian relationship, the Virgin birth of Jesus, the nature of Jesus Christ as fully human and fully divine (hypostasis), the resurrection of Jesus, and original sin, three orders of ministry and the apostolic succession of bishops. Nevertheless, Anglicans’ theological understandings and interpretations of these doctrinal subject matters differ with that of the Roman Catholic Church.

¹⁷¹ *Anglican doctrine*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican_doctrine, accessed on 20th December, 2016; cf. *The Anglican Principles of Canon Law Common*, principle 49: *The sources of doctrine*, nos. 1-5.

At the regional level, Anglican doctrines are drawn from the doctrinal formulations of the general synods of national or regional Churches. These doctrinal formations is the only binding doctrine, enforced by bishop-in-council, that is, a body that constitutes of bishops, lay persons and other clergy. Although sometimes conflicting doctrinal interpretation arise within national Churches and provinces, this is resolved by evoking the principle of “tolerating internal differences” that is also referred to as "comprehensiveness".

2.1.3.3.2 Ecumenical engagements through doctrinal dialogue

At the level of doctrinal dialogue, Anglican participants are guided by principles of ‘the content of common faith’ which they consider to encompass the entire ordering of the Church as willed by God. In her traditional teaching, ‘the content of Church unity’ (which has been discussed above) is the same as ‘content of common faith’. It includes the celebration of common sacraments and the joint exercise of common ministry by all Christians. The ‘high degree of convergence and agreement’ is arrived at through consensus agreement on ‘the content of common faith’.

The processes of ecumenical – doctrinal dialogue unfolds in stages to enable ecumenical partners to be clear of their goals and to provide them opportunities to share what all partners have as common heritage. Therefore, it is necessary to begin with what is realistic even when goals appear unachievable within a particular context. While proceeding by stages, every stage of the discussion and subsequent agreements with other Christian Churches must be compatible, consistent and coherent with one another¹⁷².

The implication of this principle of ‘proceeding by stages’ during doctrinal dialogue is for participating Churches to have enough opportunity to engage in ‘expressed degree of recognition of communion’ which serves as necessary step to visible unity. It is also a form of agreement of ‘mutual recognition’ which permits ‘full interchangeability of ministry and membership’.

For this reason, Anglicans’ concept of doctrinal ecumenism encourages participating Churches to maintain ‘the highest degree of communion possible’¹⁷³, and

¹⁷² Resolution II of 1888 Lambeth Conference.

¹⁷³ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*. p. 5.

for ecumenical partners to participate in the ‘greatest possible practical expressions of the communion’ with them.

The degree of expression of communion means that at early stages of ecumenical relations, Anglican principle of ecumenical engagement permits admission of all baptized and communicant members of Trinitarian Churches (that is, ecumenical partners) to participate or share in the Eucharistic hospitality in Anglican Churches¹⁷⁴.

This principle is obtainable in Anglicanism because, Anglicans believe that Communion with other Christians of non-Anglican origin is derived from communion with Jesus Christ and it is established by incorporation into his body through baptism. Therefore, in Anglican ecumenical engagements, mutual recognition of baptism is the basic steps to full, visible unity that makes Eucharistic hospitality possible.

Thus, in the aspect of Eucharistic communion or sharing, Anglican tradition differs from Catholic traditional practices in the celebration of the Eucharist. To accommodate such cases of differences of Christian traditions and beliefs between Anglican Churches and their ecumenical partners, Anglican principles of ecumenical engagements employ the principle of the ‘degree of bearable anomaly’ as part of the process of doctrinal ecumenism. The principle of the ‘degree of bearable anomaly’ is that in which differences in faith and practice are tolerated provided there are efforts as well as commitments to resolve and overcome principal anomaly to disunity in order to arrive at full, visible unity¹⁷⁵.

2.1.3.3.3 Inter-relations between fullness of truth and fullness of unity

Search for truth is paramount in all doctrinal dialogue that aims ultimately to achieve full, visible unity of the Church. Anglican tradition, through IASCER’s discourse, prescribes that full, visible unity of the Church cannot be achieved at the expense of truth. Just as truth cannot be sought for at the expense of unity. Thus it states: “the fullness of truth and the fullness of unity will only be found when they are found together, as all things are reconciled with God in Christ (cf. Colossians 1:17-20)”¹⁷⁶. This principles of inter-relation between truth and unity can be at risk of

¹⁷⁴ Ibid, pp. 5-6.

¹⁷⁵ Lambeth Conference of 1998, Resolution IV.1.

¹⁷⁶ S. R. Jones, *Anglicans and ecumenism*. p. 6.

compromise when applied in the context of the principle of ‘bearable or unbearable anomalies’.

It is the responsibility of the Anglican Consultative Council to act on behalf of all Churches within the Anglican Communion in coordinating ecumenical dialogues with other Christian Churches. The ecumenical dialogue can be in the form of theological consultations which would study doctrinal differences and search for possible convergence among participating Churches. This is possible through renewed doctrinal understandings, re-interpretations and correction of misunderstandings.

2.2 Roman Catholic principles of ecumenism

The commitments of the Roman Catholic Church to full visible unity and communion with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities are anchored on the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ in Jn. 17:21-23: “May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me. I have given them the glory you gave to me, that they may be one as we are one. With me in them and you in me, may they be so perfected in unity that the world will recognize that it was you who sent me and that you have loved them as you have loved me”. Therefore, full communion in the Church is modelled after Trinitarian unity.

According to Vatican II, the mystery of unity in the Church is thus; “a mystery that finds its highest exemplar and source in the unity of the persons of the Trinity; the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit, one God ... it is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe and pervading and ruling over the Church as a whole, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful”¹⁷⁷. From these statements, it follows that it is the Holy Spirit that energizes unity in the Church.

The Church as a sacramental sign signify, in tangible form, the redeeming grace of Christ. The sacramental nature of the Church is fully manifested when her members are evidently united in mutual love to one another and to God; through holiness and profession of faith in Christ, through baptism and celebration of the Eucharist. And by participation in corporate actions of the Church, the Church becomes an actual event of

¹⁷⁷ UR, no. 2.

grace¹⁷⁸. The sacramental unity is an important aspect of the Church's character because, according to Vatican II: God "does not make men holy and save them merely as individuals, without bond or link between one another"¹⁷⁹. This unity is not uniformity but enriched by the diversity of all members of God's People¹⁸⁰.

In the encyclical letter, *Ut unum sint*, Pope John Paul II underscores the necessity of faith and sacramental communion on the one hand, and hierarchical communion on the other hand. Thus, the Church's internal and external dimensions of communion are emphasized. This view is elaborated by J. Hamer thus: "the mystical body of Christ is a communion which is at once inward and external, an inner communion of spiritual life (of faith, hope and charity) signified and engendered by an external communion in profession of faith, discipline and sacramental life"¹⁸¹. Therefore, the distinctive character of bond of communion in the Church is the interior grace animated by faith, charity and other gifts of the Holy Spirit that are fully realized by participation of all members in the Eucharistic table.

The definition of the nature of the Church as communion emphasizes Vatican II's renewed and broad ecclesiological understanding, especially, in relation with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities. This renewed definition of the nature of the Church explains the Church's departure from pre-Vatican II teaching that 'outside the Church, there is no salvation'. The pre-Vatican II's teaching on the Church lacks flexibility to take care of the complex situation arising from division among Christians.

According to Hillary Okeke, the ecclesiology posited in pre-Vatican II document, "affected the legislation of the Catholic Church in the area of juridical status of baptized non-Catholics and their Communities"¹⁸². Therefore, the Second Vatican Council adopted ecclesiological teaching that is dynamic, and thus, established new beginning in the ecumenical journey that takes into account the substantial Christian patrimony and ecclesial element outside the visible structure of the Roman Catholic Church.

¹⁷⁸ A. Dulles, *Models of the Church*, New York: An Image Book, Doubleday Publ., 2002, pp. 68-69.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid*, no. 9.

¹⁸⁰ 1 Peter 4:10-11: "each one of you has received a special grace, so, like good stewards responsible for all these varied graces of God, put it at the service of others...so that in everything God may receive the glory through Jesus Christ, since to him belongs all glory and power forever and ever, Amen".

¹⁸¹ Cf. J. Hamer, *The Church is a Communion*, New York: Sheed & Ward, 1964, p. 93; cited in A. Dulles, *Models of The Church*, p. 49.

¹⁸² H. I. Okeke, *Milestones in Ecumenism: Evolution in Canonical Legislation in Ecumenical Matters*, Enugu: Think Limited, 1996, p. 65.

Hence, Vatican II employs the phrase, *subsists in*; and thus, it teaches that the Church of Christ *subsists in* the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by bishops in communion with him. To underscore intimate relationship between ‘ecclesia fullness’ and ‘fullness of means of salvation’, Vatican II further states: “We believe that Our Lord entrusted all the blessings of the new covenant to the apostolic college alone, of which Peter is the head, in order to establish the one body of Christ on earth to which all should be fully incorporated who belong in any way to the people of God”¹⁸³.

Furthermore, the Council states that only the Catholic Church possess ‘all-embracing means of salvation’, which include; the sacramental worship, the celebration of the word and the apostolicity of ancient tradition of the Church. Nevertheless, the Council acknowledges that other Churches and Ecclesial Communities, “though deficient in some respects, still possess many significant elements of truth and sanctification”¹⁸⁴. These elements are the central points of ecumenical relations¹⁸⁵.

The Church holds that by participation in baptism, Christ’s faithful enters into communion with God through Christ and with one another in a sacramental sense¹⁸⁶. Therefore, Vatican II declares thus: “For men who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in communion with the Catholic Church even though this communion is imperfect. The differences that exist in varying degrees between them and the Catholic Church – whether in doctrine and sometimes in discipline, or concerning the structure of the Church – do indeed create many obstacles, sometimes serious ones, to full ecclesiastical communion”. In this sense, members of other Christians Churches and ecclesial communion are “properly regarded as brothers and sisters in the Lord by the sons and daughters of the Catholic Church”¹⁸⁷.

¹⁸³ UR, no. 3.

¹⁸⁴ UR, nos. 3, 15; UUS, no. 12; *Ecumenical Directory* no. 104; elements of salvation that are present in other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities, according to John Paul II are as follows: “there are many who honour sacred Scripture, taking it as a norm of belief and of action, and who show a true religious zeal. They lovingly believe in God the father almighty and in Christ, Son of God and Savior. They are consecrated by baptism, through which they are united with Christ... Many of them rejoice in the episcopate, celebrate the Holy Eucharist, and cultivate devotion towards the Virgin Mother of God. They also share with us in prayer and other spiritual benefits ... for to them also he gives his gifts and graces, and is thereby operative among them with his sanctifying power. Some indeed, he has strengthened to the extent of the shedding of their blood.

¹⁸⁵ LG, no. 8.

¹⁸⁶ J. Gros, & Co. *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 61; Cf. 1 Cor. 12:13; Rom. 12: 4f; Gal. 3:26-28; Eph. 4: 3ff.

¹⁸⁷ UR, no. 3; UUS, no. 13.

2.2.1 Principles of spiritual ecumenism

The impetus required to achieve a consensus in ecumenical endeavours, cannot merely be dependent on human undertaking and theological dialogues, but must be spiritually derived from divine source¹⁸⁸. Spiritual dimensions of all ecumenical activities are inevitable because of the following reasons; first, Christian unity is divine gift; second, it is modelled after the Trinitarian unity; and third, the impetus for every ecumenical movement is received from the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ (17:21¹⁸⁹) which is the basis for spiritual ecumenism.

According to Walter Kasper, the necessity of the spiritual dimensions of ecumenism is proved thus; “it is significant that Jesus did not primarily express his desire for unity in a teaching or in a commandment to his disciples, but in a prayer to his Father. Unity is a gift from above stemming from and growing towards loving communion with Father, Son and Holy Spirit”¹⁹⁰.

2.2.1.1 Church's visible unity and communion as gifts of the Holy Spirit

Because full, visible unity and communion in the Church are divine gift through the working of the Holy Spirit, many Christians across the world have continuously felt the impulse of divine grace to engage in the movement for the restoration of this unity. Vatican II describes the events of the divine impulse on all Christians to search for unity, as follows: “Today, in many parts of the world, under the inspiring grace of the Holy Spirit, many efforts are being made in prayer, word and action to attain that fullness of unity which Jesus Christ desires”¹⁹¹.

Therefore, ecumenical movement “is a spiritual process, carried out in faithful obedience to the Father, following the will of Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit”. In the same line of argument, the work of ecumenism, according to W. Kasper,

¹⁸⁸ W. Kasper, *Which They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, London: Burns & Oats, 2004, p. 156.

¹⁸⁹ The gospel of John 17:21: “May they all be one, just as, Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me”.

¹⁹⁰ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 10.

¹⁹¹ UR, nos. 1, 4.

“is rooted in the foundation of Christian spirituality, requiring more than ecclesial diplomacy, academic dialogue, social involvement and pastoral cooperation”¹⁹².

There is the danger of misunderstanding spirituality as merely an emotional expression and as substitute for objective confession of faith of the Church. Spirituality is based on faith conviction that signifies a lifestyle that is guided by the Holy Spirit and expressed in the conduct of life. Spirituality, according to W. Kasper, is thus; “attitudes, faith convictions and practices which determine the life of men and women, and help them to reach extra-preceptory realities. More simply, it can be understood as the spirit-effected way Christians conduct themselves before God”¹⁹³.

These explanations from W. Kasper refer to two aspects of spirituality: First, God’s Holy Spirit which is at work everywhere and in all men and women; and second, the human conditions and circumstances of the Christian existence. Tension often arise from the relationship of these two aspects. Such tension might result to division and disunity as a result of different ways of interpreting, understanding and practicing Christian faith.

Therefore, spirituality in general, and spiritual ecumenism in particular demands means, “listening and opening ourselves to the demands of the spirit who also speaks through deferent forms of piety; it means a readiness to rethink and convert, but also to bear the ‘otherness’ of the other, which requires tolerance, patience, respect and, not least, good will and love which does not boast but rejoices in the truth (1 Cor. 13, 4-6)”¹⁹⁴.

In the light of this understanding, spiritual ecumenism presupposes “many elements of sanctifications and truth wrought by the Holy Spirit”¹⁹⁵, both in the Church’s life and in the individual life of Christ’s faithful. It requires constant participation in prayer for Christian unity, in conversion of heart and holiness of life.

Vatican II presents aforementioned elements as basis for spiritual ecumenism and thus, it decrees: “Renewal of the Church, interior conversion (change) of hearts and holiness of life, along with public and private prayer for the unity of Christians, have

¹⁹² W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 12.

¹⁹³ W. Kasper, *Which They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, p. 158.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid. p. 160; Cf. 1 Cor. 13,4-6, “Love is always patient and kind, love is never jealous, love is not boastful or conceited, it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage, it does not take offence or store up grievances, love does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but finds its joy in the truth”.

¹⁹⁵ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 12.

been identified as ‘the soul’ of the whole ecumenical movement, and merits the name ‘*spiritual ecumenism*’¹⁹⁶.

Furthermore, chapter four of the application of the principles and norms on ecumenism elaborates the horizon of these elements of spiritual ecumenism to include: sacramental sharing, bible study, retreats, covenants of mutual support and hospitality, as well as shared prayer among congregations and dioceses.

2.2.1.2 Renewal of the Church

According to John Paul II, active participation of Christ’s faithful in spiritual ecumenism emphasizes intimate link between conversion of heart and renewal of the Church. Thus, he writes: “not only personal sins must be forgiven and left behind, but also social sins, which is to say the sinful structures themselves which have contributed and can still contribute to division and to reinforcing of division”¹⁹⁷.

Hence, renewal of the Church is an essential and inevitable element of spiritual ecumenism. According to Vatican II; “every renewal of the Church is essentially grounded in an increase of fidelity to her own calling. Undoubtedly this is the basis of the movement toward unity ... in so far as she is an institution of men here on earth. Thus if, in various times and circumstances, there have been deficiencies in moral conduct or in Church discipline, or even in the way that Church teaching has been formulated – to be carefully distinguished from the deposit of faith itself –these can and should be set right at the opportune moment”¹⁹⁸.

In compliance to the Council’s directives for participation in spiritual ecumenism, it must be acknowledged that constant renewal is taking place within the Church. This renewal covers many aspects of Church’s life: preaching of the word of God, liturgical worship, catechetical teachings and lay apostolate, new forms of religious life and spirituality of married life, as well as the Church’s social teaching. These constituent aspects of spiritual ecumenism are further discussed below.

¹⁹⁶ UR, no. 8.

¹⁹⁷ UUS, no. 34.

¹⁹⁸ UR, no. 6.

2.2.1.3 Conversion of heart and holiness of life

Conversion of heart and holiness of life, are components of spiritual ecumenism by which Christ's faithful "strive to overcome the division inherited from the past and to build anew a communion of love by prayer, by repentance and by asking pardon of each other for sins of disunity, past and present"¹⁹⁹. Through conversion of heart, Christians are drawn by grace to deeper understanding of the mystery of Trinity, to genuine love and to generous service to others. It is a process through which they grasp, with inner mind, the various ways in which God is at work in the diversity of Christian communities.

According to Gros, McManus, and Riggs: "ecumenical conversion entails a love for all Christians, a love of one's own Church and for the Churches through which Christ has come to others, a zeal for the unity of Christians, a receptive spirituality that is welcoming of each step closer to full communion, and a willingness to learn those tools and doctrinal developments that serve this unity"²⁰⁰.

Conversion of heart is the substance of spiritual ecumenism because, "it is from renewal of the inner life of the minds, from self-denial and unstinted love that desires of unity takes their rise and develop in a mature way"²⁰¹. Furthermore, conversion of heart means openness to faith, theological teaching and doctrines into which a person is initiated and belong, as well as to those of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Conversion of heart and holiness of life entail 'ecumenical sensitivity' and respect to other Churches' ways of expressing their beliefs; this implies to avoid the use of derogatory words in the description of other Christian communities, their mode of worship, and doctrines.

The significance of 'ecumenical sensitivity' is founded on a fundamental principle which holds that, "in non-technical ecumenical parlance we designate Churches and Ecclesiastical Communities by names and categories that they use of themselves...The ecumenical sensitivity is particularly important when marks of the Church – One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic – are used in the title, or when attributes of the Church – orthodox, evangelical, reformed and the like – are used"²⁰².

¹⁹⁹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 19.

²⁰⁰ Jeffrey Gros, Eamon McManus, and Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 3.

²⁰¹ UR, no. 7.

²⁰² J. Gros, & Co. *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 4.

2.2.1.4 Public and private prayer for Christian unity

From the above definition of spiritual ecumenism, Christian unity is the work and gift of the Holy Spirit which cannot be achieved only by human endeavour. It means that, “those who live in the Spirit must let themselves be transformed by the ‘love that, for the sake of unity, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things’”²⁰³. Therefore, spiritual ecumenism is expressed in tangible form through private and public prayer for Christian unity as a manifestation of life in the Spirit, and as a participation in the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ.

According to W. Kasper in his book, *A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*: “Christian prayer for unity is a humble, but faithful sharing in the prayer of Jesus, who promised that any prayer made in his name would be heard by the Father”²⁰⁴. Because, “those (Christians) who identify deeply with Christ must identify with his prayer, and especially with his prayer for unity”²⁰⁵.

Participation in the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ through private and public prayer for Christian unity is necessary because; it is an obedience to Christ’s will and command, it is a manifestation of life in the spirit, it is a means of obtaining the grace of unity; and it is an expression of communion²⁰⁶. These are basis for the Church’s call for the ‘week of prayer for Christian unity’.

J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs further enumerate the significance of common prayer for Christian unity as follows; “cross-confessional communal prayer for unity is grounded in the promise that the prayer of two or three gathered in Jesus’ name will be answered (Matthew. 18:20). These moments of unity become, as it were, an apprenticeship in the more pervasive unity for which those gathered are praying. These moments of prayer move Christians from being persons whose backs are turned towards each other– each confession facing away from the others – to Christians turned towards God and one another, (who are) beginning to recognize themselves as disciples of the same Lord.

²⁰³ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 25; Cf. 1 Corinthians, 13: 7.

²⁰⁴ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 10; Cf. Jn. 15:7, “If you remain in me and my word remain in you, you may ask for whatever you please and you will get it”.

²⁰⁵ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 25.

²⁰⁶ UR, no. 8.

The act of gathering in Jesus' name to pray for unity is a moment of such unity. Communal prayer is aimed at abatement of the heated passions, particularly the polemical passions that have fed division. Such prayer fosters insight rather than blindness in looking at the real doctrinal disagreements. It leads to being able to distinguish between real issues and nonessentials. It leads to the ability to forgive, a necessary component of the ecumenical movements and of ecumenical formation”²⁰⁷.

Just as in any other Christian prayers, prayer for Christian unity can take the form of either private personal prayer or public communal worship. It also has elements of adoration, contrition, intercession and thanksgiving. Prayer for Christian unity takes the form of adoration as it is offered to the Father, in accordance with Christ's will (Jn. 17:21), and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In the instance of adoration, it is an expression of the self-consciousness of the three Divine Persons in whom all adoration and glory belongs.

When prayer for Christian unity takes the form of contrition, it arouses humble examination of conscience, and acknowledges in contrition the sins committed against unity of the Mystical Body of Christ, the Church. As a form of thanksgiving, prayer for Christian unity includes, gratitude to God for inspiring the desire for unity in human hearts, and for the gift of ministry in the service of unity. And as prayer of intercession, it is a supplication for the grace of unity for all Christians and for the renewal of heart, that is, to overcome the prejudices of the past, and to live in newness of life in Christ, at this present era²⁰⁸.

Prayer for Christian unity, therefore, is an inevitable aspect of spiritual ecumenism. According to W. Kasper: “(Prayer for Christian unity) is a royal door of ecumenism: it leads Christians to look at the Kingdom of God and the unity of the Church in a fresh way; it deepens their bonds of communion; and it enables them to courageously face painful memories, social burdens and human weakness”²⁰⁹.

As Christians of different Churches and Ecclesial Communities come together in fellowship for prayer to the Father, through the Son and in the Holy Spirit, they participate in the Trinitarian unity, and at the same time draw closer to one another. In this sense, they take gradual steps to overcome the long history of division and walk towards the goal of ecumenism.

²⁰⁷ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 104.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid*, p. 105.

²⁰⁹ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 11.

Furthermore, as often as Christians join in prayerful fellowship with one another in Christ, they bring the word of Christ to fulfilment, because Jesus said: “for where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am in their midst” (Mathew 10: 20). And also according to John Paul II: “Christ is truly present; he prays ‘in us’, ‘with us’ and ‘for us’. It is he who leads our prayer in the Spirit-Consoler whom he promised and then bestowed on his Church in the upper room in Jerusalem, when he established her in her original unity”²¹⁰.

Therefore, “fellowship in prayer leads people to look at the Church and Christianity in a new way”²¹¹. In this manner of fellowship, all Christians jointly “pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them”.²¹²

The preference of ‘fellowship in prayer’ at all ecumenical endeavours is emphasized by John Paul II in his encyclical, *Ut unum sint*, as follows: “Along the ecumenical path to unity, pride of place certainly belongs to *common (communal) prayer*, the prayerful union of those who gather together around Christ himself. If Christians, despite their divisions, can grow ever more united in common prayer around Christ, they will grow in the awareness of how little what divides them is in comparison to what unites them”²¹³.

The ‘upper-room’ experience in the Acts of Apostles describes as well as exemplifies a perfect fellowship in prayer where, “Mary and the apostles gathered, to pray for the coming of the Spirit which will unite the people in one language and to pray for the renewed Pentecost”²¹⁴. Furthermore, the Acts of Apostles present prayer in common as vital aspect of spiritual life for the first group of believers. It means that fellowship in prayer remains a symbol of communion among believers, and a central force for unity in the early Church. According to the Acts of Apostles; “these (the whole group of believers) remained faithful to the teaching of the Apostles, to the brotherhood, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2: 42-47).

²¹⁰ UUS, no. 22.

²¹¹ Ibid, no. 23.

²¹² UR, no. 7.

²¹³ UUS, no. 22.

²¹⁴ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, 2004, p. 166; Cf. Acts 1:13-14, “they went up into an upper room, with Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus”.

Participation of all Christians in prayerful fellowship with one another and with Christ involves giving and receiving. It also has a vertical and horizontal dimensions. Its horizontal dimension refers to habitual sharing of grace of communion among Christians; that is, the constant giving to and receiving from each other the true and authentic pattern of life for God's people.

The vertical dimension of prayerful fellowship is communion with the Trinitarian God who is the source and the end to which Christian fellowship culminates. It is a form of prayerful dependence on the grace of the Holy Spirit, it refreshes, feeds, and strengthens the soul, and as well, opens one's heart to other Christians²¹⁵.

Prayer in common offers opportunity for spiritual reconciliation. *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism* (DAPNE) encourages Catholics to join in prayer with members of other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities as effective means to gain the grace of unity, and as genuine expression of that which still binds Christians together. By this means all Christians can constantly pray to God for their needs, such as, peace, social concerns, love and charity in the family, eradication of poverty, hunger and violence²¹⁶.

As often as Christians meet in prayers with one another in Christ, they gain courage to face all the painful human reality of divisions and find themselves together once more in that community of the Church which Christ constantly builds up in spite of human limitations²¹⁷. It is recommendable for representatives of Churches to cooperate in preparation of the prayer for Christian unity. They are to cooperate in selecting Scriptural readings, hymns and prayers with priority and ultimate goal as restoration of Christian unity²¹⁸.

2.2.1.5 Common Bible study

Common Bible study and Bible sharing among members of Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities that cooperate in ecumenical movements are necessary aspects of spiritual ecumenism. These aspects of spiritual ecumenism are emphasized in

²¹⁵ B. M. Katele, *Fellowship: Its meaning and its demand*, <https://www.ministrymagazine.org/archive/2003/06/fellowship-its-meaning-and-its-demand.html>, accessed on 7th December, 2016.

²¹⁶ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 108-109.

²¹⁷ UUS, no. 22.

²¹⁸ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 110-111.

chapter four of the *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*. The necessity and importance of these aspects of spiritual ecumenism are based on the fact that the Holy Scriptures is the common heritage for all Christians who, with reverence and devotion receive its words as “God’s power for the salvation of everyone who has faith”²¹⁹.

According to the ecumenical directory: “veneration of the Scriptures is a fundamental bond of unity between Christians, one that holds firm even when Churches and Communities to which they belong are not in full communion with each other. Everything that can be done to make members of the Churches and Ecclesial Communities read the word of God, and to do that together when possible (e.g., Bible Weeks), reinforces this bond of unity that already unites them, helps them to be open to the unifying action of God and strengthens the common witness to the saving Word of God which they give to the world”²²⁰.

According to Vatican II, “ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ”, and the study of the Scriptures “is the soul of sacred theology”²²¹. Therefore, common study of the Scriptures enlightens Christians to understand the mystery of unity as the mystery of “the loving unity of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, and their divine reconciling activity in the origins and the life of the Church”²²². It also reminds all Christians about the historical painful reality of division: “its origin in human fragility and sinfulness, its profound and lasting effects, its crying out to God and searching for words in prayer, its longing for forgiveness and reconciliation”²²³.

Common Bible study and Bible sharing are fundamental to ecumenism because many scriptural passages contain perfect descriptions and teachings about the common origin, common patrimony and common heritage jointly shared by all believers in Christ. These can be studied under the following themes: common participation and sharing in the fatherhood of one God and of one faith, common origin in Adam and paternity in Abraham, common participation in the history of salvation in Jesus Christ

²¹⁹ UR, no. 21; cf. Romans 1: 16.

²²⁰ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 183.

²²¹ Second Vatican Council, *Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Dei Verbum*, November, 1965, nos. 18, 24, 25; (for further citation: DV).

²²² LG, nos. 2-4; cf. Jn. 16:41-5; Eph. 4: 1-16.

²²³ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 26; cf. Gen. 4:1-16 (Cain and Abel); Gen. 37-50 (the history of Joseph); Is. 42-53 (Suffering servant); Ps. 44 (prayer for help); Mk. 9:33-40 (who is the greatest?); Lk. 12:5 (Jesus as the cause of division); Lk. 15 (the parable of the lost sheep).

and joint experience of new Pentecost, common vocation and mandate to make disciples of all nations, the same hope of resurrection in Jesus Christ, and eternal life.

Hence, common study of the Scriptures helps to correct the error of relativism in the interpretation of Christians' heritage, and assists all to appreciate the urgent need for unity. These notwithstanding, for common Bible study and Bible sharing to have ecumenical value, they must be grounded and nourished in faith, and must constantly impart on all participants the extent to which differences in exegesis and doctrinal positions wounded the seamless body of Christ²²⁴.

In addition to Bible sharing, working together in Bible related projects is effective means of promoting unity among Christians: Bible related projects such as, translation and publication of common agreed version of the Bible, Bible week in parishes for children and youth; production of Bible study guide, production of biblical program for audio-visual and electronic media²²⁵.

2.2.1.6 Common participation in the sacraments of the Church

Spiritual ecumenism is intimately rooted in sacramental spirituality through which Christ is always present in the lives of all Christians. It is through the sacrament of baptism that Christians are incorporated into Christ and into his Church²²⁶.

2.2.1.6.1 Common participation in baptism

It is through baptism that the sacramental bond of unity is established among believers who are reborn into new life in Christ. Thus, by implication, baptism constitutes the basis for Christian communion. According to W. Kasper, "Renewal of our baptismal vow and liturgical commemoration of baptism is, therefore, a basic element of ecumenical spirituality"²²⁷. Therefore, by professing "one Lord, one faith,

²²⁴ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 186.

²²⁵ W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, pp. 23-24; (This has to follow instructions from "Guidelines for Inter-confessional cooperation in translating the Bible" jointly published by General Secretariat of the Catholic Biblical Federation, office of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity and United Bible Societies).

²²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 54; cf. 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:28.

²²⁷ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, 2004, p. 165.

one baptism” (Eph. 4:5) members of the Catholic Church join in real, but imperfect communion with members of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities²²⁸.

This means that, although all Christians participate in baptism, Churches (for instance, Anglican) that are separated from the Catholic Church lack the fullness of communion with her. This teaching is based on the truth which holds that baptism as sacrament of initiation is wholly oriented toward the fullness of life in Christ in the Eucharist. Baptism, according to Vatican II, “envisages a complete profession of faith, complete incorporation in the system of salvation such as Christ willed it to be, and finally complete in grafting in Eucharistic communion”²²⁹.

2.2.1.6.2 Common Eucharistic celebration and Holy Communion

All other sacraments, especially baptism, is oriented towards Eucharistic celebration as the mystery of faith and sacrament of communion. For this reason, the Eucharist is the summit of sacramental spirituality; and because it is a sacrament of communion, it is a vital and decisive aspect of spiritual ecumenism. According to the Ecumenical directory: “Eucharistic communion is inseparably linked to full ecclesial communion and its visible expression”²³⁰; that is, through sharing in one bread and one cup, Christ’s faithful are made one with him (1 Cor. 10:17).

As the Roman Catholic Church continuously engages other Churches and Ecclesial Communities in ecumenical dialogue as part of her efforts toward achieving full, visible unity, the Second Vatican Council instructs that sacramental communion, with regard to sharing common Eucharistic table with other Christian communities, should not be used indiscriminately as means to restore Christian unity. This is because, the focus of Eucharistic communion must be as follows: first, “bearing witness to the unity of the Church, and second, sharing in the means of grace ... The course to be adopted, with due regard to all the circumstances of time, place, and persons, is to be decided by local episcopal authority, unless otherwise provided for by bishops’ conference according to its statutes, or by the Holy See”²³¹.

²²⁸ UR, no. 3.

²²⁹ Ibid, no. 22.

²³⁰ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 129.

²³¹ UR, no. 8 (*communicatio in sacris*; cf. 1983 code of canon law no. 844, articles 1-5).

Hence, members of Churches and Ecclesial Communities who do not yet entered into full communion with the Catholic Church cannot share in Catholic Eucharistic communion. The Catholic Church adopts this position on Eucharistic communion or sharing because, Ecclesial Communities that separated from Catholic Church have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness. In addition to this, there is another reason for non-admittance of separated brethren into Catholic Eucharistic communion which is because they lack valid sacrament of orders.

Nevertheless, when these Churches and Ecclesial Communities commemorate Christ's death and resurrection in the Lord's Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with him and look forward to his coming in glory. Therefore, the teaching concerning the Lord's Supper, the other sacraments, worship, the ministry of the Church, must be the subject of the dialogue²³².

Until visible unity is fully established, the Church does not permit sharing the Eucharist with members of other Churches or Ecclesial Communities that are not yet in full communion with her. Notwithstanding this prescription, in certain circumstances and under the directives of the local ordinary, it can be made possible for members of other Churches to participate in Catholic Eucharistic communion based the following conditions; first, with members of the Eastern Churches who ask for it freely and are disposed for it; second, with members of other Ecclesial Communion who, in grave necessity, ask for it of their own will, with the right disposition and with evidence of holding on to the Catholic faith regarding the sacraments²³³.

It is regrettable that all Christians are yet to share in one table of the Eucharist with Catholics even as they are committed to ecumenical movement. This seem to be more difficult as the disagreement in faith unabatedly multiplies, and full communion is not yet achieved. Nevertheless, W. Kasper advises thus: "This suffering of so many Christians must be a further impulse for all who are responsible for promoting Christian unity"²³⁴. The positive aspect of ecumenical movement, particularly spiritual ecumenism, is that at present Christians share in spiritual communion with others²³⁵.

²³² UR, no. 22.

²³³ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 122-36; W. Kasper, *Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, p. 60.

²³⁴ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, p. 165.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*

2.2.1.6.3 Celebration of mixed marriages

The term mixed marriage “refers to marriage between a Catholic and a baptized Christian (non-Catholic) who is not in full communion with the Catholic Church”²³⁶. According to the 1983 Code of Canon Law, it is a marriage “between two baptized persons of whom one is baptized in the Catholic Church or received into it after baptism and has not defected from it by a formal act and the other of whom is enrolled in a Church or Ecclesial Community not in full communion with the Catholic Church”²³⁷.

Christian marriages, in general, is “matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring”²³⁸. When properly celebrated and lived, Christian marriage, as a sacrament, impacts grace of unity, not merely in a bodily manner between of man and women, but the gifts of union in faith. The essential properties of marriage, that is, unity and the indissolubility, is the primary concern of the Church.

From practical religious experiences, perfect union and couples’ participation in the Church’s life and faith are more assured when they belong to the same community of faith. Therefore, “mixed marriages frequently present difficulties for the couples themselves, and for the children born to them; in maintaining their Christian faith and commitments, and for the harmony of family life. For all these reasons, marriage between persons of the same ecclesial community remains the objective to be recommended and encouraged”²³⁹.

Despite challenges, mixed marriage stands as living example, in a sacramental manner, of ecumenical cooperation. When couples involved abide by the principles and norms for the valid celebration of mixed marriage, and when they draw from the positive aspects of Christian faith and life of grace which they share in common, they will attain the perfect union expected of them without losing the individual Christian identity. In this sense, they become visible symbol of Christian unity being strived for.

John Paul II, in his encyclical letter *Familiaris consortio* observes: “Marriages between Catholic and other baptized persons have their own particular nature, but they

²³⁶ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 143.

²³⁷ 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, cc. 1124 (for further citation: CC).

²³⁸ CC, 1055.

²³⁹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 144.

contain numerous elements that could well be made good use of and developed, both for their intrinsic value and for the contribution that they can make to the ecumenical movement. This is particularly true when both parties are faithful to their religious duties. Their common baptism and the dynamism of grace provide the spouses in these marriages with the basis and motivation for expressing their unity in the sphere of moral and spiritual life”²⁴⁰.

It is not within the scope of this doctoral thesis to carry out detailed discussions on principles and norms for the valid celebration of mixed marriage. These are contained in the Code of Canon Law (1124-129). References made in this context are few details that are essential for ecumenical relations in terms of the following: pastoral care of couples. This means that the spiritual conditions and formation in faith of each partner must be taken into consideration while preparing them for mixed marriage. Also, both parties should learn more about religious convictions, teachings and practices of the Christian community to which his or her partner belongs. This is to make for better understanding of one another’s faith tradition as well as for building a perfect union of the two²⁴¹. Prayer and Bible study in common as well as other spiritual activities that belong as shared Christian heritage are essential for building their spiritual life daily.

Furthermore, baptism and education of children in Catholic faith require diligence and respect for “the religious freedom and conscience of the other parent, and with due regard for the unity and permanence of the marriage”. With regards to the problem of Eucharistic sharing which may arise during and after the celebration of mixed marriage, the Ecumenical directory prescribes thus: “although the spouses in a mixed marriage share the sacraments of baptism and marriage, Eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional”²⁴².

Mixed-marriages can be regarded as a reflection of the nature and task of ecumenism. According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church: “Difference of confession of faith between the spouses does not constitute an insurmountable obstacle for marriage, when they succeed in placing in common what they have received from their respective communities, and learn from each other the way in which each lives in

²⁴⁰ John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation, *Familiaris consortio*, Rome; 22nd November, 1981, no. 78.

²⁴¹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 149.

²⁴² *Ibid.* nos. 151, 160; laws that guide Eucharistic sharing in mixed marriage are the same with norms of sacramental sharing with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities as stated in the DAPNE (nos. 122-136).

fidelity to Christ. But the difficulties of mixed marriages must not be underestimated. They arise from the fact that the separation of Christians has not yet been overcome. Spouses risk experiencing the tragedy of Christian disunity even in the heart of their own home”²⁴³.

2.2.2 Principles of practical ecumenism

Practical ecumenism is often referred to in Church’s documents as ecumenical cooperation or practical cooperation. Practical ecumenism concerns unity in action or fraternal communion among Christians irrespective of belief system and doctrinal affiliation. Through practical cooperation, Christians from different Churches and Ecclesial Communities who live in a particular region, or at the global level, bear common witness to the gospel of Christian fulfilment of his mission. Ecumenical cooperation considered in the light of Christians’ witness and mission is captured in the encyclical of Pope John Paul II thus: “Cooperation among Christians becomes a form of common Christian witness and a means of evangelization which benefits all involved”²⁴⁴.

Ecumenical cooperation is a practical expression of bond of unity exemplified in the unity of purpose among Christians, and is founded on common faith in Christ’s works of salvation. In ecumenical cooperation, ‘unity of action leads to the full unity of faith’. According to Vatican II: “In these days when cooperation in social matters is so widespread, all men without exception are called to work together, with much greater reason all those who believe in God, but most of all, all Christians, in that they bear the name of Christ. Cooperation among Christians vividly expresses the relationship which in fact already unites them, and it sets in clearer relief the features of Christ the servant ... All believers in Christ can, through this cooperation, be led to acquire a better knowledge and appreciation of one another, and so pave the way to Christian unity”²⁴⁵.

Apart from spiritual and intellectual ecumenical engagements which can take forms of prayers and theological discussions respectively, ecumenical cooperation is charity-based that aims at fostering Christian unity. Therefore, John Paul II writes:

²⁴³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1634; (for further citation: CCC).

²⁴⁴ UUS, no. 40.

²⁴⁵ UR, no. 12.

“relations between Christians ... presuppose, and from now on call for every possible form of practical cooperation at all levels: pastoral, cultural and social, as well as that of witnessing to the gospel message”²⁴⁶.

Furthermore, the Church teaches thus: “when Christians cooperate in studying and propagating the Bible, in liturgical studies, in catechesis and higher education, in pastoral care, in evangelization and in their service of charity to a world that is struggling to realize its ideals of justice, peace and love, they are putting into practice what was proposed in the *Decree on ecumenism*”²⁴⁷.

2.2.2.1 Scriptural basis for practical cooperation

The theological significance of ecumenical cooperation is rooted in the Scriptures. John Paul II explains further the Scriptural foundation upon which practical ecumenical cooperation is built on as a form of Christian witness; and it is as follows: “For Christians this cooperation, which draws its inspiration from the gospel itself, is never mere humanitarian action. It has its reason for being in the Lord's words: ‘For I was hungry and you gave me food’ (Mt 25:35)”²⁴⁸.

Hence, the following Scriptural references are considered as basis for Christian ecumenical cooperation: first, ecumenical cooperation is founded on the mission and actions of Christ; “the spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind, to set free those who are downtrodden” (Luke 4:18), and also, “You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how he went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for God was with Him (Acts 10:38); second, it is grounded on the missionary mandate of Christ to his disciples, “and having summoned his twelve disciples, he gave them authority over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness” (Matthew 10:1).

Division among Christians, especially doctrinal disagreements, presents difficulties in common Christian witnessing. Also this division exercises negative

²⁴⁶ UUS, no. 40; also see *Common Christological Declaration between the Catholic Church and the Assyrian Church of the East*: “L'Osservatore Romano”, 12 November 1994, no. 1.

²⁴⁷ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 161.

²⁴⁸ UUS, no. 75.

influence that limits Christian cooperation. Nevertheless, John Paul II holds thus: “the communion of faith (through baptism) that already exists between Christians provides a solid foundation for their joint action not only in the social field but also in the religious sphere”²⁴⁹.

Therefore, ecumenical cooperation assists in breaking barriers of disunity and encourages search for full communion. Because of many other obvious advantages of ecumenical cooperation, the *Ecumenical Directory* advises thus: “Christians cannot close their hearts to the crying needs of our contemporary world. The contribution they are able to make to all the areas of human life in which the need for salvation is manifested will be more effective when they make it together, and when they are seen to be united in making it”²⁵⁰.

2.2.2.2 Practical cooperation as common witness in charity

Practical ecumenical cooperation is also referred to as ecumenism of charity whereby Christians unite in charity to promote love, justice and peace in the world. Therefore, Catholics are advised to participate actively in ecumenical cooperation as a form of Christian witnessing. They are to engage in “spiritual renewal, action for peace and social justice, education at various levels, economic aid to countries and institutions”²⁵¹. The Roman Catholic Church believes and teaches that it is by building a society that is peaceful, one that is not polarized by polemics and ideology, that Christ’s faithful witness to the gospel of love and charity, through living an example of genuine unity in diversity.

2.2.2.3 Practical cooperation as expression of faith communion

There are no doubts that ecumenical cooperation has already begun in many countries in order to address religious and social questions through different ecumenical forms and structures. This form of cooperation is mostly needed in various developing countries of Africa where poverty level is on the increase; for instance, it is needed in Nigeria.

²⁴⁹ Ibid.

²⁵⁰ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 162.

²⁵¹ Ibid, no. 52.

Christians residing in these developing countries are encouraged to continuously cooperate to form a voice for the voiceless masses, in order to speak against injustice, and to promote love and peace in the society. This kind of cooperation is also necessary, particularly, in different regions ravaged by wars, hunger and homelessness.

Furthermore, Vatican II suggests occasions in social system where Christian cooperation is mostly required, and they are as follows; “where a social and technical evolution is taking place, be it in a just evaluation of the dignity of the human person, the establishment of the blessings of peace, the application of gospel principles to social life, the advancement of the arts and sciences in a truly Christian spirit, or also in the use of various remedies to relieve the afflictions of our times such as famine and natural disasters, illiteracy and poverty, housing shortage and the unequal distribution of wealth”²⁵².

2.2.2.4 Council of Churches and Christian council

For effective and efficient participation in ecumenical cooperation by all Christians residing in a particular region or country, it is necessary to establish ecumenical structure(s) with the purpose of reaching out to all in prayers and in theological discussions, but mostly importantly, to jointly and in charity address social questions. Therefore, practical ecumenical cooperation can take the form of ecumenical meetings, associations, and Christian Council with corporate projects that comprise representatives of different Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities. Structures such as these provide occasions for Christian participants to re-examine their tasks, mission and obligation to the society, and take decisions that can assist in building further cooperation.

Hence, various documents of the Church suggest two possible ecumenical structures or institutions to serve as means to promote ecumenical cooperation, and they are: first, Council of Churches that is to be composed of Churches that formed it; and second, Christian council that is to be composed of Churches, Christian groups and organizations. These and other institutions will enable members to work and pray

²⁵² UR, no. 12.

together, witness and render service in common, as well as engage in dialogue in order to overcome divisions²⁵³.

Catholics are required to actively participate in ecumenical cooperation in accordance with norms and principles of the Church's ecumenical engagements, and in accordance with the directives of bishops' conference of their country. In doing so, the conference of bishops must ascertain that the life, mission and purpose of the Council and/or institution(s) are compatible with the teaching of Roman Catholic Church.

Hence, Catholics have to be clarified on the doctrinal and ecclesiological structure on which the Council is founded: that is, it must be certain that these Council of Churches and Christian Councils as collective bodies do not assume ecclesial character with authority to confer sacramental ministry, and that they do not aspire to metamorphose into a Church²⁵⁴.

2.2.3 Principles of doctrinal ecumenism

Through all ages God reveals himself and his divine purpose to men and women of faith. Divine revelation reached perfection in his Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:1-2), and through the Holy Spirit, he grants humanity grace to grow in faith and deeper understanding of his revelation. According to the Second Vatican Council's dogmatic constitution on Divine revelation, *Dei Verbum*: "in His goodness and wisdom God chose to reveal Himself and to make known to us the hidden purpose of His will (see Eph. 1:9) ... by this revelation then, the deepest truth about God and the salvation of man shines out for our sake in Christ, who is both the mediator and the fullness of all revelation"²⁵⁵.

There are two major sources of Roman Catholic doctrinal teaching and principles; the sacred Scriptures and sacred tradition. The relationship between the two is defined thus: "Both of them (the sacred Scriptures and sacred tradition) flow from the same divine wellspring (God through revelation) ... for sacred Scripture is the word of God inasmuch as it is consigned to writing under the inspiration of Holy Spirit, while sacred tradition takes the word of God entrusted by Christ, the Lord and the Holy Spirit, to the apostles and hands it on to their successors in its full purity, so that led by the

²⁵³ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 166.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid*, nos. 164; 168-170.

²⁵⁵ DV, nos. 2, 4-5.

light of the Spirit of truth, they may in proclaiming it preserve this word of God faithfully, explain it, and make it more widely known”²⁵⁶.

Through the teaching authority of the Church, the *magisterium*, she transmit faithfully all that has been handed on. In exercising this authority, the Church does not claim to have attained, absolutely, to the fullness of divine truth. And for this reason, the Church believes thus; “as the centuries succeed one another, the Church constantly moves forward toward the fullness of divine truth until the word of God reach their complete fulfilment in her”²⁵⁷.

Therefore, the Church is in constant journey towards the fullness of truth in Christ. This fact is substantiated by W. Kasper who writes: “The Church is the people of God, on the way, in the faithful assurance and absolute certainty that they are being held in the truth, nevertheless recognizing that they are also on the way, being led ever more deeply into the truth which has been revealed once for all”²⁵⁸. This is the basis of doctrinal ecumenism and, particularly, theological dialogue which is not only an exchange of ideas but an exchange of spiritual gifts as the Holy Spirit leads all to the complete truth (Jn. 16:13).

2.2.3.1 Dialogue and ecumenism.

Dialogue is an essential element of human communication which takes place in an atmosphere of friendship. It is an exchange of ideas and of gifts, and through it, all parties are enriched by self-giving and receiving²⁵⁹. Also by means of dialogue, reconciliation and self-realization are possible. Dialogue does not diminish the identity of one party in favour of the other, but recognizes and acknowledges ‘the Otherness’. Therefore, it is through dialogue that the same truth which cannot be fully expressed in one formula is recognized in different forms and formulae as complementary truth²⁶⁰.

Dialogue between persons promotes human dignity because, according to John Paul II; “the capacity for dialogue is rooted in the nature of the person and his

²⁵⁶ Ibid, nos. 7, 9-10.

²⁵⁷ Ibid, no. 8.

²⁵⁸ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, p. 169.

²⁵⁹ UUS, no. 28; LG, no. 13.

²⁶⁰ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, p. 171.

dignity”²⁶¹. Furthermore, Vatican II’s declaration on religious freedom teaches thus: “Truth is to be sought after in a manner proper to the dignity of the human person and his social nature. The inquiry is to be free, carried on with the aid of teaching or instruction, communication, and dialogue. In the course of these, people explain to one another the truth they have discovered, or think they have discovered, in order to assist one another in the quest for truth. Moreover, as the truth is discovered, it is by a (free) personal assent that individuals are to adhere to it”²⁶².

Hence, while ecumenical dialogue does not mean that Churches and Ecclesial Communities should abandon their identity, on the other hand, it does not also encourage doctrinal indifferentism and/or doctrinal relativism. Rather, according to W. Kasper: “In ecumenical dialogue we discover the truth of the other as our own truth. So, through ecumenical dialogue the Spirit leads us into the whole truth; he heals the wound of our divisions and endow us with full Catholicism”²⁶³.

Therefore, the aim of ecumenical dialogue is not conversion from one Church to another, but conversion of all Christians to the truth of the gospel of Christ. It is based on these aforementioned arguments that five dimensions of ecumenical dialogue, enunciated by John Paul II, are discussed in this context and they are: dialogue of truth, dialogue of conscience, dialogue of conversion, and dialogue of charity.

2.2.3.1.1 Dialogue of truth

Dialogue of truth means that every ecumenical dialogue is characterized by common quest for truth which aims at gaining deeper knowledge and just appreciation of the teachings and religious life of all participating Churches as means for the attainment of visible unity²⁶⁴. This requires openness and ability to discern the truth by careful study of the Scriptures.

²⁶¹ UUS, no. 28.

²⁶² UUS, no. 32; cf. Second Vatican Council, *Declaration on Religious Freedom, Dignitatis humanae*, 7th December, 1965, nos. 3; (for further citation: DH).

²⁶³ W. Kasper, *That They May Be One; the Call to Unity*, p. 169.

²⁶⁴ UUS, nos. 32, 33.

2.2.3.1.2 *Dialogue of conscience*

Dialogue of Conscience means openness and “receptivity to new dimensions of understanding of gifts of God’s grace”²⁶⁵. It acknowledges truth revealed by God as what forms the conscience of Christians and inspires commitment to Christian unity.

2.2.3.1.3 *The dialogue of conversion*

Dialogue of conversion provides opportunity for re-examination of conscience, and interior conversion from sins committed against the unity of the Body of Christ, both as individuals and as community of believers. This is necessary in ecumenical endeavour because according to John Paul II, it is “not only personal sins must be forgiven and left behind, but also social sins, which is to say the sinful ‘structures’ themselves which have contributed and can still contribute to division and to the reinforcing of division”²⁶⁶.

Furthermore, John Paul II explains: “dialogue cannot take place merely on a horizontal level, being restricted to meetings, exchanges of points of view or even the sharing of gifts proper to each Community. It has also, primarily, vertical thrust, directed towards the one who, as the Redeemer of the world and the Lord of history, is himself our Reconciliation. This vertical aspect of dialogue lies in our acknowledgment, jointly and to each other that we are men and women who have sinned. It is precisely this acknowledgment which creates in brothers and sisters living in communities not in full communion with one another that interior space where Christ, the source of the Church's unity, can effectively act, with all the power of his Spirit, the Paraclete”²⁶⁷.

2.2.3.1.4 *Dialogue of charity*

Dialogue of Charity requires that disagreement among Christians in matters of faith should be addressed in the spirit of fraternal Charity, that is, “of respect for the

²⁶⁵ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 115.

²⁶⁶ UUS, no. 34; "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:8-9).

²⁶⁷ *Ibid*, no. 35.

demands of one's own conscience and of the conscience of the other party, with profound humility and love for the truth”²⁶⁸. In dialogue of charity, the Sacred Scriptures and the living tradition of the Church are points of reference. And dialogue of charity requires that every genuine quest for full communion must be based on love for the truth sought by the spirit of humility and charity.

Explanations given to these various aspects of ecumenical dialogue – dialogue of truth, dialogue of conscience, dialogue of conversion, and dialogue of charity – can be summed up with reference to the declaration made by Pope Francis and the Patriarch, Bartholomew I. According to this declaration, ecumenical dialogue is understood thus: “not mere theoretical exercise, but an exercise *in truth* and *love (charity)* that demands an ever deeper knowledge of each other’s traditions in order to understand them and to learn from them. Thus we affirm once again that the theological dialogue does not seek a theological lowest common denominator on which to reach a compromise, but is rather about deepening one’s grasp of the whole truth that Christ has given to his Church, a truth that we never cease to understand better as we follow the Holy Spirit’s promptings ... Such a common pursuit does not lead us away from the truth; rather, by an exchange of gifts, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, it will lead us into all truth (Jn 16:13)”²⁶⁹.

2.2.3.2 *Theological and doctrinal dialogue*

Theological and doctrinal dialogue require equal consideration of all doctrinal matters in mutual respect for the doctrinal formulations of participating Churches. According to Vatican II: “The way and method in which the Catholic faith is expressed should never become an obstacle to dialogue with other brethren. It is, of course, essential that the doctrine should be clearly presented in its entirety. Nothing is as foreign to the spirit of ecumenism as a false irenicism, in which the purity of Catholic doctrine suffers loss and its genuine and certain meaning is clouded”²⁷⁰.

²⁶⁸ Ibid, nos. 36, 39.

²⁶⁹ *Common declaration by Pope Francis and the ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, in Jerusalem on Sunday, 25th May, 2014*; this marked 50th anniversary of the meeting between Pope Paul VI and the Patriarch Athenagoras in 1964.

²⁷⁰ UR, no. 11; cf. UUS, no. 36.

2.2.3.2.1 Relationship between unity and truth against false irenicism

False irenicism refers to situations of dialogue in which the essence and meaning of (Catholic) doctrine is either lost or clouded. This can neither achieve nor contribute to enduring visible unity of the Church, because false irenicism is not founded on genuine dialogue of truth and dialogue of charity, but based on surrender or abandoning of one's own faith convictions to the detriment of truth.

To avoid or overcome false irenicism in doctrinal dialogue, the relationship between 'unity' and 'truth' must be emphasized and established. What this means is that in the search for visible Christian unity, the primacy of the truth of divine revelation cannot be compromised, but upheld. One of the most outstanding problems and difficulties faced by the Catholic Church during theological dialogue with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities arise when she emphasizes to establish the relationship between *unity* and *truth*, without compromise either or two of them.

Apart from false irenicism, another extreme is to 'short circuit' the process of ecumenical dialogue by emphasizing a particular Church's doctrine as norm, and to reject or refuse to accept any other objective truth beyond the boundaries of one's belief. According to J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs: "Any (Christian) unity which might result from such a truncated process would be vitiated by superficial reconciliation and would not represent the unity of the Church that God wills, a unity founded upon the reality of faith"²⁷¹.

These two extremes – false irenicism and 'short circuit of truth' – must be avoided in ecumenical dialogue. Rather, all principles that guide ecumenical (doctrinal) dialogue aim at genuine search for visible unity, based on objective search for content of revealed truth in its richness. Therefore, John Paul II explains thus: "full communion of course will have to come about through the acceptance of the whole truth into which the Holy Spirit guides Christ's disciples. Hence all forms of reductionism or facile "agreement" must be absolutely avoided. Serious questions must be resolved, for if not, they will reappear at another time, either in the same terms or in a different guise"²⁷².

²⁷¹ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 118.

²⁷² UUS, no. 36.

2.2.3.2.2 *Priority of hierarchy of truth*

From thence, the Church teaches: “When comparing doctrines with one another, they (Catholics) should remember that in Catholic doctrine there exists a ‘hierarchy of truths’, since they vary in their relation to the fundamental Christian faith. Thus, the way will be opened by which through fraternal rivalry all will be stirred to a deeper understanding and a clearer presentation of the unfathomable riches of Christ”²⁷³.

While consideration of truth according to its hierarchy is necessary, the content of truth cannot be discussed and received in fragmented manner. Full, visible communion can only be attained by the acceptance of the whole truth as revealed by God through Christ²⁷⁴. This does not imply that all the Church’s doctrines as contents of revealed truth have to be discussed in one dialogue. Rather, it means that, as theological dialogue proceeds in stages, each doctrine or revealed content of truth discussed and agreed upon, cannot be received in parts, but must be wholly accepted by all parties involved.

2.2.3.2.3 *Objective considerations of various doctrinal formulations*

In most cases, during theological dialogue, theologians are faced with doctrinal formulations that are different from those used in their own Christian communities: that is, where a particular doctrine is expressed or formulated differently by different Churches and Ecclesial Communities. According to John Paul II, thorough and objective considerations of such doctrinal formulations often reveal that they are “two ways of looking at the same thing”. The ecumenical commission, therefore, has the responsibility “to find the formula which, by capturing the reality in its entirety, will enable us to move beyond partial readings and eliminate false interpretations”²⁷⁵.

For the above mentioned reasons, it is also necessary for all parties involved in ecumenical dialogue to clearly express their doctrinal formulations and make it transparent to the truth which they intend to communicate. It means that ambiguous formulations which might stall ecumenical process must be clarified.

²⁷³ UR, no. 11.

²⁷⁴ UUS, no. 36, 37.

²⁷⁵ Ibid, no. 38.

In some cases, the truth which has been enunciated by doctrinal formulations in previous epochs, faces problem of vague interpretations in a given (recent) epoch because of the changing conception during the era in question. Thus, such formulations require detailed and further clarifications to be understood.

Hence, John Paul II reaffirms the suitability, for all generations, of the Church's dogmatic formulations as follows: "As far as the formulation of revealed truths is concerned... Even though the truths which the Church intends to teach through her dogmatic formulas are distinct from the changeable conceptions of a given epoch and can be expressed without them, nevertheless it can sometimes happen that these truths may be enunciated by the sacred *magisterium* in terms that bear traces of such conceptions. In view of this, it must be stated that the dogmatic *formulas* of the Church's *magisterium* were from the very beginning suitable for communicating revealed truth, and that as they are, they remain forever suitable for communicating this truth to those who interpret them correctly"²⁷⁶.

2.2.3.2.4 *The necessity of good will and sense of realism*

Doctrinal dialogue requires good will and realism which are to be guided by the principle of charity. To achieve a more realistic theological dialogue based on truth and charity, Vatican II enjoins Catholics as well as participants from other Churches and Ecclesial Communities to study adequately in order to understand the respective doctrines, spirituality, Church history, liturgical life, and the religious psychology of their dialoguing partners²⁷⁷. With proper knowledge of these aspects of one another's Christian life, faith and traditions, Catholics are expected to avoid, "expressions, judgments and actions which do not represent the condition of our separated brethren with truth and fairness"²⁷⁸.

Furthermore, John Paul II instructs thus: "It is necessary to pass from antagonism and conflicts to a situation where each party recognizes the other as a 'partner'. When undertaking dialogue, each side must presuppose in the other a desire for reconciliation, for unity in truth. For this to happen, any display of mutual

²⁷⁶ UUS, no. 38; cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Declaration in Defence of Catholic Doctrine on the Church against Certain Errors of the Present Day, Mysterium Ecclesiae*, Rome, June 24th, 1973, no. 5; (for further citation: ME).

²⁷⁷ UR, no. 9.

²⁷⁸ *Ibid*, no. 4.

opposition must disappear. Only thus will dialogue help to overcome division and lead us closer to unity”²⁷⁹.

Therefore, mutual trust and confidence is the bedrock of all theological and doctrinal dialogue. As pilgrims journeying alongside one another towards the realization of visible unity, Pope Francis advised all Christians to eschew “all suspicion or mistrust, and turn our gaze to what we are all seeking: the radiant peace of God’s face”²⁸⁰.

There are many advantages of theological dialogue when it takes place in religious spirit with distinctive presentation of theological teachings of all participants. In such circumstance all Christians gain truer knowledge of the faith and religious life of other Churches or their ecumenical partners²⁸¹. For this reason, it is necessary to educate those engaged in dialogue more on various aspects of sacred theology, particularly, from ecumenical point of view²⁸².

When dialogue texts reach the stage of institutional action by the Holy See, ‘official reception’ remains a key to its outcome. For instance: (1) The Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission final report (ARCIC 1, 1982-1991) is said to have reached consensus stage, not merely a convergence text. Its goal is the restoration of full communion. (2) The Lutheran World Federation-Roman Catholic Joint Declaration on Justification by Faith (JD-1998); it has provided a context from theological dialogue to ecclesial action.

2.2.3.3 *Receptive ecumenism*

Reception and assimilation of the different doctrinal and moral formulations into the life of the Church are important aspects of ecumenical dialogue. The spirituality of ecumenism makes it imperative that reception of these formulations follows the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Receptive ecumenism is considered as spiritual attitude of Christians while they strive after full ecclesial communion²⁸³.

This implies that the outcome, consensus or agreed statements of bilateral commission that are produced through several ecumenical dialogue are considered as

²⁷⁹ UUS, no. 29.

²⁸⁰ Pope Francis, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii gaudium*, Rome, 24th November, 2013, no. 246; (Further citation: EG).

²⁸¹ UR, no. 4.

²⁸² Ibid, no. 10.

²⁸³ J. Gros, & Co. *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 125.

common heritage which requires the overall consent of the both Christian-dialoguing partners as members of people of God.

Receptive ecumenism as a process by which all ecumenical partners study, accept and assimilate the outcome of theological dialogue is not only the concern of theologians and clergy within the participating Churches. It is the responsibility of all Christians to follow the proceedings of the dialogue, and to accept the outcome as common heritage.

According to John Paul II: “While dialogue continues on new subjects or develops at deeper levels, a new task lies before us: that of receiving the results already achieved. These cannot remain the statements of bilateral commissions but must become a common heritage. For this to come about and for the bonds of communion to be thus strengthened, a serious examination needs to be made, which, by different ways and means, and at various levels of responsibility, must involve the whole people of God. We are in fact dealing with issues which frequently are matters of faith, and these require universal consent, extending from the bishops to the lay faithful, all of whom have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is the same Spirit who assists the *magisterium* and awakens the *sensus fidei*”²⁸⁴.

To buttress these facts further, Gros, McManus, and Riggs write: “In Catholic understanding, reception can be circumscribed as a process by means of which the people of God, in its differentiated structure and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, recognize and accept new insights, new witness of truth and their forms of expression because they are deemed to be in line of the apostolic succession and in harmony with the *sensus fidelium* of the Church as a whole. Because such witness of new insights and experiences are recognized as authentic elements of apostolicity and Catholicity, they basically aimed at acceptance and inclusion in the living faith of the Church ... In its full form, reception embraces the official doctrine, its proclamation, the liturgy, the spiritual and ethical life of the faithful, as well as theology as systematic reflection about this complex reality”²⁸⁵.

It is the responsibility of the college of bishops to ensure that all aspects of Christian life participate in the process of reception, and that the reception process engages various Church disciplines: liturgy, pastoral care, Church law, morals, and forms of piety, and *kerygma*. This means that all segments of the Church’s life must be

²⁸⁴ UUS, no. 80.

²⁸⁵ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 126.

actively involved in receptive ecumenism: “the theologians by means of their research activities, the faithful by means of their preserving fidelity and piety, the ecclesial ministries and especially the college of bishops with its function of making binding decisions. One can also say that ministry and charism, proclamation and theology, magisterial ministry and sense of faith of the people, all act together in the reception process”²⁸⁶. This is because every agreed statements produced through theological dialogue have intrinsic impart in the entire life of the Church.

This notwithstanding, the process of receptive ecumenism does not imply that statements of bilateral commissions have been accepted as standard doctrinal formulations with binding force or as norms of faith. Rather, “these statements (of bilateral commissions) are not binding on the Catholic Church until they are approved by the competent ecclesiastical authorities”²⁸⁷; and when necessary, promulgated.

Hence, John Paul II states: “This process (receptive ecumenism), which must be carried forward with prudence and in a spirit of faith, will be assisted by the Holy Spirit. If it is to be successful, its results must be made known in appropriate ways by competent persons ... The Church's teaching authority is responsible for expressing a definitive judgment”²⁸⁸.

2.2.3.4 *The goal of ecumenical dialogue*

The achievements and consensus reached during ecumenical-theological dialogue cannot remain an invisible endeavour or achievement solely on printed materials, but must be expressed visibly and in organic manner. Therefore, the common goal of ecumenical dialogue is to achieve visible unity of the Church that is expressed in the common celebration of the Eucharist.

This truth points to the spiritual orientation of every ecumenical-theological dialogue as observed by Gros, McManus, and Riggs thus: “The goal of ecumenism is to render the Church more Catholic and to demonstrate how the Church can be an inclusive community that reaches out to people everywhere”²⁸⁹.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

²⁸⁷ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 178.

²⁸⁸ UUS, no. 81.

²⁸⁹ J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 124.

Nevertheless, the unity of the Church can neither be reduced to nor be equated with mere goal and target. It cannot also be associated solely with spiritual or invisible unity in contrast with the diversity of the Churches. According to John Paul II, “the Church’s unity is a gift of God – manifested in the visible, historical, temporal, institutional, in short, bodily Church – (intrinsically) belonging to the Church herself, here and now ... this gift needs to be received and developed ever more profoundly”²⁹⁰.

Therefore, full communion as divine gift and as intrinsic nature of the Church is essentially sacramentally manifested in the Eucharistic celebration. It also requires visible expression in a ministry in which all bishops and the faithful are united in Christ as sign of *Koinonia*²⁹¹.

2.3 Progress and difficulties in Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations

After about four centuries of theological and doctrinal dissension, starting from the second half of the twentieth century the religious relationship between the Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion took reconciliatory turn with aura of hope and optimism. The historic visit of Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Michael Ramsey to Pope Paul VI in 1966 initiated the journey for reconciliation of the two Churches; and this is inspired by the prayer of Jesus Christ in John 17:23.

Since the ultimate goal of this initiative was to re-establish full, visible communion between Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion, the meeting between the then Archbishop and the Pope led to renewed desire for partnership and ecumenical co-operation between the two Churches.

Vatican II’s decree on ecumenism acknowledges unique relations between Roman Catholics and Anglicans thus: “among those in which Catholic traditions and institutions in part continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place”²⁹². This unique relations of real, but imperfect communion is grounded on the following ecclesial elements: common faith in the Trinitarian God; common baptism; shared belief in the content of the holy Scriptures as necessary for salvation; profession of faith articulated in the Apostle’s and Nicene Creed; Chalcedonian definition and the

²⁹⁰ John Paul II, Apostolic letter: *Novo millennio ineunte*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2001, no. 48; (for further citation: NMI).

²⁹¹ UUS, no. 97.

²⁹² UR, no. 13.

teaching of the Fathers; and common Christian inheritance with living traditions of liturgy, theology, spirituality, common witness and mission²⁹³.

2.3.1 Progress in Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical dialogue

Theological dialogue is considered as an important aspect of ecumenical partnership and co-operation between these two Churches. The importance of ecumenical dialogue necessitated the establishment of “Anglican-Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission” (ARCJPC). This commission met three times between 1967 and 1968 and produced *Malta report*. The first “Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission” (ARCIC) was created in 1969. It conducted its activities from 1970 to 1982. The second phase (ARCIC II) lasted from 1983 to 2011. While the third phase (ARCIC III) lasts from 2011 till present time.

In the year 2000, ARCIC II endorsed the establishment of “International Anglican—Roman Catholic Commission on Unity and Mission” (IARCCUM). IARCCUM is a commission of 13 pairs of Anglican and Roman Catholic bishops from around the world. It was established solely to find ways for the implementation of Substantial Agreements reached and submitted by ARCIC.

IARCCUM began its meetings in 2002. In 2007 it produced its report titled; *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*. This report summarizes nine Agreed Statements of ARCIC. Through the report, Anglicans and Roman Catholics are required to discover together how the ministry of the bishop of Rome, as universal primate, which is in accordance with Christ's will, might be offered and received in order to assist the two Communion to grow towards full, ecclesial communion and truth²⁹⁴.

After about fifty years of ecumenical encounter, the relationship between the two Churches have recorded achievements in theological discussions and dialogues, through the instrumentality of various ecumenical commissions: ARJPC, ARCIC I, II, and III, and IARCCUM. For instance, ARCIC I's theological discussions on

²⁹³ *Common Declaration between Paul VI and Archbishop Donald Coggan*, on 29 April, 1977, no. 2.

²⁹⁴ *Anglican—Roman Catholic International Commission*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anglican%E2%80%93Roman_Catholic_International_Commission, accessed on 8th January, 2017.

'*Eucharistic Doctrine*' (1971) and '*Ministry and Ordination*' (1973) are considered as 'significant milestone'.

ARCIC I *Clarifications* (1993) on these subjects are also "judged by the Roman Catholic Church to have greatly strengthened agreement" in many ways²⁹⁵. To address disagreement on the theological understanding of 'Authority in the Church', ARCIC I produced two statements on the theme: '*Authority in the Church*' I and II, (1976, 1981). These have helped both Communion to recognize convergences on the subject matter²⁹⁶.

Furthermore, the ARCIC II theological dialogue on '*Salvation in the Church*' (1986) re-echoes *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine on Justification* between the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation in 1999. No consensus have been reached on this subject matter, and there are also no official responses from both the Roman Catholic and her Anglican counterpart.

In addition, ARCIC II dialogue on *The Church as Communion* (1991) is drawn from ARCIC I's final report on the Church as *Koinonia*. Other theological discussion of ARCIC II are as follows: *Life in Christ* (1994) which focuses on ethical teaching; *The Gift of Authority* (1999) which elaborates the ARCIC I's discussions on *Authority in the Church* and emphasizes the universal ministry of primacy in the Church; and *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ* (2005) that substantiates Anglican-Catholic common understanding of Blessed Virgin Mary²⁹⁷.

Drawing from these theological discussions, the two Communion have realized that "What unites us is much greater than what divides us"²⁹⁸. As a result of this, the ecumenical journey between the two Communion has taken gradual, but steady steps in accordance with the principle of "unity by stages"²⁹⁹. Since all dialogues of ARCIC have as their goal the full visible communion, this doctoral thesis will further review some theological discussions on the Church as communion. This is to be considered as

²⁹⁵ ARCIC's *Clarifications on aspects of the Agreed Statements on Eucharist and Ministry*. After the clarifications, Cardinal Edward Cassidy, on March 11, 1994, observed that 'no further study seems to be required at this stage'. Anglicans have not officially responded to the *Clarifications*.

²⁹⁶ IARCCUM, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission: Building on 40 Years of Anglican -Roman Catholic Dialogue*, 4th October 2006, no. 2; (for further citation: *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*).

²⁹⁷ Walter Kasper, *Address at the Lambeth Conference, section I on Overview of Relations in Recent Years*, Lambeth Conference, July 30th, 2008.

²⁹⁸ UR, no. 3.

²⁹⁹ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 10.

synthesis of principles guiding doctrinal and spiritual ecumenism as enunciated by the IARCCUM.

2.3.1.1 Anglican-Roman Catholic agreed principles of Church as Communion

The origin of communion is traced to the very beginning of creation: God created humanity in his image and likeness, and thus, established relationship of communion with his creation. Through Christ and by the gift of the Holy Spirit, God's relationship with humanity is renewed. (Rom 8:15; Gal 4:4-6). Thus, "it is communion with the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit that constitutes the people of the new covenant as the Church"³⁰⁰.

Therefore, the foundation for Christians' *Koinonia* with one another is *Koinonia* with God in Christ. This *Koinonia* with God in Christ serves the spiritual aspect of communion. Nevertheless, spiritual communion requires visible expression in form of full, visible communion³⁰¹.

Full, visible ecclesial communion, according to God's will, requires active presence and mutual recognition of the essential constitutive elements of Church's life. These essential constitutive elements of the Church, which are also Christ's gifts to his Church, share the same characteristics with elements of Church as Communion.

Thus, elements of Church as Communion are as follows: shared sacramental life; common confession of one faith; and common ministry of oversight that finds full, visible expression by sharing in Eucharist (source and summit of Christian life) – the Eucharist is considered as the effectual sign of *Koinonia*; collegial ministry of oversight (*episcopus*) as what serves the *Koinonia*, and ministry of primacy as 'a visible link and focus of *Koinonia*'³⁰².

It is necessary to note that the mutual recognition of the essential constitutive elements of Church's life which are also elements of Communion does not necessitate precisely the same canonical ordering: diversity of canonical structure is part of the acceptable diversity which enriches the one communion of all the Churches"³⁰³.

³⁰⁰ *Second Anglican/Roman Catholic International Commission on the Church as Communion*, 1991, no. 8; (for further citation: *the Church as Communion*); cf. also Second Vatican Council, *Nostra aetate*, no. 4.

³⁰¹ LG, no. 8; cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Communio in notio*, Rome: 28th May, 1992, no. 4.

³⁰² *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 19.

³⁰³ *The Church as Communion*, nos. 43, 47.

Furthermore, “Full unity (and communion) will come about when we all share in the fullness of the means of salvation entrusted by Christ to his Church”³⁰⁴. The extent of mutual recognition of these essential constitutive elements of the Church determines the degree of the visible communion. The implication is that the communion between two or more ecclesial bodies can be real, but incomplete where some elements of visible communion are lacking.

The Church as sign, instrument and foretaste of communion with God and with all Christ’s faithful is realized and manifested, substantially, in the common celebration of the Eucharist³⁰⁵. This is one of the reasons the Roman Catholic Church, at present, has real, but imperfect communion with Anglican Communion until all the elements of visible communion, which are also essential constitutive elements of the Church, are established.

The communion in the Church is derived from participation of Christ’s faithful in the Trinitarian communion. In the Apostles’ and the Nicene Creed, Catholics and Anglicans profess faith in the Trinitarian God and in the Communion of the saints (*communio sanctorum*). *Communio sanctorum*, according to IARCCUM statement, is thus: “simultaneously, the communion of God’s holy people (*sancti*) and their communion in God’s holy gifts (*sancta*) of word and sacrament”³⁰⁶.

The statement of IARCCUM published on 4th October 2006 gave insight on areas of agreement and disagreement between the two Churches. IARCCUM’s document titled; *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, observed that while Catholics and Anglicans agreed on some areas of the Church doctrine, there are still Catholic doctrinal teachings which Anglicans are yet to come to terms with. For instance, Primacy as God’s will and focus of unity.

2.3.1.2 *Baptism as basic bond of unity and Communion*

Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church believe and jointly accept thus: “they (Catholics and Anglicans) receive one baptism, administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ... in obedience to the command of the risen Lord (cf. Matthew 28.18-20) ... (It is) a sacrament of initiation

³⁰⁴ UUS, no. 86.

³⁰⁵ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 20;

³⁰⁶ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 13; cf. *Salvation and the Church*, nos. 1, 9, 11.

instituted by Jesus Christ, by which we are incorporated into the life of his body, the Church. Baptism is the sacrament of faith, through which a person embraces the faith of the Church and is embraced by it³⁰⁷. Hence, both Churches agree that baptism is basic bond of unity and Communion.

Both Church accept that baptism is received as a sacrament for the forgiveness of sins, including original sin. Thus, Baptism is an “unrepeatable sacrament of justification and incorporation into Christ”; Anglicans and Catholics believe and accept that justification and sanctification are all aspects of God’s action, which require from the believer living faith and love as inseparable virtues. Therefore, baptism is considered as the sacrament of faith that cannot be separable from love and charity³⁰⁸.

Faith is not merely an interior disposition that assents to the truth of the gospel, but living faith expresses itself in good works (James 2:17ff) as fruits of the Spirit. Love, charity and good works are inspired by God’s grace. It is God’s grace that evokes authentic human response of faith in both individual life and in the corporate life of the Church.

In addition to the sacrament of baptism, both Churches accept that through confirmation, which is part of the sacrament of initiation, Christians are endowed with gifts, and strengthened by the Holy Spirit for witness and mission. Therefore, it is through the working of the Spirit that Church’s life is renewed, sanctified and grow in holiness and communion.

2.3.1.3 Eucharist as effectual sign of koinonia

Anglicans and Catholics together acknowledge that the sacrament of initiation as well as communion in the Church reach their completion by full participation in the Eucharist – that is, Eucharist as both a gift and a command from Lord himself (cf. 1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Matthew 26:26-29). They agree that the Eucharist is celebrated as a memorial (*anamnesis*) of the death and resurrection of Christ. Nevertheless, Catholics differ with Anglicans in their interpretations and theological understanding of the Eucharist as a memorial (*anamnesis*).

According to the Catholic teaching, Eucharist is an effectual sacramental proclamation which, through the action of the Holy Spirit, makes present what has been

³⁰⁷ Ibid, nos. 11, 33.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, nos. 11, 34, (1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3.27).

accomplished once-and-for-all. It is the real and true presence of Christ, effectually signified by the bread and wine which, through the action of the Church, become Christ's body and blood. Hence, the visible communion of Church as the body of Christ, established through baptism, is nourished and expressed in the Eucharistic communion when Christians receive the body and blood of Christ³⁰⁹. The Eucharist, therefore, is an effectual sign of *Koinonia*.

2.3.1.4 Relations between Eucharist and ministry in service of koinonia

Both Churches acknowledge intimate link or relations between Eucharist and Ministry. They agree that the threefold ordering of the ministry of bishop, presbyter (priest) and deacon are God's will to nurture and strengthen communion in the Church, and to continue the teaching and mission of the apostles. Therefore by ordination, bishops and priests share in the unique priesthood of Christ.

According to the statement of IARCCUM, "The act of ordination is a sign of the apostolicity and continuity of the Church. It is a sign of God's fidelity to the Church and of the Church's intention to be faithful to the apostles' teaching and mission"³¹⁰. The act of ordination "ensures the historical continuity of this Church with the apostolic Church and of its bishop with the original apostolic ministry"³¹¹.

The two Churches also accept that participation in ordination, which is unrepeatable, endows the ordained with the responsibility to minister to Christ's faithful by word and sacraments, while the ordination of bishops confers on them the responsibility of oversight. The oversight function entrusted to bishops is to maintain communion in the Church and to ensure that the fidelity of the apostolic faith is transmitted to the next generation in its purity³¹². The oversight function of bishops is also an expression of communion. Hence, collegiality of bishops is exercised in service of communion of the Church.

Since 1896 when Pope Leo XIII, in his Apostolic Letter, *Apostolicae curae*, ruled out the Anglican Orders based on the question of validity, doubts on the validity of ordination and ministries in the Anglican Communion remain a fundamental obstacle

³⁰⁹ *Eucharistic Doctrine*, no. 6; *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 37, 39, 40-41

³¹⁰ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission* nos. 50, 52-53; cf. *Ministry and Ordination*, no. 14.

³¹¹ *Ministry and Ordination*, nos. 14, 16.

³¹² *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 55; cf. *Church as Communion*, no. 45.

to the recognition of Anglican ministries by the Catholic Church. ARCIC I's theological discussions on *Eucharist and Ministry* provide grounds for re-evaluation of Anglican Orders from the point of view that "there is evidence that we have a common intention in ordination and in the celebration of the Eucharist"³¹³.

Although common intention in ordination and in the celebration of the Eucharist is not substantial ground to establish communion between the two Churches, the validity of ordination has to be established or rectified as it is directly linked to the Eucharistic celebration. And both Eucharist and ministry occupy significant place in the establishment of full, visible Communion.

Because of the intimate link and relations between Eucharist and ministry, mutual recognition and reconciliation of these ministries between the two Churches are necessary for common understanding, celebration and sharing of the Eucharistic table. Because of the necessity of Eucharist in nourishment and strengthening of communion in the Church, mutual recognition of ministries in the Church are inevitable for full, visible communion to be achieved between the two Churches.

Nevertheless, although Anglicans and Catholics acknowledge that there is an intrinsic relationship between sharing the Eucharist and full ecclesial communion³¹⁴, each of the two Churches adopts different approaches to sharing Eucharistic table with non-members of her Church.

It is very important to note that substantial agreed statements produced by ARCIC on some theological and doctrinal issues, for instance, the Eucharist and Ministry, do not suffice to establish full, visible unity. These Substantial Agreed Statements from ARCIC and IARCCUM do not also mean that Catholic Church has formally and officially recognized Anglican Orders. Neither do they mean that Anglicans can freely share the table of the Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church. For these reasons, many theological and doctrinal matters need to be clarified, mutually agreed upon and accepted as article of faith by both Churches.

For instance, Anglican tradition is still deficient in theological understandings and interpretations of the Eucharist, with particular reference to the concepts of memorial and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist; Anglicans believe that at Eucharistic celebration, the 'bread and wine' become the 'body and blood' of Christ only in symbolic way and not in the real and effectual sense. The intimate link between

³¹³ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 60.

³¹⁴ *Ibid*, nos. 45, 46.

the Eucharist and ministry means that without formal recognition of Anglican Orders, for Anglicans to participate and share in the Eucharist celebrated in the Catholic Church requires further discussions and dialogues.

Presently, the Catholic Church regards Eucharistic sharing with those that are not yet in full ecclesial communion with her as something exceptionally limited to particular cases of spiritual need. Hence, Catholic faithful are not yet permitted to receive Holy Eucharist from those Churches that are not yet in full ecclesial communion with her. On the other hand, Catholic clergies are not permitted to concelebrate the Eucharist with ministers of non-Catholic Churches whose ministries have not been officially recognized by the Roman Catholic Church³¹⁵.

On the other hand, Anglican provinces regularly admit to communion baptized non-Anglicans Christians who are communicant in other Christian communities. In certain circumstances, Anglicans permit Eucharistic sharing with other Churches where there is sufficient agreement in faith and commitment to shared Christian life.

2.3.1.5. Primacy as visible sign of unity and koinonia

The ministry of oversight has both collegial and primatial dimensions. Primacy and collegiality are complementary aspects of oversight whereby the bishop of prominent see, for the sake of universal communion, exercises a distinctive ministry of unity as the first among equal of all bishops. Thus, he, as the primate, acts as the focus of unity and Communion.

In as much as Catholic and Anglican affirm that the visible link, sign and focus of unity and *koinonia*, is the ministry of universal primacy; nevertheless, many Anglicans seek clarification on the nature and jurisdictional consequences of ‘universal primacy’. Therefore, many national and regional Churches of Anglican Communion are yet to accept the statement of IARCCUM which says: “The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the ministry of the Bishop of Rome as universal primate is in accordance with Christ’s will for the Church and an essential element for maintaining it in unity and truth”³¹⁶.

As regards communion in local Churches, both Churches agree that bishops have the responsibility to assist the faithful to understand and practice the faith as means

³¹⁵ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 104, 122-123, 129-133.

³¹⁶ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 23,70, 71.

to safe-guard fidelity to the apostolic teaching. Therefore, they have vital role to teach and maintain the truth, discern error, as well as preserve communion in accordance with the Scriptures and apostolic tradition. By taking counsel together the episcopal college discern and articulate the *sensus fidelium*. This is because, “for the nurture and growth of this communion, Christ the Lord has provided a ministry of oversight, the fullness of which is entrusted to the episcopate”³¹⁷.

Communion in the Church is certain by mutual collegiality of bishops which is both synchronic and diachronic. Synchronic and diachronic are the two dimensions of communion in the apostolic tradition. In its synchronic principle, collegiality requires each bishop to be in communion with all other bishops and with the faithful. Its diachronic principle refers to the apostolic succession, which means an unbreakable relationship of episcopate from one generation to another. It also means the transmission of gospel from one generation to the next.

According to ARCIC II statement on *Gift of Authority*: “The ministry of the bishop ... serves communion within and among local Churches. Their communion with each other is expressed through the incorporation of each bishop into a college of bishops. Bishops are, both personally and collegially, at the service of the communion”³¹⁸. Therefore, no bishop or local Church can be said to be self-sufficient.

Common profession of faith (by Apostles’ Creed), in one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church, establishes fundamentally, the visible communion of the Church with apostolic tradition; apostolic tradition presents the content of faith as the truth of Christ transmitted through the apostles. Therefore, Roman Catholic Church teaches that through the apostolic tradition, “succession in the episcopal ministry is intended to assure each community that its faith is indeed the apostolic faith, received and transmitted from apostolic times”³¹⁹. Therefore, apostolicity of the Church, whereby the Church is in close and constant link with apostolic teaching and traditions, is referred to as communion at the horizontal level.

The fullness of Catholicity and Oneness of the Church, therefore, is discovered in the apostolicity: It is the apostolicity that unites the Church, past and present, in one Eucharistic fellowship of men and women of every race and culture, in every

³¹⁷ *The Church as Communion*, no. 45; cf. *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 66.

³¹⁸ ARCIC II, *Gift of Authority*, (Authority in the Church III) Agreed Statement, 3rd September, 1998, no. 37.

³¹⁹ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 26, 31, 34.

generations and place. In addition to ordination, the validity of ministry is also derived from the apostolicity of the Church.

According to the ARCIC statement; it is in the apostolicity and Catholicity that, “varieties and diverse gifts and graces which God bestowed on the Church to sanctify his people, do not lead to division, but result in communion with God in Christ. This explains the inter-connectivity between the apostolicity, Catholicity, unity (oneness), communion and holiness of the Church. Hence, the holiness of the Church is derived from and reflects the mission of the Spirit of God in Christ, which is made known to all generations through the apostolic teaching”³²⁰.

2.3.1.6 Divergences in Anglican and Catholic theological formulations

Despite unique relations between the two Churches, the journey to full, visible communion is hampered by differences in the interpretations and practice of Christian faith and morals. According to the *Malta Report* of 1968: “Divergences since the sixteenth century have arisen not so much from the substance of this inheritance as from our separate ways of receiving it. They derive from our experience of its value and power, from our interpretation of its meaning and authority, from our formulation of its content, from our theological elaboration of what it implies, and from our understanding of the manner in which the Church should keep and teach the faith. Further study is needed to distinguish between those differences which are merely apparent, and those which are real and require serious examination”³²¹.

There are divergences between the two Churches on the teaching authority of the Church which is based on Scripture and tradition. The teaching authority of the Church also plays the role of transmitting the faith and receives the acceptance of the *sensus fidelium*.

Przemysław Kantyka clarifies the nature of the divergence between Anglicans and Catholic as regards the authority of the Church’s teaching as follows: “Nevertheless, at this point a divergence occurs in the approach to the authority of the Church’s teaching. Anglicans perceive Church’s teaching as authoritative only if approved by the *sensus fidelium* of the community of the faithful. Catholics see the

³²⁰ *The Church as Communion*, nos. 33-34, 40-41.

³²¹ *Malta Report: Report of the Anglican-Roman Catholic Joint Preparatory Commission*, Malta: 2 January 1968, no. 3, 4; (for further citation: *Malta Report*).

same otherwise: ‘any teaching is proclaimed because it is true’, and not ‘it is true only if proclaimed’. Although as Anglicans and Catholics accept the indefectibility of the Church’s teaching, the Anglicans would rather see it limited to the fundamental truth of the faiths, which is not easily accepted according to the Catholic position”³²².

Another divergence on the teaching authority of the Church is the doctrine of infallibility. According to Catholic teaching, the doctrine of infallibility means thus: “in specific circumstances and under certain precise conditions, those with a ministry of oversight, assisted by the Holy Spirit, can come to a judgment regarding matters of faith or morals which is preserved from error”³²³.

On the other hand, Anglicans have continued to question the divine right, the jurisdiction and the infallibility ascribed to the Petrine ministry as exercised by the bishop of Rome. Anglicans believe that the truth is maintained solely by fidelity to the Gospel, the creed, sacraments and ministry, and not by other means like the jurisdiction and the infallibility of Petrine ministry.

Divergent theological teachings between the two Churches that require further clarification include the following: the binding authority of ecumenical councils, the infallibility of the teaching office of the Church, and relationship between local and universal in the life of the Church.

On relationship between local and universal, because of the confederated nature of Churches within the Anglican Communion, Anglicans need to re-define the following: the relationship between regional and national structures, between collegial and synodical meetings, and the role of the laity-in-councils and synods of the Church. Although Catholics and Anglicans agree on the interdependence of local and universal Church, Anglicans believe that it is only at the provincial level that binding decisions are taken³²⁴.

The two Communion have continuously engage in theological-doctrinal dialogue in order to distinguish between divergences which are merely apparent, and those which are real and require serious examination. In the common declaration between Pope Francis and His Grace, Justin Welby, they clarify the subject matter thus:

³²² Przemysław Kantyka, *Autorytet w Kościele (Authority in the Church): Dialog katolicko-anglikański na forum światowym*, Lublin: Wydawnictwo KUL, 2004, p. 147.

³²³ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 5, 76.

³²⁴ *Ecclesiological Reflections on the Current Situation in the Anglican Communion in the Light of ARCIC. Report by the ad hoc sub-commission of IARCCUM presented to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Most Rev. Rowan Williams and to the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Cardinal Walter Kasper, 8th June, 2004, no. 15.*

“These differences...cannot prevent us from recognizing one another as brothers and sisters in Christ by reason of our common baptism. Nor should they ever hold us back from discovering and rejoicing in the deep Christian faith and holiness we find within each other’s traditions. These differences must not lead to a lessening of our ecumenical endeavours”³²⁵. Hence, both Churches have to be committed to work for that unity in truth for which Christ prayed.

With emergence of new questions in Anglicanism on the priestly and episcopal ordination of women, and the episcopal ordination of persons living in active homosexual relationship, there seems to be further obstacles and challenges ahead of the realization of the goal of full, visible communion between Anglicans and Catholics. These create stumbling blocks for the two Churches to mutually recognize one another’s ministry and authority, and consequently to share in one Eucharistic communion. Details of this obstacles are discussed below.

2.3.2 Challenges and obstacles to full communion

From the later part of the twentieth century, new challenges and obstacles to the ecumenical relations between Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Communion emerged. There arose in some Churches of Anglican Communion the episcopal ordination of priest in an active homosexual relationship, the introduction of rite for blessing of same sex couples in the diocese of New Westminster and in the Anglican Church of Canada, as well as priestly and episcopal ordination of women.

These challenges constitute obstacles to full, visible Communion. These challenges constitute also complicate ecumenical relationships between the two Churches and even up to relations among regional Churches within the Anglican Communion. In the statement of IARCCUM titled, *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, the commission elaborates the ecumenical implications of these recent practices thus:“Since this (Mississauga) meeting, however, the Churches of the Anglican Communion have entered into a period of dispute occasioned by the episcopal ordination of a person living in an openly-acknowledged committed same-sex relationship and the authorization of public Rites of Blessing for same-sex unions. These matters have intensified reflection on the nature of the relationship between the

³²⁵ *Common Declaration of Pope Francis and His Grace, Justin Welby*, Rome; 5th October 2016.

Churches of the Communion. The Anglican Communion has acted to address these difficulties, notably through the *Windsor Report* of 2004³²⁶. It is noteworthy that Anglicans have looked for the positive assistance of their ecumenical partners including the Catholic Church in this process. In addition, ecumenical relationships have become more complicated as proposals within the Church of England have focused attention on the issue of the ordination of women to the episcopate which is an established part of ministry in some Anglican provinces³²⁷.

2.3.2.1 *Episcopal ordination of women and priests in homosexual relationship*

The first woman to become bishop in Anglican Communion was Barbara Harris. She was ordained in 1989 as the suffragan bishop of Massachusetts in the United States of America. Therefore, between February, 1989 and August, 2017 about 24 women have since been elected to episcopal office across Churches of Anglican Communion. And during the 2006 General Convention, Katharine Jefferts Schori was elected as the 26th presiding bishop and primate of Episcopal Church of the United States of America for nine-year term (2006-2015)³²⁸.

Legislations that authorized the episcopal ordination of women has also been passed in more than 13 Anglican provinces. These legislations and its consequent episcopal ordination of women are adopted and executed in many provinces of Anglican Communion even without consensus of overall member Churches and dioceses within these provinces.

These legislations that authorized ordination of women create obstacles and tension in the practice of episcopal ordination of women among Churches of Anglican Communion. Such legislations have also affected and slowed down the impetus of

³²⁶ Cf. The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity: *Update on Relations with the Anglican Communion* 27th April, 2005: “Faced with major tensions within the Anglican Communion, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr Rowan Williams, established the ‘Lambeth Commission’. This Commission published *The Windsor Report* in October, 2004. Cardinal Kasper was to write a letter as a reflections on *The Windsor Report*. In February of 2005, the Anglican Primates endorsed *The Windsor Report*, and reiterated that Anglican Communion’s teaching about human sexuality remains as stated at the Lambeth Conference of 1998, which affirmed traditional Christian understanding of marriage and human sexuality”.

³²⁷ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 6; see also ARCIC, *Salvation and the Church*, no. 1.

³²⁸ *Ordination of Women in the Anglican Communion*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ordination_of_women_in_the_Anglican_Communion, accessed February 9, 2018.

ecumenical discussions between Anglicans and Catholics which hitherto made outstanding progress.

In his address to the Lambeth Conference, on July 30, 2008, Cardinal Walter Kasper observed that there is no consensus agreement among different Churches and provinces of Anglican Communion during and after the legislation before putting into practice the episcopal ordination of women and that of a priest in active homosexual relationship. The lack of consensus agreement raise questions on the validity of authority and has also caused tension within the Anglican Communion.

In recent years, some Anglican bishops have broken communion with other bishops, while some Anglican provinces are not in full communion with the Anglican Communion. Hence, there are proposals from within Anglicanism which are challenging existing instruments of authority in the Anglican Communion³²⁹. Some Anglican Provinces have also failed to apply the ecclesiology set forth in *Windsor Report* because of its vague position on the ordination of women and priests in active same sex relationship. The synodal legislations seem to override the episcopal authority and these has weakened Anglican Communion.

Kasper further argued that the Christian community of the apostolic era was characterized by unity, unanimity and *koinonia*. Therefore, from the ancient tradition, the ministry of oversight was undertaken in communion and collegiality with all bishops of the Church. Hence, he stated categorically as follows: “The episcopal office is thus an office of unity in a two-fold sense. Bishops are the sign and the instrument of unity within the individual local Church, just as they are between both the contemporary local Churches and those of all times within the universal Church ... the decision for the ordination of women to the episcopal office can only be made with an overwhelming consensus, and must not in any way involve a conflict between the majority and the minority. It would be desirable that this decision would be made with the consensus of the ancient Churches of the East and West”³³⁰.

With the practice of priestly and episcopal ordination of women, theological understanding of ministry and authority in Anglicanism took a different dimension. Hence, Anglicans insist that ordination of women is not contrary to the traditional

³²⁹ Walter Kasper, *Address at the Lambeth Conference*, July 30, 2008, section II on *Ecclesiological Consideration*.

³³⁰ Walter Kasper, *Mission of Bishops in the Mystery of the Church: Reflections on the question of ordaining women to episcopal office in the Church of England*, June 12, 2006.

understanding of apostolic ministry, and that there are no theological objection to that³³¹.

This recent development in Anglican theological understanding of ministry introduces new obstacles to mutual recognition of ministry between the Roman Catholic and the Anglican Communions. According to W. Kasper: “ordination of women to the episcopate effectively and definitively blocks a possible recognition of Anglican Orders by the Catholic Church”. The Roman Catholic Church maintains that ordination of women means “turning away from the common position of all Churches of the first millennium ... and from the apostolic tradition”³³².

2.3.2.2 Catholic response to episcopal ordination of women

The Roman Catholic Church with Orthodox and the Oriental Churches still reserve priestly ordination to men alone who serve in the ministerial office of teaching, sanctifying and governing all members of the body of Christ. This tradition of the Church has been maintained starting from the first century of the Church, that is, from the apostolic era, through the patristic epoch to the modern times.

Paul VI mentioned three major reasons for the Church’s decision to reserve priesthood to men alone, and they are: “The Roman Catholic Church holds that it is not admissible to ordain women to the priesthood, for very fundamental reasons. (1) These reasons include: the example recorded in the sacred Scriptures of Christ choosing his apostles only from among men; (2) the constant practice of the Church, which has imitated Christ in choosing only men; (3) and her living teaching authority which has consistently held that the exclusion of women from the priesthood is in accordance with God's plan for his Church”³³³.

³³¹ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 61; cf. *Ministry Elucidation*, no. 5.

³³² Walter Kasper, *Address at the Lambeth Conference on Ecclesiological Consideration*: “The objections of the Catholic Church on ordination of women are of a different kind than the objections raised in the past against the validity of Anglican Orders. Objection raised on the validity of Anglican Orders was concerned with origin and nature of the ordained ministry in Anglican Communion and it is on this that ARCIC reached its substantial doctrinal agreement on ministry. Ordination of women refers to who can or cannot be ordained”.

³³³ Paul VI, *Response to the Letter of His Grace, Most Rev. Dr. F.D. Coggan, Archbishop of Canterbury, concerning the Ordination of Women to the Priesthood*, November 30, 1976; no. 68; in John Paul II, *Apostolic Letter; Ordinatio sacerdotalis, to the Bishops of The Catholic Church on Reserving Priestly Ordination to Men Alone*, May 22, 1994, no. 1; (for further citation: *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*).

In John Paul II's Apostolic Letter, *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*, he notes that non-admission of women to the ministerial priesthood does not suggest any form of discrimination against women, and does not express denial of the dignity of women. Reserving to men alone the ministerial priesthood, and episcopal office in particular, follows the teaching and actions of Jesus Christ who did not confer on his mother, Blessed Virgin Mary, the ministerial priesthood. To be specific, Jesus Christ during his earthly life did not entrust his mother, Virgin Mary, with the mission proper to the apostles.

The reason for non-admission of women to the priestly ordination is based solely on fidelity to apostolic tradition and apostolic testimony as it was handed down in the Church throughout the generations. Furthermore, John Paul II declares: "the Church has no authority whatsoever to confer priestly ordination on women and that this judgment is to be definitively held by all the Church's faithful"³³⁴.

In addition, the Holy Father writes: "In granting admission to the ministerial priesthood, the Church has always acknowledged as a perennial norm her Lord's way of acting in choosing the twelve men whom he made the foundation of his Church (cf. Rv 21:14). These men did not in fact receive only a function which could thereafter be exercised by any member of the Church; rather they were specifically and intimately associated in the mission of the incarnate word himself (cf. Mt 10:1, 7-8; 28:16-20; Mk 3:13-16;). The Apostles did the same when they chose fellow workers who would succeed them in their ministry"³³⁵.

Other official arguments of the Catholic Church against the ordination of women is found in *Declaration on the Question of Admission of Women to the Ministerial Priesthood, Inter insigniores*, by the Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, published on October 15, 1976.

2.3.2.3 Catholic response to ordination of priests in homosexual relationship

The Catechism of the Catholic Church elaborated the Church's position on human sexuality and particularly, homosexuality. In the Catechism, the Church states thus: "Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity (Genesis 19: 1-29; 1 Corinthians 6: 9-10, 12-20; 1 Timothy 1:10),

³³⁴ *Ordinatio sacerdotalis*, nos. 3, 4.

³³⁵ *Ibid*, no. 2.

tradition has always declared that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered. They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved. The number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided. These persons are called to fulfil God's will in their lives and, if they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the difficulties they may encounter from their condition"³³⁶. Although Anglicans may accent to this view of the Catholic Church on homosexual activities which considers it as intrinsic disorder and an acts of grave moral depravity³³⁷, but Anglican differ in offering moral and pastoral advice in decisive circumstances.

2.3.2.4 Ecumenical implications of recent developments in Anglicanism

These new developments in Anglicanism which are not merely of disciplinary issue but touches the essential elements of faith and morals, introduced a twist in Roman Catholic ecumenical relations with Anglican Communion: the development led to the suspension of official talks between the two Churches. Although authorities in the Catholic Church continue to express the Church's desire to maintain the cordial relationship that exists between the two Churches for decades.

Therefore, Pope Francis advices members of these two Churches against abandoning their shared ecumenical endeavours. This is because differences of beliefs and moral practices should neither prevent them from recognizing one another as brothers and sisters in Christ by reason of their common baptism nor blind them from discovering the richness of one another's Christian tradition³³⁸.

The recent developments in Anglican Communion have also threatened the internal cohesion of the Anglicanism which resulted in many Anglicans to seek full communion, both as individual and in corporate capacity, with the Roman Catholic

³³⁶ *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nos. 2357-59.

³³⁷ Resolution 1.10 of the 1998 Lambeth Conference.

³³⁸ *Common Declaration of His Holiness Pope Francis and His Grace Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury*, Rome, 5th October, 2016.

Church. Hence, it became necessary for the Roman Catholic Church to develop pastoral structures to accommodate Anglicans who wish to join the Catholic faith. It is as a result of this that the Catholic Church establishes ‘Personal Ordinariates’, for corporate and individual Anglicans who desire to be in full communion with Roman Catholic Church.

2.3.3 Principles for the establishment of Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans

The document of the Second Vatican Council, *Christus Dominus*, made provisions for special pastoral structures to be established when the Apostolic See judges necessary after consultation with the conference of bishops, to take care of the spiritual needs of Christians of different rites living in territories within the Catholic ecclesiastical jurisdiction of conference of bishops.

According to Paul VI: “where there are faithful of a different rite, the diocesan bishop should provide for their spiritual needs either through priests or parishes of that rite or through an episcopal vicar endowed with the necessary faculties. Wherever it is fitting, the last named should also have episcopal rank. Otherwise the Ordinary himself may perform the office of an Ordinary of different rites. If for certain reasons, these prescriptions are not applicable in the judgment of the Apostolic See, then a proper hierarchy for the different rites is to be established”³³⁹.

2.3.3.1 Norms establishing the Ordinariates

This is further clarified in the *Code of Canon law* which provides thus: “Nevertheless, where in the judgment of the supreme authority of the Church seems advantageous after the conferences of bishops concerned have been heard, particular Churches distinguished by the rite of the faithful or some other similar reason can be erected in the same territory”³⁴⁰.

Such particular Church is erected only by the supreme authority and once “legitimately erected possess juridic personality by the law itself”³⁴¹. It is on this ground

³³⁹ Paul VI, *Decree on Pastoral Office of Bishop in the Church, Christus Dominus*, 28th October, 1965, no. 23 #3; (for further citation: CD).

³⁴⁰ CC, 372, #2.

³⁴¹ CC, 373.

that Pope John Paul in 1986 established Personal Ordinariates to take care of the spiritual needs of the military and those working with them³⁴².

2.3.3.2 Juridical framework for Personal Ordinariates for Anglicans

The Holy See, therefore, provides convenient juridical framework to receive desirable Anglicans into full communion with the Catholic Church. The established personal Anglican Ordinate enable ‘willing Anglicans’ to participate actively and comprehensively as *bona fide* members of the Roman Catholic Church, while still retaining some of their distinctive spiritual and theological patrimony.

Hence, Benedict XVI’s Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus* of 2009, provides general norm and principles for the establishment of personal Ordinariates for Anglicans who seek full communion with the Catholic Church. This document is considered as an expression of goodwill towards Anglicans who seek full communion as stipulated in Vatican II.

It is the responsibility of *Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith* to erect personal Ordinariates (that has the characteristics of ‘Public Juridic Personality’) for Anglicans who seek full communion with the Catholic Church. Personal Ordinariates is to be erected within the confines of the territorial boundaries of a particular Conference of Bishops in consultation with that same Conference. It is also to be governed in accordance with the norms and law of universal Church³⁴³ as well as norms contained in *Anglicanorum coetibus*.

Without excluding the Roman liturgical rite, the Ordinate possesses the faculty to celebrate Eucharist and other Sacraments. It has faculty to celebrate liturgy of hours and other liturgical celebrations according to the liturgical books proper to the Anglican tradition which have to be approved by the Holy See³⁴⁴. The Ordinariates are to be under the supervision of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith.

To maintain collegiality with other bishops of the Catholic episcopal conference, the oversight function for the pastoral care in the Personal Ordinate is by the approval of Roman Pontiff who appoints the Ordinary. Anglican deacons, priests or bishops who

³⁴² John Paul II, Apostolic Constitution, *Spirituali militum cura*, Vatican: 1986.

³⁴³ Benedict XVI, Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus*, Rome; November 4, 2009, section, IV-VI.

³⁴⁴ *Anglicanorum coetibus*, section I-III, nos. 1, 3, 4.

are not impeded by irregularities (cc. 1040-1049) and who fulfil the requisites established by canon law (cc. 1026-1032), may be admitted by the Ordinary as candidates for Holy Orders in the Catholic Church³⁴⁵.

Anglican ministers who are unmarried must submit to the norms of clerical celibacy according to CIC canon 277, §1; while those married ministers of Anglican Communion who desire to be admitted to Holy Orders in the Catholic Church must submit to the norms established in the Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI, *Sacerdotalis coelibatus* (no. 42).

2.3.3.3 General response to establishment of the Ordinariate for Anglicans

Since the promulgation of *Anglicanorum coetibus*, three such Ordinariates have been created: The Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham that covers England, Wales and Scotland was established on 15th January, 2011 with Keith Newton as the first Ordinary; the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of Saint Peter, USA and Canada was established on 1st January, 2012 with the former bishop of Episcopal Church of USA, Jeffery N. Steenson, as the first Ordinary; the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of the Southern Cross, Australia was established on 15th June, 2012, with the western regional bishop of the Anglican Catholic Church in Australia, Henry Entwistle, as the first Ordinary.

Despite the stringent conditions for the admission of Anglican ministers to the Catholic ministerial priesthood in the Ordinariates, many Anglican ministers have embraced Catholic ministry by going through the rigorous process before incardination into full communion with the Catholic Church. This expresses the inner yearning for visible unity by majority of Christians not yet in full, visible communion with the Catholic Church.

The promulgation of the Apostolic Constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus*, and the proposal to establish personal Ordinariate have continued to receive mixed interpretations and reaction from both Anglicans and Catholics. Some consider it as effort by Catholic Church to win Anglican converts, while others welcome the development as positive fruit of many years of theological dialogue between Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church.

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

In the joint statement signed by Archbishop Vincent Gerard Nichols of Westminster and Archbishop Rowan Williams of Canterbury, the two primates acknowledged the establishment and success of Personal (Anglican) Ordinariates as signs of overlap in faith, doctrine and spirituality between the two Communion which is now possible after 4 decades of theological dialogue and Prayers³⁴⁶. The reaction of Church of Nigeria Anglican Communion to the idea of Personal Ordinate for Anglicans will form part of the major discussion in chapter three of this work.

Personal Ordinate is a welcomed development in the Roman Catholic relations with the Anglican Communion, but it is not the ultimate goal of their relations. It is a step in the right direction. It is a sign of the possibility of full, visible communion between the two Churches. It increases optimism in the ecumenical journey. Therefore, the two Churches have not given up on the future benefit of dialogue and in the search for full visible communion.

³⁴⁶ *The Joint Statement by Vincent Gerard Nichols and Rowan Williams: "A Consequence of Ecumenical Dialogue"*, in "L'Osservatore Romano", weekly edition in English, Baltimore: The Cathedral Foundation, 28th October, 2009, p. 20.

CHAPTER 3

APPLICATION OF ECUMENICAL PRINCIPLES IN THE NIGERIAN ANGLICAN-ROMAN CATHOLIC RELATIONS

For about a century after Christianity arrived to Nigeria, the country's religious environment was charged with religious rivalry, competition and antagonism. As already discussed in chapter one, various groups of Christian missionaries were engaged in the evangelization of indigenous people in different parts of the country. But as these missionaries spread the seed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, this good seed of Christian faith grew with rivalry, antagonism and bigotry among different established Christian denominations within the country – a situation that is comparable with the parable of the darnel in Matthew 13: 24-30.

The purpose of the above remarks is not to trivialize or to cast doubt on the credibility of the work of evangelization carried out by these missionaries in Nigeria. In fact, the missionaries worked at the expense of their health and lives, they surmounted many obstacles of primitive culture, unfriendly climate, poor nutrition, health challenges, and faced imminent death as efforts to plant the Christian faith and win souls for Christ.

On the other hand, although present day indigenous Christians in Nigeria, “who grow up believing in Christ, cannot be accused of the sin involved in the separation”³⁴⁷, yet, they have, for over a century, participated actively in various ways to perpetuate this division through indifference and contempt for fellow Christians of other denominations. They have also through self-righteousness, pride, prejudice, bigotry, and distortion or misrepresentation of other Churches' doctrinal teachings and formulations, hindered progress in the journey for full, visible unity of the Church. Therefore, it is

³⁴⁷ UR, no. 3.

imperative on members of all Churches and Ecclesial Communities in Nigeria to work assiduously together for Christian unity.

Discussions in this chapter of the doctoral thesis will centre, mainly, on how basic principles and norms of ecumenism, which are enunciated in chapter two and more in many Church documents, are applied in ecumenical relations between Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria and Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion). Relevant ecumenical structures are identified in the first segment of this chapter as necessary means for the implementation of these ecumenical principles and norms. Therefore, it covers a review of viability, aims and objectives of all ecumenical structures established by the two Churches, particularly, the activities of the joint commission – “the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission”.

The second segment of this chapter considers in details practical application of spiritual ecumenism, doctrinal-dialogue and practical cooperation in the Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical engagements in Nigeria. While discussions in the third segment mention obstacles and challenges to their ecumenical relations. Nevertheless, recommendations are proposed for efficient and effective subsequent relations between the two Churches.

3.1 Ecumenical structures in Nigeria

3.1.1 Early stages of ecumenical consciousness in Nigeria

From the beginning of the twentieth century, Christians in Nigeria became increasingly conscious to form a united front in the work of evangelization: The World Missionary Conference of 1910 held in Edinburgh aroused the consciousness of need for Christian unity among members of Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and mainstream protestant Churches in Nigeria; while the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) gave impetus to Catholics in Nigeria for full participation in ecumenical movement.

3.1.1.1 Ecumenical engagements among protestant Churches in Nigeria

In 1911, the Presbyterian missionaries in Nigeria initiated a conference that brought together Presbyterian, Methodist and Anglican missionaries. The conference

was held in Calabar, southern Nigeria, with the following agenda: “to secure uniformity of discipline within the native Churches founded by different missionary societies, (and) discuss such matters as the relation of the Church to marriage under native law, the baptism of women themselves, Christian women married to polygamous husbands, the definition of spheres of influence in the untouched (missionary) fields”³⁴⁸.

Another major concern of the conference at Calabar was to eliminate denominationism and division among protestant communities and Anglicans in Nigeria. According to the report presented by W. Wilkie on the proceedings of the conference, participants at the conference agreed thus: “We are not here primarily to establish in Africa Presbyterianism, Anglicanism or Methodism or any other ‘ism’, but to preach Christ and to make a lowly place, under the guidance of the Spirit of God”³⁴⁹.

3.1.1.2 Initial participation of Anglicans in ecumenical activities

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) began her initial ecumenical engagement by participating in 1917 conference of protestant Churches that held in Aba (south-east Nigeria). During this conference, major deliberations centred on matters of Church Order and organization, regulations for baptism (infant and adult), marriage (marriage enquiring and full Church members), and some disciplinary measures; such as, suspension from Church benefits (burial, Holy Communion etc). As a follow up to this conference, the 1919 Christian conference which took place in Calabar proposed to all Christian communities in Nigeria (except Catholics) to form membership of united Church.

The outcome of these conferences led to the formation of the Evangelical Union of Southern Nigeria (EUSN) in 1924. In 1929, EUSN metamorphosed into Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN). The establishment of CCN was to enable mainstream protestant Churches, including Anglicans, to form united front against Catholic influence in the mission land of Nigeria. O. U. Kalu explains this fact thus: “The truth remains that it was convened in order to break the Roman Catholic monopoly of the

³⁴⁸ F. K. Ekechi, *Missionary Enterprises and Rivalry in Igboland*; cited in Ogbu. U. Kalu, *The Divided People of God: Church Union Movement in Nigeria 1857-1966*, New York: Nok Publishers Int. Ltd, 1978, p. 4.

³⁴⁹ A. W. Wilkie, *Report of Missionary Conference held at Calabar, November 1911*, p. 76; in C. P. Groves, *The Planting of Christianity in African, 1878-1914*, vol. 3, London: Lutherworth Press 1955, p. 292.

mission fields in Nigeria”³⁵⁰. Furthermore, according to J. Baur: “for Protestants, the ecumenical movement has been restricted to a search for unity among protestant Churches, sometimes as a strengthening bond against the so-called Roman (Catholic) danger”³⁵¹.

In 1947, another missionary conference took place in Onitsha with representatives of Anglicans, Methodists, Presbyterians, and Quakers. But after the meeting of World Council of Churches (WCC) in 1948, the missionary conference of Nigeria received new impetus. Between 1949 and 1964, Presbyterians, Methodists and Anglicans negotiated to form *United Church of Nigeria* (UCN). This proposal received approval in January 1965. The date for the inauguration of UCN was chosen to be on 11th December 1965. The “Deed of Union” (DoU) was to be signed between Anglicans, Methodists and, Presbyterians, at Anglican Girls Secondary School, Broad Street, Lagos on 10 December.

After all the preparations, the inauguration of UCN was stillborn because of internal crisis among Churches concerned. According to E. Ekpunobi, the dream to establish UCN could not be realized for the following reasons: “Lack of clear ideology, inadequate mass education, personality conflict, ethnic sentiments, interdenominational antagonism, etc”³⁵². This means that successful ecumenical endeavour must be based on conscious application of ecumenical principles and norms in charity and in truth.

3.1.1.3 Formation of Christian Council of Nigeria

In 1929, Anglicans, Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, and Salvation Army came together to establish Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) with the following objectives: to create opportunities to foster and express fellowship and unity of Christian Churches in Nigeria; to provide forum for member Churches to co-operate in projects relating to pastoral education, joint ownership of schools, and health institutions; and to connect Christian Churches in Nigeria with the International Missionary Council (IMC) and the World Council of Churches (WCC)³⁵³.

³⁵⁰ O.U. Kalu, *Divided People of God: Church Union Movement in Nigeria 1857-1966*, p. 3.

³⁵¹ J. Baur, *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa: An African Church History*, Kenya: Pauline Publ., 1994, p. 500.

³⁵² *Ibid*, p. 69.

³⁵³ E. Ekpunobi, *We are Closer than We Think: An Analysis of Contemporary Issues in Ecumenism*, Enugu: Rabboni Publ. Int., 2001, p. 69.

The above statements are proves that the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) was actively involved in the activities of CCN from its inception in 1929. But it was after the Second Vatican Council that Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria became fully involved in ecumenical relations with other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities.

Thereafter, Catholics and other Christians in Nigeria jointly participated in ecumenical activities which included: meetings, common prayer, common Bible study, religious and social cooperation, as well as theological conferences and discussions to facilitate Christian unity. Recent ecumenical relations among Christians in Nigeria are focused on application of those principles that promote unity in charity and in truth.

3.1.2 Ecumenical structures for Anglicans and for Catholics in Nigeria

The establishment of Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission (ARCIC) in 1970 was preceded by several global ecumenical conferences and councils: The World Missionary Conference (WMC) of 1910, the meeting of the World Council of Churches of 1948, The Second Vatican Council (1962 to 11965). These conferences and council provided enabling environment for ARCIC to come into existence. ARCIC, on the other hand, set the stage, and provided necessary impetus and theological grounds for Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria to work together.

Hence, authorities of the two Churches in Nigeria acknowledge their mutual responsibility to institute a joint commission as part of their commitments to mission for full, visible unity. But first of all, each of them earnestly established an ecumenical structure for effective representation at the national joint commission. This is in accordance with principles and norms on ecumenism which require that Churches' participation in ecumenical endeavour must be within "ecclesial structures and the discipline appropriate to each of these levels"³⁵⁴.

³⁵⁴ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 26.

3.1.2.1 Ecumenical structures for Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion

3.1.2.1.1 Directorate of ecumenism and inter-faith

The Church of Nigeria's directorate of ecumenism and Inter-Faith (also known as department of ecumenical relations) was established in 2002 by the then Primate, Most Rev. Peter J. Akinola, alongside other departments. The directorate of ecumenism takes charge of theological education and doctrinal matters, mission and evangelism. It is also responsible for the Church's socio-political mission for peace and justice, religious intolerance and empowerment of youths and women. The department organizes training programs for her members in partnership with the International School of Ecumenism in Bossey, Switzerland in order to prepare personnel and experts in ecumenism.

Through this department, the Church of Nigeria maintains effective ecumenical relations with other Christians Churches and with other religions – for instance, Islam and African traditional religion. The current coordinator of Church of Nigeria's directorate of ecumenism is Ven. Dr. Princewill O. Ireoba, who was appointed in December 2011 by Most Rev. Nicholas D. O. Okoh to supervise this department.

Ecumenical engagement of the Church of Nigeria is undertaken to the extent that the interests of the Anglican Communion is not jeopardized or compromised. Hence, it is guarded by principles of “change with changing times, while keeping with changeless principles”, and to “seek unity in the essentials, and practice charity as means in other areas”.

3.1.2.1.2 Church of Nigeria's commitments to ecumenical partners

The ecumenical department has the responsibility to engage other Churches and Christian communities in dialogue in order to be enriched with the knowledge about their beliefs and practices. It is also concerned with the establishment of functional departments of ecumenism at the provincial and diocesan levels. It represents Anglicans at many Christian associations in Nigeria and around the world.

Presently, Anglicans in Nigeria, through department of ecumenism, engage Catholics in the country on ecumenical activities. Both Churches are members of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC). The Church of Nigeria is

also a member of many ecumenical bodies such as the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN), the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

3.1.2.2 Ecumenical structures for the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria

3.1.2.2.1 The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria

As already mentioned in chapter two, the collegiality of the ministry of oversight (*episcopate*) serves the *koinonia*: the college of bishops, with the bishop of Rome as both the primate and, 'visible link and focus of *koinonia*'³⁵⁵, form a sacramental communion. Thus, they carry on the threefold ministry of teaching, sanctifying and governing by which they effect Church unity in sacramental manner³⁵⁶.

Understood in this sense, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) was incorporated on 15th March, 1958. CBCN serves as "the organ of unity, communion and solidarity for over thirty million Catholics, spread across the thirty six states of Nigeria and the federal capital territory. It is the forum wherein the collegiality of Nigerian bishops as successors of the apostles in union with the Pope is expressed, and where the idea of Church as family is witnessed to"³⁵⁷. Through this bond of unity exemplified by the episcopal conference of Nigeria, the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria is able to work, pray, and speak with one voice to promote human dignity, human rights, truth, justice, reconciliation, peace, development in the society and, above all, ecumenical activities with other Christian Churches.

3.1.2.2.2 Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria

The CBCN established the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) as visible symbol of unity for the Catholic Church in Nigeria. The secretariat serves as

³⁵⁵ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 19.

³⁵⁶ *Lumen gentium*, no. 21; cf. J. Gros, E. McManus, and A. Riggs, *Introduction to Ecumenism*, p. 63.

³⁵⁷ *The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria*, <http://www.cbcn-ng.org/>, accessed on 14th January, 2017. According IARCCUM statement: "By taking counsel together and consultation, the episcopal collage ... have vital role of maintaining and promoting the truth, discerning error, as well as preserving and promoting communion in accordance with Holy Scripture and apostolic Tradition. *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 66.

administrative headquarters and coordinating framework of the CBCN. It has the responsibility to implement the decisions of the CBCN in order to facilitate its pastoral work and integral human development. The secretariat is headed by the Secretary General and structured according to the following departments: Department of Pastoral Agents, Department of Church and Society, the Directorate of Communication, Department of Mission and Dialogue.

The department of mission and dialogue co-ordinates and facilitates activities of CBCN in areas of missionary animation, ecumenism, dialogue among Christian Churches and with other religious bodies. The department is linked to many global conferences and commissions on mission and dialogue, especially the relevant Vatican Dicastries. The department is divided into three units of committee: The mission committee; committee on ecumenism; and committee on dialogue.

3.1.2.2.3 Department of Mission and Dialogue

It is the responsibility of the committee on ecumenism and dialogue to promote Christian unity in many areas and at all levels in Nigeria. The committee on ecumenism, through the department of mission and dialogue, organizes ecumenical meetings with other Christian Churches within the country, to provide opportunities for all to study and understand each other's faith and religious world view, to work together in identifying areas of agreement, and to resolve areas of disagreement³⁵⁸. The committee on ecumenism takes charge of ecumenical-theological dialogue with other Churches and Ecclesial Communities that are not yet in full communion with the Catholic Church, as well as interreligious dialogue with Islamic religion in Nigeria.

To promote Christian unity, the CBCN, through committee on ecumenism, encourages and educates all Catholics in Nigeria, "to regard non-Catholics in human and charitable way and establish dialogue with them; socialize with them; and not to discriminate against them, (to) avoid criticizing them; (to) prudently encourage associations that favour ecumenism; (to) have special care for children in mixed marriages".³⁵⁹

³⁵⁸ *The Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria*, <http://www.csnigeria.org/>, accessed on 14th January, 2017.

³⁵⁹ H. O. Okeke, *Milestones in Ecumenism: Evolution in Canonical Legislation in Ecumenical Matters*, Enugu: Think Ltd, 1996, p. 222.

The CBCN prescriptions are in accordance with statements of Vatican II which says: “Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments from our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ, sometimes even to the shedding of their blood”.³⁶⁰

The committee on ecumenism presently coordinates and facilitates ecumenical relations and theological dialogue with members of Church of Nigeria, under the auspices of “National Anglican/Roman Catholic Commission” (NARCC). The committee on ecumenism, as a segment of CSN, organizes interdenominational services and other forms of joint prayer sessions at national and diocesan levels. For instance, the annual week of prayer for Christian unity includes program such as seminars, lectures and joint prayers sessions with other denominations.

The Catholic ecumenical structures in Nigeria are established in accordance with the Catholic principles and norms of ecumenism whereby Vatican II directs episcopal conferences and diocesan bishops, who are entrusted with the responsibility of promoting ecumenical relation with the separated brethren, to establish commissions and secretariats with corresponding norms to guide ecumenical activities within their region and dioceses respectively. They are also officers for ecumenical commission that serve as the animators and coordinate the commission’s activities³⁶¹.

Hence, the directory stipulates as follows: “Each episcopal conference, in accordance with its own procedures, should establish an episcopal commission for ecumenism, assisted by experts, both men and women, chosen from among the clergy, religious and laity. If possible, the commission should be assisted by a permanent secretariat. This commission, whose method of work will be determined by the statutes of the synod or conference, should have a mandate to give guidance in ecumenical affairs and determine concrete ways of acting in accordance with existing Church legislation, directives and legitimate customs and the concrete possibilities of a given region”³⁶². To this effect, the CBCN’s episcopal committee on ecumenism is chaired by Most Rev. Mathew Audu (Bishop of Lafia), while the current director of ecumenism is Fr. Cornelius Omonokhua.

³⁶⁰ UR, no. 4.

³⁶¹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 41; see also nos. 28, 39, 40-44; cf. UR, no. 4; CC, 755.

³⁶² *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 46; see also nos. 44, 47.

3.1.3 Ecumenical relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria

The Second Vatican Council requests all Catholics around the world to take initiatives and reach out in charity to other Churches and Ecclesial Communities in order to work together with them through prayer, dialogue and in charitable work. They are to jointly discover and acknowledge the truth, and thus, strive to overcome division among them. According to Vatican II : “Catholics, in their ecumenical work, must assuredly be concerned for their separated brethren, praying for them, keeping them informed about the Church, making the first approaches toward them. But their primary duty is to make a careful and honest appraisal of whatever needs to be done or renewed in the Catholic household itself, in order that its life may bear witness more clearly and faithfully to the teachings and institutions which have come to it from Christ through the apostles”³⁶³.

Based on these and other similar instructions from Vatican II, the Catholic Church in Nigeria engages other Churches in ecumenical activities. Several initiatives are taken by the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria to establish ecumenical relations with other Churches. Thus, CBCN plays a leading role whereby it provides necessary assistance both in the formation and maintenance of ecumenical councils and commission.

The CBCN promotes the course of ecumenism by the following means: The Catholic secretariat of Nigeria provided administrative headquarters for Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) for 28 years (1976-2004); the formation of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) was the initiative of CBCN. The participation and contributions of the Catholic Church in Christian councils, associations and ecumenical commissions in Nigeria is very significant; the CBCN is both the facilitator and, indeed remains the conscience all ecumenical endeavours.

3.1.3.1 Formation of Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission

After in-depth study of the Malta report and the landmark achievements of ARCIC, Catholics in Nigeria were motivated to establish joint ecumenical commission with Anglicans in the country to take charge of their spiritual activities, theological

³⁶³ UR, no. 4; *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 9.

dialogue and collaboration in social work. The CBCN earnestly provided platform to journey with its counterpart in the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) to heal the old wound of division, and to strive for Christian unity. Therefore, the formation of Nigerian Anglican – Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) was inevitable.

In the year 2000, during an annual public lecture, the Catholic bishop of Umuahia diocese, Most Rev. Lucius I. Ugorji, in his presentation titled *That they may be one*, called for the creation of NARCC, as national ecumenical commission for both Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria. This commission is to study and implement the Malta report, and various statements of ARCIC. Thus he writes: “The Anglican and Catholic bishops of Nigeria should as a matter of urgency form a National Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC), consisting of competent theologians from both Churches, to explore ways and means of implementing the *Malta Report* in the country as well as to study, promote and monitor the reception of and responses to the agreed statements of the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission”³⁶⁴.

L. I. Ugorji in the above statement described the importance as well as responsibilities of NARCC as follows: first, to implement the *Malta Report*; second, to study, promote and monitor the reception of and responses to the agreed statements of ARCIC. These terms of reference remain the major focus of the commission since after its inception. Thereafter, from July 22 to 24, 2003, Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) was inaugurated at the auditorium of Kolping Society of Nigeria in Umuahia diocese.

During the inauguration of NARCC, L. I Ugorji also observed that NARCC should serve as a bilateral commission between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria to facilitate theological dialogue between the two Churches. Nevertheless, he advised thus: “This bilateral theological dialogue between Anglicans and Catholics should not be misconstrued as a ‘clubbing’ together of both Churches (Anglican and Catholic) to the exclusion of other Christian denominations. Indeed, both Churches also have separate bilateral international dialogue with other denominations in effort to work for full, visible unity among Christians”³⁶⁵.

³⁶⁴ L. I. Ugorji, *That They May Be One: Anglicans and Roman Catholics Overcoming their Division*, Enugu: SNAAP press, 2000, pp. 59-60.

³⁶⁵ L. I. Ugorji, *The Origin and Background to NARCC in Nigeria*; cited in C. A. Omonokhua and S. Igbari, (editors) *Proceedings of the Nigeria Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC): the Eucharist*, vol, 1.1, Abuja: Mac Pama, 2010, p. 6. (Further citation: *NARCC Proceedings*).

3.1.3.2 Annual activities of the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission

From inception, NARCC fosters bilateral relationship between the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria and the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) with the goal of visible unity in the Church. The commission has two current co-chairmen, Most Rev. Dr. Matthew Ishaya Audu (Catholic bishop of Lafia) and Most Revd. Dr. Ikechi Nwachukwu Nwosu (Anglican bishop of Umuahia) as well as two current co-secretaries, Rev. Fr. Cornelius A. Omonokhua (Catholic) and Ven. Dr. Princewill O. Ireogbu (Anglican).

NARCC has from 2003 to 2014 held its meetings in different parts of the country: Umuahia (2003), Abeokuta (2004), Jos (2005), Lokoja (2006), Ilesa (2006), Uromi (2007), Calabar (2008), Kaduna (2008), Ekiti (2009), Ilorin (2009), Onitsha (2010), Abuja (2010, 2012), Owerri (2011), Sokoto (2011), Osun (2013), Benin (2014).

Since the year 2003, NARCC organises theological dialogue and discussions annually. Its theological discussions centre mainly on themes contained in the agreed statement of ARCIC. The aim of these discussions is to enable representatives of the two Churches in Nigeria to receive, study and responds to Agreed Statements of ARCIC; and to make further recommendations for final decision by the Holy See and Canterbury.

Through these theological discussions, NARCC educates both Catholics and Anglicans on ecclesial teachings which are common Christian heritage for both Churches. At the same time, the commission provides opportunity for participants to reflect more deeply on theological issues or themes which are still areas of divergence for Catholics and Anglicans.

Themes for theological dialogue at all meetings of NARCC are drawn from subjects which ARCIC has discussed and issued statements on. NARCC decided to carry out its theological dialogue in this manner during its meeting at Ilorin, from 28th to 30th of July, 2009. Based on this decision, NARCC has undertaken discussions on the following themes; the Holy Eucharist, the Church and Salvation, Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church, and Church as communion.

The commission also publish, annually, every proceedings of the theological dialogue for the benefit of all Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria. Such publications enable members of the two Churches to participate actively at every stage of the deliberations, and thus, be carried along in all activities of the ecumenical relations.

With annual publication of the proceedings, every participant, and indeed all Christ's faithful at diocesan and parish level, are properly informed of the theological teachings of their ecumenical partners.

The annual publications of the proceedings by NARCC is in accordance with Vatican II's instructions on ecumenical dialogue; the instruction states: "At these meetings, which are organized in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his communion in greater depth and brings out clearly its distinctive features. In such dialogue, everyone gains a truer knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both Communion³⁶⁶."

The commission also provides ecumenical platform for the two Churches to journey together towards mutual understanding, friendship, and unity, in accordance with the will of God and as response to the prayer of Christ (John 17:21ff). This ecumenical relationship, exemplified in journeying together of the two Churches in Nigeria, is characterized by collaboration and partnership. Its goal is the visible unity in the Church which is understood as God's gift; this divine gift is received through grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit. According to the Church's teaching: "It is the Holy Spirit, dwelling in those who believe and pervading and ruling over the Church as a whole, who brings about that wonderful communion of the faithful. He brings them into intimate union with Christ, so that He is the principle of the Church's unity³⁶⁷."

3.1.3.3 Anglican-Catholic collaboration on socio-political matters in Nigeria

Through the instrumentality of NARCC, the CBCN works in conjunction with its Anglican counterpart in the evangelizing mission "to unite all things in Christ" (Colossians 1:17-20). In all aspects of their ecumenical relations and missionary mandate, Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria are conscious of the peculiarity of religious, political, social and economic conditions in the country: That is, they take into consideration the religious influence of Islam, traditional religions, and Pentecostalism as well as the socio-political impact of unemployment and poverty on the Nigerian populace.

Islam poses a threat to lives of members of all Christian communities, including Catholics and Anglicans. African traditional religions encourage religious syncretism:

³⁶⁶ UR, no. 4.

³⁶⁷ *Ecumenical directory*, nos. 11, 16; UR, no. 2.

That is, its attempts to sway the faith of weak and tepid Christians. As a result of the influence of African traditional religions many Catholics as well as Anglicans slack back and forth while they search for traditional solutions to their daily problems.

Pentecostalism, on the other hand, fish in the troubled waters of division, rivalry and antagonism among mainstream Christian Churches in Nigeria, such as Anglican and Catholic Churches. The aim of Pentecostal communities is to woo members of mainstream Churches to gain new converts, with promises of miracles and solutions to all their spiritual and material problems. With these problems in mind, Christian unity is an imperative option.

At the socio-political and economic level, the bishops of the two Churches, in their joint ecumenical activities, are conscious of the poverty, unemployment, high rate of crime, ethnic and tribal discrimination that militate against unity of the country at large and indirectly affect Christians in their day to day relationship with one another. These facts can be substantiated in the following ways: the impact of poverty and unemployment cause many Christians to compromise their faith and seek cultic means to be rich; and since Catholics and Anglicans are citizens of heaven and also citizens of the Nigerian society, the societal discrimination and rivalry along lines of different political interest, ethnic sentiments and tribal differences heighten and complicate the already existing divisions among Christian Churches, and consequently, slow down ecumenical progress. These and many other factors in the Nigerian society are taken into consideration as authorities of both Churches work and walk towards full, visible unity.

Common prayer is identified as a key and major factor in order to address these obstacles to ecumenical endeavour in a pluralistic society like Nigeria. According to Church's principles and norms on ecumenism: "The particular local context will always furnish the different characteristics of the ecumenical task. What is important is that, in this common effort, Catholics throughout the world support one another with prayer and mutual encouragement so that the quest for Christian unity may be pursued in its many facets in obedience to the command of Our Lord"³⁶⁸.

Furthermore, according to the Second Vatican Council, "Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments from our common heritage which are to be found among our separated brethren. It is right and salutary to recognize

³⁶⁸ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 34.

the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ”³⁶⁹.

3.2 Application of principles of ecumenism in the Nigerian context

3.2.1 Spiritual ecumenism

Discussions on spirituality recall various ways by which the Holy Spirit acts through human agent to perfect God’s created things. This requires man’s obedience and docility to the working of the Holy Spirit. By the grace of the same Spirit, he or she is capable of removing every obstacles, within and around him or her that may impede the free flow of the Spirit of God. Thus, all forms of spirituality requires everyday conversion of heart, devotional prayer, works of charity, meditation on the word of God and participation in the Church’s sacraments.

In all, repentance and continuous conversion is the basis of spirituality. The sin of division, though was committed years before Christianity arrived to Nigeria, has been perpetuated among Christians in the country through human pride, selfishness and prejudice. Therefore, Lucius I. Ugorji writes: “In our country (Nigeria) sins of pride, selfishness, rivalry, suspicion, indifference, distortion, prejudice, distrust, jealousy, etc. have helped to keep members of both Churches from one another and have at times contributed to deepening the wound of separation”³⁷⁰. Hence, starting point of ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria is marked by conversion of heart and holiness of life.

3.2.1.1 Conversion of heart

Both Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria look beyond theological dialogue and various forms of collaboration in social matters to overcome vices that prolong and deepen the wound of division among them. They are encouraged daily to “share in spiritual activities and resources, that is, to share that spiritual heritage they have in common in a manner and to a degree appropriate to their present situation”³⁷¹.

³⁶⁹ UR, no. 4.

³⁷⁰ L. I. Ugorji, *That They May Be One*, p. 52.

³⁷¹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 25.

Since genuine ecumenical movement is rooted in Trinitarian unity and providence, all Christians rely on divine grace and on prayers to truly confess one faith and maintain fraternal harmony of the children of God³⁷². Hence, through the impulse and grace of the Holy Spirit, Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria have realized that the process to remove obstacles such as pride, selfishness, rivalry, suspicion, indifference, prejudice, distrust, and jealousy, which have perpetuated division among them for over a century, must basically, begin from “mutual confession and mutual pardon for the sin of division”. Mutual confession and pardon is a necessary conditions (*conditio sine qua non*) for their ecumenical relations to advance³⁷³.

3.2.1.2 *Mutual confession and mutual pardon*

The principle of mutual confession and mutual pardon for sins of division, or sins against unity, was proposed by Lucius I. Ugorji as an imperative for all ecumenical bilateral or multilateral relations in Nigeria. Mutual confession requires individuals as well as each corporate Christian communities to acknowledge that in many ways (by words, actions and omission) they have, in attempt to defend and protect the integrity their Church’s faith, tradition and heritage, widen the gap that separates one Christian tradition from another, and thus, deepened the wound of division initially inflicted on the mystical body of Christ during the era of reformation.

Mutual confession of sins also require a given Church to acknowledge, in humility, those doctrinal formations and structures in Ecclesial Communities that lack, in essence, the truth of the divine revelation, and which also deviate from the true teaching of Christ. It demands all Christians to express contrition for wilful distortion of the doctrinal teachings of other Christian Churches and denominations with the intention to malign, without seeking in sincerity and openness of heart the truth contained in the doctrinal teachings of those Churches concern.

On the other hand, mutual pardon requires Catholics, Anglicans, and in fact all Christians to forgive one another for all forms of calumny and humiliations received in the practice of their Christian beliefs and traditions. It means to accept one another as brothers and sisters, and as members of one body of Christ, who share the same

³⁷² UR, no. 2.

³⁷³ L. I. Ugorji, *That They May Be One*, p. 52.

patrimony and Christian heritage through faith and baptism, while still working for actualization of visible unity in the Church.

Mutual pardon entails mutual understanding and respect for other Church's faith convictions. It is motivated by charity, humility and openness in order to acknowledge the truth found in other Christian communities. This requires the grace of the Holy Spirit that is certainly obtained for all believers through Jesus' prayer (John 17:21). It is a form of witnessing, to fellow Christians, of the divine forgiveness made available to humanity through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; it is *missio ad intra* where Christians witness to fellow Christians of the great Trinitarian love, mercy, love and unity.

The principles of 'mutual confession and mutual pardon' are being propagated by both Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria at the national, diocesan, and parish level. They also form part of themes for common prayer session, theological meetings, conferences, workshops, seminars, retreats and formation. Several spiritual and social gatherings are organized to improve cordiality among Christians.

To state the obvious, in the recent past and within the last three decades, the relationship between Catholics and Anglicans have greatly improved from what it was at the inception or advent of Christianity in Nigeria. Although, it is not yet perfect, as there are still many unresolved theological matters, like Eucharistic sharing and mixed marriages. Catholics and Anglicans in many parts of Nigeria have gradually adopted the lifestyle of mutually accommodating one another's beliefs and Christian practices, even when they do not share the same convictions and norms of faith.

Hence, members of both Churches pray together occasionally and share other spiritual resources together (Holy Scriptures, worship, etc.). The teaching of the Vatican II have great impact in the recent days and renewed attitude of relation among Christians. This is with particular reference to the following statements of the Council: "There can be no ecumenism worthy of the name without a change of heart. For it is from renewal of the inner life of our minds, from self-denial and an unstinted love that desires of unity take their rise and develop in a mature way. We should therefore pray to the Holy Spirit for the grace to be genuinely self-denying, humble, gentle in the service of others, and to have an attitude of brotherly generosity towards them"³⁷⁴. This change

³⁷⁴ UR, no. 7, 8.

of heart, public and private prayer for the unity of Christians merit the name of spiritual ecumenism.

3.2.1.3 Common prayer

Common prayers and other spiritual fellowship are crucial and vital aspects of spiritual activity in Catholic-Anglican relations in Nigeria. For instance, the Catholic Church with the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and some other Christian denominations in Nigeria severally engage in common prayer session and interdenominational services, particularly, during the annual week of prayer for Christian unity (that is, from 18th January to 25th January of every year).

At moments such as that, seminars, lectures and common prayer sessions are organized jointly between Catholics and Anglicans at all levels of the Church's structure. On some occasions, Catholic faithful and Anglicans jointly take part in non-liturgical worships, such as, morning prayers, vespers, special vigils, Bible weeks etc, but these mainly take place at the national and diocesan level³⁷⁵.

For many years, spiritual activities with other Christian Churches are effectively organized at the national level by the Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) under the supervision of the CBCN. The week of prayer is also an annual event in all dioceses in Nigeria. But at the parish level, it is rarely a joint program between Catholics and Anglicans, and it is left at the discretion of the parish priest. Therefore, parish participations in spiritual ecumenism is not yet encouraging.

In the past, prejudices that built up over a long period of time hindered common participation in religious activities. It was inconceivable for Catholics, Anglicans and members of other Christian communities to relate with one another at all forms of religious activities. During the early history of Christianity in Nigeria, as mentioned in Chapter one of this doctoral thesis, it was a taboo for Catholics to attend any form of religious activity with members of other Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities; such actions were punishable with severe penance that served as deterrence for other Catholics. It was also the same for members of the Anglican Church who attended Catholic mass, prayer and academic education. It is in this sense

³⁷⁵ P. I. Okonkwo, *Ecumenical Week of Prayer for Christian Unity As Instrument For Cultivation of Global Peace and Social Progress*; cited in L. E. Ijezie, et al., *The Church in Nigeria and Ecumenical Question*, pp. 372-385.

that the common prayer for Christian unity and other forms of ecumenical worship between Catholics, Anglicans and other Christian communities have made deep and positive impact in the relationship among Christians in Nigeria.

Common prayers and other spiritual fellowship have been very effective in healing the old wounds of division, and in building bridges among Christians in Nigeria. They also helped to overcome prejudices, and to relieve members of both Churches of the burden of hatred for one another. Presently, Christians in the country cannot hold back to express joy that they are able to pray and worship together as brothers and sisters.

Various forms of spiritual fellowship or ecumenism offers opportunity to thank God and to pray for visible unity. The expression of joy and gladness with members of Catholics, Anglicans and other Churches, singing the hymns and chanting the psalms during the common prayer sessions form an obvious statement that all Christians are eagerly yearning for, and thus, look forward, ultimately, to common Eucharistic celebration as an expression of full, visible unity.

3.2.1.4 Bible sharing

The Holy Scripture is a common heritage for all Christians. Hence, the Church teaches that the Scriptures is “a fundamental bond of unity between Christians, one that holds firm even when the Churches and Communities to which they belong are not in full communion with each other”³⁷⁶. This statement expresses the central position of the Holy Scriptures in all ecumenical endeavours as well as its importance in the movement for Christian unity.

Common study on Scriptural themes is one of the necessary activities that take place in Nigeria during each annual week of prayer for Christian unity. Also during a Bible week, through theological conferences and other activities of the Bible Society of Nigeria (BSN), Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria organize joint theological discussions on themes from the Scriptures.

Activities that promote Bible sharing and Bible study has helped to reinforce the bond between the two Churches. They also serve as veritable means for common witness to the gospel. Bible week and other forms of discussions on biblical themes

³⁷⁶ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 183; CC, 172.

takes place annually at all levels of ecclesial structure. Bible sharing is frequently used at the opening session of gatherings and meetings that comprise of people from various Christian denominations.

Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria has severally made attempts to engage other Christian Churches in joint Bible translation. Between the 1975 and 1985 various groups of Christian Churches, which comprised of Catholics, Anglicans and other protestant Churches of Igbo extraction arranged for joint translation of the New Testament to native Igbo language. The same was the case in other part of Nigeria. But, because of the pluralistic nature of the country, that is, in as much as Nigeria, as a nation, comprises of people from different ethnic groups, tribes, and cultures, with over 200 languages, common translation of the Bible between Catholics and Anglican or with any other Christian community cannot be possible at the national level, except at the provincial or diocesan level where there is homogeneity of culture and language.

3.2.1.5 Reciprocity in sharing of spiritual resources

Most vital and significant dimensions of spiritual ecumenism are common participation and reciprocal sharing in spiritual activities and resources, such as sharing common prayer, joint participation in non-liturgical worship and Bible study. By these means, both Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria express common witness to faith and baptism which they administer and receive in the name of the Trinitarian God, who transforms and unites all things through the power of love.

In this sense, reciprocity is the guiding principle for common participation in spiritual activities and resources. Reciprocal sharing in spiritual activities and resources takes the following procedures: at national and diocesan level, representatives of Roman Catholic Church and Church of Nigeria are selected to form joint committee to draw up plan for ecumenical activities. The committee's duty is to propose time, place (Church, location), forms of prayers, scriptural readings, hymns, and psalms for common spiritual activities. The committee is also to draw up prayer manual containing Bible readings, hymns, psalms and prayers that reflects common tradition and faith professed by both Churches³⁷⁷.

³⁷⁷ Ibid, nos. 109-116, 187.

Furthermore, in its schedule, the committee considers, basically, texts of Christian prayers common to both Churches, such as, the Lord's prayer, Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed, a Trinitarian doxology, and Gloria. Its proposals are subject to the approval of authorities of both Churches. The venue of the spiritual activities is alternated between the Anglican and Catholic Church building, depending on the most suitable for the purpose³⁷⁸.

Generally, joint participation in spiritual ecumenism by which Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria express their common faith and Christian heritage in the spirit of charity intensifies spiritual reconciliation and harmonious growth in Christ³⁷⁹. Irrespective of its benefits, the Church warns against the danger of extreme enthusiasm for Catholic participants in spiritual-ecumenical activities.

According to Vatican II's decree on ecumenism: "Worship in common (*communicatio in sacris*) is not to be considered as a means to be used indiscriminately for the restoration of Christian unity. There are two main principles governing the practice of such common worship: first, bearing witness to the unity of the Church, and second, the sharing in the means of grace. Witness to the unity of the Church very generally forbids common worship to Christians, but the grace to be had from it sometimes commends this practice"³⁸⁰.

3.2.1.6 Sacramental sharing between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria

3.2.1.6.1 Common Baptism

Both Catholics and Anglicans believe that baptized Christians are cleansed from sins (actual and original sin), reborn into new life in Christ as members of his body and as children of God, co-heirs with Christ in God's kingdom. Baptism, therefore, is understood as the basis of ecumenical relations between the two Churches. According to

³⁷⁸ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 137: "Catholic Churches are consecrated or blessed buildings which have an important theological and liturgical significance for the Catholic community. They are therefore generally reserved for Catholic worship. However, if priests, ministers or communities not in full communion with the Catholic Church do not have a place or the liturgical objects necessary for celebrating worthily their religious ceremonies, the diocesan bishop may allow them the use of a Church or a Catholic building and also lend them what may be necessary for their services". Common use of sacred places is possible at the occasion of ecumenical prayer, and non-liturgical worship and this is the practice in Nigeria.

³⁷⁹ UR, no. 8; *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 105, 108.

³⁸⁰ UR, no. 8.

the Church's teaching: "Those who are baptized in the name of Christ are, by that very fact, called to commit themselves to the search for unity. Baptismal communion tends towards full ecclesial communion. To live our Baptism is to be caught up in Christ's mission of making all things one"³⁸¹.

Since baptismal communion tends towards full ecclesial communion, Vatican II presents baptismal communion between Catholics and Anglicans as "real, but imperfect communion". It puts it thus: "For men who believe in Christ and have been truly baptized are in communion with the Catholic Church even though this communion is imperfect"³⁸².

This is why baptism as "sacramental bond of unity" between the two Churches, and indeed all believers in Christ, is wholly directed towards acquiring fullness of life in Christ, and visible unity of the Church. Hence, baptismal communion is expressed in many elements of Christian life; through common prayer and non-liturgical worship, common Bible study and other spiritual activities mentioned above³⁸³.

From the above explanation, it means that members of the Catholic Church in Nigeria and the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) share common belief and conviction in many elements of the sacrament of baptism. The agreed statement of ARCIC elaborates this fact thus: "they (Anglicans and Catholics) receive one baptism, administered with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ... in obedience to the command of the risen Lord (cf. Matthew 28.18-20) ... (as) a sacrament of initiation instituted by Jesus Christ, by which we are incorporated into the life of his body, the Church. Baptism is the sacrament of faith, (love and charity), through which a person embraces the faith of the Church and is embraced by it"³⁸⁴.

Furthermore, the two Churches believe that baptism is, "unrepeatable sacrament of justification and incorporation into Christ"³⁸⁵, by which believers receive forgiveness of actual and original sins. Although the bond of communion shared by both Churches through baptism is yet imperfect, it paves way for closer relationship between them, both as individual members and collectively as a group. Although, between the two Communion there still exist many differences both in doctrinal teachings and practices,

³⁸¹ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 22.

³⁸² UR, no. 3.

³⁸³ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 104,129; UR, nos. 4, 8.

³⁸⁴ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 11, 33.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid*, no. 34; see also *Salvation in the Church*, no. 16; (1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 3.27).

baptismal relationship enables their members to consider one another as brothers or sisters in Christ.

Both Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria believe, accept and practice unrepeatability (as once-and-for-all) of a validly celebrated sacrament of baptism in each of the two Churches. That is, a validly baptized Anglican in Nigeria who wishes to be admitted as a member into the Catholic faith, cannot be administered with another sacrament of baptism in the Catholic Church. The same is the case when a validly baptized Catholic seeks admission into a Church of Anglican Communion in Nigeria.

In the aforementioned cases, the candidate that seeks admission into the Church (either Anglican or Catholic) is not required to receive another baptism in so far as it is ascertained that he or she had earlier received valid baptism in his or her Church (either Anglican or Catholic Church) where he or she was member initially.

Rather, he or she follows the “rite of reception into the Church” which may vary according to Catholic and Anglican tradition, but basically includes: prayers, profession of faith (the Creed) in the Trinitarian God and in One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. The rite of reception also requires candidate(s) in question to be taught, and to accept and believe doctrines as well as other teachings of the Church into which he or she seeks to be admitted, particularly, those that are at variance with his or her former Church.

3.2.1.6.2 Eucharistic Communion

The Second Vatican Council acknowledges the unique relationship which exists between Roman Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion through baptism, thus it states: “among those in which Catholic traditions and institutions in part continue to exist, the Anglican Communion occupies a special place”³⁸⁶. Through this statement the Council basically acknowledges real, but imperfect communion between Catholics and Anglicans that is characterized by the following: common faith in the Trinitarian God; common baptism; shared belief in the contents of the Holy Scriptures as necessary for salvation; profession of faith articulated in Apostle’s and Nicene Creed, the Chalcedonian definition, and the teaching of the Fathers; as well as living traditions of liturgy, theology, spirituality, common witness and mission.

³⁸⁶ UR, no. 13.

While the Council states that Catholic traditions and institutions continue to exist “in part in the Anglican Communion”, it means that Anglican Communion do not possess in its entirety (fullness) all the essential constitutive elements of the Church’s life which also constitute elements of full communion in the Church. These constitute elements of full communion in the Church are as follows: profession the one faith, celebrating the one Eucharist, and apostolic ministry.

Furthermore, the 1983 *Code of Canon Law* explains: “those baptized are fully in communion with the Catholic Church on this earth who are joined with Christ in its visible structure by the bonds of the profession of faith, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical governance”³⁸⁷. Anglicans share real, but imperfect communion with the Catholic Church through baptism and in the profession of faith (Creed). Nevertheless, two major essential constitutive elements of the Church’s life and full communion, that is, the Eucharist and ministry, are not yet mutually recognized by both Churches. The extent of mutual recognition of these essential constitutive elements of the Church, determines the degree of the visible communion³⁸⁸. These are principles upon which ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans in the Nigerian context are based.

Even in the Nigerian context, Catholics and Anglicans differ in their beliefs, theological understanding and interpretation of the mystery and the celebration of the Eucharist. In the Catholic teaching, the Eucharist is celebrated as a memorial (anamnesis) of the death and resurrection of Christ. This means that the Eucharist is an effectual sacramental proclamation, through the action of the Holy Spirit, that makes present that one sacrifice of Christ on the cross accomplished once-and-for-all. The Eucharist is the real presence of Christ effectually signified by the bread and wine which, through the action of the Church, become Christ’s body and blood, in which the entire Body of Christ, the Church celebrate and participate³⁸⁹.

Hence, the visible communion of Church as the Body of Christ, joined through baptism, is nourished and expressed in the Eucharistic communion when believers eat and drink or receive the body and blood of Christ”³⁹⁰. Eucharist, therefore, is an effectual sign of *Koinonia*. To stress the communion aspect of the Eucharist, Vatican II

³⁸⁷ CC, 205.

³⁸⁸ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 20.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid*, nos. 40, 41; *Eucharistic Doctrine*, no. 6.

³⁹⁰ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 39.

states: “in his Church, he (Christ) instituted the wonderful sacrament of the Eucharist by which the unity of his Church is both signified and made a reality”³⁹¹. Therefore, “Eucharistic communion is inseparably linked to full ecclesial communion and its visible expression”³⁹².

On the other hand, Anglicans (Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion) believe and teach that the Eucharistic celebration is just a memorial of the Last Supper understood merely in the symbolic sense, but not as an effectual act of sacrifice. Therefore, in Anglican tradition, the once-and-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross, cannot be repeated; it means that words of the Eucharistic celebration, are metaphorical and symbolic with spiritual reality. In this sense, Anglicans in Nigeria deny the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and consequently, refuse Eucharistic adoration. They hold that the faithful cannot feel or see Christ in the Eucharistic species, bread and wine, but only receive him in faith.

It is in this regard that Vatican II instructs all Catholic faithful thus: “though the Ecclesial Communities which are separated from us (Catholics) ... have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders, nevertheless when they commemorate his death and resurrection in the Lord's Supper, they profess that it signifies life in communion with Christ and look forward to his coming in glory. Therefore the teaching concerning the Lord's Supper, the other sacraments, worship, the ministry of the Church, must be the subject of the dialogue”³⁹³.

Because of the aforementioned reasons, and particularly for the reason of lack of validity of Anglican Orders, the Catholic Church in Nigeria does not, at present, permit Eucharistic sharing or communion with members of Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) and other separated brethren. This is because, the Church directs thus: “in general the Catholic Church permits access to its Eucharistic communion and to the sacraments of penance and anointing of the sick, only to those who share its oneness in faith, worship and ecclesial life”³⁹⁴.

There are still ongoing theological dialogues between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria on theological interpretations of the Eucharist and Eucharistic communion

³⁹¹ UR, no. 2.

³⁹² *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 129.

³⁹³ UR, no. 22.

³⁹⁴ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 129; UR, no. 8; CC. 844, #4.

which shall be discussed in details later in this section under doctrinal ecumenism and dialogue. Suffice it to state that presently, there is no mutual agreement between the two Churches on this matter. And as such, Anglicans in Nigeria are not admitted to Eucharistic communion, and cannot receive communion in the Catholic Church.

On the other hand, Catholics in Nigeria are not permitted to participate in the Anglican Eucharistic communion. These prohibitions covers the following aspects: Anglican members are prohibited from reading the Scriptures during liturgy of the word at Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church; Anglican ministers are prohibited from concelebrating with Catholic priests during Eucharistic celebration; they are prohibited from preaching a homily during Catholic Eucharistic Liturgy; they are prohibited from sharing common Eucharistic table with Catholics at Eucharistic celebration³⁹⁵.

On the other hand, members of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) are willing and open to share Eucharistic communion with members of other Christian Churches if it is ascertain that they have received valid baptism and confirmation in their own Churches. In such cases, when these requirements are fulfilled, candidates in question who, hitherto have received baptism and confirmation, can go through the process of formal reception and begin to participate in Communion or become "communicants". At that stage, the communicants are regarded as full-fledged members.

3.2.1.6.3 Mixed marriages in the Nigerian context

The family as a domestic Church is primarily the place where unity is either fashioned or weakened. This depends on first, the extent to which each of the married couple is willing to balance commitments to the covenant of love, and to his or her Christian faith; second, it depends on how the couple is assisted by the community of faith (the Church) in which they belong in order to nurture their faith in Christ and in

³⁹⁵ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 133-135. "The reading of Scriptures during Eucharistic celebration in the Catholic Church is to be done by members of Catholic Church. On exceptional occasions, and for a just cause, the bishop of the diocese may permit a member of another Church or Ecclesial Community to take on the task of reader". Furthermore: "In the Catholic Eucharistic liturgy, the homily which forms part of the liturgy itself is reserved to the priest or deacon, since it is the presentation of the mysteries of faith and the norms of Christian living in accordance with Catholic teaching and tradition". *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 118; cf. CC. 767.

the one communion of the Church; third, it also depends on their commitments to search for truth in all things³⁹⁶.

In situation of mixed marriage, it is expected that through the common baptism which both married partners receive, and the dynamism of grace which are the characteristic of Christian marriage, couples who celebrate mixed marriage are provided with the basis for unity in their moral and spiritual lives. Therefore, despite the challenges of mixed marriage, there are numerous elements in them that are useful which can be developed both for their intrinsic value and for the contributions they can make to the ecumenical movement³⁹⁷.

As a country in Africa, Nigeria share in the same African cultural and traditional ideology like other countries in her. Thus, African understanding of marriage in connection with extended family ties permeates socio-cultural lifestyle of the people and often complicate relationship in marriages contracted from the Christian point of view.

For instance, in African culture, marriage between two persons (male and female) concerns not only the would-be couple, but every marriage must consider and respect the interest of their immediate and extended family: a man or a woman who wishes to enter into marriage takes into account the overall interest and, particularly, the religious view of his or her immediate and extended families. The situation is more difficult and complicated when families, particularly parents of both partners involved, have attained high degree of commitment in the practice of their Church's faith and tradition. In such cases, there are often clashes of religious interest since parents of each of the partners insist on their own particular Church as where the marriage must be celebrated.

Another factor is the concept of male chauvinism in African cultural practices. In African culture, the general notion of marriage is such that once married, the woman's identity and interest is submerged in her husband's – this is more than losing her surname. Any decision she wants to take or any project she wants to undertake is subject to the approval of the husband, and in special cases, her in-laws.

Interestingly, Christianity, civilization and Western education have transformed the position and rights of women in the family and African society at large, and thus, empowered them to choose any lifestyle in respect of their human dignity. Nevertheless,

³⁹⁶ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 66.

³⁹⁷ *Familiaris consortio*, no. 78; *Ecumenical directory*, no. 145.

the male partner, and in some cases his family, still have the final word in decision making. Hence, in present days in Nigeria actual is the saying: “women have no permanent Church (faith tradition) where they belong until they get married. It is the husbands’ Christian faith (Church) that determines their faith”.

For these reasons, it is difficult for most male partners who are baptized non-Catholics (Anglicans and members of other Christian denominations in Nigeria) to accept to participate in mixed marriages that are celebrated in the Catholic Church with a Catholic female partners. Even when they accept such celebrations in Catholic Church, there are greater risk of forcing Catholic female partners to defect from Catholic faith to assert men’s authority. Hence, most cases in the Nigerian context, where the female partner is a Catholic, her marriage with non-Catholic member, causes great dangers to her practice of Catholic faith.

It is against this background that mixed marriages are considered serious challenge in relationship which involves a Catholic and a member of other Christian communities. Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria have not yet reached any consensus agreement on the celebration of marriages between Catholic and Anglican partners. Each of the two faith traditions differ in many ways in terms of theological teaching and practice concerning Christian marriage: for instance, the Catholic Church adopts mixed marriage to accommodate baptized non-Catholic partner who wishes to enter into marriage with Catholic partner.

On the other hand, Anglicans in Nigeria do not practice mixed marriage: when any member of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, wishes to marry a baptized non-Anglican (in this case, a Catholic), the non-Anglican partner is expected to convert to Anglican faith where the marriage is to be celebrated. If they do not wish to do so, both partners can celebrate their marriage in any other Christian community of their choice, and afterwards, decide which Church they wish to practice their Christian faith; which might not be either Catholic or Anglican Church, but a neutral Christian denomination.

According to Ven. Princewill O. Ireoba, an Anglican clergy: “There is no provision for mixed marriage in any Church of Anglican Communion. Husband and wife are meant to be one in faith. There is no rule, but it is expected that the woman will

follow the husband to his Church or a Church that they both agree. The husband and wife and children should belong to the same Church”³⁹⁸.

Although this Anglican understanding of marriage gives room for Anglicans to easily accept mixed marriage with Catholic partners, and also to be open to embrace entirely the Catholic faith and tradition after marriage, particularly for the reasons of many elements of Christian faith which Catholics and Anglicans share in common. But this is not always the case; it is often practically impossible when the male partner is Anglican. Non-Catholic members, including Anglicans, still entertain the old suspicion of Catholic dominance.

3.2.1.6.3.1 Religious difficulties inherent in mixed marriages

Although many legislations guild couples in mixed marriages to live harmoniously and to respect one another’s Christian beliefs and practices, nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that mixed marriages present difficulties between partners. According to Paul VI: “There are many difficulties inherent in a mixed marriage, since a certain division is introduced into the living cell of the Church, as the Christian family is rightly called. And in the family itself the fulfilment of the gospel teachings is more difficult because of diversities in matters of religion, especially with regard to those matters which concerns Christian worship and education of children. For these reasons, the Church, conscious of her duty, discourages the contracting of mixed marriages, for she is the most desirous that Catholics be able in matrimony to attain to perfect union of mind and full communion of life”³⁹⁹.

According to Paul VI, causes of the above mentioned problems are traceable to the following religious questions that arise in the celebration of mixed marriages: “Nevertheless ... there is often a difference of opinion on the sacramental nature of matrimony, on the special significance of marriage celebrated within the Church, on the interpretation of certain moral principles pertaining to marriage and the family, on the extent to which obedience is due the Catholic Church, and on the competence that belongs to ecclesiastical authority. From these, it is clear that difficult questions of this

³⁹⁸ Ven. Dr Princewill O. Ireoba is the director of ecumenism of the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion).

³⁹⁹ Paul VI, *Apostolic Letter, Motu Proprio: Matrimonia Mixta on Mixed Marriages*, October 1, 1970,

kind can only be resolved when Christian unity is restored”⁴⁰⁰. Therefore, it is with full, visible communion in the Church that these obstacles are surmounted.

The difficulties inherent in mixed marriages are even more complicated in the Nigerian context with increasing number of multifarious and diverse Ecclesial Communities that confer baptism that is doubtful and lack certitude as regards its matter and form. At such baptism, often the intention of the candidates, ministers and the Church cannot be ascertained as rightful intentions. Although Catholic Church recognize validly celebrated baptism in Anglicans, Lutherans, Episcopalians, Methodist, Evangelicals and Eastern Orthodox Churches, in the Nigerian context, it is very difficult to ascertain the veracity of most of baptisms celebrated in Anglican Churches where there are no accurate baptismal records.

Even when baptismal records are available, the major danger of mixed marriage is the possibility of denying the Catholic party the freedom to practice and raise his or her children in Catholic faith; that is, the danger of defection from Catholic faith. Thus, Paul VI writes: “Although the Church somewhat relaxes ecclesiastical discipline in particular cases, she can never remove the obligation of the Catholic party, which, by divine law, namely by the plan of salvation instituted through Christ, is imposed according to the various situations”⁴⁰¹.

Despite difficulties in mixed marriages, when mixed marriages are properly celebrated and lived, they can benefit couples involved to build their Christian faith in the spirit of ecumenism: for instance, when couples continuously invoke the grace of divine union through devotion to daily common prayer and meditation on the word of God; also when couples respect the faith of individual partner in order to understand and enrich themselves in the diversity of their faith, and open themselves to the divine grace that unites all things in Christ; and most importantly, when they keep to the promises they made to each other in marriage and in the declarations, such couples become a sign of Christian communion of life and love.

In spite of all benefits of mixed marriages, they cannot, except in some cases, serve as means to re-establish the Christian unity, because they are consequences of the division among Christians that admit differences in the practice of Christian faith. Thus, many Catholics in Nigeria prefers marriage with fellow Catholics or with non-Catholic partners who entirely accepts to practice Catholic faith.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

3.2.1.6.3.2 Norms for valid celebration of mixed marriages

Irrespective of religious problems inherent in mixed marriages, and since men and women have natural rights to marry and beget children, the Church, through her laws and pastoral concern, makes arrangements to balance observance of principles of divine law with respect for human right to contract marriages.

Thus, to forestall difficulties that may arise from mixed marriages and to safeguard the faith of those concerned, the Church takes certain measures in its celebration; in particular, the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria abides by all norms and laws of the universal Church that guide celebration of mixed marriages.

According to some of these norms, the permission of the competent ecclesiastical authority is required when it is necessary for the Catholic party to enter into marriage with baptized non-Catholic⁴⁰². Such permission is based on moral certitude that the promise made by the Catholic party must be kept; that is, promises to maintain his or her Catholic faith, and to raise the children in accordance with the Catholic faith. These promises take the form of written declaration which the Catholic and the non-Catholic partners for mixed marriages make in the presence of the parish priest. While the non-Catholic party and parents also sign as witnesses. And Catholic and non-Catholic partners are to be instructed on the Catholic teaching concerning the purpose and essential properties of marriage in the Catholic Church⁴⁰³.

Catholics in Nigeria have preference for liturgical celebration of marriages, including mixed marriages⁴⁰⁴. Catholic ministers strictly observe the canonical form for the celebration of marriage, and also ascertain that no other religious celebration of the same marriage takes place in another Church to give or renew matrimonial consent before or after the canonical celebration⁴⁰⁵. The CBCN is yet to approve valid form for

⁴⁰² CC. 1124; without permission from competent authority, marriage is prohibited between baptized Catholic and a member of Church or Ecclesial Community not in full communion with the Catholic Church.

⁴⁰³ CC. 1125 and 1086#2; *Ecumenical directory*, no. 146; clergy and those who assist in pastoral ministry have the responsibility to offer instruction and support for the Catholic party and the couples in mixed marriages to live their faith before, during and after sacramental celebration marriage ceremony.

⁴⁰⁴ *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 160; 125, 130-132; In the liturgical celebration of mixed marriages and within Eucharistic communion the practice is thus; “although spouses in a mixed marriage share the sacraments of baptism and marriage, Eucharistic sharing can only be exceptional”.

⁴⁰⁵ CC. 1127 #1-3; “there is not to be a religious celebration in which the Catholic who is assisting and a non-Catholic minister together, using their own rites, ask for the consent of the parties”; Also because of the growing number of vocation to the Catholic priesthood, there is no need to delegate a lay persons to assist at the celebration marriages as stipulated in CC. 1112 #1.

celebration of marriage with dispensation from canonical form. Thus, local bishops might be reluctant to grant dispensation from the canonical form for celebration of mixed marriages.

3.2.2 Practical cooperation

Practical cooperation is an ecumenical process by which Christians bear common witness to faith and hope in Christ, by working together for the overall good of humanity. Through this means also, they express the cordial relationship that already exists among them⁴⁰⁶. In this regard, the Catholic Church instructs thus; “Christians cannot close their hearts to the crying needs of our contemporary world. The contribution they are able to make to all the areas of human life in which the need for salvation is manifested will be more effective when they make it together, and when they are seen to be united in making it ... Their cooperation can help them to overcome the barriers to full communion and at the same time to put together their resources for building Christian life and service, and the common witness that it gives, in view of the mission which they share”⁴⁰⁷.

3.2.2.1 *Establishment of Christian Association of Nigeria*

Generally, all Christians in Nigeria collaborate in several ways to address socio-political and religious questions that frequently arise as a result of the pluralistic nature of the country. They do so under the umbrella of a national Christian body known as “Christian Association of Nigeria” (CAN). Fortunately, the Catholic Church and the Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) are active participants of CAN. It is through CAN that both Churches carry out their socio-political and religious responsibilities to the Nigerian society as forms of practical cooperation.

There are five main ‘Christian blocks’ that make up CAN and they are: first, Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria (CSN) that has only the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria as a member; second, the Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) that comprises Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), Methodist Church, and Presbyterian Church; third, the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN); fourth, the Organization of

⁴⁰⁶ UR. nos. 4, 12.

⁴⁰⁷ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 162.

Instituted African Churches (OIAC); and fifth, the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) with Fellowship members in Nigeria referred to as Evangelical Fellowship Nigeria (EFN).

Christian Association of Nigeria began on 27th August, 1976. CAN's circumstances of birth were preceded by the meeting of various leaders of the Christian Churches and Ecclesial Communities with the then Nigerian president at Dodan Barracks, Lagos. And afterwards, on that same day, Christian leaders met separately at the Catholic Secretariat, Lagos⁴⁰⁸. Thence, they took a decision to establish a Christian association with representatives of all Christians in Nigeria. Thus, the first meeting of CAN took place at Catholic Secretariat, Lagos; this shows the major role of Catholic Church in the formation and nurturing of CAN.

The Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria continuously plays vital roles both as facilitator and as *conscience* to the association. Catholic roles in CAN are necessary because most leaders of other Churches and Communities who participate in the activities of CAN attempts to use this structure to advance personal interest or gain to the detriment of overall interest and goal of the association. This is often the case when CAN is confronted with ethnic, political and denominational challenges and manoeuvres; on such occasions, the Catholic Church is looked up to for direction both administratively and spiritually.

Hence, between 1976 and 2004, CAN's administrative headquarters was situated at Catholic Secretariat of Nigeria. It was in 2004 that its headquarters was officially transferred to the *National Ecumenical Centre*, Abuja. It was also the Catholic Church that introduced "the Youth Wing of CAN"(YOWICAN), and "the Women Wing of CAN" (WOWICAN), for education and development of youth and for women respectively. The Catholic media centre in Kaduna is also open to all Christians in Nigeria who wish to receive training in modern communication for the propagation of faith.

Catholic commitment and participation at various activities of CAN as well as her partnership with other Christian Churches in the overall human development in Nigeria are parts of her ecumenical responsibilities. She is inspired by the Church's instruction which states thus: "the field of development, which is basically a response to human needs, offers a variety of possibilities for collaboration between the Catholic

⁴⁰⁸ C. O. Williams, *Note on Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)*, Lagos: Fami Commercial works, 2004, p. 1.

Church and Churches and Ecclesial Communities at regional, national and local levels. Such collaboration would include, among other things, working for a more just society, for peace, for promotion of the rights and dignity of women, and for a more equitable distribution of resources. In this sense, it would be possible to provide joint services for the poor, the sick, the handicapped, the aged and all who suffer because of unjust structures of sin”⁴⁰⁹.

The principle guiding the participation of the Catholic Church as a member of CAN is based on the agreement that it is not and will not in future transform or metamorphose into a Church with ecclesial character or elements. This caution on the side of the Catholic Church in Nigeria is in accordance with the directives of the universal Church which states thus: “Councils of Churches and Christian Councils⁴¹⁰ do not in fact contain either within themselves or among themselves the beginning of a new Church which could replace the communion that now exists in the Catholic Church. They are not to proclaim themselves Churches or to claim for themselves an authority which would permit them to confer a ministry of Word or Sacrament. Careful attention should be given to the Council's system of representation and voting rights, to its decision-making processes, to its manner of making public statements and to the degree of authority attributed to such statements. Clear and precise agreement on these matters should be reached before membership is taken upon”⁴¹¹.

In accordance with the above statement, Catholic Church in Nigeria supervised the constitution or guidelines that established CAN, and it explicitly states: “The frequent use of the word ‘Church, Churches, member Churches and Church groups presupposes the fact that CAN is aware that she is basically, fundamentally, intrinsically and essentially a Church-founded organization (that is, comprised of different Churches)”⁴¹².

Also article VII of CAN’s constitution titled; ‘independence and cooperation of member- Churches’ further states: “each member- Church shall be autonomous in the ordering of its internal affairs, but may receive advice from the association, in case of dissension and sharp disagreement within its folds. Notwithstanding the autonomy, each

⁴⁰⁹ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 215.

⁴¹⁰ *Ibid*, no. 166: “Generally, councils and similar institutions seek to enable their members to work together, to engage in dialogue, to overcome divisions and misunderstandings, to engage in prayer and work for unity, and to give, as far as possible, a common Christian witness and service”.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid*, no. 169.

⁴¹² C. O. Williams, *Notes on Christian Association of Nigeria*, p. 9-10.

member- Church shall always be ready to co-operate with the other member- Churches in order to ensure the smooth running of the association”⁴¹³. Hence, members-Churches that make up CAN never discuss or contemplate the ambition to metamorphose the association into a mega or organic Church of Nigeria that will abolish or replace all other denominations and ecumenical groups.

CAN has well established structures that effectively and efficiently administer its Christian responsibilities to the Nigerian society in order to achieve its objectives. First, CAN is structured at four levels of administration: the national level; the state level which functions at the 36 states of Nigeria, including the federal capital territory; the zonal level; and the local government level which is the grass root level that covers all local government areas in Nigeria. Second, each of these levels has functional administrative structure, women wing and youth wing, and encourages team spirit, internal cohesion and collaborative minds among its member-Churches.

3.2.2.2 Christians’ cooperation on socio-political and moral issues

Objectives and mission of CAN are elucidated in article V of its constitution thus:

- a. To serve as basis of response to unity of the Church, especially as contained in the Lord’s prayer: “That they may be one’ (John 17:21);
- b. To promote understanding, peace and unity among the various peoples and strata of the society in Nigeria, through the propagation of the gospel;
- c. To act as liaison committee, by means of which its member-Churches can consult together and, when necessary, make common statements and take common actions;
- d. To act as watch-dog to spiritual, social, political and moral welfare of the nation⁴¹⁴.

These objectives of CAN capture the goal of the association as it concerns ecumenical collaboration on socio-political and moral well-being of Nigerians. Hence, CAN is committed to promoting peace and unity among its member-Churches, and for

⁴¹³ 1991 revised *Constitution of the Christian Association of Nigeria, article VII*; cited in C. O. Williams, *Notes on Christian Association of Nigeria*, p. 11.

⁴¹⁴ *Ibid.* p. 4.

the generality of the Nigerian society as forms of witnessing to the gospel of Christ. It remains a strong voice, and in most cases, alone voice, for voiceless citizens of Nigeria.

CAN acts also as conscience to the Nigerian society and as such its members constantly condemns and takes actions against killing of Christians in the Northern part of Nigeria. CAN has also taken several actions against attempts to register Nigeria as a member of organization of Islamic countries (OIC). In socio-political arena; through its various committees and sub-committees, it participates in election monitoring to eliminate or at least reduce electoral fraud and promote credibility of electoral process.

3.2.2.3 Cooperation on religious activities – pilgrimages to the Holy Land

Other major ways CAN contributes, as association of Christians, to the socio-political and moral well-being of the nation, is by organizing common prayer sessions for Nigeria. On several occasions, particularly during political and religious crisis in Nigeria, CAN organizes prayers and fasting for the country. It also openly condemns government policies and actions that could ruin religious and moral standards of the country; especially when such government policies threaten to undermine Christian principles.

For instance, in 2000, CAN condemned the adoption of *sharia* laws in some states in the northern Nigeria; and in 2006, it fought against incessant violence against Christians which was perpetrated by Muslims in the northern part of the country. In September, 2007, it endorsed a social security plan in Jigawa state, (northern Nigeria) that was promoted by the then governor, Sule Lamido. Generally, CAN has been proactive in fighting for social justice, promoting peace and moral value among the populace.

CAN also contributes to successful Christian participation at pilgrimages. Prior to the establishment of CAN, only Muslims received federal government sponsorship for pilgrimages to Mecca. But as soon as CAN came into existence, its member-Churches collaborate to secure this privilege by which Nigerian federal government sponsor Christians, bi-annually, for pilgrimages to the holy land in Israel. Such pilgrimages help to deepen the faith and spirituality of Christians in Nigeria. They help also to strengthen the bond of unity among Christians, because every visit to the holy land remains all Christians of their common heritage and patrimony, irrespective of denominations where they belong.

During and after these pilgrimages to Israel, many members of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities come to just conviction and appreciation of many teachings of Catholic Church. This helps to overcome those prejudices that have, for many years, sustained division and acrimony among Christian Churches in Nigeria. CAN, in collaboration with the Bible society of Nigeria (BSN) undertakes Bible translation into different Nigerian languages. It also works to produce religious syllabus for colleges in Nigeria. These projects are still ongoing.

3.2.2.4 Cooperation on health-care services

Provision of good and affordable healthcare and education system are among the major concerns of CAN. CAN's objectives on humanitarian and charitable work follow the footsteps of Jesus Christ whose ministry centred on compassion for the suffering humanity. Thus, he fed 5000 and 700 people, cared and healed the sick, raised the dead. The association believes that its role as "watchdog of the spiritual and moral welfare of the nation" must of necessity include every effort to ensure that all Nigerian citizens are provided with reasonable and affordable health-care services⁴¹⁵.

To carry out this mission efficiently, CAN was instrumental in the establishment of "Christian Health Association of Nigeria" (CHAN). Membership of CHAN comprises Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), Churches that make up Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN) and Northern Christian Medical Advisory Council (NCMAC).

One of the objectives of CHAN is to encourage and develop the highest level of healthcare for the people of Nigeria within the frame work of national health policies. CAN's *Memorandum of Understanding* (MoU) with the federal government of Nigeria emphasizes thus: "the supreme importance of ensuring that the (greater) population of our nation consists of those who have sound mind in sound bodies"⁴¹⁶.

3.2.2.5 Cooperation on various issues concerning educational policies

From its inception in 1976, CAN considers formal education program as priority in its mission. For this reason, CAN's first memorandum of understanding (MoU) with

⁴¹⁵ C. O. Williams, *Note on Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)*, p. 5.

⁴¹⁶ *Ibid*, p. 6.

the federal government of Nigeria contains extensive chapter on ‘education’. Its main purpose is to improve the spiritual, moral and academic standard of many institutions of learning across the country. Most of those institutions of learning were established during the missionary era and they are very necessary in building the nation spiritually, morally and intellectually.

It can be recalled here, as already extensively discussed in chapter one of this doctoral thesis, that the priority of the early Christian missionaries to Nigeria was the establishment of academic institutes for the education of all Nigerians. Therefore presently, majority of institutions of learning in Nigeria were built by missionaries of RCM (Catholic), CMS (Anglican), and Methodist mission and CSM (Presbyterian). Although they were forcefully taken over by the federal government of Nigeria in 1970s. What this means is that, before the takeover of those institutes, they were owned and managed by Christian Churches (Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian) who also used them as means of evangelization.

Hence, since over the last three decades, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) and members-Churches of the Christian Council of Nigeria (which includes Anglicans), have continuously engaged both the Nigerian federal and state governments in negotiations for the release, return and handing over of those mission institutes to the original Church-owners. The platform for these negotiations was partly provided by CAN’s memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the federal government of Nigeria on education.

These negotiations so far yielded positive results. Presently and across the country, the ownership of more than fifty percent of those mission institutions of learning have been reverted to their original Church-owners. Those Churches that regains ownership of these mission schools have already started to refurbish the dilapidated structures, and to reinvent the high moral, religious and academic standard, which hitherto was obtainable in those institutions. Since the federal and state government fail to support the refurbishment of school buildings that are returned to Church-owners, it is difficult for many Churches to cope financially in sustaining and running of those schools.

The struggle for the return of mission academic institutes is not the only contribution of CAN and its member-Churches for the improvement of educational sector of the country. Since 1970, that is, after the expulsion of European missionaries

and confiscation of mission academic institutes, many Christian Churches devote much funds to establish new academic institutes for all levels of education.

CAN, as a body, does not own any education institutes, but its member-Churches have established many schools – nursery, primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. CAN's main role is to negotiate for enabling government policies, support and environments for its member-Churches to establish institutes across the country without hindrances and interferences of agencies of federal and state government⁴¹⁷. Recently, when the federal government of Nigeria attempted to expunge religious education from the curriculum of education, CAN, alongside with CBCN, stood against such government policy.

3.2.3 Doctrinal ecumenism – dialogue and formation

As spiritual ecumenism is the soul ecumenism, dialogue is at the heart of ecumenical cooperation. It is through dialogue that members of different Churches and Ecclesial Communities acquire greater knowledge of one another. Therefore, through dialogue, ecumenical partners identify matters of faith and practice which they share in common. Also by means of ecumenical dialogue, they jointly seek to understand underlying causes of their difference and that extent of these differences constitute obstacles to common faith (belief); and they jointly seek ways to overcome those obstacles.

It is by reciprocity and mutual commitment that are guided by authentic charity and search for truth that different parties, through dialogue (in bilateral or multilateral sense), seek to understand and to be understood⁴¹⁸. Therefore, Vatican II states: “At these meetings, which are organized in a religious spirit, each explains the teaching of his Communion in greater depth and brings out clearly its distinctive features. In such dialogue, everyone gains a truer knowledge and more just appreciation of the teaching and religious life of both Communions”⁴¹⁹.

These are primary concerns of the ecumenical dialogue organized by Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) on behalf of Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria. During these dialogues, both parties have opportunities to explain in details,

⁴¹⁷ Ibid, p. 6.

⁴¹⁸ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 172.

⁴¹⁹ UR, no. 4.

and in greater depth, the distinctive features of their Christian faith and traditions, teachings and practices on a subject matter under consideration. These procedures assist both parties to acquire truer knowledge and just appreciation of the teachings and religious conviction of one another.

3.2.3.1 Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission's approach to receptive ecumenism

Receptive aspect of ecumenical dialogue is a fundamental principle employed by NARCC through which the commission centres its dialogue and theological discussion on reception, study, assimilation, and response on various Agreed Statements of ARCIC: such as on, “The Eucharist Doctrine”, “Salvation and the Church” and “The Life in Christ: morals, Communion and the Church”.

The commission adopts this form of ecumenical dialogue following the proposal made by L. I. Ugorji (Catholic bishop of Umuahia, Nigeria) at the inauguration ceremony of NARCC. During his speech, he requested that NARCC, as a bilateral commission between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria, facilitates theological dialogue in two major ways; implementing the *Malta Report* and reception of the Agreed Statements of ARCIC⁴²⁰. Hence, during one of the commission's meeting at Ilorin, from 28th to 30th of July, 2009, it was decided that each of the proceedings would adopt a theme from the ARCIC documents.

Receptive ecumenism, as one of the methods of theological dialogue, enables the commission, which is made up of representatives of the two Churches (Catholics and Anglicans), to jointly monitor the reception of statements of ARCIC, through study, assimilate and response to different doctrinal and moral formulations of the Church's life, with consideration to the peculiar situation of Nigeria as an entity. Thus, the outcome or statements of ARCIC as a bilateral commission are received as a common heritage that requires overall consideration of all Catholics and Anglicans in all dioceses in Nigeria.

John Paul II explains the importance of receptive ecumenism thus: “while dialogue continues on new subjects or develops at deeper levels, a new task lies before us: that of receiving the results already achieved. These cannot remain the statements of

⁴²⁰ L. I. Ugorji, *That They May Be One*: 2000, pp. 59-60; see also L. I. Ugorji, *The Origin and Background to NARCC in Nigeria*, cited in *NARCC Proceedings*, 2010, p. 6.

bilateral commissions but must become a common heritage. For this to come about and for the bonds of communion to be thus strengthened, a serious examination needs to be made, which, by different ways and means and at various levels of responsibility, must involve the whole People of God. We are in fact dealing with issues which frequently are matters of faith, and these require universal consent, extending from the bishops to the lay faithful, all of whom have received the anointing of the Holy Spirit. It is the same Spirit who assists the *magisterium* and awakens the *sensus fidei*⁴²¹.

Therefore, through this process of reception, NARCC assists Catholics as well as Anglicans in Nigeria to recognize and accept new insights expressed in the statements of ARCIC which are in accordance with apostolic teachings and in harmony with the *sensus fidelium*. NARCC adopts this method of dialogue as a systematic reflection on doctrines and moral teachings of the Church, and later publish its proceedings periodically.

Its theological discussions are based on the spirit of *conversion* (change of heart), and in common search for *truth in Charity*. The CBCN continuously work with, and supervise the activities of NARCC to ensure that the reception process engages various Church disciplines: liturgy, pastoral care, morals, proclamation and forms of piety. Episcopal conferences of both the Catholic Church in Nigeria and the Church of Nigeria ensure that all aspects of Christian life participate in the same process. A brief review of some theological discussions of NARCC are undertaken below.

3.2.3.2 *Dialogue on Eucharistic doctrine*

The first theological dialogue organized by NARCC centred on holy Eucharist. Initial discussions on the subject matter took place at Kaduna (north-west Nigeria) on July 9th, 2008 and later, at Ekiti on March 25th, 2009. In its discussions on the holy Eucharist, the commission examined different theological understandings and varied doctrinal formulations of the subject according to both Anglican tradition and Catholic tradition. Representatives of the two Churches studied and responded to some themes raised in the ARCIC agreed statements on the Holy Eucharist. Themes such as; *anamnesis* and sacrifice, *transubstantiation* and real presence of Christ in the Eucharist,

⁴²¹ UUS, no. 80.

Eucharist as gift and for reception, inter-communion or Eucharistic sharing, reservation and adoration.

One of the major concerns of these discussions was to determine possibilities or extents to which members of the two Churches can mutually participate in Eucharistic communion during its celebration in one another's Church. This subject is so important for members of the two Churches to the extent that during the theological dialogue many Anglican participants expressed their views thus: "As long as we are not able to share the Holy Eucharist together, the whole essence of bi-lateral relationship is still very far from full communion"⁴²². Therefore, the dialogue proceeded as follows.

3.2.3.2.1 *Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission's statement on the Holy Eucharist*

ARCIC discussions on the Holy Eucharist considered the purpose and meaning of the reality of the Eucharist in consonance with biblical teaching, apostolic tradition and other Christian traditional heritage. According to the ARCIC statements: "Christ's redeeming death and resurrection took place once and for all in history. Christ's death on the cross, the culmination of his whole life of obedience, was the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice for the sins of the world. There can be no repetition of or addition to what was then accomplished once for all by Christ. ... yet, God has given the Eucharist to his Church as a means through which the atoning work of Christ on the cross is proclaimed and made effective in the life of the Church"⁴²³.

Therefore, the Eucharistic memorial (*anamnesis*) instituted by Christ, is not mere calling to mind of a past event or of its significance, but understood in the sense of *Passover* celebration by which the Church effectually proclaim Christ's death as God's reconciling action. In the Eucharist celebration the Church continues to make a perpetual memorial of Christ's death and give thanks for all his mercies.

Although Christ transcends sacramental order and thus, present at the right hand of the Father; he is as well really present and active in the entire Eucharistic celebration in various ways: he is present through the proclaimed word; in the minister who presides; and in the Eucharistic species. Hence, "communion with Christ in the Eucharist presupposes his true presence, effectually signified by the bread and wine

⁴²² *NARCC Proceedings*, 2010, p. 1.

⁴²³ ARCIC 1, *Eucharistic Doctrine*, no. 5.

which, in this mystery, become his body and blood”⁴²⁴. His real Eucharistic presence does not depend on the individual’s faith.

The Lord’s words at the last supper, ‘Take and eat; this is my body’, relates or links the gift of his presence with the act of sacramental meal. Therefore, his body and blood are not mere signs, but real spiritual meal by which Christ’s faithful increase in faith and communion in Christ⁴²⁵. Through his Eucharistic communion, he establishes personal relationship with the faithful such that life-giving encounter occurs when met by faith; and he builds and strengthens fellowship in the Church.

3.2.3.2.2 Church of Nigeria, Anglican perspective on Eucharistic doctrine

The representatives of the Church of Nigeria presented the Anglican perspective and understanding of major themes used in ARCIC document on the Eucharist. In their view, the word *anamnesis*, which was derived from Old Testament (Exodus 12:24ff) and used at *Passover* celebrations during the time of Christ, expresses link between the Eucharist and sacrifice of Christ on the cross. Therefore, in the Anglican understanding, *anamnesis* is “making effective in the present of an event in the past”.

In response to the ARCIC statement on the Eucharist as memorial (*anamnesis*) sacrifice, Ikechi N. Nwosu reiterated the position of Anglicans in Nigeria, and described the link between the sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the Eucharist. He describes the ‘once-and-for-all sacrifice of Christ on the cross’ as one that can never be repeated on the table of the Eucharist. Thus, he observed: “the one ‘sacrifice’ of Christ on the cross for the redemption of the world is celebrated (in the Eucharist) as thanksgiving and a return to God. The people of God, moved by the Holy Spirit when they celebrate the Eucharist continually renew their strength to ‘sacrifice’ their lives for the well-being of the world”⁴²⁶.

The Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, through teachings contained in her Book of Common Prayer maintains thus: “The offering of Christ (on the cross) once made, is the perfect redemption, propitiation and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; there is no other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Whereof the sacrifices of Masses, in which it was commonly said that the priest

⁴²⁴ Ibid, no. 6, 7.

⁴²⁵ Ibid, no. 9.

⁴²⁶ I. N. Nwosu, *The Eucharistic Doctrine*, cited in *NARCC Proceedings*, p. 32.

did offer Christ for the living and the dead, to have remission for guilt, were blasphemous fable, and dangerous deceit”⁴²⁷.

This Anglican position completely denies the following Catholic teachings on the Eucharist: first, it denies the teachings that every Eucharistic celebration is a memorial sacrifice and effective sacrifice of Christ (*anamnesis*); second, it denies the Church’s doctrinal teaching on transubstantiation and real presence of Christ in the Eucharist.

I. N. Nwosu also observed that Anglican understanding of the Eucharist neither supports nor accepts ARCIC statement on the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. According to I. N. Nwosu: “Jesus singled out for attention at the last Supper ‘bread and wine’ *associating* them with his ‘body and blood’. This selection has unmistakable reference to his sacrificial death; similarly, his words to James and John, ‘are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am about to take?’ (Mark 10:7-40) carry the same imagery and force ... in the bread and wine, the faithful cannot see, feel him (Christ), but in faith receive him. The bread and wine ‘may’ represent Christ, but Anglicans do not agree with the interpretation that makes the consecrated elements *equivalent* to Christ”⁴²⁸. Therefore, the consecrated elements – bread and wine, are ‘body and blood of Christ, only in the *symbolic* and *metaphorical* sense as pointing to spiritual realities, but not equivalent to Christ.

Contrary to Catholic teaching on transubstantiation which states that after consecration, the bread and wine becomes the real body and blood of Christ, Anglicans believe that the expressions “body and blood of Christ” are metaphorically and symbolically used to refer to the elements of bread and wine after consecration. Although these consecrated elements (bread and wine) are still regarded by Anglicans as sacrament, but it is so only like other materials set apart.

Thus, I. N. Nwosu writes: “Anglican doctrine on the Eucharist over the centuries has consistently maintained that the ‘sacrifice’ at the Eucharist is not a ‘factory’ producing the body and blood of Christ on the altar to be viewed and adored by the faithful ... any understanding of the consecrated elements becoming the real body and

⁴²⁷ The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion), *the Book of Common Prayer*, article 31, p. 490; cited in *NARCC Proceedings*, p. 46.

⁴²⁸ *NARCC Proceedings*, pp. 33-34.

blood of Christ, except in a faithful and spiritual manner rather than material, must be rejected”⁴²⁹.

Anglicans in Nigeria accept ARCIC statement that describes the Eucharist as Christ’s gift for his Church. This is because they believe that Christ offered freely his life as oblation for sins of the world and this action, the mystery of the Eucharist is possible. The body and blood of Christ is offered to be received and to be approached with thanksgiving.

Although the Church of Nigeria accepts the practice of reservation of the holy Eucharist, nevertheless, she expresses fear that its adoration and veneration may replace community Eucharistic celebration. This Anglican position is contrary to the elucidation on ARCIC statement which says: “if veneration is wholly dissociated from the Eucharistic celebration of the community, it contradicts the true doctrine of the Eucharist”⁴³⁰.

According to the 1549 Anglican Book of Common Prayer, Anglicans have provisions for the reservation of sacrament of the Eucharist for communion to the sick, but this teaching and practice were expunged in the revised version, and replaced with rubrics which directed priests to consume consecrated sacrament that is left over after celebration.

3.2.3.2.3 Roman Catholic perspective on Eucharistic doctrine

The Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night he was betrayed, instituted the Eucharist (1 Cor 11:23). During the institution, he did not merely say: “this is my body”, “this is my blood”, but went on to say: “which is given for you”, “which is poured out for you” (Lk 22:19-20). These words express the universal charity of the Eucharistic sacrifice as the true gift and sacrifice of Christ’s body and blood that is perpetuated⁴³¹, and it is indelibly marked by the event of his passion and death.

The celebration of the Holy Eucharist, is not merely a reminder or symbol of the Lord’s sacrifice on the cross, but it effectually makes present the sacrifice of the cross; though it neither add nor multiply that sacrifice. Thus, “the sacrifice of Christ and the

⁴²⁹ Ibid, p. 32.

⁴³⁰ ARCIC *Elucidation*, 1979.

⁴³¹ John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter, Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, Rome: Libreria Editrice, 2003, no. 12; (Further citation: *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*).

sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice”⁴³² given and received by his Church as gift par excellence: it is given as gift of his person in his sacred humanity and as gift of his saving work. Therefore, when the Church celebrates the Eucharist as the memorial of the Lord's death and resurrection, the central event of salvation becomes really present and “the work of our redemption is carried out”. Therefore, it is the source and summit of Christian life⁴³³.

The sacramental re-presentation of Christ's sacrifice in the Eucharist refers to his real presence whereby he is substantially present. This is *mysterium fidei*, that is, a mystery received in faith. Therefore, “the consecration of the bread and wine effects the change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ, our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. And the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called this change transubstantiation”. Adoration of the Eucharist outside of the Mass is strictly linked to the celebration of the Eucharistic Sacrifice⁴³⁴.

The Lord's words: “take it and eat, this is my body ... drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood” (Mtt. 26:26-28) present the Eucharistic gift as real food and true banquet, whereby Christ offers himself for the nourishment of his faithful; this is neither symbolic nor metaphorical food. Hence, he says; “my flesh is food indeed, and my blood is drink indeed” (Jn 6:53-55). This means thus: “the Mass is at the same time, and inseparably, the sacrificial memorial in which the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated and the sacred banquet of communion with the Lord's body and blood”⁴³⁵.

Through the Eucharistic communion, Christ grants his Spirit, and the unity of the faithful is both expressed and brought about. Eucharistic communion confirms the mutual “abiding” of Christ in each of his followers – “Abide in me, and I in you” (Jn 15:4, 6:57; 1 Cor 10:16-17). Hence, the Eucharistic sacrifice in which the death of the Lord is proclaimed “until he comes” is foretaste of future glory in heaven. This eschatological dimension reinforces communion with the Church in heaven⁴³⁶.

Eucharist and ministry are linked by the fact that a truly Eucharistic assembly, absolutely requires the presence of an ordained minister as its president who acts in the

⁴³² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1367.

⁴³³ LG, nos. 3, 11; *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 14.

⁴³⁴ *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*, nos. 15, 25.

⁴³⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1382.

⁴³⁶ *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*, no. 19, 22; LG, no. 3.

person of Christ to bring about the Eucharistic Sacrifice and offers it to God in the name of all the people”⁴³⁷. Consequently, the Eucharistic mystery cannot be celebrated in any community except by a validly ordained minister, as taught in the Fourth Lateran Council⁴³⁸. Apart from different doctrinal formulations, this is a major consideration at every dialogue with member Churches in Anglican Communion.

3.2.3.2.4 Resolutions of the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission’s on Eucharistic doctrine

After many years of study and deliberations on the subject matter, NARCC, during its meeting which took place at Ilorin from 28th to 30th of July, 2009, resolved to publish the proceedings with the theme on “Holy Eucharist”. This was to make the outcome of its theological discussions on Holy Eucharist available for further study at provinces, dioceses and parishes in Nigeria.

This decision of the NARCC is in view of the commission’s further discussion on all theological subjects that are areas of divergences⁴³⁹ between the Catholic teaching on holy Eucharist and the Anglican position. These divergences centred on the following areas: *anamnesis* as link between the Eucharist and the sacrifice of Christ on the cross, transubstantiation and Christ’s real presence in the Eucharist, as well as intercommunion or Eucharistic sharing.

According to the NARCC resolutions, there is mutual understanding between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria on the subject of the Eucharist as “Christ’s gift” to his Church, which both Christian communities receives in faith. But, the two Churches differ in their teachings on sacramental grace of the Eucharistic celebrations.

Concerning her teachings on sacramental grace of the Eucharistic celebrations, Catholics believe thus: “the real presence of Christ in the consecrated elements which re-presents the redemptive work (*opus operantum*) of Christ does not depend on the faith of the individual faithful. Sacramental grace is effected *ex opera operato*, by virtue of the valid liturgical celebration. Yet, the operations of the sacramental grace received

⁴³⁷ LG, no. 10.

⁴³⁸ *Ecclesia De Eucharistia*, nos. 28, 29.

⁴³⁹ UR, nos. 2, 19-20: “we are aware indeed that there exist considerable divergences from the doctrine of the Catholic Church concerning Christ himself, the word of God made flesh, the work of redemption, and consequently, concerning the mystery and ministry of the Church, and the role of Mary in the plan of salvation”.

by the faithful depends on the faith of the recipient; *ex opera operantis*. These two levels of sacramental efficacy are accounted for only when there is priority of the presence of Christ in the Eucharistic elements”⁴⁴⁰.

Still on sacramental grace of the Eucharistic celebrations, Anglicans, on the other hand, believe that the faith of the participating Christian in the Eucharistic celebration is necessary for sacramental efficacy; and that the Eucharist is not the real presence of body and blood of Christ, but only his symbolic presence received by faith.

Concerning the possibility of intercommunion or Eucharistic sharing, NARCC statement is as follows: “of its very nature, celebration of the Eucharist signifies the fullness of profession of faith and the fullness of ecclesial communion. This principle must not be obscured”⁴⁴¹. With reference to the Agreed Statement of IARCCUM, NARCC re-affirms thus: “Anglicans and Roman Catholics hold that there is an inextricable link between Eucharist and Ministry. Without recognition and reconciliation of ministries, therefore, it is not possible to realize the full impact of our common understanding of the Eucharist. Anglicans and Catholics acknowledge that there is an intrinsic relationship between sharing the Eucharist and full ecclesial communion”⁴⁴².

Furthermore, the Catholic position on sharing the Eucharist with Anglicans and members of other Ecclesial Communities that are not in full communion with her is clearly defined in Vatican II’s *Decree on ecumenism* as follows: “We (Catholics) believe that they (separated brethren) have not retained the proper reality of the Eucharistic mystery in its fullness, especially because of the absence of the sacrament of Orders”⁴⁴³.

Hence, according to John Paul II: “celebration of the Eucharist, however, cannot be the starting-point for communion; it presupposes that communion already exists, a communion which it seeks to consolidate and bring to perfection. The sacrament is an expression of this bond of communion both in its invisible dimension, which, in Christ and through the working of the Holy Spirit, unites us to the Father and among ourselves,

⁴⁴⁰ NARCC Proceedings, p. 67.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid, p. 27; see also *General Principles Governing Admission to Communion*, no. 1.

⁴⁴² *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, nos. 45, 46.

⁴⁴³ UR, no. 22.

and in its visible dimension, which entails communion in the teaching of the Apostles, in the sacraments and in the Church's hierarchical order”⁴⁴⁴.

Furthermore, “Eucharistic communion is inseparably linked to full ecclesial communion and its visible expression ... generally, the Catholic Church permits access to its Eucharistic communion and to the sacraments of penance and anointing of the sick, only to those who share its oneness in faith, worship and ecclesial life”⁴⁴⁵. Therefore, the 1983 Code of Canon Law prescribes thus: “Catholic priests are forbidden to concelebrate the Eucharist with priests or ministers of Churches or Ecclesial Communities which do not have full communion with the Catholic Church”⁴⁴⁶.

3.2.3.3 *Dialogue on morals, communion and the Church*

As part of the process of reception of ARCIC documents, during the meeting of NARCC at All Saints' Church, Wuse 5, Abuja, Nigeria, from 1st to 4th September, 2010, NARCC begins theological discussion on the subject; “Salvation and the Church”. And in October of 2011, at Sokoto, the commission also begins discussion on the subject; “Life in Christ: morals, communion and the Church”. Theological dialogues on the above subjects are still ongoing. These theological discussions provide opportunities for the commission to study and respond to two ARCIC II’s statements on “Salvation and the Church” of 1986, and Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church” of 1994.

The subject of “Salvation and the Church” contains statements on the doctrine of salvation and justification, while “Life in Christ: morals, communion and the Church” centres on moral teachings by the two Communion. In its study on “Life in Christ: morals, communion and the Church”, NARCC reflects on how both Churches can jointly witness and contribute to moral and ethical growth of the nation and people Nigeria⁴⁴⁷.

⁴⁴⁴ *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, no. 35; 39: “the Ecclesial Communion of the Eucharistic assembly is a communion with its own bishop and with the Roman Pontiff. The bishop, in effect, is the visible principle and the foundation of unity within his particular Church”; cf. LG, no. 23.

⁴⁴⁵ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 126; UR, no. 8.

⁴⁴⁶ CC. 908.

⁴⁴⁷ UR, no. 23: “while it is true that many Christians understand the moral teaching of the gospel differently from Catholics, and do not accept the same solutions to the more difficult problems of modern society, nevertheless, they share our desire to stand by the words of Christ as the source of Christian virtue, and to obey the command of the Apostle: ‘And whatever you do, in word or in work, do all in the

The connection between the two subjects; “Salvation and the Church”, and Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church”, is drawn from ARCIC II’s statements as thus; “those who share one faith in Christ will share one life in Christ ... The former adumbrates or foreshadows the later”. Therefore, “constitutive of life in communion is acceptance of the same basic moral values, the sharing of the same vision of humanity created in the image of God and recreated in Christ, and the common confession of the one hope in the final consummation of the Kingdom of God”⁴⁴⁸.

3.2.3.4 Ecumenical formation

Ecumenical formation is an important prescription of the Church’s ecumenical teaching to enable Christ’s faithful to be trained in order to understand the history of divisions and various ecumenical efforts directed at the reconciliation of Christians. The formation includes in-depth study of the Scriptures, sacred theology and different doctrinal formations.

According to Vatican II: “This (formation) must be pursued with a sense of realism and good will. Catholics, who already have a proper grounding, need to acquire a more adequate understanding of the respective doctrines of our separated brethren, their history, their spiritual and liturgical life, their religious psychology and general background. Most valuable for this purpose are meetings of the two sides – especially for discussion of theological problems – where each can deal with the other on an equal footing, provided that those who take part in them are truly competent and have the approval of the bishops”⁴⁴⁹.

The ecumenical formation is necessarily focused on those to be engaged or are already engaged in pastoral work and those who participate in ecumenical dialogue as representatives of the Church and other Ecclesial Communities. It includes also proper understanding of one’s socio-cultural context as regards the history – achievements and deficiencies – of ecumenical activities in the country where one lives⁴⁵⁰.

name of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to God the Father through Him’. For that reason an ecumenical dialogue might start with discussion of the application of the Gospel to moral conduct”.

⁴⁴⁸ Preface by co-chairman, *ARCIC II Statement, Life in Christ: Morals, Communion and the Church*, 1994.

⁴⁴⁹ UR, no. 9.

⁴⁵⁰ *Ecumenical directory*, no. 57.

Within the context of the ecumenical formation in Nigeria, the activities and theological discussions carried out by NARCC provides opportunities for members of the two Churches to be enlightened and educated on different theological and doctrinal formulations that are peculiar to Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria. By providing a platform for each ecumenical partner to present and discuss the Church's doctrines, faith and tradition, many Catholics and Anglicans benefit from one another. These benefits are not only for the participants in ecumenical dialogue, but for all Catholics and Anglicans in various dioceses and parishes who study the proceedings of NARCC.

Thus, NARCC theological dialogue serve several purposes. First, it serves the purpose as receptive process of ARCIC documents, second, it serves the purpose as a process of ecumenical formation by which Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria are educated on the doctrinal formulations of the two Churches.

Also in the Nigerian context, the Catholic Church establishes institutes for ecumenical formation. Basic stages of this formation are major seminaries spread across the country, which provide degree program on many fields of sacred theology, taught from the ecumenical perspective. There are other Catholic universities and institutes for higher studies in sacred theology which also provide studies on ecumenical theology. These institutions include: Catholic Institutes of West Africa (CIWA), Port Harcourt; Veritas University, Abuja; and institutes of ecumenical studies, Enugu, all in Nigeria.

Bishops in Nigeria also send priests to Catholic universities abroad (mainly Europe and America) for further studies on ecumenical theology and dialogue. From time to time, theological conferences, workshops and seminars are organized for discussions on ecumenical subjects. These are often part of program for the week of prayer for Christian unity.

Catechesis is effective means to educate the lay faithful to gain deeper knowledge of the scriptural and magisterial teachings on Christian unity⁴⁵¹. Other means are through daily preaching at liturgical worship and non-liturgical activities. This system of ecumenical formation has tremendous impact on members of both Churches in Nigeria; it helps to broaden their horizons as regards their daily relations with one another. Although, there are still much to be done for more lay faithful to participate in the formation.

⁴⁵¹ Ibid, nos. 59-61.

From the Anglican perspective, the Church of Nigeria have an understanding and are in partnership with the International school of ecumenism, Bossey, Switzerland, where they send Anglican clergy and lay faithful for training program on ecumenism. This partnership helps Anglicans in Nigeria to produce personnel as experts in ecumenical dialogue to represent the Church. The Church of Nigeria also organizes other ecumenical training program in houses of formation, like the seminaries and theological institutes. Presently in Nigeria, Catholic Church and the Church of Nigeria have not yet establish joint academic institute for ecumenical studies and formation. There are not also any formally organized joint formation program for members of both two Churches.

3.3 Recommendations to foster unity in the Nigerian Anglican-Catholic Relations

The above discussions on the application of the principles and norms on ecumenism in the Anglican-Catholic relations within the Nigerian context show the extent of commitment of the two Churches to the actualization of visible unity in the Church. These extensive and analytical study on the subject matter, point to the progress in Anglican-Roman Catholic ecumenical relations. But as far as ecumenical relations have not yet achieved its goal, which is full, visible unity of the Church, much need to be done.

Indeed, there are still many clogs on the wheel as both Churches (Anglican and Catholic) make their ecumenical journey to full, visible unity. The concern of this section of the doctoral thesis is to mention some obstacles that hinder harmonious relations between the two Churches, and to recommend possible means to improve their working and walking together towards unity. Most of these obstacles emanate from attitudes and actions of individual Christians, as well as from doctrinal teachings and interpretations in both Churches.

3.3.1 Necessity of living shared faith in truth and charity

The articles of faith which Catholics and Anglicans jointly profess through Apostles' and Nicene Creed is fundamental to their ecumenical journey. Nevertheless, this shared faith must grow beyond professing the same creed by mere words and celebrating one baptism. Its maturity to a "living faith" is a necessary ecumenical

endeavour; that is, faith professed must be lived out, expressed in daily lives and interactions between Christian Churches and their members.

This understanding is expressed in the Agreed Statement of IARCCUM thus: “genuine faith is more than assent: it is expressed in action ... agreement in faith must go beyond mere affirmation”⁴⁵². Separation between “faith professed” and “faith lived and practiced” is responsible for slow-in-progress in Catholics-Anglicans relations in Nigeria: Many Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria are yet to transcend verbal common profession of faith in one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church, to attain religious and spiritual maturity of mutually “living the faith” in charity and truth.

Daily and constant maturity in faith is required in order for Christians to live their faith in mutual charity and in truth. Maturity in faith is possible when members of both Churches engage themselves constantly in spiritual ecumenism, theological dialogue and practical cooperation. Anglicans and Catholics are encouraged thus: “more frequent joint non-Eucharistic worship, including celebrations of faith, pilgrimages, processions of witness (e.g. on Good Friday), and shared public liturgies on significant occasions. We encourage those who pray the daily office to explore how celebrating daily prayer together can reinforce their common mission”⁴⁵³.

To explain these further, L. I. Ugorji writes thus: “Christians of the two Churches are to utilize that period (week of prayer) to foster Christian unity by praying together. This effort could also be deepened by formation of small ecumenical groups from both Churches, made up of people mature in faith, to observe an ecumenical hour of prayer on specific days, praying together for Christian unity and other needs of the world. Arrangements could also be made for Anglicans and Roman Catholics in different localities to have Stations of the Cross jointly during the season of lent. This could be done in their Churches on alternate weeks”⁴⁵⁴.

Catechesis is also considered as very important in building Christian faith to maturity. According to the ecumenical directory: “Catechesis will have an ecumenical dimension if it arouses and nourishes a true desire for unity and still more if it fosters real effort, including efforts in humility to purify ourselves, so as to remove obstacles on the way, not by facile doctrinal omissions and concessions, but by aiming at that perfect unity which the Lord wills and by using the means that He wills. Catechesis will,

⁴⁵² *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 96.

⁴⁵³ *Ibid*, no. 102.

⁴⁵⁴ L. I. Ugorji, *That They May Be One*, pp. 55-56.

moreover, have this ecumenical dimension if it sets out to prepare children and young people as well as adults to live in contact with other Christians, maturing as Catholics while growing in respect for the faith of others”⁴⁵⁵. Constant encounters help to strengthen relations and to overcome mutual mistrust and prejudices.

3.3.2 The necessity of family for ecumenical formation

Although ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria have improved tremendously, nevertheless, it cannot be denied that there are still traces of past years of rivalry, antagonism and acrimony expressed in mutual prejudice and mistrust. These militate against mutual trust required in ecumenical relations.

In the Nigerian Context, some family traditions, preaching at pulpit, and schools educations are identified as breeding grounds of negative prejudices by one Christian tradition against other Christian community. In these settings, children, young people and adult are taught to disregard and avoid association with certain Christian teachings as well as members of some Christian communities.

All these settings – family, pulpit, and schools – are necessary media to counter the negative teachings and to initiate Christ’s faithful into genuine ecumenical life and participation. Christian family, which is a domestic Church, has an outstanding role to play as the primary place of encounter and formation of children to love and appreciate the outlook of other Christian denominations⁴⁵⁶.

Christian families are necessary as nursery grounds to nurture ecumenical spirit, especially, if those families are borne out of mixed marriage. According to ecumenical directory, “The family, called the "domestic Church" by the Second Vatican Council, is the primary place in which unity will be fashioned or weakened each day through the encounter of persons, who, though different in many ways, accept each other in a communion of love. It is also there that care must be taken not to entertain prejudices, but on the contrary to search for the truth in all things”⁴⁵⁷.

In Christian families, children should be taught to acquire positive approach in relation to members of other Christian Churches and Communities. They must be taught

⁴⁵⁵ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 61.

⁴⁵⁶ GS, no. 50: “Parents should regard as their proper mission the task of transmitting human life and educating those to whom it has been transmitted. They should realize that they are thereby co-operators with the love of God the Creator, and are, so to speak, the interpreters of that love”.

⁴⁵⁷ *Ecumenical Directory*, no. 66.

to avoid expressions that undermine integrity of other Churches' teachings and forms of worship. In transmitting the Christian faith to children, parents are expected to do so with respect for the religious freedom and conscience.

Hence, the Church teaches that; "the spirit of charity, of respect, and of dialogue demands the elimination of language and prejudices which distort the image of other Christians"⁴⁵⁸. These guidelines also apply to ministers who through preaching the gospel attempt to undermine beliefs and Christian traditional worships of other Churches. They must use the medium available to them to inculcate the spirit of ecumenism; this requires careful selection of the content and form of preaching, especially, of the homily, and with catechesis.

3.3.3 Necessity of joint ownership of academic and health-care institutions

Nigerian society is blessed with many education and health institutions owned and managed by Catholics, Anglicans and other Christian communities. But often students, teachers and patients that attend these institutions are compelled against their will to join Christian denominations that own these institutions in question or to participate in their prayer worship as necessary conditions of employment or admission.

It is necessary to observe here that the principles of religious freedom requires respect for other peoples' faith, conscience and ways of worship. The spiritual needs of those who receive medical treatment in these hospitals should be taken care of by allowing them free and frequent access to ministers of their own Church except in grave danger when ministers of their Church cannot be reached⁴⁵⁹.

These problems aforementioned can be eliminated when the Catholic Church and the Church of Nigeria jointly establish educational and health institutes with defined program of how the spiritual needs of those who work or receive services there are to be provided.

Presently, Catholics and Anglicans are yet to establish jointly owned education and healthcare institutes in Nigeria. Such collective projects between the two Churches necessarily requires urgent attention because of the intrinsic connection between humans and social development, human need and spiritual need. The Church encourages more collaboration in such areas of human endeavour. Thus, she teaches:

⁴⁵⁸ Ibid, no. 68; cf. UR, no. 4.

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid, nos. 141-142.

“collaboration in social and charitable initiatives in contexts such as schools, hospitals and prisons, has a proven formational value. So too has work for peace ... and for human rights and religious liberty”⁴⁶⁰.

Furthermore, the statement of IARCCUM directs thus: “We invite our Churches to consider the development of joint Anglican/Roman Catholic Church schools, shared teacher training programs and contemporary religious education curricula for use in our schools. We are conscious of the pressing need for new ways to reach youth, and believe that young people would themselves welcome creative joint outreach programs”⁴⁶¹. And healthcare workers, teachers and proprietors of Church institutes must use the medium available to them to inculcate the spirit of ecumenism, in words and actions.

3.3.4 Direct and active ecumenical engagement at the parish level

While NARCC actively engages in spiritual activities, theological discussions and cooperation to promote unity of Churches, Catholic and Anglican dioceses in Nigeria involve themselves in various ecumenical programs, not much is achieved at the parish level. Parish ecumenical commission is of paramount importance because of its grassroots dimension of evangelization. It is a place of authentic ecumenical witness.

Hence, Catholic Church directs thus: “The parish, as an ecclesial unity gathered around the Eucharist, should be, and proclaim itself to be the place of authentic ecumenical witness. Thus a great task for the parish is to educate its members in the ecumenical spirit. This calls for care with the content and form of preaching, especially of the homily, and with catechesis”⁴⁶².

The uniqueness of parish ecumenical commission expressed in that parish activities engage of all Christ’s faithful in direct forms of dialogue: first, in the dialogue of charity that is characterized by ecumenical commitment in humility, love for the truth and mutual respect; second, in the dialogue of life that is characterized by mutual cooperation of all Christians in everyday living and interaction with members of other Christian denominations, whether in the workplace, market or in the neighbourhood; third, in the dialogue of conversion that focuses on examination of conscience, change

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, no. 64.

⁴⁶¹ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 122.

⁴⁶² *Ecumenical directory*, no. 67.

of heart, and mutual forgiveness that transcends prejudice, pride, bigotry and hatred for Christians of other Churches.

For more efficiency and in consideration of the population of the given parish, parish commissions can be subdivided into “small Christian communities” (SCM) that consists of groups of individual or families whose lives, relationship and activities centre on Christ. What is most important is that at all levels of ecclesial unity, it is required that priests, lay faithful and the religious men and women must be fully engaged in those commissions under the supervision of the local ordinary. In the case of national commission, it is to be supervised by any bishop appointed by the national conference of bishops.

3.3.5 Joint ecumenical formation for lay faithful

A lot of efforts, resources and programs are put in by either of the two Churches in Nigeria to train personnel, especially the clergy, as facilitator and coordinators of ecumenical activities at all levels of ecclesial unite. It is recommendable to establish joint training and formation programs for lay Catholics and Anglicans.

According to Agreed Statement of IARCCUM: “We recommend joint training where possible for lay ministries (e.g. catechists, lectors, readers, teachers, evangelists). We commend the sharing of the talents and resources of lay ministers, particularly between local Anglican and Roman Catholic parishes”⁴⁶³.

It is necessary to organize formal academic programs, seminars, and ecumenical conferences for lay faithful as means to inculcate ecumenical spirit which fosters cooperation among Christ’s faithful and helps all to gain truer knowledge of the teaching and religious life of both Churches. Therefore, more ecumenical institutes have to be established to enhance sound academic and theological research on the Church’s mission and ecumenism.

3.3.6 Joint theological research as means to overcome conservatism

The Catholic Church in Nigeria and Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) are traditional in the practice of Christian faith. But Anglicans in Nigeria adopt

⁴⁶³ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 117.

conservative-religious attitude in defence of Anglican faith and tradition; that is, to the extent that the Church of Nigeria was among many national Churches of Anglican Communion who openly expressed total rejection of Pope Benedict XVI proposal to establish Personal Ordinariate for Anglicans who seek full communion with the Catholic Church.

Consequently, at the publication of Pope Benedict XVI apostolic constitution, *Anglicanorum coetibus*, on November 4th, 2009, that provides opportunities and opens the Church's doors for willing Anglicans to seek full communion with the Catholic Church and to participation in Personal-Anglican Ordinariate (this was discussed in detail in chapter two). That same year, the leadership of the Church of Nigerian, headed by the then Primate, Most Rev. Peter Akinola, reacted and opposed vehemently Vatican's proposal as well as discouraged Churches of Anglican Communion from participation in the Ordinariate.

Peter Akinola, in his arguments, did not consider the overall positive and ecumenical implications of the Ordinariates for Anglicans. While he, on behalf of the Church of Nigeria, welcomed ecumenical dialogue and relation with Catholic Church, he insisted that their membership of *General Anglican Future Conference of Nations* (GAFCON) already meet the spiritual and pastoral needs of conservative Anglicans of the Church of Nigeria⁴⁶⁴. Thus, the Church of Nigeria refused participation in Personal Ordinariate for Anglicans.

Religious conservatism creates major obstacle to ecumenical relations and to ecumenical dialogue in, particular. Ecumenical relations and dialogue require change of heart through openness, flexibility and receptivity in the quest for truth. Conservatism is a threat to receptive ecumenism. This is why conservatism is major setback in ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria; it weakens the receptive process of the agreed statements of ARCIC and IARCCUM as was observed earlier.

To overcome this religious sentimental anomaly, Vatican II advises all ecumenical partners as follows: "We must get to know the outlook of our separated brethren. To achieve this purpose, study is of necessity required, and this must be

⁴⁶⁴ *Church of Nigeria*, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_Nigeria, accessed on 22nd march, 2016: GAFCON was established in 2008 at the occasion of moral crisis and doctrinal error that struck the Anglican Communion through the episcopal ordination of women and persons in active homosexual life. Thence, some Churches of Anglican Communion that opposed such innovations came together to form GAFCON. Cf. GAFCON, <https://www.gafcon.org/>, accessed 4th January, 2018.

pursued with a sense of realism and good will”⁴⁶⁵. It is recommendable for Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria to engage each other to promote joint theological research, studies, retreats, seminars and workshops to gain more just knowledge of and to appreciate one another’s Christian religious history and heritage, faith tradition and doctrines, teachings and practices, moral life and discipline. These studies help to discover the truth of the faith they share in spite of diversities in Christian practices. Through such joint theological research truth is sought in charity under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

3.3.7 Comprehensive Biblical studies as means to overcome fundamentalism

Fundamentalism is characterized by strict belief in literary interpretation of religious texts, particularly, the Scriptures. The central tenet of biblical fundamentalism is the doctrine that considers biblical authority as solely sufficient for life, faith, salvation and theology. The idea of fundamentalism is rooted in belief of the absolute divine authorship, absolute inerrancy and truth of scriptural text. Fundamentalist principle rejects magisterial teachings, Church’s traditions, and other forms of interpretation of the revealed truth.

Catholics and Anglicans accept the normative status of the Scriptures, but differ in their approach to the interpretations of Scriptural texts. Anglicans believe that the teachings of the Scriptures are sufficient for salvation, even though interpretation of its texts necessarily varies – as enunciated in the *Chicago-Lambeth quadrilateral* of 1888. Anglicans in Nigeria accept principle of “sufficiency of the Scriptures for salvation”, with biblical fundamentalist interpretations. The fundamentalist approach to scriptural text serves the purpose of a conservative Anglican community in Nigeria; yet, it creates many obstacles in her ecumenical dialogue and theological discussions with the Catholic Church.

From this point of view, Vatican II acknowledges thus: “it must, however, be admitted that in these Churches and Ecclesial Communities there exist important differences from the Catholic Church, not only of a historical, sociological,

⁴⁶⁵ UR, no. 9.

psychological and cultural character, but especially in the interpretation of revealed truth”⁴⁶⁶.

These statements points to the fact that other Churches and Ecclesial Communities differ from Roman Catholic Church in many ways with regard to the relationship between the Scriptural contents, Church’s traditions and magisterial teaching. However, the Church teaches: “according to Catholic belief, the authentic teaching authority of the Church has a special place in the interpretation and preaching of the written word of God. But Sacred Scriptures provide for the work of dialogue an instrument of the highest value in the mighty hand of God for the attainment of that unity which the Saviour holds out to all”⁴⁶⁷.

Joint biblical research and studies are identified as means to overcome biblical fundamentalism. According to Agreed Statement of IARCCUM: “Since the Scriptures hold a prime place in the life of faith for both Anglicans and Catholics, we encourage joint study of the Scriptures, particularly by those in training for ministry. Ecumenical translations of the Bible are invaluable resources in our efforts to engage in common witness”⁴⁶⁸.

Joint studies and research programs need to be approached with sense of realism, openness, receptivity and with good will, in order to create room for harmonious ecumenical relations and proper understanding of doctrinal and theological outlooks of ecumenical partners. Joint projects such as this help both parties to acquire comprehensive knowledge and mysteries contained in the divinely revealed truth.

There are various methods of studying the scriptures; for instance, literary and historical-critical method. Whichever method adopted, the Roman Catholic Church recommends comprehensive approach to the study of the Scriptures that considers together the unity of the Scriptures and ancient tradition of the Church⁴⁶⁹. Therefore, she teaches: “since Holy Scripture must be read and interpreted in the sacred spirit in which it was written, no less serious attention must be given to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture if the meaning of the sacred texts is to be correctly worked out. The

⁴⁶⁶ Ibid, no. 19.

⁴⁶⁷ Ibid, no. 21.

⁴⁶⁸ *Growing Together in Unity and Mission*, no. 104.

⁴⁶⁹ UR, no. 3; the decree on ecumenism states: “our separated brethren, whether considered as individuals or as Communities and Churches, are not blessed with that unity which Jesus Christ wished to bestow on all those who through him were born again into one body, and with him quickened to newness of life – that unity which the Holy Scriptures and the ancient Tradition of the Church proclaim”.

living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account along with the harmony which exists between elements of the faith”⁴⁷⁰.

This comprehensive interpretation of Scriptural texts is assured with the guidance of those who receive prophetic ministry and episcopal office with sure of gift of truth, and who contemplatively study the Scripture and explain inner spiritual realities contained therein. Also with the guidance of those who have devoted time for in-depth biblical studies at recommended biblical institutes.

3.3.8 Christian unity and evangelization

About five decades ago, in the 1970s, European missionaries were untimely and forcefully expelled from Nigeria while the mission land was yet to be completely cultivated and evangelized. In 2015, the Nigerian population was estimated at about 182 million people, with about 49% as Christians. This means that about 91.8 million Nigerians, who are mostly Muslims and few adherents of traditional religion, are yet to receive the gospel message of Christ.

Not only Muslims and adherents of traditional religion are major focus of evangelization, many young people in various Christian Churches, including Catholics, are tossed around and blown out of the Church by the wind of modernism and/or materialism. Hence, they either abandon the Church completely or remain lukewarm members. In this sense, while statistics set 45% as the number of active practicing Christians in Nigeria, the actual current estimated number of active practicing Christians might be less with increasing number of tepid members.

In the face of these challenges to Christianity in Nigeria – modernism and materialism, Islamic and traditional religion – it is pertinent that every ecumenical movement has to be characterized by a missionary outlook; this requires *missio ad extra* and *missio ad intra*. And on the other hand, every evangelization mission must be characterized by ecumenical approach. These measures are necessary because division among Christian Churches in Nigeria is major obstacle to evangelization as well as significant loophole through which many lose their Christian faith.

To buttress this, Vatican II states thus: “Such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalizes the world, and damages the holy cause of preaching the Gospel to

⁴⁷⁰ DV, no. 12, 8.

every creature”⁴⁷¹. Therefore, the Council illustrates thus: “the divisions among Christians prevent the Church from attaining the fullness of Catholicity proper to her, in those of her sons who, though attached to her by baptism, are yet separated from full communion with her. Furthermore, the Church herself finds it more difficult to express in actual life her full catholicity in all her bearings”⁴⁷². There is urgent need to reconcile the two forms of mission and witnessing; ecumenism and evangelization “for greater catch” (Luke 5:4).

Ecumenism and evangelization are interrelated missionary mandate of Christ as well as two forms of witnessing: In the priestly prayer of Jesus Christ, he asked the father to grant unity in his Church, and among all Christians, through this unity the world will come to know and believe in the son of God. That is, unity of all Christians is a missionary witness to the world of the love of the Trinitarian God: “May they all be one, just as , Father, you are in me and I am in you, so that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe it was you who sent me” (John 17:21). This prayer shows an inseparable link between ecumenism and evangelization.

Therefore, Christian unity and evangelization are two forms of witnessing. Paul VI, in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii nuntiandi*, elaborates this thus: “As evangelizers, we must offer Christ's faithful not the image of people divided and separated by unedifying quarrels, but the image of people who are mature in faith and capable of finding a meeting-point beyond the real tensions, thanks to a shared, sincere and disinterested search for truth. Yes, the destiny of evangelization is certainly bound up with the witness of unity given by the Church ... At this point we wish to emphasize the sign of unity among all Christians as the way and instrument of evangelization. The division among Christians is a serious reality which impedes the very work of Christ”⁴⁷³.

John Paul II underscores link between Christian unity and Christian mission of evangelization as follows: “how indeed can we proclaim the gospel of reconciliation without at the same time being committed to working for reconciliation between Christians? ... When non-believers meet missionaries who do not agree among themselves, even though they all appeal to Christ, will they be in a position to receive

⁴⁷¹ UR, no. 1.

⁴⁷² Ibid, no. 4.

⁴⁷³ Paul VI, *Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii nuntiandi*, Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana 1975, no. 77. (Further citation: EN); UR, no. 1; *Ecumenical Directory*, nos. 205-209.

the true message? Will they not think that the Gospel is a cause of division, despite the fact that it is presented as the fundamental law of love?”⁴⁷⁴.

Nevertheless, the Holy Father, offers pertinent answers to the above ecumenical questions thus: “Here, an imperative of charity is in question, an imperative which admits of no exception. Ecumenism is not only an internal question of the Christian communities. It is a matter of the love which God has in Jesus Christ for all humanity; to stand in the way of this love is an offence against him and against his plan to gather all people in Christ”⁴⁷⁵. Therefore, missionary activities and movement for unity of the Church must meet at promoting Trinitarian love and presence in the world.

As long as Christian communities in Nigeria, as evangelizers, continue to preach the gospel with doctrinal formulations that contradict one another, there are dangers that the minds of evangelized will be more confused (see above dialogue between Catholics and Anglicans where varied definitions of the doctrine of Holy Eucharist were presented). According to John Paul II “it is obvious that the lack of unity among Christians contradicts the truth which Christians have the mission to spread and, consequently, it gravely damages their witness”⁴⁷⁶.

By Pentecost experience, which marked the beginning of the public ministry of the Apostles, God reconciled the confused languages at Babel (Gen. 11:7-9), and brought into unity men and women of every race, tribe and nation. In this reconciled unity, over 3,000 men and women from every corner of the earth were brought into communion and unity with the new people of God, under the leadership of the Apostles, as people matured in faith.

It is therefore recommendable for Catholics and Anglicans to foster mission-orientated spirituality of ecumenical engagement: first, through inter-Church evangelization between the two Churches as well as between them (Anglicans and Catholics) and other Christian communities; and second, to jointly prepare program for the evangelization of those who are yet received the gospel message of Christ.

Inter-Church evangelization is carried out through ecumenical dialogue and joint theological discussion by which theological differences are resolved. Further research shall elaborate Principles and guideline to be applied for effective and efficient mission-

⁴⁷⁴ UUS, no. 98.

⁴⁷⁵ Ibid, no. 99.

⁴⁷⁶ Ibid, no. 98.

orientated spirituality of ecumenical engagement, as method of witnessing in the Nigeria context.

CONCLUSION

The aim of the research undertaken in this doctoral thesis was a methodological study and analysis of the ecumenical relations between the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria in terms of their practice and application of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism; with focus on how these two Churches comply with norms and principles of spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism.

This study further aimed at detail discussions on the necessary ecumenical structures such as the different conference of bishops deriving from these two Churches in Nigeria which perform the oversight function and serve as “organ of unity, communion and solidarity”. The study of the various structures of ecumenical relations in Nigeria included a review of the activities of the Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission (NARCC) that serves as national ecumenical commission for dialogue, spiritual and practical cooperation between the two Churches; achievements, challenges as well as prospects of the commission in enhancing Anglican-Catholic relations in Nigeria.

Since Anglicans as well as Catholics in Nigeria are directly linked to other international ecumenical Commissions and Conferences jointly organized by Anglican Communion and Roman Catholic Church, this research also extended its study to cover relevant achievements deriving from *Malta Report*, ARCIC, and IARCCUM. It studied also some achievements from Lambert Conferences, as well as the principles guiding establishment of Anglican Ordinariate as Anglican-Catholic response to ordinations of women and gay bishops in Anglican Communion.

Therefore, this research work has so far presented, within the available time and space, detailed account and analysis of the ecumenical relations between Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion, and Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria. Through historical analysis, it was discovered that ecumenical relations between them are inspired by several dialogues undertaken by the Anglican-Roman Catholic International

Commission, and are carried out in accordance with norms and principles of ecumenism.

To justify the topic of this doctoral thesis which is “spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism in the Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria”, this research centred more on the extent to which these two Churches in Nigeria engage themselves, adopt and participate in the “practical principles of ecumenism” which encompasses spiritual, practical and doctrinal principles. This is not to undermine their compliance to other norms and principles of ecumenism such as Trinitarian, ecclesiological and ethical principles. In fact, this thesis emphasized Trinitarian, ecclesiological and ethical principles as fundamental principles as well as vital parts on which spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism are rooted.

Trinitarian, ecclesiological and ethical principles fundamentally and theologically define spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism. Thus, they are inseparable. Hence, this doctoral thesis presented spiritual, practical and doctrinal ecumenism as concrete and practical means of engagement and ecumenical encounter between the two Churches in Nigeria. As such, these principles guide both Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria to meet one another in the atmosphere of Christian fraternity and dialogue as well as build relationship of love, openness and trust that eschew rivalry and hatred.

The overall discussions revealed different stages of relations between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria. From the historical perspective, hate, rivalry and antagonism characterized the early stages of encounter between Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria; that was during the first century of Christianity in Nigeria, prior to the establishment of organized ecumenical engagement. During this period, all missionary tools employed by Anglican and Catholic evangelizers – Catechesis, education, healthcare system etc – which supposed to serve solely as instruments of conversion, at the same time generated unhealthy competition.

Furthermore, the research undertaken in this doctoral thesis revealed that the early twenty-first century marked the beginning of historic era of ecumenism in Nigeria; when Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria took several steps to heal the wounds of division by adopting and adhering to the norms and principles of ecumenical engagement. Therefore, through relevant Church structures – Conference of Bishops and National Secretariats – members of these two Churches came together to establish joint commission known as “The

Nigerian Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission” (NARCC). The national commission is to oversee the affairs of the study and implementation of the *Malta Report* as well as the reception of and response to statements of ARCIC and IARCCUM. These ecumenical structures and commission are also being established at various levels of ecclesial structures – national, diocesan, and parish level – to take responsibilities for the spiritual activities (common prayers, Bible sharing, etc.), theological discussions, and various aspects of practical cooperation.

Although presently, Anglicans and Catholics in Nigeria cannot claim to have arrived at ultimate agreement on major theological issues and Christian practices, there are already noticeable improvements in their ecumenical relations. It is necessary to observe that while they are still on this journey towards unity and love, the Anglican partners are yet to overcome fear of Catholic dominance. This notwithstanding, both ecumenical partners have continued to work and walk (journey) together in the spirit of prayer, dialogue and cooperation on religious as well as social matters. Their ecumenical undertakings take place in accordance with the spirit of the gospel as well as norms and principles of ecumenism.

Therefore, the Christian spirit of fraternity, love and trust which are gradually restored between Anglicans and Catholics were mentioned in this thesis as some of the achievements of their ecumenical relations and theological dialogue. It was also observed that through theological dialogue and discussions, both parties have clearer and deeper understanding of one another’s theological point of view and religious practices. The Joint Commission, which comprises of theologians from Anglican and Catholic Churches in Nigeria, provides enabling environment and opportunities for both parties to study together the *Malta Report*, and the various statements of ARCIC and IARCCUM. These ecumenical actions help to eliminate mutual suspicion and mistrust in order for love and trust among Christian members to be restored.

From the research carried out, some challenges were discovered as clogs on the wheel of progress in the ecumenical journey jointly undertaken by the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion and the Roman Catholic Church in Nigeria. The major challenges faced by Anglican-Roman Catholic relations in Nigeria centre on subjects where consensus agreement have not been reached at the international level by both Churches: Subjects like; sacramental sharing (common Eucharistic communion) and exchange of ministers (ordained ministry). In addition to these, and peculiar to Nigerian

situation, are difficulties that accompany marriages which involve Anglican and Catholic partners.

In the Nigerian context, Anglican participants in ecumenism are eager to be permitted to share in Catholic Eucharistic communion; many Anglican ministers also express desire to concelebrate with Catholic ministers. Often Anglican ministers misconceive their nascent ecumenical relations with Roman Catholic Church to imply full participation in Catholic Eucharistic celebration and ministry. Whereas the Catholic ecumenical teachings consider common Eucharistic celebration and sharing as goal and the ultimate end of ecumenical relations; that is, as sign of full, visible unity. Hence, common Eucharistic celebration can never be the starting-point and/or means to achieve visible unity with Churches and Ecclesial Communities that are not in full communion with Catholic Church.

By the common celebration of sacraments, the Church expresses her bond of communion in two dimensions: first, the invisible dimension by which through Christ and in the Holy Spirit Christ's faithful are united to the Father and to themselves; second, the visible dimension entails communion in the teaching of the apostles and in the Church's hierarchical order. Since the sacrament is an 'act of Christ and of the Church through the Spirit', the Catholic Church considers its celebration in the community of Christ's faithful as symbol of visible unity in faith, worship and communion.

On the other hand, the Eucharist remains the summit of sacramental spirituality, and by implication, spiritual ecumenism. It is the mystery of faith and sacrament of communion; that is, by sharing in one bread and one cup, Christ's faithful are made one with him (1 Cor. 10:17). As source of unity and spiritual life of the Christian community, the Eucharist is inseparably linked to visible expression of full ecclesial communion. Therefore, it is celebrated where the visible bonds of communion are intact; that is, communion in the sacraments, particularly in baptism, and where all faithful are in communion with their bishop and with the Supreme Pontiff as "visible principle and the foundation of unity" within the Church. For instance, Holy Communion cannot be given to unbaptized persons as well as those who denounce faith in and truth of Christ's teaching on the Eucharistic mystery, that is: persons or even Christians who deny, reject and criticize faith in the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and, those who consider the Eucharist as mere remembrance of the last supper.

Discussions in chapter three (3.2.2.2.2) of this thesis stated the theological position of the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion on the Eucharist as mere remembrance of the last supper. By this belief and teaching on the Eucharist as a mere remembrance of the last supper, Anglicans in Nigeria deny the sacrificial dimension as well as the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. The position of the Roman Catholic Church on Eucharist and ministry with regard to her relations with the Anglican Communion is clarified in John Paul II's encyclical, *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, (28, 29) where it states that those separated from the Catholic Church, with particular reference to Churches and Ecclesial Communities which arose in the West in the 16th century, lack valid orders. Therefore, they have not preserved the genuine and total reality of the Eucharistic mystery because of the link between the Eucharist and ministry. Nevertheless, Churches within Anglican Communion commemorate the last Supper as that which signifies life in communion with Christ.

Furthermore, because of the link between Eucharist and ministry, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that it is not possible to celebrate together the same Eucharistic liturgy with those Churches and Ecclesial Communities that lack full communion in the bonds of sacraments, profession of faith and ecclesiastical governance until those bonds are fully re-established. Any such con-celebration would not be a valid means, and might be an obstacle to the attainment of full communion by introducing ambiguities with regard to truth of the faith.

While members of Churches and Ecclesial Communities that have not reached full communion with the Catholic Church are restrained from receiving communion in the Catholic Eucharistic celebration, Catholic faithful are also instructed to refrain from receiving communion distributed in their celebrations in order not to condone an ambiguity about the nature of the Eucharist. This instruction is to be carried out without disregarding religious convictions of these separated brethren. Along the same line of argument, members of the Roman Catholic Church are not to substitute Sunday Mass for either a liturgical service of the word or ecumenical celebrations of common prayer with Christians from other Ecclesial Communities; because that can endanger progress towards full visible unity.

As regards marriage between Catholic faithful and Anglican or any other non-Catholic partner, the major challenge lies in the fact of variation in theological teachings and understanding of marriage between the Roman Catholic Church and Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion. For instance, concepts such as sacramentality of

marriage, indissolubility and mixed-marriage are alien to the theology of marriage as taught by the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion. Therefore, it is often difficult for her members to relate with Catholic partner from the perspective of Church's teachings on mixed marriage.

Catholic teaching on marriage considers authentic married love as immerse in divine love, and enriched by Christ's redeeming power so that this love leads spouses to God and aids them in responsibilities of fatherhood and motherhood. Graced with the dignity of fatherhood and motherhood, parents have the Christian responsibility of educating their children, especially on religious education. For this reason, Christian marriage is a special sacrament by virtue of which spouses fulfil their conjugal and family obligation, as well as advance in perfection and mutual sanctification.

Hence, it is necessarily recommendable to educate all parties involved on the proper ends of marriage. All parties, Catholics as well as Anglicans, must come to terms, accept and abide by the Church's teaching and understanding of marriage and conjugal love as supreme gift from God that unites "man and woman" indissolubly. They must accept that Christian marriage and conjugal love are by their nature ordained toward begetting and educating of children. This means that as they share mutual love with one another in this sacrament, they participate in divine love. Thus, as co-operators with the love of God, they must interpret and transmit this love to one another, to their children and to the entire Christian community as their proper mission and Christian responsibility.

The sacramental, religious and social dimensions of Christian marriage must be well understood by all parties involved as not solely the concern of the Christian spouses (married couples), but the concern of a larger community of faith and society. This is because, whatever that happens between married partners affects directly or indirectly the entire community of believers. Therefore, when necessary and as conditions require would-be as well as married couples should consult the interests of their extended family, civil society and the Church herself.

The ecclesiological structure of confederating Churches under Anglican Communion often constitutes an obstacle to Anglican-Catholic relations in Nigeria. The complex and confederated nature of ecclesiological structure on which Anglican Communion is founded and operates deters the down-stream transmission, assimilation, and reception of the fruits of ecumenical-theological dialogue: from the See of Canterbury to various National Churches of Anglican Communion, a noticeable

theological differentiations in theological teachings, understanding and interpretation of the overall Anglican tenets clog the wheel of ecumenical progress.

The Lambeth Conference of 1930 described Anglican Communion as ‘a federation without a federal government’. As a result of this form of ecclesiological structure, the emergence of many new autonomous Provinces, including those in West Africa, makes the problem acute. For instance, the problem faced by modern Anglicanism (with her participation in ecumenism) is the uncertainty surrounding its doctrinal basis, theological liberalism and the acceptable limits of doctrinal variation as new *Prayer Book* emerge and *Thirty-Nine Articles* are effectively demoted. Also the ordination of men living in active homosexual relationship and women to the episcopal office in some Anglican Provinces introduced division in Anglican Communion and creates difficulties in relationship with her ecumenical partners.

Hence, the inner tension within the federating unites in Anglicanism and her ecumenical relations or commitments with other Churches challenges her to redefine her vocation and mission in the world. In so far as the Church of Nigeria, Anglican Communion differs, to some extent, in her theological teachings and views with other segments/national Churches of Anglican Communion, it slows down their disposition to accept the decisions and Agreed Statements of ARCIC, and IARCCUM. For this reason, Anglicans in Nigeria vehemently opposes the Roman Pontiff proposal to establish Anglican Ordinariate.

Although Anglican notion of ‘bond of affection’ in which local and regional Churches are embodied at the universal level is a great contribution she makes to the unity of the Church (‘bond of affection’ refers to the fellowship and communion of thirty-eight autonomous provinces in various parts of the world which help to maintain the internal unity of the Anglican Communion). However, the problems lies in the fact that there is no certainty that a Communion of such diversity provides opportunity for all voices to be heard. Also in the Anglican Communion the proper place and role of the episcopal voice in its oversight function is not defined. Furthermore, it is not clear which areas of faith and order to be decided upon by the autonomous provinces, what must wait for the emergence of a common mind of the whole Communion, and what place is to be afforded to the process of receiving the decision of the council by the local Churches.

Although these diversities can, at times engender tensions, they also could be considered as pointers to the diversity in the Church that emphasizes her Catholicity.

The unity of the Church is realized in the midst of a rich diversity through the working of the Spirit who calls Christians to deeper unity. To overcome these challenges, therefore, Catholic faithful are advised to work and journey together with the separated brethren to surmount all obstacles on the way of divine providence. Basically, while they must eschew preconceived judgments, they must also refrain from superficiality and imprudent zeal. Rather, they must uphold ecumenical actions that are “fully and sincerely Catholic”, that is, ecumenical actions that are faithful to the truth received from Christ, from his apostles and from Fathers of the Church.

This is not to undermine theological views and beliefs of other Christian communities, rather as they journey together all must assist one another, in the spirit of evangelical charity, to achieve visible unity with full content of the heritage handed down by the apostles. Without this, full communion will never be possible. In effect, it is necessary to establish mutual cooperation in fraternal spirit between Catholics and her ecumenical partners based on common profession of faith, cooperation in social and religious matters. When obstacles to ecclesiastical communion are overcome, it is believed that all Christians will gather together in a common celebration of the Eucharist.

It is in this sense that Catholics and Anglicans in Nigeria adopt an ecumenical stand that is both missionary and at the same time address social questions. The document produced by the International Anglican-Roman Catholic Commission for Unity and Mission (IARCCUM) recognize the intimate relationship between the unity of the Church and well-being of the human community. Anglicans and Catholics are encouraged to work together to promote social justice and to eradicate poverty. This cooperation is a form of common Christian witness and means of evangelization.

Ecumenical movement in many African countries, for instance Nigeria, with young and nascent Christian Churches cannot separate the search for Christian unity from mission and evangelization. The reason for this is because the Church is by her very nature missionary; she received a mandate from Jesus Christ to announce and witness, to make present and spread the mystery of communion in the world, and to gather all people and all things into Christ. This is why she is a sacrament of unity.

Hence, all Catholics are to join with members of other Churches and Ecclesial Communities in this ecumenical journey provided there is nothing sectarian or deliberately anti-Catholic in organizations and programs that provide common support to the missionary activities of all the participating Churches. Thus, ecumenical activities

in Nigeria must intensify its missionary dimension that would enable all ecumenical partners to look beyond the confines of their Christian communities to address all Christians and all peoples in Nigeria to acquire in-depth knowledge of the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ; for instance, they must address adherents of traditional religion, Christians who relapsed into religious syncretism and adherents of Islamic religion.