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# EDITORIAL

## FOSTERING INCULTURATION



In the previous edition (December 2024) of this Magazine, we began exploring the theme of Inculturation by laying down the fundamental and theological foundations of what Inculturation is. In this edition, our focus will be the practical application of Inculturation in our local Church. Our preoccupation in this edition is to discuss Inculturation in the life of the Church, which flows from the reflections on the foundations laid down in the December edition 2024.

Our discussions in this edition are profoundly based on the teachings and directives or instructions of the Church through Councils, Synods, and Popes that have engaged in the discussion on Inculturation. In the Decree on the Church's Missionary activity *Ad Gentes*, the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council stated that: "the seed which is the word of God grows out of good soil watered by the divine dew, it absorbs moisture, transforms it, and makes it part of itself, so that eventually it bears much fruit. So too indeed, just as happened in the economy of the Incarnation, the young churches, which are rooted in Christ and built on the foundation of the apostles, take over all the riches of the nations which have been given to Christ as an inheritance (Cfr Ps 2:8). They borrow from customs, traditions, wisdom, teaching, arts and sciences of their people everything which could be used to praise the glory of the Creator, manifest the grace of the Saviour, or contribute to the right ordering of Christian life" (**VATICAN II COUNCIL, Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity *Ad Gentes*, 7 December 1965, n. 22).**

"Inculturation is not merely the adaptation of a ready-made Christianity into a given situation but rather a creative embodiment of the Word in the local Church" (**INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON MISSION, Workshop Report, 1979**). In effect there should exist a mutual enrichment: on the one hand, a given culture receives a new dynamism and on the other hand, fresh ways of understanding and living the Christian faith are opened up. Thus, Pope John Paul II noted that evangelization has to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures, so that they may bring forth from their own living tradition, original

expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought. In this way, the faith is grasped in a more profound and personal manner by the local people and it can take deeper root among them (Cfr **ONE WORLD THEOLOGY Vol. 12, *Inculturation: God's Presence in Culture*, 171.**)

It has always been the concern of John Mbiti to search for ways and means of communicating the gospel to Africans as an encounter and living dialogue between the gospel and African traditional religious concepts (Cfr **Y. S. HAN – J. BEYERS, *A Critical Evaluation of the Understanding of God in J. S. MBITI'S Theology*, 7.**). However, there is need for adequate follow up to ensure the fruitfulness of the encounter of the Christian gospel and various cultures. This dialogue is initiated when cultural concepts of the people are brought into the liturgy, especially when liturgical texts, symbols, gestures, and feasts which evoke something from the people's history, traditions, cultural patterns, and artistic genius are employed.

Therefore, this edition of the *Searchlight* Magazine titled "**INCULTURATION AND THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**" aims at looking at the guidelines and pastoral implications of the process of Inculturation especially in the life the local Church. This can be appreciated in articles such as: Principles of Inculturation in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*; Guidelines for the Renewal of Liturgical life; Les Organismes responsables de l' Inculturation/ Renouveau liturgique; Active and conscious participation of the people of God; Abuses in the celebration of the Sacred liturgy; Inculturation as reflected in the visits of the Popes in Africa; Pastoral care of the Liturgy; Principles pertaining to the translation of sacred Scriptures and the Preparation of Lectionaries. Our Easter article, "Jesus Lifted up on the Cross: A theological and liturgical reflection" highlights the two-fold dimension of God's love for us which are God's compassion and his exaltation.

As we celebrate the Season of Easter, may the light which Christ brings illumine every darkness of our lives, heal the broken hearted, restore joy to those who are bereaved and raise fallen men on the wings of prayer. Happy Easter!!!

**Rev. Cyril Sangnyuy Kiran**  
(Editor-in-Chief)

# SEMINARY AFFAIRS

## Reopening for the Second Term

Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary- Bambui opened its doors for the Second Term of the 2024/2025 Formation Year on Saturday 04<sup>th</sup> January 2025 with the arrival of all the Seminarians from the Christmas vacation.

## Visits

On Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> of January 2025, Fr Gerald Hasty, a Mill Hill Missionary General Councillor paid a visit to the Seminary community. He and his entourage were received by the Rector, Fr Charles Berinyuy. The occasion which took place in the Aula was marked by a presentation from the Special Choir. Fr Gerald Hasty encouraged the seminarians to hold firm to the call from God. The occasion ended with some photographs taken in front of the Aula to immortalize the event.

On Sunday, February 09<sup>th</sup>, 2025, the members of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) of the Archdiocese of Bamenda visited the Seminary. The occasion started with the celebration of the Holy Mass presided by Fr Evans Shang. In his homily, Fr Evans explained that we experience the power of God in our lives when we are humble and weak. After Holy Mass, a single photograph was taken in front of the Seminary Chapel. The second part of the occasion took place in the Seminary Refectory. The youth wing of the CCR presented a short play which was entitled "And on this Rock I will build my Church". Moreso, the representative of CCR of the Archdiocese of Bamenda gave words of encouragement to the seminarians admonishing them to be committed in their formation, while assuring them of the constant prayers and support of the CCR. Besides the encouragement, he also presented the gifts that they had brought.

## Seminary Feast Day

STAMS Bambui commemorated the solemnity of her patron saint, St Thomas Aquinas, the Angelic Doctor on Tuesday the 28<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The official programme began with the celebration of Holy Mass presided at by Fr Peter Foleng. During his homily, Fr Foleng explained some four attributes in the life of St Thomas Aquinas that can be emulated. They include: challenge, victory, wisdom and docility. In challenging moments, St Thomas sought only the will of God for his life; he was victorious in all circumstances and attained great heights in Theology because he never turned his eyes away from the Lord; he was gifted with natural wisdom and intellectual wisdom because he did his studies with contemplation; and because of his docility

to the truth. Before the final blessing, the litany of St Thomas Aquinas was said in front of the Statue of St Thomas Aquinas outside the chapel. After Holy Mass, a few official photographs were taken in front of the Seminary Chapel in order to immortalize the event. The second part of the programme took place in Bishop Pius Suh Awa's Memorial Auditorium. This included choral singing from the Seminary Special Choir, a presentation from the Drama Club, and a presentation from Zion's Choir. The Last part of the occasion consisted of refreshment which took place in the seminarians' refectory, and was followed by a football encounter.

## STAMS Cultural Day

The Seminary community of STAMS Bambui celebrated its maiden Cultural Day on the 1st of February 2025. The guest of honour was Sr Claris Remjika who was celebrating her 25th anniversary of religious profession. The occasion commenced with the celebration of Holy Mass which was presided at by Fr Anthony Yilaka. During his homily, Fr Anthony Yilaka explained that faith is a response to the divine self-communication of God to man; it is an act of confidence by which man entrusts himself totally to God. The dialogue between the Christian culture contained in the deposit of faith with other cultures is called inculturation. The second part of the occasion took place in the Aula where there were socio-cultural presentations from the Nso community (poem), the Bamileke community, the Beti community, the Sawa community (traditional dance), the Nigerian community. The last part of the occasion consisted of refreshment which took place in the Seminary refectory.

## A Seminar on the Pastoral Care of Disabled Persons and their Families

A seminar on the pastoral care of disabled persons took place from Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> February to Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025 in the Seminary. This seminar was facilitated by Fr Lucas Alang who is a Conceptionist priest, Parish Priest of Queen of Peace Parish Njimafor. The seminarians, who were the main participants, were equipped with the rudimentary lessons on sign language so that they can communicate with the deaf and those who are hard of hearing whenever they are called to administer to them pastorally.

# Notice! Notice!! Notice!!!

## NOTICE! NOTICE!! NOTICE!!!

Information for the attention of Exseminarians and Priests alumni of **Saint Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (STAMS Theologicum), Bambui.**

If you wish to collect documents from the secretariat of the Theologicum, kindly make your request via the email address provided below:  
bambuiseminary@yahoo.co.uk

Indicate clearly what kind of documents you wish to be prepared for your collection and leave a contact phone number by which you can be conveniently reached when the documents are ready for collection. Your appointment to collect documents should be on working days, that is, from Monday to Friday, during working hours, that is, from 9:00AM until Midday.

Thank you for your understanding and collaboration.  
Sister Secretary

## A PLEA FOR MASS INTENTIONS

We use this opportunity to thank you who have been sending Mass Intentions to our Seminary. We appeal for more intentions. Our Seminary has eleven resident Priests, and ten intentions could

be exonerated everyday. Mass Intentions to STAMS could be sent through any Bishop's House or through any member of the STAMS family-Priest or Seminarian. Once the Mass is celebrated, the Mass Offering is used for the upkeep of the Seminary as a whole. Thus, when you send these intentions, besides reaping the assured Spiritual Benefits, you contribute to the upkeep of the Seminary materially. May God continue to bless and reward you for all your kindness towards our House of Formation for future Priests.

**Rev. Fr. Charles BERINYUY SENGKA**  
(Rector)

## A PLEA FROM STAMS LIBRARY

We plead with Priests and Christians to send copies of Sunday Newsletters, Wedding cards, Funeral booklets, Wedding booklets, Invitation cards, Thank You cards, Souvenirs of Religious Professions, Papers, Magazines and any other souvenir cards for preservation in the archive section of the Seminary library. We also use this opportunity to acknowledge, with profound gratitude, having received a good number of these items. However, we remain open to receive even more. You could hand any of these to any member of the STAMS family (priest or seminarian) or, if possible, bring them yourself to the Seminary.

**Fr. Kenneth Ngwobela**  
(Father Librarian)

Dear Readers, we would like to inform you that Subscription Forms for the Searchlight Magazine are now available. To get the form, kindly get to any seminarian from STAMS Bambui and Subscribe for a year or more. Thanks.

## NOTICE! NOTICE!!

Dear brothers and sisters, we would like to remind all those who visit the Seminary, that whenever they come, they should dress decently.





Candidates for

**priostly**

April 2025

## ARCHDIOCESE OF BAMENDA

### REV. BORIS ACHIRI



He was born on the 18th of April 1997 to the family of Mr Achiri Cletus Akeh (RIP) and Mrs Verve Agnes Sivem. He is the second in a family of three. He did Primary Education in Sacred Heart Nursery and Primary school Ekondo Titi (2000-2007). He spent seven years of Secondary Education in St Aloysius' Minor Seminary (SAMS) Kitiwum (2007-2014). After Secondary Education, he was admitted as seminarian for the Archdiocese of Bamenda. He continued formation at the Spiritual Centre, Bafut, (2014/2015), after which he studied of Philosophy for three in SAJOPAMS (2015-2018), and spent a year of pastoral experience in Fuli - Kom (2018/2019).

For his theological studies, after his first three years in STAMS, Bambui (2019-2022), he was given a year of probation which he spent in St Agnes parish Mbessa (2022/2023). After the year of probation, he had to go back to STAMS to complete the fourth year of theological studies, at the end of which he was ordained Deacon by His Grace Andrew Fuanya Nkea, on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2024. He is presently serving as Deacon on diaconal year in Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish Mesaw - Bamunka (2024/2025). Throughout his formation he served as infirmarian, sacristan and refectorian. He is from St. Pius X parish, Akum.

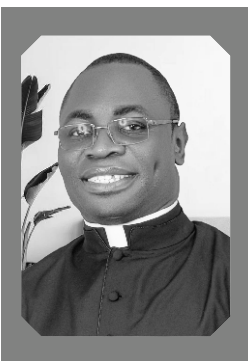
### REV. VALERY DINYUY



He hails from Nso in Bui Division and was born on July 26th 1995. He is the fruit of the marital union of Pa Tobias Lukong and Ma Theresia Kiven. He completed his basic education in C.S. Ngomgham, secondary school in Step-by-Step High School Mankon.

Upon admission to pursue formation towards the ministerial priesthood by His Grace Cornelius F. Esua, the then Archbishop of Bamenda, he was sent to Bishop Rogan College Buea, for a prospective year (2014). Thereafter, he spent a year in Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre in Bafut and was then sent to undergo philosophical studies in Saint John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai, Mamfe. Upon the completion of this in 2019, he had a year of pastoral experience in the Archdiocese of Garoua and was then admitted to continue formation in STAMS Theologicum Bambui. He completed his 4-years of theological studies and was ordained a Deacon for the Archdiocese of Bamenda on June 29th 2024. He is presently serving the Christians of St Paul's Parish Benakuma as a Deacon while awaiting Priestly Ordination.

### REV. COLLINS NGES ANKINIMBOM



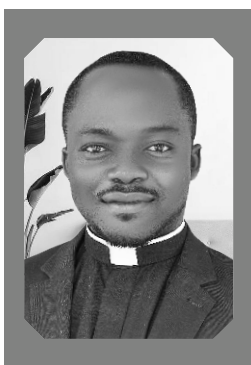
He is the son of Mr. Simon Ngongeh who hails from Awing and Mme Celestina Funkuin who hails from Kom. He was born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of January, 1996 at Njinikom, Boyo Division. He is the only child to the mother. He did Primary Education at St Joseph Primary School Wombong-Ikui, St Joseph Primary School Big-Mankon and St Anthony's Primary School Njinikom, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate in 2007. After Primary Education, he then proceeded to Government High School, Njinikom, where he obtained the Ordinary Level and Advanced Level certificates in 2012 and 2014 respectively. After his Advanced Level, he worked in the Wellness Centre of the St Martin de Porres Catholic Hospital Njinikom for a year. In September 2015, he was admitted by His Grace Cornelius F. Esua, the then Archbishop of Bamenda as a Seminarian for the Archdiocese of Bamenda. He was sent to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Small Soppo, Buea, as a Prospective Major Seminarian for a year. Upon completion of that year, he was admitted to the St John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut, where he spent a year. He then continued with his Philosophical studies in St John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai, Mamfe [2017-2020], where he obtained a Bachelor's degree in philosophy. At the end of his philosophical studies, he was sent for a year of pastoral experience to Our Lady Queen of Peace Comprehensive College Akum. At the end of the year, he gained admission to STAMS, Bambui for theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2024 by His Grace Andrew F. Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda. He has served the Seminary community as; Class co-ordinator, Singing Prefect, Florist and Master of Ceremonies. He will serve the people of God in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

**REV. EUCHERIUS DABIT ACHA**

He was born at Mambu Health Centre – Bafut on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 1997, to the family of Mr. Dabit Ivo Acha and Mrs. Acha Alice Azunta. He hails from Bifang- Widikum. He is the first of four children: three boys, one girl. He did his Primary Education at Sacred Heart Nursery and Primary School Bawum -Bafut. Upon completion, he did his secondary school studies at St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Kitiwum (Kumbo), where he obtained both the G.C.E. Ordinary and Advanced Level Certificates. He was admitted to St. John Mary Vianney Propaedeutic Centre, Bafut, by the then Archbishop of Bamenda His Grace Cornelius Fontem Esua. After this year, he moved to St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo- Ntai (Mamfe) for philosophical studies, where he earned a Bachelor of philosophy Degree (B. Phil). He had a year of pastoral experience at St. Paul's College Nkwen. He then proceeded to STAMS, Bambui where he is presently rounding off Theological Studies. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, he was ordained Deacon for the Archdiocese of Bamenda by His Grace Andrew Fuanya Nkea, Archbishop of Bamenda. While in the Seminary, he served as Chief (Musical) Instrumentalist, Singing Prefect, Path Tender, Animal Farmer and Dormitory Captain. He will serve the people of God in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

**REV. MALACHI ACHAH NGIAH**

Rev. Malachi Achah Ngiah hails from Teze-Ngie Sub Division in a village called Azem. He was born on 04<sup>th</sup> September 1992 into the family of Mr Agome Joseph Ngiah and Mrs Florence Mbaa. He is the first child in a family of 9. He underwent Primary Education in G.S. Gomboh and C.S. Umon where he obtained his F.S.L.C. in 2007. He did his Secondary Education in G.H.S. Widikum and G.B.H.S. Downtown Bamenda where he obtained both his Ordinary and Advanced Level Certificates in 2012 and 2014 respectively. He was admitted to Bishop Rogan College Small Soppo-Buea in 2016 as a prospective Seminarian. In the following year 2017, he moved to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut for a year of spiritual formation. After a year of spiritual formation, he proceeded to St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai-Mamfe for three years of philosophical studies, from 2018-2020. At the end, he was awarded a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. From there, he was sent to All Saints Catholic College Bayelle for a year of pastoral experience in 2021. After his pastoral year experience, he was admitted to STAMS, Bambui in 2022, where he is currently about to complete theological studies. While in the Seminary, he served in the following functions: Reading Master, Canteen Manager, Dormitory Captain, Journalist, Vice Auxiliary and Auxiliary. He loves reading, drawing, jogging and horticulture.

**REV NELSON PEMWOYA GHARWOH**

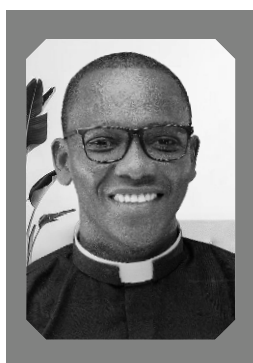
Rev Nelson Pemwoya Gharwoh was born on November 11<sup>th</sup> 1992 at Ikom. He is the third child in the family, born to Mr. Raymond Gharwoh (of blessed memory) and Mrs. Ernestine Mbongioh. He did his elementary education in St Mark's Catholic school, Baba 1, where he had the First School Living Certificate and proceeded to Government High School, Baba 1, where he had his Ordinary Level Certificate and later to Government High School Mbessa where he had his Advanced Level Certificate. He was admitted to Bishop Rogan College, Small Soppo as a Prospective seminarian. In September 2016, he proceeded to St John Mary-Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut for the Propaedeutic year. The following year he was admitted for Philosophical studies in St John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai. Then he had a year of Pastoral experience in the Diocese of Ebolowa. He proceeded to pursue his Theological studies in STAMS, Bambui. He was ordained a Deacon for the Archdiocese of Bamenda on the 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024 by His Grace Andrew Fuanya Nkea Archbishop of Bamenda.

**REV. VALENTINE NGUOH NSANI**

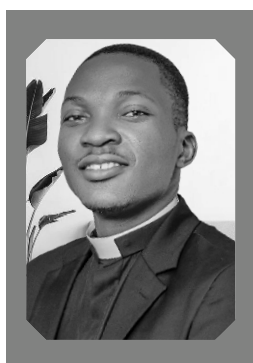
Rev. Valentine NGUOH NSANI was born into the Family of Mr Nsani Sebastine Ntaintian and of Mrs. Nsani Clementina Nchangha (RIP) on 9<sup>th</sup> March 1999, at Mbessa, Belo Sub-Division. He is the fourth in a family of five sons. He did his Primary Education in Saint Agnes Primary School Mbessa from 2001-2008, Secondary School in Comprehensive High School Mbessa from 2008-2013 where he obtained the GCE Ordinary Level Certificate. He continued, for High School studies, at Government High School Mbessa from 2013-2015, and later proceeded to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum (Diocese of Kumbo) where he obtained the GCE Advanced Level Certificate in 2016. From there he proceeded to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut for a year of Spiritual Formation from 2016-2017. From 2017 to 2020, he did Philosophical studies in St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai Mamfe, where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. Thereafter, he went for the Pastoral year experience at St. Clementine Anuarite's Quasi Parish Yemgeh (2020-2021). He was admitted to continue formation in Theological studies in STAMS, Bambui where he has been studying since September 2021. He was ordained Deacon by Archbishop Andrew F. Nkea on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2024. He is currently completing his studies in STAMS, Bambui. He has served the Seminary community as: Dormitory Manager, Classroom Manager, Path Tender, Poultry Farmer, Dormitory Captain, Key-Tag Office Manager, and Sacristan. Some of his hobbies include: reading, writing, journaling, singing, listening to music and gardening. As a priest, he will serve the people of God in the Archdiocese of Bamenda

**REV. WILSON DIANG**

He was born on the 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1996, into the family of the late Mr Augustine Ndi and Mrs. Beltha Ndum. He is the eldest, alongside his twin brother, among five siblings (three boys and two girls), one of whom has returned to the Lord. He did his Primary Education in CS Balikumato-Njinikom. He then proceeded to St. Maria Goretti Comprehensive High School Njinikom, and Jua Memorial College Njinikom where he obtained the Ordinary Level Certificate in 2013 and finally obtained his Advanced Level Certificate in GBHS Atiela Nkwen in 2015. He was admitted to Bishop Rogan College Small - Soppo Buea as a prospective seminarian. In September 2016, he gained admission to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut. In September 2017, he was admitted to Saint John Paul II Major Seminary, Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe, where he did three years of Philosophical studies, obtaining a Bachelor of Philosophy Degree in 2020. He was sent for a year of Pastoral experience to Paroisse Notre Dame De Fatima Nko'ovos in the diocese of Ebolowa. Upon completion, he gained admission to STAMS *Theologicum* Bambui in 2021. He was ordained a Deacon by His Grace, Andrew F. Nkea, on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at St. Joseph's Cathedral, Big-Mankon. While in the Seminary, he served the community as Classroom Manager, Path Tender, Shoe Mender and Labour Coordinator (for three years). He will serve in the Archdiocese of Bamenda.

**REV. KEN-EMMANUEL BAWALA**

Rev. Ken-Emmanuel BAWALA was born on 7th December 1996 in Bangui (Central African Republic), into the family of the late Mr. Gaston BAWALA and Mrs. Germaine SONGOLOWANE. He is the seventh in a family of eight. He did his Nursery school in Ecole St Charles de Lakouaga (Bangui) and Divine Providence de Gobongo (Bangui). He did his Primary Education at Ecole St Kizito de Bégoua (CAR) from 2002-2009. He attended the secondary school in Petit Séminaire St Marcel de Sibut (CAR) from 2009-2013, and Moyen Séminaire St Paul des Rapides (Bangui) from 2013-2016. He was later admitted to Grand Séminaire Propédeutique St Joseph de Bimbo (CAR) from 2016-2017, and eventually he was admitted to Grand Séminaire St Marc Bangui-Bimbo (CAR), where he studied philosophy for three years, from 2017-2020. After his degree programme in Philosophy, he was asked by His Eminence Dieudonné Cardinal NZAPALAINGA, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bangui, to go and continue formation in Bamenda (Cameroon), where he had a Pastoral year experience at St Edmund Quasi Parish, Mulang from 2020-2021. After that year, he was admitted to STAMS, Bambui to continue his formation in Theology from 2021-2025. He was ordained as Deacon on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024, by His Grace Andrew Fuanya NKEA, Metropolitan Archbishop of Bamenda. He has served in his Seminary days as Librarian. He often helped the Seminary as driver. He likes reading, sports (football) and music. He will serve the people of God in the Archdiocese of Bamenda for some years before going back to Bangui (CAR), his diocese of origin.

**REV. VIANNEY-MARTIAL DORO-NZINRINTOU**

He was born on September 21, 1996, in Castors, Bangui (CAR), to Mr. David Dorogeretou (RIP) and Mrs. Martina Dorogeretou (RIP). He is the fourth child and the only son among nine siblings. He completed his elementary education at École Mixte de Boyali (2002–2008) and attended Collège de Boali for secondary school, where he obtained the Brevet des Collèges (BC) in 2013. He then studied at St. Paul's Minor Seminary, Bangui (2013–2016), earning the Baccalauréat A4'. Following this, he spent a year at St. Joseph's Spiritual Centre (2016–2017). From 2017 to 2020, he pursued Philosophy at St. Marc's Major Seminary, Bangui-Bimbo. He completed his Pastoral Year at St. John the Baptist Parish, Ntaghem (Bamenda) before being ordained on June 29, 2024, in Bamenda. He is currently in his fourth year of Theology at STAMS, Bambui.



## DIOCESE OF BUEA



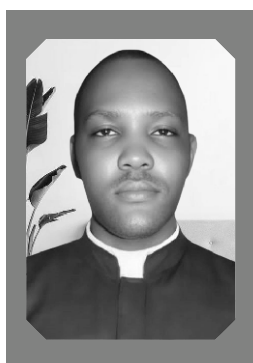
### REV. DIEUDONNE AMBE

He was born in Mutengene on the 5<sup>th</sup> of May 1993. He is the second child of Mr Suh Ngwa Peter of blessed memory and Mrs Josephine Ngum. He attended Catholic primary school Mutengene and did his Secondary and High School studies in FETCOL Mutengene and PCHS Mankon – Bamenda. In 2014, he moved to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Small Soppo – Buea as a prospective Major Seminarian. From there, he continued formation at the St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre in Bafut, after which, for three years, he did his philosophical Degree studies at St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai Mamfe. At the end of his Philosophical studies, he was sent to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Small Soppo – Buea for a year of Pastoral Experience. He was later admitted to STAMS, Bambui – Bamenda where he did his Theological studies for four years. In the course of his formation, he was a gardener and a refectorian. After his Seminary formation, he was appointed to serve as a Parish Deacon at St. John of God Parish Bonadikombo Mile 4, Limbe where he is currently serving.



### REV. ERIC AFONGANG

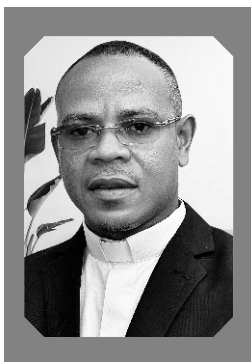
Born on 28 September 1996, Afongang Eric Njimukala is the son of Mr. Chita Stephen and Mrs. Akwo Mary. He did his Nursery and Primary Education in Catholic School Misselele, Full Gospel Bilingual Nursery and Primary School Penda Mboko, and Full Gospel Bilingual Nursery and Primary school Muyuka. He did his secondary school in Bishop Rogan College-Minor Seminary Small Soppo – Buea, culminating with him obtaining his G.C.E. Ordinary Level and G.C.E. Advanced Level certificates in 2013 and 2015 respectively. On 22 September 2015, he began studies in the St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut as a candidate for the diocese of Buea. From 30 October 2016 to June 2019, he did philosophical studies in St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo – Ntai, Mamfe, where he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. From September 14, 2019, to 28 June 2020, he served at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral Parish, Molyko – Buea, as a seminarian on Pastoral Experience. From 16 October 2020 to 21 June 2024, he did his theological studies at STAMS, Bambui. He was ordained a Deacon on 29 June 2024 at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral, Molyko – Buea by Mgr. Michael Bibi, Bishop of Buea. He currently works in Bishop Rogan College – Minor Seminary, Small Soppo, alongside occupying the responsibility of Associate Editor-in-chief of *Cameroon Panorama Magazine*. While in the Seminary, he occupied the following posts of responsibility: Librarian, Journalist, Sacristan, Refectorian, Florist, Website Manager, Searchlight Magazine Editor-in-chief, STAMS Bambui History Committee, Secretary to STAMS Bambui Golden Jubilee Steering Committee. His hobbies are: reading, writing, publishing, outdoor sports, research, teaching. He will be ordained a priest for the Diocese of Buea.



### REV. RAYMOND DZELAMONYUY VERSHIYI

He is the first of eleven children, one of whom is of late. He was born on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 1988 at Tiko. He is a native of Nso. He started schooling at St. Benedict Nursery School Mudeka, which now is extinct. From there he went to Cameroon Baptist Convention Primary School (C.B.C.), Great Soppo Buea, and later on came back to continue schooling at Government Primary School (G.S.), Mudeka where he had his First School Leaving Certificate, and after he was admitted to Government Technical High School (G.T.H.S.), Molyko Buea, and later on went to school at Government Technical High School (G.T.H.S.), Meluf-Nso. Later on, he switched to St. Peter's Comprehensive Catholic College, Kumbo-Nso, Government Bilingual High School (G.B.H.S.), Mudeka, St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary Kitiwum. After Secondary and High School, he went to the University of Bamenda and spent a year there and from there he applied as a P.T.A. teacher in G.B.H.S. Mudeka and taught Biology and Chemistry for a year. The following year he applied to begin formation to the Major Seminary under Buea Diocese in the 2014/2015 Academic year. He did his Prospective year at Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary, Small Soppo-Buea, Spiritual Year at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut, his philosophical studies at St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe. He did his Pastoral Year at St. Laetitia Parish Tiko-Douala Road and his theological studies at STAMS, Bambui. He was sent to St. Martin de Porres Parsh Likomba-Tiko as Deacon. He will serve as a priest in the Diocese of Buea.





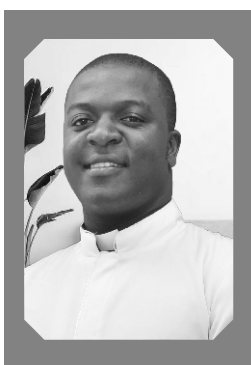
#### REV. BERTRAND NOSIMBANG WKABOPI

He was born on July 21, 1996, to Mrs. Janet Nosimbang Mapepuh. His educational journey began in Tombel. In September 2015, he was admitted into the seminary by Bishop Immanuel Bushu, then Bishop of the Diocese of Buea. From 2015 to 2016, he completed a prospective year at St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary, Kitiwum. The following year (2016–2017), he proceeded to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut, for his Spiritual Year. From 2017 to 2020, he pursued Philosophical Studies at St. John Paul II Major Seminary, Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe, where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. In 2020–2021, his Bishop, Michael M. Bibi, assigned him to Holy Family Parish, New Town-Limbe, for a year of Pastoral Experience. Upon completing his pastoral year, in September 2021, he was sent to STAMS, Bambui, to continue his Theological Studies. On June 29, 2024, he was ordained a Deacon by Mgr. Michael Bibi for the Diocese of Buea. Throughout his seminary formation, he has served in various capacities, including sacristan, dormitory manager, dormitory captain, museum manager, infirmarian, and refectorian. He is now preparing to serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.



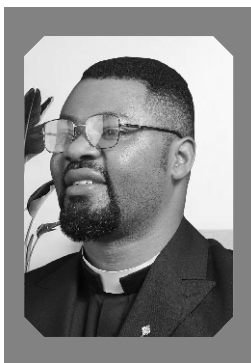
#### REV. CYRIL SANGNYUY KIRAN

He was born on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March, 1994 at Bota – Limbe, to Mr. Mengnjo Peter Kuhvekiseng and Mrs. Mainimo Relindis. From the year 1997 to 2005, he did his Nursery and Primary Education at St. Philomena Catholic Nursery and Primary School, New Town, Limbe where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate. He did his Secondary and High School at Government Bilingual High School (G.B.H.S.) Limbe, where he obtained his G.C.E. Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Certificates in 2010 and 2012 respectively. He gained admission into the University of Buea in 2012, precisely in the Faculty of Social and Management Science, where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Banking and Finance in 2015. In September 2015, he was admitted to the Seminary by Bishop Immanuel Bushu, the then Bishop of Buea. From 2015 to 2016, he did a Prospective year at St. Aloysius Minor Seminary, Kitiwum. From 2016 to 2017, he moved to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut for a Spiritual Year. From 2017 to 2020, he studied Philosophy at St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo – Ntai, Mamfe where he obtained a degree in philosophy. From 2020 to 2021, he was sent by Bishop Michael Bibi for a year of Pastoral experience at St. Laetitia Parish, Tiko – Douala Road. Upon completion of the Pastoral year, in 2021, he gained admission to STAMS, Bambui to begin theological studies. At the end of his third year of theology, he was ordained a Deacon by Bishop Michael M. BiBi at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral, Molyko Buea. While in the Seminary, he served in different capacities – Animal Farmer, Farmer, Editor of the *Searchlight* Magazine, Reading Master, Assistant Editor-in-chief of *Searchlight* Magazine, and Editor-in-chief of the same Magazine. He enjoys reading good books, listening to music, public speaking, watching educative movies and sports. As a priest, he will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.



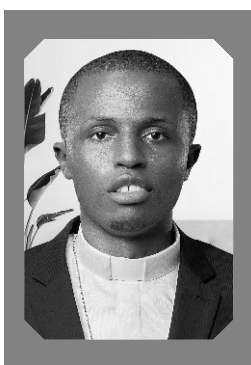
#### REV. EDWIN AZONG AKWO

He was born on 17<sup>th</sup> January 1996, to Mr. Azongho Lucas (R.I.P) and Mrs. Ekei Patricia. He hails from Wum in the Menchum Division of the North West Region. He attended G.S Zongho-fuh and later on moved to Buea where he completed his Primary Education in G.S Mile 16 Bolifamba. He attended G.S.S Bolifamba (Present-day G.H.S), where he obtained the Ordinary Level Certificate. He moved over to B.G.S (Lycee Molyko-Buea) for High School and obtained his Advanced Level Certificate. After High School, he applied to become a priest in the Diocese of Buea. In September 2015, he was sent to St. Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum-Kumbo to begin formation as a Prospective Seminarian. His then Bishop, Mgr. Immanuel BUSHU, Emeritus of Buea, later sent him to continue formation in the St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut. Having finished from the spiritual year, he was sent to St. John Paul II Major Seminary (SAJOPAMS) Bachuo-Ntai in Mamfe for three years philosophical studies. After his Bachelor's in Philosophy, his Bishop, Mgr. Michael BIBI sent him on pastoral experience to St. Paul's College Bonjongo-Limbe for a year. In September 2021, he was sent to STAMS, Bambui where he is presently studying Theology. He was ordained Deacon on Saturday, 29<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral Molyko-Buea by His Lordship Michael BIBI, Bishop of Buea. While in STAMS, he served as Barber, Dormitory Captain and Head of the Technical Department. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.



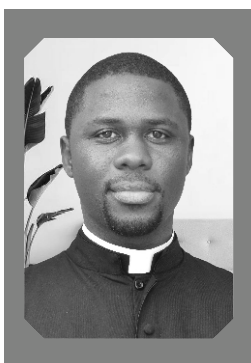
#### REV. FIDELIS NZEGWU ANYANWU

He was born on the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 1994 into the family of Mr. and Mrs. Dominic UGWUEZE ANYANWU. He hails from Umudureze Okrika-Mweke Umueavu, Imo State Nigeria. He was born in Muea-Buea Fako Division Cameroon. He is the third in a family of six (2 girls and 4 boys). He did his Primary Education in G.P.S GROUP I Muea-Buea. He obtained his Ordinary Level in 2013 and Advanced Level Certificate in 2015, both in Government Bilingual High School (G.B.H.S) Muea-Buea. He gained admission to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum-Kumbo after High School as a Prospective Seminarian in the 2015/2016 academic year. He was later admitted into the St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut, in the year 2016/2017, and eventually he was admitted into Saint John Paul II Major Seminary (SAJOPAMS) Bachuo-Ntai Mamfe in 2017/2018 where he obtained his degree in Philosophy (2019/2020). After his degree program in Philosophy, he went on Pastoral year experience at St. Therese of the Child Jesus Parish Yoke-Muyuka in 2020/2021. After that year he was granted admission to STAMS, Bambui-Bamenda for a four years degree programme in Theology that is ongoing. On June 29<sup>th</sup> 2024, he was ordained a Deacon at the Divine Mercy Co-Cathedral Molyko-Buea by His Lordship, Michael MIABESUE BIBI, Bishop of Buea. While in the Seminary, he served as Refectorian, Canteen Manager, Lawn Manager, Dormitory Manager, Farm Manager, Dormitory Captain and Class Prefect of Theology IV. He enjoys tourism, site seeing, playing football, Basketball and loves reading, prayer and quiet moments, and he is interested in outdoor activities. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.



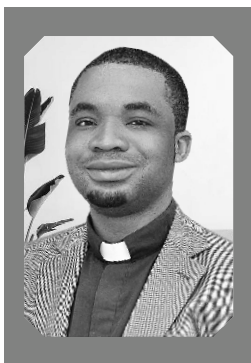
#### REV. IDRISTIANJI AWUNG

He hails from A' Touck Village/ Menji-Fontem SouthWest Region, Cameroon. He was born on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1996 into the family of Mr. AWUNG Stephen Assah and Mrs. Theresia Nyiawung Amin (R.I.P). He is the first among three girls and two boys. He did his Primary Education in Government Primary School Mile four Bonadikombo Limbe. He then proceeded to Government High School (GHS) Limbe, where he obtained both his Ordinary Level and Advanced Level Certificates. In September 2015, he was admitted to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum-Kumbo (SAMS) as a Prospective Seminarian, by Bishop Immanuel Bushu, Emeritus Bishop of Buea. The following year, he was admitted for a year of Propaedeutic Formation in St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre Bafut. In 2017, he was admitted to St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai Mamfe for his Philosophical Studies. After three years of Philosophical Studies, He was sent to Sacred Heart Parish Bomaka, for a year of Pastoral Experience. Thereafter, he was admitted to continue formation in STAMS, Bambui where he is currently doing his Theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, by His Lordship Mgr. Michael Bibi, the Bishop of the Diocese of Buea. During his stay in the Seminary, he served the Seminary Community as; Sacristan, Master of Ceremonies, Dormitory Captain, Class Manager, Librarian, Editor of Searchlight Magazine and Website Manager. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.



#### REV. JAVIS BOU EBUA

He was born to Pius Eboa Kebei (RIP) and Ekei Rose Mih on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 1997 in Limbe. He was brought up in the early stages of his life in Limbe by his mother. He began his Primary Education at G.S. Bota, Group II (for two years) and completed at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic School Bota, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate. He was admitted into G.B.H.S. Limbe but after five years, he relocated to Wum, and was admitted into G.H.S. Wum, where he completed his Secondary and High School Studies and obtained his O/L and A/L Certificates. Upon completion from High School, he applied to be formed as a priest for the Diocese of Buea. In September 2015, he was sent by His Lordship Msgr. Immanuel Bushu, Bishop Emeritus of Buea, to St. Aloysius' Minor Seminary Kitiwum – Diocese of Kumbo as a Prospective Seminarian. A year after, he proceeded to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut. Thereafter, he continued to St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe where he did three years of Philosophical Studies and obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy. After a year of Pastoral Experience at St. Cornelius Parish Bonduma, Buea, assigned by His Lordship Msgr. Michael Bibi, he gained admission into STAMS, Bambui, where he is currently studying Theology. While in the Seminary, he served as a Florist, Sacristan, member of the Technical Department, secretary to the Seminary Council, Class Coordinator and Librarian.

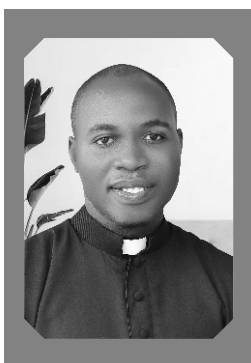
**REV. KYRIAN NNADI**

He was born in Kombone on the 31<sup>st</sup> August 1995. He is the last child of Mr. Hyginus Nnadi of blessed memory and Mrs. Maria Nnadi. He did elementary education in Government Primary School Kombone-Bakundu, Group 2, (class 1) and completed in Catholic School Kwa-kwa, where he obtained his First School Leaving Certificate. He did his Secondary school studies in G.H.S Kombone-Bakundu where he obtained the G.C.E Ordinary Level certificate. From there he moved to Saint Aloysius' Minor Seminary Kitiwum, Diocese of Kumbo, and obtained the G.C.E Advanced Level. He was admitted to study in the Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut, after which he went on to study Philosophy in Saint John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe, where he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. At the end of his philosophical studies, he was sent for a year of pastoral experience to Holy Trinity Parish Malende. He was later admitted to Saint Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary Bambui-Bamenda, where he is currently completing his studies. He was ordained Deacon for the Diocese of Buea, by His Lordship Michael M. Bibi, Bishop of Buea on 29<sup>th</sup> June, 2024. He has served the Seminary community in the following capacities; Librarian, Assistant Class Coordinator, and infirmarian. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Buea.

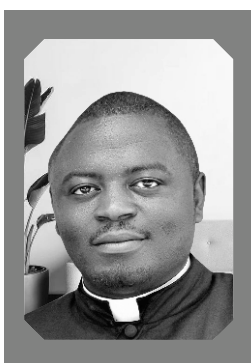
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## DIOCESE OF KUMBO

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**REV. NSAI BERTRAND VIBAN**

He was born in the Family of Mr Nsai Mathias on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 1993, in Mbiame. He hails from Mbiame - a Sub division situated about 28km South East of Kumbo town, Bui Division in the North West Region of Cameroon. His mother is Mrs Binir Prudentia. He is the tenth in the Family of thirteen. He spent the whole of his childhood with his Father's elder sister Mama Beatrice Ndzeayuar Lukong. He attended primary school at St. Therese Catholic School, Kumbo, where he obtained his First School leaving Certificate, from 1998 to 2005. He did his Secondary Education in G.B.H.S Kumbo where he obtained his G.C.E Ordinary Level in 2010. He had his G.C.E.A. Level in 2011. He is a holder of a Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Buea in 2014. He was admitted to SAMS Kitiwum as a Prospective Seminarian in 2015 where he also assisted as a History teacher. In 2016 he was admitted to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut. He moved to St. John Paul II Major Seminary, Bachuo-Ntai where he obtained a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy in 2019. He did his pastoral experience in Our Lady of Mount Carmel Pastoral Zone Nwa in 2018. In 2019 he was admitted to STAMS, Bambui for Theological Studies. Upon completion of third year of Studies he was Ordained Deacon on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> July by Mgr. George Nkuo. He served the Seminary as Aula Manager, Pastoral Coordinator, STAMS F.M Member. He is in his last year of theological studies in STAMS-Bambui. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumbo.

**REV. COLBERT DZELAMONYUY FONYE**

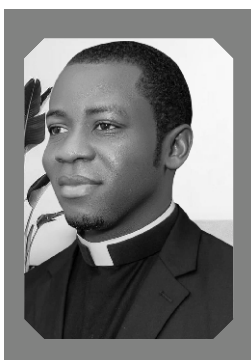
He was born on 17<sup>th</sup> February 1993, to the family of Mr. Fonye Dominic Wirngo (RIP) and Mrs Joan-Mary Leinyuy. He is the second out of three children. He did his Primary Education in C.S. Nghomgam, C.S. Rifem-Mbiame, and P.S. Mah. He did his Secondary Education in St Pius X Catholic College, Tatum and his High School in St Mary's Comprehensive High School, Ndop. After his Advance Level, he went to Teachers Training College, Tatum. Thereafter, he was admitted to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Buea for prospective year, from there he moved to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut for one year, after which he went to SAJOPAMS Bachuo Ntai for philosophical studies. He had a year of pastoral experience in Sts. Peter and Paul Pastoral Zone, Ntaba/Mbonso. After the Pastoral Year he went to STAMS, Bambui for theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Kumbo on 04<sup>th</sup> July 2024 by Mgr. George Nkuo. He is from Christ the King Pastoral Zone, Rifem-Mbiame. He is a man who loves silence.

## DIOCESE OF MAMFE



### REV. BENAZIA ALEMNGU

Benazia ALEMNGU was born on October 09, 1989 in Lekong-Fontem, Lebialem Division. He is the last son of Mr Francis Alemngu and Mme Atabongankeng Mary. He had his Nursery Education from 1992-1994 in Government Bilingual Nursery School (GBNS) Yaoundé and his Primary Education from 1995-2002 in Government Bilingual Primary School Yaoundé (GBPS). In October 2002 he gained admission into Government Bilingual High School (GBHS) Essos-Yaounde, where he obtained the G.C.E Ordinary level and Advanced Level Certificates in 2007 and 2009 respectively. He later moved on to the University of Buea, where he obtained a Degree in Zoology, with a Minor in Environmental Science from 2009-2013. He was admitted to begin formation for the priesthood in Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary Small Soppo- Buea (BIROCOL) in September 2014 as a Prospective Seminarian. In September 2015, he was admitted into Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Formation Centre, Bafut. In October 2016, he was admitted into Saint John Paul II Major Seminary (SAJOPAMS), Bachou-Ntai, Mamfe, where he studied Philosophy for three years. Thereafter, in 2019, upon completion of his Philosophical Studies, he left for a year of Pastoral Experience at Our Lady of Fatima Cathedral Parish Eseka. In September 2020, he was admitted into STAMS, Bambui, he did theological studies. While in formation he served as librarian, archivist and farmer. He was ordained a Deacon for the diocese of Mamfe on the 29 of June 2024 by Bishop Aloysius Abangalo. After his theological studies, he was appointed as parish Deacon to Eyomujock Parish. He enjoys going for treks, reading, playing volleyball and listening music. He will serve the people of the diocese of Mamfe as priest.

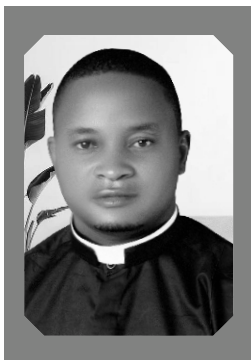


### REV. BENSINYO ALARM

Alarm Bensinyo a native of Ballin village was born in Akwaya on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1996 to Mr Ngusha Lucas Alarm (a native from Ballin) and Kili Winifreda Ghenyo of blessed memory (a native of Lassin, Noni Subdivision, North West Region). He studied in Saint Joseph Catholic Primary School Akwaya from 2000 to 2007. Upon completion, he entered form one in Government High School Akwaya in 2007/2008 Academic Year and moved to Ballin from form two to form five from 2008 to 2012 where he had his GCE Ordinary Level in Government Secondary School Ballin. He went to Longla Comprehensive High School Mankon - Bamenda where he had his Advanced Level Certificate from 2012 to 2014. After the advanced level he taught in Government Secondary School Ballin for a year while assisting in the parish before he began formation to the Ministerial Priesthood. Upon admission by His Grace Andrew Nkea the then Bishop of the Diocese of Mamfe in 2015, he was sent to Saint Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum for the Prospective Year and he served the community as a sacristan. In 2016/2017 academic year he did the Spiritual Year in Saint John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre in Bafut and again during this year he was a sacristan in the Spiritual Centre. He studied in Saint John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai from 2017 to 2020 where he had a Bachelor's Degree in Philosophy and throughout his stay in the Philosophicum, he served as a sacristan. He did his Pastoral Year experience in Notre Dame De Providence Ambam in the Diocese of Ebolowa, South Region of Cameroon. He was admitted into STAMS, Bambui from 2021 for theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon for the diocese of Mamfe by His Lordship Mgr Aloysius Abangalo on the 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2024. In STAMS he has been a Refectorian from theology one to theology four.

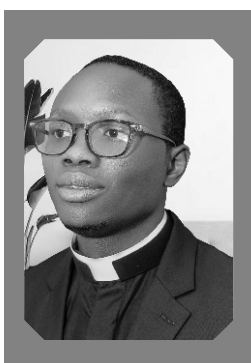


## DIOCESE OF KUMBA



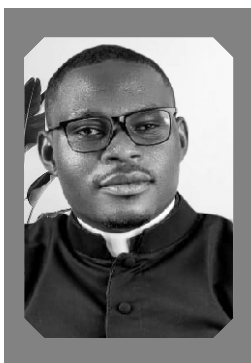
### REV. BERTRAND NGWEMBA NGWEMBA

Ngwemba Bertrand Ngwemba was born in the family of Ngwemba Joseph (RIP) and Muche Lydia (RIP). He is a native of Babungo, North West Region and was born on the 14<sup>th</sup> August 1991 in Babungo Village. He is the second child in a family of four. He did his primary studies in St. Mary's Catholic School Babungo, from the year 1996 to 2004. He later on moved to Kumba in 2007 where, he became a Butcher and sold Cow Meat at Fiango Market. After two years, he returned to school at C.C.H.S Kumba. He later on went to Tiko where, he obtained his G.C.E Ordinary Level at Christ the King evening School in 2012. He did his High School at Bilingual Academy of Arts and Science Kumba (BAASK), and obtained his Advanced Level Certificate in 2014. He was admitted into the Society of St. Joseph Mill Hill Missionaries, Bamenda in 2014. He spent one year in basic formation and three years of Philosophical studies at the Catholic University of Cameroon, Bamenda. (CATUC), where he obtained his first Degree in Philosophy, and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2019, he was accepted for temporary Oaths. He was sent for theological studies to Nairobi, Kenya where, he did two Years of theological studies at the Tangaza University College Kenya. He returned to Cameroon where he felt more inclined to become a Diocesan priest. He was accepted in 2022 by the Diocese of Kumba and was sent for Pastoral Year at St. Paul's Parish Mundemba, and was later sent to the STAMS, Bambui to complete his theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon on the 4<sup>th</sup> July 2024 and was sent to work as parish Deacon at Isangele, Bakassi. He will serve the people of the diocese of Kumba as priest.



### REV. BERTRAND WOBGA SAMGWA

He was born on 12 December 1998 in Mutengene. Born of Mr. Che George and Mrs. Samgwa Isabella. He did his Primary Education in Catholic School Buea Station where he had his First School Leaving Certificate. He later gained admission into Bishop Rogan College in September 2009, where he obtained the G.C.E. Ordinary and Advanced levels in 2014 and 2016 respectively. The following year, he moved over to St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre Bafut. In 2017, he started his philosophical studies in St. John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai – Mamfe, where he earned a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. He had a year of Pastoral experience in St. Martin De Porres Parish Bekora. He then proceeded to STAMS, Bambui to pursue his Theological studies. On July 4, 2024, he was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Kumba by His Lordship Agapitus Nfon. He served the Seminary in the following capacities: Dormitory Manager, Path Tender, Class Prefect, Instrumentalist and Chief Singing Prefect. He will serve the people of God in the diocese of Kumba.



### REV. EMMANUEL ETONE NJUMBE

He was born on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1995 in Nyandong to the late Mr. Charles Akume and Mrs. Agnes Muke Njumbe. He attended Catholic School Nyandong from 2002-2008. He proceeded to Bishop Rogan Minor Seminary from the year 2008-2014 where he obtained his Ordinary Level Certificate. He later spent High School at St. Joseph College Sasse-Buea where he spent two academic years from 2014-2016 and obtained his Advanced Level Certificate. He was admitted as a Seminarian for the Diocese of Kumba to begin formation for the ministerial Priesthood by Mgr. Agapitus Nfon. He studied at St. John Mary Vianney Spiritual Centre, Bafut in the year 2016-2017. After that year, he was admitted to St John Paul II Major Seminary Mamfe where he spent three years of Philosophical studies from 2017-2020. He later did a year of pastoral experience at St. Paul's Parish Mundemba in 2020/2021. He is currently undergoing formation at St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary-Bambui. He was ordained Deacon on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2024 by Mgr. Agapitus Nfon. He served the Seminary as a Sacristan, Gardener, Dormitory Captain, and currently serving as Head of the Infirmary Department. He enjoys playing football and a lover of good music and prayer. He will serve the people of God in the Diocese of Kumba.



### REV. JOACHIM ELAH BELLE

He was born on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1997 in Ebonji-Tombel to the family of Mr. Ignatius Ebwelle Elah (RIP) and Mrs. Lilian Ahone Mponge. He is the first child of three (two boys, one girl). He did his Primary Education in C.S Ebonji. He did his Secondary Education in G.H.S Ebonji, where he obtained his G.C.E O/ Level in 2013 and G.C.E A/ Level in 2015. He began his formation to the priesthood as a prospective seminarian in St. Aloysius Minor Seminary Kitiwum in 2015 and then proceeded to the Spiritual Formation Centre Bafut in 2016. He did three years of Philosophical studies in SAJOPAMS Bachuo Ntai. In 2020, he was sent for a Pastoral Year experience in St. Peter Claver Parish New Town, Barombi. He then continued his formation in STAMS, Bambui where he is currently doing his Theological studies. He was ordained a Deacon for the Diocese of Kumba on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July 2024, by His Lordship Agapitus Nfon. He has occupied the following functions in the Seminary: Car Washer, Sports' Prefect, Librarian, Gardener, Animal Farmer, Path Tender, Farmer and Time Keeper. He loves sports, especially football and listening to music.



**REV. SEBASTIAN NEBA**

He was born on April 30, 1993 to Mr. Evaristus Ngwa and Mrs. Winifred Neh. This was at Pamol Hospital Lobe. He is the first child of their marriage, and has four siblings. He spent his early years in Bekora Barombi, where he attended Government School (G.S.) Bekora (1997-2004) and had his First School Leaving Certificate. He then moved to Bamenda and studied in P.C.H.S. Mankon (2004-2011) from where he obtained his O/L and A/L Certificates. He proceeded to study Software Engineering at the Faculty of Engineering and Technology of the University of Buea (2011-2015), and obtained from there a degree (BEng.) in Software Engineering. He started priestly formation with a Prospective Year in Saint Aloysius' Minor Seminary (S.A.M.S) Kitiwum (2015-2016). He spent the next academic year (2016-2017) at the Vianney Centre, Bafut. The next three years (2017-2020) were spent at St. John Paul II Major Seminary, Bachuo-Ntai, Mamfe, from where he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy. Simultaneously, he obtained a degree in Philosophy from CATUC Bamenda. He spent the 2020-2021 academic year working at St. John the Evangelist Parish, Kumba Town and Sacred Heart College (SAHECCOL) Fiango. From there, he moved to St. Thomas Aquinas' Major Seminary (S.T.A.M.S) Bambui, where he is currently studying for a degree in Theology. He was ordained Deacon on 4<sup>th</sup> of July, 2024 by Mgr Agapitus Nfon, Bishop of Kumba. In the course of his priestly formation, he served as Photocopy Manager, Secretariat Manager, Music Prefect, Editor of *Searchlight* Magazine, Internet Lab manager, and coach of the STAMS Football team.

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## FRANCISCAN CAPUCHINS (OFM. CAP)

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**Br. KENSO IGNATIUS NYUYDINI OFM Cap**

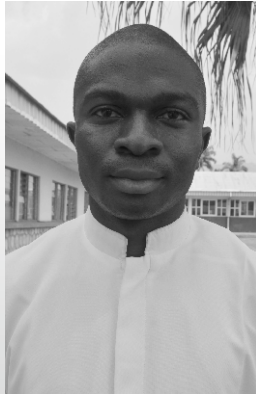
KENSO IGNATIUS NYUYDINI was born in Mbouda, West Region of Cameroon on the 11th February 1992 as the fourth child to Kenso Valentine and Nga Eucharia Lambiv. He did his Primary Education in GBPS Mbouda from 1995/96 - 2001/02 academic year. Then he proceeded to GBHS Mbouda from 2002/03 - 2009/10 Academic year. After his Advanced level, he moved to the university for 2yrs and was admitted to begin his formation as a postulant in the Order of the Friars Minor Capuchin in 2012. In 2015 he did his first profession of religious vows. Then he moved to Bambui where he spent 2 years of post-novitiate experience. After this experience, he was admitted to study Philosophy in 2017 at the St John Paul II Major Seminary Bachuo Ntai from where he completed in 2020 with a Baccalaureat in Philosophy from the said institution and a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from CATUC Bamenda. He was then admitted to theological studies in STAMS, Bambui where he studied from 2020 - 2024. He was ordained a Deacon on December 2, 2023 in the Capuchin friary of Bambui by his Lordship Bishop Angelo Pagano, Apostolic Vicar of Harar in Ethiopia. Till date, he has been exercising and serving the Church as a Deacon in Sacred Heart Parish Shisong - Kumbo Diocese.

**Br. THADDEUS ESOPÉ MOSSEU OFM cap**

Thaddeus Esope MOSSEU was born on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January in Muyuka district hospital, to the family of Pa. Godefroy MOSSEU of blessed memory, and Ma. Subin Victorime. He is the second child in a family of six, five boys and a girl. He attended the Saint John's Catholic primary school Ikata in Muyuka sub-Division in the South West Region of Cameroon, after his first school leaving certificate, he was enrolled in the Government Bilingual secondary school Muyuka from 2003-2008, then he was later transferred to Government High School Bokwaongo -Buea where he had his ordinary level certificate and advanced level certificate in 2010 and 2012 respectively. After his advance level in 2012, he was admitted into the Capuchin postulancy in Shisong in the Diocese of Kumbo, where he did two years of postulancy, then was admitted to the Novitiate in 2014. In 2017 he was admitted in the Saint John Paul II major Seminary Bachuo-Ntai where he did his Philosophical studies and obtained a Bachelor's degree in Philosophy from the Seminary and at the same time from the Catholic University of Cameroon (CATUC) in Bamenda affiliate to the university of Bamenda in 2020. In 2021, he began his theological studies in STAMS, Bambui, and while studying, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of August 2022, he did his final profession in the Saint Francis of Assisi conventual chapel Bambui-Bamenda, and on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of December 2023, he was ordained Deacon in the Capuchin friary Bambui by Mgr. Angelo Pagano (Apostolic Vicar of Harar-Ethiopia). Upon finishing his theological studies in STAMS Bambui, he was sent for a diaconal year in the Paroisse Sainte Famille de Bayon in the Diocese of Bafang in the West Region of Cameroon where he is serving till date. He loves playing and watching football, reading and chatting.



**Paul OBASHI ETTA**  
Theology II



**Peter FANBOYE KWE**  
Theology II

# PRINCIPLES OF LITURGICAL INCULTURATION IN *SACROSANCTUM CONCILIUM*

## INTRODUCTION

The Second Vatican Council which held from 1962 to 1965 considered the centrality of the Liturgy in the life of the Church. It is for this reason that the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* was published by the Council on 4 December 1963. The concept of inculturation is mentioned in this document as it points out its contribution to the spreading of the Gospel. The Sacred Liturgy and Inculturation have a common goal which is the promotion of Gospel values. As far as inculturation is concerned, some important aspects like respect for cultural heritage, active participation and unity in diversity ought, to be considered.

### 1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

There are basically three elements which serve as the general principles of inculturation. These are: the goal of inculturation, substantial unity of the Roman Rite, and the competent authority.

#### 1.1. Goal of Inculturation

The goal of inculturation is to promote Gospel values. In order for this to be achieved in the liturgy of the Roman Rite, both texts and rites should be drawn up so that they express more clearly the holy things they signify, so that the Christian people as far as possible may be able to understand them with ease and to take part in the celebration fully, actively and as befits a community. (Cfr VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 21).

#### 1.2. Substantial Unity of the Roman Rite

In the process of fostering liturgical inculturation, the substantial unity of the Roman Rite must be maintained. This means that the rubrics should be followed scrupulously so as to avoid

liturgical aberrations which are very common in the liturgy today. Inculturation responds to the needs of a particular culture and leads to adaptations which are still part of the Roman Rite. (Cfr CONGREGATION FOR THE DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS, *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation*, n. 36).

#### 1.3. Competent Authority

Concessions granted to one region cannot be extended to other regions without the necessary authorization, even if an Episcopal Conference considers that there are sufficient reasons for adopting such measures in its own area. (Cfr *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation*, n. 37). Recourse to competent authority is therefore very essential in this regard.

### 2. POSSIBLE APPLICATIONS

There are many ways in which the general principles of inculturation can be applied. These include the following:

#### 2.1. Language

In fostering inculturation, the language which is understandable by the people must be considered. This is because the Gospel makes more meaning when brought to the people in their own language. The language must express along with truths of the faith, the grandeur and holiness of the mysteries which are being celebrated. As a principal means of communication between people its purpose in liturgical celebrations is to announce to the faithful the good news of salvation and to express the Church's prayer to the Lord. In the process of liturgical inculturation, careful considerations need to be given to determine which elements in the language of the people can properly be introduced into liturgical celebrations. (Cfr

*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 39).

## **2.2. Music/Singing**

In the follow up of the implementation of inculturation, care must be taken as to which song is suited to the liturgy. The liturgy is a sacred work in the Church and the music in the liturgy must have a sound theological meaning, not that which is infested with doctrinal error. A text which is sung is more deeply engraved in the memory than when it is read (Cfr *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation*, n. 40).

## **2.3. Respect for Cultural Heritage**

In her liturgy, the Church does not impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not involve the faith or the good of the whole community but rather, she does respect and foster the qualities and talents of the various races and nations. Also, in order to show that respect for cultural heritage, the Church does not put aside all the aspects of a particular culture, but she studies with sympathy, and if possible, preserves intact anything which is not bound up with superstition and error. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n.37). Moreover, the respect for cultural heritage is exercised by the competent territorial ecclesiastical authority as he carefully and prudently considers which elements from the traditions and cultures of individual peoples might appropriately be admitted into divine worship. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 40).

## **2.4. Active Participation**

One of the things which the Church expects from her Christians especially during liturgical celebrations is their active participation. As such, she earnestly desires that all the faithful should be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgical celebrations which is demanded by the very nature of the liturgy, and to which the Christian people "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a redeemed people" have a right and obligation by reason of their baptism. Active participation by the people is the aim to be considered before all else, because it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 14). The aim of liturgical inculturation is to enable the faithful to participate more actively in the liturgy.

## **2.5. Unity in Diversity**

Inculturation should not create new families of rites but rather it should respond to the needs of a particular culture and lead to adaptations which remain part of the Roman Rite. In order to enhance and preserve the substantial unity, provision is made when revising the liturgical books for legitimate variations and adaptations to different groups, regions and peoples, especially in mission countries. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 38)

## **3. GRADUAL DEVELOPMENT**

Inculturation in the liturgy has to take place in a gradual manner so that sudden changes could be avoided while ensuring the continuity of tradition. In this regard, innovations should only be made when the good of the Church genuinely and certainly requires them, and care must be taken in the process of innovations so that any new forms adopted should in some way grow organically from forms already existing. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 3). Changes in the liturgy therefore need to be gradual and adequate explanation has to be given in order to avoid the danger of rejection or simply an artificial grafting on the previous forms. According Saint John Paul II, the liturgy is the expression of faith and Christian life, and liturgical inculturation should not be marked even in appearance by religious syncretism. (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Dominicae Cenae*, n. 10).

### **3.1. Music and Art**

Musical forms, melodies and musical instruments could be used in divine worship as long as they "are suitable for sacred use, and provided they are in accord with the dignity of the place of worship, and truly contribute to the uplifting of the faithful." (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 19). Art should be adopted in the Church as long as it enhances the beauty of the buildings and liturgical rites. The arts should also be truly significant in the life and tradition of the people. (Cfr *Can.* 1216).

### **3.2. Ritual and Customs**

The ritual and customs of the different cultures must be thoroughly examined before they are being implemented in the liturgy, in order to avoid the danger of diminishing the truth of the Christian rite and the expression of the Christian faith in the lives of the faithful. Therefore, fidelity to traditional usages must be accompanied with purification in every case. It is also important to note that rituals like magic rites, superstition and rites with a sexual connotation cannot and must never be used in liturgical celebrations.

## **CONCLUSION**

Whatever the richness a particular culture may portray, it should be guided and informed by the Gospel values. Cultural adaptation requires a conversion of heart and even, where necessary, a breaking with ancestral customs incompatible with the Catholic faith. (Cfr CCC, n. 1206). Only then can inculturation be true to its name. Consequently, inculturation is not the assimilation of any other culture. At the same time, it is not the destruction or abolition of any culture. It is an evangelization in and through a given culture.



**Dieudonne KEDZE**  
Theology III

**Frederick  
KONGNYU SHAFÉ**  
Theology III

# GUIDELINES FOR THE RENEWAL OF LITURGICAL LIFE

## INTRODUCTION

As the Latin expression goes "*Ecclesia semper reformanda*", the Church always reforms herself. Reforms are always in line with what St Vincent of Lerins says that it is not a change of the substance per se but a new presentation of the old. Pope John Paul II in his Apostolic Letter "*Viscesimus Quintus Annus*" of 1988 laid down some guidelines for the renewal of liturgical life. These guidelines are not a divergence from the path traced by the Second Vatican Council but simply its continuation. Jesus Christ who is the same yesterday, today and forever, is the centre of the Liturgy and not just some human initiative. It is from Christ that the Liturgy gets her sustenance.

The Liturgy is not our thing; it is a divine activity, a participation in the work of angels. Man in his limitedness only tries to imitate the exercise of angels and so, in the Liturgy we don't glorify ourselves but Christ for whom all praise is due. And so, every liturgical act, be it homily, hymns or any intervention by a minister must be at the service of the Word of God.

Liturgical celebrations are not private acts but acts of the Church. They belong to the whole body of Christ. These acts are valid if the Church recognizes them as hers, else they are not. It is not permitted for anyone, even the Priest, or any group to change anything whatsoever in the Liturgy by their own initiative. Amendments in the Liturgy are solely the duty of the hierarchy of the Church. Since the Liturgy is a celebration of the Church, it requires the active, conscious and full participation of all her members. This participation is orderly; meaning that functions or roles are distributed according to the various ministers and the lay faithful. This order accounts for the beauty of the Liturgy which unfolds in signs and symbols. Without diminishing the role of Latin as promulgated by the Council of Trent in 1545 as the official language of the Church, the

Church encourages the use of vernacular, so that each individual can understand and proclaim the wonders of God in his/her mother tongue. Furthermore, through the liturgical books, the Church has adapted the Liturgy to individual cultures and traditions of different peoples. The revision of the rites has brought simplicity in the Liturgy. It must be noted that this simplicity is not a degradation or an impoverishment of the signs but a more flamboyant expression.

We will now look at some practical applications of the reforms. Our focus on the practical applications of the reforms in the Church's liturgical life will consider: the difficulties in the practical application of the reform, positive results of the reform and erroneous application of the reform.

## 1. DIFFICULTIES IN THE PRACTICAL APPLICATION OF

### THE REFORM

Firstly, we have the tendency to see religious practice as a private affair. Some don't entertain corrections of some sort and see them as intruding into a personal life backed up by the misunderstood quotation that "salvation is personal" and so, they create an unfavourable atmosphere for a change.

Secondly, there is the rejection of institutions. The coming of new books has left some indifferent and they tend to be very comfortable with the already existing liturgical forms without any effort at understanding the new. Some have rejected new institutions such as the marriage tribunal, the diocesan penitentiary etc.

Finally, we have the calling into question of a personal faith. Others have promoted personal innovations, disrupting the norms issued by the authority of the Apostolic See or the bishops, thus disrupting the unity of the Church and the piety of the faithful and even contradicting matters of faith.



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# VOX POP

*In your opinion, what has been done about inculturation in our local Church?*



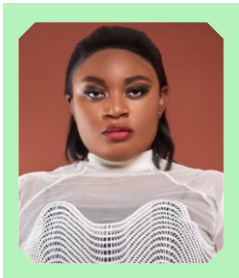
The word of God became incarnate in a particular culture and among a particular people. The written Word of God has come down to us and the Church in our Province has been working hard to see to it that the written word is expressed in our various dialects. There are already tribes with the complete written word translated into their dialects. This shows that something very great is happening regarding inculturation. We pray that eventually and in the near future every tribe in our province can listen to God speak to it in its native tongue.

**Rev. Fr. ELIAS BERINYUY, Parroco, Montalban, Teruel, Spain**



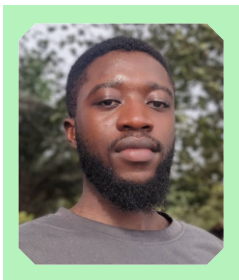
The question on whether something or nothing has been done about inculturation in our local province, leaves more or less desirable answers with regards to its implementation. While noticeable improvements can be seen through the incorporation of traditional dance, local languages and traditional music in the liturgy, a lot requires polishing since understanding and knowing what to incorporate often remains a challenge. Commendable efforts must be appreciated with the recent elevation of the Samba group to the ranks of a prayer and action group within the Church. Although, much controversies were raised, it must be applauded as a powerful move to make the people nearer to God and God nearer to the people through their culture. A lot can be said about how far we have gone with inculturation and how much we need to do in making the Church truly local and contextual. Indeed, inculturation is not without its pitfalls as shown in recent controversies yet it is a respectable effort of make the Church truly ours and representing the rich and diverse deposit of our local faith.

**Bernard Wirndzerem, Student, Buea.**



The Church has gone a long way with regards inculturation in that she has made it possible for people to worship together despite their different cultures. Through the liturgy, people have learnt different cultures and are accepting them. This has changed most of the Christians' mentality on how to relate with other Christians from different cultural backgrounds. Listening to a priest read and preach from your dialect makes you understand better some concepts that could not have been better understood if it were another language.

**NANCY MISSIH, ST Felix Parish NTENEFOR- BAMENDA**



I was very happy when I received this question not because inculturation has been a regular subject of my reflection of late, but also because a few months ago we held a heated debate in one "Bernard Fonlon's Intellectual Forum" after a photo of one of our Bishops conferring a red feather on some 'Samba' members went viral on social media. One must admit that the local Church has made huge strides in intergrading local traditions into worship. However, in my opinion the question worth asking at this point is how much inculturation is 'healthy' enough to guarantee the integrity of the indigenous cultures in question? This question is very pertinent not least because inculturation not delicately handled by relevant stakeholders is only a few steps from cultural "assimilation."

**YUVEN CHRISTIAN, Student, Molyko-Buea**



In my opinion, much has been done about inculturation in our Local Church. This is visible in the liturgical life of the Church wherein we can see songs composed in different vernaculars being rendered in our Churches. Also, the translation of many liturgical texts like the Bible, Lectionaries in various vernaculars is a sign of inculturation and this has increased active participation in the Liturgy. Besides, incorporating local customs and traditions of gospel worth from various cultures into the Liturgy has made the Liturgy more meaningful and engaging for the faithful, leading to increased participation and a deeper sense of ownership. With Inculturation, the Church has promoted some unity by recognizing and valuing the diversity of cultures and traditions.

**MATILDA NKESE, St. Agnes Parish-Mbessa**



In my humble opinion, it goes thus, lots has been done as far as inculturation is concerned in our local Church. The singing of songs during the Liturgy in our local languages, playing of traditional musical instruments during the liturgy, lectionary procession, and proclaiming of God's word in our local languages. These are a litany of approaches to enable evangelization to fully penetrate to the roots attesting to the Word of God that says go and make disciples of all nations.

**TCHAPTCHET CLAUDE MICHEL MUNGA, St Gabriel's Parish-Alamatu**



Inculturation has been one of the most effective means of evangelization in our local Church by teaching the People to find Christ in their cultural values. Thanks to the efforts of the Church, Christians have come to the understanding that our unique music, dances, gestures and languages play a very important role in our spiritual experience as humans in a particular area. There is of course still much to be done in order to curb misunderstandings and excesses from a few overenthusiastic Christians.

**TALLA REBECCA, Nurse, Yaoundé**



Inculturation, understood from the point of an encounter between the Christian faith and our local cultures, is being practiced in different ways in our local Church. This is seen in the reverence given to the Lectionary, as the Word of God, during lectionary processions, which is typical of the reverence we have for sacred things. Also, the use of songs in the liturgy, composed in local languages, and even some cultural displays, which occur during such moments as offertory processions. Another area of particular significance is the celebration of life: in a typical cultural way, we celebrate the nativity and epiphany of Christ, and even his death on Good Friday. Indeed, it is a faith-culture encounter.

**KONGNYUY CHIN TANYEH, Teacher, Limbe.**



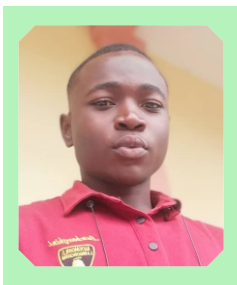
The concept of inculturation has significantly reshaped worship practices in the Church. This transformation has led to the integration of local traditions, such as the use of xylophones and traditional dances, allowing Christians to express their faith in their native dialects and cultural forms. Historically, worship was dominated by Western traditions. However, with the advocacy of Pope John Paul II for inculturation, there has been a notable shift towards a more vibrant and culturally relevant worship environment. This change has fostered deeper commitment among Church members and enhanced community engagement during mass. In contrast to the past, when Church services were rigid and disconnected, the current practice incorporates traditional instruments and lively expressions of faith. Hence, in my opinion, the progress made through inculturation represents a meaningful evolution in evangelization efforts compared to previous decades.

**FUNDOH PIUS KISANG, Civil Engineer, St Felix Parish Ntenefor**



Inculturation having as aim the integration of local cultural practices, values, and beliefs into the life of the Church with the core tenets of the Catholic faith intact, I think that in our local Church, it is using the indigenous music, dance, and languages. Exploring concepts such as community and spirituality, dialogue with local leaders and participation in community events, teaching the faith using culturally relevant examples and stories, addressing social issues such as poverty, education, and health care and solidarity. Encouraging interfaith dialogue to promote understanding and cooperation while respecting cultural heritage.

**MAI BONG JEVISK., Agricultural Engineer, MINADER-NW RDARD**

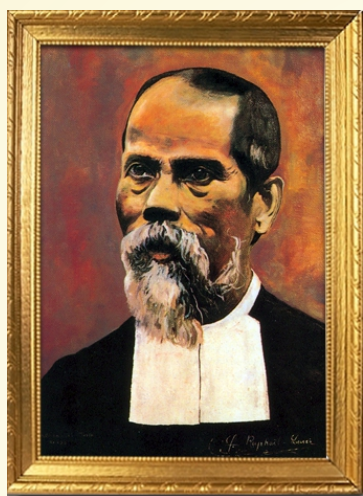


In my parish, the act of inculturation is being carried out in different ways. One can see inculturation during the celebration of the Holy Mass as the readings are being read in the dialect of the people of that area. It is also practiced during the offertory procession, lectionary procession, bread and wine procession, as different tribes portray their traditional dances, songs and other traditional activities. Also, different tribes promote their cultures in churches as they sing different songs that relates to the word of God in their dialects.

**DESMOND EWAMBI, Student, University OF BUEA**

# SAINT OF THE ISSUE:

## BLESSED RAPHAEL-LOUIS RAFIRINGA



Rafiringa was born on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1856 in Antananarivo when Queen Ranavalona was the Empress of Madagascar (1782-1861). His father, Rainiantoandro was the head of the royal blacksmiths working for Queen Ranavalona I. At birth, Rafiringa was named Rakatnirina meaning the "Desired One"; but a sorcerer intervened and warned that if the name was maintained, he was going to die like his elder brother. So, his name was changed to "Firinga" meaning "Dustbin". Most of his teachers at his elementary education were sorcerers; due to the nature of his father's work, he rarely saw him, and with the arrival of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in his Home Town, Antananarivo, his life took a different turn. The kingdom of Antananarivo was not receptive to earlier Christian missionary activities. The first stable mission was only founded in 1861 when Radama II rose to power and officially authorized the teaching of religion in his territory.

Firinga was thrilled during one of his playing sessions at the age of ten when he beheld some pictures on the wall of the house inhabited by the Brothers and he saw one of them explaining, in an amicable fashion, the meaning of the portraits to a group of children. He joined the school which was directed by the Brothers, and at the age of 14, he

decided to follow the teachings he had acquired from the school. He was baptized on October 24, 1879, the feast of St. Michael the Archangel and was given the name Raphael and possibly, "Ra" (monsieur) was added to Firinga to give the name Rafiringa.

He rose to a position of prominence when Brother Yom, one of the Brothers of the Christian Schools, died. He was asked by the Director, Brother Gonzalvien, to replace Brother Yom. The events which marked his progress in his new position and a persuasive voice which he had heard for some time led him to the decision to join the congregation of the Brothers of the Christian schools. He communicated this decision with fear and trembling to his father who did not hesitate to show his disapproval. However, Raphael's decisiveness carried the day. On Easter Sunday 1876, he officially requested and received the approval to begin the required preparation for joining the Brothers. He was given the habit of the Brothers on March 11, 1877; a ceremony which officially made him a member of the brotherhood and during which the name Louis was added to his names.

The Protestants, particularly the Methodists, who were jealous of the Cathedral under construction in Antananarivo, incited conflict between the Malagache authorities and the French authority. The Protestants claimed that the Jesuits on the island (all of them French) were planning to destroy native traditional customs. This led to the expulsion of the French men from Madagascar. This left the church under the care of Brother Raphael who entered a saintly alliance with Victoria Rasoamanarivo, the daughter of the Prime Minister, an alliance which produced great and unexpectedly good results. Together, they fought the opposition that was put up by the locals and Protestants. On June 3, 1883, the worshipping community voted Brother Raphael, under the influence of Victoria, as the

president of the Catholic Union of Madagascar. Alongside directing the school, Brother Raphael rallied his students in the cathedral every morning to recite the Rosary and sing hymns. They prayed the Stations of the Cross on Fridays and sung the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Saturdays.

His progress attracted further jealousy and persecution by the Protestants. This did not however discourage him; he trained catechists and motivated them to minister in villages where there were Catholics or potential Catholics. He organized meetings and retreats for religious Sisters and wrote pamphlets. Despite his busy schedule, he was careful not to neglect the practices of the Rule of his Order and so maintained his personal relationship with God. A peace agreement was signed in 1885 which allowed peaceful coexistence between the French and the government of Madagascar. The missionaries returned and were pleased with the growth which the Christian community had recorded under the leadership of Brother Raphael. He pronounced his Perpetual Vows in 1889.

He was arrested on December 24, 1915 following the outbreak of the First World War, under the charge of participating in a plot against the government. He was finally tried and seen to be innocent and was released days after. His stay in the prison cell damaged his health and he had frequent bouts of fever which moved his superiors to send him to Fianarantsoa, hoping to get his health better. It was here that he died at the age of 63 on May 19, 1919. In 1933, his corpse was exhumed and reburied in his home town, Antananarivo. It was then discovered that his corpse was intact. Monsieur Pierre Rafaralahy was miraculously cured of his paralysis on the day of the reburial in 1933 when he touched the coffin. Raphael-Louis Rafiringa was beatified in 2009 by Pope Benedict XVI.



## 2. POSITIVE RESULTS OF THE REFORM

One of the positive results of the reforms on the liturgical life as presented in the Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus*, is the fact that a vast majority of pastors and the Christian people have accepted the liturgical reform in a spirit of obedience and indeed joyful fervour. (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* 1988, n. 12). The Liturgical renewal in the Church owes credit to the Movement of the Holy Spirit in the Church. (VATICAN II COUNCIL, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 43.) Another positive result of the reform thanks to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit is providing to the Christian People with translations of the Bible, the Missal and other liturgical books; for the increased participation of the faithful by prayer and song, gesture and silence, in the Eucharist and the other sacraments; for the ministries exercised by lay people and the responsibilities that they have assumed in virtue of the common priesthood into which they have been initiated through Baptism and Confirmation; for the radiant vitality of so many Christian communities, a vitality drawn from the wellspring of the Liturgy. (Cfr *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* 1988, n. 12). Holding onto the teaching of the Constitution *Sacrosanctum Concilium* and to the reforms which it has made possible, it should be noted that: "the liturgical renewal is the most visible fruit of the whole work of the Council". (Final Report of the Extraordinary Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (7 December 1985), II, B, b, 1.). It is no doubt and without any exaggeration to say that the message of the Second Vatican Council has been experienced principally through the liturgical reforms of which the Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* of Pope John Paul II is one of the reforms. Having seen the Positive results of the reform in the Liturgical Life brought about by the Publication of the Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* in 1988, we now delve into looking at the erroneous applications of the reforms.

## 3. ERRONEOUS APPLICATIONS OF THE REFORM

Amidst the benefits of the Liturgical reforms, we still regret the deviations of greater or lesser seriousness in its application.

To begin, there have been illicit omissions or additions, rites invented outside the framework of established norms; postures or songs which are not

conducive to faith or to a sense of the sacred; abuses in the practice of general absolution; confusion between the ministerial priesthood, linked with Ordination, and the common priesthood of the faithful, which has its foundation in Baptism (Cfr *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* 1988, n. 13). The existence of these illicit omissions or additions is not something to condone with but we must here reiterate that no one [minister or recipient] has the right to manipulate any liturgical rite which has been laid down by the Church. (Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1125).

The Holy Father in his Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* says that, It cannot be tolerated that certain priests should take upon themselves the right to compose Eucharistic Prayers or to substitute profane readings for texts from Sacred Scripture. (*Viscesimus Quintus Annus* 1988, n. 13). Taking upon oneself such initiatives which are not in accordance with the Liturgical reforms of the Church or laid down in Liturgical books approved by the Church remains a direct contradiction to the liturgical celebrations, disfigure meaning and deprive the Christian people of the genuine treasures of the Liturgy of the Church. No doubt the Church teaches that the Liturgy is the work of the Holy Trinity (Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, nn. 1110-1112).

## CONCLUSION

In this article we have been looking at the guidelines for the renewal of Liturgical life as laid down in Pope John Paul II's Apostolic Letter *Viscesimus Quintus Annus* published in 1988. We noted that this Letter of the Holy Father did not deviate from the teaching regarding the Liturgical Life as presented in the Second Vatican Council Constitution, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, but it was a continuation of the work begun by the Vatican II Council fathers. Though the Church constantly renews herself especially regarding her liturgical life, measures are to be set to ensure that the reforms regarding the Liturgical life are not understood wrongly nor applied wrongly. Thus, it is for the bishops to root out such abuses, because the regulation of the Liturgy depends on the bishop within the limits of the law (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 22, 1.) and because "the life in Christ of his faithful people in some sense is derived from and depends on him". (*Ibid.*)



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# THE REQUIREMENTS AND PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS FOR LITURGICAL INCULTURATION

## INTRODUCTION

Liturgical inculturation is the process by which elements of another culture are integrated into the liturgy while maintaining the integrity and universality of both the Catholic liturgy and the other culture. It can never be seen as an assimilation of the other culture. This process ensures that the liturgy remain meaningful and accessible to people of different cultural backgrounds. The Second Vatican Council document *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, highlights the need for legitimate variations and adaptations, particularly in mission territories. (Cfr VATICAN II COULCIL, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, 4 December 1963, nn. 37-40). Also, the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments further defines inculturation as "the incarnation of the Gospel in native cultures and the introduction of these cultures into the life of the Church". (CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS, *Varietates Legitimae*, n.4)

The Catholic Church is universal, embracing people from all cultures and backgrounds. However, evangelization requires that the faith be expressed in a way that resonates with the lived experiences of local communities. Liturgical inculturation allows the

Church to make worship more meaningful, foster evangelization, encourage active participation, reflect the Church's universal nature and overcomes colonial and Eurocentric expressions in Christian worship. This work seeks to explore the fundamental requirements and preliminary conditions necessary for authentic liturgical inculturation. It also aims at clarifying the meaning and theological foundations of inculturation, the conditions necessary for legitimate adaptation and provide guidelines for proper implementation of the processes of inculturation.

## 1. THEOLOGICAL AND ECCLESIAL FOUNDATIONS

Liturgical inculturation is deeply rooted in the Church's theological and ecclesial tradition. It is not merely an adaptation for cultural relevance but an expression of the Church's mission to make the Gospel accessible to all peoples. The theological and ecclesial foundations explore the biblical data, official teachings of the Magisterium, and the roles of both the universal and local Church in the inculturation process.

### 1.1 Biblical Basis for Liturgical Inculturation

The principle of inculturation can be identified throughout salvation history, where God's revelation was always

communicated in ways understandable in specific cultures. Several Biblical themes and events illustrate the theological basis for liturgical inculturation. The Incarnation expresses the ultimate form of "divine inculturation" where God took on human nature within a particular cultural context that is, the culture of the Jewish people context.

Again, at Pentecost we see inculturation expressing itself when the Apostles spoke and the people understood what they were saying in various languages, this enabled people from different cultures to understand the message of Christ. These events illustrate the universality of the Church and the need for diverse expressions of faith. Furthermore, St. Paul in 1Cor 9:19-23 says that "I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some". His engagement with Greek and Jewish audiences shows the early Church's flexibility in the cultural expressions of the faith.

### 1.2 The Teaching of the Magisterium

The Church's official teachings affirm the legitimacy and necessity of liturgical inculturation while providing clear guidelines to safeguard doctrinal integrity. In *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, there is the emphasis on the need for "legitimate



variation and adaptations” in the liturgy, especially in mission territories. The document also encourages local Episcopal Conferences to take responsibility for adaptations, under the guidance of the Holy See (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium* nn. 37-40.).

Furthermore, mention is made of the fact that inculturation should be based on deep theological reflection and not just cultural preferences. (Cfr *Varietates Legitimae* nn. 29-35). In addition, the Catechism of the Catholic Church highlights the unity and diversity of worship in the Church. It states that: “the liturgy is at once the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed and the font from which all her power flows” (CCC, 1074). In line with this, Pope John Paul II urges African Churches to express the faith in ways that resonate with local traditions while maintaining Catholic unity. (Cfr POPE JOHN PAUL II *Ecclesia in Africa*, nn. 59-62). And finally, Pope Francis in *Querida Amazonia*, calls for greater cultural sensitivity in evangelization, particularly in indigenous communities. He also highlighted the role of local customs in shaping worship, provided they align with Catholic doctrine.

## 2. ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LITURGICAL INCULTURATION

For any liturgical inculturation to be successful, three elements should be considered. Firstly, it must be carried out with deep respect for the Church's doctrines and traditions. Secondly, the Christian faith of the local community must be taken into consideration. Lastly, the universal nature of the Catholic liturgy must be upheld. Nevertheless, this process requires careful planning, education, and discernment to ensure that cultural expressions enrich the liturgy without compromising its integrity.

### 2.1 Respect for the Unity of the Universal Church

There is a need to maintain communion with the Church's liturgical tradition in the sense that liturgical inculturation should never sever the local community from the broader tradition of the Church. Unity in the liturgy is a fundamental principle, as the Eucharist and other sacraments are not merely local celebrations but universal expressions of the Church's faith. In this light, we are to avoid unnecessary divisions through local adaptations. Inculturation should not lead to fragmentation within the Church, where local communities develop separate liturgical practices that risk causing division or confusion. The adaptations should enhance the liturgical experience without creating barriers or distinctions that separate one community from another.

## 3. PRELIMINARY CONDITIONS FOR LITURGICAL INCULTURATION

Liturgical inculturation is a delicate process

requiring thorough preparation to ensure that cultural adaptations enrich the liturgy without compromising doctrinal integrity. The Church provides guidelines which when carefully exploited will balance cultural expressions with the universality of the Christian faith. In this connection, the preliminary conditions for a successful liturgical inculturation are as follows:

### 3.1 Comprehensive Preliminary Studies

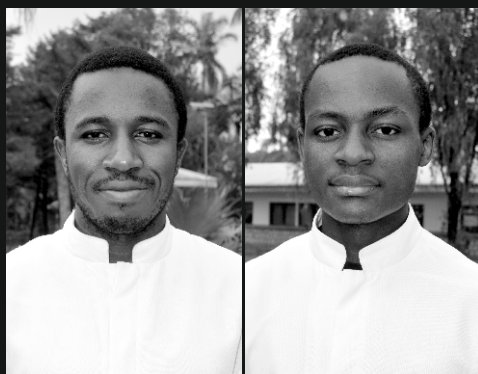
The historical, anthropological and theological dimensions are necessary for comprehensive preliminary studies. The historical study examines past instances of inculturation, such as the adaptation of Greco-Roman customs in the early Christian Church. Furthermore, the anthropological research investigates the meanings, functions, and implications of cultural elements within a given society to determine their suitability for liturgical worship. (Cfr PIERRE BERTAINA, *Liturgical Inculturation and the Church's Mission*, 2002). Lastly the theological reflection assesses whether cultural expressions align with Catholic doctrines and enhance, rather than distort, the liturgical celebration. (Cfr *Varietates Legitimae*, nn. 29-35).

### 3.2 Competent Expertise and Ecclesial Authority

The Magisterium has established clear guidelines for ecclesial authorities which must approve liturgical adaptations (Cfr *Can.* 838). The Local Bishops are Responsible for minor adaptations that do not alter the essential structure of the liturgy. The Episcopal Conferences can propose significant changes but must seek approval from the Dicastery for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. And finally, the Holy See exercises oversight to maintain doctrinal unity and prevent abuses in the universal Church (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 22).

## CONCLUSION

The process of liturgical inculturation is an essential aspect of the Church's mission to bring the gospel into the hearts of diverse cultures across the globe. Through the integration of local cultural elements into liturgical practices, inculturation fosters a deeper connection between faith and culture, enriching the worship experience while respecting the universal nature of the Church's teachings. It requires careful considerations of universal and local factors. Finally, effective inculturation can enrich the liturgy and promote evangelization and foster greater unity within the Church.



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# LES ORGANISMES RESPONSABLES DE L'INCULTURATION/ REFORME LITURGIQUE

## INTRODUCTION

La liturgie en tant que source et sommet de la vie chrétienne, occupe une place essentielle dans la vie de l'Eglise. Le renouveau apporté par Vatican II précisément en la Constitution sur la liturgie *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, vise à obtenir une liturgie active et participative. (Cfr VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 14). L'intention de Vatican II est de faire de la liturgie l'action de l'Eglise, intégrant tous les chrétiens du monde venant de différentes cultures. L'Eglise entend ainsi prôner une « liturgie incarnée » aux cultures afin de favoriser une plus active, fervente et consciente participation aux mystères divins. Dans l'optique d'une implémentation réelle et structurée de l'action liturgique, l'Eglise a mis en place des organismes responsables du renouveau liturgique. Il s'agit notamment du Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements, les Conférences Episcopales et enfin l'Evêque Diocésain.

## 1. LE DICASTÈRE POUR LE CULTE DIVIN ET LA DISCIPLINE DES SACREMENTS

En tant que structure de la Curie Romaine, le Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements est essentiellement en charge de tout ce qui est en relation avec la liturgie et les sacrements. Il est important de souligner le rôle primordial du Siège Apostolique qui exerce une réelle primauté en ce qui concerne la prise de décisions et son implémentation dans le milieu ecclésial. En retournant dans l'histoire de la création de ce dicastère par le pape Sixte V, avec pour appellation Sacrée Congrégation des Rites, nous remarquons les différents changements d'appellations bien que la fonction est restée presque inchangée. C'est sous le pontificat du pape Paul VI, que le nom «

Congrégation pour le Culte Divin » fut donné avec pour principal objectif, l'implémentation de la Constitution sur la Liturgie Sacrée *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Avec l'avènement de la Constitution Apostolique *Pastor Bonus* du pape Jean Paul II, une nouvelle disposition de la curie romaine est mise à jour. Avec la Constitution Apostolique *Praedicate Evangelium*, la Congrégation pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements changea de dénomination pour désormais être appelée Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements. Tout le mouvement liturgique est ainsi unifié et désormais confié au Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements. Les attentes de ce dicastère sont les suivantes : la promotion de la liturgie et des sacrements en tant qu'incorporés à l'action liturgique, le soutien et l'encadrement de l'action pastorale liturgique et tout ce qui est en relation avec ce qu'on peut appeler l'apostolat liturgique (musique, chant et l'art sacré). (Cfr JEAN-PAUL II, Lettre Apostolique *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, 1988, n. 19).

La fonction de ce dicastère est davantage importante étant donné qu'il est appelé à garder fidèlement et à veiller au respect des grands principes de la liturgie. Ces principes liturgiques essentiels pour le renouveau liturgique dans l'Eglise sont illustrés et développés dans la Constitution sur la liturgie *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. Cette Constitution conciliaire représente ainsi le document central dont le Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements devra s'inspirer afin de promouvoir et d'approfondir le renouveau liturgique dans l'Eglise en général. Ce dicastère promeut ainsi la réforme liturgique au niveau général afin de favoriser une certaine harmonie dans les différentes Eglises particulières.

Conscient des défis actuels liés à la diversité

sociale et culturelle et aussi du souhait d'avoir une liturgie incarnée, qui tienne en compte le donné culturel des peuples, le dicastère devra travailler en étroite collaboration avec les conférences épiscopales et les évêques diocésains. L'objectif de cette collaboration sur l'aspect liturgique est de promouvoir une liturgie universelle qui s'adapte à toute culture sans pour autant y perdre de sa valeur.

## 2. LES CONFÉRENCES ÉPISCOPEALES

Les conférences épiscopales jouent un rôle majeur dans ce qu'on peut appeler « l'inculturation liturgique » au niveau national. Dans le passé, les Conférences épiscopales ont eu la lourde charge d'apprêter les traductions des textes et livres liturgiques en des langues locales ou adaptées à chaque pays ou région. La langue en tant qu'élément essentiel de communication, facilite l'appréhension directe d'une chose. Dans le cas de la liturgie, la traduction des textes en langues locales constitue un apport majeur dans le mouvement d'inculturation liturgique et favorise une meilleure compréhension et participation au culte divin. Cette tâche, il est important de le souligner, n'est ni facile à réaliser, ni impossible.

Il revient aux conférences épiscopales aujourd'hui encore, de réfléchir davantage sur comment réaliser le renouveau liturgique au niveau national. Ces conférences dans l'effort d'accomplir ce travail de fond, devraient tenir en compte les difficultés du passé et corriger les erreurs ou confusions. Il est important d'apprécier le travail déjà réalisé à travers la traduction partielle des documents liturgiques, mais il faudrait parvenir aux traductions complètes de ces documents liturgiques et aussi veiller à les respecter afin de parvenir à une réforme liturgique réelle. (Cfr *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, n. 20.)

Les conférences épiscopales ont aussi la lourde responsabilité de veiller à ce que le renouveau liturgique se fasse sans abus. Par abus, nous faisons allusion à toute exagération ou addition qui vont à l'encontre des normes liturgiques. Raison pour laquelle il leur revient de veiller au respect des textes approuvés, de publier les livres liturgiques jugés appropriés, de créer ou d'approuver les chants à utiliser dans la liturgie.

## 3. L'ÉVÊQUE DIOCESAIN

Comme pasteur propre, l'évêque diocésain est le principal modérateur de la vie liturgique dans son diocèse. Il a la charge de régler, de promouvoir et de contrôler la pastorale liturgique dans son diocèse. (Cfr CONGRÉGATION POUR LES EVÊQUES, Directoire pour le ministère pastoral des évêques, *Apostolorum*

*Successores*, CECC, 2004, n. 145). Le décret *Christus Dominus* le désigne en effet comme le « dispensateur des mystères de Dieu, l'organisateur et le gardien de toute la vie liturgique dans l'Eglise qui lui est confiée » (VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Christus Dominus*, n. 15). Les grandes lignes pour l'harmonisation liturgique sont définies au niveau universel, cependant il revient à chaque évêque diocésain d'adopter les méthodes d'implémentations réelles en fonction des réalités vécues sur leur territoire.

L'évangile s'affermir bien évidemment sur un terrain culturel. La démarche d'inculturation est orientée vers un double objectif : l'illumination de la culture par l'Évangile et la célébration de la foi à travers les éléments propres de cette culture. Ces deux mouvements font partie intégrante de la nouvelle évangélisation et constituent alors une des tâches propres de la charge épiscopale. (Cfr PAUL LONTSIE-KEUNE, *La Voix de la Conscience. Parole d'un évêque en temps d'incertitude*, Editafic, Bafoussam, 2024, p. 58). Tout ceci est bâti sur le principe suivant lequel, « une foi qui ne devient pas culture est une foi qui n'est ni pleinement accueillie, ni entièrement méditée, ni fidèlement vécue (Cfr JEAN-PAUL II, *Pastores Gregis*, n.30).

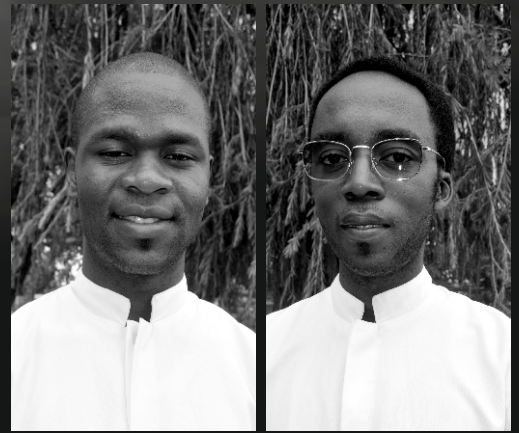
En tant que liturgiste par excellence de son Eglise particulière, l'évêque diocésain devra créer une commission liturgique diocésaine dont le rôle est de promouvoir l'action liturgique, la musique et l'art sacré dans son diocèse. (Cfr Jean-Paul II, Lettre Apostolique *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, n. 21). Conscient des réalités culturelles de sa localité, l'évêque diocésain « fera tout son possible pour que l'évangile soit annoncé dans son intégrité, de telle sorte qu'il façonne le cœur des hommes et les mœurs des peuples » (*Pastores Gregis*, n.30).

## CONCLUSION

La liturgie en tant que source et sommet de la vie de l'Eglise, se veut l'action de l'Eglise toute entière. Raison pour laquelle l'Eglise portant à cœur le souci du peuple chrétien, a mis en place des organismes à différents niveaux, et dont l'objectif est d'aider les chrétiens venant de différents coins, à vivre intensément le renouveau liturgique apporté par le Concile Vatican II. Nous savons que pour favoriser l'écoute et la réception du message évangélique, il est important d'entrer dans la psychologie du peuple local, de parler un langage qui est le leur. Le Dicastère pour le Culte Divin et la Discipline des Sacrements, les Conférences Episcopales et enfin l'Evêque Diocésain ont la lourde responsabilité à leurs différents niveaux de veiller à l'effectivité du renouveau liturgique.



# ACTIVE AND CONSCIOUS PARTICIPATION IN THE LITURGY



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## INTRODUCTION

The words "Participation", "Conscious", and "Active" are familiar terms in the liturgy today. Participation generally refers to the act of taking part or being involved in an activity, event, or process. Meanwhile, the word "active" carries several related meanings, all centered around the idea of action, engagement, and energy. And the word "conscious" revolves around the idea of awareness and understanding. But when these terms are applied to the Liturgy it means something slightly different. The word "Participation" was used for the first time in the liturgy by Pope Pius X in his 1905 encyclical titled "*Vehementer Nos*", which emphasized the importance of active involvement in the Church's mission and the necessity of participating in the life of the Church and society by the laity. This conception is of utmost importance in the sense that the Liturgy is at the centre of the existence, the renewal and the vitality of the Church. (Cfr J. KOMONCHAK– M. COLLINS et al., eds, *The New Dictionnaire of Theology*, pp. 559-600). That is why presence at a liturgical act is

not a passive presence but rather an active and conscious one. Thus, this article is going to focus on these aspects of conscious and active participation in the Liturgy. This shall be done firstly by looking at the meaning of Liturgy and its development throughout history and the different degrees of participation in the Liturgy.

## 1. DEFINITION AND HISTORY OF THE LITURGICAL REFORM

### 1.1. DEFINITION OF LITURGY

Etymologically, the term "Liturgy" comes from two Greek words: *Laos* (people) and *Ergon* (Work or service). Therefore, it is the work or the action of the people. In Athens, liturgy referred to the work carried out by the citizens in a systematic manner for the good of the community. In the Old Testament as well as in the New Testament, liturgy has to do with the cult used by men enter into a relationship with God (Cfr RICHARD MCBRIEN, *Catholicism*, p. 1064). The Church adopted this view of Sacred Scripture by seeing the Liturgy as a public cult, that is the "official public worship of the Church" (Richard McBrien,

*Catholicism*, p. 1063). It is in this sense that the Liturgy "is rightly seen as an exercise of the priestly office of Jesus Christ." (Cfr VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 7). It is "the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows." (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 10).

### 1.2. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE LITURGICAL REFORM

Many liturgical reforms were initiated at the Council of Trent, especially the reform of the liturgical books, breviaries and missals. From there, many feasts were added to the liturgical calendar, such as the Sacred Heart, the Precious Blood, Christ the King, feast of Saint Joseph as well as many other Saints. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the reflection initiated by the Benedictine monk *Dom Guerenger* was considered by the universal Church and kind attention was given to the liturgical reflections from that time up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century with pope Pius X, who invited people, that is at the individual level, to participate actively and consciously in the liturgy. He also



decreed that children could receive First Holy Communion when they attain the age of reason. France and Germany engaged their own liturgical reforms based on the developments made by the Holy Father. It is in this movement that in 1947, Pope Pius XII instituted a commission in charge of the preparation of a general liturgical reform. In October 1962, Pope John XXIII at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, emphasized the need for liturgical reforms (Cfr TH. REY-MERMET, *Croire. Vivre la Foi avec le Concile Vatican II*, t. 3, Droguet-Ardant, Paris 1979, pp. 75-80).

## 2. PARTICIPATION IN THE LITURGY

Participation in the liturgy can be seen from different dimensions which will be enumerated below.

### 2.1. EXERCISE OF FAITH AND BAPTISMAL DIGNITY

Before the second Vatican Council, the faithful used to be present at Mass as well as other liturgical celebrations, but were never actively involved in the celebration. The faithful were called upon to participate more fully, consciously and actively in the liturgical celebration. This full participation is the implication of baptism which enables each baptized member of the people of God to celebrate the liturgy in dignity. And that is why the participation of the lay faithful in the Eucharist as well as in any other liturgical celebration, by virtue of their royal priesthood, "cannot be equated with mere presence, and still less with a passive one, but is rather to be regarded as a true exercise of faith and of the baptismal dignity." (Cfr CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENT, *Redemptoris Sacramentum*, n. 37). The participation in the liturgy, especially in the Eucharistic celebration, has to be active and conscious, since the Eucharist itself is not a mere meal but a sacrifice which demands the full participation of the whole assembly. That participation was facilitated by the introduction of the responses and acclamations to be made by the people: the responses, the singing of psalms, the antiphons, and the attitudes and gestures to be adopted during the liturgical celebrations (Cfr *Redemptoris Sacramentum*, n. 39).

### 2.2. PARTICIPATION THROUGH GESTURES, RESPONSES AND ACCLAMATIONS

The members of the assembly actively participate in the liturgy through acclamations, responses, psalms, antiphons, hymns, actions, gestures and bodily attitudes (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 30). In addition to the above forms of participation, ample flexibility is given for

appropriate creativity aimed at allowing each celebration to be adapted to the needs of the participants, to their comprehension, their interior preparation and their gifts, according to the established liturgical norms (Cfr *Redemptoris Sacramentum*, n. 39). This is manifested in a special way in the possibility to choose songs, prayers and readings, the preparation of the prayers of the faithful, the decoration of the church building according to the seasons, and any other variety able to foster the participation of the participants (Cfr *Redemptoris Sacramentum*, n. 39).

### 2.3. DIFFERENT DEGREES OF PARTICIPATION IN THE LITURGY

It is the great desire of the Church that the faithful, whether lay or cleric participate fully, consciously and actively in the liturgical celebration by reason of their baptism which makes them members of the People of God (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 14). And that is why, "in the restoration and promotion of the sacred liturgy the full and active participation by all the people is the aim to be considered before all else, for it is the primary and indispensable source from which the faithful are to derive the true Christian spirit." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 14). The active participation of the faithful takes into consideration "their age, condition, way of life and standard of religious culture." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 19). This shows clearly the place and the value of inculturation, especially in the field of the liturgy. It contributes for the fruitful transmission of the mysteries of God. However, this demand has to take into consideration the dignity of the liturgy, because in itself, "the liturgy is made up of unchangeable elements divinely instituted, and of elements subject to change." (*Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n. 21)

## CONCLUSION

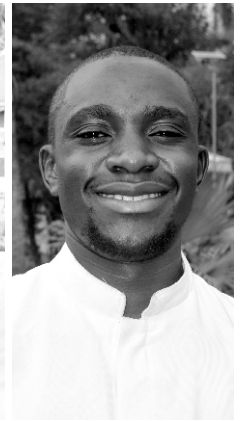
Liturgical celebrations are not private functions but pertain to the entire community of the Church. Each member has a part to play and by an active and conscious participation, receives the graces from each liturgical celebration. That is why "servers, readers, commentators and members of the choir also exercise a genuine liturgical function. Their participation should be active and conscious. This means that it should be done with piety. Every member of the assembly, especially the lay faithful, can exercise some particular ministries for the good of the whole community, such as the ministry of lector and acolyte and also the functions of preparing the hosts and the washing of liturgical linens.



# ABUSES IN THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRED LITURGY



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## INTRODUCTION

The liturgy occupies a very central place in the life of the Church as the source and summit of Christian life. Through it, the Church offers God true and proper worship, while at the same time receiving the graces needed for salvation. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, the liturgy is the "work of Christ, the high priest, and of his body, the Church" (Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n.1069). Therefore, liturgical celebrations should reflect the dignity and holiness of the acts they represent, especially as they are the visible signs of the Church's faith. The Sacred Liturgy, however, has often been subject to abuses that can obscure its true meaning and sanctity. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* issued by the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments in 2004, addresses these liturgical abuses and calls for a return to fidelity to the Church's teachings and practices.

This article will explore the theological significance of the liturgy, analyze liturgical abuses in the light of *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, and consider the pastoral and theological implications of these abuses. Lastly, it will offer practical proposals for reform and the prevention of such abuses, emphasizing the role of bishops and pastoral leaders in safeguarding the integrity of the liturgy.

## 1. THEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE SACRED LITURGY

The liturgy is more than a mere ritual; it is the heart of the Church's life and mission. Theologically, the liturgy is an act of worship that engages both the Church and the faithful in a profound relationship with God. In the words of the

Second Vatican Council, the liturgy is "the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fountain from which all her power flows" (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, n.10). Through the liturgy, the Church participates in the mystery of Christ's life, death, and resurrection, especially in the celebration of the Eucharist, which is the "source and summit of the Christian life" (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church *Lumen Gentium*, n.11). The liturgy also expresses the Church's faith. It is a public declaration of the truths believed by the Church, and its prayers, hymns, and actions articulate the Church's relationship with God. As the Catechism explains, "the liturgy is the action through which the Church expresses the mystery of Christ's salvation" (CCC, n.1070). It is a proclamation of the Word of God, a means of communal prayer, and a way of participating in the heavenly worship.

## 2. UNDERSTANDING LITURGICAL ABUSES

Liturgical abuses can be defined as deviations from the prescribed norms and practices of the Church's liturgical tradition. These abuses often spring from misunderstandings, a desire to adapt the liturgy to personal or cultural preferences, or, in some cases, a rejection of the Church's authority over liturgical matters. (CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS, Instructions on the most Holy Eucharist *Redemptionis Sacramentum* nn.169-184) identifies various forms of liturgical abuse that can damage the integrity of the liturgy. These include:

### 2.1. Improper or Unapproved Liturgical Innovations

These are changes made to the liturgy that have not been authorized by the Church. For example,

introducing new prayers, rituals, or gestures not approved by the Holy See or the Magisterium can distort the intended meaning and significance of the liturgy.

## **2.2. Failure to Adhere to Liturgical Norms**

This includes neglecting or changing the prescribed order of the liturgy. For instance, altering the sequence of prayers or omitting important elements like the offertory or the consecration during Mass.

## **2.3. Improper Roles for the Faithful**

Liturgical norms clearly define the roles of the priest, deacon, and laity for instance. Liturgical abuses may occur when these roles are blurred or when individuals act in ways contrary to the proper liturgical functions, such as lay people giving blessings or leading prayers reserved for the clergy.

## **2.4. Disrespectful or Unworthy Liturgical Practices**

This might include behaviors such as inappropriate or indecent dresses, irreverence during the reception of the Eucharist, as well as changing liturgical celebrations to reflect non-Christian beliefs or customs. Such actions diminish the sacredness of the liturgy and can lead to confusion or mislead the people about their true meaning.

The impact of these abuses is significant. Liturgical abuses can lead to confusion among the faithful, erode reverence for the sacraments, and ultimately hinder the Church's mission. If the liturgy is not celebrated in a way that respects its sacred nature, it can fail to be the vehicle of grace it is meant to be.

# **3. PASTORAL AND THEOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS**

The theological implications of liturgical abuses are far-reaching. The liturgy is a sign of the Church's faith and unity. Theologically, liturgical abuses can create a sense of disconnection between the faithful and the sacred mysteries they are celebrating.

Pastorally liturgical abuses can have profound effects on the spiritual lives of the faithful. If the liturgy is not celebrated with reverence and according to the Church's norms, it may fail to lead the faithful to encounter Christ in the Eucharist or to deepen their relationship with God. Furthermore, abuses in the liturgy can create division and confusion within the community, as different interpretations of liturgical norms may arise.

# **4. ADDRESSING LITURGICAL ABUSES**

## **4.1. The Call for Fidelity to the Liturgy**

*Redemptionis Sacramentum* makes a clear call

for a return to fidelity to the liturgical norms established by the Church. The document stresses that the liturgy should be celebrated according to the rubrics of the Church and that any innovation or change must be approved by the proper authorities. It also emphasizes the importance of reverence and the avoidance of practices that might diminish the sacredness of the liturgical celebration.

## **4.2. Practical Proposals for Reform and Prevention**

To address liturgical abuses, the Church must implement concrete reforms at the local and diocesan levels. This includes: offering ongoing formation for clergy and laity on the proper celebration of the liturgy, ensuring that liturgical texts and practices are followed exactly as prescribed by the Church, and encouraging reverent participation in the liturgy, with a focus on fostering a deeper awareness of the sacred.

## **4.3. Role of Bishops and Pastoral Leaders**

Bishops and pastors have a particular responsibility in safeguarding the integrity of the liturgy. As *Redemptionis Sacramentum* emphasizes, bishops are to ensure that the liturgy is celebrated in accordance with the Church's norms and that abuses are corrected swiftly. Pastoral leaders are also called to educate the faithful about the importance of the liturgy and the need for reverence in its celebration.

# **CONCLUSION**

The Sacred Liturgy is the heart of the Church's life, and its celebration must reflect the reverence and holiness due to God. Liturgical abuses not only distort the meaning of the liturgy but also undermine the spiritual life of the faithful. *Redemptionis Sacramentum* calls the Church to return to the faithful celebration of the liturgy, with attention to the theological and pastoral implications of its practices. Through fidelity to the liturgical norms and a commitment to reverence, the Church can safeguard the integrity of the liturgy and ensure that it continues to be a source of grace and unity for all.



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# PASTORAL CARE OF THE LITURGY



## INTRODUCTION

The intention of Vatican Council II was to make the liturgy more participatory and active, while nourishing the lives of Christ's faithful, considering their socio-cultural backgrounds and contexts. The Council Fathers outlined possible changes and adaptations to the liturgy in the *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium*, emphasizing pastoral care and how the liturgy could accommodate the people of God. This includes incorporating local languages, music styles, and symbols that resonate with the community. However, many adaptations and modifications have been introduced in the name of inculturation, from both the clergy and the lay faithful. This article aims to help us understand our role within the liturgical celebration and how to make the celebration active, participatory, fruitful, and enriching.

## 1. DEFINITION OF TERMS

### 1.1. Liturgy

The liturgy is central to the Catholic Church's worship and communal life. It includes various forms of public worship, such as the celebration of the Eucharist, the Divine Office, and the Sacraments. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium* sees liturgy as the summit towards which the activity of the Church is directed and the font from which all her power flows. It emphasizes active participation by the faithful and highlights the communal nature of liturgical celebration (Cfr VATICAN COUNCIL II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy Sacrosanctum Concilium* nn. 10, 26). The Church teaches that the liturgy is the participation of

the people of God in the work of God (Cfr *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1069). The liturgy is meant for the sanctification of the people and the glorification of God. It is God-centered, not man-centered.

### 1.2. Pastoral care of the liturgy

The pastoral care of the liturgy is a vital aspect of the Church's life, focusing on how liturgical practices can support and nurture the spiritual well-being of the people. It involves the study and application of the liturgy in the actual life of the Church, ensuring that worship is meaningful and accessible to all. Pastoral care ensures that liturgical celebrations are life-giving for the faithful. The ultimate goal of pastoral care is to promote active participation in the liturgy, fostering an enriching worship experience for all involved (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 14).

## 2. PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY OF CLERGY IN THE LITURGY

The clergy has the responsibility to ensure the proper and orderly celebration of the liturgy. If the liturgy is to achieve its purpose in the life of the faithful, the clergy must follow the Church's requirements and directions.

### 2.1. Teaching and sanctification

Teaching and sanctification are the primary functions of priests. Pope John Paul II, commemorating the 40th anniversary of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, stated that the mystery



proposed in preaching and catechesis, listened to with faith and celebrated in the liturgy, must shape the entire life of believers (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Spiritus Sponsa*, n. 12). Since faith comes by hearing (Cfr Rom. 10:14-15), ministers of God must guide the faithful to be true witnesses to the Gospel. Pastors are to ensure the proclamation of the Word of God and the instruction of the faithful in the truth of the faith, especially through homilies and catechetical formation (Cfr *Can.* 218).

## 2.2. Celebration of the Eucharist and other Sacraments

The priest's office is often referred to as the ministry of the word and sacraments. Beyond word and sacraments, other functions assigned to a priest are administrative. Therefore, the celebration of the sacraments should be the priest's priority. Pope John Paul II stresses the importance of celebrating the liturgy with reverence and adherence to liturgical norms, ensuring that the Eucharist should be the center of parish life (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptionis Sacramentum*, n. 12). The celebration of the liturgy as the action of Christ and the people of God is central to Christian life. For the liturgy to bear fruit, there must be conscious, active, and full participation of both the priest and the faithful (Cfr *General Introduction to the Roman Missal*, nn. 16-18).

## 3. INVOLVING THE CONGREGATION IN THE LITURGY

When the faithful gather in a liturgical context, each is expected to participate according to his rank. There is a need for the lay faithful to be fully and consciously involved in the liturgical life of the Church.

### 3.1. Encouraging active participation

It is the clergy's responsibility to ensure that the faithful actively engage in the liturgy. If pastors are not imbued with the spirit and power of the liturgy and fail to provide proper instruction, active participation will be lacking. The Church desires that all the faithful participate fully, consciously, and actively in liturgical celebrations, as this is the primary and indispensable source of the Christian spirit (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 14).

### 3.2. Education and Formation

A lack of respect for liturgical norms can lead to abuses that obscure the mystery of the liturgy and cause distress among the people. Education and formation of both the clergy and the laity are essential for preserving the true meaning of the liturgy (Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter, *Spiritus Sponsa*, n. 37).

### 3.3. Sacred music and Art

Music plays a vital role in enlivening the liturgy and creating an atmosphere of active participation (Cfr *Spiritus Sponsa*, n. 14). Sacred music should possess qualities of sanctity and goodness of form, ensuring that it naturally fosters the universality of the liturgy (Cfr PIUS X, *Instruction on Sacred Music, Tra le Sollecitudini*, n. 2).

### 3.4. Adaption and inculturation

Adapting the liturgy to the local context is essential for making worship more relevant and meaningful to a community. This involves considering the cultural and spiritual needs of the community while preserving the core elements of the liturgical tradition. Ongoing adaptation and inculturation are necessary to address the needs of diverse cultural contexts (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter: *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, nn. 16-18).

## 4. CHALLENGES IN PASTORAL CARE OF THE LITURGY

Encouraging full participation in the liturgy is challenging, as many Christians are indifferent to their liturgical life and view the Church as an intrusion into their sacred traditions. Additionally, selecting appropriate music and sacred art to foster devotion remains difficult (Cfr PAUL VI, Apostolic Letter *Musica Sacram*, nn. 3-6). A balance between the universality of the Church's rites and the particularities of local cultures is necessary to ensure that the liturgy remains meaningful and relevant to all.

## CONCLUSION

Pastoral care of the liturgy and making sense of our liturgical celebrations have been and remain a priority of the Church. The *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy* emphasizes conscious, active, and full participation in the liturgy to produce the desired fruits. Without active participation, the liturgy risks becoming a routine or ritual without meaning.

# PRINCIPLES PERTAINING TO THE TRANSLATION OF SACRED SCRIPTURES AND THE PREPARATION OF LECTIONARIES



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## INTRODUCTION

The translation of Sacred Scriptures for liturgical use is a vital aspect of the Church's mission to make the Word of God accessible to the faithful. This task is influenced by both theological principles and the practical needs of the liturgy, with particular attention to inculturation. Inculturation in biblical translation seeks to preserve the integrity of the original text while adapting it to the linguistic and cultural context of a particular community. This article explores the norms for translating the Sacred Scriptures and preparing Lectionaries, emphasizing the Church's commitment to both doctrinal fidelity and cultural relevance.

### 1. INCULTURATION AND THE TRANSLATION OF SACRED SCRIPTURES

Inculturation refers to the process by which the Gospel is understood, expressed, and lived within particular cultural contexts. As such, the Church is committed to making the message of Christ understandable and meaningful in all cultures (Cfr JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Redemptoris Missio*, 7 December 1990, n. 52). In the context of biblical translation, inculturation is a delicate process: translators must be faithful to the original texts while making them comprehensible in the local language and culture. A successful translation "must respect the cultural context of the people to whom it is addressed" (CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH VATICAN, *Instruction on the Translation of the Bible*, 15 April 1965, n. 3).

### 2. THE PRINCIPLES OF SOUND EXEGESIS AND LITERARY QUALITY

A core principle in translating the Sacred Scriptures is fidelity to sound exegesis, ensuring that the text remains true to its original meaning. This requires a deep understanding of biblical languages,

historical contexts, and theological nuances. Therefore, translations must be based on solid biblical scholarship, ensuring that the text's theological richness is conveyed in the vernacular (Cfr CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS, *Liturgiam Authenticam*, 28 March 2001, n. 30). Translators are also urged to maintain the literary quality of the original, as this contributes to the sacredness and solemnity of the biblical proclamation. Translation for liturgical purposes demands both clarity and elegance to allow the faithful to engage fully with the sacred text.

### 3. UNIFORMITY AND STABILITY IN LITURGICAL TRANSLATIONS

Uniformity in biblical translations is essential for the unity of the Church. The Church emphasizes that there should be a single, approved translation in each language for liturgical use, providing stability across liturgical texts (*Liturgiam Authenticam*, n. 36). This approach is based on the principle that liturgical texts are meant to form a cohesive experience for the faithful, unifying them in prayer and worship. Similarly, Pope Benedict XVI highlighted the importance of a stable liturgical language that allows the faithful to encounter the eternal truth of Scripture (BENEDICT XVI, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, Ignatius Press, California 2000, p. 67). Uniformity in translation also aids in memorizing and internalizing the Word of God.

### 4. THE ROLE OF THE NOVA VULGATA AND THE MANUSCRIPT TRADITION

The *Nova Vulgata*, the authoritative Latin translation of the Bible, is a key reference point in the Church's translation work. It is the "official text" from which liturgical translations must be drawn (CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH

VATICAN, *Instruction on the Translation of the Bible*, 15 April 1965, n. 37). This ensures that translations are consistent with the Church's canonical text. Translators must also consider the historical and theological implications of different manuscript traditions. The choice of manuscripts can significantly influence the interpretation of Scripture. Understanding the historical context of textual variations is essential to translating the Bible faithfully (Cfr GERARD BRAY, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present*, InterVarsity Press Illinois 1996, p. 88).

## 5. AVOIDING CONFUSION WITH NON-CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES

One of the challenges in translating the Scriptures for Catholic liturgy is avoiding a language or style that might confuse the faithful or align the text too closely with non-Catholic theological traditions. Hence, the translation should avoid terms or phrases that might blur the distinction between Catholic and non-Catholic readings of Scripture (Cfr *Liturgiam Authenticam*, n. 40). The goal is to ensure that the liturgical text remains distinctly Catholic, preserving doctrinal clarity while respecting ecumenical sensibilities. The Church provides guidelines for balancing dialogue with other Christian communities while maintaining doctrinal integrity (Cfr CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, *Directory for the Application of Principles and Norms on Ecumenism*, 25 March 1993, n. 85).

## 6. GUIDANCE FROM CHURCH TRADITION AND THE FATHERS

The Church's historical interpretation of Scripture, especially through the lens of the Fathers of the Church, plays a crucial role in translation. Ancient versions like the Septuagint have influenced Christian theology and liturgy for centuries. It is beneficial for translators to consult these ancient texts, as they provide insights into how the early Church understood key passages of Scripture (Cfr *Liturgiam Authenticam*, n. 41). The theological importance of the Septuagint, in particular, cannot be overstated, as it was widely used by the early Christian writers, including St. Augustine and St. Jerome, whose works continue to shape Christian biblical exegesis (Cfr J. MEYENDORFF, *Byzantine Theology: Historical Trends and Doctrinal Themes*, Fordham University Press, New York 1983, p. 45).

## 7. TRANSLATING FOR CATECHESIS AND DEVOTION

The translation of Scripture is not solely an academic task; it has profound implications for the spiritual lives of the faithful. Translations must be crafted in a way that aids the faithful in

understanding the mysteries of salvation and deepening their relationship with God. The Catechism stresses that "the Word of God is a sure guide for teaching the faithful" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 113). In this context, translations must be clear, accessible, and capable of nurturing the spiritual growth of the community.

James Barr argues that Scripture must be translated in a way that encourages active participation in the faith, rather than merely as a scholarly exercise (JAMES BARR, *The Semantics of Biblical Language*, Oxford University Press, Illinois 1961, p. 96). Translations should foster a deeper understanding of salvation history and invite the faithful into a personal encounter with the Word of God.

## 8. PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR TRANSLATORS

Practical considerations for translating the Bible for liturgical use include ensuring clarity and avoiding ambiguity. Any expression that could lead to confusion when heard should be avoided, ensuring the message is easily understood (*Liturgiam Authenticam*, n. 44). Furthermore, Lectionaries must follow the structure outlined in the *Ordo Lectionum Missae*, ensuring consistency in the titles, incipits, and biblical passages. This standardization aids in the proclamation of the Word, ensuring that the text is both reverent and intelligible (CONGREGATION FOR DIVINE WORSHIP AND THE DISCIPLINE OF THE SACRAMENTS, *Ordo Lectionum Missae*, (25 March 2001), n. 45).

## CONCLUSION

Translating the Sacred Scriptures for liturgical use is an endeavour that requires theological sensitivity, linguistic skill, and cultural awareness. The norms outlined by the Church, particularly in documents like *Liturgiam Authenticam* provide a framework for ensuring that translations remain faithful to the Word of God while also making the Scriptures accessible to the local faithful. By drawing from the rich tradition of biblical scholarship, consulting historical sources like the Septuagint, and prioritizing clarity and consistency, translators can fulfill their mission to present the Word of God in ways that are both doctrinally sound and culturally relevant.



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# THE PUBLICATION OF LITURGICAL BOOKS

## INTRODUCTION

The Church continues to open her windows for her sons and daughters to have a full and active participation in her liturgy. The Second Vatican Council in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, gave Conferences of Bishops the responsibility to supervise the publication of liturgical books for their respective territories, to the extent determined by Church discipline and law. Consequently, the role of the National Episcopal Conference and its Episcopal Liturgical Commission has been defined in the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy (Cfr VATICAN COUNCIL II, Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 44). For our case in Cameroon, we can make reference to the complete publication of the lectionary in Pidgin English, which came as a result of this constitution to help not only priests, but to enhance the teaching and preaching of God's Word to the people of God so that, they can understand and

appreciate the Gospel of salvation and be actively involved in the Liturgical life of the Church.

In this connection, *Liturgiam Authenticam* the Fifth Instruction on Vernacular Translations of the Roman Liturgy issued by the Congregation (Dicastery) for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments on March 28, 2001, further specifies the role of the Conference of Bishops: "as regards the publication of liturgical books translated into the vernacular which are the property of a given Conference of Bishops, the right of publication is reserved to those editors to whom the Conference of Bishops shall have given this right by contract, with due regard for the requirements both of civil law and juridical custom prevailing in each country for the publication of books (Cfr *Liturgiam Authenticam* n.115)." From this perspective, this article is aimed at helping us understand what is to be considered before the publication of any liturgical book.

## 1. GUIDELINES FOR THE PUBLICATION OF LITURGICAL BOOKS

### 1.1. The Competent Authority for the Publication

The National Episcopal Conference through its Episcopal Liturgical Commission has the responsibility of regulating pastoral-liturgical actions. This responsibility includes the supervision of the publication of approved liturgical books, participation aids, and those prayer books which contain liturgical materials. The supervision of the publication of books wholly comprising of devotional materials (prayer books) does not fall within the scope of the Episcopal Liturgical Commission but is the responsibility of the local Ordinary of the place in which they are published (Cfr Can. 826 §3).

### 1.2. The Consideration of the Quality of the Books

Special attention should be given to the quality of books used for proclaiming the liturgical texts to the people in the vernacular, so that even the book's



appearance may prompt greater reverence for the word of God and for sacred objects (Cfr *Liturgiam Authenticam*, n.120), and (Cfr *Inter oecumenici*, n.40.). They should be clear in their arrangement and typography, worthy in appearance and quality of paper and binding, supplemented by such catechetical and other comments which will encourage effective and dignified celebration, and be faithful to the goals of the liturgical reform.

### 1.3. The Presentation of the Material

In particular, from the approved liturgical books to the simplest participation aids, publications should provide the greatest possible diversity and options, as expected by the liturgical reform. No publication should limit, directly or indirectly, the breadth of choice open to the priest and other ministers, the leaders of the singing, parish and community worship committees, or others who participate in planning liturgical celebrations. Similarly, no explanation or arrangement of text or rites should misrepresent or distort the approved ritual, as found in the vernacular typical editions approved by the National Catholic Bishops' Conference and confirmed by the Apostolic See.

## 2. THE PUBLISHING HOUSE AND THE TYPES OF PUBLICATION

The term 'publisher' is applicable to any person, group or consortium, public or private, for-profit or not-for-profit, ecclesiastical, religious, or lay, engaged in the production of liturgical materials for distribution to others. Publishers are expected to conform to the spirit and norms of the Catholic tradition (Cfr *Liturgiam Authenticam* n.122). 'Publications' refer to such materials by whatever process, paper or electronic, and these in so far as they are liturgical or related texts

may be produced or reproduced, whether for sale or for distribution without charge.

There are two main types of publication. There are; Ritual Editions and Participation Aids. Ritual Editions are formal publications of approved liturgical texts for use in liturgical celebration by a liturgical minister, while Participation Aids are materials excerpted or compiled from the approved liturgical texts designed to assist the participation of the faithful in the liturgy.

### 2.1. Permissions and Approval

For typical vernacular editions, the *recognitio* granted by the Apostolic See is to be indicated in the printed editions together with the concordat *cum originali* signed by the chairman of the Liturgical Commission of the Conference of Bishops, as well as the imprimatur undersigned by the President of the same Conference (Cfr *Liturgiam authenticam*, n.81). In addition, the publication of liturgical texts *iuxta typicam*, that is, reproductions of all or part of liturgical texts in other forms such as in participation aids, is governed by a separate canonical norm, (Can.826 §2). The requisite attestation that a liturgical book is in conformity with the approved typical edition (in this case, the typical vernacular edition) is supplied by the Ordinary of the place where the liturgical book is published.

### 2.2. The Responsibilities of the Publisher

It is the responsibility of the publisher to obtain the necessary permission or contract from the copyright holder of any liturgical or other text which is included in a publication. Such permission should be sought as soon as the material has been chosen and always prior to its publication. Any conditions or requirements established by copyright holders are in addition

to these guidelines, including the payment of royalties or other fees, and have their own force. Publishers are reminded that the appropriate copyright notice is to be made, as specified by the copyright holder. Also, Publishers are requested to place the Diocesan Liturgy Office on their mailing lists so that copies of all publications, releases, advertising and promotional material, etc. will be available.

## CONCLUSION

In keeping with the demands of the Church, and the instructions given towards the publications of liturgical texts, we have come to realize that, liturgical publications are carried out, under proper consultation of the bishops and with the approval of the Apostolic see. Liturgical books are to be revised as soon as there is updated information either modifications of rites or development of doctrine. There is need for well-trained experts in this area. Also, when the liturgical books are being revised, the people's parts must be carefully indicated by the rubrics. (Cfr *Sacrosanctum Concilium* n. 31). In addition, care is to be taken to ensure that the choice of publishers for the printing of the liturgical books be made to avoid any form of syncretism and obstructions or change of intended purpose.



# MUSIC ARTICLE

## LITURGICAL MUSICAL INCULTURATION

### INTRODUCTION

In our last edition, we dealt with the general principles for judging songs that are suitable for use within the liturgy. In this edition, we shall limit ourselves to the suitability of songs. We must note first that every song has a cultural background. To this effect, we shall dwell in this edition on our African Songs, carefully bringing out the necessary criteria to keep in mind when using these songs in the liturgy. Liturgical musical inculturation involves incorporating traditional musical styles, instruments, and melodies into our liturgical celebrations. This is to ensure that the liturgy expresses the genius and spirit of each people (Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Vicesimus Quintus Annus*, 23).

#### 1.1. THE POSSIBILITY OF LITURGICAL MUSICAL INCULTURATION

We are able to talk about liturgical musical inculturation because "the Church has not adopted any particular style of art as its very own but has admitted styles from every period, according to the proper genius and circumstances of peoples and the requirements of the many different rites in the Church" (KEVIN W. IRWIN, *Responses to 101 Questions on the Mass*, 191).

#### 1.2. THE APPROPRIATE STYLE OF MUSIC FOR THE LITURGY

The appropriate style of music for the liturgy is one which reflects and respects variety of persons and cultures. (Cfr KEVIN W. IRWIN, *Responses to 101 Questions on the Mass*, 192). Therefore, in bringing songs from our respective cultures into the liturgy, we must ensure that they are such that uphold the dignity of man and the positive values of that culture itself. When we practice inculturation in such a fashion, minds are easily raised to God when the singing takes place (Cfr *Musicam Sacram* n. 5). *Musicam Sacram* further states very clearly that "each nation should have its own proper music for the parts that are to be sung by the people.... Let the melodies be proper to the texts and let them be sung

in the language of the people" (*Musicam Sacram* n. 5).

#### 1.1. LITURGICAL MUSIC IS ESSENTIALLY A RESULT OF INCULTURATION

As we earlier mentioned, there is no music that has not got a cultural background. Lucien Deiss once mentioned that liturgical music must be rooted in the culture of the people and that the Church must recognize the value of traditional music and incorporate it into the liturgy. (Cfr LUCIEN DEISS, *Music and the Liturgy*, 127). The Church has never been indifferent to this for even the plain chants which many people think are originating from the Church are as a result of the Roman Tradition. It is due to inculturation that we have such in the Church. We must however, be mindful that inculturation is a two-way process: the Church learns from the culture of her people then adapts it to liturgical practices accordingly, while culture also learns and adapts new aspects from the Church. (Cfr ANSCAR J. CHUPUNGO, *Liturgical Inculturation: Sacraments, Religiosity and Catechesis*, 193). This adaption however must be done in a way that respects the universal character of the Church's liturgy.

### CONCLUSION

Given the possibility of Liturgical Musical Inculturation and the various things to consider which we have spoken about in this article, it is important also that we end by mentioning clearly, that all these things as was already implied, should be done in a way that will avoid any syncretism. This would demand that we train musicians who will handle this aspect with expert skills. Of course, Liturgical Musical Inculturation is not new to us. It had begun officially a long time ago and culminated with the second visit of Pope Saint John Paul II to Cameroon whose purpose was to sign and make public *Ecclesia in Africa* in 1995. This explains the reason for traditional drums, xylophones, shakers, and other traditional instruments in our Churches.

# JESUS LIFTED UP ON THE CROSS: A THEOLOGICAL AND LITURGICAL REFLECTION

The theological significance of the crucifixion and death of Jesus forms an essential element in the primitive *Kerygma* or Apostolic Preaching (Cfr Lk 4:18, Rom 10:14 and Mt 3:1). In the eyes of the Church, the cross takes on cosmic dimensions. No longer is it just an event in history, but something that has changed the face of the earth. Generally, the Gospel of John presents a threefold proclamation of Jesus being lifted up upon the cross. We see the first in Jesus' conversation with Nicodemus here He says "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the desert, so must the Son of man be lifted up" (Jn 3:14). We find the second in Jn 8:28 where Christ says "when you have lifted up the Son of man, then you will know that I am He" (*Ego eimi*) and the third in Jn 12:32-33 wherein Jesus, to show by what means he was to die says "I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." The fundamental questions which serve as a roadmap for this reflection are: what does being lifted up on the cross signify for us Christians as we celebrate this joyful season of Easter? And how is a society such as ours to understand the mystery of the cross, when it opposes the cross with pleasure at every level?

From a historical background, we note that crucifixion was an ancient form of punishment or execution that was widely practised in antiquity. The Victim also known as "*Supplicium Servile*" was nailed or bound to a cross or sometimes a stake or a tree; a form of punishment which Cicero refers to as "most cruel and disgusting." The cross was therefore a symbol of public humiliation and ignominy.

However, it is by this humiliation and ignominy that the *Shekinah* glory of God will dwell among us (Jn 1:14). With this in mind, the account of St. Andrew's martyrdom, which used to appear in the Office of his feast tells us that the apostle, before stretching out on the cross, saluted it with these words: "Hail cross, by which the Most High God has brought salvation! Hail cross, trophy of Christ's victory over his enemies! Hail cross, planted on earth but whose fruit is in heaven! Hail cross, whose name contains the fullness of all things! I know your mystery!" (*Acts of St. Andrew*, in Lipsius-Bonnet, *Acta Apostolorum Apocrypha*, II, I, 54).

From a theological perspective, the Greek word "*Hypsoo*" which translates the English words "**To lift up**" or "**to exalt**" opens a twofold dimension of God's love as manifested upon the cross. Firstly, by being lifted up, Jesus makes clear by what method of crucifixion he was to undergo on the cross. It is on the cross that Jesus fulfills and completes the prefiguration of Moses lifting up the bronze serpent in the wilderness as seen in Num. 21:4-9. Thus, Christ lifted up on the cross is the epitome of God's compassion for us. Secondly, by being lifted up means to exalt. The exaltation of Jesus by means of the cross is also the exaltation of Jesus on the cross. Therefore, Jesus is lifted up via the cross to the throne of heaven, to the glory of God the Father. Nevertheless, the message of the cross even seems incomprehensible to many today wherein we often hear of slogans like "Christianity without the cross or suffering is not my portion." How easily it can be even for us Christians to



overlook the importance of the cross of Jesus in our faith journey. But we should always keep in mind that the cross is at the heart of our Christian faith for there is “no Christianity or glory without the cross.” The cross is the perfect expression of God's effective concern for us. The cross is the passion of God for us and the cross is the standard of God's love for us (Cfr Jn 3:16). For St. Paul upholds that “while the Jews demand miracles and the Greeks look for wisdom, we are preaching a crucified Christ: to the Jews an obstacle they cannot get over and to the Gentles foolishness” (1Cor 1:22-23).

It is in this regard, that Pope Pius XII in his Encyclical Letter *Mystici Corporis Christi*, makes a beautiful liturgical insight in relation to Jesus being lifted up on the cross and the Good Friday celebration of the Lord's passion. To this, the Pope asserts that “the three-fold Johannine proclamation of Jesus being lifted up upon the cross as seen in (Jn 3:14; 8:28 and 12:32) find its liturgical expression in the Good Friday celebration of the Lord's Passion, where the crucifix is lifted up before the congregation three times and the minister thrice proclaims: ‘*Ecce lignum crucis, in quo salus mundi pependit*’: ‘This is the wood of the cross, on which hung the Savior of the world.’” The faithful are therefore summoned to adore Him: “Come, let us worship” (Cfr Pope Pius XII, Encyclical Letter *Mystici Corporis Christi*, 29<sup>th</sup> June 1943, nn. 32-40). Through this liturgical action, Raniero Cardinal Cantalamessa asserts that this ancient liturgical ritual is the symbol of the mystery of the cross being gradually revealed throughout the centuries. Each stage in the unveiling represents a period of time, or a stage, in the history of salvation. The first stage represents the cross as it was *prefigured* in the Old Testament; the second stage represents the cross *accomplished* in the life of Jesus, the ‘cross of history’; and the third represents the cross as it is celebrated in the Church, the ‘cross of faith’ (Cfr Raniero Cantalamessa, *The Power of the Cross*, Vol. 1, p. 149).

Nevertheless, while the “lifting up of Jesus” initially refers to the cross, according to Julian of Norwich (1342-1416), there is also embedded within that “lifting up” the reality of Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Thus, the cross is present throughout salvation history. It is present as a *figure* in the Old Testament, as an *event* in the New Testament and as a *sacrament* or mystery in the Church. In connection with the Good Friday celebration, we realize that there is a three-fold

lifting up of the risen Jesus at the Easter Vigil under the symbol of the Paschal Candle with each lifting up the priest says: “Light of Christ” (*Lumen Christi*). It is the lifted-up crucified and risen Savior who is now the salvific light in the darkness of the world of sin and death. And it is this light (the light of divine truth and the light of divine life) that draws all humanity to Jesus, the lamb once slain who now lives forever. (Cfr Rev 5:9-14). Hence, Jesus' death, resurrection and ascension are understood as one continuous event, summarized in the phrase “glorified.”

Nonetheless, as we celebrate this joyful season of Easter in the light of the resurrection of Christ, we should always keep in mind that Christ is risen. The cross is swallowed up in victory ‘*O crux, ave spes unica*’: ‘Hail to the cross, our only hope!’ The cross is the place where ‘the mystery of our religion’ (1 Tim 3:16) is accomplished, where the new Adam says ‘yes’ to God on behalf of all and for all time, it is where the real Moses divides the real Red Sea with wood, and by his obedience transforms the bitter waters of rebellion into the sweet waters of grace and baptism. The cross is the power of God and the wisdom of God (Cfr 1 Cor 1:24). As St. Thomas Aquinas will always say that “it is the beggar's empty hands that receive a gift.” Let us look up to the cross of Christ with all our fears, anxieties, difficulties and life's challenges for through the cross, Jesus draws all human beings to Himself for it is as the crucified Savior that people will come to faith in Him as the loving divine Son of the Father and so obtain eternal life.



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