

The mission of God's people in the light of God's Mission. A Missiological case study on the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, South Africa

DW Mofokeng
22607870

Thesis submitted for the degree *Philosophiae Doctor* in Missiology at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University

Promoter: Prof JJ Kritzinger
May 2015



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I acknowledge that the product of this research is not solely a personal achievement. Many people contributed to it in many invaluable ways. Undoubtedly, I am indebted to all of them. However, it gives me pleasure to name just a few:

First and foremost, thanks must go to Dr Agrippa Goodman Khathide who challenged and encouraged me to study with North West University. This has been a great opportunity for me.

A big thank you goes to the local ordinary, Bishop Jan De Groef who not only provided pieces of information about the Diocese of Bethlehem, but also accommodated me at bishop's house.

Most appreciated is the contribution of Bishop emeritus of Bethlehem Diocese, Hubert Bucher who shared about the times he lived and administered the diocese in Bethlehem, Free State.

I am indebted to my supervisor, Professor Dons Kritzinger, for his informed and incisive scrutiny of various drafts of this academic activity, for his constructive criticism, and, above all, for his forbearance. He certainly dedicated his time and energy in making sure that this project becomes truly an academic work.

Drawing from their living memory, thanks must be directed to priests, religious sisters and the parishioners of Bethlehem Parish and Qwaqwa Deanery who could recall what they saw in the first missionaries.

A word of gratitude is also due to Phuthaditjhaba Parish, where I am currently working as parish priest for putting up with my absences from the parish.

I also acknowledge with thanks the bursary I received from North West University and other financial burdens carried by the Diocese of Bethlehem.

To all of these individuals, I say a heartfelt thank you for the encouragement and inspiration to finish the study and thus enable a new look at the re-evangelising and revitalising of the Diocese of Bethlehem.

TITLE

The mission of God's people in the light of God's mission. A missiological case study of the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, South Africa.

KEY WORDS

Missio Dei, Missiones Ecclesiae, Mission, Local Church, Bethlehem Diocese, Roman Catholic Church, Revitalisation

ABSTRACT

Missiology is about God's call and his sending forth of people to do his will. His call is always linked to his purpose. Thus, the primary purpose of God is salvation. And his salvation is all embracing. Similarly, the Church is the sacrament of salvation and is mandated to proclaim faith and salvation to all. Hence, the mission of God (*missio Dei*) takes place in the Church, and is implanted by the Church in the world (*missiones Ecclesiae*). The mission which Jesus gives to the Church is made possible by his own mission (*missio Christi*), and thus has its foundation in God.

The history of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem begins with the German Missionaries of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit (Spiritans). Importantly, for the Spiritans, the growth of the diocese depended upon the training of the lay people to teach catechism, to lead Priestless Sunday services and gradually by the training of the local clergy as well.

The present situation in the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem is the seemingly shallow understanding of faith and mission, and also the dwindling number of Catholics. This is clearly evident in the number of baptisms in the baptismal register and the head counts on Sundays. Nevertheless, the diocese is still called to preach the Good News to the poor and the oppressed. This thesis assesses the efforts of the pioneers (German Missionaries) as well as the current situation in the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem, and recommends a paradigm shift for the future.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Apostolic Administrator/ Vicar Capitular: Apostolic Administrations are distinct and extraordinary arrangements. They govern a diocese in the name of the Supreme Pontiff.

Apostolic Exhortation: An apostolic exhortation is a type of communication from the Supreme Pontiff. It normally encourages a community of people to undertake a particular activity, but does not define Church doctrine. It is considered lower in formal authority than a papal encyclical, but higher than other ecclesiastical letters. Apostolic exhortations are commonly issued in response to a synod of bishops, in which case they are known as post-synodal apostolic exhortations.

Catechism: The CCC (Catechism of the Catholic Church) “is conceived as an organic presentation of the Catholic faith in its entirety” (CCC 18). It is the book containing the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, which catechists use ‘to present the Gospel teaching and engage in liturgical worship and in works of charity (CIC 1983, 785#1).

Catechists: Catechists are lay members of Christ’s faithful who have received proper formation and are outstanding in their living of the Christian life. Under the direction of missionaries, they are to present the Gospel teaching and engage in liturgical worship and in works of charity (CIC 1983, 785#1).

Community: The Code of Canon Law / *Codex Iuris Canonici* (CIC) of 1983 describes a community as ‘Christ’s faithful within a particular Church, entrusted to a priest as its proper pastor, but because of special circumstances not yet established as a parish (CIC 1983, 516#1). [The focus of this project is on the communities of QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish, where the church members live and worship.]

Cor Unum et Anima Una: One Heart and One Soul.

Deanery: A group of parishes in a district under the care of a dean. [In Bethlehem diocese there are four deaneries: Central, Mpumalanga, Southern and QwaQwa. A focus in this project will be on the QwaQwa Deanery].

Diocese: The Code of Canon Law / *Codex Iuris Canonici* (CIC) of 1983 defines a diocese as 'a portion of the people of God, which is entrusted to a Bishop to be nurtured by him, with the cooperation of the presbyterium' (CIC 1983, 369). [In this project the focus is on the Bethlehem Diocese, South Africa].

Encyclical: It is a letter sent by the pontiff to all the leaders of the Church and to all Catholics (sometimes to all people of good will) regarding a specific subject of foremost importance at the moment of its publication.

Evangelisation: Evangelisation literally means bringing Good Tidings or the proclamation of the Good News. Evangelisation takes many forms and employs any medium of communication.

***Fidei Donum*:** In his encyclical, *Fidei Donum* (1957) Pope Pius XII appealed to all Bishops of the Christian homelands to make some of their diocesan priests available for temporary assignment to the missions, for example Africa. [Bethlehem Diocese received the gift of *Fidei Donum* in the persons of Bishop Hubert Bucher and Msg. Georg Wagner].

Inculturation: It is the incarnation of the Gospel in a native culture and also the introduction of a culture into the life of the Church.

Kerygma: Official Proclamation or the Preaching of the Good News.

Laity: All the faithful except those in Holy Orders and those who belong to a religious state approved by the Church (Lumen Gentium 10).

Local Church: The term also refers to a diocese (cf. above).

Missiology: It is a systematic study of the evangelising activity of the Church and of the ways in which it is carried out guided by the Holy Spirit. It is the scientific theological study of the missionary reality of the Church. Missiology extends to the study of history of Christian missions and the analysis of missionary methodology, organisation and experience. Another definition of Missiology is: the systematic theology of mission.

Missionaries: The Code of Canon Law / *Codex Iuris Canonici* describes missionaries as people who 'have been sent by the competent ecclesiastical authority to engage in missionary activity, maybe chosen from the indigenous population or from others, be they secular clergy, or members of institutes of consecrated life or of a society of apostolic life, or other members of Christ's faithful' (CIC 1983, 784).

Missionarity: The concept refers to the sense or state of mission. For Pope Francis, Missionarity "is not alone about geographical territories, but is about the people, cultures and individuals, because the 'boundaries' of faith do not only cross places and human traditions, but the heart of each man and each woman" (<http://www.missionz.co.za>, 4/8/2014).

Missionary Activity: The activation of God's plan (*Ad Gentes* 9).

Omnibus Omnia: To be All to All. The motto of the Sisters of St. Paul.

Ordinary: In the Code of Canon law the term Ordinary means, apart from the Roman Pontiff, diocesan Bishops and all who, even for a time only, are set over a particular Church or a community equivalent to it in accordance with Canon 368, and those who in these districts have general ordinary executive power, that is, Vicars general and episcopal Vicars; likewise, for their own members, it means the major Superiors of clerical religious institutes of pontifical right and of clerical societies of apostolic life of pontifical right, who have at least ordinary executive power (CIC 1983, 134 #1).

Particular Church: It is a community of the faithful, united by the Word of God to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments. It is a community united with its particular bishop or pastor who is in unity with the Bishop of Rome and other bishops.

Parish: The Code of Canon Law / *Codex Iuris Canonici* (CIC) of 1983 describes a parish as ‘a certain community of Christ’s faithful stably established within a particular Church, whose pastoral care, under the authority of the diocesan Bishop, is entrusted to a parish priest as its proper pastor (CIC 1983, 515#1).

Pastoral letter: the letter written by the Local Ordinary to the faithful entrusted to his care addressing any point that he deems necessary.

Prefect Apostolic: He governs the prefecture apostolic in the name of the Supreme Pontiff (CIC 1983, 371 #2).

Prefecture Apostolic: A prefecture apostolic is a certain portion of the people of God, which for special reasons is not yet constituted a diocese, and which is entrusted to the pastoral care of a Vicar Apostolic, who governs it in the name of the Supreme Pontiff (cf. CIC 1983, 371 #1).

Vicar Apostolic: He governs the vicariate apostolic in the name of the Supreme Pontiff (CIC 1983, 371 #2).

Vicariate Apostolic: A vicariate apostolic is a certain portion of the people of God, which for special reasons is not yet constituted a diocese, and which is entrusted to the pastoral care of a Vicar Apostolic, who governs it in the name of the Supreme Pontiff (cf. CIC. 371 # 1).

ABBREVIATIONS

AG: *Ad Gentes* - Decree on Missionary Activity of the Church, Vatican II, 1965. (The decree refers to the proclamation of the Word of God to peoples and communities who do not yet believe in Christ and to plant the Church among them).

CB: Ceremonial of Bishops

CCC: Catechism of the Catholic Church. It was promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1992.

CIC: *Codex Iuris Canonici* – Code of Canon Law. It was promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1983.

CSP: The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Paul.

CSSp: *Congregatio Sancti Spiritus* (Spiritans). The Holy Ghost Fathers were renewed by Francis Libermann in 1848. His chief missionary principle was the establishment of a local church.

DV: *Dei Verbum* - Dogmatic Constitution on Divine revelation, Vatican Council II, 1965.

EA: *Ecclesia in Africa* (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope John Paul II, September 14, 1995). The *Ecclesia in Africa* literally means: The Church in Africa.

EG: *Evangelii Gaudium* (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis, November 24, 2013). The *Evangelii Gaudium* literally means: The Joy of the Gospel.

EN: *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Paul VI, December 8, 1975). The *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) deals with: Evangelisation in the Modern World.

FCSCJ: Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

FD: *Fidei Donum* (Encyclical of Pope Pius XII, 1957). *Fidei Donum* literally means the Gift of the Faith.

GNLY: General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar.

JB: Jerusalem Bible

LG: *Lumen Gentium* – Light of the Nations. It is the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Vatican Council II, 1965.

M.Afr: Missionaries of Africa (previously known as White Fathers)

MF: *Mysterium Fidei* (Encyclical letter of Pope Paul VI, September 1965). *Mysterium Fidei* literally means the Mystery of Faith.

NA: *Nostra aetate* – Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions, Vatican Council II, 1965.

OMI: Oblates of Mary Immaculate.

PO: *Presbyterorum Ordinis*: Document on the Priesthood, Vatican Council II, 1965.

RM: *Redemptoris Missio* (Pope John II, Encyclical Letter on the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate).

SACBC: Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

SC: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* – The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, Vatican Council II, 1963.

SC (B)): *Sacramentum Caritatis* (Apostolic Exhortation on the Eucharist as the source and summit of the Church's Life and Mission, February 22, 2007).

SCC: Small Christian Community.

UR: *Unitatis redintegratio* – Decree on Ecumenism, Vatican Council II, 1964.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	16-27
1.1 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT	16
1.1.1 Background	16
1.1.1.1 Theological developments in Missiology.....	16
1.1.1.2 Historical background of the Bethlehem Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church	18
1.1.2 Problem Statement	19
1.1.2.1 The main research question	21
1.1.2.2 Other questions.....	21
1.1.3 Aim and objectives	21
1.1.4 The central theoretical argument	22
1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
1.2.1 The literature study	22
1.2.2 The empirical study	23
1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS	25
1.4 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN CHAPTERS 2, 3, 4 AND 5	26
CHAPTER 2: THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION (<i>MISSIO DEI AND MISSIO ECCLESIAE</i>): THE MISSION OF GOD’S PEOPLE IN THE LIGHT OF GOD’S MISSION, WITH REFERENCE TO MODERN MISSIOLOGISTS	28-53
2.1 INTRODUCTION	28
2.2 THE MISSIOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH	29
2.2.1 Terminology	29
2.2.2 S. Karotemprel	29
2.2.3 L. Luzbetak	30
2.2.4 J. Verkuyl	30

2.2.5	K. Muller	30
2.2.6	A. Shorter	31
2.2.7	D. Bosch	31
2.2.8	B. Hearne, CSSp	32
2.2.9.	Evaluation and Critique.....	32
2.3	THE CONVENTIONAL CATHOLIC IDEA OF MISSIOLOGY	35
2.3.1	Ad Gentes	35
2.3.2	Evangelisation	37
2.3.3	Kerygma (Proclamation)	39
2.3.4	Diakonia (Service)	40
2.3.5	Liturgy (Leitourgia).....	41
2.3.6	Catechesis (Journey).....	42
2.3.7	Martyria (Witness)	43
2.4	MISSIO DEI: THE MISSION OF GOD	45
2.5	MISSIONES ECCLESIAE: THE CHURCH'S MISSION.....	46
2.6	PAPAL DOCUMENTS ON MISSION SINCE VATICAN II	50
2.6.1	<i>Evangelii Nuntiandi</i> (EN)	50
2.6.2	<i>Redemptoris Missio</i> (RM)	51
2.7	CONCLUSION	53

CHAPTER 3: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BETHLEHEM PARISH AND QWAQWA DEANERY.....54-104

3.1	INTRODUCTION	54
PART I: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM		55
3.2	AN OVERVIEW	55
3.3	EARLY DAYS IN THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM	58
3.4	THE CIRCUMSTANCES	58
3.4.1	Apartheid	59
3.4.2	Missionary Poverty	61
3.4.3	Sects: "Come and join us"	62
3.4.4	The means of Transport for evangelisation	63

3.5	ZEALOUS APOSTOLATE: EVANGELISATION	63
3.5.1	Language	63
3.5.2	Schools	64
3.5.3	Liturgy	66
3.5.4	Home visits	68
3.5.5	Social outreach	69
3.5.6	Literature	70
3.6	THE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATES	70
3.6.1	Youth ministry: Associations	71
3.6.2	Sisters of St Paul: Healthcare	71
3.6.3	Catechists: Missionaries in the local church	74
3.7	THE HIERARCHY	75
3.7.1	The Bethlehem Diocese under Bishop Peter Kelleter, CSSp	75
3.7.2	The Bethlehem Diocese under Bishop Hubert Bucher	77
3.7.3	Bishop Hubert Bucher retires and is replaced by Bishop Jan De Groef, M.Afr	81
PART II:	THE PARISH OF BETHLEHEM	84
3.8	INTRODUCTION	84
3.8.1	<i>Tswalo ya Morena</i> (The Nativity of the Lord)	85
3.8.2	<i>Mofumahadi wa Kgotso</i> (Queenship of Mary)	86
3.8.3	<i>Bohlokong</i> location community	86
3.8.4	Community of the Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart in <i>Bohlokong</i>	87
PART III:	QWAQWA DEANERY	88
3.9	QWAQWA HOMELAND	88
3.9.1	Introduction	88
3.9.2	The missionary activity in QwaQwa Deanery	88
3.9.3	Oblates of Mary Immaculate and other Missionaries in Qwaqwa	90
PART IV:	A BALANCE	91
3.10	CHALLENGES OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM	91
3.11	STATISTICS	92
3.12	ANALYSIS	101
3.13	CONCLUSION	102

CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY	105-131
4.1 INTRODUCTION	105
4.2 CHALLENGES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.....	106
4.3 THE COMMENDABLE WORK OF THE MISSIONARIES	107
4.4 THE PROBLEM OF THE LACK OF VOCATIONS WITHIN THE DIOCESE	110
4.5 THE ECUMENICAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS	111
4.6 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND TRADITIONAL SOTHO CULTURE	112
4.7 THE SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES	118
4.8 THE PLANNED GIVING	120
4.9 THE MASS INTENTIONS	123
4.10 THE OUTREACH PROGRAMMES	124
4.11 FAMILY MINISTRY	125
4.12 DIOCESAN FUNERAL POLICY.....	125
4.13 LAITY INVOLVEMENT.....	127
4.14 JUSTICE AND PEACE	127
4.15 STATISTICS.....	128
4.16 MEANS OF COMMUNICATION	128
4.17 LAPSED CATHOLICS	128
4.18 OTHER CHALLENGES	129
4.19 CONCLUSION	130
CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATIONS: A POSSIBLE PROGRAMME OF REVITALISATION.....	132-147
5.1 ECUMENISM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE.....	133
5.2 FAMILY MINISTRY	137
5.3 TEACHING AND PREACHING	139
5.4 COMMUNICATION	141
5.5 SHORTAGE OF PRIESTS	142
5.6 ORGANISATIONS AND SODALITIES	142
5.7 SELF SUPPORT.....	143
5.8 OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY	144

5.9	THE CHURCH AND SOTHO CULTURE	146
5.10	REVITALISATION	146

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION.....	148-151
-----------------------------------	----------------

Appendices.....	152-156
------------------------	----------------

Bibliography.....	157-164
--------------------------	----------------

Map of Deaneries

Statistics form

Headcount form

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

1.1.1 Background

1.1.1.1 Theological developments in Missiology

The Second Vatican Council teaches that “the church on earth is by its very nature missionary” (*Ad Gentes* 2). David Bosch takes it further to say “the Christian faith is intrinsically missionary” (Bosch 1991:8). Thus, the church’s mandate is to proclaim the message of the Kingdom of God to the whole universe. “All generations of the earth are objects of God’s salvific will and plan of salvation which has come in Jesus Christ and is intended for all humanity” (Bosch 1991: 9). Jesus commanded the church to go on mission and make disciples of all nations: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations...” (Matthew 28:18-21). Therefore, the mission of Christ is communicated to the apostles and the Church. As a result, it is the Church’s mission to carry out the will of Christ. Importantly, the Church’s origin is in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit (AG 2), and the complete mission of the Triune God (Divine Persons) is through the Church and in the full participation of the baptised.

Basically the starting point of Missiology is the Mission of God (*missio Dei*), that is, God is the source of mission, even before He sent the Son and Holy Spirit (AG 2). It is important to explain as to where the mission comes from and whose mission is it. All Mission is rooted in God, so we speak of the *Missio Dei* (the Mission of God) when we are looking for the source

of our mission. David Bosch in his book, *Transforming Mission*, talks about the *missio Dei* (God's mission) as God's self-revelation as the One who loves the world, God's involvement in and with the world, the nature and activity of God, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church is privileged to participate (1991:10). To participate in the *missio Dei* as missional people is to participate in the movement of God's love (1991:390) and be transformed by God's very own mission.

Part of the *missio Dei* is the *missio Christi*, Mission of Christ. If we want to understand the mission we have to look at the sending of the only Son of God, Jesus Christ. The Mission which Jesus (*missio Christi*) gives to the Church (*missio Ecclesiae*) has its foundation or rather origin in God Himself (*missio Dei*).

However, for the purpose of this project, it is advisable to briefly consider how the term Mission/Missiology is understood by different authors and by some different Christian traditions. Verkuyl (a Reformed Church missiologist) prefers the term Missiology to Missionary Science. For him, the focus is primarily not only on the content of the message but also on the missionary activity of God and the men and women He mandates. He defines Missiology as: 'The study of the salvation activities of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit throughout the world geared toward bringing the Kingdom of God into existence' (Verkuyl 1978:5). Muller (a Catholic missiologist) defines the objective of Missiology into two senses: 1) The Missionary work (activity) of the Church, that is, the science of the missionary. 2) The praxis of mission, in which the world sets the agenda and the message is a message of promise to the world without a hierarchical mediation, that is, the contextualization of the gospel (Muller 1987:12).

The Second Vatican Council defines the Missiology or the mission of the Church (*missiones ecclesiae*) in a more conventional way: The mission of the Church (*missiones ecclesiae*) is carried out by means of the activity through which, in obedience to Christ's command and moved by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit, the Church makes itself fully present to all

men and women and indeed to all peoples in order to lead them to the faith, freedom and peace of Christ by the example of its life and teaching, by the sacraments and other means of grace. Its aim is to open up for all people a free and sure path to full participation in the mystery of Christ (AG 5).

Consequently, the *missiones ecclesiae* transmit the message of the Kingdom of God through the Local Church or Particular Church. In the context of this project we may define the concept Local Church or Particular Church: the local church or particular church means a community of the faithful, united by the Word of God to celebrate the Eucharist and other sacraments. It further refers to a community united with its particular bishop or pastor who is in unity with the Bishop of Rome and other bishops. In the Vatican II documents (AG 19-22 and *Presbyterorum Ordinis* 6-11) the expression local church is emphasised. The term is even used speaking of priests in their ministry. So one can see here the openness to the linking of the local church to parishes.

1.1.1.2 Historical background of the Bethlehem Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church

The history of the local church in the Diocese of Bethlehem begins with the German Missionaries. It is rooted back to the Holy Ghost Fathers or Spiritans of the German Province and the Religious Sisters of St. Paul. In this project, therefore, I shall examine the history of their work in the Diocese of Bethlehem, their contribution and involvement in terms of evangelisation and secular development. Then I shall examine their weaknesses in the spreading of the Good News. I shall also look critically at the later development of the Catholics in terms of the formation of the Diocese of Bethlehem, the growth of the diocese and the local clergy, but also their weaknesses.

In Bethlehem Diocese there are thirteen parishes, each comprised of three or more communities. For the purpose of the project, the researcher will limit himself to one parish and one Deanery, namely, Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery. The aim is to investigate if the selected communities were and still are involved in the life and mission of

the local church. Through training and formation received, were these parishes rooted in their personal relationship with Jesus? Was/Is the formation offered by the local church sufficient for their faith journey? I also endeavoured to discover how they were and are still inspired or encouraged to commit themselves to the mission of the local church.

The background to the enquiry is the worrying indication that some of the faithful in the diocese are increasingly drifting away from the Church after receiving the initial sacraments (Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist), even after a long training and hours of formation. For instance, recent statistics from the diocesan office show that in 2009 there were 68 133 Catholics in the diocese of Bethlehem and in 2010 there was a sharp decline of 3 048, which means that there are now 65 085 Catholics in the diocese. What happened with the 3 048 Catholics? Is there something wrong with the kerygma? What makes baptised Catholics to take their faith somewhere else rather than where they were Christianised? Or is there something wrong with the statistics?

1.1.2 Problem Statement

The historical overview of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem starts with the missionaries from Europe. In my discussion of the older history I will largely base myself on the historical book by Brain (1996): *Patience Our Daily Bread: The Catholic Church in the Orange Free State and Kimberley from 1850*. I shall examine the history of the first missionaries in the Diocese of Bethlehem, their contributions in terms of evangelisation and secular development (political = apartheid). Then I shall examine their challenges in their missionary activity.

As the church in the Diocese of Bethlehem grew, a lot of further developments took place with the growth of the diocese. The number of local clergy, congregations of men and women increased, then followed by education and medical care as we are yet to examine. As we shall later discover, the current standing of membership does not show a consistent growth with the number of years that the diocese was founded. The problem statement in

the context of the involvement of the local church in mission in the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem is therefore the following:

Are the communities in a position to carry out their mission as commanded by Jesus: Go out and proclaim the Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28: 18-20)? Are the baptised people and the religious carrying out this work of Christ? Are the communities of Bethlehem Diocese mature enough to carry out their responsibilities of proclaiming the Word of God? Furthermore, the diocese is now faced with the great need to explore different ways of providing formation so that the faithful become more involved in the mission of Jesus through the local church. A great number of the faithful/laity were trained and formed in the faith. Is this number seen in church on Sundays and Holidays of Obligation? Are they committed to Jesus through their mission?

It is therefore necessary to investigate the problem of the decline in numbers of the faithful in the diocese and the manner in which they were evangelised. Parenthetically, the decline in number is a worrying symptom; it indicates the unhealthy state of the church. However, the decline should not primarily be seen quantitatively as a decline in numbers, but more on the qualitative level. The researcher's hope for revitalisation of the Diocese of Bethlehem will not only be on the diocesan level, deanery level or parish level but also on the level of the faithful. I am going to focus on two different settings, namely, Bethlehem Parish, which is situated in an urban area, and QwaQwa Deanery, situated in a densely populated rural area (rural villages).

The new approach that will be developed could be a new way of evangelising the Deanery of QwaQwa and Bethlehem Parish and ultimately the entire Diocese of Bethlehem. Incidentally, this present research is pertinent also to the situation in the Church at large, because the topic of re-evangelisation of the world is presently foremost on the agenda of the Roman Catholic Church.

1.1.2.1 The main research question

How missional is the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in the light of the *missio Dei*?

1.1.2.2 From this main, overarching, question **others** may follow:

- 1 What is the Biblical understanding of missional ecclesiology in the light of *missio Dei*?
- 2 What was the past involvement of the local church (the Bethlehem Diocese) in *missio Dei* and *missiones ecclesiae*?
- 3 What is the present (current) involvement of the local church (the Bethlehem Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church) in God's Mission?
- 4 How can the Bethlehem Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church be revitalised to become a healthy missional church?
- 5 What is the proposed approach of the involvement of the local church in Mission?

1.1.3 Aim and objectives

The following aims could be formulated:

- 1 To propose a paradigm for the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in order to let the faithful be more practically involved in the local Mission.
- 2 To help the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem to become a healthy missional body.

As the objectives of the study the following could be stated:

- 1 To study and outline Scriptural evidence concerning the involvement of the local Church in Mission.
- 2 To study and outline the past involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in Mission.
- 3 To study and outline the current involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in Mission.
- 4 To propose a feasible and useful model of involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in Mission.

1.1.4 The central theoretical argument

The central theoretical argument of this research is that a feasible and useful model of involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in local mission can be developed and that it can be of value to the Christian Faithful with regards to the *missio Dei* and *missiones Ecclesiae*.

1.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher used two basic research methods: 1) A literature study, and 2) An empirical study.

1.2.1 The literature study

The literature study focused on two areas: a) Theological-Missiological works, and b) documents on the history and present situation of the Catholic Church in the Bethlehem Diocese.

In the first place the study outlined a wide spectrum of Missiological Theologians' (Missiologists) understanding of mission in the Scriptures and especially their material on the *missio Dei* and *missiones Ecclesia*. Together with this the recent developments in Roman Catholic thought (Pastoral letters, Apostolic Exhortations and Papal Encyclicals) on the mission of God's people in the light of the *missio Dei* and *missiones Ecclesiae* were also studied. By bringing together all these dynamics the theological basis of the thesis was laid.

The second aspect was to give a historical overview of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem and to use this as basis for the proposal of a paradigm shift in the practical involvement in the mission of the local church.

This further literature study involved the gathering and analysis of the content of the diocesan documents from the diocesan archives. The analysis of the past and present diocesan documents from the archives was done to establish the material facts. Even though most of them were written in German, prior translations were done accordingly by Bishop emeritus Hubert Bucher DD.

For deeper understanding the reading was followed up by in-depth interviews with the former and present leadership of the Diocese of Bethlehem. To find out if and how the concept of *missio Dei* and *missiones Ecclesiae*, and the practical involvement of the faithful in local Church growth is presently understood and again it was also necessary to interview some of the parishioners of the two selected settings (Bethlehem Parish which is mostly urban and has a township called *Bohlokong* and Qwaqwa Deanery which is largely rural with a number of villages) and some members of the Pastoral Parish Council (PPC). Through these efforts the researcher strove to ascertain if past and present methods used to involve the faithful in the local mission furthered their desire to be practically involved in the local church.

1.2.2 The empirical study

The empirical study was based on qualitative research, and entails in-depth interviews with a variety of people. They could be classified as follows:

1 In the first place the past and present leadership of the Diocese.

From the past leadership the following were selected, namely, Bishop Emeritus Hubert Bucher (now residing in Mariannahill, KwaZulu Natal), Fr Bernard Wiederkehr (still in the Diocese of Bethlehem, at Reitz), Sister Monica Morallana and Sister Gabriel Sithole (they are both retired at their mother house in Reitz).

For the present leadership, the following were selected: namely, Bishop Jan De Groef (resides in Bethlehem), Monsignor Gregory van Dyk (resides in Fouriesburg) and Vicar General Father Mosebetsi Simon Mokoena (resides in Ladybrand).

The discussions with these interviewees related to themes such as: Conversion and Baptism; Formation of the Communities; Formation of the Local Church; The Mission as building the Church; and The Mission as Inculturation.

2 A number of the faithful were also interviewed.

These people were selected from the two places situated in different settings: namely Bethlehem Parish, which is one of the longest established churches in the Diocese and is in the urban area (as explained above), and QwaQwa Deanery, which is a younger established church in the former homeland and is in the rural area (as explained above).

In terms of the selection of the interviewees the researcher relied on the cooperation and active participation of the parish priests, the leadership and communities. Letters of invitation were written for the parish communities, specifically addressed to the Parish priest and the Pastoral Parish Council (PPC) of Bethlehem, and to the Pastoral Council of the Deanery (PCoD). The criteria for the selection of interviewees were stipulated in the letter. It was necessary to interview senior people, younger people, and lapsed Catholics and those baptised Catholics who have lost a living sense of their faith and live far removed from Christ and his Gospel. (The copies of the letters can be seen in the Addenda). Those who agreed to participate in the study were expected to sign the consent form (cf. appendices).

The questions to these interviewees related to aspects like: the 'what' of the mission and the Gospel message; the 'why' of the mission and the Gospel message; and the 'how' of the mission and message of the Gospel. Apart from the individual interviews I also visited groups of elders and youth selected to participate and share their experiences in their local mission.

My conclusions were derived from the analysis of the aforementioned diocesan documents (for material facts), and the responses (opinions) obtained from interviews with the faithful of the two places (urban and rural), and the information and insights gained from the past and present leadership of the local church.

I was then in the position to make recommendations that will hopefully develop a more practical involvement of the Diocese of Bethlehem in the local mission in the future (proposed paradigm).

1.3 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The thesis follows more or less the following logical order. The details can be found in the Table of Contents.

Definition of key terms

Abbreviations

Chapter 1 Introduction

Chapter 2 Missiological understanding of the Church's Mission (*missio Dei* and *missiones Ecclesiae*)

Chapter 3 The Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem and its past and present involvement in Mission, with special reference to Qwaqwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish.

Chapter 4 The results of the empirical study

Chapter 5 A possible programme of revitalisation

Chapter 6 Conclusion

Appendices

Bibliography

1.4 SCHEMATIC REPRESENTATION OF THE CORRELATION BETWEEN CHAPTERS 2, 3, 4 AND 5.

Problem Statement	Aim and Objectives	Methodology
What is the Biblical understanding of missional ecclesiology in the light of the <i>missio Dei</i> ?	To study and outline Scriptural evidence concerning the involvement of the local Church in Mission.	To study and outline a wide spectrum of Missiological Theologians's (Missiologists') understanding of mission in the Scriptures and their material on the <i>missio Dei</i> and <i>missiones Ecclesia</i> .
What was the past involvement of the local church of Bethlehem Diocese in <i>missio Dei</i> and <i>missio ecclesia</i> ?	To study and outline the past involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in Mission.	To study and analyse the content of the diocesan documents from the diocesan archives and conduct interviews with the former and present leadership of the Diocese of Bethlehem. Again, to interview some of the parishioners of two selected parishes (urban and rural) and some members of the Diocesan Pastoral Council. To find out if the concept of <i>missio Dei</i> , <i>missio Ecclesiae</i> and the practical involvement of the faithful in the local church growth is presently understood. It will also be ascertained if past and present methods used to involve the faithful in the local mission furthered their desire to be practically involved in the local church.
What is the present (current) involvement of the local church in Mission?	To study and outline the current involvement of the Catholic Diocese of	To study recent developments in Roman Catholic thought (Pastoral letters, Apostolic Exhortation and Papal Encyclicals) on the mission of God's people

	Bethlehem in Mission.	in the light of the <i>missio Dei</i> and <i>missiones Ecclesia</i> , and to assess to what extent these found practice in the local Church.
What is the proposed paradigm of the involvement of the local church in Mission?	To propose a feasible and useful model of involvement of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem in Mission.	To bring together a historical overview of the Catholic Diocese of Bethlehem and the theological principles to be used as an example to propose the paradigm of the practical involvement in the Mission of the local church.

CHAPTER TWO

THEOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION (*MISSIO DEI AND MISSIO ECCLESIAE*): THE MISSION OF GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE LIGHT OF GOD'S MISSION, WITH REFERENCE TO MODERN MISSIOLOGISTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the researcher will take a brief look at the meaning of the term Mission or Missiology as understood by different theologians. The deeper meaning of the *missio Dei* and *missio Ecclesiae* will be explored. The chapter will also outline a wide spectrum of Missiological Theologians' (Missiologists') understanding of mission in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and New Testament. [Scripture will be quoted from the Jerusalem Bible, published and copyright © 1985 by Darton, Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday & Company, Inc.]

Finally, the researcher will look at the Second Vatican Council documents and subsequent magisterial documents of the Church regarding the mission of God's people in the light of God's mission. The researcher will refer to various papal encyclicals and relevant documents published after the Second Vatican Council.

Let us now consider how the terms Mission and Missiology were and are interchangeable as suggested by different missiologists, scholars, and theologians.

2.2 THE MISSIOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF THE CHURCH

2.2.1 Terminology

In general terms, the etymology of the term mission is understood to be rooted in the Latin verb *mittere*, simply meaning: to send. The following generally accepted English terms developed from *mittere*: *Mission, Missionary and Missiology*. For Luzbetak, "etymologically, Missiology is a study of the sending forth or expansion of the Church. Missiology is about God's call and his sending forth of people to do his will. This call is for all God's people and the call is always linked to his purpose of salvation" (1990:12). Hence, the root of mission has salvific value.

According to David Bosch, "the Latin word *missio* was an expression employed in the doctrine of the Trinity, to denote the sending of the Son by the Father, and of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son" (1991:228). We shall explore the role of the Trinity under section 2.4 below. It is also interesting to note that David Bosch sees the concept mission (*missio*) linked in a particular way with the colonial era, as we shall later discover.

We shall now look at theologians and missionaries who contributed to the understanding of the concept of Mission and Missionary. The researcher picked up the following Missiologists: S. Karotemprel, L. Luzbetak, J. Verkuyl, K. Muller, A. Shorter, D. Bosch and B. Hearne CSSp.

2.2.2 S. Karotemprel

According to Karotemprel, "some missiologists declared the concept 'mission' as out-dated without realising they were damaging the cause of mission" (1995:22). For him the term 'mission' is one of the fundamental concepts in both Old Testament and New Testament. "One of the key words in Scripture is *send (mittere, missio Ecclesiae, mission)*". He cites the

examples of Moses (Exodus 3:15) and the prophets. From the New Testament he highlights the passages from Luke 10:1 and John 10:3.

Karotempel says that "the word 'mission' is of recent origin. Previously the concept was rendered by such phrases as 'propagation of the faith', 'conversion of the heathen', 'religious instruction of the ignorant', 'apostolic proclamation', 'proclamation of the Gospel', 'planting of the Church', or 'expansion of the Kingdom of Christ'" (1995:24).

2.2.3 L. Luzbetak

According to Luzbetak, missiology has two components: a theological one and a non-theological one. He argues that theology has the central place and determining role in missiology. Thus, missiology is fundamentally a theological discipline since it is concerned with the action of God in the world. The object of mission studies is the mission of the church (*missio Ecclesiae*). And missiology tries to evaluate this in terms of how God understands mission activities (1990:13-14).

2.2.4 J. Verkuyl

Verkuyl prefers the concept missiology to Missionary Science. For him, the focus is not primarily on the content of the message, but on the missionary activity of God and the men and women He mandates. He defines missiology as: "The study of the salvation activities of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit throughout the world geared toward bringing the Kingdom of God into existence" (1978:5).

2.2.5 K. Muller

Muller defines the objective of missiology into two senses: a) The missionary work (activity) of the church, that is, the science of the mission, and b) The praxis of mission, in which the world sets the agenda and the message is a message of promise to this world (1987:12).

2.2.6 A. Shorter

For Shorter the missionary activity occurs when the evangelisers cross a human frontier to build the kingdom in another culture, another language, another nation or local church. A frontier or border is both an obstacle and a challenge.

He insisted that Christians have to prepare the ground for the Word to take root and to do its formative work. When it is heard and accepted within a people's culture the Good News will be deeply rooted in people and thus lived both meaningfully and practically by those who seek to embrace the evangelical life (1994:67).

2.2.7 D. Bosch

Bosch points to the necessity of the meaning and understanding of mission in our own time. He spelt out that today's Christians have to be conscious of the fundamental difference "from the period in which Matthew, Luke, and Paul wrote their gospels and letters for the first and second generations of Christians. The profound dissimilarities between then and now imply that it will not do to appeal in a direct manner to the words of the biblical authors and apply what they said on a one-to-one basis to our own situation" (1991:181).

When dealing with the colonial era Bosch indicated that the colonial period also precipitated an unprecedented growth of mission. During the imposition of slavery on non-Western peoples, the "Christendom discovered with a shock that, fifteen centuries after the Christian Church was founded, there were still millions of people who knew nothing about salvation and who, 'since they were not baptised, were all headed for eternal punishment'" (1991:227). Consequently, it dawned on some during this period, Bosch stated: "the right to have colonies carried with it the duty to Christianise the colonised" (1991:227).

In terms of the Roman Catholic missionary activity, Bosch saw the establishment of the *Sacra Congregatio de Propaganda Fide* also known as *Propaganda Fide* (Sacred

Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith) in the Roman Catholic Church as the affirmation that “the Roman Catholic Church’s entire ministry among non-Catholics was firmly and exclusively assigned to the pope” (1991:228). In essence, he understood the mission in the Roman Catholic Church as the responsibility of an instituted hierarchy (Propaganda Fide).

2.2.8 B. Hearne, CSSp

In his article in the Tangaza Occasional Papers, Brian Hearne, CSSp, argues that the concepts “‘mission’ and ‘missionary’ are unfashionable words today. They smack of neo-colonialism, of covert forms of domination” (1994:28). Furthermore, he explains the understanding of mission today, which “must be a dialogue [...] a creative and adventurous effort to communicate, not just proclaim the good news of salvation” (1994:28-29). In essence, Brian Hearne understands the mission as dialogue and as communion, the point where people communicate without “giving in, diluting the faith, or watering down our message to make it ‘relevant’. [Communication] does not reject ‘proclamation’ or ‘*kerygma*’, but it refuses to accept ways of ‘proclaiming’ that satisfy the proclaimer more than those to whom the message is proclaimed” (1994:28-29).

2.2.9 Evaluation and Critique

The focus on this section is to evaluate and engage with some of the abovementioned theologians. The researcher chose the aforesaid missiologists because he finds their theological missiological works still relevant in our time and they are a great resource and help for young and developing missionary theologians.

As we have seen above the term missiology is explained in different ways by variety of missiologists. This variety evidently makes it difficult for missiologists to agree upon a unified definition on what missiology is. Perhaps the theological reflection on missiology as done by Johannes Verkuyl is the way to follow: “The study of the salvation activities of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit throughout the world geared toward bringing the Kingdom

of God into existence” (1978:5). For the researcher, missiology refers precisely to the investigation of the mandate of Jesus to his disciples in Matthew 28:18-21, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations [...]”. Through the discipline of missiology, the modern missionaries argue better the understanding of preaching the Gospel to the people.

God gave a mission mandate to a particular institution and that institution is his Church. Disciples were then sent out from this visible institution of the Church. They were sent to proclaim the Good News not to a few groups of people but their message was to be an inclusive message, that is, to everyone and everywhere. Were they to believe they be baptised and be made disciples. Through the work of missionaries people should experience God in a broader way, meaning they should experience God as calling them, and that is the intention of God that all may worship Him.

Clearly, the mission of spreading the Good News is given to the entire Christian Church, even though the present study concentrates on the Roman Catholic Church in the Diocese of Bethlehem, the mandate is wider. So, therefore, it is extremely important for the Catholic Church to work with other churches in an ecumenical spirit. In that way, as Luzbetak put it, the Church of God would expand (1990:12). He further states that the call to be a missionary Church “is for all God’s people and the call is always linked to his purpose of salvation” (1990:12). Absolutely, salvation is not just for our own sake but for the sake of the world at large.

In our modern times it should not be cumbersome for missionaries to communicate the Good News and to compare it with other religious or secular teachings. In engaging with people of different religions, missionaries or evangelisers need to have a solid theoretical framework within which they could move efficiently to find this mission and succeed in spreading the Gospel.

Furthermore, in our present day, missionaries need a strategy to carry out the mandate of Christ. Dialogue is one of many strategies to be considered. To know what is in the mind of

other religions, being Islam, Buddhism or whatever, dialogue is to be taken seriously in the Church of Christ. Having a dialogue with other religions will certainly nurture our relations with them. However, our dialogue with other religions, as Brian Hearne warns us, should not be “giving in, diluting the faith, or watering down our message to make it relevant” (1994:28-29). This study concurs with Hearne that there are certain principles that are non-negotiable in Christianity, for example, the Nicene Creed.

Another strategy for modern day missionaries could be creativity. The author believes that current missionaries ought to be creative in communicating the Good News. I couldn't agree more with Brian Hearne CSSp, in saying that there “must be a dialogue [...] a creative and adventurous effort to communicate [...] the message” (1994:28-29). One example of such creativity could be that the Church shows more compassion with the poor. Essentially, the message proclaimed by the Church is to be truly centered in our Lord Jesus Christ. It needs to be the message of hope for the whole creation. K. Muller put it clearly that “the message [of the Gospel] is the message of promise to this world” (1987:12). Correspondingly, the desire of the contemporary world is to hear missionaries delivering the message that is transcendental (timeless) and not temporal even though we are situated in time and space.

The researcher strongly believes that missiologists cannot reject history; hence, we need Church History to project the message of God. For example, in the colonial past mission history records that missionaries often attempted to use their political influence and economic power in spreading the Gospel. David Bosch observed correctly that it was thought that “the right to have colonies carried with it the duty to Christianise the colonised”. However, it is now necessary for current missionaries to construct a new paradigm and precisely that is the aim of this academic project.

Without doubt, the core mandate of Christ remains in today's world: “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me, Go therefore, and make disciples of all nations [...]” (Matthew 28:18-21).

We now turn our focus to the Mission Council, Vatican II (1962-1965).

2.3 THE CONVENTIONAL CATHOLIC IDEA OF MISSIOLOGY

In Catholic Tradition, Missiology has come to be defined in two ways: 1) The Science of the Mission, and 2) The Self Realisation of the Church. In the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes Divinitis* (AG):

"The mission of the Church is carried out by means of that activity through which, in obedience to Christ's command and moved by the grace and love of the Holy Spirit, the Church makes itself fully present to all men and peoples and in order to lead them to the faith, freedom and peace of Christ by the example of its life and teaching, by the sacraments and other means of grace. Its aim is to open up for all men a free and sure path to full participation in the mystery of Christ" (no. 5).

2.3.1 Ad Gentes

Already fifty years ago, the Second Vatican Council considered itself a missionary council, because it taught that the Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its foundation in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. This plan flows from "fountain-like love", the love of God the Father (AG 2). In the Vatican Council II, the term mission is re-valued. For instance, AG 2 says that the Church has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit. AG 5 refers to the Church as sacrament of salvation, hence the obligation of the Church to go on mission and proclaim the faith and salvation which comes from Christ. The Church makes itself fully present to all people by carrying out the mission of Christ through her missionary activity. AG 6 alludes to the missionary activity of the Church which is the mission of all, and demands the cooperation of the whole Church. The special understanding of the mission is highlighted: "The special undertakings in which preachers of the Gospel, sent by the Church, and going into the whole

world, carry out the work of preaching the Gospel and implanting the Church among people who do not yet believe in Christ, are generally called ‘missions’”.

AG 7 states the reason for the missionary activity and the plan of God. “The reason for missionary activity lies in the will of God”. By means of the missionary activity, God’s plan of salvation is realised, “a plan to which Christ lovingly and obediently submitted for the glory of the Father who sent him in order that the whole human race might become one people of God”. AG 9 reiterates that the missionary activity is the activation of God’s plan and it further indicates the period of the missionary activity: “The period, therefore, between the first and second coming of the Lord is the time of missionary activity”. This missionary activity is the manifestation of God’s plan through which the history of salvation is concluded.

Furthermore, the conciliar decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity “*Missio ad Gentes*” states that the starting point of Missiology is *missio Dei*: God sends the Son and the Holy Spirit (AG 2). *Missio Dei* leads to *diakonia* (service) and missions (people being sent). This and other missionary aspects will be discussed in full under section 2.3.2 – 2.3.7 below. Lastly, AG 1-5 highlights the mission activity of the Church as being ‘sent’ and also ‘sending’, that is, *missio Ecclesiae*.

The Council emphasised that the *telos* or goal of the *missio Dei* can be variously described as salvation, or the Kingdom of God, or the Plan of God, or Eternal Life.

"Such is the richness of the grace which he has showered on us in all wisdom and insight. He has let us know the mystery of his purpose, the hidden plan he so kindly made in Christ from the beginning to act upon when the times had run their course to the end: that he would bring everything together under Christ, as head, everything in the heavens and everything on earth" (Ephesians 1:7-10).

The subject of the *missio Dei* will be further expounded comprehensively in section 2.4.

Significantly, the Second Vatican Council document, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine revelation (*Dei Verbum, DV, 42*), speaks about the role of the Holy Spirit in the salvific work and it describes the Holy Spirit as the ‘transcendent principal agent’ in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. For the Holy Spirit to do the salvific work, the Council reaffirms that “Christ sent the Holy Spirit from the Father to exercise inwardly his saving influence and to promote the spread of the Church” (AG 4). This is done to achieve the universal effects of the salvation plan: “This universal plan of God for salvation of mankind is not carried out solely in a secret manner [...] through which they in many ways seek God” (AG 3). The Council Fathers stressed that on the day of Pentecost, “the Church was openly displayed to the crowds and the spread of the Gospel among the nations, through preaching, was begun” (AG 4). Hence, the growth of the Church continued after the ascension of Christ who together with the Father sent the Holy Spirit in order to guide people along the same journey modelled by Christ who commanded the Church to be missionary. Needless to say that the Second Vatican Council reemphasised that “the Church on earth is by its very nature missionary” (AG 2).

The topic on the Church (*missio Ecclesiae*) will be seen systematically under section 2.5.

Perhaps it is now proper to briefly explore in the next paragraphs the missionary nature of the Church focussing on the following missionary aspects respectively: Evangelisation, Kerygma, Diakonia, Liturgy, Catechesis and Martyria. The aim is to show the link between Christ and the aforementioned missionary aspects.

2.3.2 Evangelisation

According to Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) the Church understands her crucial mission of evangelisation as “the task of evangelising all people”, and this “constitutes the essential mission of the Church” (EN 14). Thus Pope Paul VI declared in his Apostolic Exhortation that the Church exists primarily to evangelise, “she exists in order to evangelise, that is to say, in order to preach and teach, to be the channel

of the gift of grace, to reconcile sinners with God, and to perpetuate Christ's sacrifice in the Mass, which is the memorial of His death and glorious resurrection" (EN 14).

EN 27 clearly teaches that "evangelisation will also always contain – as foundation, centre, and at the same time, summit of its dynamism – a clear proclamation (*kerygma*)". According to EN 18 for the Church to evangelise means "bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new [...]. [Thus] the purpose of evangelisation is therefore precisely this interior change". The central thrust of evangelisation, is "the evangelisation of groups or people who for some special reason have not yet, perhaps, accepted the Gospel message or have so far resisted it" (AG 27). In the *Ecclesia in Africa* (EA 74), Pope John Paul II gave the example of Africa as the continent in which millions of people are still to be evangelised:

"Because in Africa there are millions who are not yet evangelised, the Church is faced with the necessary and urgent task of proclaiming the Good News to all, and leading those who hear it to Baptism and the Christian life. The urgency of missionary activity derives from the radical newness of life brought by Christ and lived by his followers. This new life is a gift from God, and people are asked to accept and develop it, if they wish to realise the fullness of their vocation in conformity to Christ".

Interestingly, Pope Paul VI points out the link between Christ, the Church and evangelisation. In EN 16 he stresses that "there is thus a profound link between Christ, the Church and evangelisation. During the period of the Church that we are living in, it is she who has the task of evangelising. This mandate is not accomplished without her, and still less against her".

Since the *Kerygma* is one of the ways in which the missionarity of the Church is expressed in a diversity of roles and tasks, we shall turn to this important aspect of the Church.

2.3.3 Kerygma (Proclamation)

Pope John Paul II reminded Christ's faithful that "to evangelise is to proclaim by word and witness of life the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and risen, the Way, the Truth and the Life" (EA 57). And according to David Bosch "the authentic *kerygma* has an inherent social dimension" (1980:228). In the same vein, López-Gay (quoted in Karotempel 1995:91) stated that kerygma or "proclamation is the permanent priority of mission". In its explicit form, proclamation is the systematic, verbal announcement of salvation.

Pope Paul VI told us that the Church is obliged to proclaim the Evangelic Message that exceeds the material world and always contains the Paschal Mystery. EN 27 taught that proclamation is the foundation, centre, and summit of evangelisation. The central message of the proclamation is:

"That in Jesus Christ, the Son of God made man, who died and rose from the dead, salvation is offered to all men, as a gift of God's grace and mercy. And not an immanent salvation, meeting material or even spiritual needs, restricted to the framework of temporal existence and completely identified with temporal desires, hopes, affairs and struggles, but a salvation which exceeds all these limits in order to reach fulfilment in a communion with the one and only divine Absolute: a transcendent and eschatological salvation, which indeed has its beginning in this life but which is fulfilled in eternity" (EN 27).

Thus, unequivocally, the subject of proclamation is Christ. The proclamation opens the way to conversion and to Christ and "all forms of missionary activity are directed to this proclamation, which reveals and gives access to the mystery hidden for ages and made known in Christ (cf. Ephesians 3.3-9; Colossians 1:25-29)" (*Redemptoris Missio* (RM) 44). Consequently, as Paul Vadakumpadan put it "the result of the proclamation [kerygma] is discipleship [diakonia]" (1995:79).

As noted above, the kerygma is necessary for salvation. So is the “service of and witness to the faith” (Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 1816). Hence, we shall now look at the meaning of *diakonia* in the mission of the Church.

2.3.4 Diakonia (service)

One of the characteristic tasks of the Church is service (*diakonia*). Paul Vadakumpadan intimates that it is expected of the Church as “she received the commission from her Lord to proclaim the kingdom that he brought about and to make disciples in his name [to *diakonise*] in his Church. It is only in this dynamic perspective that the Church becomes meaningful” (1995:79). David Bosch argues that “the genuine *diakonia* has an inherent proclamation dimension” (1980:228).

Every baptised Christian is called upon to participate in the mission of the Church through diakonia, and so to proclaim Christ to the entire human race. Reinforcing the role of an individual who received the grace of baptism, Luzbetak quoted John Henry Newman’s understanding of his part in the mission of the Church:

“God has created me to do Him some definite service [diakonia]: He has committed some work to me which He has not committed to another [...] Somehow I am necessary for His purposes, as necessary in my place as an Archangel in his - if, indeed I fail, He can raise another, as He could make the stones children of Abraham. Yet I have a part in this great work” (1990:6).

I wish to conclude this subheading with the quotation from Paul Vadakumpadan that points out that the Church is meant to be present and diakonise the human community: “[the Church] must be rooted in society. It is not a ghetto, but is immersed in the wider human community and participates fully in its life” (1995:86).

The community of people not only participates and serve in the human life of the society, but also (as the Vatican Council II reminded us):

“The Church therefore, earnestly desires that Christ’s faithful, when present at this mystery of faith [Holy Mass], should not be there as strangers or silent spectators. On the contrary, through a good understanding of the rites and prayers they should take part [participate] in the sacred action” (*Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC) 47).

In the light of the above, we shall now explore the aspect of liturgy in the mission of Christ (*missio Christi*) and the mission of the Church (*missio Ecclesiae*).

2.3.5 Liturgy (*Leitourgia*)

The Second Vatican Council promulgated on 4 December 1963 the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC). The Council described liturgy as the fount and summit of Christian life, “the liturgy is the summit toward which the activity of the Church is directed; it is also the fount from which all her power flows (SC 10). David Bosch describes liturgy (*leitourgia*) as “the encounter of the Church with her Lord” (1980:227). The encounter with the Lord happens in the liturgy, particularly in the Eucharistic celebration. Kathleen Hughes formulated it thus: “evangelisation, conversion and faith find their ultimate expression in the liturgy” (1991:3). Pope Benedict XVI reaffirmed this encounter in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Sacramentum Caritatis* (SC (B)), that in the celebration of the Eucharist our relationship with Christ is deepened and the “Lord meets us” (SC(B)) .

Importantly, the Vatican Council II has had far reaching effects on all aspects of the life of the Church. Among other things, the Council emphasised the need for active and meaningful participation of the faithful. SC 14 spoke of the “mother Church [who] 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”. Kathleen Hughes also reaffirmed the teaching of the Council fathers in calling for active participation of the faithful in the liturgy. She says that “a community that is participating internally as well as externally is fully aware of what it is doing, actively engaged in the rite and enriched by the rite’s effects” (1991:5).

In his encyclical, *Mysterium Fidei* (MF), published on 3 September 1965, Pope Paul VI stressed that the faithful are to show their appreciation to Christ for the gift of the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the highest liturgical celebration:

“In dealing with the restoration of the Sacred liturgy, the Fathers of the Council were led by their pastoral concern for the whole Church to regard it as a matter of highest importance to urge the faithful to participate actively, with undivided faith and the utmost devotion, in the celebration of this Most Holy Mystery, to offer it to God along with the priest as a sacrifice for their own salvation and that of the whole world, and to use it as spiritual nourishment” (MF 1).

Also Pope Benedict XVI in his Apostolic Exhortation reemphasised the gift given to the Church by Christ. He wrote that “if the Eucharist is truly the source and summit of the Church’s life and mission [...] [then] it is our participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice which perfects within us the gifts given to us at Baptism” (SC(B)) 17).

The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy explains that “the sacred liturgy does not exhaust the entire activity of the Church” (SC 9). Also catechesis is an essential component for the Church in announcing “the good tidings of Salvation to those who do not believe, so that all men (people) may know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent and may be converted from their ways, doing penance” (SC 9). Therefore, Catechesis is fundamental in the life of the Church. We shall now turn our focus onto catechesis.

2.3.6 Catechesis (Journey)

Catechesis refers to the “Church’s efforts to make disciples, to help men believe that Jesus is the Son of God so that believing they might have life in his name, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the body of Christ” (CCC 4).

Catechesis is a journey towards Christ and this journey is underpinned by three pillars of Christianity, that is: the Word of God, liturgy, and response. Paolo Giglioni clarified the three aspects:

“The journey towards Christian maturity is supported by the Word of God, liturgy, especially the Eucharist, and Christian Spirituality. True discipleship is learnt only by the constant listening to God’s word at home and in liturgy and the reordering of personal and the community value systems and attitudes according to Gospel values. Secondly, liturgy, especially the Eucharist, is meant to be formative of the disciple. Thirdly, the newly baptised community will develop a spirituality that responds to its own cultural and psychological genius and needs” (1995:149).

In addition, the Catechism of the Catholic Church raises a certain number of elements that build the catechesis beyond what Paolo Giglioni clarified above.

“Catechesis is built on a certain number of elements of the Church’s pastoral mission which have a catechetical aspect, that prepare for catechesis, or spring from it. They are: the initial proclamation of the Gospel or missionary preaching to arouse faith; examination of the reasons for belief; experience of Christian living; celebration of the sacraments; integration into the ecclesial community; and apostolic and missionary witness” (CCC 6).

The missionary witness in the life of a Christian, Kakichi Kadowaki maintains, is the key in giving witness “of the reality of the newness in Christ” (1995:275). We shall now turn our attention into the witness of Christians.

2.3.7 Martyria (Witness)

The term witness is the Greek word for *martyr*. For “in the early Church the witness often had to seal his witness (*martyria*) with his blood” (Bosch 1980:73). George Kottuppallil, expounds the concept witness by characterising it as the shedding of blood. For instance, “[the Apostles of Christ] offered their lives for this end. The missionary has always been a

‘witness’ and often a martyr, transformed and ‘christified’ by the message of the Gospel” (1995:237). The above indicates that throughout history, the Church has always produced people, men and women, priests, religious and laity, who lived heroic lives as witnesses to the message of the Gospel. Notably, this “witness, *martyria*, means the way of the Cross” (Bosch 1980:211), “the witnessing and suffering go together” (Bosch 1980:73). The life of many saints epitomises the perfect witness to Christ.

Moreover, the Vatican Council II reminded both men and women about their bound duty in giving witness to Christ. AG 21 clearly stated that “the principal duty of both men and women is to bear witness to Christ, and this they are obliged to do by their life and their words, in family, in their social group, and in the sphere of their profession”.

Linked with the above explanation of the term witness, the Catechism of the Catholic Church summarises the understanding of martyrdom in the following manner:

“Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing even unto death. The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through an act of fortitude” (CCC 2473).

David Bosch, in his book that deals in detail about the ‘Witness to the World’, acknowledged the objective of a true witness. In it “the *martyria*, the witness by word and deed, has its ultimate origin not in the witness himself, but in God” (1980:75). Undoubtedly, Christ is the core subject in the life of witnessing to Him.

In great detail EN 41 emphasises the expression of a witness lived and not only professed by lips. Pope Paul VI writes: “The first means of evangelisation is the witness of an authentically Christian life”.

In conclusion of this subheading, it is, perhaps, good to mention that there are obviously, missiologists and theologians who contributed significantly to the attempt to understand

the concepts of the witness to Christ. Furthermore, it is beneficial to note that Pope John Paul II gave the African Synod the theme that highlights the aspect of witness. Thus the theme: “The Church in Africa and Her Evangelising Mission towards the year 2000. ‘You shall be my witnesses’ (Acts 1:8)” (1995:5).

To make this chapter relevant to its topic it is necessary to probe the deeper meaning of the *missio Dei* and *missio Ecclesiae*. As mentioned in the first paragraph of this subheading, witness has its origin in God, so we have now to reflect on *missio Dei*, God’s mission.

2.4 MISSIO DEI: THE MISSION OF GOD

The entire salvific mission is rooted in God, and the missionary activity is the activity of God himself, so we speak of the *missio Dei*. David Bosch wrote that the redemptive “mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission” (1991:392). The salvific mission emanates from the nature of God, thus “God is missionary” (Bosch 1980:239). Even the mission which Christ gives to the Church (*missio ecclesiae*) has its foundation in God. The Vatican Council II attested to this in *Ad Gentes* 2: “The Church on earth is by its very nature missionary since, according to the plan of the Father, it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit”.

Furthermore, the above citation points to the doctrine of the Trinity, God the Father sends the Son, and God the Father and the Son sends the Spirit. God the Father and the Son and Holy Spirit sends the Church into the world (Bosch 1991:390). The salvific mission of God is sustained in the mission of the Church. The article in the CCC substantiates the divine economy of the divine Persons where it states that “the work of creation, the whole history of salvation after the fall, and the missions of the Son and the Spirit, [...] are continued in the mission of the Church” (257). Adam Wolanin sees the Trinity at the centre of the mission of the Church. He maintains that “at the core of the missionary nature of the Church, at the root of her existence, there is God who has revealed and given himself to humanity as Father, Son and Holy Spirit” (1995:37).

David Bosch summarises the concept of *missio Dei* in a more comprehensive way:

“Mission has its origin neither in the official Church nor in special groups within the Church. It has its origin in God. God is a missionary God, a God who crosses frontiers towards the world. In creation God was already the God of mission, with his Word and Spirit as ‘Missionaries’ (cf. Gen. 1.2-3). God likewise sent his incarnate Word, his Son, into the world. And he sent his Spirit at Pentecost. Mission is God giving up himself, his becoming man, his laying aside of his divine prerogatives and taking our humanity, his moving into the world, in his Son and Spirit. From this is clear that it is the Triune God who is the subject of mission. For many centuries in the Christian Church the word *missio* was a concept used in connection with the doctrine of the Trinity, a reference to the mission of the Son by the Father, and of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son” (1980:239-240).

In the above section we learnt the mission starts in God (*missio Dei*) and is sustained in the Church (*missio Ecclesiae*). In the ensuing paragraphs we shall now deepen the understanding on the missionary nature of the Church.

2.5 MISSIONES ECCLESIAE: THE CHURCH

The Vatican Council II taught that the Church is constantly in mission. Undoubtedly, the Church’s identity is bound up with its obligation to continue the mission commissioned to her by Christ. The Council states categorically that “the Church has an obligation to proclaim the faith and salvation which comes from Christ” (AG 5). The Church is the carrier of the true light which is Christ, “*Lumen Gentium cum sit Christus*” (LG 1). About the ‘carrier of the true light’ George Kottuppallil attests that it is: “Jesus Christ, who personifies in himself the ‘Good News’ and the Gospel values, has been the greatest agent for evangelisation of the world” (1995:236).

Missionality, that is, the sense or state of mission, is an essential dimension of the Universal Church and the indispensable element of the Church's nature. The mission of Christ and mission of the Holy Spirit are the foundations of the Church. Pope Paul VI also taught that the Church is the subject of mission, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit who is the soul of the Church and the principal agent of evangelisation.

“It is in the ‘consolation of the Holy Spirit’ that the Church increases. The Holy Spirit is the soul of the Church. [How?] It is He who explains to the faithful the deep meaning of the teaching of Jesus and of His mystery. It is the Holy Spirit who, today just as at the beginning of the Church, acts in every evangeliser who allows himself to be possessed and led by Him. The Holy Spirit places on his lips the words which he could not find by himself, and at the same time the Holy Spirit predisposes the soul of the hearer to be open and receptive to the Good News and to the kingdom being proclaimed” (EN 75).

Mariasusay Dhavamony reminded that the effects of the Holy Spirit are given through the Church, and are seen in the Church. He argued that “the Church on earth is not equivalent to the Kingdom of God. But because the risen Lord sent the Holy Spirit to the Church the spiritual and salvific forces are present in the Church and through the Church they are bringing about divine salvation in the world” (1995:254).

Moreover, as Pope Paul VI stated, the Church exists to evangelise and “the task of evangelising all people constitutes the essential mission of the church” (EN 14). The fundamental obligation of the Church is to prolong the mission of Christ,

“the Church remains in the world when the Lord of glory returns to the Father. She remains as a sign – simultaneously obscure and luminous – of a new presence of Jesus, of His departure and of His permanent presence. She prolongs and continues Him. And it is above all His mission and His condition of being an evangeliser that she is called upon to continue” (EN 15).

David Bosch uses the image of a garden to explain the purpose of the Church of God in the world:

“The Church is God’s experimental garden in the world. She is a sign of the coming age and at the same time a guarantee of its coming. She lives on the border-line between the ‘already’ and the ‘not yet’. She is a fragment of the Kingdom, God’s colony in man’s world, his outpost and bridgehead. The Church alone has the ‘first fruits of the Spirit’” (1980:225).

For the Church to be vital it is expected to follow the mission and the road of Christ which is meant for the universal mission:

“Since this mission continues and, in the course of history, unfolds the mission of Christ, who was sent to evangelise the poor, then the Church, urged on by the Spirit of Christ, must walk the road Christ himself walked, a way of poverty and obedience, of service [*diakonia*] and self-sacrifice even to death [...] So it was that the apostles walked in hope and by much trouble and suffering filled up what was lacking in the sufferings of Christ for his body, which is the Church” (AG 5).

It is important to realise that the vitality of the Church comes from the united (union) Christ-Church,

“since the Church, in Christ, is in the nature of a sacrament – a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of unity among all [...] set forth, as clearly as possible, and in the tradition laid down by earlier Councils, her own nature and universal mission” (LG 1).

The Church has to be united to Christ in order to fulfil her mission, however, she cannot do it on her own but only in unity with Christ and then it is fitting to refer to the Church as sacrament of salvation. “[Christ] sent his life-giving Spirit upon his disciples and through him set up his Body which is the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation” (LG 48). The mission of the Church (*missio ecclesiae*) is inseparable from the mission of Christ (*missio Christi*). López-Gay (quoted in Karotemprel 1995:91) said that “the Church cannot elude

Christ's explicit mandate, nor deprive men and women of the 'Good News' about their being loved and saved by God".

Connected with the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, Mariasusay Dhavamony wrote in detail about the Church as the effective sacrament of divine salvation and as having a divine mission in human history:

"The Church is the effective sign of divine salvation, or equivalently, the sacrament of the Kingdom of God. The Church has a divine mission in human history; it means that the Church is a universal sacrament of salvation. This mediation is exercised through the Holy Spirit. The Church as the visible social body of Christ becomes the sign of his salvific work in the world, since the Spirit of Christ is invisible" (1995:254).

The Church has a divine mission in the community of believers and in human history. It is interesting to note that David Bosch sees the Church as the chosen one of God, "she is God's chosen agent" (1980:222). For him the Church is the new community of believers,

"the Church is the community of believers, gathered by divine election, calling, new birth, and conversion, which lives in communion with the Triune God, is granted the forgiveness of sins, and sent to serve the world in solidarity with all mankind [...] The Church is, however, discipleship-in-community. She is God's new creation, the messianic community" (1980:222-223).

The Church as the "sign of divine salvation" (Dhavamony 1995:254) is "an evangeliser, but she begins by being evangelised herself" (EN 15).

Throughout the centuries the Church evangelised through the magisterial documents as well. In this project we shall only concentrate on the papal documents produced during and after the Second Vatican Council.

2.6 PAPAL DOCUMENTS ON MISSION SINCE VATICAN II

It is imperative to note that the Church Documents on Evangelisation and Mission reveal the Church's commitment to her missionary mandate to all humanity that was entrusted to her by Jesus. The Church,

“having been divinely sent to the nations that she might be ‘the universal sacrament of salvation’, the Church, in obedience to the command of her founder (Matthew 16:15) and because it is demanded by her own essential universality, strives to preach the Gospel to all men (people)” (AG 1).

We shall concisely examine some of the papal documents released after the Second Vatican Council.

2.6.1 *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN)

The apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN) was released after the Third General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops (8 December 1975) and was promulgated by Pope Paul VI. After the publication of EN many of the theologians regarded it as the most insightful post-Conciliar document and “a turning point in the mission debate”. It “clearly distinguished between ‘evangelisation’ and ‘missionary activity’. ‘Evangelisation’ was seen as the more general concept (in the sense of *missio Ecclesiae*), and ‘mission’ specifically as *activitas missionalis*” (Karotempel 1995:22).

The apostolic exhortation points out that the Church is the fruit and the object of the Divine Mission. It further attests that the Church is the fruit of the Evangelising action of Jesus and the apostles through the power of the Holy Spirit (EN 75).

It further states programmatically that it is upon the Church that there rests, by divine mandate, the duty of going out into the whole world and preaching the Gospel to every creature (EN 59). According to EN 27, the ultimate aim of the mission activity is to bring

salvation to people, and this salvation is transcendental and eschatological as explored above in 2.5.

2.6.2 *Redemptoris Missio* (RM)

Redemptoris Missio is the encyclical of Pope John Paul II on Christian Mission promulgated on the 7th of December 1990. With this encyclical the pontiff wanted to honour the Silver Jubilee (25 years) of the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*. Chronologically, it is actually the first encyclical on 'mission' since the Vatican II's Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity, *mission ad gentes* (7 December 1965), and the Pope drew heavily on the aforesaid document. For instance, "about a quarter of the abundant footnotes refer to *Ad Gentes* and there are 23 references to *Evangelii Nuntiandi*" (SACBC 1991:i). According to Karotempel, the Pope's encyclical takes up the geographical concept of mission. He says:

"[The Pope] distinguishes among three fields of 'evangelising' activity. The first situation is that of people and groups in which Christ and his Gospel are not known or in which there is a lack of Christian communities sufficiently mature to be able to incarnate the faith in their own environment and to other groups. The second situation is that of Christian communities possessing adequate ecclesial structures, fervent in their faith and Christian living, bearing witness to the Gospel in their surroundings and having a sense of commitment to the universal mission. An intermediate situation is found in countries with ancient Christian traditions and occasionally in younger churches where entire groups of the baptised have lost a living sense of the faith; they may even no longer consider themselves members of the Church and live a life far removed from Christ and his Gospel" (1995:23).

Redemptoris Missio seeks to conscientise the Church about the missionary command of Jesus: "Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Interestingly, in the RM 41, the mission is seen as the announcing of the Good News of the Kingdom in the world. Importantly, the Church cannot comprehend the missionary spirituality or the

mission of announcing the Good News, unless she refers to Christ as the One who was sent to evangelise. RM 88 states “an essential characteristic of missionary spirituality is intimate communion with Christ”. Moreover, Pope John Paul II also affirmed that Jesus Christ is the Centre of the message of mission. He stressed that as Christians, “we must first clearly affirm our faith in Christ, the one Saviour of mankind, a faith we have received as a gift from on high, not as a result of any merit of our own” (RM 11).

Redemptoris Missio (RM 21) defines the Holy Spirit as “the principal agent of the Church’s mission”.

“At the climax of Jesus’ messianic mission, the Holy Spirit becomes present in the paschal mystery in all of his divine subjectivity: as the one who is now to continue the salvific work rooted in the sacrifice of the cross [...] The Holy Spirit is indeed the principal agent of the whole of the Church’s mission. His action is pre-eminent in the mission *ad gentes*, as can clearly be seen in the early Church: in the conversion of Cornelius (cf. Acts 10), in the decisions made about emerging problems (cf. Acts 15) and in the choice of regions and peoples to be evangelised (cf. Acts 16:6 ff). The Spirit worked through the apostles, but at the same time he was also at work in those who heard them”.

Importantly the RM is the encouragement of Pope John Paul II to the Universal Church to continue to enthusiastically evangelise the world today which is changing and to listen to the prompts of the Holy Spirit.

“Our own time, with humanity on the move and in continual search, demands a resurgence of the Church’s missionary activity. The horizons and possibilities for mission are growing ever wider, and we Christians are called to an apostolic courage based upon trust in the Spirit. He is the principal agent of mission. The history of humanity has known many major turning points which have encouraged missionary outreach, and the Church, guided by the Spirit, has always responded to them with generosity and farsightedness. Results have not been lacking. [...] Today the Church must face other challenges and push forward to new frontiers, both in the initial mission *ad gentes* and in the new evangelisation of those peoples who have already heard Christ proclaimed. Today all

Christians, the particular Churches and the universal Church, are called to have the same courage that inspired the missionaries of the past, and the same readiness to listen to the voice of the Spirit" (RM 30).

The above citation reminds us of the fact that the whole wide world is to be evangelised. We shall see in the following chapter how the particular church of Bethlehem took the call of Pope John Paul II earnestly.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter highlighted the missionary nature of the Church. Essentially, the teaching of the Church is the teaching of Christ. For the Church to be vital is to take the Good News to others, as in obedience to the commission of Christ: "Go therefore, make disciples of all nations, baptise them..." (Matthew 28:19). The baptised Christians are a new community and are really called to be missionaries, *ad extra*, that is, to the whole world, and missionaries *ad gentes*, that is, towards other people, as Vatican II called it in the document of the same name. The baptised Christians must be challenged by the life of the heroic men and women who received the message of Christ and gave their lives as martyrs.

Basically, evangelisation is the most important mission of the Church. The participation of Christ's faithful in the community is indispensable to their role in the liturgy by virtue of their baptism.

The mission of the Church in evangelisation has continued up to the present day.

In the next Chapter, the focus is on the Historical Overview of the Diocese of Bethlehem with special reference to QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BETHLEHEM PARISH AND QWAQWA DEANERY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding chapter we concerned ourselves with the theology of mission and the missionary Church. We looked at the missiological concepts, missionary aspects, *missio Dei*, *missio Ecclesiae*, Vatican Council II and Magisterial Documents.

In this chapter, the researcher bases himself on the three historical books written at different decades in the Diocese of Bethlehem: Fr. Heinz Kuckertz (1984): *Cor unum et anima una*; Professor JB Brain (1996): *Patience Our Daily Bread: The Catholic Church in the Orange Free State and Kimberley from 1850* (By the way, Professor JB Brain was requested by the Bloemfontein Church Province to write up the history of the Catholic Church in the Orange Free State) (Bethlehem Diocese, archives: Chronicle History, Correspondence 1990); and Fr. Dikotsi Mofokeng (2011): *The Shepherd of Bethlehem: The book commemorates the occasion of Bishop Hubert Bucher's 80th Birthday 2011*.

In the aforementioned historical books and the *festschrift* the researcher will examine the work of the first missionaries in the Diocese of Bethlehem, their positive contribution in terms of planting the local church, evangelisation and secular development (political = apartheid). Then the challenges in their missionary activity will also be examined. People and dates will be important in this chapter.

This chapter is based on a literature study as well as an empirical study. In the latter, the researcher has interviewed people (January 2014 - May 2014) who were willing to talk about their own experiences in the early days of the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Bethlehem and in the current setting. Another group interviewed have been the lapsed Catholics; they shared their experiences in the Catholic Church.

The approach of the interviewer was relatively informal in some cases and formal in others. That means the researcher contacted literate and illiterate people. Some of them would have grown up in an urban environment (*Bohlokong* - Township), others in a rural one (QwaQwa - Villages). Again, I approached the people I know personally, but also others who were recommended by other persons. Some of the interviews were recorded directly by means of a tape recorder. Others were reported from memory after the interview or were jotted down on an A5 pad. I did not concern myself to establish data from the interviews that could be analysed statistically. Yet, as Adrian Hastings cited the words of Churchill that “great numbers are at least an explanation of great changes” (1971:110).

We shall now turn our focus on the historical development of the Diocese of Bethlehem.

PART I: AN HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM

3.2 AN OVERVIEW

The first German Spiritan missionaries set foot on South African soil “as far back as 1878” (Kuckertz 1984:4).

In its history, the Catholic Church in the Orange Free State, as it was previously known, had had numerous changes in its boundaries. Firstly, it was the Orange Free State Vicariate from 1886 to 1923. “The new vicariate of the Orange Free State, including Kimberley and Basutoland (later Lesotho), was established by a *Decretum* or decree of separation on

March 15, 1886. Fr. Anthony Gaughren OMI was appointed vicar Apostolic of the new vicariate" (Brain 1996:32).

On 26th November 1923, a papal document was issued to establish the Prefecture Apostolic of Kroonstad. Fr. Rath cited the papal document which stressed that "the Prefecture Apostolic of Kroonstad [was] to be formed from part of the Vicariate of Kimberley and responsibility for it given to the members of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit" (1973:67). For the Spiritans this was the opportune time to spread the message of the Gospel intensively.

Fr. Kuckertz noted that "a field of work was created for the Spiritans" (1984:6). At that time the Prefecture of Kroonstad had "only 821 Catholics, largely of European origin, who were known to the three Oblate priests who stayed in Kroonstad and Harrismith and visited regularly Ladybrand" (Echo 1964:10). The travelling missionaries made stops in these areas to search for Catholics and administered the sacraments.

"Father Hoendervangers had travelled widely in the OFS from the 1850s and had collected small congregations at Bloemfontein, Fauresmith, Smithfield and Harrismith. His first visit was probably in 1853 when he noted that there was only one Catholic family in the village and that they were preparing to move to Smithfield. Catholic missionaries from Natal regularly passed through Harrismith to reach Lesotho where they established a mission at the end of 1861. Prior to this, in February 1856, Father Logegaray had passed through on foot, on his way to Potchefstroom (then known as Mooi River), in order to visit the Quin family. In Harrismith he visited the Madden family and baptised their two children. Madden was the chief constable at Harrismith. In 1861 Bishop Allard and Fr. Gerard, on their first journey outside Natal, had also visited a small group of Catholics in Harrismith. Bishop Jolivet, an indefatigable traveller, called on Catholics in Harrismith every time he passed through on the way to Transvaal, Lesotho and the diamond fields. During Bishop Anthony Gaughren's episcopate they were visited by a travelling priest who

came by ox-wagon from Cocolan to visit the Harrismith district, calling on scattered Catholic families on the way, giving them the opportunity to receive the Sacraments” (Brain 1996:43).

At the pioneering stage there was no missionary activity going on among the African population. This was a great concern for the missionaries. The state of affairs as mentioned above exacerbated during the World War II, as the missionaries were once again not allowed to shepherd the Blacks. They were described as pagans and “a few were baptised on their death beds or were converted by the prison chaplain while serving a gaol sentence” (Brain 1996:27). In the same vein, Fr. Kuckertz recorded that the missionaries “were forbidden to undertake all pastoral work among the Blacks except in the case of death or near death. In 1945, this restriction was lifted” (1984:28).

Subsequently, after the establishment of the Prefecture Apostolic of Kroonstad the hierarchy was also instituted, “on the 24th March, 1924, the former Provincial of the German Province, Fr. Leo Klerlein, was appointed Prefect Apostolic” (Kuckertz 1984:8). A further significant development came in 1935 when “the prefecture was awarded the status of a Vicariate. Mgr. Klerlein was appointed Vicar Apostolic. He was subsequently ordained bishop on 30th May, 1935” (1984:26).

Following the suggestion of Bishop Klerlein, the Vicariate of Kroonstad was divided into the Vicariate of Bethlehem and Kroonstad in 1948.

“The Dominicans received the Western part of the Vicariate with Kroonstad as centre and the Eastern part was left to the Spiritans, Bethlehem being designated as episcopal see. The latter was the more heavily populated area and the agricultural land offered the individual missions better opportunities to safeguard their livelihoods. Moreover, the proximity to Lesotho which was at that time one third Catholic was also in their favour. The division was made on 6th July 1948. [...] in Bethlehem there were 10 stations with 26 churches, 11 schools (2 226) and one crèche, there were 9 148 Catholics and 2 289 catechumens” (Brüning 1950:9f).

Even though the study refers to urban and rural settings, by and large the Diocese of Bethlehem is situated in a rural area.

3.3 EARLY DAYS IN THE DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM

On the whole, the Spiritans from Germany were the ones who first planted the Catholic Church in the area of the Orange Free State, which later on, after the new political dispensation (1994), was called the Free State Province.

As far as Catholicism is concerned the history of the Bethlehem Diocese can be traced back to the work of the Missionary Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, later known as the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, the Spiritans (as they endearingly call themselves). The Spiritans are the pioneers who sowed the seed of faith amongst the Bethlehemites.

In the following paragraphs we shall discover the circumstances under which the missionary activity was carried out in the Vicariate Apostolic of Bethlehem, and later Diocese of Bethlehem.

3.4 THE CIRCUMSTANCES

The pioneering work of the Spiritans began under the most trying circumstances: “there missionaries were faced with their most general problem: a large scarcely populated territory, a virtually non-existent Catholic Church; a situation that needed courage, ingenuity and faith in order to be overcome” (Kuckertz 1984:6). The project essentially focuses on the following challenges: Apartheid, Missionary Poverty, “Come and join us” of the Sects, and the means of transport for evangelisation.

3.4.1 Apartheid

Even before the Nationalist party came to power the unjust policies of the government did not make the proclamation of the message of the Gospel easy for the Catholic missionaries. In South Africa the government's policy of apartheid discriminated against people of colour. A. Mokone remembers in an interview that in those days it was fashionable among the Whites to talk about *swart gevaar* and *Katolieke gevaar* (the Black, or Catholic danger). M. Maseou states in an interview that "*Katolieke gevaar*" was for the Whites (*Afrikaners*) the prominent concern.

Some of the people, especially the Protestant Afrikaners, were hostile to the Catholic missionaries and looked upon them as unwanted intruders. For instance, in their early years on South African soil, as reported above, the Catholic Missionaries "had to withdraw from [Mafikeng] since the constant conflict with the Protestants [...] made any further work impossible" (Koren 1958:276f). In the heat of apartheid, Afrikaners barred the Catholic missionaries to enter their areas. Fr. Schings noted that the Catholic missionaries were "greatly handicapped by the Afrikaaner's negative attitude towards Catholics especially on the farms where the missionaries [were] barred from entering and Black Catholics [were] forbidden access of school and church often under penalty of dismissal" (1933:170).

According to Brain (1996:38) under the apartheid government "the Dutch Reformed Church was the state church but other denominations existed alongside it". No doubt the Catholic Church was ostracised by the government of the day. The following example illustrates the preceding point:

"The first church to be erected in Harrismith, and also the largest to this day, was the Dutch Reformed Church which occupies a central place position. Other churches followed: the Wesleyan-Methodist, Presbyterian and Anglican came next; then a synagogue and a Salvation Army hall were erected, all, it seems, on land granted free of charge by the Town Council. For the Catholic Church there were many problems to be

overcome before building could begin, not least the obstacles put in the way by the Town Council [...] Fr. Lenoir had a fixed purpose of establishing a mission [in Harrismith]. The first essential being to find a suitable site. In due course application was made to the Town Council for a free grant of land. The Town Council proved hostile to the 'Roman' Catholics & refused. Father Lenoir, not to be beaten, decided to buy the ground [...] The mayor, Mr. T. James, an estimable man & Wesleyan took a lively part in running up the price to something like £600 or more" (Brain 1996:42-44).

As stated above, the government policy of segregation of people impacted negatively on the missionary activity of the Spiritans. It is noted in the archives that the missionary work was "also hindered by racial problems which especially [arose] between Coloured and also among the individual Black tribes which [were] thrown together in one big pot [...]" (Klerlein 1926:136).

Brain records that with time, the missionaries were cognisant of the fact that "blacks in the Orange Free State were receiving little or no attention from the Catholic Church" (1996:31). The missionaries could only evangelise the oppressed Black people at a much later stage. They translated the scriptural message from the Gospel of St. Luke into reality: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord" (Luke 4:18).

As their first move in terms of justice the missionaries started to organise the Blacks who were mostly uneducated. The missionaries started Black people's organisations. Fr. Heinrich Brüning "was one of the main promoters of the CAU movement in the central Free State" (Bethlehem Diocese, archives 1982-1991, part 1 of 2). The Catholic African Union (CAU) and other movements "were set up to try to organise Black Labour, in particular in the urban areas" (Kuckertz 1984:56).

“The CAU (Catholic African Union) which was founded as a result of the 1927 South African Bishops’ Conference saw its role as being an umbrella organisation encompassing all Catholic movements [...] its aim was to foster and preserve Catholic principles and to foster the economic and social wellbeing of the African races” (Bönisch 1928:37). Their theme was: Better education – better homes – better fields.

"As time went on, the following organisations were introduced into the Prefecture under the auspices of the CAU: Within the context of ‘Better education’ the Catholic Teachers’ Union; the Catholic Farmers’ Union tried to help the many Black farm workers who also owned land get better fields through modern farming methods and help them get a better price for their products by farming a co-operative. The Catholic Thrift Club was to encourage thrift and there was even an experiment with a people’s bank. The Catholic Charity Association saw its task as being a kind of SOS-Organisation, helping out in cases of need” (Kuckertz 1984:56-57).

From then on, the missionaries devoted their time to “the conversion of the blacks. [However] the ministry to the blacks was particularly difficult because many of the men were away working on the mines or farms” (Brain 1996:37).

3.4.2 Missionary Poverty

The Spiritan pioneers who left Germany just after the World War I (1914 – 1918) were very poor. “As a result of the First World War (1914-1918) the German missionaries lost their field of work which had been in the German colonies” (Kuckertz 1984:5). History repeated itself again during and after the Second World War (1939-1945) in the sense that the missionaries had no contact with their home province Germany. The consequence was the lack of finances. “Money [was] necessary to pay the grocery bills, the teachers’ salaries, transport costs and other sundries quite apart from new building projects” (Schings 1933:170, Bethlehem Diocese, archives). The missionaries felt “the effects of the world recession. Poverty [was] particularly widespread among the Blacks for they [were] miserably rewarded for their labour” (Schings 1933:170).

The missionaries then “decided, after much deliberation to set up gardens, for they scarcely had enough money to secure their own livelihood. The garden produce meant that they could both feed themselves more cheaply and at the same, earn money by selling fruits and vegetables” (Kuckertz 1984:21-22). A Spiritan missionary with whom I had an informal interview, stated that at a later stage the missionaries were again receiving regular support from Germany in the form of foreign mass stipends.

The St. Paul Sisters bought a little Farm Waldheim of 94 morgen for self-support. In an interview, Sr. M. Morallana, who joined the sisters’ congregation at her tender age, attests to the fact that the farm provided and still provides milk, vegetables and meat for the convent in Reitz and the St. Paul Old Age Home.

In the former days, the Africans in the diocese were virtually unable to sustain the missionaries due to lack of adequate means. However, the missionaries used their skills to provide for themselves. We shall later talk about the skills utilised by the religious brothers to create material support for the missionaries.

3.4.3 Sects: “Come and join us”

Another big challenge for the mainline Church was the mushrooming of the sects. In connection with the foregoing sentence, Fr. Schings mentioned “the enormous apathy in matters of religion which is the result of unnumerous (*sic*) sects who for the most part judge their members by their ability to pay and only give their priestly services to the accompaniement (*sic*) of the clink of coins” (1933:170).

One other aspect that the sects used to entice Catholics was and still is the healing service. In the Roman Catholic Church “an equally important and perhaps even more difficult task of pastoral inculturation is the healing ministry of the Church” (Baur 1994:332). Many Catholics, said T. Mokone, believe in the Church, but maintain that even today the Roman Catholic Church is heavily western in character in terms of healing and therefore they go to these sects to address their sicknesses which at times are beyond science (interview).

3.4.4 The means of Transport for evangelisation

The efficiency of the missionary activity of the Spiritans was often hindered by the lack of transport. Since many converts lived in relatively isolated missions, commonly known as outstations, missionaries had to travel long distances. Thus, they were “limited to a relatively small geographical area because of the long distances involved and the non-availability of transport. They did not have access to cars and motorbikes but instead went on foot, by bicycle, on horseback or by train” (Kuckertz 1984:21). R. Motloung remembers Fr. Hern visiting the sick on horseback. Unfortunate incidents of priests on horses were also reported. For example, “On 20 June 1931 Fr. Bönisch fell from the horse going to the location for Mass. On 22 June Fr. Herting arrived from Europe and passed Bethlehem and gave last Sacraments to Fr. Bönisch who died at 10:00 p.m.” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives: Chronicle History 1923). T. Mogongoa pointed out that it was not surprising in their time to see a priest walking on foot in the location, later on riding on a bicycle, on a motorbike and finally driving a car.

Sr. G. Sithole, one of the first African sisters to join the congregation, related that the missionaries also had a challenge of transporting their produce from the farm to town and to the Sisters of St. Paul’s convent in Reitz.

3.5 ZEALOUS APOSTOLATE: EVANGELISATION

The researcher equates the zealous apostolate to the methods of evangelisation. In their evangelisation, the missionaries used the following praxis for the early evangelisation: language, schools, liturgy, home visits, social outreach programmes, and literature.

3.5.1 Language

First and foremost, the missionaries were aware that in order for them to communicate well with the people they had to learn the indigenous language. They therefore made an effort

to learn the African languages, mostly Sotho and in some cases isiZulu. They maintained that “one good way to achieve success is to learn the Sotho language which is understood by all. Although English and Afrikaans are [were] not unknown to the Sotho people they will trust the missionary significantly more if he learns their language” (Büffel 1924:85f). Mgr. Klerlein is cited saying: “One of the most disturbing difficulties lies in the plethora of languages. If the missionary wants to make any headway then he must master at least three languages” (Klerlein 1926:121). The proliferation of languages in the Prefecture:

“Among the African population in the Prefecture most spoke Southern Sotho (or: Seshweshe (*sic*), as it is called endearingly by the Basotho); a few in the East of the Prefecture spoke Zulu; and then there was the koine of the area, most commonly spoken among the population of European descent, namely Afrikaans. Above all, there was English most commonly spoken among the Catholics of Irish and other extractions” (Kuckertz 1984:17).

The missionaries had to learn the vernacular to communicate well with the people. B. Mabuya in the interview spoke about priests attending the primary school just for the Sotho language. Virtually, after three months they could read and speak Sotho without a need of an interpreter. Msg. George is said to have also gone to a primary school in Ficksburg to learn Southern Sotho.

Nevertheless, T. Mogongoa concedes that in their youth the Church prohibited the liturgical use of vernacular. All was solemn and in Latin, to which they could only respond in short sentences like *Et cum Spirito tu* (And with your Spirit).

3.5.2 Schools

The young Catholic Church in the (Orange) Free State soon realised that education is also important in evangelisation. The pioneer missionaries were “intensely interested in Catholic education, seeing it not only as an effective mission method but as the foundation for the future of the Church everywhere” (Brain 1996:35). For instance, they were convinced that teaching people how to read and write would help the local church in her teaching ministry.

Several schools were then established in different towns and villages. The Spiritans “spent much of their resources on building schools” (Kuckertz 1984:70).

However, the challenge in this area was the policies of the apartheid government (as mentioned in 3.4.1). In the first place the government subsidised schools with an “amount being determined by the size of the school roll” (Kuckertz 1984:70). Secondly, the apartheid regime did not want to involve the (Roman Catholic) church in education. Fr. Schings put it that “the government’s anti-religious education politics [were] increasingly aimed at keeping the churches out of education and at educating the children in secular schools” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives 1933:170).

Yet, in these mission schools education was given to Catholics and non-Catholics. The missionaries in the Free State wanted to close the gap of education especially amongst the South Africans. “They forcefully began to encourage the people to obtain at least a primary schooling for their children” (Kuckertz 1984:70). Secondly, the missionaries believed, as Fr. Bönisch wrote, “a mission which has no school, has no future, for the young are the future of the missions” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives 1929a:37).

Unfortunately, most of the mission schools were closed down due to the Bantu-Education-Act of 1953.

“From 1958 the schools had to be financed totally by the missionaries which was an intolerable burden for them. Therefore, [the missionaries] created sources of income in order to be as independent as possible from overseas donations. [In Bethlehem Diocese] the farms at Geduld, Breda and Mariadal financed the schools and the farm at Sheridan provided school food” (1984:74).

M. Masoeu who was a principal in one of the government schools, stated in the interview that the Bantu Education System was in many respects inferior. Rapid expansion of black education led to the employment of teachers with insufficient qualifications. Many had only Junior Certificate and two years teachers’ training. Conditions were appalling; there were poor facilities and as many as sixty pupils to a class.

However, in my conversation with S. Mokoena, she emphasised that the Catholics schools played a pivotal role in those times. She asserted that the people who could write became important in the society. The mystic of writing as a means of communication with husbands in distant mines, particularly in Johannesburg, and children in distant schools, for example in Soweto and QwaQwa, was suddenly appreciated; therefore mission schools were appreciated, over and above the Church with her spiritual teaching on the efficacy of the Gospel and the sacraments. The mission school and the Church were closely linked together. Therefore, in order to get the one, that is, literacy, one had to get the other as well, that is, the Gospel message, and receive Christ as the saviour. It was therefore not surprising that the greatest number of converts was gained in that manner. A. Mokone said that in the labour market the literate member of the community had an advantage over those who did not avail themselves of schooling. He wrote letters to their husbands and children on their behalf and read out letters received to them.

S. Mokoena attested that in their time there was no other school in the whole of South Africa which offered an education of comparable academic level to that of Catholic schools, for example, St. Francis College in Mariannhill.

3.5.3 Liturgy

The missionaries took care of their people by preaching and celebrating the Holy Eucharist frequently. They were so dedicated to the missionary activity that:

“Fr. Frank [had] become convinced; that there [was] a good deal of good will to be found among the people. We must bring the graces which are to be obtained from the Holy Eucharist, the Word of God and preaching to them more often. A chapel must be built and as soon as it is possible to increase the number of missionaries we shall be able to care for the local people in other places more effectively” (Kuckertz 1984:9).

Interestingly, Adrian Hastings already taught that “the *diakonia* of the ordained ministry has to provide the core of Word and Sacrament for the Church, and that includes a regular Eucharistic celebration for every real local community of baptised faithful”

(1971:107). As mentioned in the previous chapter 2.3.6., the journey towards Christ is underpinned by three pillars of Christianity, that is, the Word of God, Liturgy and response.

We shall now briefly look at the impact of the Word of God on Christians. At this stage, it is perhaps essential to expound on the importance of the ministry of the Word of God in the evangelisation of peoples as another method used by the missionaries to communicate the Good News to Africans. As stated in *Studia Canonica*, “the aim of the ministry of the divine Word is to communicate the message of salvation: to bring the Gospel to humanity, to make Christ present in the world through Word and Sacrament” (*Studia canonica*, 23 (1989), pp. 325-344).

In essence the Church is to address the above aim in her missionary activity. The Word of God is to be proclaimed and preached to all nations (Matthew 28:19). The missionary command of Jesus in Matthew 28:19 is explained further by Pope Francis as “the Lord’s missionary mandate [that] includes a call to growth in faith” (*Evangelii Gaudium*, EG 160). Thus, priests and deacons are to devote a great deal of time to the liturgy of the Word (homily). The homily is meant to edify people as *Evangelii Gaudium* points out:

“Another feature of a good homily is that it is positive. It is not so much concerned with pointing out what shouldn’t be done, but with suggesting what we can do better. In any case, if it does draw attention to something negative, it will also attempt to point to a positive and attractive value, lest it remain mired in complaints, laments, criticisms and reproaches. Positive preaching always offers hope, points to the future, does not leave us trapped in negativity” (EG 159).

The pioneers preached the Word of God without any fear despite opposition and the apartheid policy. They were true messengers of the Gospel. It is worth noting that the Word of God calls people to conversion. They preached repentance to the oppressed and the oppressor. Incidentally, those who wholeheartedly receive the Word of God are themselves transformed, as it was the case in Bethlehem Diocese in the first proclamation of the Gospel.

Those who hear the Word of God should produce fruits of conversion:

“But you must do what the Word tells you and not just listen to it and deceive yourselves. Anyone who listens to the Word and takes no action is like someone who looks at his own features in a mirror and, once he has seen what he looks like, goes off and immediately forgets it. But anyone who looks steadily at the perfect law of freedom and keeps to it, not listening and forgetting, but putting it into practice, will be blessed in every understanding” (James 1: 22-25).

Pope Francis reminds hearers of the Word of God that “not only the homily has to be nourished by the Word of God. All evangelisation is based on that Word, listened to, meditated upon, lived, celebrated and witnessed” (EG 174). Finally, the Pope urges preachers of the Word of God to communicate the message of the Scripture faithfully and without alterations.

“If a [Scripture] text was written to console, it should not be used to correct errors; if it was written as an exhortation, it should not be employed to teach doctrine; if it was written to teach something about God, it should not be used to expound various theological opinions; if it was written as a summons to praise or missionary outreach, let us not use it to talk about the latest news” (EG 147).

3.5.4 Home visits

The other method of evangelising was the home visits. The missionaries would visit the homes of Catholics, and even of non-Catholics. A non-Catholic, Mr. Hooper, related how he benefited from a visit of a Catholic missionary:

“Father Forrest (military chaplain at the Cantonments) was the first British Officer during the war to enter Harrismith – he came to buy bread for the starving soldiers. [He] busted around enquiring for Catholics, found my wife with a baby 15 days old & her husband made a prisoner of war! He baptised baby & then visited me. When I returned to Harrismith after the Boer War – about 1903 – Father Forrest was again there & to meet him again gave me and mine much joy (*sic*). He was good to me during my severe illness

with enteric, visiting daily and cheering and comforting. Shortly after my recovery I was received into the Church” (Brain 1996:45).

3.5.5 Social outreach

The missionaries assisted many people in their difficulties. T. Mogongoa, was a staunch member of the former St. Vincent de Paul Society (the Catholic organisation that helps the needy), spoke of the missionaries buying school uniforms for children from poor families. Fr. B. Wiederkehr spoke of this organisation which he spearheaded in *Bohlokong* as an attempt for the people to help the needy amongst themselves. In addition he helped struggling families with second hand clothes from overseas and the Church gave bursaries to academically promising youth. The missionaries were all to all, to Catholics and non-Catholics. Fr. Kuckertz quoted Fr. Bönisch's notes from the archives in terms of their missionary activity in all spheres. Fr. Bönisch noted:

“The missionary is not only a priest but also an orphanage director, an accommodation officer, an employment officer, a workers’ leader, a bank clerk, a schoolmaster, a newspapers reporter, publisher [and] a doctor” (1929:168). Adrian Hastings concurs with the preceding sentence when he writes “whether [a missionary] is to be a tentmaker or a headmaster, a doctor or an agricultural adviser, a travelling salesman or a simple village priest, he will go on” (1971:18).

In the interview with J. Hoshu, he also spoke about the comprehensive understanding of the work of a priest among the people, Catholics and non-Catholics: we understood the work of the priest as celebrating mass, hearing confessions, anointing the sick, visiting the sick and marriage counselling. Thus the ministry of the priest was based only on ministerial work.

Over and above, the missionaries imparted skills to the blacks. As mentioned in paragraph 3.4.2, due to lack of sufficient resources, the missionaries used their skills through which they were able to sustain themselves. The able personnel had different skills. For instance, “Mgr. Klerlein arrived in Kroonstad accompanied by [...] Br. Ansbert, a builder; Br. Meinulf, a

bricklayer; Br. Tarzsius, a butcher; Br. Baldomir, a smith; Br. Jakob, a carpenter and Br. Winand, a farmer” (Kuckertz 1984:8). The religious brothers constituted a good Construction Task Force. This “Construction Task Force built innumerable churches, chapels and schools” (Kuckertz 1984:58). They always worked with the farm workers and people also came from the location.

3.5.6 Literature

The early missionaries recognised that in order for their mission to succeed, printed media also played a crucial role. “In 1929 Fr. Bönisch edited [the] first Sotho Newspaper *MoAfrika* in Jan 29 [was] continued by Fr. Heinrich Brüning. Later [was] taken over by [the Basuto-land Fathers [of the Oblates] under [the] new title *Moeletsi oa Basotho*” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives Chronicle History, The Mission of Kroonstad, 1923). Fr. Heinrich Brüning “was a leader in the development of the Sotho weekly paper *MoAfrika* which subsequently changed its name to *Moeletsi*, the widely circulating Sotho weekly publication based in Mazenod, Lesotho” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives 1982-1991, part 1of 2). Furthermore Fr. Kuckertz wrote,

“Fr. Bönisch worked on the Catholic weekly ‘*Izindaba za Bantu*’ (News about people) which sought to be a counterforce to the Communist ‘Workers’ Herald’. Then from 1930 he became editor of the newly founded magazine ‘*MoAfrica*’ (The African), a popular Catholic newspaper in Sesotho which was financed by Mgr. Klerlein. Therefore, in addition to the Mariannahill Zulu newspaper *UmAfrika* there was a magazine in Sesotho. By 1931 it had a subscription of 1 000 and had increased in size to six pages.”

“Newspapers are today an important means of communication, not only for Europe, but also for Africa” (Bönisch 1930:110).

3.6 THE MISSIONARY ASSOCIATES

For the missionaries to reach the goal of the missionary work, they worked closely with the youth, the Sisters and the Catechists.

3.6.1 Youth ministry: Associations

From the beginning of their missionary work, the missionaries recognised the importance of the youth work. You could say that evangelisation is sacrosanct to the formation of youth. Hence, the early missionaries organised young people into: Boys' Scouts, Girls' Guides, Chiro, Altar servers, Children of Mary, *Masolenyana* (little soldiers) and of late *Bongwana* (Missionary Childhood Association) and all these youth groups or associations aimed at creating future leaders or good Catholic adults.

"The missionaries did consider setting up theatres, cinemas, reading rooms and evening schools among other things, but a shortage of money put a stop to this. Yet, they did create activities for children, young people and adults. In addition to scouts, guides and altar boys, an attempt was made to extend the Children of Mary. The Chiro movement was added in 1963" (Kuckertz 1984:57-58).

In the youth associations, apart from the faith lessons, singing practice and leadership training, the youth were allowed to play. P. Mofokeng mentioned soccer as a common entertainment among the youth both female and male. He maintains that the entertainment at Church prevented a good number of young people from frequenting the shebeens.

3.6.2 Sisters of St Paul: Healthcare

Bishop Klerlein invited the sisters of St. Paul from Germany (*Herxheim*) in 1927. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Paul (CSP) was founded by Monsignor Jacob Friedrich Bussereau as a religious Congregation in 1913. At the instigation of Monsignor P. Leo Klerlein the Sisters of St. Paul came to South Africa to aid the Apostolic Prefect of Kroonstad in 1927. And in 1937 the sisters went to Bethlehem. The motto of the Sisters of St. Paul is: *Omnibus Omnia*, To be all to All. The Congregation of the Sisters of St. Paul (CSP) follows the Rule of St. Francis under the Patronage of St. Paul. The Sisters of St. Paul, who were a Diocesan Congregation depending on the motherhouse of *Herxheim* in the Diocese of

Speyer in Germany became a Diocesan Congregation of the Diocese of Bethlehem in December 2010. The house of the General Superior is based at the Plot Amsterdam in Reitz.

Sr. G. Sithole, related in the interview that the beginnings were tough for the sisters, the people of Reitz showed hostility to Catholics. They received a cold welcome in a Calvinistic environment, but after a few years, communication improved.

These religious sisters of the Congregation started the healthcare system in the Diocese of Bethlehem. Fr. Kuckertz recorded about the sisters of St. Paul:

“As a Congregation they dedicated themselves to the care for the handicapped, therefore they were well suited for the strenuous work of caring for the sick [...] they introduced the so-called ‘poor-dispensaries’ and so could help an increasing number of the sick. They also contributed to the decrease in the high infant mortality rate” (1984:63).

Sr. G. Sithole attested that some young sisters were trained as nursing sisters. The sisters also helped the priests in different works. For example, with the assistance of the Spiritans dispensaries were opened in different mission stations like Bethlehem and Frankfort. Thus, the ministry to the sick could not be separated from other missionary activities of the pioneers. The priests quickly acknowledged the contribution of the sisters in the “difficult tasks [...] in the care of the sick and the improvement of the social status of the local people” (Büffel 1924:85f). The sisters were in demand and as a result dispensaries were built for them to take care of the sick children as well as the adults. For instance, Sr. M. Morallana stated that the sisters helped babies and children with measles, adults with toothaches and referred others to government hospitals to be treated there.

Whilst the sisters took care of the sick, they later widened their scope of ministry to the needy. They simultaneously “engaged as pastoral assistants (*sic*), as kindergarten nurses, as instructors of catechism classes, as spiritual director” (Kuckertz 1984:65). Sr. V. Tshabalala, who served three bishops as a cook, pointed out in the interview that the pioneers of the St. Paul sisters trained many young ladies in dressmaking, needlework and taught them

sewing and trained them in pastoral work. In their missionary work, they catechised the people and took Holy Communion to the faithful and visited the sick. They trained lay people for different ministries, such as preparing the laity to conduct funerals, to conduct Priestless Sunday services, to conduct Block prayers, to lead Small Christian Communities (SCCs), to prepare Catechumens for Baptism, and so forth.

St. Paul sisters contributed a lot in the evangelisation of the people. They visited the people in their homes and there they met with much suffering for there were many who were physically or medically handicapped lacking proper care. They opened Homes for the physically and mentally disabled or physically challenged. To follow their charism they opened two Old Age Homes, viz, House of St. Paul in Reitz, and *Mmabahloki* Clara Home in Petrus Steyn (Mary Mother of the Poor), all in the Diocese of Bethlehem, Free State. Both institutions are essentially owned and staffed by the Sisters of St. Paul. To be real missionaries, they also accepted an invitation from Stigmatine Fathers in the Archdiocese of Pretoria to run the St. John the Baptist's Old Age Home. The patients in these Homes are blessed with a chapel for prayers and singing of hymns. The glory of God is once again praised in these Homes which serve as points of evangelisation.

Sr. G. Sithole recalled that in the early days of their missionary activity they prepared and led Sunday Priestless services and were Catechists in some outstations, herself was at one stage a Diocesan Catechetical Coordinator. The Sisters of St. Paul played an important role in the establishment of mission stations within the diocese.

They earnestly promoted local vocations. Sr. V. Tshabalala still remembers the role played by Sr. Scholastica Stilb who had tenaciously pursued the establishment of a novitiate in the Diocese of Bethlehem. Many young African girls, for example, Srs. Monica, Gabriel and Lousiana, joined them and eventually made their final vows.

The Sisters of St. Paul still serve in many educare centres (crèches) in the diocese, particular in QwaQwa Deanery where they own two educare centres (crèches), in Tebang and

Makoane villages. It is through these centres that they contribute immensely to the evangelisation of the peoples, since these centres are also places of evangelisation. They help the mothers who have to go to work by looking after their children from morning till afternoon. Their daily programme includes prayers, and extracts from the Bible. Importantly though, the activities at educare centres are geared to prepare children for primary school in a Christian way.

They also run a training centre in Reitz, where they conduct several courses in sewing, knitting, weaving and gardening. Many young people are trained in these fields and work and pray together before the start of the day. It is sad to note that in *Bohlokong* township the sisters don't have an educare centre and the township is growing and expanding rapidly with many people building houses in the new site.

3.6.3 Catechists: Missionaries in the local church

Mgr. Klerlein asked himself a difficult question with regard to the missionary work: "How am I to help these people who live so far away? I need a vanguard of committed catechists who could go to the farms to give catechism classes and lead catechumens to the missionary" (1925:111). In this way, the bishop wanted to save the local church from a dire situation in which she found herself.

He then relied on laymen of good standing in their communities to teach catechism and lead priestless services. For example, the catechist "Cyprian Suping from Ladybrand cared for the little band of Catholics. Afterwards he offered his service to the new parish priest by introducing him and accompanying him as an interpreter – he was indispensable" (Kuckertz 1984:66). Bishop Klerlein was so impressed with the service and the dedication of the catechists that "he presented [them] with a cassock and pectoral cross" (1984:67).

Fr. Kuckertz observed that "priests, brothers, sisters and catechists worked now side by side. As a result of this more intensive work among the Blacks, the number of Catholics rose dramatically. However, this was not accompanied by the corresponding increase in the

number of catechists” (1984:68). The presence of the catechists in their communities was, according to M. Moloji, noticeable that the Catechists were often asked by the members of the communities to bury a non-Catholic according to Christian norms.

However, there was always a challenge in the training of catechists. Fr. Schings stated “another major impediment to our work [was] the lack of trained and experienced catechists” (1933:170). The missionaries believed that “if [the] catechists’ training school succeeded [they] can then soon look forward to assistance” (1933:170). They then started “a catechist’s training school, which opened its doors in May, 1926; from March, 1927, the female catechists, were also trained” (Kuckertz 1984:68). It is necessary to point out that because of no church structures and shortage of priests; the Holy Masses were often celebrated in schools or in family houses, in most instances in the house of a catechist.

We are now in a position to discuss the hierarchy of the Diocese of Bethlehem since 1951.

3.7 THE HIERARCHY

In accordance with the *codex iuris canonici*, when the see is vacant (*Sede Vacante*) “the Supreme Pontiff freely appoints Bishops” (CIC 1983, 377 #1). In the Diocese of Bethlehem, the following bishops were duly appointed by the Holy See: Peter Kelleter (1950 – 1975), Hubert Bucher (1977-2009) and Jan De Groef (2009 -).

To do justice to the historical overview of the Diocese of Bethlehem, it is proper to concisely look at the contribution of the hierarchy to the local church of Bethlehem.

3.7.1 The Bethlehem Diocese under Bishop Peter Kelleter, CSSp

Bishop Peter Kelleter became the second leader and the first bishop for the Diocese of Bethlehem after Bishop Klerlein, who was the Vicar apostolic. Bishop Peter Kelleter was appointed at 42 years of age on 12th March 1950. In 1950 he was the Vicar Apostolic and later when the Ecclesiastical Hierarchy was established in Southern Africa, he became the

first bishop. “On 11th January, 1951, the Southern African hierarchy was established by papal decree [...] Bloemfontein received the status of archdiocese and the Vicariate of Bethlehem became the Diocese of Bethlehem” (Kuckertz 1984:36). As the new Bishop of Bethlehem, Peter Kelleter knew “his mission territory for fourteen years, he had come into the country shortly after his [priestly] ordination 1936, and he knew what his new office held for him” (1984:32). He had learnt the language and the culture of the Basotho in his early days in the (Orange) Free State.

The dearth of priests remained a big challenge for the young bishop “since even the young missionaries who became available in Germany were hesitant to come after the war. Above all many of the original priests and brothers were tired after long years of service” (Kuckertz 1984:33). The Spiritans fostered the local vocations, but to no avail. As a result, in the beginnings of his bishopric, Bishop Kelleter continued with the catechists’ programme as initiated by Mgr. Leo Klerlein (cf. 3.6.3.) and trained a large number of catechists.

It is recorded that by 1974, when the Spiritans celebrated their golden jubilee since the arrival of the first missionaries on the soil of South Africa, “29 churches, 8 chapels, 5 schools, 11 parish houses, 12 houses for catechists and 3 parish halls were built” (Kuckertz 1984:37).

Due to bad health, Bishop Peter Kelleter submitted his resignation to the Holy Father, Pope Paul VI, and it came into effect on the 5th July 1975 (Bethlehem Diocese, archives pre-1982, Part 1). Fr. Kuckertz remarked that after celebrating his episcopal silver jubilee: “[Bishop Kelleter’s] health suffered greatly and shortly after his silver jubilee he abdicated his see. He recognised that at the age of 65, he was no longer capable of doing justice to the increasing demands of his office” (Kuckertz 1984:38). When the Bethlehem Diocese was still *Sede Vacante*, the Diocesan Consultors met and elected Vicar Capitular (Apostolic Administrator) on the 7th July 1975, in the person of Fr. Anton Wilden, CSSp (Bethlehem Diocese, archives pre –1982, Part 1).

3.7.2 The Bethlehem Diocese under Bishop Hubert Bucher

Fr. Hubert Bucher succeeded Bishop Peter Kelleter as the third leader and the second bishop of Bethlehem. The researcher in his book titled, *The Shepherd of Bethlehem* cited the letter of appointment written by the former Secretary of State, John Cardinal Villot in the name of Pope Paul VI, on the 9th December 1976. Cardinal John wrote: “Bishop Paul, the Servant of the Servants of God, sends best wishes and his Apostolic Blessing to his beloved son, Hubert Bucher, of the secular clergy of the Diocese of Regensburg, the Bishop-elect of the Cathedral See of Bethlehem” (Mofokeng 2011:11).

Bishop Bucher’s arrival in the diocese ushered in a “new chapter in the history of the Diocese of Bethlehem” (Kuckertz 1984:41). As the Church began to grow in the diocese, a lot of development came with the growth of the diocese, for instance, the local vocations, and the social outreach programmes. In a sense, in the bishopric of Hubert Bucher, the *kerygma* was embodied in the *diakonia* (as explained in Chapter two, 2.3.3. and 2.3.4).

Local Vocations: Immediately after his episcopal ordination, Bishop Bucher began to work intensively towards the growth of the diocese by training of the diocesan clergy. His “primary concern [was] to encourage the participation of the laity and establish a local diocesan clergy” (Kuckertz 1984:43). He established a spiritual year for the aspirants and later a *Mater Cleri* programme was instituted. The aspirants were overseen by the Vocations Director and the focus was on their faith and personal growth. “He has always believed that, without the diocesan priests, the local church is dead and that there is no prospect of growth in vocations in such situations” (Mofokeng 2011:46).

On September 8th, 1982, the diocese received its first diocesan priest in the name of Fr. Gregory van Dyk, “who originated from the Archdiocese of Cape Town, but who was ordained in the name of the Diocese of Bethlehem” (Kuckertz 1984:43). By the time of his retirement, Bishop Hubert Bucher had ordained twenty (20) diocesan priests.

On a number of occasions, Bishop Bucher had correspondence with Superiors of different religious congregations soliciting help with priests from their congregations. The evidence is in the archives in the letter dated 3 August 1979, in which the bishop thanked the then Superior General of the Spiritans in Rome, Father Frans Timmermans, for urging him to approach other Congregations apart from the Spiritans and he wrote, "I am particularly grateful for the magnanimous view you take of my efforts to recruit clergy from other Congregations to help us discharge our Apostolic duty in this diocese" (Bethlehem Diocese, archives 1982-1991, part 1 of 2).

Since the diocese was short staffed the bishop amalgamated parishes and introduced Pastoral Animations Teams. The bishop in the interview viewed a dearth of vocations as one of the main challenges in the diocese. Pastoral care suffered from a lack of priests, and the lay animation and amalgamation of smaller parishes was well perceived. The amalgamation of parishes meant there were priests working together under the leadership of a parish priest or moderator, for example, Bethlehem Parish and former Phuthaditjhaba Parish. Through Bishop Bucher's influence, priests took decisive steps to get rid of clericalism and moved closer to the people.

The bishop introduced the married diaconate in the spirit of service. It is true that this was not an adequate solution to the dearth of priests, but the married deacons were to bring forth the *kerygma* and *diakonia* as explained above.

According to Adrian Hastings, the church is labelled:

"a 'mission' in so far as it is still dependent upon overseas Christian bodies in a way that a full local church is not, while we label it as 'church' in so far as it has become a self-ministering, self-supporting, self-propagating - a rounded local fellowship of Christians in faith, sacrament and service, a self-reliant community, itself obedient to the call of mission" (1971:147).

Bishop Bucher subscribed to the aforesaid understanding. Under his leadership several factors contributed to the making of the present diocese. For example, he emphasised a

self-reliant church that is a self-ministering, a self-supporting and a self-propagating church. Furthermore, he established structures such as the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC), which helped the diocese to consult and assist the laity in the running of the pastoral matters. It was in his tenure that the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission (J & P) began its work, making the laity conscious of their social and political obligations in the midst of apartheid. S. Mokoena believes that Bishop Bucher was especially concerned with the training of the local leaders, thus he established leadership structures in the church (interview).

About the missionary activity in the diocese, Bishop Bucher was very much concerned. In his reflection in 2004 (quoted in Mofokeng 2011:94-95) he stated:

“The Church founded by our Lord Jesus Christ ought to be, by its very nature, continuously growing and expanding beyond itself. This was the case with the Church in Southern Africa from the 1920s until the end of the 1960s. During those 50 years, the number of Catholics within the territory of our Bishops’ Conference doubled in each decade. However then came the big slump. It was brought on by a number of factors, chiefly among them the loss of many missionary vocations in Europe as a result of World War II, and the crisis in vocations to the priesthood and religious life which was the strange result of a myriad of homemade interpretations of ‘the Spirit of the 2nd Vatican Council’ conjured up mainly by people in the northern hemisphere”.

"Since then, also our local church, i.e. the Diocese of Bethlehem, ceased to be missionary. Faced with an ever dwindling number of missionaries, on the one hand, and the painfully slow emergence of an indigenous clergy, on the other, its rate of growth has sunk dramatically. In addition, because of the prolonged, absence of a resident priest in a number of parishes during the extremely difficult 1980s, we lost scores of Catholics who have ambled away from us into other, more or less Christian, sheep folds.

"For me [Bp. H. Bucher], heading a diocese which had lost its title to being missionary, has been the heaviest cross to bear during nearly 27 years as bishop of Bethlehem. I came to South Africa as a young priest filled with missionary zeal, and I was privileged to

build up a parish from scratch during my first ten years in the country – from 1958 to 1968 – in the Diocese of Aliwal North. As I approach the end of my service to this diocese, it is my hope and desire to launch us back into being a missionary Local Church, once again bent on growth and expansion. However, we cannot do this helter-skelter, without preparation”.

The aforementioned citation begs the question: how does the Diocese of Bethlehem prepare herself to be a missional church? Are there ordained diocesan priests of Bethlehem well evangelised in order to evangelise the people they serve? How does the local church prepare herself for the calling of being missionary? This is the main theme which I want to address in this dissertation.

Furthermore, to assist with alleviating poverty in the society, Bishop Bucher created the following programmes: Sekwele, Catholic Community Service (CCS) and Bethlehem Building Training Project (BBTP). In these programmes, in the words of Pope Francis (which came much later) are stressed the importance of a community that takes care of those who are less fortunate than the rest: can any church community think "it can comfortably go its own way without creative concern and effective cooperation in helping the poor to live with dignity and reaching out to everyone?" (EG 207). In these programmes, Bishop Bucher wanted the voice of the black Africans to be heard in their own affairs, particular through Sekwele, social reflection on current affairs. Moreover, it was mostly in the apartheid years, 1980s that the Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission began to work hard in the diocese, making the laity conscious of their social obligations. In the interview, Bishop H. Bucher acknowledged that all structures set up in the diocese were meant to be missionary-oriented in their outlook.

The other method of evangelisation implemented by Bishop emeritus H. Bucher was the occasion of the Chrism Mass. “The blessing of Holy Oils in [the] Holy Week was usually planned to take place in a different parish in the diocese” (Mofokeng 2011: 44). Many Catholics participated and still do in the Chrism Mass and use the opportunity to renew their faith commitment so as to become partakers in the missionary calling of the local church in

today's world. Perhaps, it is essential at this stage to briefly explain the meaning of the Chrism Mass as explained by Kevin W. Irwin in his article, 'Overview of General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar' (GNLY): "At the Chrism Mass on Holy Thursday morning the bishop, concelebrating Mass with his body of priests, blesses the oils and consecrates the chrism" (1991:176). Furthermore, G. Thomas Ryan in his article, 'Overview of the Ceremonial of Bishops' (CB) clarifies the meaning of the Chrism Mass: "[Chrism Mass is the] Mass, which the bishop concelebrates with his college of presbyters and at which he consecrates the holy chrism and blesses the other oils, manifests the communion of the presbyters with their bishop" (1991:213).

Another occasion on which the faithful were reminded that they are missionaries was and still is on Pentecost Sunday. On this solemnity, the bishop encouraged that parishioners should be re-commissioned in their different ministries in their parishes and become missionaries to their own.

With regard to the Catholic Schools, it was a sad story. Bishop Bucher in our conversation mentioned that the problem of salaries and benefits of teachers in Catholic Schools compared to those in Government Schools was of a great concern. Catholic Schools did not afford a pension fund, among other benefits, and rural schools lacked the necessary teaching material. As a result, some of the good schools were taken over by the government.

Finally, in the conversation with M. Masoeu, it was evident how Bishop Bucher shepherded and evangelised in the Diocese of Bethlehem and brought it into heights as a result of his clear vision and constant policy of the diocese.

3.7.3 Bishop Hubert Bucher retires and is replaced by Bishop Jan De Groef, M.Afr

In accordance with canon 401#1, Bishop Hubert Bucher "tendered his resignation to the Holy Father when he reached the age of seventy-five" (Mofokeng 2011: 8) and Fr. Jan De

Groef, of the Missionaries of Africa (M.Afr) was appointed as his successor on the 31st December 2008.

The primary concern of Bishop Jan has been the vocations to the priesthood. He, however, experienced frequent losses through the early death of diocesan priests.

In terms of the number of parishes and priests: There are presently thirteen parishes in Bethlehem Diocese, each made up of a number of communities, namely: Bethlehem, Clocolan, Ficksburg, Fouriesburg, Frankfort, Harrismith, Ladybrand, Lindley, Makeneng, Phuthaditjhaba, Reitz, Senekal and Vrede. They are being served currently by sixteen (16) priests.

The main pastoral concern for Bishop Jan De Groef is family ministry. He would love to see the Catholic families being centers of the missionary apostolate. There is a positive response to his plea since marriage and family is facing a huge challenge in the modern world.

At the heart of marriage and family there are challenges that cannot be ignored: In his book, *'Bones of my bones'*, Doctor Khathide mentioned some of these challenges:

“The institution of marriage is experiencing tremendous pressure all over the world. In some western communities, people are showing little faith in the institution of marriage. In such societies, single life or cohabiting (*vat en sit*) is on the increase. In Africa, the institution of marriage is also experiencing pressure... (2000:xiii). Infertility – Because procreation is understood to be the main reason for marriage in Africa, childlessness can and often has led to polygamy (2000:60). Wife-beating (family violence) – In most cases family violence involves the husband beating either the wife or children or both (2000:61). Migration – Another cause of divorce (another challenge to families) in Africa has been migrant labour. Men leave their wives behind at home to take care of their kids and property. Because of a meagre salary the husband finds somebody to share his life with in the city – a situation that eventually leads to the abandonment or separation from the actual wife. We have

seen the breakdown of the family unit in South Africa due to the migrant labour” (2000:61).

In order to deal with these challenges, preparation for marriage set a good foundation for a healthy family hence it cannot be ignored. It’s a long practice in the Roman Catholic Church that a good start of marriage is the period of premarital (pre-nuptial) counselling. “In the Roman Catholic circles it is rare for a priest to marry two people who have not received proper premarital counselling. Perhaps it is because the Catholic Church believes in the indissolubility of marriage. But it is heart-warming that other churches and marriage enrichment organisations and marriage officers are beginning to attach similar significance to premarital counselling” (Khathide 2000:27).

The Church needs to “face the challenge head on, and turn the perceived influence into positive for the sake of building functional marriages in Africa. It is an awesome responsibility we dare not shrink from. Marriage is Christ’s call to his disciples to live for him in the marital relationship so as to reflect the intimate relationship between him and the Church. Needless to say, in our hope and endeavour of building a strong vibrant African church, the focus on marriage needs to be high on our agenda of the African Renaissance” (Khathide 2000:xiii-xiv). Importantly, concerning resources for Family Life ministry, Bishop Jan highly recommends the ‘Handbook and Training Manual’ produced in 2009 by the Southern African Catholic Bishops’ Conference’s Family Life Desk.

Furthermore, in his bishopric, he emphasises the animation of the laity in the local church. As a former parish priest in *Bohlokong* township, the bishop still encourages active Small Christian Communities (SCCs). Initially, the structure used the Lumko kit material for their training and meetings but of late one diocesan priest, Fr. Leuta William Lengoabala produced a good guide for their weekly meetings. The latter development responded directly to the concern of Bishop Jan to have the role of the laity visible in the local church, their co-responsibility and activity in their basic communities empowered.

Unfortunately, Bishop Jan does not produce many documents apart from his circular letters, thus it may appear that the researcher does not have much information on his work and ideals. However, he still elaborates on the foundation laid by his immediate predecessor. For example, he encourages the lay participation at diocesan level, which is at Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC), Pastoral Council of Deanery (PCoD), Local Pastoral Council (LPC), Local Finance Committee (LFC) and other structures at grassroots level.

As we proceed to Part II of this chapter, we need to remind ourselves that the focus in this study – as mentioned earlier – is the parish of Bethlehem (particularly in *Bohlokong* township), on the one hand and the deanery of QwaQwa (villages) on the other hand. The town of Bethlehem is the seat of the bishop. It is chosen as focus in this study precisely because it is an urban area and therefore acts to balance the other focus on the rural QwaQwa Deanery. The established work in Bethlehem also contrasts with the setting of the former "homeland" of QwaQwa, where the Roman Catholic Church could only enter at a late stage.

So, therefore the two different settings would give us a sense of the missionary activity of the German Spiritan pioneers over the years on the one hand and the missionary activity of the more recent evangelisers on the other hand.

PART II: THE PARISH OF BETHLEHEM

3.8 INTRODUCTION

This project will first focus on the Bethlehem Parish. We shall now look at the role of Bethlehem Parish in the growth of the diocese.

The Bethlehem Parish as it stands now has five communities, namely, the Cathedral (Holy Ghost), The Nativity Church (*Tswalong ya Morena*), the Queenship of Mary (*Mofumahadi wa Kgotso*), St. Kizito and *Moeder van die Rosekrans*, in Bakenpark (Our Lady of the Rosary).

Barkenpark: At one time most of the Catholics in Bakenpark, as transpired in my conversation with Msg. Gregory van Dyk, were from the so-called Coloured community. The majority spoke Afrikaans at home. In the beginning the Mass was celebrated in Afrikaans and the homily preached in their mother tongue. Bishop emeritus Hubert Bucher pioneered this apostolate and encouraged priests serving this community to continue this practise. However, after the year 2000 homilies were no longer given in Afrikaans. It was said that the people understand English. This community was also once blessed with a woman who was very active in teaching catechism to the children, Mrs. Joy McCKerry. She also produced liturgical sketches in Afrikaans. This dynamic was not continued by those who took over from her. As a result of less attention being given to this community gradually the number of Catholics dwindled. Most of them joined other churches where they felt more at home.

However, the scope of the study focuses only on the two long established communities, that is, *Tswalong ya Morena* and *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso*, which were previously parishes on their own standing, later called *Bohlokong* Parish and now referred to as Bethlehem Parish. The focus is also on the missionary activities of the pioneers.

3.8.1 *Tswalo ya Morena* (The Nativity of the Lord)

Fr. Anton Kummer CSSp was the parish priest of *Tswalo ya Morena* (The Nativity of the Lord) from 1952 to 1984.

In the interview B. Mabuya recalled that during the period of the missionaries, particularly in the times of Fr. A. Kummer, who stayed in their parish for more than 30 years, even in the midst of apartheid, the community was one, everybody knew everybody and everybody's interests too. She went on to say, if you did not have money to get into the bus it was no problem. You could ask from anybody. If you did not have salt, milk, you could go to your neighbour for help. That was life of an African but encouraged more by the homilies of Fr. A. Kummer. While the apartheid houses were small, the parish priest would find a Catholic family in the township to accommodate a family evicted from a farm.

Fr. A. Kummer went on foot to visit families in the location and to bring communion to the sick. This gave him the opportunity to know the people in their location, surprising enough; he knew the parents and their children by their names. He manifested his apostolic zeal by celebrating frequent Masses. B. Mabuya said in our conversation they had morning Mass at 06:00 a.m. and School Mass at 08:00 a.m. On other days they had devotions to Mary (rosary) and to the Blessed Sacrament (Benediction).

3.8.2 *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso* (Queenship of Mary)

Fr. Horst Schier CSSp was the first parish priest of *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso* (Queenship of Mary), from 1966-1980.

The church of *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso* was under construction in the care of Fr. Heinz Gibis and was consecrated just after Vatican Council II in 1966 in the tenure of Fr. Horst Schier. C. Moloji, in a conversation recalled that in the early days of the church in the new location, there were 'house churches'. In these house churches, a small community of Catholics would come together for the celebration of the Eucharist and prayer meetings. The first of these houses was that of M. Clara in *Kgotsong* (as endearingly called).

Fr. H. Schier, the first parish priest, believed very much in the lay ministry. For example, in *Bohlokong* he "divided his parish into neighbourhoods each comprising 400 people and looked after by a parish leader" (Lobinger 1973:61ff). He had interest in working with the young people. For instance, he started the Boys' Scouts to bring young boys together and impart skills on them.

3.8.3 *Bohlokong* location community

It was under the pastoral care of **Fr. Bernhard Wiederkehr CSSp** that both parishes in *Bohlokong*, that is *Tswalo ya Morena* and *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso* merged under one Parish Priest in 1984 after the death of Fr. Anton Kummer CSSp.

Fr. Bernard related in the interview that he stood with Blacks during the apartheid era. In Bethlehem he intervened between the police and the students during the riots in 1985 (State of Emergency). The students burned houses, government and school buildings; private and police cars and there were casualties in the mayhem and as a result he took some students to hospital with his car. He visited schools to preach and pray with the learners and their teachers. He spent time with the youth especially the altar serves teaching them the precepts of faith and bible sharing. He was always inspired by the Gospel of Matthew 25. Thus he helped poor families with second hand clothing from Germany and gave money to the needy. In the township, T. Mogongoa testified that Fr. Bernhard embraced everyone, Catholics and non-Catholics. She went further to say Fr. Bernhard was a real missionary in their area. One other example related by S. Mokoena was that Fr. Bernhard could ride a bicycle from Geduld, a Spiritan farm outside Bethlehem, to the location. If it happened that he was driving a car, he surely gave lift to everyone going his direction. The Spiritan Fathers were imbued with the spirit of service (*diakonia*).

3.8.4 Community of the Daughters of Charity of the Sacred Heart in *Bohlokong*

The Diocese of Bethlehem did not have many of the Religious Sisters Congregations. This became another concern for Bishop H. Bucher after his appointment as bishop. He immediately “contacted several Congregations of Sisters domiciled in the Republic of South Africa inviting them to work in the family apostolate in the Diocese of Bethlehem. Due to over-commitment they all refused the offer” (Bethlehem Diocese, archives, pre – 1982, Part 2).

The Daughters of the Sacred Heart in the province of Lesotho accepted the invitation. They established their house (*Pelong* = Sacred Heart) in *Bohlokong* location in 1980 and in 1985 they opened the Pelong Educare Centre which is adjacent to the convent and is run by the sisters. The objective of the sisters residing in *Bohlokong* was to provide:

“Training of adolescent girls and young women in household skills, such as budgeting, cooking, housekeeping, tailoring, knitting, dietetic, saving and gardening. To instruct people in preventive health-care and care for the sick. To present to young people, especially those of marriageable age, the New Testament idea of marriage. To teach

adolescent boys and girls and young married couple the do's and don'ts of child education, about good-neighbourly relations, meaningful participation in various groups and organisations, etc." (Bethlehem Diocese, archives pre – 1982, Part 2).

The sisters worked tirelessly in *Bohlokong* township with the support of the parishioners. T. Mogongoa related that the sisters were seen walking on foot in the location doing their family apostolate, for instance, Srs. Maretha and Louisa, FCSCJ, both came from Lesotho. She believes that the *Pelong* Sisters, as they were affectionately known, really evangelised the African families at a deep level.

PART III: QWAQWA DEANERY

3.9 QWAQWA HOMELAND

3.9.1 Introduction

Bethlehem Diocese comprises four deaneries, that is: Central (Bethlehem), Southern (Ficksburg), Mpumalanga (Harrismith) and QwaQwa. This section will pay attention to QwaQwa Deanery.

3.9.2 The missionary activity in QwaQwa Deanery

QwaQwa covers 45 000 hectares of mountainous country on the Lesotho border. Due to apartheid which segregated people, the Catholic Church went to QwaQwa homeland much later, in the sixties (1960s), when "QwaQwa (*Witsieshoek*) experienced a boom in population" (Kuckertz 1984:26). At the time of the Group Areas Act (which was passed by the Apartheid government in 1950. The Act enforced segregation of different races to specific area, for example Basotho were sent from cities to QwaQwa as their homeland). Consequently, QwaQwa had the highest growth rate of Basotho due to the influx of people into the homeland and the number of Catholics started to grow especially in the 1980s. During the height of apartheid, Whites were not allowed to stay in the Black populated area,

and not allowed to dine with them. Hence, missionaries from Europe could not stay in QwaQwa. In the interview with Bishop Jan De Groef, he attested that till half of 1983, he together with his confrères had to stay in the small town of Kestell. Pastoral care therefore constantly suffered from the lack of priests. P. Mofokeng stated that before the arrival of Fr. Simon Rampeo in QwaQwa, Phuthaditjhaba, the pastoral care had been sporadically carried out from Harrismith, about 50 kms away from QwaQwa. T. Mokone also judged that this was the reason why the Catholic Church in QwaQwa progressed at a slower pace, although it picked up in the 1980s.

Another reason for a late entry into the area of QwaQwa was the Dutch Reformed Church which “concentrated at Witzieshoek (*sic*) where a theological school for Africans was opened” (Brain 1996:13).

The Catholic Church commenced its evangelisation in QwaQwa by initially tracing existing members of the Catholic Church and a priest was appointed to serve their spiritual needs.

The fact remains that most people in QwaQwa live in rural surroundings, for example, there exists villages such as: Sehlaneng, Monontsha, Makoane, Tebang, Tsheseng, etc. In QwaQwa one of the greatest challenges is the large number of unemployed and under educated youth in the villages.

Going back to the foundation phase of evangelisation in QwaQwa, the shortage of priests made some villages to remain more than three months without the visit of a missionary. Bishop Bucher himself went to QwaQwa on weekends to celebrate Mass for the people.

Sr. M. Morallana at a certain time had to catechise a large group of people since there was only one priest (Fr. Simon Rampeo) working in QwaQwa. She visited and took Holy Communion to the sick. The sisters worked as Catechists and led Sunday Priestless services.

The Spiritan Fathers moved out of QwaQwa as their pastoral area in 1981. However, the missionaries of Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI) from Lesotho had already been invited to

evangelise QwaQwa. Fr. Simon Rampeo OMI laboured tirelessly and in most of the time alone in such a vast area (1975-1981). The White Fathers now known as Missionaries of Africa were invited by Bishop Hubert Bucher to the diocese; and in 1982 they took over QwaQwa as their pastoral area.

3.9.3 Oblates of Mary Immaculate and other Missionaries in QwaQwa

Bishop H. Bucher followed the request made by his predecessor, Bishop Peter Kelleter CSSp to plead with the Ministry of Co-operation and Development in Cape Town offices, Pretoria offices and QwaQwa homeland offices, to allow Fr. Simon Rampeo from Lesotho to provide the spiritual assistance for the Catholic Population of QwaQwa. In this difficult situation Bishop Bucher wrote numerous letters to the Missionaries of Oblates of Mary Immaculate in both Lesotho and Natal Provinces and during the Plenary Session of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) he would be asking them to assist the Diocese of Bethlehem with missionaries willing to work in QwaQwa. He made urgent appeals to aforesaid structures stating that he is "in real trouble" (Bethlehem Diocese, archives pre – 1982, part 2) with regards to finding a priest resident in QwaQwa, and called himself "a beggar with dignity" (Bethlehem Diocese, archive pre – 1982, part 2).

According to A. Mokone, when Fr. Simon Rampeo from Lesotho Oblates province arrived in QwaQwa there was an influx of Blacks into the homeland. Then Fr. Rampeo advised the bishop to build huge churches in the villages; with the view of accommodating all Catholics from urban areas or cities. But the influx was not a huge success for the apartheid regime as they envisaged it. The apartheid police had to arrest people in the cities to make them go and stay in the homelands. A. Mokone added that people resisted and some went back to urban areas for job security. P. Mofokeng recalls Fr. Rampeo as a hard worker. He baptised many people and went around visiting their homes. However, the set back during that time was the policy of the government which at a certain period expelled Catholic missionaries in QwaQwa, including Fr. Rampeo, who originated from Lesotho. It was interesting, though, that even in the absence of a priest the neophytes Catholics remained faithful and even propagated their faith. In fact, the flame of faith was kept burning by the catechists.

Fr. George Qwabe OMI also worked in QwaQwa in 1980 but was more responsible for the hostel meant for the formation of young men before they were sent to the Seminary either in Pretoria, Hammanskraal or in Lesotho, St. Augustine and was later moved to Bethlehem. In 1981, the diocese bought “a house in nearby Kestell [...] the White Fathers established their operational base as a Diocesan Pastoral Animation Team, with QwaQwa forming their ‘home parish’ for which they assumed full responsibility” (Bethlehem Diocese, archive pre-1982, part 2).

PART IV: A BALANCE

3.10 CHALLENGES OF THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF BETHLEHEM

To enlist the shortcomings of the missionaries is not to deny their great contributions, their religious motivation in coming to Bethlehem Diocese, their heroism in the early days of apartheid. But it means to correct the failures of the missionaries and challenge ourselves to move beyond that.

First and foremost, it is very sad to say that some missionaries also cooperated with the oppressors in order to secure their citizenry. One interviewee remarked that in their time it became difficult or at times impossible as black young men to join the Congregation of the Spiritans which was still heavily German. At baptism, babies and adults were given ‘Christian names’ because their Sotho names were regarded as ‘heathen names’ and registered in the baptismal register as such.

Incidentally, despite the growth of the diocese and the growth of the number of local clergy, local religious congregations were not established in the diocese. The missionaries came with a good intention of establishing the local church; however, one senior missionary is reported to have said that Blacks cannot be priests since they cannot grasp philosophy.

There were great problems coming from all directions right from the beginning. But as regards to education and health care, the diocese did its best in those trying times, yet one

still feels that more could have been done. For example, there is no single Catholic Hospital built in the diocese. This in itself could have helped many sick people and introduce them to faith and prayer.

The diocese seemed not to implement the spirit of ecumenism. Even though Rome issued documents on ecumenism, the diocese really did not go out of its way to cater for this interest and no Vicar for Ecumenism has ever been appointed to guide the diocese in this area. Importantly, the ecumenical spirit embraces all the people since the concept ecumenical means 'the whole inhabited world'.

Another big challenge (especially in QwaQwa) is that there are institutions set up by the government that seem not to be served by the church. A couple of examples will assist in demonstrating the aforesaid situation. For instance, *Manthathisi* in *Tsheseng* is a Home for children from disadvantaged background. I know for a fact that there are baptised Catholics in this place, but they are never visited by the church. The other Home is *Thekolohelong* Welfare Centre; this is a Home for elderly people who have no place to stay and have to be cared for. The priest goes to this place only on invitation. *Leratong* is another institution where street kids and abandoned children's needs are being taken care of. For sure there are Catholics who need pastoral care. *Thiboloha* School for the Blind and Deaf (speech impaired) also have Catholics who are not pastorally cared for.

3.11 STATISTICS

As background to the enquiries of the next chapters we shall now give an overview of the available statistics from the diocesan archives (the sample of the diocesan statistics form and headcount form are attached).

In the following tables the researcher will look at the diocesan area as a whole, but then also the smaller area of Bethlehem town as such, and lastly the QwaQwa Deanery. The tables indicate the number of Catholics, in order to get an idea of growth or decline; the number of adults baptised, as an indication of growth and the number of "converts"

baptised (those who came over from other churches or no churches) baptised. The different graphs will specifically illustrate these numbers.

The statistics will focus on the years since 2000, but first an indication of the picture in the QwaQwa homeland and Bethlehem mission in 1980 and 1981, as they were called then.

Table 1: QwaQwa, 31 December 1980

Total population within confines of parish	250 000
Number of Catholics in parish	19 896 (8,0%)

Table 2: Bethlehem (Tswalong and Kgotsong), 31 December 1981

Total population within confines of parish	80 000
Number of Catholics in parish	7 000 (8,8%)

As a preliminary, it may be sensible to highlight the importance of the Jubilee year in the Christian calendar and in particular the year 2000 by means of the following quotation:

“The origin of the Christian Jubilee goes back to Bible times. The Law of Moses prescribed a special year for the Jewish people: ‘You shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim the liberty throughout the land, to all its inhabitants; it shall be a jubilee for you when each of you shall return to his property and each of you shall return to his family. This fiftieth year is to be a jubilee for you: you will not sow, you will not harvest the un-gathered corn, you will not gather the untrimmed vine. The Jubilee is to be a holy thing to you, you will eat what comes from the fields’ (The Book of Leviticus 25, 10-14). The trumpet with which this particular year was announced was a goat’s horn called *Yobel* in Hebrew, and the origin of the word jubilee. The celebration of this year also included the restitution of land to the original owners, the remission of debts, the liberation of slaves and the land was left fallow. In the New Testament, Jesus presents himself as the One who brings the

old Jubilee to completion, because he has come to 'preach the year of the Lord's favour' (Isaiah 61: 1-2).

For Christians then, the Jubilee of the year 2000 is especially important because it will be a celebration of the 2000th anniversary of the birth of Christ (apart from differences of exact chronological count). What is more, it will be the first Holy Year which marks the turn of a millennium, since the first Jubilee was proclaimed by Pope Boniface VIII in 1300. For Christians then, the Jubilee of the Year 2000 should be a great prayer of praise and thanksgiving to God for the gift of the incarnation of His Son and the Redemption He brings. The Jubilee is called Holy Year, not only because its beginnings, is marked, and ends with solemn holy acts, but also because its purpose is to encourage holiness of life.

It was actually convoked to strengthen faith, encourage works of charity and brotherly communion within the Church and in society and to call Christians to be more sincere and coherent in their faith in Christ, the only Saviour"

(http://www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/documents_8/8/2014).

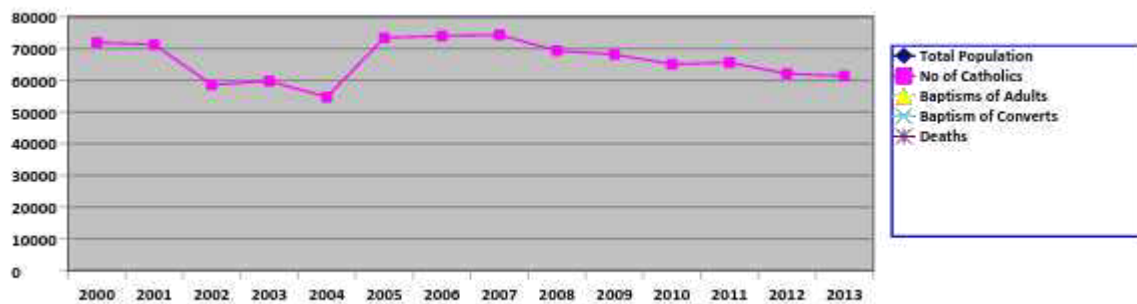
Tabled below are the statistics sent to the Central Statistics Office of the Church in Rome.

Table 3: Annual General Statistics: Bethlehem Diocese, 2000-2013

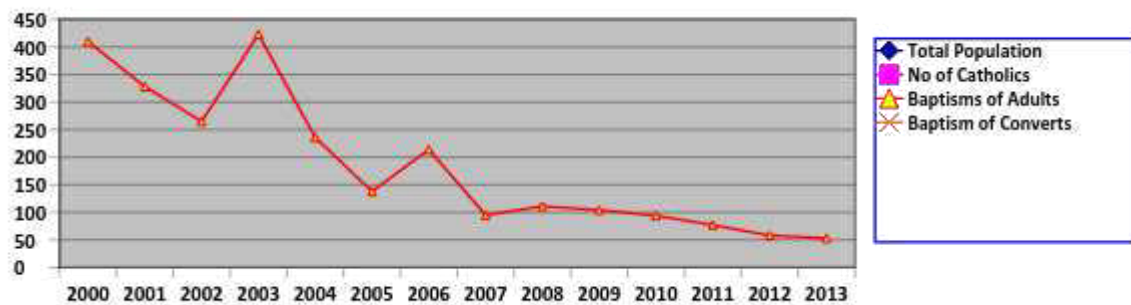
Year	Total Population	Number of Catholics	Baptisms of Adults	Baptisms of Converts	Deaths
2000	895 183	71 912 (8,0%)	410	175	568
2001	895 505	71 303 (8,0%)	328	241	514
2002	885 021	58 569 (6,6%)	265	272	633
2003	526 316	59 768	423	251	580

		(11,4%)			
2004	897 954	54 493 (6,1%)	236	202	652
2005	702 948	73 402 (10,4%)	138	190	436
2006	702 948	74 009 (10,5%)	214	162	564
2007	714 807	74 343 (10,4%)	95	124	605
2008	755 989	69 338 (9,2%)	111	137	578
2009	781 384	68 133 (8,3%)	104	185	425
2010	787 697	65 085 (8,3%)	94	144	457
2011	856 790	65 620 (7,77%)	77	96	882
2012	879 015	62 065 (7,1%)	58	71	380
2013	885 992	61 391 (6,9%)	53	52	367

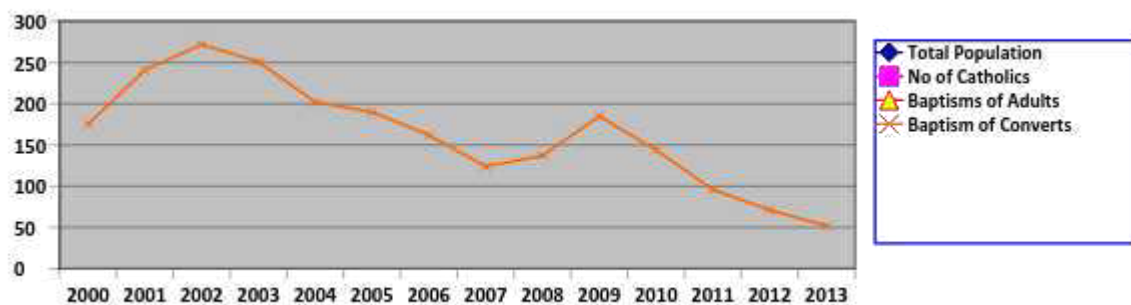
The graph below depicts the number of Catholics in the Diocese of Bethlehem, 2000 - 2013



The second graph shows the number of Baptisms of Adults in the Diocese of Bethlehem, 2000-2013



The third graph shows the number of Baptisms of Converts in the Diocese of Bethlehem, 2000-2013



Observations

It should be clear that especially the population numbers are not really trustworthy. This is especially the case in 2003. The researcher is not sure if the counting was genuine or a thumb-sucking exercise since the decrease in numbers was enormous. Perhaps, previously they were pushed up or inflated and deflated.

In general it is sad to note that the number of Catholics is decreasing especially since 2010.

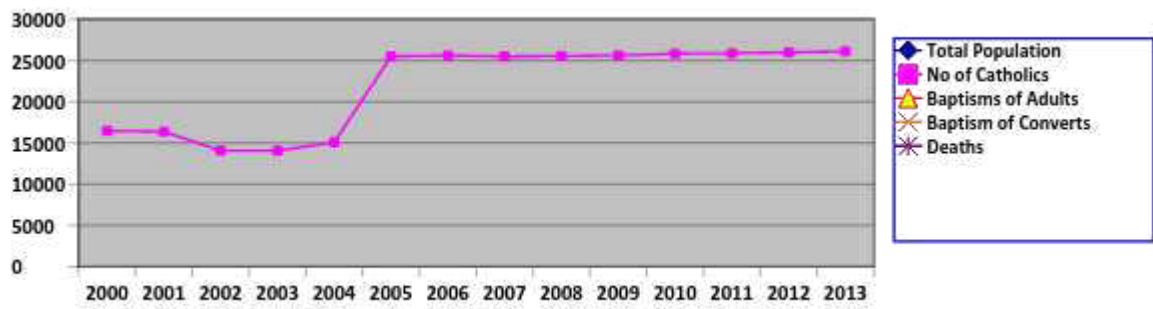
The following tables will focus on QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish. It is especially notable in the decrease of baptisms.

Table 4: Statistics for the QwaQwa Deanery, 2000-2013

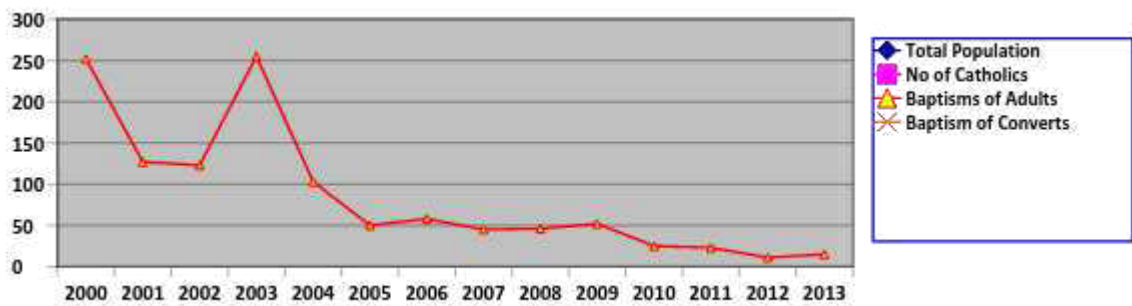
Year	Total Population	Number of Catholics	Baptisms of Adults	Baptisms of Converts	Deaths
2000	369 946	16 477 (4,4%)	252	52	198
2001	369 946	16 379 (4,4%)	127	101	197
2002	370 000	14 069 (3,8%)	123	119	186
2003	391 649	14 063 (3,8%)	255	52	186
2004	370 000	15 091 (4,1%)	103	55	231
2005	302 000	25 508 (8,4%)	50	25	176
2006	302 000	25 615 (8,5%)	58	52	200
2007	302 000	25 513 (8,4%)	42	54	265
2008	302 200	25 558 (8,5%)	46	63	182
2009	307 250	25 629 (8,3%)	52	127	190
2010	310 210	25 832 (8,3%)	25	90	152
2011	378 112	25 889 (6,8%)	23	35	160
2012	398 244	26 005 (6,5%)	11	39	111

2013	399 876	26 112 (6,5%)	15	22	47
-------------	---------	------------------	----	----	----

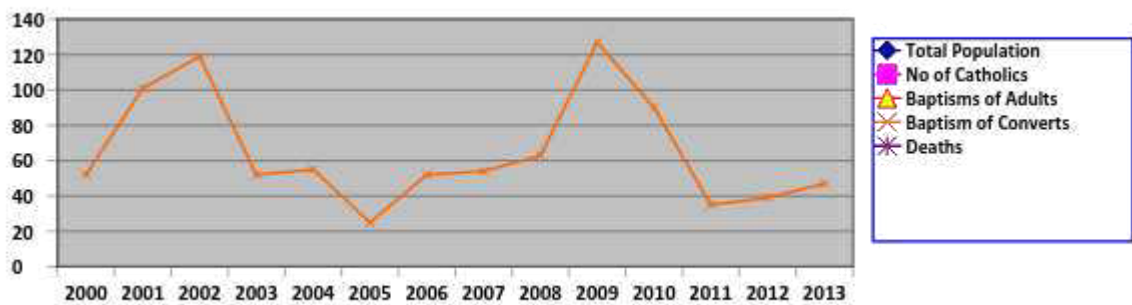
The graph below indicates the number of Catholics in Qwaqwa Deanery, 2000-2013



The second graph shows the number of Baptisms of Adults in QwaQwa Deanery, 2000-2013



The third graph shows the number of Baptism of Converts in QwaQwa Deanery, 200-2013



Observation

It seems as if the number of Catholics in the QwaQwa Deanery increased in 2005, but then stabilised. One can even suggest that it is stagnant. It would appear as if the church in QwaQwa is only maintaining the church which is already planted years back. The baptisms of adult converts appear to be declining although there is an upturn since 2012. One hopes that a programme of Evangelisation in QwaQwa would reach many lapsed Catholics and those who are not yet baptised or Christianised.

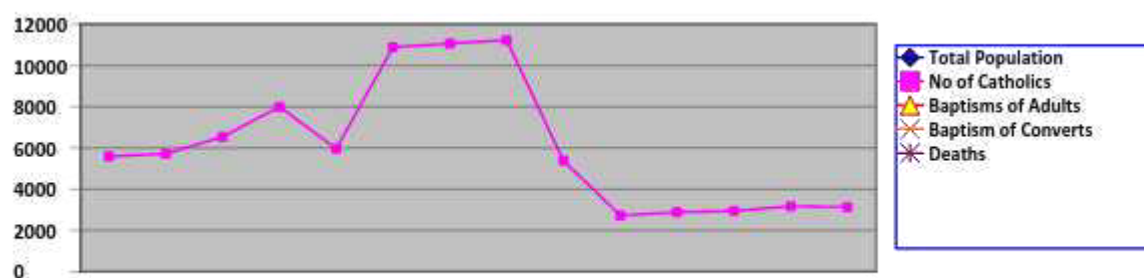
However, the researcher has a fundamental problem with some of the numbers given above. They are inconsistent. For example, there was a big jump from 2005 and one wonders if the previous counts were accurate. A proper counting and verification is urgent in the statistics that are brought to the diocese and are meant to be sent to Rome.

Table 5: Statistics for the Bethlehem Parish, 2000-2013

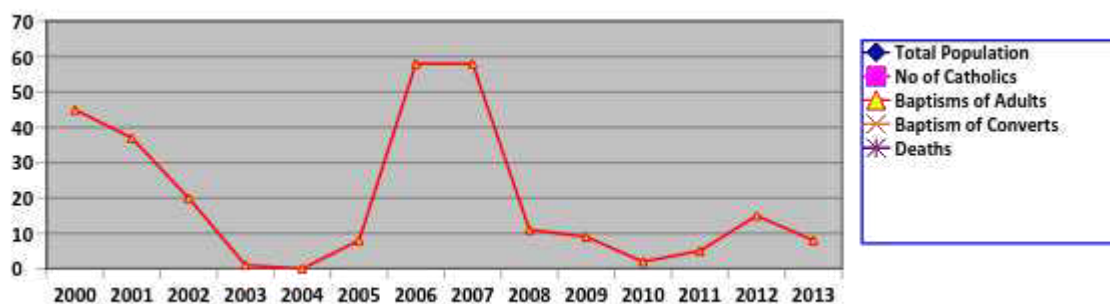
Year	Total Population	Number of Catholics	Baptisms of Adults	Baptisms of Converts	Deaths
2000	87 394	5588 (6,4%)	45	36	81
2001	87 136	5719 (6,6%)	37	30	41
2002	90 000	6545 (7,3%)	20	20	67
2003	95 000	8000 (8,4%)	1	1	77
2004	95 000	5968 (6,2%)	-	-	85
2005	66 706	10896 (16,3%)	8	34	64

2006	66 706	11067 (16,6%)	58	25	-
2007	68 000	11238 (16,5%)	58	25	-
2008	69 000	5387 (7,8%)	11	8	101
2009	66 740	2728 (4,1%)	9	6	136
2010	68 000	2884 (4,2%)	2	7	74
2011	68 000	2946 (4,3%)	5	13	59
2012	70 000	3170 (4,5%)	15	9	64
2013	75 000	3136 (4,2%)	8	7	53

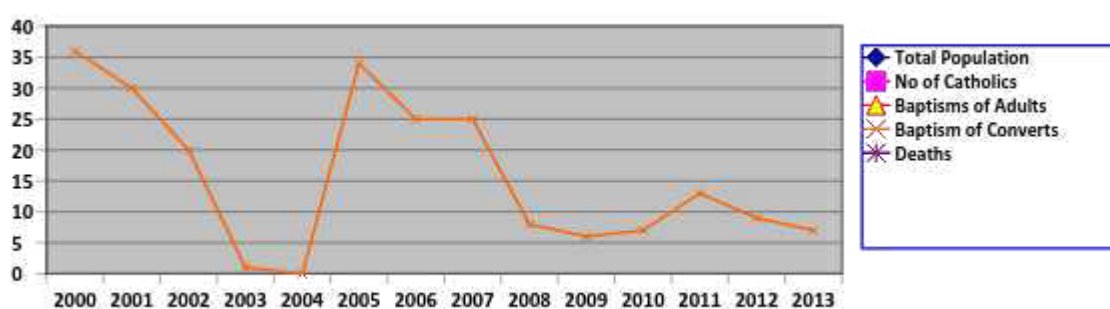
The graph below shows the number of Catholics in Bethlehem Parish, 2000-2013



The second graph shows the number of Baptisms of Adults in Bethlehem Parish, 2000-2013



The third graph depicts the number of Baptisms of Converts in Bethlehem Parish, 2000-2013



Observations

The decline in the number of Catholics in Bethlehem Parish, and obviously the downward spiral of the number of adults' baptisms and baptisms of converts should be a matter of serious concern for the church in Bethlehem Parish.

Needless to say that the study finds the numbers for 2009 to 2013 as problematic; the above statistics leave much to be desired. In some cases numbers are seemingly understated and in other cases they are probably exaggerated.

3.12 ANALYSIS

It was already stated – and the above tables and graphs show it very clearly – that the statistics are not very dependable. However, there is an indication that the number of the Catholic population and the baptisms of adults and converts in the Diocese of Bethlehem

seem to go down. Depending on how the calculations were done, it can be said that up to about ¼ of the Catholics left the Church or simply disappeared over the last decade.

In the interviews the researcher heard stories about why people left the Church. For example, parents shared stories about their children who opted for a different religion or church, even though they were baptised Catholics. This study forces us to look beyond our circle of acquaintances to see what is going on in the whole diocese. The research puts hard numbers on anecdotal evidence: almost one out of every 10 Bethlehemites is an ex-Catholic. One of four people who were raised Catholic no longer identifies themselves as Catholic.

Any other institution that lost ¼ of its members would want to know why. But as far as I know, since I joined the Bethlehem Presbyterium (in 2000), our meetings have never been devoted to discussing the exodus of Catholics. Nor have we spent a dime trying to find out why it is happening.

It can be said that those leaving the Church are not a homogeneous group. They can be divided into two major groups: those who become unaffiliated (that is, they don't go to any other church and they don't regard themselves as Catholics any more), and those who join other churches. Almost half of those leaving the Church seem to become unaffiliated. The rest join other churches or sects.

Why do people leave the Church or, put differently, why the dwindling numbers of Catholics in Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery? As we shall reflect in the next chapter, people leave the Church for different reasons. For example, some are married by a non-Catholic partner and others feel called to sangomahood and the church's understanding of African healing are among the reasons of the exodus.

3.13 CONCLUSION

As we discovered in this chapter, the history of the Diocese of Bethlehem has been influenced by many players, for example, Mgr. Antony Gaughren OMI, Mgr. Leo Klerlein and

Fr. Hoendervangers, etc. We also observed that the history of the diocese touches on the history of (Basutoland) Lesotho, Bloemfontein Archdiocese, and Kimberley Diocese as well.

In the early days of the pioneer mission in the Diocese of Bethlehem, we noted that the Spiritan Missionaries started the catechetical schools. These were necessary, since many of the “adult Catholics were badly instructed themselves and thus unable to pass on the faith to their children” (Brain 1996:34). They also lived in poverty and discomfort in the rural villages and locations (townships). They established schools for the children of South Africa, which were co-educational and non-racial. Despite the policy of apartheid which hampered the efforts of first evangelisation, the pioneer fathers in the Diocese of Bethlehem gave themselves completely to the service of the poor and the suffering. Undoubtedly, the missionaries did much in the past in the area of education, medicine and social outreach. Evidently, the German Spiritan Missionaries succeeded in establishing a new local church in such a way that it is a living community.

The Sisters of St. Paul visited the sick and worked at dispensaries and shared their goods with the poor and the neglected. They brought witness to service and missionary work in the Diocese of Bethlehem.

The Spiritan missionaries and the St. Paul Sisters laboured so hard in the vineyard of the Lord in Bethlehem Diocese, that they laid the foundation of an infrastructure which the Vatican Council II referred to as the Local Church. They really saw very hard beginnings but never lacked in their dedication to missionary activity. In the early days of the congregation here in South Africa, the religious vocations of the girls had gone ahead, but lately they seem to be declining. For example, the number of the Sisters of St. Paul has not reached even 50 (fifty) after so many years in the Diocese of Bethlehem.

Regarding priestly vocations, Bishop Hubert Bucher worked unceasingly. In 1982 he ordained his first diocesan priest. While there is currently a decrease in foreign missionaries there isn't a corresponding increase in local clergy (diocesan priests) for the Diocese of Bethlehem. The most important teaching of Bishop Bucher which still lingers on today is the

three selfs: Self-supporting, Self-ministering and Self-propagating church. That being the case, perhaps the question remains: Is the Diocese of Bethlehem becoming a missional church?

The researcher concurs with the Archbishop of Johannesburg, Buti Tlhagale, in Peter Knox's book that among Christians "there is also a renewed interest in the cult of the ancestors as a rich source of African spirituality" (2008:11). The study shows that the African traditional practices are still alive in Christian homes. As Klaus Nürnberger puts it: "The problem of ancestor veneration within the church is substantial but largely hidden" (2007:17). The researcher came to the same conclusion.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF THE EMPIRICAL STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Perhaps, before the researcher presents the outcomes of the research, he takes into cognisance the address of Cardinal Ivan Dias at the Anglican Conference of Lambeth on 22nd July 2008:

“The theme of evangelisation must be considered in the wider context of the spiritual combat which began in the Garden of Eden with the fall of our first parents, in the wake of fierce hostilities between God and the rebel angels. If this context is ignored in favour of a myopic world-vision, Christ’s salvation will conveniently dismissed as irrelevant.

The spiritual combat, described in the Books of Genesis and Revelation, has continued unabated down the ages. [...] This combat rages fiercely even today, aided and abetted by well-known secret sects, Satanic groups and New Age movements, to mention but a few, and reveals many ugly heads of the hideous anti-God monster: among them are notoriously secularism, which seeks to build a Godless society; spiritual indifference, which is insensitive to transcendental values; and relativism, which is contrary to the permanent tenets of the Gospel.

All of these seek to efface any reference to God or to things supernatural, and to supplant it with mundane values and behaviour patterns which purposely ignore the transcendental and the divine. Far from satisfying the deep yearnings of the human heart, they foster a culture of death, be it physical or moral, spiritual or psychological”. (L’Osservatore Romano, English edition, N. 31 – 30 July 2008, p. 4).

The task of the present chapter is to present the findings of the study and the challenges of evangelisation (or mission) in the Diocese of Bethlehem, with special reference to the

Bethlehem Parish and Qwaqwa Deanery. First and foremost, the researcher concurs with Fr. M. Mokoena who justly observed that the Spiritans:

“...worked tirelessly in God’s vineyard converting many people to the Catholic faith, blessing a great number of marriages, burying those who passed away with dignity of the children of God, and giving many young people opportunities to be educated through bursary schemes. They helped to build churches and schools where many people (including non-Catholics) got a very good education. In terms of the lay faithful the Church grew from strength to strength, but there was a very slow growth in the number of the local clergy who could become co-workers with the Spiritans. This was attributed to two main obstacles: Firstly, the apartheid system which was not in favour of the White missionaries staying with Blacks in formerly ‘Whites only towns’ especially in the Orange Free State (as it was known then). Secondly, it was due to the German missionaries’ lack of knowledge and trust in those indigenous young men who came forward to offer themselves for the priestly ministry. An example of those who tried is the late Fr. George Qwabe OMI” (Mofokeng 2011:47-48).

Indeed, the Spiritan Missionaries brought the mercy of God to whole communities, by the means of apostolic love. Their commitment and faithfulness to the mission earned them much praise. The following paragraphs analyse the progress made.

All the interviews were conducted for five months (January 2014 – May 2014).

4.2 CHALLENGES TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The study found that in the early days of evangelisation in South Africa, particularly in the (Orange) Free State, the Catholic Church was not popular with the majority White group, namely the Afrikaners (cf. above 3.4.1). Thus the pioneers worked under difficult and trying circumstances. On the other hand the researcher found that the first reaction of the Basotho in the (Orange) Free State was that of openness and conversion.

However, there were two kinds of migrations which affected the work in the diocese. Due to the apartheid Group Areas Act, people were removed from the towns to, on the one hand, the "homeland" QwaQwa and, on the other hand, to a new city *Botshabelo*, which is not far from Bloemfontein. A second migration was when, at the advent of new dispensation, farm dwellers moved in large numbers from farms to towns. It should be clear that these big movements affected the number of Catholics in the different areas. As a result, many outstations were closed down. Fr. Schings also noted this experience:

“The fact that security of employment did not exist [...] people moved from one area to another. This nomadic style of life clearly [created] difficulties for any planned pastoral work. Frequently, I [went] to great lengths to persuade Africans to come to Catholic classes only to discover that they [had] suddenly disappeared. Moreover, I might just have at long last persuaded a lukewarm Catholic to fulfil his religious duties regularly, only to be informed that he [went] to look for a better job elsewhere and so [was] lost to my pastoral care” (Kuckertz 1984:18).

4.3 THE COMMENDABLE WORK OF THE MISSIONARIES

The Spiritans are still recognised by many people, especially the elderly, as the ones who planted the **first seed of evangelisation** amongst the inhabitants of the Diocese of Bethlehem. By and large, according to the analyses of Van der Walt: “the main aim of the missionaries in their contact with the blacks was to Christianise them to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ among the heathen” (1992:129).

One person from among the Catholic Christians whom I contacted was asked whether the Catholic Church is still missionary in outlook. She replied that the real and genuine missionaries were from overseas. They were **dedicated** in their ministry. For example, priests wore their black cassocks and cross around their neck and one St. Paul sister, the sister to the former bishop of Bethlehem, Peter Kelleter, used to ride a bicycle to town and to the post office. I got the impression that the people's ideas and talks about missionary activity in the Diocese of Bethlehem centers on the Westerners, even though the diocese

had Oblates of Mary Immaculate from Lesotho and Missionaries of St. Paul (MSP) from Nigeria as missionaries in the diocese. Perhaps, the perception is created by the reality of the Spiritan missionaries' approach in their apostolate. For example, they were able to make contact with the people easily. They walked in the location greeting everyone they met. As discussed in paragraph 3.5.4 above, it was often expressed that people admired the home visits by the priests. These **home visits** had a great impact on them. They were seen to have not only visited Catholics but also non-Catholics who were in their territory.

There can be no doubt that these missionaries worked diligently and sacrificially. However, it is disturbing to the researcher that there seems to be people who still long back to the days of the European missionaries. They seem to remember that during the time of European missionaries they used to get free education, medication and financial assistance. However, the researcher is quite aware of the fact that the Spiritans received funds from overseas for the missionary work among Blacks. The **worrisome concern** is why the contemporary priests and religious in the diocese are not understood by these people as missionaries in their own backyard?

The Spiritans concentrated their effort on providing **educational facilities** especially for the black youth in the Diocese of Bethlehem (cf. above 3.5.2). The missionaries had through the years built up a local church by means of schools. The study finds that most of the faithful still believe that the few Catholic Schools which existed then were bright lights in the future of the Church and the country at large. Many of the political and government leaders studied in the Catholic Schools and were mostly educated by the nuns.

The establishment of **Catholic schools** by missionaries was an important mission method. It would seem that with time the missionaries educated many people, baptised Catholics and non-baptised Catholics. They contributed immensely in education because they had capital to cover the cost. For example, they paid the salaries of teachers with the money they received from overseas, especially from Germany, although at times there were scant resources both of personnel and finances. It can be concluded from the interviews that the Catholic schools undoubtedly promoted and supported quality education for the common

good of all. The mission of the Catholic schools included formation in spirituality and training in the leadership of future leaders.

Many Catholics are not happy with the fact that Catholic schools are now run by the government (public schools on private property). Their aim is to see more Catholic Schools being set up, even in the new dispensation, in order to preserve the Catholic ethos. The researcher is keenly aware of the financial burden involved in this venture. It would seem that Bishop Jan de Groef concurs with the researcher as he mentioned in his May month circular. He wrote: "Education plays an important role in the life of our nation. Though, due to financial and personnel constraints, we had to hand over (to government) quite a few schools over the past years" (Circular 5/14).

Interestingly, during the time of the missionaries, the young Catholic Church in the (Orange) Free State soon realised that education is also important in evangelisation (cf. 3.5.2). However, this seems not to be the case any longer, since, in short, in the Bethlehem Parish and Qwaqwa Deanery where the study is based, Catholic Schools do not exist at all.

The **Sisters of St. Paul** were role models to many in their active pastoral work. Many young ladies found their way to sisterhood (missionaries) through the work of these sisters (cf. paragraph 3.6.2). A number of elderly Catholics in Bethlehem told the researcher that they still remember Sr. Scholastica visiting the sick in the location from morning to evening. She helped the Children of Mary in the parish and taught needlework in the local Catholic School *Tshepiso* (Promise). Later, after the government took over the school, the name changed to *Motshepuwa* (Trusted). She had a heart for people. The problem is that there were not many qualified African Sisters to do the financial administration, clerical work and theological education. Yet they soon had to begin with the work of administration of their congregation.

4.4 THE PROBLEM OF THE LACK OF VOCATIONS WITHIN THE DIOCESE

The study notes that the **shortage of priests** exacerbated the difficulty of evangelising the Blacks in the Free State, in particular in the Diocese of Bethlehem (cf. above 3.9.2). For example, there were places that remained more than three months without the visit of a priest. In the interview, Bishop Bucher related that at one time he travelled to QwaQwa to celebrate Mass because there was no resident parish priest in the vast area.

Even though Bishop Bucher went to QwaQwa from time to time there was not enough time to attend to the needs of the faithful in QwaQwa. Coupled with his responsibility as a bishop he did not have sufficient time to succeed in all aspects of the Church. These remained big concerns for Bishop Hubert Bucher and still is for the incumbent bishop.

It is sad to acknowledge that in the **pursuance of vocations**, it seems that very few born in the diocese (both male and female) responded to the will of God. And these few were only African youth. Even though Bishop Bucher made great attempts to get vocations from other races as well, he was unsuccessful. For example, he wrote a letter to the then administrator of the Cathedral parish, "I am particularly concerned about the need to build up a good liaison to our young boys. One good way to do this would be to make much more of the altar servers. They should have regular, vocation-oriented meetings" (Bethlehem Diocese, archives pre – 1982, Part 2). Unfortunately, fruits of this endeavour have not been seen as yet.

The research found that pastoral care constantly suffered from the lack of priests, until the Missionaries of Africa took over in QwaQwa. By and large, the problem of learning the **Sotho Language** remained a big challenge (cf. paragraph 3.5.1). However, the missionaries made every effort to study the language and to a certain extent the customs of the Basotho.

Maybe not surprisingly, in the period of the missionaries the number of baptised converts seemed to be increasing. However, the contrary is manifested in the recent times, now that the African priests, who are mostly diocesans, have the privilege of the language!

4.5 THE ECUMENICAL RELATIONS WITH OTHER RELIGIOUS MOVEMENTS

Due to the hostility of the Afrikaners towards Catholics in general, it evidently was quite difficult for the Diocese of Bethlehem to promote the **process of ecumenism** (cf. above 3.10). This would have created the platform of communication and simultaneously wipe away the rivalries which existed between Catholics and Protestants.

The existence of the many sects and newer Christian communities, like Pentecostals, Assemblies of God, *Bapholoswa* (the "saved/born again" ones), different Evangelicals and Independent churches, mushrooming all over the place and enticing (Catholic) people with especially their healing ministries was a huge challenge to the missionaries of old (cf. paragraph 3.4.3), as it is also for today's church. Truly, sects are a massive challenge to the local church, particularly in QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish.

The healing ministry in some of those sects includes hysterical actions and testimonies. Even though the healing ministry is present in the Catholic Church it exists in a quite different manner than which the sects are doing it. Just like in the practice of sangomahood (as we will deal with later), in some of these sects – particularly in the Independent churches – “the ancestors are intimately involved in the practice of healing” (Knox 2008:121). So, therefore, Catholics and other people flock to them for healing.

Therefore, some Christian Catholics are schizophrenic. That is, on Sundays they are Catholics, but from Monday to Saturday they believe in something else, for instance, magic, casting spells, sorcery, etc. They even seek help in the secret sect named, *kereke ya sephiri* ('secret church'). Here, as explained by one interviewee, people are being prayed over for healing and are given codes that are kept as their secrets but they are not bound to leave their main church.

As a result of the above, what the researcher found common in most of the families is that in a once well-known staunch Catholic family, there is now Calvinist, Zionists, Anglicans,

African Traditionalists and the Saved (*Bapholoswa/the born again*) all together in one family. This weakens the Catholic faith in that family. And those who still remain in the Catholic Church tend to backslide when they are in crisis.

4.6 THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND TRADITIONAL SOTHO CULTURE

The study agrees with Peter Knox's findings that despite the fact that no one can dispute the fact that "the missionaries studied and wanted to comprehend the people they were sent to evangelise [...] Nevertheless, they were men and women of their time and as such, failed to appreciate the values and meanings of the foreign cultures they encountered" (2008:129).

It would appear that there was a general **lack of understanding** by some missionaries. They arrived in Bethlehem Diocese, and were put to work with Basotho people, but often there seems to have been (at least in some of them) no deeper understanding of the political climate of South Africa, but also (surprisingly) no eagerness to learn the cultural aspect of the Basotho. Many lacked the down-to-earth understanding of the way Basotho live. This assertion is supported by what Peter Knox wrote:

"When Christian missionary work began in the 18th Century, it actively suppressed the [cult of the ancestors] in favour of Western Christian religious ideas. This repressive action, though understandable in itself and well-intended, ultimately worked to the detriment of African Christian life" (2008:90).

For example, A. Mokone states in an interview that at baptism people were given names of Europeans and the forefathers' names were ignored. According to Mgr. Gregory van Dyk, a stipend was given to a missionary to name a Mosotho child with a European name, a saint name or a Christian name, for example, William, Sylvia, etc. This was done to defend the foreign Christian names as signs of Christian authenticity. By and large, it would appear that some of the missionaries were not really interested in the salvation beliefs of the Africans, in particular among the Basotho.

In conversation with some of the elderly in Bethlehem and particularly in QwaQwa, it came up that the long term challenge for the local Church in Bethlehem, which hasn't been addressed adequately by the diocese, is the **ritual of circumcision** which is traditionally practiced by the Basotho and is wide spread in QwaQwa. A father, also Catholic, explained in our conversation that, traditionally, a boy is initiated into the tribe through circumcision, and thereby achieving manhood. It is something highly respected by the Basotho. At the initiation school, boys are taught everything pertaining to the tribe; their lineage, praise words, family matters, and so forth. Peter Knox writes: "Male circumcision is traditionally done with a cohort of young men going into isolation in the veld or the mountains and attending an initiation school, the highlight of which is the circumcision ceremony" (2008:67).

The difficulty amongst many Catholics is when the Catholic Church says that those who 'went to the mountain' are excommunicated from the Church and need to undergo catechetical lessons in order to be brought back to the Sacramental life of the Church.

Another challenge is that regarding the calling to **Sangomahood**. In numerous interviews the issue of *moya wa badimo* (the spirit of the ancestors) which called people to be sangomas came up. To many it remains a problem, because it is punished by the Church as unacceptable. Honestly, the issue of Sangomahood poses a serious challenge to priests involved in the pastoral service, more particularly in QwaQwa. Although this issue may seem to be outside the scope of this project, it would be an injustice if I were to ignore it, because it was spontaneously mentioned in a number of interviews.

As the study is confined to the Basotho in the Eastern Free State the researcher will also only deal with this issue in this context. Since the researcher does not know how other indigenous African tribes go through the process of one being inducted into Sangomahood, he will therefore stick to the Sotho culture with which he is familiar.

Having skimmed through the contributions of several authors on the topic of Sangomahood and healing, the researcher will limit himself to the following three references: Peter Knox, *Aids, Ancestors and Salvation: Local Beliefs in Christian Ministry to the sick*; Klaus Nürnberger, *The Living Dead and the Living God: Christ and the Ancestors in a Changing Africa*; and Heinz Kuckertz (ed.), *Ancestor Religion in South Africa: Proceedings of a Seminar on Ancestor Belief*.

The church in Bethlehem is faced with the challenge of explaining clearly the dichotomy between the **Sangomahood** (cf. 3.12) and Christianity. Sangomas are on the increase among Catholics. Talking to some of them the researcher discovered that the calling is twofold: on the one hand those families which have produced sangomas for generations; and then those families which have not until one member had a cataclysmic experience, and announced that he or she has been called to sangomahood. Many times these people were active members of the Church, and some in leadership positions, but they later abandoned the faith and follow the new calling although they still regard themselves as Catholics.

Many Catholics and other Christians still follow their African traditional rituals. Archbishop Buti Tlhagale in his foreword to the book written by Klaus Nürnberger states that: "The majority of African Christians in Sub-Saharan Africa profess to be Christians, and yet cling tenaciously to their traditional beliefs" (2007:vii). Nürnberger goes further to say that in the belief in the ancestors, "the most dangerous are the spirits of the deceased who have not received a proper funeral, or who have not been 'brought home' in a respectful manner after the time of mourning" (2007:28).

In my conversation with a certain interviewee, she related that at the funeral of her mother, who was a member of St. Anne sodality, certain burial rites were not performed. As a result, after the burial they experienced lots of misfortunes in the family, for instance sicknesses, and being penniless. As a family they consulted a sangoma in the village who told them that they needed to slaughter a goat to appease the ancestors or the spirit of the dead. They obliged and now things are much better in the family. But they still go to Church and

continue to use the sacramentals blessed by the priest. She remembered that in the past the missionaries prevented people from observing their customs. People accepted this because they respected the missionaries and they could not defy them. As mentioned earlier, in the course of time people realised that they were suffering and were not making any progress. When they consulted the diviners (*sangoma*) they were reminded about their customs, and they revived the practices they had abandoned. When they came back to the Church, they had to make confessions before they could participate in normal church activity.

The above incident is confirmed by Fr. Peter Knox:

“Many South Africans resort to traditional healers as their primary healthcare professionals. Rather than attend hospitals or clinics in which Western-style biomedicine is practised, they first consult traditional healers who address the diagnosis and treatment in ways that are considered to be culturally appropriate” (2008:70).

The above statements leave one with the impression that for a good number of Christians and Catholics the idea of Christianity does not prevent them from playing their role in their culture. It seems to me that Peter Knox captured the notion of ancestors accurately. He writes:

“The cult of the ancestors, which inseparably includes belief in a supreme God, is deeply rooted in southern African tradition and was solidly established long before any colonials or missionaries arrived. The cult is a much richer spiritual resource than was appreciated at first” (2008:90).

Peter Knox relates a number of recent studies that indicate the resurgence of African beliefs among modern Christians, in particular with reference to the ancestors and African religion.

“C.W. Manona became convinced that the cult is resurgent after many years in which Christians customarily dissociated themselves from the supposed power of the ancestors. Without providing hard numerical evidence for his claim, he has nevertheless formed the general impression that Christians were reclaiming what previous generations had

abandoned. Manona says this is not so much because of conservatism but rather out of a conviction that what earlier generations of Christians had cast off was actually of value. M.C. Kitshoff reported the continued currency of the cult even among modern black youth [...] Kitshoff was clear that his survey showed how the cult of the ancestors cannot be dismissed as irrelevant to modern youth [...] Allan Anderson writes: 'The ancestor cult is the central feature of African religion, the heart of the African spirit world. It is not an outmoded belief which is dying out in South Africa's urban areas. The veneration of the ancestors is still widely practised in the black townships of South Africa' [...] J.D. Kriel discovered that 95 per cent of women and 67 per cent of nurses believed that the *badimo* (ancestors) can influence the lives of people individually and the world as a whole [... W.A. Dreyer and F.E. Mjwabe have confirmed that the cult is still a real part of black culture. While westernised black people do not hold on to the traditions as strongly, the cult is widely practised both in the cities and in Christian communities" (2008:91-93).

Perhaps at this stage we need to define *badimo* (ancestors) in general terms. According to the reflections of M. Fortes:

"An ancestor can usefully be defined as a named, dead forebear who has living descendants of a designated genealogical class representing his continued structural relevance. In ancestor worship such an ancestor receives ritual attention and service directed specifically to him by the proper class of his descendants. Being identified by name means that he is invested with attributes distinctive of a kind of person" (in Knox 2008:95).

The reader should not be misled by the definition of M. Fortes which could sound patriarchal. Quoted in the book of Peter Knox, Mönnig observes that:

"This definition gives the impression that ancestors are always male but in South Africa, at least, this is not the case. Nevertheless, because of way which patrilocal tradition works, fathers and grandfathers are usually by default accorded a higher status. In most South African society, women leave their own homes when they marry and go to live

with the husband's family. This means then, in the home in which they raise their children, they do not have roots going back several generations. While the husband's forebears are remembered more than three or four generations back, the wife's forebears may be known only through the rare visits of one of her parents" (2008:95).

One other difference of opinion is highlighted by the use of the contrasting concepts of "worshipping the ancestors" and "venerating the ancestors". A. Shorter (as also other scholars) suggest that:

"The expression "ancestor worship" is controversial because, for Christians, the term 'worship' is reserved for God in an absolutely exclusive way. The weaker terms 'venerate' and 'veneration' are preferable here, although they do not capture all nuances of the vernacular terminology which can include notions of sacrifice, remembrance and offering of libations" (2008:96).

According to Archbishop Buti Tlhagale, the "ancestors, because of their authority and power, are said to intervene in the affairs of their descendants and to provide meaning, values and protection; in short they respond to the spiritual needs of their descendants. Ancestors appear to occupy the centre in *lieu of Christ*" (In Nürnberger 2007:vii). Nürnberger therefore state about the ancestors that they "are ascribed greater power than they had when still alive. As bearers of authority ancestors depend on being remembered, honoured and obeyed by their offspring. They are not subject to time and space. They are everywhere all the time [...] But they are certainly not devils" (2007:14).

Taking into consideration the aforementioned citations, it would appear that the mistake the missionary of old made was to pretend that African Tradition Religion, especially the belief in the ancestors, was dead or was going extinct. The fact is that the Diocese of Bethlehem is really faced with cases of noticeable people in the Church feeling called by the ancestors and following their call. Recently, an ordained priest left the priesthood and became a fully-fledged sangoma. This sent shock waves through all the Catholics and the hierarchy of the church. In our conversation he stated that he could not resist the power of

the ancestors calling him to be a sangoma through his sickness and his many dreams about his forefathers. For instance, he reported that he was constantly sick or unwell and frequently had unexplainable split headaches. Since he left priesthood for sangomahood he helps many sick people and he feels healthier once again.

This is why this study calls for a fresh research on ancestors and sangomahood. Hence, the researcher strongly believes that after a proper study a formal and an informed document on this should be produced by the Pastoral Council of Sotho Region (PCSR) and the Diocese of Bethlehem in particular.

4.7 THE SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES

Interacting with SCCs (or Blocks as they are often referred to in QwaQwa and Bethlehem Parish) (cf. paragraph 3.6.2), it appears that the SCCs are not too active in most of the blocks. It is perhaps necessary to investigate how the SCCs came into being in the Diocese of Bethlehem, especially in the community of *Tswalo ya Morena (Tswalong)*.

Bishop Jan De Groef related that his own involvement with SCCs in Bethlehem Diocese dates back to the eighties when he was working in the Parish of *Bohlokong*, Bethlehem, and more specifically in the community of *Tswalo ya Morena*. He worked together at that time with Sr. Maria Louisa of the Daughters of the Charity of the Sacred Heart (FCSCJ). He was part of a team of Missionaries of Africa, responsible for the two communities of the *Bohlokong* township, *Mofumahadi wa Kgotso* and *Tswalo ya Morena*.

The team divided up the community into different areas and had planned to visit those areas over the year with the aim to meet with members of the Christian community in their own neighbourhood so as to make them aware of the need of those Small Christian Communities, and helping them to see why they need those to discover their particular purpose and place in the bigger Parish community. The team had a number of meetings in one or other home decided upon by the local community. In the various meetings they

touched on a number of issues concerning the life of an SCC, like how to conduct prayer/reflection meetings, the various tasks within an SCC, contact with the broader community, etc., using the Lumko material. The meetings were usually concluded with the celebration of the Eucharist. In this way a Small Christian Community was born. This SCC would henceforth go on living its own life.

To ensure that such an SCC did not become an island the team stressed the importance of linking up with the Parish community through having delegates in the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and performing certain tasks as SCC for the whole community, for instance the cleaning of the church, each SCC having its week to be responsible for the cleaning.

Though SCCs were meant to become more self-reliant having their own leaders, without a continued support and encouragement from the Parish Pastoral Council, and especially from the Priest(s), they would not be able to survive. This is what happened in the years after the launching of those SCCs. Some never really came to life. Others flourished for some time but then withered away. More recently another effort was made through the blocks which can be considered as the heirs of the original SCCs having their own elected leaders, regular neighbourhood meetings and activities.

Unfortunately, the research discovered that some of the faithful seem to be content with their passiveness in their Blocks/SCCs. Although the Small Christian Communities (SCCs) were established in many parishes, they, while successful in one way and effective in another in general failed to fulfil their proper purpose. Some parish priests and the parish pastoral councils seem not to give this structure the attention they need, as is the case with the other sodalities in the parish life. Especially the men are often not physically present at the gathering of the SCCs, but feel themselves as represented by their wives or children. In some cases these meetings neglect to give attention to an orphan in the neighbourhood, or an abused person. The old and other needy people are at times practically left to themselves.

4.8 THE PLANNED GIVING

Many efforts were made by the former bishop of the Bethlehem Diocese to get the diocese to be a self-reliant church. But it would seem that there has been a general lack of support for those efforts. For example, it is worthwhile to mention that the diocese introduced small envelopes to assist the faithful to make their tithing. That is, they were expected to donate one tenth of their income to the church for the support of the priest. Unfortunately this old system did not seem to work. When it was realised that the tithing in the diocese did not bring the necessary funds to run the particular church, the DPC meetings decided on many other approaches.

According to former Bishop H. Bucher the Local Church, in this case the Diocese of Bethlehem, was in transition from being a “missionary church” – where often the past missionaries had failed to educate their converts to make an honest contribution towards the financial upkeep of the faith community – to a self-ministering, self-supporting and self-propagating “Local Church”. The Diocese of Bethlehem launched an awareness programme during the Jubilee Year 2000 which stressed these three “selves”. He went further to say that baptised Catholics should make a pledge and contribute to the planned giving. After long consultations in the diocese it became clear that there are baptised Catholics who refuse to make their contribution to the planned giving, although they had the means to do so (Letter to Gunther Simmermacher, 30/10/2002, the author is in possession of the copy of this letter).

Again, during the tenure of Bishop Bucher the diocese was very much aware that both the Parishes but also the administration of the Diocese could no longer depend on outside financial assistance for its daily running costs. The bishop expressed this very clearly and strongly in his letter to all Catholics ‘Bethlehem 2000: Stand up and be counted!’ published on 15th August 1998. The third chapter had as title ‘Our Local Church must become self-supporting’. Among the recommendations from the Diocesan Pastoral Council held on 02nd May 1998 was the statement that a person’s contribution to the Planned Giving should reflect their economic situation (not just the same amount for rich and poor alike) and that

a certain percentage of the parish income must be sent to the diocese's central fund. Unfortunately until very recent this remained a dead letter.

Since Bishop Jan De Groef's Episcopal ordination in 2009 it has been a continual concern for him searching for ways to turn around this sad state of affairs. Just one year after his ordination he was asked to become Episcopal Administrator of the neighbouring Diocese of Kroonstad. It brought him some more work but also gave him a chance to see the attempt they made to become more self-supporting. They had launched two important initiatives: a yearly diocesan fundraising to help finance the expenses for the formation of seminarians, and a new system of planned giving. The bishop asked himself: Why could the same not be done in the Bethlehem Diocese?

The diocese started with a yearly diocesan fundraising to help to finance diocesan expenses for administration. This was apart from the continued effort to make the parishes self-supporting. They tried to tailor the amounts asked from each parish according to their numeric and economic strength. Sometimes the diocese got big surprises when small communities managed to give much more than asked. At times there have also been some negative experiences of parishes which remained far beneath the proposed target.

The diocese left it to the parish to decide in which way they would collect the amount allotted to them. Some parishes organised various fundraising activities. Others worked according to yearly budgets. The contributions from each parish were brought forward during a yearly specially organized event in a spirit of joyful giving. Parishes were encouraged to add spontaneously to the cheque they brought forward – a way of contributing which is called '*motjekelo*'. Each year the diocese increases the target amount with a 10%.

The priest from Kroonstad Diocese, who was responsible for the initiative of diocesan fundraising, and the way of planned giving, was invited to the 2009 Diocesan Pastoral

Council (DPC) gathering at John Paul II Formation Center; to explain to all Priests and some lay representatives how the system was devised in his home diocese. Bishop Jan suggested that a new 'planned giving' effort be tried out in two different parishes: one who was already self-supporting, and another one who was struggling. Four parishes volunteered. He chose two among them: Harrismith (already self-supportive on parish level) and Vrede (still receiving subsidy from the diocese). In order to launch this initiative he invited the lay person, who had by now taken over from the Priest from Kroonstad Diocese, to explain, supported by his own experience in his own Diocese, to the Priests and members of Finance Committees and Pastoral Councils of the two Parishes how it was introduced over there.

He made it very clear to them that the first phase should be a long and thorough awareness building programme from house to house. Only when there is a proper understanding, having engaged the members of the various communities in a dialogue responding to their various questions and objections, could the step of launching the new planned giving be commenced. A lot of the Parish community leaders would have to be involved in this exercise.

What does the new planned giving consist of? How does it work? The bishop explained that one key element is confidentiality. The name of the giver is not to be exposed. He is registered under a certain number which is put on the envelope he/she receives. The giver pledges an amount. An envelope is distributed to the person each month and collected on a particular Sunday. The total amount given is to be announced. This goes of course together with a regular report before the whole congregation about income and expenditure of the Parish. What counts is accountability and transparency in the finances of the Parish.

So far the two Parishes in some of their communities managed to complete the first phase of raising awareness. In Vrede they already introduced the new system in the main community. In Harrismith they have planned to start in the town community next year January (2015). The result so far is still minimal as they are still very much in the beginning of this effort, but the hope is that gradually things will change and they shall be able to

harvest the fruits of this big effort. After that the diocese envisages to introduce this system gradually – always respecting the free choice and engagement of our members – throughout the whole Diocese.

The aim of the above effort is to “make the local Church in the Diocese of Bethlehem healthy and strong by becoming ‘self-ministering, self-supporting and self-propagating’” (Diocese of Bethlehem, 1998, p8).

The question at present is whether QwaQwa Deanery as a rural area is ready for this proposal, or is it only going to work in Bethlehem Parish which is urban?

4.9 THE MASS INTENTIONS

The research found that a thorough deep rooted re-evangelisation process has to incorporate an understanding of the longstanding customs of the Church. After talking to a number of priests in the diocese about the offering of the Mass intentions in their parishes the response was not encouraging. Fr. S. Thusi of Phuthaditjhaba parish, QwaQwa Deanery, retorted by saying that he thought he was the only one not receiving Mass offerings from the local communities.

For the sake of the reader it is necessary to explain the tradition of Mass stipends. In Law (according to the Church), those who make an offering of Mass for their “intentions, contribute to the good of the Church, and by that offering they share in the Church’s concern for the support of its ministers and its activities” (Canons 946). As mentioned above in paragraph 3.4.2 the early missionaries received regular support from Germany, their home country, in the form of foreign Mass stipends. It appears not to be the case in the diocese at present moment.

At the request of priests in the Diocese of Bethlehem, Bishop emeritus Hubert Bucher wrote a letter in an effort to explain the issue, and to remind the faithful about the importance of mass stipends.

“By and large, Catholics in our diocese do not often ask priests to celebrate Holy Eucharist in their special intentions [...] Catholics in other parts of the world so often ask their priests to say Holy Mass for a special intention that these often cannot cope. Their bishops, therefore, send the money received as Stipends for Masses which cannot be celebrated locally to diocese in the Young Churches, like ours, where as yet not many Mass Stipends are offered by the people. This should be an indication for us how much Catholics in other countries appreciate the tremendous value of the Eucharist. It is my hope that in times to come also we Catholics in this diocese offer Holy Mass more often for a specific intention. This will increase our trust in the power of the Holy Sacrament of the Altar, decrease our fear of evil powers and witchcraft, and at the same time help to ensure the upkeep of our priests who serve God and His people at the altar” (Bishop’s letter, Holy Thursday, 1993, the author is in possession of the copy of the letter).

From the look of things, the aforementioned letter does not seem to have caught fire with many of the faithful in the diocese. This begs the question if they were made aware of it? Whether they got copies of it to serve as a constant reminder? Did the priests make enough ‘spade work’ in the hearts and minds of the faithful?

4.10 THE OUTREACH PROGRAMMES

As mentioned in paragraph 3.5.5 the missionaries helped struggling families, so in both Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery there are Community Gardens and Soup Kitchen under the auspices of Catholic Community Service (CCS), *Hlokomela wa Heno* (Take care of your neighbour) St. Kizito Childrens’ Programme. The projects’ objective is to assist in feeding the poor families, especially children in the communities. For instance, the produce from the garden is sold and the proceeds given to the poor families. The Soup Kitchen provides meals at school and after school to poor children and destitute families. Home-based Care Givers offer support and basic care to people who are affected and/or living with HIV/AIDS.

In some cases people appear not to be genuine. Even though the procedure is well outlined the reality is that people still take chances. The mission of the Church is to take the Good News to all. Now, how does the Church evaluate the seriousness of the circumstances of each family?

4.11 FAMILY MINISTRY

As already indicated above in section 3.7.3, the main pastoral concern for Bishop Jan is family ministry. He would love to see the Catholic families being centres of the missionary apostolate/evangelisation. The study detected that the aforesaid sentiment resonates well with the parishioners of Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery. They take into cognisance that “the home is the first school of the Christian life and human growth” (Diocese of Bethlehem, 2001, p1).

A certain Catechist (*Mojadi*) remarked that the family ministry in QwaQwa Deanery still has a long way to go. He cited the fact that parents fail to prepare their family for Holy Communion and Confirmation. They seem to leave that responsibility on the shoulders of *Bajadi*. Whenever parents teach their children Catechism, they automatically take part in the mission of the Church.

4.12 DIOCESAN FUNERAL POLICY

Apparently, another contributing factor to the decline of the number of Catholics in the diocese of Bethlehem, particularly in Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery, is the enforcement of the Diocesan Funeral Policy. A certain family in Phuthaditjhaba claims that they left the Roman Catholic Church because the priest refused to say Mass at the funeral of their daughter because she missed Sunday Masses for a year. Actually, she was occupied with some other commitments when she fell ill and died as a result. The researcher investigated the issue and found that, even though some of the family members are regular at Sunday Mass, their daughter was really not committed to the Church. However, a certain staunch Catholic lady recalls how the missionaries buried Catholics and non-Catholics. They

regarded this as the form of evangelisation. But she lamented the fact that the old practise was stopped.

Perhaps, due to ignorance of the policy, the faithful are to some extent hurt in the process of the implementation of the funeral policy. Let us be a little more explicit on this important point: As stated in the Code of Canon Law (CIC 1983, 1176#1), Christ's faithful who have died are to be given a Church funeral according to the norms of the Church. Church funeral rites are to be denied to the following, unless they gave some signs of repentance before death: 1. Notorious apostates, heretics and schismatics; 2. Those who for anti-Christian motives chose that their bodies be cremated; and other manifest sinners to whom a Church funeral could not be granted without public scandal to the faithful (CIC 1983, 118 #1). Membership of the deceased in the Catholic Church must be proven through the presentation of a valid Church document (Baptismal certificate, Church-endorsed marriage certificate). Failure to present such proof will result in the deceased not being granted a Church funeral.

There is to be a difference in the mode of Church funeral provided for a deceased, dependent on the latter's intensity of integration into the life of his/her local Church community during his/her lifetime. Category 1 is for active, practising Catholics, they are granted a funeral Mass (with coffin in Church, if so desired). Category 2 is for practising Catholics who refused to contribute to planned giving. They are granted a funeral service conducted in Church by funeral leaders. The coffin will be accompanied to the cemetery. Category 3 is for non-practising Catholics who contributed to planned giving. They are granted a funeral service conducted by funeral leaders at the deceased's home and the coffin will be accompanied to the cemetery. Category 4 is for non-practising Catholics who did not contribute to plan giving. They are also granted a funeral service conducted by funeral leaders at the deceased's home and the coffin will be accompanied to the cemetery (cf. Norms concerning Church funerals in the Diocese of Bethlehem, 1/11/2000).

The aforesaid norms aimed to encourage baptised Catholics to comply with the Church rules about practising their faith, and towards a self-supporting local Church.

4.13 LAITY INVOLVEMENT

One other area of genuine evangelisation is the involvement of the laity in the running of the parish. In the interviews, it would seem that in both Bethlehem Parish and Qwaqwa Deanery the involvement of the laity is really emphasised. Those interviewed appeared to be happy in carrying out their responsibilities in their communities. For instance, they are funeral leaders, Extraordinary Eucharistic Ministers, Catechists (*Bajadi*), Proclaimers, members of the LPC, LFC, PPC and PFC.

With the latter, the challenge comes up during the elections. Apparently, some people would like to ignore the Diocesan Statutes on those structures and want to remain in the committees even though their time has expired. They will then start inner controversies to derail the process of electing new members.

Again, the study found that the adult sodalities and the Youth movement, as discussed above in paragraphs 3.6 are still given an emphasis. For example, in QwaQwa Deanery, which has now two parishes, viz. Phuthaditjhaba Parish and Makeneng Parish, adult sodalities and youth associations are establishing new parish structures in order to coordinate their apostolate/evangelisation better.

4.14 JUSTICE AND PEACE

As far as the establishment of Justice and Peace Commission in the two settings considered in this project, the commission is not thriving in terms of members. Mr. T. Moloji was of the opinion that the people associate the commission dealing with justice and peace issues as politics.

It is imperative to remind ourselves that the “promotion of justice is a constitutive dimension of evangelisation” (SACBC 1997, p17). Pope Paul VI exhorted all the people of God to be committed in matters of Justice and Peace: “Evangelisation will not be complete unless it constantly relates the gospel to men’s actual lives, personal and social [...]. It must

deal with community life in society, with the life of all nations, with peace, justice and progress” (EN 29).

4.15 STATISTICS

As shown in section 3.11 above the number of Catholics in Bethlehem Parish (urban) and QwaQwa Deanery (rural) is going down, and Bishop Bucher observed that the baptised Catholics are found wanting in carrying out their duty of handing on to the young the faith in a missionary spirit. This could be one aspect which contributes to the dwindling number of Catholics in the settings under consideration in the study. Handing on the faith is one of the modes of evangelisation.

Also the problem of the accurate figures is of great concern to the research. Bishop emeritus Bucher acknowledged that it was a battle to get statistics from the parishes to the diocesan office. Every year there were astonishing surprises.

4.16 MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Already in paragraph 3.5.6 we saw that the missionaries used newspapers to evangelise the wider world. In the contemporary world the society is even more conscious of the modern technology. It is worrisome to observe that even though we have the modern means of communication at our disposal, both QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish do not use these in the evangelising of the people. Fr. M. Mona acknowledges that in Bethlehem Parish they only use them for pastoral work and not necessarily for proclamation of the Gospel.

4.17 LAPSED CATHOLICS

The researcher had conversations with Catholics who left the Church and wanted to remain anonymous. The following paragraphs portray what transpired from the interviews.

Perhaps, it is prudent to introduce this section with a paragraph from the recent Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis:

“We must recognise that if part of our baptised people lack a sense of belonging to the Church, this is also due to certain structures and the occasionally unwelcome atmosphere of some of our parishes and communities, or to a bureaucratic way of dealing with problems, be they simple or complex, in the lives of our people. In many places an administrative approach prevails over a pastoral approach, as does a concentration on administering the sacraments apart from other forms of evangelisation” (2013. no. 63).

A certain pastor, who was once a Catholic, stated that he also wanted to preach and choose his own readings in Church but he was not permitted since there is a liturgical calendar to adhere to, and on a Sunday when a priest was available, he was not allowed to share the pulpit with him. That, according to him, stifled the power of the Holy Spirit within him.

Quite a number of people as mentioned above under the sub-heading of sangomahood, left the Church because of *Moya wa badimo* (ancestral spirit). The summary of Peter Knox on this issue is relevant: “The fact that many people feel compelled, despite ecclesiastical censure, to participate in the cult indicates how inextricably it is tied with what it means to be ‘African’” (2008:94).

4.18 OTHER CHALLENGES

Analysing the particular situation in QwaQwa, the researcher is aware of the fact, as mentioned in the previous chapter, that there are **institutions** set up by the government that seem not to be served by the church. A couple of examples will assist in demonstrating the aforesaid situation. For instance, *Manthathisi* in Tsheseng is a Home for children from disadvantaged background. The researcher went there and found baptised Catholics in this place who are never visited by the Church. The other Home visited was *Thekolohelong* Welfare Centre, in Phuthaditjhaba. This is a Home for elderly people who have no place to stay and need to be cared for. The priest goes to this place only on a call and that is where the local Church fails in proper evangelisation. *Leratong* in Phuthaditjhaba is another

institution where the needs of street kids and abandoned children are being taken care of by the government. There are also Catholics who need pastoral care. In *Thiboloha* in Bluegumbosch there is a school for the blind and the dumb (speech impaired). Also here the researcher found Catholics who are not pastorally cared for.

In all of these institutions there is also the need for the Catholics there to be healed spiritually, which is even more important than a physical healing.

Both in Bethlehem and QwaQwa there are **Correctional services**. The one in QwaQwa is referred to as a Juvenile Rehabilitation Centre or Juvenile Security Centre. However, it remains to be seen how the Catholic prison ministry in QwaQwa will respond to the challenges of the new institution. Bethlehem parish has a group of the laity that visits the prison on regular basis. However, through conversation with the laity involved in this ministry, a frequent visit of an ordained minister has more impact on the inmates.

As quoted in paragraph 3.5.6 printed media also played a crucial role in the early evangelisation of the people. Having said that a number of staunch Catholics lamented the fact that the diocese has no **printing press** which would help in printing a Diocesan Newspaper and other liturgical books in South African Orthography. The study points out that the Diocese of Bethlehem did not produce and distribute sufficient publications to other Catholics or interested people to read and reflect and engage with the articles in the publication. A printing press is also another mode of evangelisation.

4.19 CONCLUSION

In general, the study established that the Spiritan missionaries had a fruitful missionary work in Bethlehem Diocese, South Africa. They really achieved something of the highest importance in the salvation of souls (CIC 1983, 1752). They used all of their resources to evangelise the Basotho in Bethlehem Diocese. They built chapels, schools, churches for them without reservation.

The researcher concurs with the Archbishop of Johannesburg, Buti Tlhagale in Peter Knox's book that among Christians "there is also a renewed interest in the cult of the ancestors as a rich source of African spirituality" (2008:11). The study showed that the African traditional practises are still thriving in Christian homes. As Klaus Nürnberger puts it "The problem of ancestor veneration within the church is substantial but largely hidden" (2007:17). The researcher came to the same conclusion.

Other factors elaborated on above clearly show that a great deal still has to be done to achieve comprehensively the Evangelisation of Peoples as stipulated in the Vatican II documents and in the subsequent papal documents.

The next chapter will suggest a few practical recommendations for the local church in Bethlehem, particularly, for the Bethlehem Parish and QwaQwa Deanery, in order to become a really missional Church.

CHAPTER FIVE

RECOMMENDATIONS: A POSSIBLE PROGRAMME OF REVITALISATION

As the command of Jesus “Go, therefore, make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28:19) remains relevant for the Church in the 21st century, therefore the Diocese of Bethlehem should become a healthy missional body heeding this call. It has to open up to the call to Universal Church mission, meaning, being a “missionary Church in nature” (AG 2). This should be done by fostering the missionary spirit in the diocese. It is perhaps good to remind the readers that the primary concern of this study is based on the above quotation and, furthermore, that the researcher is concerned about the dwindling number of Catholics in the Diocese of Bethlehem; particularly in the QwaQwa Deanery and the Bethlehem Parish. The researcher believes that this should concern all the Bethlehemites.

Pope Francis in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, encourages the Church structures to be used as tools for evangelisation and to carry out the message of Christ.

“There are ecclesial structures which can hamper efforts at evangelisation, yet even good structures are only helpful when there is life constantly driving, sustaining and assessing them (no. 26). [...] The parish is not an outdated institution; precisely because it possesses great flexibility, it can assume quite different contours depending on the openness and missionary creativity of the pastor and the community. While certainly not the only institution which evangelises, if it proves capable of self-renewal and constant adaptivity, it continues to be ‘the Church living in the midst of the homes of her sons and daughters’” (no. 28).

The following structures existing in the local church at present are considered practical vehicles for evangelisation: Diocese, Deanery, Parish, Community, Sodalities, Associations, and maybe the most important of them all: the baptised Catholics.

A number of action steps, related to the whole spectrum of diocesan life, will be proposed in this chapter as summary recommendations for the Bethlehem Diocese. All the time the reader will be referred back to the relevant paragraphs of chapter 4 where these issues were dealt with in more depth.

5.1 ECUMENISM AND INTERRELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

(Refer also to 4.5)

As we make suggestions for implementations of the policies of ecumenism and interreligious dialogue, we need to understand the two terms:

Ecumenism

The Second Vatican Council declared a Decree on Ecumenism (*Unitas Redintegratio*) (UR) and gave guidelines and a method that help Catholics in responding to “the grace of this divine call” (UR 1). In the introduction to the decree the sacred Council taught that:

“Christ the Lord founded one Church and one Church only. However, many Christian communions present themselves to men (all) as the true inheritors of Jesus Christ; all indeed profess to be followers of the Lord but they differ in mind and go their different ways, as if Christ himself were divided. Certainly, such division openly contradicts the will of Christ, scandalises the world, and damages that most holy cause, the preaching of the Gospel to every creature (evangelisation). The Lord of Ages nevertheless wisely and patiently follows out the plan of his grace on our behalf, sinners that we are. In recent times he has begun to bestow more generously upon divided Christians remorse over their divisions and longing for unity. Everywhere large numbers have felt the impulse of this grace, and among our separated brethren also there increases from day to day a movement, fostered by the grace of the Holy Spirit, for the restoration of unity among all Christians. Taking part in this movement, which is called ecumenical, are those who invoke the Triune God and confess Jesus as Lord and Saviour. They do this not merely as individuals but also as members of corporate groups in which they have heard the Gospel, and which each regards as his Church and indeed, God’s. And yet, almost everyone,

though in different ways, longs for the one visible Church of God, a Church truly universal and sent forth to the whole world that the world may be converted to the Gospel and so be saved, to the glory of God” (UR 1).

Two years after the Vatican Council II a Franciscan Friar, PM McDonald, wrote the following on the ecumenical spirit in the Church:

“The ecumenical spirit was born when Christians re-awoke to the realisation that their divisions into competitive and often inimical Churches and sects were scandalous, being against the purpose and will of Christ and impeding the bearing of a convincing witness to the Lord and his Gospel of salvation. Those Christians sensitive to the need for unity began to meet privately and in conferences, crossing denominational boundaries in the process. This encounter of persons contributed the supremely important factor of experience to the development of the ecumenical spirit and movement. This experience is in essence the perception of the Christ-rooted brotherhood (sisterhood) in the membership of His one Body of all Christians, no matter what their Church or sectarian loyalty. When a person has this experience of recognising his Christian brother (sister), he (she) is brought into an ‘I-thou’ relationship, with him (her), seeing him as a person who bears in himself the image of Christ, a member of that one Body to which oneself belongs. Thus the experience of recognition becomes a stimulant to pray and work for the unity of all in the one Body, a stimulant far more powerful than could be provided by conclusions resulting from academic study” (1967:iv-v).

The 1983 Code of Canon Law advises that, in the spirit of ecumenism, those preparing for Holy Orders (seminarians) are to be instructed in missionary praxis and ecumenical questions (CIC 1983, 256#2). The Church law emphasises that the diocesan bishop should foster the spirit of “ecumenism as it is understood by the Church” (CIC 1983, 383#3).

There is a significant presence of a variety of Christian Churches in all parishes. The parishes should co-operate with all the people of good will on an ecumenical basis. As Adrian Hastings recorded, “the church’s mission is essentially a work of communication” (1971:23).

Again, the commitment to the Second Vatican Council's teaching is important, and the ecumenical involvement of the lay people is a *sine qua non*. The latter are already putting into action the spirit of ecumenism, for example, at funerals, weddings and as they do prayers at their work place and indeed, at every opportunity they get. Catholics should also be active during the week of unity, which comes just after the celebration of the solemnity of Pentecost. Priests, especially in QwaQwa should strive to be members of Ministers Fraternity and attend their activities.

The Council's Declaration on the Relation of the Church to non-Christian Religions (*Nostra Aetate*), or Interreligious Dialogue, prescribes how the relationship should be between Catholics and the adherents of non-Christian religions, for example, Hindus, Buddhist, Muslims *et cetera*. The Church acknowledges that:

"In this age of ours, when men (people) are drawing more closely together and the bonds of friendship between peoples are being strengthened, the Church examines with greater care the relation which she has to non-Christian religions [...] The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. She has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from her own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men (people). Yet she proclaims and is in duty bound to proclaim without fail, Christ who is the way, the truth and the life (Jn. 1:6) [...] The Church, therefore, urges her sons (daughters) to enter with prudence and charity into discussion and collaboration with members of other religions. Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, also their social life and culture" (NA 1-2).

Virtually in all the parishes of the Diocese of Bethlehem there are in these days followers of Islam. In both Bethlehem and QwaQwa there are mosques. It is, therefore, worth noting that:

"The Church has also a high regard for the Muslims. They worship God, who is one, living and subsistent, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who

has also spoken to men (people). They strive to submit themselves without reserve to the hidden decrees of God, just as Abraham submitted himself to God's plan, to whose faith Muslims eagerly link their own. Although not acknowledging him as God, they venerate Jesus as prophet, his virgin Mother they also honour, and even at times devoutly invoke. Further, they await the day of judgement and the reward of God following the resurrection of the dead. For this reason they highly esteem an upright life and worship God, especially by way of prayer, alms-deeds and fasting" (NA 3).

In relation to interreligious dialogue the Diocese of Bethlehem could consider the view of Pope Francis:

"An attitude of openness in truth and in love must characterise the dialogue with the followers of non-Christian religions, in spite of various obstacles and difficulties, especially forms of fundamentalism on both sides. Interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and so it is a duty for Christian as well as other religious communities. This dialogue is in first place a conversation about human existence [...] in this way we learn to accept others and their different ways of living, thinking and speaking. We can then join one another in taking up the duty of serving justice and peace, which should become a basic principle of all exchanges" (EG 250).

The Diocese of Bethlehem should keep the missionary spirit alive and initiate a dialogue with people of other religions. Perhaps a 'Vicar for Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue' should be appointed. Suitable training, as the Pope writes,

"is essential for all involved [in ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue] not only so that they can also acknowledge the values of others, appreciate the concerns underlying their demands and shed light on shared beliefs" (EG 253).

I strongly recommend that Interreligious Dialogue be a part of the Confirmation catechesis. *Bajadi* (Catechists) need to be workshopped on the same subject.

5.2 FAMILY MINISTRY

(Refer also to 4.3, 4.11 and 4.12)

In his World Mission Sunday message of 2013 Pope Francis said:

“everyone should be able to experience the joy of being loved, the joy of salvation! The proclamation of the Gospel is part of being disciples of Christ and it is a constant commitment that animates the whole life of the Church [...] Each community is ‘mature when it professes faith’” (<http://www.missionz.co.nz> 4/8/2014).

Taking the message of the Holy Father earnestly, the **pastoral home visits** by priests and pastoral sisters are still essential for the evangelisation of a *community* and a particular *parish*. This aspect should never be neglected in the missionary activity of the local church in Bethlehem. The St. Paul sisters should play a much stronger role in this. They can work in teams of the Diocesan Catechetical Committee, Diocesan Liturgy Committee, Pastoral visitation or Youth ministry.

Pastoral workers should unceasingly **visit stray (lapsed) Catholics** to bring them back to the faith. The returnees to Catholicism are to be workshopped in faith and their return programme should be clear, as this is not the case at present.

The **family ministry** should receive priority attention by the Church of Bethlehem. The seed of evangelisation is primarily prepared in a family. Parents are the primary agents of evangelisation. I recommend the diocese to form a team of priests from the four deaneries who could form a 'Family Ministry Team'. Of course, the inclusion of married couples, single parents, widows and widowers is important. The team should be supported by the hierarchy and the parishes for it to be fully functional. The proposed team could give attention to all the aspects related to the family ministry, such as: models of families, adoption of abandoned children, motivation of children to participate in the work of evangelisation, the care of the elderly in the family, as well as those who are physically challenged. Intrinsically, the modern family needs to be evangelised more than ever before. As the church we should

by all means avoid the secularisation of families which happens when families are no longer Christo-centric.

If everybody in the Diocese of Bethlehem would be concerned about bringing Christ back into families they will have to make an effort to implement the principles of the **Small Christian Communities (SCCs)**. For example, the caring of the sick in the blocks will be taken seriously and the family ministry as discussed above would be further strengthened.

In the spirit of helping married couples, over and above the Family Ministry Team; the Diocese of Bethlehem should introduce the ***Retrouvaille* programme**. The *Retrouvaille* website gives a good explanation of the programme: *Retrouvaille* is a French word meaning 'rediscovery'. This is the programme of the Church – nationally and internationally – to help married couples to heal and renew their marriages. The programme helps those who feel lost, alone or bored in their marriages. Furthermore, it aims at helping married couples who are frustrated, hurt or angry with their spouse. It also helps those who are constantly fighting or simply shut down in their relationships. Critically, it assists couples who are seriously thinking about separation or divorce. The programme offers tools needed to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. The *Retrouvaille* Programme consists of a weekend experience combined with a series of 6 to 12 post-weekend sessions over three months. The main emphasis of the programme is on communication in marriage between husband and wife. It gives them the opportunity to rediscover each other and examine their lives together in a new positive way (<http://www.retrouvaille.org>. 08/11/2014).

With regards to the **Diocesan Funeral Policy**, the priests should try to put people at ease by explaining the Church's attitude to funerals, especially for a better understanding of the rules for different categories of people. The priest should visit and keep in contact with the bereaved family regardless of the funeral category allotted. The socio-cultural realities should be taken into consideration at funerals. For instance, those who attend Catholic funerals are not likely to be all Catholics. Some would likely be unchurched or lapsed Catholics and others may be irregular church goers at the very best. The homily on such

events should reflect the mercy of God and highlight reconciliation with God and reconciliation in the Church.

5.3 TEACHING AND PREACHING

The **training and on-going formation** of the different leaders and functionaries in the Church, like the Catechists (*Bajadi*), Funeral leaders, Extra-ordinary ministers of Holy Communion, and Block leaders is of utmost importance. A 'Diocesan Training Team' should be formed to facilitate the empowering of these ministries. A Parish Pastoral Directory for the Diocese of Bethlehem should be compiled. The diocese has several policies, but they are not generally accessible. The researcher hopes that such a Directory could contain diocesan policies on a wide range of issues, including missionary activities.

Preaching the Word of God is as valid and important as it was in the beginning. Priests and Deacons should not cease to interpret the Word of God as enshrined in the Scriptures and in the Tradition of the Church. Christ should be the centre of all preaching. Hence every sermon should be Christological in character, meaning, preaching Christ the Crucified and Risen Lord. O'Collins confirms this conviction: "all divine Scripture speaks of Christ and finds its fulfilment in Christ, because it forms only one book, the book of life which is Christ" (1981:258-259).

Code of Canon Law / *Codex Iuris Canonici* of 1983, no. 757 speaks of the duties of priests and deacons in preaching the Word of God. Priests are co-operators of the bishops; it belongs to them to proclaim the Gospel. Deacons are to serve the people of God in the ministry of the Word. Hence, priests, deacons and all the preachers of the Word of God in Bethlehem Diocese are obliged to preach and proclaim Jesus as Saviour, with a view to converting people to the faith. Their ministry is for the service (*diakonia*) of the community, not for themselves. They must preach in the name of the Church, fulfilling the command of Christ. Norris in *Studia Canonica* 24, concurs: "The primary goal of preaching is to preach Jesus Christ to the best of our ability, then behaves us the best means possible" (1990:450).

The "best means possible" may also mean that the latest technological gadgets should now be used, things like the mobile phone, the internet, blogs and other social media. Is it too far-fetched to think of opening a broadcasting station on the level of the diocese, which can be used to preach the Word of God? It would benefit many Catholics and non-Catholics, especially if it would be done mainly in the local languages. Furthermore, if the diocese could issue a diocesan paper and name it *Lesedi* (Light) in the vernacular, it would encourage many people to read and study the Word of God, which is the light in itself.

Again, priests in the ministry of proclamation represent both the community and the Lord. Therefore, they are to internalise the Word of God before preaching it, and then also identify with the people of God. Their preaching should be pastoral, hence, the need for them to be evangelised first.

The following quote brings forward a very important aspect, namely that the preacher should be informed on a wide variety of issues.

“Preachers [Priests in the local church of Bethlehem] need to devote some time and energy to understanding the complex social, political, and economic forces that are shaping the contemporary world. [...] [They] need exposure to more serious and sustained commentary on the contemporary world, the kind of exposure that can be gained through a programme of reading or through conversation with people who are professionally involved in such areas as business, politics, or medicine. Without this kind of informed understanding of the complex world we live in, preaching too easily degenerates into platitudes of faith, meaningless broadsides against the wickedness of the modern world, or into an uncritical affirmation of the wonderful advances that have taken place in modern times” (Huels 1991:355).

The audience of the Word of God is to be catechised to understand it, and taught to apply the hermeneutical principles to the reading of the Bible. It must be understood that for the Word of God to be well received it needs faith, and this faith is to be lived out in the Church and shared (*ad extra*) with the brothers and sisters.

The researcher gained the impression from his discussions with the interviewees that the people of God appreciate a person of faith speaking the Word of God; they are not really looking for abstract words of high intellect, but faith that will touch their hearts. This kind of preaching on the Word of God can lead people who have not really given attention to the Gospel to an initial acceptance of Jesus Christ as Saviour. And as for those who have often heard it preached, it should deepen their understanding of the faith.

5.4 COMMUNICATION

(Refer also to 4.16)

It is high time that the Diocese of Bethlehem catches up with the rest of the technically advanced world in her mission of evangelisation. For instance, it is worrying that the diocese still does not have website in this time and age. Today we live in an age that has been characterised by the widespread use of computers, information technology, multimedia, technological devices and many more. In actual fact, I strongly recommend that every priest working in the diocese takes the advantage of opportunities offered by the modern technologies in spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ in this third millennium, and learn to use these modern technologies as far as possible. Practically, each priest could pose their Sunday sermons to the website and Diocesan Short Message Service (SMS) could dispatch reflections on scriptural readings based on the liturgical calendar of the Church.

The use of **social communication** is more recommended than ever before. While the Church may encourage all the faithful to use the modern technology, they should, however, also be aware of their duty to warn of the new dangers especially to the youth. In using the modern means of social communication the Church is called to imbue in the faithful the Christian spirit through their pastoral work (CIC 1983, 822).

5.5 SHORTAGE OF PRIESTS

(Refer also to 4.4)

There is a hope that with time the number of priests will grow in the diocese. Whenever the number of diocesan priests will reach the level that is relatively sufficient to cover the diocese, the time will come for the diocese to start thinking about **Fidei Donum** Priests. This means that some diocesan priests could be sent out to assist in other dioceses within the country where there is a dearth of vocations. We could even send those who are willing abroad, that is, being missionaries in other continents.

5.6 ORGANISATIONS AND SODALITIES

(Refer also to 4.13)

With the congregation of the St. Paul Sisters in the diocese, whose charism is linked to St. Francis of Assisi, it would be proper for the diocese to consider establishing a group of laity as '**The Third Order Secular of St. Francis**'. These would be ordinary people living the spirituality of St. Francis. The spirituality of St. Francis of Assisi includes the following elements: intimacy with God through prayer, worshipping God through nature, understanding Scriptures, a life of voluntary poverty, care for the poor and the sick and preaching to the nations (evangelisation).

The **adult sodalities** (St. Anne's Sodality, Sacred Heart Sodality and St. Joseph's Sodality) are to be encouraged to focus more on the reason for their existence. At the moment there seems to be lots of deterrence. They have in common their charism of studying Scriptures, the visitation of troubled families, home and hospital visitation of the sick and elderly, leading of prayers in families, prison visitation, the concern about people with disabilities, and the assistance in faith development of young people.

The **Holy Childhood (*Bongwana*)** should be helped to grow in the missionary spirit. Their activities should be geared to being missional in character. For example, stories could be related of other children who are living in hunger, those who stay in countries ravished by

civil war. One example is the recent abduction of the school girls in Nigeria by the *Boko Haram* (2014). In this way children could be brought together for a specific cause.

The study recommends the formation of **a team of healing ministry in the diocese**. It seems as if many people left the church because of what they perceived to be a lack of attention to healing. There should be a response to this challenge. Healing workshops could be organised as often as possible, because there is a general lack of knowledge about faith healing.

Many people are perceived to be possessed by evil spirits, thus, they approach the priests for deliverance and exorcism. However, in terms of the canon law, “no one may lawfully exorcise the possessed without the special and express permission of the local Ordinary” (CIC 1983 1172#1). Furthermore, the bishop of Bethlehem Diocese is obliged by law to appoint “a priest who is endowed with piety, knowledge, prudence and integrity of life” (CIC 1983, 1172#2) as the diocesan exorcist.

5.7 SELF SUPPORT

(Refer also to 4.8 and 4.9)

It would seem that the traditional concept of *kabelo* is no longer moving the faithful to be more generous in their self-sacrificial giving. A more pertinent concept should be sought among the people. A few possibilities could be mentioned: *boitlhabo ba ka kerekeng* (My sacrifice to the Church), *boinehelo ba ka kerekeng* (My dedication to the church), etc.

The new proposal of Bishop Jan (cf. 4.8) about the new system of *kabelo* should also be given a chance to unfold in the various parishes of the Diocese, both urban and rural. To reinforce the support of the well-being of the priests through Mass Stipends, the parishioners should be reminded about their duties and rights towards their priests. In a humble way the parishioners should be called upon to contribute materially and financially to the well-being of the Church.

In the Diocese of Bethlehem the following structures rely absolutely for finances on the diocesan coffers: Priests' Provident Fund, Diocesan Liturgy Committee (DLC), Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC), Diocesan Finance Committee (DFC), Justice and Peace Commission (J&P), Diocesan Catechetical Committee (DCC). They need the whole-hearted support and collaboration of all God's people. The annual Diocesan Fund Raising is an event organised to collect the necessary money to cover the costs of the aforesaid structures, therefore it is imperative for the priests to enthusiastically support and encourage the faithful to be generous towards the diocesan fund raising. In truth, time to depend on overseas financial aid is over.

5.8 OUTREACH INTO THE COMMUNITY

(Refer also to 4.10 and 4.18)

The Catholic Church in the Bethlehem Diocese has good outreach programmes. However, the researcher believes that more could be done on the **drug problem** which is devastating our youth. The local church could build a rehabilitation unit in which the (re)evangelisation would be deepened and the message of the Gospel be resuscitated in the hearts of the addicted youth. A recovery house for people who suffered substance abuse will give the local Church the opportunity to also put into operation the programme of evangelisation.

In the **social outreach** efforts – apart from what is already there in QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish (e.g. the Catholic Community Service) – the St. Vincent de Paul Society (association) is to be encouraged. This Association serves charitable purposes and promote Christian vocations. The members of the society are expected to help people to be financially and materially independent, so that they can improve their own life. In QwaQwa many people live in abject poverty. They depend only on the social grants of the government. Most of young people, and even their parents, are unemployed. St. Vincent de Paul Society could make a difference to these people. People of good will and those who are well-to-do could come together and pledge to support the society. In this way many families in need will be helped.

The Diocesan **Justice and Peace** Commission (refer 4.14) should commit themselves and witness to the practice of justice within the diocese, in each particular context addressing the relevant issues. The commission should work out the various ways in which the rights of people within their territory should be respected. In QwaQwa Deanery, for example, there are industrial areas. Here people are subjected to lots of injustices. Also, recently there have been a number of cases in QwaQwa where women and children were raped and killed. The Justice and Peace Commission should conscientise the workers about their rights to a living wage, and come up for the rights of women and children, among other injustices. These actions would be a witness of the Church to the poor and the oppressed, and eventually to the world. Of course, this would be evangelisation at play.

Justice is also to be practiced within the Church. Perhaps the Commission should reflect on the question that the study asks: To what extent is justice in Bethlehem, Qwaqwa and elsewhere an urgent issue for Christians today? It seems that many people do not understand the workings of democracy. The sporadic protests on (the lack of) service delivery usually turn violent. It should be (among other things) the responsibility of the Justice and Peace Commission to teach the inhabitants of the Bethlehem Diocese about democracy and peaceful demonstrations.

Another way of dealing with the enormous challenges, especially in QwaQwa where there are institutions set up by the government, is for the bishop to appoint a priest for this special ministry. This religious priest should regularly visit *Manthathisi* in Tsheseng, a Home for children from disadvantaged background; *Thekolohelong* Welfare Centre, a Home for elderly people who have no place to stay and have to be cared for; *Leratong*, an institution where street kids and abandoned children's needs are being taken care of; and *Thiboloha* School for the Blind and Deaf (speech impaired). In the case of the branch of the University of Free State there has always been a chaplain to the university, so the same principle should be applied to the aforesaid government institutions so that they can also be spiritually nourished.

5.9 THE CHURCH AND SOTHO CULTURE

(Refer to 4.6)

It is recommended that the Church's pastoral approach to the traditional culture and religion of the Basotho in the Free State be investigated. A serious dialogue on the issue of **Sangomahood** (for example) is necessary. The reality is that a huge number of people left the Church because of *Moya wa Badimo* (ancestral spirit). Others are living with split personalities, not knowing where they belong.

5.10 REVITALISATION

(Refer also to 4.17)

The diocese needs to think about a massive parish **revitalisation**. A necessary adjustment and re-evangelisation of the diocese is to be taken up in the whole area. The aim of re-evangelisation would be to strengthen the Catholic faith among the baptised Catholics. A new pastoral planning process is to be thought through. This process may be named 'Revitalisation of Catholic faith' and could have a director, whose task would be to seek input from all parishes, including priests working in the diocese. The agenda of the pastoral planning process could cover: the shortage of priests, shortage of the faithful, lapsed Catholics, healing, sangomahood, and many other relevant topics.

In its effort of revitalisation, the Bethlehem Diocese is to confront the **apparent shallowness of faith among many Catholics, especially the young**. Too many, after receiving the sacrament of Confirmation, fail to enter into a deeper relationship with Jesus, and they drift away from the Church.

The parishes in both the rural and urban areas should move from being a maintenance Church to being a dynamic missionary Church. According to the *Codex Iuris Canonici* 78 the missionary activity of the Church is the responsibility of all Christ' faithful. In that spirit, the diocese is to instil within the people of God the true priority of the concept of being missionary. A **missionary formation programme** could be designed in the diocese to help

those who are interested to learn about the history of missions in the diocese and abroad. Today it is imperative to learn about the mission in your territory and also to be oriented about the missionary praxis elsewhere. However, this programme should lead to action.

Although the diocese of Bethlehem is fast becoming a mature one, it still has more to look forward to, especially in the sense of being a missionary church. The Catholics in Bethlehem Diocese have to stand entirely on their own feet and evangelise their world.

As a start the researcher hopes that the Diocese of Bethlehem would become **missionary in outlook**. This would mean not only a focus on the clerical obligation in terms of the missionary activity, but especially to incorporate the laity in the missionary worldview.

The local church of Bethlehem Diocese should become self-ministering, meaning that the servant-missionaries (ministers) should come from their own ranks. I believe that a local church which depends for its existence and evangelisation on the continuous flow of overseas missionaries is not a healthy, properly established local church. The local Church of Bethlehem should establish a Missionary Commission with the aim of coordinating and dissemination of information regarding missions so that all who are involved would be well informed. The existence of such a structure would, over and above, make those who are involved in the missionary activities in the diocese feel that they have a role to play.

Importantly, the corporal works of mercy should be a drive for missionary activities in the Diocese of Bethlehem (Matthew 25:31-46).

Finally, the study hopes the church of Bethlehem would be a missionary church which will also **produce willing missionaries**.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

As I conclude this study, I wish to re-iterate that the evangelisation in the area of the (later) Diocese of Bethlehem was initiated and for many years undertaken by the Holy Ghost Fathers, the Spiritans. Despite their invaluable missionary activities the Diocese of Bethlehem still has various challenges in terms of missions. The missionaries managed to establish the Catholic Church despite the government policy of apartheid, and they succeeded to consolidate the people of God. In keeping with the words of St. Paul, the missionary apostle, the Spiritan missionaries were “subjected to every kind of hardship, but never distressed; [saw] no way out but never despair[ed]; [were] pursued but never cut off; knocked down; [but still had life in themselves]” (2 Corinthians 8-9). The priests emerged from the apartheid regime as moral leaders of the nation, courageously calling for justice and reconciliation and peace.

Many African people opened their hearts to the European missionaries. They received baptism, confirmation and their marriages were solemnised in the church. Generally, the missionaries received a cordial hospitality from the indigenous Basotho.

However, as the history of the Diocese of Bethlehem, as depicted in the previous chapters, would show, there was no shortage of difficulties in the missionary life and missionary activities of the pioneers. What is important though, was that in general the Spiritan missionaries were totally committed to the cause of evangelisation. That may, among other things, be seen in the fact that just a small number of them returned back to their home country, Germany, after retirement. A good number of them were buried on Geduld, a small farm outside Bethlehem. One of the senior Spiritan missionaries, Fr. Johannes Susenberger chose to be buried in Vrede where he was stationed since 1961, among the people he faithfully served for his entire life.

The main missionary activity which really made their evangelisation a success was their home, hospital and general visits. They trained catechists, built schools and provided medical care. Thus their missionary work also focused on improving the health and education of the people. The religious Brothers also contributed immensely through the building of schools, priests' houses, catechists' houses, chapels and churches. In the interviews that were conducted by the researcher, he could hear that no one doubted the value of the missionary work. The missionaries of old worked hard and did exceptionally well in their missionary work, without question. The missionary method of home visits was the accepted method of initial evangelisation and should not be discarded today.

Similarly, one cannot fail to notice the role played by the St. Paul Sisters. They served and are still serving the Diocese of Bethlehem in a number of important fields of missionary activities, increasingly through institutions of their own. Together with the Spiritan Fathers they carefully picked men and women and trained them as catechists. These men and women went to all the corners of: first the Vicariate and later the Diocese of Bethlehem. True missionaries in the mission field, these Sisters involved themselves in the different aspects of the apostolate: teaching in the schools, co-operating with the parochial team in parishes, and dispensing medicine, among other things.

Bishop Hubert Bucher's vision was to establish a real local church, entrusted to local clergy. He believed very much that an essential characteristic of a local church is to be self-reliant. His wish was confirmed by the faithful, and so he began to make the necessary preparations for this to happen. He really altered the situation of the lack of vocations which he found when he came to the Diocese of Bethlehem. However, there were many disappointments. There can be no doubt that the church in Bethlehem still desperately needs young men and women called by God to commit themselves to the mission for a lifetime. More is still to be done in promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

The local church of Bethlehem still has great possibilities, that is, to become a truly revitalised indigenous Catholic Church with its Christian life deeply rooted in the missionary spirit. Meticulous pastoral care is the key to foster a missionary existence.

Throughout the entire project the missionary character of the church was highlighted and elaborated on. Mission does not only mean to cross oceans and cultures. One can be a missionary by serving your neighbours down the road, people of your own culture. I hope and believe that Bethlehemites will rise to the calling and be genuine missionaries in their surroundings. The command to the disciples "to go out and proclaim the Good News" (Matthew 19:20ff) is also valid for the Bethlehemites. Thus, both the laity and the hierarchy of the Church are called to participate in the mission of the Church by virtue of their baptism. Even though the parishioners of both Bethlehem and QwaQwa Deanery are already responding positively to the spirit of Vatican II by getting involved in the apostolate activities still more could be done.

Vatican II was clear on it that "the ordained ministers are not in a position to undertake alone the whole salvific mission of the Church to the world" (LG 30). The Church cannot be said to be truly missionary unless there is an active participation of the laity as well. The response to the call by the Vatican Council II, namely for all to play an active role in the evangelisation of peoples, have to be done in the spirit of ecumenism. This is one of the matters to be addressed seriously and be implemented immediately.

The researcher found that, generally speaking, the majority of Catholics feel that the Diocese of Bethlehem belongs to them. They want to take ownership. That is why the researcher firmly believes that the study will assist the diocesan readers to pursue their own reflections on their missionary calling. For that reason, the research into the missionary work in the Diocese of Bethlehem is not a digging into an obsolete past, but a present challenge to the hearts of the young and old Christians. They are asked to reflect on who and what they are as baptised people of God, being called and challenged by Jesus and the Church, in relation to their missionary calling.

A new church usually starts as a mission and with missionaries, but in the context of this study, I am of the opinion that it is about time that the faithful in the Diocese of Bethlehem make the paradigm shift and embark on the process of becoming a real missional local church. The last word at Holy Mass by the deacon or the priest: *Ite, missa est* ("Go, the Mass

has ended") should in reality always remind the faithful about the commission they received from the Lord: that they are sent to the world to bring the "Good News to the afflicted. To proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favour from the Lord" (Luke 4:18). We hear these words each time at the end of the Mass, but from now on this formula must challenge us to go out and bring back to the church the lost sheep. All Christ's faithful are encouraged to witness to the Gospel by words and deeds in the schools, in the neighbourhood, at work and everywhere else.

The family ministry is to be highlighted, since "the family is the first school of the Christian life and human growth" (Diocese of Bethlehem, 2001, p.1). The family ministry will be successfully fulfilled when the Small Christian Communities (SCCs) are effective. Truly, all Christ's faithful have to come to the realisation that they have a role to play in the Church's mission of taking the Gospel to all people and making Christ known to all.

To put into action the recommendations mentioned in the previous chapter, the study cannot emphasise enough the need for a system of intense formation. Formation of all members is paramount if all are to positively fulfil their role in the mission of the Church.

It is of paramount importance to once again remind ourselves that the Church is by its very nature missionary (*Ad Gentes*, 2), which means that the Church exists for mission. It is its missionary thrust that keeps the spirit of evangelisation alive in a parish. It would benefit the local church of Bethlehem, particularly QwaQwa Deanery and Bethlehem Parish, to form a band of lay people to promote mission awareness amongst other parishioners.

I end with a salutary citation from Pope Francis:

"Keeping our missionary fervour alive calls for firm trust in the Holy Spirit, for it is he who 'helps us in our weakness' (Romans 8:26). But this generous trust has to be nourished, and so we need to invoke the Spirit constantly [...] The Holy Spirit knows well what is needed in every time and place" (EG 280).

APPENDICES

1 Letter of Invitation to Cooperate: Bethlehem

P.O. Box 1439

Bethlehem

9700

19 July 2013

For the attention of: The Bethlehem Parish Priest and the PPC

Letter of Invitation for the Parish Community Participation in Research Study

My name is Fr. Dikotsi William Mofokeng, and I am presently doing my doctoral studies in missiology, with the North West University (NWU).

My research study is *'The mission of God's people in the light of God's mission. A Missiological case study of the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, South Africa'*, under the supervision of Professor Dons Kritzinger.

As Bethlehem Parish is one of the longest established parishes in the diocese and is situated in the urban area, I chose it as one of my research areas for the project. Therefore, with your help, I need to conduct interviews with some of your parishioners selected by you together with your PPC. Please note that this is a doctoral study, so it will be lengthy and in-depth.

I would like to interview a number of the following categories of people: the senior people, the younger people, lapsed Catholics and the baptised Catholics who have lost a living sense of their faith and live far removed from Christ and his Gospel. At times, I will visit a group of

elders and youth selected to participate and share their experiences in their local mission. The questions to the interviewees will relate to: 1) the 'what' of the mission and the Gospel message, 2) the 'why' of the mission and the Gospel message, 3) the 'how' of the mission and message of the Gospel.

Clearly, the bigger the number of the participants, the better. Furthermore, I foresee the interviews taking place at the home of the participants or at church, of course, depending on the desire of the participants.

Really, the aim of the letter is to outline the nature of my study, what it will entail and as well as the benefit to the parish community, eventually, the entire diocese. Again, the purpose of the letter is to provide the Parish Priest and the PPC with information to consider and make a decision, please feel free to contact me if there are any questions or concerns.

As you know, Universities are very strict with regards to ethics and permission, and so if you agree with my request, I would then ask you to sign the attached Consent form.

Once I have received your consent, I will meet with the individuals selected to explain the study and to discuss possible dates for the interview. The interview will be in the home language and be recorded for editing.

I hope my request will meet with your favourable consideration.

Warm regards,

Fr Dikotsi Mofokeng

Cell no. 072 684 7421

dikotsi.mofokeng@gmail.com

2 Letter of Invitation to Cooperate: QwaQwa

P.O. Box 1439

Bethlehem

9700

19 July 2013

For the attention of: The Clergy in QwaQwa Deanery and the PCoD

Letter of Invitation for the Deanery Community Participation in Research Study

My name is Fr. Dikotsi William Mofokeng, and I am presently doing my doctoral studies in missiology, with the North West University (NWU).

My research study is 'The mission of God's people in the light of God's mission. A Missiological case study of the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, South Africa', under the supervision of Professor Dons Kritzinger.

As QwaQwa Deanery is one of the latest developing deaneries in the diocese and is situated mostly in the rural area, I chose it as one of my research areas for the project. Therefore, with your help, I need to conduct interviews with some of your parishioners selected by you together with the PCoD. Please note that this is a doctoral study, so it will be lengthy and in-depth.

I would like to interview a number of the following categories of people: the senior people, the younger people, lapsed Catholics and the baptised Catholics who have lost a living sense of their faith and live far removed from Christ and his Gospel. At times, I will visit a group of elders and youth selected to participate and share their experiences in their local mission. The questions to the interviewees will relate to: 1) the 'what' of the mission and the Gospel

message, 2) the 'why' of the mission and the Gospel message, 3) the 'how' of the mission and message of the Gospel.

Evidently, the bigger the number of the participants, the better. Furthermore, I foresee the interviews taking place at the home of the participants or at church, of course, depending on the desire of the participants.

Really, the aim of the letter is to outline the nature of my study, what it will entail and as well as the benefit to the parish community, eventually, the entire diocese. Again, the purpose of the letter is to provide the Clergy in the deanery and the PCoD with information to consider and make a decision, please feel free to contact me if there are any questions or concerns.

As you know, Universities are very strict with regards to ethics and permission, and so if you agree with my request, I would then ask you to sign the attached Consent form.

Once I have received your consent, I will meet with the individuals selected to explain the study and to discuss possible dates for the interview. The interview will be in the home language and will be recorded for editing.

I hope my request will meet with your favourable consideration.

Warm regards,

Fr Dikotsi Mofokeng

Cell no. 072 684 7421

dikotsi.mofokeng@gmail.com

3 CONSENT FORM

THESIS:

The mission of God’s people in the light of God’s mission. A missiological case study of the Catholic Church of Bethlehem, South Africa

BETHLEHEM PARISH

I,.....(Full name) in my capacity as give consent for Fr. Dikotsi William Mofokeng to conduct the abovementioned doctoral study at Bethlehem Parish.

As the Parish Priest and the PPC we have read the Letter of Invitation explaining the purpose of the research project and understand the content thereof.

If any further information is required on the research, the primary researcher Fr. Dikotsi William Mofokeng may be contacted on 072 684 7421 or dikotsi.mofokeng@gmail.com

PARISH PRIEST SIGNATURE: DATE: _____

PPC MEMBER SIGNATURE: DATE: _____

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANDERSON, A. 1993. African Pentecostalism and the Ancestor Cult: Confrontation or Compromise?" *Missionalia* 21, no. 1 (April 1993), 26-39.

BAUR, J. 1994. *2000 Years of Christianity in Africa. An African History 62-1992*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

BETHLEHEM DIOCESE, ARCHIVES (*as translated from German to English and quoted extensively in Cor Unum et Anima Una, by Fr. Heinz Kuckertz, CSSp*)

_____. Pre - 1982. Past Clergy. Part 1.

_____. Pre – 1982. Past Clergy. Part 2.

_____. Chronicle History, Correspondence 1990.

_____. Chronicle History, The Mission of Kroonstad, 1923.

BÖNISCH, J. 1928. Bolschewistische Rüpeleien. Der katholische Volksverein (CAU). In *Echo aus den Missionen*, 29: 37-42.

_____, 1929 a. Der gegenwärtige Stand der Eingeborenenschulen in der Oranje-Freistaat-Provinz. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 30, 36-38.

_____, 1929 b. Soziale Fürsorge in den Missionen. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 30, 168-175.

_____, 1930. Im Zeichen der Kath. Aktion. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 31, 108-110.

BOSCH, D. 1980. *Witness to the World*. London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott.

_____. 1991. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shift in Theology of Mission*. New York: Orbis Books.

BRAIN, J.B. 1996. *Patience Our Daily Bread: The Catholic Church in the Orange Free State and Kimberley from 1850*. Pinetown: The Catholic Bishops of the Free State and Kimberley.

BRÜNING, H. 1950. Jubelklänge aus Bethlehem. In *Echo aus Mission und Heimat*, 9-11.

BÜFFEL, P. 1924. Unser Erbe. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 25, 80-86.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, (CCC). 1992. Nairobi – Publications Africa

CODE OF CANON LAW / *Codex Iuris Canonici: English Translation* (CIC) 1983. London: Collins Liturgical Publications.

DE GROEF, Jan, M.Afr. 2014. "Give them something to eat (Mt. 14, 16b)". Circular 5/14. Bethlehem.

DHAVAMONY, M., SJ 1995. Theology of Religions. In Karotempel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

DREYER, W.A. and MJWABE, F.E. 1995. Tradisionele geloof (Traditional belief). *Hervormde Teologiese Studies* 51, no. 2 (June 1995), 552-558.

ECHO aus Mission und Heimat, 1964. 40 Jahre Spiritaner in Südafrika, p. 10.

FORTES, M. 1965. Some Reflections on Ancestor Worship in Africa. In *African Systems of Thought: Studies Presented and Discussed at the Third International African Seminar in*

Salisbury, December 1960, edited by M. Fortes and G. Dieterlen. London: Oxford University Press (for the International African Institute), 122-144.

GIGLIONI, P. 1995. Evangelisation Process: Kerygma to Local Church. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

HASTINGS, H. 1971. *Mission and Ministry*. London: Sheed and Ward Ltd.

HEARNE, B., CSSp. 1994. Mission, Ecumenism and Fundamentalism. In Karotemprel, *Missionary & Missiology in Africa Today*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

HUELS, J.M. 1989. The Ministry of the Divine Word (Canons 756-761), in *Studia Canonica*, 23, 325-344.

HUELS, J.M. et al. 1991. Overview of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In *The Liturgy Documents: A Parish Resource*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

HUGHES, K., RSCJ. 1991. Overview of the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. In *The Liturgy Documents: A Parish Resource*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

IRWIN, K. W. 1991. Overview of General Norms for the Liturgical Year and the Calendar. In *The Documents: A Parish Resource*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

KADOWAKI, K., SJ. 1995. Buddhism. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

KAROTEMPREL, S., SDB. 1994. *Missionary and Missiology in Africa Today*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

_____. 1995. *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

KHATHIDE, A.G. 2000. *Bone of my bones: Building marriages that work in Africa*. South Africa: AcadSA Publishing Company.

KITSHOFF, M.C. 1992. Moderne swart jeug se siening oor Christus en voorouers as middelaars (Modern Black Youth's Opinion of Christ and the Ancestors as Mediators). *Ned.*

KLERLEIN, L.1925. Der schwarzen Seelen Heilsverlangen. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 26, 111-115.

_____, 1926. Viel Dornen und einige Rosen. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 27, 136-138. *Geref. Teologiese Tydskrif* XXXIII, no. 23 (September 1992), 417-427.

KNOX, P., SJ 2008. *Aids, Ancestors and Salvation: Local Beliefs in Christian Ministry to the Sick*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

KOREN, H. J.1958. *The Spiritans. A History of the Congregation of the Holy Ghost*.

KOTTUPPALLIL, G., SDB. 1995. Mission History: General Conclusions. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

KRIEL, J.D. 1995. Lewendes, gestorwenes en voorouergeeste in die Noord-Sotho ontologie. (The living, the dead and spirits of the ancestors in Northern Sotho onthology). *South African Journal of Ethnology* 18, no. 3 (1995), 106-119.

KUCKERTZ, H., CSSp. (ed.) 1981. *Ancestor Religion in Southern Africa: Proceedings of a Seminar on Ancestor Belief*. Lumko, Transkei: Lumko Missiological Institute.

_____, 1984. *Cor unum et anima una*. Bethlehem: Hooglandpers.

LEBON, J. 1992. *How to Understand the Liturgy*. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company.

LOBINGER, F. 1973. How much can lay People do? Lumko Institute, Lady Frere, pp. 61-66.

LÓPEZ-GAY, J., SJ. 1995. Proclamation. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

LUZBETAK, L.J. 1990. *The Church and Cultures – New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*. New York: Orbis Books.

MANONA, C.W.1981. The Resurgence of the Ancestor Cult Among Xhosa Christians. In Kuckertz (ed.). *Ancestor Religion in Southern Africa*, 34-39.

McDONALD, P.M. 1967. *Approaches to Intercommunion*. Durban: Unity Publications.

MOFOKENG, D.W. 2011. *The Shepherd of Bethlehem. The book commemorates the occasion of Bishop Hubert Bucher's 80th Birthday 2011*. Mariannhill: Mariannhill Press.

MÖNNIG, H.O. 1967. *The Pedi*. Pretoria: Van Schaik

MULLER, K. 1987. *Mission Theology: an Introduction*. Nettetal, Germany: Steyler Verlag.

NORRIS, P.F. 1990. Lay Preaching and Canon Law: Who May Give the Homily? In *Studia Canonica*, 24 (1990), 443-454.

NÜRNBERGER, K.2007. *The Living Dead and the Living God: Christ and the Ancestors in a changing Africa*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.

O'COLLINS, G. 1981. *Fundamental Theology*. New York: Paulist Press.

RATH, J.T. 1973. Die Knechtedener Provinz 1895-1948. Zur Geschichte der Dt. Provinz der Congregation vom He. Geist Knechteden.

RYAN, G. T. 1991. Overview of the Ceremonial of Bishops. In *The Documents: A Parish Resource*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications.

SCHINGS, W. 1933. Jahresbericht der Missionstation Kroonstad, Juli 1931-1932. In *Echo aus den Missionen* 34, 168-172.

SHORTER, A. 1969. Conflicting Attitudes to Ancestor Veneration in Africa: in *AFER* XI, no. 1 (January 1969), 27-37.

SHORTER, A. 1994. *Evangelisation and Culture*. New York: Geoffrey Chapman.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' CONFERENCE (SACBC) 1997. *Pope John Paul II, Redemptoris Missio (Special issue with accompanying facts and commentary)*. Pretoria: SACBC.

_____ 2005. *Evangelisation: The Path to Transformation*. Pretoria: SACBC.

VADAKUMPADAN, P., SDB. 1995. Ecclesiological Foundation of Mission. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

VAN DER WALT, J.L. 1992. The Culturo-Historical and Personal Circumstances of Some 19th Century Missionaries Teaching in South Africa. *Koers* 57, no. 1 (1992), 75-85.

VERKUYL, J. 1978. *Contemporary Missiology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

VILLOT J. 1976. Letter of Appointment of Bishop Hubert Bucher as Bishop of Bethlehem, p. 11.

WOLANIN, A., SJ. 1995: Trinitarian Foundation of Mission. In Karotemprel, *Following Christ in Mission*. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa.

VATICAN II DOCUMENTS ON MISSION

1963. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC): Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy

1964. *Unitatis redintegratio* (UR): Decree on Ecumenism

1965. *Ad Gentes* (AG): Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church

1965. *Dei Verbum* (DV): Dogmatic Constitution on Divine revelation

1965. *Lumen Gentium* (LG): Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

1965. *Nostra Aetate* (NA): Declaration on the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions

1965. *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (PO): Document on the Priesthood

PAPAL DOCUMENTS

1965. *Mysterium Fidei* (MF): Encyclical Letter by Pope Paul VI. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

1975. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (EN): Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Paul VI. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

1990. *Redemptoris Missio* (RM): Encyclical Letter of Pope John Paul II. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

1995. *Ecclesia in Africa* (EA): Apostolic Exhortation by Pope John Paul II. Nairobi: Paulines – Publications Africa. (The theme of *Ecclesia in Africa* was: The Church in Africa and its Evangelising Mission towards the Year 2000. “You shall be my witnesses”, Acts 1:8).

2007. *Sacramentum Caritatis* (SC): Apostolic Exhortation by Pope Benedict XVI. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.

2013. *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG): Apostolic Exhortation of Pope Francis. Nairobi: Paulines-Publications Africa.

INTERNET

http:www.missionz.co.nz. 4/8/2014

http:www.vatican.va/jubilee_2000/documents_8/8/2014

http://:www.retrouvaille.org. 08/11/2014

.

NEWSPAPERS

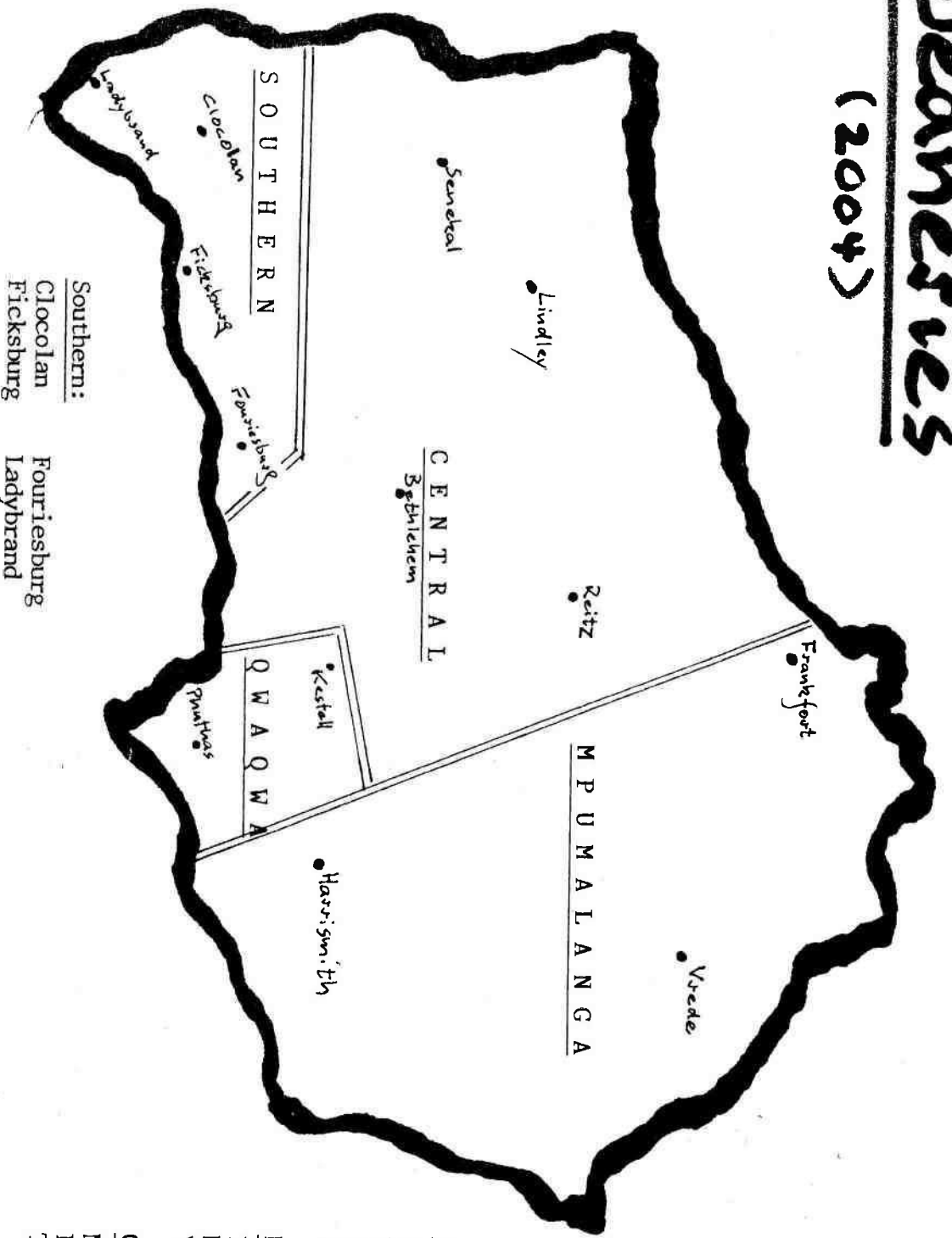
L'OSERVATORE ROMANO, English edition, N. 40 – 3 October 2007.

_____, English edition, N. 23 - 4 June 2008.

_____, English edition, N. 31 – 30 July 2008.

Deanseries

(2004)



Southern:
Clocolan
Ficksburg
Fouriesburg
Ladybrand

CENTRAL
Bethlehem

MPUMALANGA

OWAGWA

Central:
Bethlehem
Lindley
Reitz
Senekal

Mpumalanga:
Frankfort
Harrismitsh
Vrede

Owagwa:
Makeneng
Phuthaditjhaba
Tsheseng

Diocese of Bethlehem

South African Catholic Bishops Conference

Counting Month

Diocese: _____

Parish: _____

No. Of Masses: _____ (Specify times)

Parish Setting: _____

Rural: _____

Township: _____

Date	No of People attending Mass
<u>TOTAL</u>	