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Kaleidoscope Catechesis: Critique and Response to Missionary Catechesis in Africa with Particular Reference to the Diocese of Wa in Ghana

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Kaleidoscope Catechesis: Critique and Response to Missionary Catechesis in Africa with

Particular Reference to the Diocese of Wa in Ghana

A Dissertation

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by

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Abstract

The question about how to appropriately incarnate the Christian message among different cultures is a perennial one. The very first Christian Council of Jerusalem (Acts 15: 1-35) dealt with this issue and throughout the centuries different cultures have continued to battle with the same issue.

Within the African context, the question arises as to how Christianity can truly be Christian and African at the same time. In other words, how can faith become culture in Africa?

The answer to this question must be rhetorical. That is to say, the proclamation (catechesis) of the Christian message must be expressed in a language that translates Africans' relationship with Jesus of Nazareth and is understood by them. This means that catechesis must begin with the historical understanding that Africans (and for that matter, Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana) have of themselves and of the world around them.

In this regard, the rhetorical significance given by St. Augustine (Bishop of Hippo) to the problem of incarnating Christianity in local cultural contexts will constitute the theoretical basis on which the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis in Africa will be grounded. For Augustine just as for any African Church, there is no room in catechesis for repeating the sin of the sophists by denying the necessity of subject matter (Christian Doctrine) and insisting that *forma* alone is desirable. Rather a union of both matter and form must be concurrently pursued as a rhetorical endeavor.

Therefore, this study will critically analyze the rhetorical dynamics of catechizing cross-culturally and propose that a rhetorically robust catechesis, called kaleidoscope

catechesis, is essential for faith development and maturity in Africa. The rhetorical

function of kaleidoscope catechesis will be to incarnate the Gospel into the indigenous

culture.

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Preface

"The mission of Christ the Redeemer, which is entrusted to the Church, is still very far from completion" (RM no. 1).

As a Christian I belief that I have been called by Christ and the Church to spread the message and mission of Christ the Redeemer to the world. Throughout the course of my graduate studies, I have always asked myself how my studies could contribute to the mission of the Redeemer. In the summer of 1998 and 1999 I was blessed to obtain a scholarship to attend a brief course in Pastoral Communication at the Institute of Pastoral Initiatives at the University of Dayton, OH. This course introduced me to the idea of Kaleidoscope catechesis and increased my curiosity as to how the concept could apply to the Diocese of Wa in Ghana. The Diocese of Wa was holding its first diocesan Synod at this time. With the help and superb direction of Dr. Calvin L. Troup my hope of understanding, clarifying and applying the concept of kaleidoscope catechesis in rhetorical terms to the mission of the Redeemer in the Diocese of Wa has taken shape in the form of this dissertation. I am very grateful to many people and institutions for making this work possible.

First of all, I am very grateful to Dr. Calvin L. Troup, my dissertation director, for his suggestions, critical reading and comments throughout the course of writing this dissertation. I am equally grateful to Dr. Richard Thames and Dr. Janie Fritz for reading and approving this work. I am grateful to Duquesne University for the opportunity to pursue graduate studies and for the financial support I received from the University in the form of tuition discount. I am indebted to the Diocese of Wa, Ghana and Most Rev. Paul

my life and contributed to the wealth of intellectual, spiritual, moral, physical, and

psychological growth to God whose Word broke into our world and gave us a mission to

proclaim love, peace, and hope to the world.

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Introduction

The need for a catechism that is both faithful to the official Magisterium of the Church and at the same time appropriate to different cultural milieux has been discussed at several levels of the Church. In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council, the Church has vigorously pursued ways of making the Good News of Jesus Christ at home in the culture and among the people to which it enters. Apostolic Exhortations such as *Catechesi tradendae* [CT](1979) as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* [CCC] (1995) and the *General Directory for Catechesis* [GDC] (1997) have all called for a catechism and catechetical approach that maintain the content of the faith but teaches it in a language that is understandable and meaningful to people in their respective cultures. In this direction, the call by the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa [Wa Synod] (1998) for an effective catechesis is appropriately in line with the general quest of the Catholic Church.

The bedrock on which such an effective catechism and catechetical approach in any cultural context is built must be rhetorical. That is to say, for effective catechesis, equal attention must be paid to content of message and culturally appropriate methods of disseminating the message. This is important if catechesis is to refrain from the "Platonic heresy" (Murphy 60) on the one hand by placing too much emphasis on doctrine over method of presenting the doctrine and the empty eloquence of the Second Sophistic on the other hand by overemphasizing style, delivery and ornamentation (Troup 4). As the General Directory for Catechesis (GDC) rightly observes, "Catechetical pedagogy remains a dualism between content and method, often with the result that one is suppressed or overemphasized at the expense of the other" (GDC No. 32). To address this dualism in catechetical pedagogy a rhetorical approach via kaleidoscope catechesis (a

term coined by Angela Ann Zukowski) and inspired by the rhetorical theory of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, is essential.

In this study I undertake to present kaleidoscope catechesis as a rhetorically robust catechetical pedagogy in the Church. This approach is inspired by the rhetorical theory of Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, James J. Murphy (1974) and Calvin L. Troup (1999). Although the theological context and foundation of St. Augustine for the Church may be clear it is important to emphasize that the contemporary philosophical and rhetorical relevance of his work goes beyond James J.Murphy and Calvin L. Troup. In fact, some scholars have credited St. Augustine with being the father of religious psychology and some postmodern thinkers like Heidegger, Jacques Derrida and Jean-Francois Lyotard turn to St. Augustine as the precursor of philosophical existentialism. In a diffused and different form the existentialist world-view of human existence may be traced back to St. Augustine (354-430) and Dun Scotus (1266-1308), both Catholic philosophers. In *Irrational Man*, William Barrett (1962) also traces the origins of philosophical existentialism to St. Augustine. According to Barrett, "the existentialism of St. Augustine lies in his power as a religious psychologist, as expressed most notably and dramatically in his *Confessions"* (95). As psychologist, St. Augustine in his *Confessions* asked the subjective and introspective question, "Who am I?" Barrett describes this question as a significant and decisive shift from Plato and Aristotle who asked the question, "What is man?" (95). By asking the question, Who am I? Barrett observes that St. Augustine opened the "door to an altogether different view of man than had prevailed in Greek thought" (96) although he never really went inside it himself. Therefore, the relevance of St. Augustine to scholarship goes well beyond the Church and theology to philosophy,

psychology and rhetoric

This study purports to respond to the theoretical question: How can Christianity be "at home" (Healey & Sebertz 19) in the lives of catechumens and Christians and vice versa? In other words, how can catechesis make the saving message of Jesus Christ incarnate in any culture to the extent that people invest in Christianity as a life-long commitment to Jesus Christ and His Church? The metaphor "at home" is a significant rhetorical trope that underpins this work. This is so because kaleidoscope catechesis as rhetorical performance should constantly seek to bring the Good News into a culture using relevant and understandable cultural codes of the new culture and without compromising the content of the Christian faith.

Kaleidoscope catechesis will not only address the problem of dualism between content and method in catechesis, it will adequately address "the problem of transmitting the Gospel with foreign cultures in a way that the Gospel can really be perceived as Good News" (GDC No. 32). This study, therefore, undertakes the challenge of presenting kaleidoscope catechesis as a rhetorically robust catechetical pedagogy in the Church and specifically in the Diocese of Wa in Northwestern Ghana.

The doctrinal stance on which I base my considerations of the relevance of kaleidoscope catechesis in the Church and the Diocese of Wa is unwavering. The God of Israel is also the God of all nations. His compassion reaches out to Israel and beyond. God has always been a "missionary" to all nations preparing them for the day when they will behold with unveiled faces, and death will be swallowed up forever (Is. 25:6-8). Even so, Israel remains the center of God's activity in the world necessitating the function of both the Old and New Testaments (Sacred Scripture) and the tradition that has

handed down the deposit of faith from generation to generation (Tradition) through legitimate authority (Magisterium).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ has transforming power for the cultures into which it enters. The Gospel is the light that enters any culture and shines in it to dispel darkness. "What came to be through him was life, and this life was the light of the human race; the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it" (Jn.1: 3-5; Mt. 5:14). It is the salt of the earth that enters any culture and gives it flavor. "You are the salt of the earth" (Mt. 5:13). It is the Word of God that can be likened to a double-edged sword that cuts through bone and marrow in order to effect transformation in the object it contacts. It is like rain that falls into the ground and will not return without soaking the earth and producing fruit (Is. 55: 10-11). All these statements about the power of the Word of God can be said to affirm the universal application and effect of the saving message of Jesus Christ in any culture into which it enters. No culture is too dark to be illumined by the light of the Gospel nor too hard to be penetrated by the Word of God. However, the work of proclaiming the Word of God must entail patience because the growth of the Kingdom can be slow or apparently insignificant like the mustard seed (Mt. 13:31-32; Lk. 13: 18). However, it is effective like yeast (Mt. 13:33; Lk. 13 20). Even if it encounters hostility or hardship, it will still prevail and yield positive results (Mt. 13: 24-30; Is. 55:10-11). This is the nature of the narrative of the saving works of Jesus Christ that must be proclaimed. The desired outcome or result of this proclamation is faith as expressed by the centurion, "Truly this man was the Son of God" (Mk. 15:39), or by the Samaritans "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world" (Jn. 4:42). People come to this kind of

faith because through the narrative of the incarnation, and the ministry and passion of Jesus they encounter a profound three-fold revelation of the light of the Gospel: God revealed to man (God as Emmanuel [Mt. 1:23; 11: 25-27; 17: 1-6]), man revealed to God (the prayer life of Jesus [Lk. 11:1-13] and the Passion of Christ [Mt. 27:38-46; Mk14:32-42; 15:33-37]), and man revealed to man (the story of the Good Samaritan [Lk. 10: 29-37]). This revelation affirms that God is alive among His people as the Emmanuel; that humanity can look up to God in prayer and supplication; that human beings can indeed be like a "Good Samaritan" to one another and live together in peace (Is. 11: 6-9); and finally, that good will always triumph over evil. Philosophically, this triumph of light over darkness or good over evil is affirmed by Hannah Arendt's (1968) *Men in Dark Times*. In this book, Arendt affirms that dark times "are no rarity in history" yet in such dark times people can still "expect some illumination… from the uncertain, flickering, and often weak light that some men and women, in their lives and their works, will kindle under almost all circumstances" (Preface ix).

Therefore, both Biblically and philosophically, the power of light to dispel darkness or good to overcome evil is affirmed and should give every reason to believe that no culture is above the transforming power of the Gospel message. However, such transformation must be the result of the Holy Spirit working in and among the people and their socio-cultural environment and experience through human agency which defines the rhetorical character of kaleidoscope catechesis. The agent of catechesis is a bearer of Good News who must make the Good News understandable to a people within their temporal experience.

My literary critical bias in this study is a combination of positions. I give credence to

the value of the text (The Bible, the teachings of the Church and the rich rhetorical tradition) as the primary source of meaning on which my study is grounded. I also look beyond the text to the historical context within which the content of the Christian faith must be made incarnate.

Since the aim of catechesis is to achieve a life-long conversion of a person's mind, heart and soul to Jesus Christ, the context and worldview of the people or culture in which the Christian faith is taught must be taken seriously. That is what catechesis should be about. Therefore, the retreat of some Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians to traditional religious practices explained by an inadequacy of catechesis according to the Wa Diocesan Synod, shows the need for a more robust and rhetorical approach to catechesis in Northwestern Ghana. This rhetorical approach to catechesis is also the unique comparative advantage of kaleidoscope catechesis over the catechetical method of the White Fathers.

There is no intention, therefore, to belittle missionary catechesis in Northwestern Ghana. The White Fathers did a tremendous job of introducing Christianity to this part of Ghana and through their instruction baptized many people into the Church. However, as the General Directory for Catechesis and other Church documents have observed, there is still a need for a more effective catechesis that maintains fidelity to the content of the Christian faith and at the same time is sensitive to the cultural context in which the message is addressed. This dual commitment was in many ways lacking in the catechetical program of the White Fathers that was essentially focused on content of the faith to the near neglect of contextual approach.

My role in this rhetorical discourse is to present a critical and considered opinion on

how kaleidoscope catechesis adequately answers the catechetical needs of the Diocese of Wa. This effort constitutes my contribution to the ongoing conversation initiated by the Synod of Wa. The intention of this study is not to develop or give the rules of rhetoric but to offer my humble contribution by demonstrating how the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis appropriately responds to the search for new ways of evangelization in the Diocese of Wa.

This study follows the humanities approach to scholarship and not the social scientific approach. It lays no claims to a monopoly of ideas or solutions. Based on a liberal arts and humanities model, the study is open to various ideas and fully aware that on a human level no single idea adequately describes or represents the whole truth in every place and time. At the same time, it offers significant reason to proceed with action. That is its rhetorical character.

In terms of its contribution to the discipline, this study will broaden the scope of rhetoric beyond rhetorical theory and sacred rhetoric to the localized context of Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana. It will also contribute to the rhetorical dynamics of communicating cross-culturally.

The study will comprise five chapters. Chapter one will explain the project and its genesis. It will discuss the historical and cultural context of the Diocese of Wa in Northwestern Ghana and outline the problem of catechesis in rhetorical terms. The chapter will identify some rhetorical dynamics in a cross-cultural catechetical encounter between the White Fathers and the new culture of Northwestern Ghana. Chapter two will identify and discuss the problem of catechesis raised by the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa and at other levels of the local Church's self-reflection and search for growth.

Basically, this will consist in perusing the scholarly works of some indigenous Dagaaba and Sisaala to identify their analysis of the state of Christianity in Northwestern Ghana as a result of the missionary catechesis of the White Fathers. In chapter three I will relate the rhetoric of catechizing to the rhetorical performance of theology and define the rhetoric of catechizing as a responsibility to the truth and a service to humanity. Then, I will equate kaleidoscope catechesis to rhetoric in chapter four and ground kaleidoscope catechesis in the rhetorical theory of Saint Augustine, James J. Murphy and Calvin L. Troup.

As a conclusion to the study, chapter five will address the implications and applications of the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis in the Diocese of Wa in Northwestern Ghana.

Finally, I will attach two appendices. Appendix I will describe the Diocese of Wa in terms of its geographical location and people. Appendix II will offer a taxonomy of practical approaches to catechesis that are applicable in the Diocese of Wa.

Chapter One

The Project and Its Genesis

Missionary activity of the White Fathers is largely responsible for the spread of Christianity and exposure of Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana to Western civilization. The White Fathers, also called the Missionaries of Africa, first arrived in Northwestern Ghana in 1929 and began Catholic evangelization immediately. They were founded by Cardinal Lavigerie in 1868 to work with Arab populations of North Africa and the interior of the African continent. The importance of their work in Northwestern Ghana is greatly and generally acknowledged by word of mouth and in writing by several Dagaaba and Sisaala. Professor Benedict Der (Professor of History at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana), Most Rev. Dr. Philip Naameh (now Bishop of Damongo Diocese, formerly lecturer of Church History at St. Victor's Seminary in Tamale, Ghana), Most Rev. Dr. Paul Bemile (Bishop of the Diocese of Wa), Paul K. Bekye (1991;1998), Eugene Suom-Dery (2000), and many others have clearly affirmed the invaluable contribution of the White Fathers to Northwestern Ghana in terms of provision and development of education, health care, agriculture and other social amenities among the Dagaaba and Sisaala.

Other reputable African scholars, including Lamin Sanneh, agree that some European missionaries in Africa, beside spreading the Word of God were the staunchest defenders of African culture and African capabilities especially in terms of translating the Word into indigenous languages. Even though such missionaries, including the White Fathers, were in the minority, their contribution is nonetheless significant given the prevailing attitudes of many Europeans towards Africans in general.

In the context of the White Fathers' contributions, this study explores the rhetorical impact of their catechetical program of evangelization, particularly examining its ineffectiveness at producing Christians among the Dagaaba and Sisaala who have a faithful and lifelong commitment to Christ and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Specifically, the study posits that from a rhetorical perspective, the catechetical methods of the White Fathers who first introduced Christianity to Northwestern Ghana in 1929, were inadequate in making the Good News of Jesus Christ a meaningful source of liberation and growth to the people of Northwestern Ghana. These catechetical problems have been acknowledged by missiologists, theologians, Pope John Paul II and the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa (1998). Therefore, I will use rhetorical theory to clarify the problems with the catechetical methods and propose "kaleidoscope catechesis" as a rhetorically sound alternative to the conventional catechetical methods employed by the White Fathers.

In the aftermath of the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), both the theological and procedural problems of missionary catechesis have become glaring and there has been a call in the Roman Catholic Church for new ways of conceptualizing and approaching catechesis.

Some theological problems raised by missionary catechesis, for example, are the universal salvific will of God (1 Tim 2:4) and the preparatory work initiated by the Spirit among all cultures for God's final and definitive revelation in the person and mission of Jesus Christ [the principle of incarnation] (Heb. 1:1-6; Acts 17:22-28) vis-à-vis missionary condemnation of native cultures and their religious practices as pagan and totally incompatible with the Gospel.

In the midst of non-Christian religious practices of the Second century, St. Irenaeus and St. Clement of Rome were able to articulate the universal salvific will of God and the ubiquity of grace in the following theological formulations. St. Irenaeus taught that the divine Logos "was ever present to the human race until that day when he united himself with his creation and was made flesh" (*Adversus haereses* 3:6, 12-13, 16, 24) and St. Clement of Rome (88-97) stated that "From generation to generation the Lord has given opportunity of repentance to all who would turn to him" (*Epist.* 1 *ad Cor.*, chap. 7). In the Third century Tertullian of Carthage expressed this belief when he spoke about 'morally upright unbelievers whose souls were "naturally Christian"' (Hillman 38).

Karl Rahner's theory of the "anonymous Christian" has further elucidated the teaching of these early Fathers. Rahner's theology of anonymous Christian is grounded in the traditional Christian belief that grace works for the most part anonymously always and everywhere and is given on account of Christ (Acts 4:12; Rom 5:15-18; 8:32; 2 Cor. 5:15; 1Tim 2:5); that the eternal Logos who enlightens everyone comes into the world (Jn1:9), finally emerged from creation itself (Is 45:8) and became historically present, … in the physical flesh of a definite ethnic group and within the context of a particular culture during a brief time span (Hillman 37).

Most recently, Pope John Paul II has taught in *Redemptor Hominis* (RH) that "The human person – every person without exception whatever – has been redeemed by Christ; and Christ is in a way united with each person, without any exception whatever, even when they are not aware of this" (no. 14; also no.13) (Hillman 39).

Regarding "the principle of incarnation," the Second Vatican Council reaffirmed the ancient Christian teaching that because "the Church, sent to all peoples of every time and

place, is not bound exclusively and indissolubly to any race or nation… (GS no. 58), missionary activity must never be a matter of displacing the religio-cultural experiences of non-Christian peoples and replacing them with the Western world's historically developed and culturally articulated experience of Christian revelation. Rather the missionary ministry is supposed to entail a "wonderful exchange, in keeping with the economy of the incarnation (AG no. 22).

According to Eugene Hillman, the incarnation principle: "making Christ, his Gospel and his grace present among all peoples as such in their own specific histories and cultures, and thereby of achieving a quite new incarnational presence of Christ himself in the world (TI12:176)" is impossible where it is ignored (Wa Synod 3).

All this means that theological discussion right from the early Church has always recognized the possibility of salvation for all people including those who have not yet heard the saving message of Jesus but who listen to and act in accordance with divine grace. That is why it is theologically problematic when missionaries, including the White Fathers, condemned Dagaaba and Sisaala culture and religious beliefs as pagan and incompatible with the Gospel.

These theological problems of missionary catechesis directly relate to and affect evangelization and Christian life in the Diocese of Wa. These problems are reflected in the catechism taught by the White Fathers and the effects have been observed and summarized by the Diocesan Synod of 1998 as follows:

> Despite the movement in droves to become Christians, evangelization was
> perhaps very attractive, because it went along side-by-side with the building of
> roads, putting in place an economic base, building schools and health centers and

fighting against forced labor.

    The missionaries made relentless efforts to fight against *the 'Dagaaba bonwiiri*,'" that is, the useless things of the Dagaaba, to the extent of seeing superstition in many forms of the traditional religions.

    It must be noted that these have certain values, such as sacrificial rites, meals of communion with ancestors, rites of purification, reconciliation and conjuration of evil during bad weather or epidemics and divinatory practices. Their wholesale abolition without Christian institutes has made Christians to spontaneously return to these ritual practices in times of epidemics, disaster and misfortune.

    There is the dire need to deepen the Christian faith in the communities by ensuring that our Christian faith is firmly anchored in our culture (Wa Synod 3).

Anchoring the Christian faith in the culture of Dagaaba and Sisaala can come about through a catechetical program that respects the culture of a people and that seeks to incarnate the Gospel into that culture.

Unfortunately, many missionary societies, including the White Fathers, did not always respect the cultures into which they went. The disregard for traditional African values by many missionary institutes including the White Fathers is acknowledged by a May 23, 1999 document entitled, "Pastoral Approach to Culture," issued by The Pontifical Council for Culture. In this document the Council observed that when the evangelization of Africa began, the positive cultural values of African religions were not always taken seriously enough to be integrated with the Gospel. The Pontifical Council for Culture enumerates sense of family, love and respect for life, veneration of ancestors, a sense of solidarity and community, respect for the chief and elders, as some of the cultural values

of Africans that could have been used as solid basis for the inculturation of the faith whereby the Gospel penetrates the whole of culture and brings it to fruition. The Pontifical Council for Culture made these observations being asked by Pope John Paul II to help the Church to respond to how the message of the Church can be made accessible to the new cultures, to contemporary forms of understanding and of sensitivity; how the Church of Christ can make itself understood by the modern spirit, so proud of its achievements and at the same time so uneasy for the future of the human family.

These concerns raised by Pope John Paul II are relevant to the consideration of how 19th and early 20th century missionaries, especially the White Fathers should have or could have made the message of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church accessible to and understood by the people and culture of Northwestern Ghana in their catechetical practice, and presumably, to how Church leaders can do so with greater care and better fruit today. The concern of Pope John Paul II as it is reflected in this request to the Pontifical Council for Culture and in several of his encyclicals and Apostolic exhortations indicate that missionary attitudes toward evangelization were not only problematic in terms of process. They also affected the very core or substance of Christianity itself. That explains why this study will not only be concerned with questions of process but also with the substantive message of the Gospel as it addresses itself to all peoples and cultures seeking to transform them from within.

The theological grounds of my analysis of the White Fathers' method of catechesis in Northwestern Ghana lie in the very fact that Christ who is and must remain the center of catechesis was "a person very much inculturated in his own culture – by his language, by his clothes, even by his religion" (Buhlman 174). The Gospels themselves are incarnated

into the different cultures of the early Church – Greek culture, Roman culture, and the

German-Celtic culture and the same process of incarnating the Gospel into the cultures of

Dagaaba and Sisaala and other parts of the world ought to have been the catechetical

agenda of the White Fathers because the pattern of evangelization right from the time of

Christ through the early Church has been incarnational. Unfortunately, observes Walbert

Buhlmann, since the discovery of the New World, the Church began to export its own

Western culture, its own Western form (Buhlman 174). This was a deviation from the

Biblical pattern of evangelization, the Bible being the canonical text upon which the

Church and her mission are based. The fact of teaching Christianity in a static, non-

flexible Western form negates the possibility of allowing the incarnation of the Gospel

into the new culture of the Dagaaba and Sisaala.

Fortunately, the corrective steps toward effective catechesis have been sounded by the

Second Vatican Council and its aftermath. According to the Pastoral Constitution on the

Church in the Modern World (*Gaudium et spes)*, the Church is not bound exclusively and

indissolubly to any race or nation, nor to any particular way of life or any customary

pattern of living, ancient or recent. Pope Paul VI in his encyclical letter *Evangelii*

Nuntiandi states that the "Church has the duty to incarnate the Gospel message into the

cultural languages, so that this message can be understood by these peoples… in

theological expression, catechetical expression, liturgical expression" (Flanagan 175).

Avery Dulles explains that the heart of the Church's position is that the reality of the

Church be incarnated in each people to whom the Gospel is preached so that the Church

becomes an "autochtonous" reality (Dulles 175).

Regarding the importance of catechesis in the formation of faithful Christians, Adrian

Hastings (1967), former missionary priest in East Africa, observes that missionary approach to catechesis often failed "to achieve a real commitment to Christ, the beginning of a new personal life, a conversion in the spiritual and not merely in the bare ecclesiastical sense" (Hastings 123). These are also the problems of catechesis observed by the Wa Diocesan Synod. Among the reasons for poor catechetical methods, Hastings mentions too much reliance on memorization of formulas and expression of doctrine in a dry scholastic way. Acording to Hastings, these miniature scholastic treatises (catechism) do not sufficiently give a living account of sacred history, which is necessary for incarnational catechesis.

The issue at stake here is how incarnational catechesis can take place within a cross-cultural context. It is an issue of how Christianity enters into a new culture and takes root in that culture. This issue involves complex considerations including the vexing issue of whether there is such a thing as a distinctive Christian culture. At the dawn of Christianity, the Jerusalem Council had already discussed and resolved the issue of admitting non-Jews into Christianity saying that it was not necessary for Gentiles to first become Jews in order to embrace Christianity: "It is the decision of the Holy Spirit, and ours too, not to lay on you any burden beyond that which is strictly necessary…." (Acts 15: 22-29).

In the light of the conclusions of the Jerusalem Council, it should not be necessary for Dagaaba and Sisaala to abandon every aspect of their culture in order to become Christians. Yet the catechetical program of the White Fathers and other missionary groups of the 19th and early 20th centuries did just that. They designed catechetical programs that were aimed at assimilating new converts into the culture of the agent (the

missionary) and establishing a Church that was a satelitte of the mother Church in Europe or North America.

From a rhetorical perspective, I submit, along with Brenda Deen Schildgen (1997) and others that the Bible is the primary text or normative text in Christianity (Schidgen 151). Catholic theology, ecclesiology and missiology are built on the Bible as the normative text and so discussions on theology, ecclesiology and missiology must always refer to the Bible as the central and normative text. It is understandable that contingent issues of historicality and culture can affect the hermeneutical approach to the Biblical text but that should not in any way cast the essential message of the Gospel text into oblivion. In this sense, missionary activity of the White Fathers among Dagaaba and Sisaala can be evaluated in light of the normative text, the Bible, and the ability of White Fathers to deal with the contingencies of cross-cultural encounter between agent (missionary) and object of catechesis (new converts or catechumen). In the same way, whenever the missionary was faced with cross-cultural differences within the pastoral, his immediate recourse for inspiration should have been the Bible and not the practices of his home culture as many missionaries often did.

Therefore, I am arguing that the catechetical methods of the White Fathers, who were the first to introduce Christianity to Northwestern Ghana, were inadequately grounded rhetorically to make the Good News of Jesus Christ a meaningful source of liberation and growth to the Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana. The work of the Diocesan Synod of Wa warrants this study by identifying the problems raised by catechesis concerning the value of Christian life and witness and calling for new methods of catechesis in the pastoral mission of the Diocese. The Second Vatican Council

documents, the African Synod (1994), the Pastoral Congress of Ghana (1997) and theological discussions on African Christianity constitute a wider basis and support on which my position is grounded.

The *Instrumentum laboris* of the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa, for instance, observed that early Christians [read missionaries] uncritically rejected most of Dagaaba and Sisaala cultural practices outright without making any serious study to find out the values in the culture.

However, the Second Ecumenical Vatican Council (Vatican II) in the 1960s has opened the doors for the Church to enter into dialogue with non-Christian religions and to design catechetical programs that respect diversity, indigenous peoples and their culture, as well as build upon the good elements of indigenous cultures. As recently as October 2002, the Catholic Church at the International Vatican Congress on Catechesis was still reflecting on evangelization and catechesis in the world, a sign of their (evangelization and catechesis) ongoing nature rather than the definitive and dogmatic stance that missionaries prior to the Second Vatican Council took with regard to mission.

In this study, I present "kaleidoscope catechesis," (a term coined by Angela Ann Zukowski) as a rhetorically robust, theologically sound, catechetical methodology for evangelization in the Diocese of Wa. Kaleidoscope catechesis promotes cultural diversity and respects the need for dialogue and multiplicity of pedagogical options. It caters to the content of the Gospel message, method of presentation and psychological disposition of agents. The function of kaleidoscope catechesis is to nurture faith, open people to communication with one another and God, to build communities of solidarity and service and to open the way for mission toward all people as they journey toward their

eschatological home to which God calls his creation. Although this may not be a new development given the fact that 19th and 20th centuries were unique in their "de-communifying" aspects, the novelty brought by kaleidoscope catechesis is in terms of using the explicit Catholic teaching since the Second Vatican Council (*Nostra aetate*) on the need for respect and dialogue with non-Christian religions as an impetus in engaging both Christian and non-Christian worldviews in the catechetical activity.

Papal encyclicals/Apostolic Exhortations and other Church documents recognize the importance of using a plurality of methods or means in spreading the Gospel. Many of these Church documents insist that the new era in which we live is exploding with new beliefs about the world, human relationships, codes of ethics and conceptions about God which call for new ways of reaching people with the saving message of the Gospel. It is an era in which a search for dialogue and its necessary correlative – a clearer identification of what is specific to Christianity – are an increasingly significant area of reflection and action in the proclamation of the faith in our cultures (Ecclesia in America 73).

The message of Pope John Paul II to the American Bishops of the States of Minnesota, North Dakota and South Dakota on their *ad limina* visit in 1998 offers a fundamental rationale for kaleidoscope catechesis.

> Since lay people are at the forefront of the Church's mission to evangelize all areas of human activity – including the workplace, the worlds of science and medicine, the world of politics, and the diverse world of culture – they must be strong enough and sufficiently catechized to testify how the Christian faith constitutes the only valid response…to the

problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society (Williams

94).

To be a true witness of Christ in the world people need to be sufficiently catechized in

the faith. They need to be helped to understand the relevance of the Gospel to their

culture and to allow the Gospel to transform their lives and environments. Catechesis as a

way of transmitting the faith to others and accounting for "the hope that is in us" (1 Pet.

3:15) must entail the use of every available pedagogical tool in making the Good News

available, understandable and meaningful to people leading them to faith and witness of

life. According to Pope John Paul II this should involve helping people to "come to a

deeper understanding of the mysteries of faith and to find meaningful language with

which to convince our contemporaries that they are called to newness of life through

God's love (Williams 55).

The pedagogy of faith that endeavors to use every available resource to transmit the

faith is what Angela Ann Zukowski refers to as kaleidoscope catechesis. Kaleidoscope

catechesis approaches catechesis from the standpoint of the learner (catechumen) and the

comprehensive salvific mission of Jesus. This means that the entire life and ministry of

Jesus: incarnation, proclamation of the Gospel, call to repentance, healing of the sick,

miracles, passion, death and resurrection were all salvific acts of the savior and not just

means to an end. In the same way that the entire life and ministry of Jesus was a

sacrament of salvation so also should every act of evangelization become catechesis and

a sacrament of salvation to people of our time.

In kaleidoscope catechesis, education, health care services, pilgrimages, acts of

charity, prayers and ritual celebrations, etc. are not simply means of evangelization or

catechesis, they are in and of themselves both means and *kairos* moments or events of salvation. Schools, hospitals, are not mere aids to salvation. They are concrete signs of salvation just as in Jesus, medium and message are fused into one.

The essential value of kaleidoscope catechesis is its focus on the person of Jesus Christ as both medium and message of salvation.

The focus of kaleidoscope catechesis is on the learner (catechumen) not the instructor. As a learner-centered pedagogy of faith, kaleidoscope catechesis needs to take the particular context of the learner seriously. It must create an environment that supports and facilitates the learner's ability to learn, understand, and internalize what he is learning and also to share his religious experiences if he chooses to do so. In this way, kaleidoscope catechesis will effectively help catechumens and Christians grow and mature in their faith and within their own cultural situations.

If mission is identified with *kerygma* (proclamation) and not essentially with socio-economic development (although that is also important) as that may be determined by Western societies, then the role of missionaries would be to tell the story of Jesus of Nazareth, his ministry, passion, death and resurrection and what that salvific event of Christ means for the new culture.

From the memoirs of the pioneer missionary to Northwestern Ghana, Father Remigius McCoy (1988), it is clear that the White Fathers' catechetical program had flaws that would account for the religious crisis of many Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians. In *Great Things Happen*, Father McCoy admits that the appearance of "neo-pagans" identified as "members of the educated class who have undergone a religious crisis resulting in loss of faith"can be attributed to "internal upheaval experienced by those

emerging from a traditional cultural setting to a modern one" (230). Aylward Shorter

(1977), also a member of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers), traces

the cause of what may be described as "neo-Christianity" to an inadequacy of

catechetical programs initiated by the White Fathers in frankly and honestly exposing the

strengths and weaknesses of both Christianity and traditional religions to catechumens in

order to enable them (catechumens) to make an informed decision for or against

Christianity. Shorter states: "if this is not done, they will experience a crisis as adults

when they realize that the whole truth was withheld from them …." (156).

Father McCoy further admits the inadequacy of the missionary effort of the White

Fathers in Northwestern Ghana when he states that "some missionaries, who knew none

but American or European steps, tried for a while to teach these to the people and to

discourage them from 'improvising'.…" (McCoy 233). In other words, the White Fathers

in Northwestern Ghana did not always put the Bible in its central position as normative

text and canonical guide of catechesis when they encountered cross-cultural conflicts.

Rather they looked to their home culture for a solution to the pastoral challenges.

Sometimes their cultural sentiments and preferences came ahead of the Biblical norm.

American Catholic missionary, Father Vincent Donovan of the Holy Ghost Fathers,

who worked among the Masai of Tanzania, clearly describes his personal disappointment

and dissatisfaction with missionary methods of evangelization in his book *Christianity*

Rediscovered (1978). In this book, Father Donovan searches for the essence of

missionary activity and the essential message of Christianity. Refering to the missionary

command of Jesus Christ, "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations …" (Mt.

28:19), Donovan explains that in the Greek New Testament the word used for nations is

ethne. This word, according to Donovan, most likely refered to ethnic or cultural groups. Donovan explains that the Biblical writers did not have a sense of nations in the political way that modern society does and, therefore, the command of Jesus Christ meant that his disciples should bring the Gospel to the ethnic groups or cultures of the world (Donovan 29-30). These ethnic groups or cultures already possess the ordinary means of salvation. Consequently, missionary evangelism, according to Donovan, should begin with the realization that every culture or tribal or racial traditions constituted an essential background for salvation and the missionary has no right to disrupt the body of those customs or traditions of the people to whom he goes. Just as Jesus Christ did not come to do away with the law and prophets (Jewish culture and religion) but to fulfill them, so also is the missionary not called to destroy the culture and religious traditions of any people but to fulfill those traditions with the light of the Gospel message. The work of the Christian missionary, according to Donovan, is to share the life and ministry of the God-man born in Bethlehem and risen near Golgotha with the *ethne* of every people. For Father Donovan, "After proclaiming all that God has done in the world because of his love for the world and for human beings, and after announcing the depths to which his love has gone in the person and love of Jesus Christ, the missionary's job is complete" (Donovan 81). The response to the Gospel should come from the receiving culture and not from the missionary. For Donovan, when missionaries show people how they ought to respond to the Gospel, they (missionaries) become imperialist and oppressive. This is so because, their attitude suggests that there is only one way to respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ – the missionary's way. Donovan insists that there "must be many responses possible to the Christian message, responses which are filled with promise and meaning,

but which have hitherto been neither encouraged nor allowed" (83). By this Donovan means that it should be possible to have diffirent cultural responses to the Christian message. Such a cultural response would reflect a commitment to the essential message of the Gospel and foreground the unique role of Jesus Christ as the teacher.

In the light of Donovan's observations, the role of catechesis in producing Christians who are capable of responding to the Christian message in their unique historical and cultural circumstances cannot be overemphasized. That should be the rhetorical outcome of an effective cross-cultural catechetical encounter.

Catechesis or the process of transmitting the history of salvation from one generation to the other is at the core of Christian life and witness. It is informing in faith, hope and charity that shapes the mind and touches the heart leading the person to embrace Christ more fully and completely. It introduces the believer to experiencing the Christian life, which involves the liturgical celebration of the mystery of redemption.

According to Pope Paul VI catechesis is a moment in the evangelizing process that aims to develop with God's help an as yet initial faith and to nourish day by day the Christian life of the faithful. Catechesis holds a certain priority of place among pastoral ministries because it is foundational in ways that other ministries are not. It precedes other pastoral ministries sequentially and developmentally while other pastoral ministries build on the catechetical process in order to achieve their ends. That is why catechesis is so important for the development of a faithful Christian life theologically and rhetorically.

For Thomas Groome (1980), catechesis must recognize that the being and becoming of people in faith is shaped and deepened by their knowing that enabling people to put on

the mind of Christ (Phil. 2: 5) is enhanced by engaging their own minds. That is the philosophical basis for kaleidoscope catechesis. Dagaaba and Sisaala Christian life must be enhanced by their knowing that they are capable of becoming who they genuinely are by putting on the mind of Christ and not the mind of an agent. Catechesis must be a source of empowerment for Dagaaba and Sisaala so that they become the active agents of their own faith development.

The catechetical program of the White Fathers did not succeed in empowering Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians in becoming who they are genuinely called to be by the Gospel. It did not sufficiently help Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians to put on the mind of Christ. Evidence of this is their dual commitment to Christianity and Traditional religious practices as well as their readiness to say yes to Christianity if that is beneficial at one moment and yes to Traditional religious practices if that is beneficial at another moment. Both the Wa Synod and Suom-Dery testify to this.

Among the Dagaaba, the catechumenate program followed by the White Fathers in 1930 was designed by their founder, Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, and may be presented in three main stages. The first stage required the White Fathers to teach the principles of natural law. The second stage was the catechumenate proper. During this stage, catechumens were to be taught specifically Christian truths. These truths were coded in a catechism which was basically a miniature scholastic treatise of doctrine which catechumens were obliged to memorize. The third stage was reserved for the immediate preparation for baptism. The entire process was designed to last four years.

Hastings has rightly commented that the catechumenate program of the White Fathers often failed to achieve a real commitment to Christ, the beginning of a new personal life,

a conversion in the spiritual and not merely in the bare ecclesiastical sense. This is because, the regular course of catechetical instruction required the memorization of answers from the catechism which was expressed in a dry scholastic way, baptism imparted, a new name given and that was almost all. Other reasons for the failure of the catechumenate program of the White Fathers, according to Hastings, are the lack of sufficient personal involvement of priests and poorly trained catechists. Hastings also observes that there were usually too many adults involved in the catechumenate at any given time and such large numbers could hardly enable a personal imbibing of the religious truths contained in the catechism. Mass catechumenate therefore, was hardly an instrument for personal conversion and the achievement of a commitment to Christ (Hastings 126).

In Northwestern Ghana for instance, the statistics on the enrollment of catechumens within very short periods with very few priests and catechists make one wonder how effective the program could have been in leading the individual to personal conversion. For example, between September 9 and November 7, 1931 over 2000 catechumens were enrolled in Jirapa and by December of the same year over 7000 catechumens were enrolled (McCoy 245-246). Even the long period of four years covering the catechumenate could not ensure interiorization of the message of the Gospel and Christian doctrine thereby leading to personal conversion.

Among the greatest demands that Christianity made on Dagaaba and Sisaala converts has been the forcible acceptance (by converts) of monogamy as the only pattern of marriage. It was made, and still is in some mission Churches in Africa, a requirement for the reception of baptism and Holy Communion. This new Christian idea of marriage has

radically altered the traditional family structure of indigenous people of Northwestern Ghana, and, consequently, the support families used to offer one another. The demand for monogamy by missionaries has caused conflict between families and communities and given rise to secret conflict in the minds and lives of many Christians. Kwesi Dickson states that "It cannot be right to brutalize human beings in the name of some so-called Christian law, nor to present catechumens with an undignified choice between 'baptism or wives' which seems to have precious little to do with the love of Christ" (Owoahene-Acheampong 90-91). This Christian teaching and requirement for monogamy conflicts with the leviratic practice in some areas of Northwestern Ghana and adversely affects the ability of widows and orphans to receive the support and care of the family of their deceased husband or father in accordance with custom. That is why the observation of Kwesi Dickson is so apt. Why indeed should people (especially widows and orphans within a leviratic system) be brutalized with the undignified choice between baptism and wives within a social and cultural context where the levirate is the normative way for the upkeep of the widows and orphans? In *African Widows: An Empirical study of the problems of Adapting Western Christian Teachings on Marriage to the Leviratic Custom for the Care of Widows in Four Rural African Societies*, for example, Michael Kirwen (a European missionary to East Africa), sees nothing wrong with the leviratic practice in the parts of East Africa where he was a missionary priest. He expresses concern that the Church's prohibition of the African custom of the levirate is directly related to the ethnocentrism of Western missionaries and the failure of a dominantly Western theology of Christian marriage even to comprehend the values of African marriage and family life. However, many Ghanaian Catholics think that people who were in polygamous marriages

prior to their decision to become Christians could have been admitted to baptism and the other sacraments but given a thorough catechesis on the monogamous nature of Christian marriage. On this issue the Pastoral Congress of Ghana (1997) expressed the following opinion:

> In its catechesis the Church should make it clear the Christian ideal is monogamy and that all should strive towards it. However, certain concessions appear to be necessary in the case of those who were polygamists before they decided to become Christians. They should be permitted to be baptized together with the members of their household, so that they can go to the sacraments. At the same time the Church should make it clear to those who are Christians that no such concessions will be granted them should they become polygamists (Ecclesia in Ghana 114-115).

The White Fathers gave no concessions to polygamists who wanted to receive baptism. They called for cessation of polygamy of any kind, drumming and dancing, puberty and nubility rites. They believed that these practices were obscene, promiscuous and not Christian. Christians were expected not to go to the *bagre* celebrations and eat the *bagre* food. Pupils in Catholic schools were punished for watching the so-called "fetish" or "pagan" dancing of the *bagre* initiates. Frequent attendance at such ceremonies could result in the pupil's expulsion from the Church denominational schools. All of this was done in the name of missionary teachings and observances, and preservation of Christian sanctity.

Ancestor veneration, for instance, was categorically denounced as pagan and contrary to Christianity yet an examination of ancestor veneration reveals its close relationship to

the cult of the Saints in Christianity.

Although the Bible speaks voluminously about the role of dreams as media of divine communication in both Old and New Testaments (Gn 28: 10-22; 37: 5-11; 40: 8; 41: 1-36; Dan 2: 1-46; Mt 1: 20; 2: 13, etc.) which equally had high religious significance in many African cultures missionaries often regarded the consideration and interpretation of dreams as a practice in superstition and pagan ritual.

This catechetical approach of the White Fathers in denouncing some of the cherished cultural and religious practices of the Dagaaba and Sisaala which were not inherently opposed to the Gospel has no doubt contributed to the dual commitment of these people to Christianity and their customary practices depending on which one is beneficial at any given time. Hence the need for a new form of catechesis that pays sufficient attention to the Bible as normative text and the culture of Dagaaba and Sisaala as an incarnational task. That will be the function of kaleidoscope catechesis.

I will therefore discuss and propose alternative catechetical approaches to these problems raised by the White Fathers' catechetical methods in chapter four, Kaleidoscope Catechesis: Theory and Practice. My discussion and catechetical approach will be based on and inspired by the Bible, the doctrinal teachings of the Catholic Church and the rich rhetorical tradition, especially of Saint Augustine.

Chapter Two

The Problems of Missionary Catechesis in The Diocese of Wa

Under the theme, "Let Evangelization Shine Forth in a Renewed Life of Faith," the Wa Diocesan Synod (1998) discussed and identified several issues confronting evangelization and Christian life in the Diocese of Wa from the time evangelization was begun in the area by the White Fathers. The reasons for calling the synod were to reflect upon the state of evangelization after about 70 years of missionary activity in the Diocese of Wa in Northwestern Ghana and to find new ways of effective evangelization, both primary and on-going in the light of the ever new circumstances of our times (Wa Synod 6).

Beside the local concern for Church renewal the synod was also inspired by the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops (1994) which successfully discussed the state of evangelization in Africa. At the end of that Special Assembly for Africa (African Synod) Pope John Paul II challenged local Churches in Africa to take a serious look at themselves so as to discover or rediscover the best methods by which they might continue to effectively proclaim the Gospel now and in the third millennium (Ecclesia in Africa no. 41). An appropriate way to respond to the Pope's challenge would be through a diocesan synod.

In this chapter I will deal specifically with the problems raised by both the content and process of the White Fathers' catechetical approach to evangelization as it was discussed at the Wa Synod and at every other level of the local church's self-reflection and search for growth.

1. Missionary Objective

The goal or specific objective of missionary activity of the White Fathers remains unclear to many Dagaaba and Sisaala today. The Bishop of the Diocese of Wa observed in the *linneamenta* of the Synod of Wa that, "evangelization was perhaps very attractive, because it went along side-by-side with the building of roads, putting in place an economic base, building schools and health centers and fighting against forced labor" (Wa Synod 3). This indicates that many Dagaaba and Sisaala may have seen missionary activity as an opportunity to receive an education, modern medicine, and freedom from forced labor imposed by colonial authorities or exposure to Western civilization.

In addition, the narrative of the mass conversion of Dagaaba to Christianity often attributed to the rain event also affects perceptions of evangelization in the Diocese. Shortly after the arrival of the White Fathers many areas of Northwestern Ghana experienced severe drought. After failing to secure the help of their gods in this desperate situation the indigenous people finally decided to consult the White Fathers and ask the help of their God. The White Fathers agreed to pray with the people on various conditions including the demand to allow interested people to join the catechumenate and not to oblige any woman to marry someone they did not like. After praying with these desparate Dagaaba, rain came in torrents and a mass conversion of Dagaaba to Christianity began. If the rain event is mainly responsible for the mass conversion of these people Sean Hawkins' conclusion may be right that the conversion "had its origin in the social and political contexts of these people"(Hawkins 66; Suom-Dery 40) rather than in religious motivations. This means that in the absence of these precipitating reasons, these people could easily fall away from Christianity.

The ambiguity of accounts for conversions in the Diocese raises serious communication questions about evangelization in the Diocese of Wa. When there is lack of understanding between the communication subjects on the desired objective of their communicative encounter it is rhetorically problematic in terms of evaluation and measurement of the effects of the communicative encounter. Lack of identification between speaker and audience makes persuasion difficult to achieve. According to Kenneth Burke, persuasion is achieved "only insofar as you can talk his language by speech, gesture, tonality, order, image, attitude, idea, identifying your ways with his" (Burke 55).

2. Theological Problems

The White Fathers denounced Dagaaba and Sisaala religious practices as "pagan", "idolatrous", "fetishism", "ancestor worship", etc. They described the Dagaaba and Sisaala religious experience and practices as useless (*bonwiir*). The Bishop of Wa noted at the Synod that,

> the missionaries made relentless efforts to fight against the *'Dagaaba*
>
> *bonwiiri*,' that is, what they called the useless things of the Dagaaba, to the
>
> extent of seeing superstition in many forms of the traditional religions.
>
> Missionaries uncritically rejected most of Dagaaba and Sisaala cultural
>
> practices outright. They dismissed the spirits and powers as being non-
>
> existent.Yet the fact remains that whether these beliefs are true or false,
>
> people live by them. Divination is still widespread and the role of the
>
> ancestors in the lives of many families is still very strong (Wa Synod 25-

26; Kuukure 13; Bekye 40, 276).

The denunciation of traditional religions of Africa and other non-Christian religions as the work of the devil, paganisn, etc. and the labelling of these religions as the haven of the devil raises a serious theological problem, namely the universal salvific will of God, the ubiquity of God's grace and the meaning and purpose of the incarnation. If God wants all people to be saved he will also provide the necessary means for their salvation within the context of their unique history and culture. In this light, the Letter to the Hebrews is very significant: "In times past, God spoke in fragmentary and varied ways to our fathers through the prophets; in this, the final age, he has spoken to us through his Son…" (Heb 1:1-6).

It is therefore theologically problematic for missionaries, including the White Fathers, to condemn and vilify these cultures, indeed any culture, and their religious traditions as pagan or irreligious when these are the fragmentary and varied ways in which God has chosen to prepare that particular people for the final revelation in Jesus Christ. This negative position of the White Fathers toward traditional religions of Dagaaba and Sisaala is not Biblical nor does it follow the positive tradition and teaching of the early Fathers such as Irenaeus, Clement of Rome, Tertullian and also Vatican II as I have mentioned in the previous chapter.

The theological position of the missionaries was inspired by the theology of salvation that propagated the saying "*extra ecclesiam nulla salus*" (outside the Church no salvation), formulated by Origen (d. 254) but rejected by the Council of Trent (1545-1563) in its adoption of the notion of "baptism of desire" (*in voto)*: " 'pagans' who followed their conscience, and lived morally good lives were implicitly expressing a

desire to join the Church and this way, could get through the doorway to salvation"
(Bekye 48). In *Nostra Aetate*, the Second Vatican Council clearly expressed respect for
non-Christian religions and indicated the possibility of salvation for them as taught by the
Council of Trent.

Bernard Lonergan traces this negative attitude of missionaries toward traditional
religions to the "classicist mentality." By classicist mentality Lonergan means the way of
viewing reality and stabilizing it in immutably universal concepts from which deductions
are then made and conceptual categories fashioned to cover everything.

> It is a matter of acquiring and assimilating the tastes and skills, the ideals, virtues
> and ideas, that were pressed upon one in a good home and through a curriculum in
> the liberal arts. This notion, of course, had a very ancient lineage. It stemmed out
> of the Greek *paideia* and Roman *doctrinae studium atque humanitatis*, out of the
> exuberance of the Renaissance and its prunning in the Counter-Reformation
> schools of the Jesuits. Essentially it was a normative rather than an empirical
> notion of culture, a matter of models to be imitated, or ideal characters to be
> emulated, of eternal verities and universally valid laws (Lonergan 101. Hillman
> 3).

Eugene Hillman, quoting Lonergan, explains that classicism was the opposite of
barbarism. People were humanized, developed or civilized to the extent that they learned
to approximate the models and ideals produced and articulated by the cultural genuis of
Western peoples. Missionaries, imbued with these ideals and formed according to these
models, sent out from Europe and North America to evangelize "barbarous" or
"primitive" peoples, would have no qualms about imposing their own culture as a

precondition for admission through baptism into the Christian community. They would

do this in the name of God, imagining they were conferring "the double benefit of both

the true religion and the true culture" (Lonergan 363; Hillman 4).

According to Hillman, Western culture was also seen as the one norm against which

all other cultures could be evaluated on a scale of higher or lower, primitive or advanced,

backward or progressive (Lonergan 93; Hillman 4).

But it is important to realize that every culture, including Dagaaba amd Sisaala

cultures, have good elements upon which or by means of which God reveals his will to

the people. Bishop Bemile acknowedged this at the Wa Synod:

> these (*some Dagaaba and Sisaala cultural practices*) have certain values, such as
>
> sacrificial rites, meals of communion with ancestors, rites of purification,
>
> reconciliation and conjuration of evil during bad weather or epidemics and
>
> divinatory practices. Their wholesale abolition without Christian institutes has
>
> made Christians to spontaneously return to these ritual practices in times of
>
> epidemics, disaster and misfortune (Wa Synod 3).

3. Catechezing Cross-Culturally with an Ethnocentric Bias

In a cross-cultural catechetical encounter, respect for other cultural practices is

important. In fact it was demanded by the Sacred Congregation for Propagation of the

Faith. In 1659 this Sacred Congregation issued the following instruction to the Vicars

Apostolic of foreign missions:

> Do not in any way attempt, and do not on any pretext persuade these people to
>
> change their rites, habits and customs, unless they are openly opposed to religion

and good morals. For what could be more absurd than to bring France, Spain,

Italy or any other European country to China? (Bekye 68).

In 1939 Pope Pius XII expressed the need for respect for other cultures in an encyclical

letter, *Summi Pontificatus* (AAS31, 1939):

The Church of Christ…cannot and does not think of depreciating the peculiar

characteristics which each people, with jealous and understandable pride,

cherishes and retains as a precious heritage. (Therefore) all that, in such usages

and customs, is not inseparably bound up with religious errors will always be the

object of sympathetic consideration, and whenever possible, will be preserved and

developed….” (Bekye 69).

Without respect for other cultures one cannot enter into the worldview of the other.

The specific problem being identified here is that the ethnocentric bias of missionaries

foregrounded their cultural and religious superiority over the new culture into which they

went and this made it difficult or impossible for them to appreciate the cultural values of

the new culture, in this case, Dagaaba and Sisaala culture. Some ethnocentric terms used

by missionaries were, “savages”, “uncivilized”, “barbarous people”. Other ethnocentric

terms with religious undertones were, “heathens”, “infidels”, “pagans”(Bekye 63). These

terminologies used to depict religions in Africa are obviously misnomers. African

religions cannot be said to be “paganism” (pagan comes from the Latin root for rugged,

country person) nor “heathenism” (a heathen being somebody who is supposed not to

know God. Africans definitely know God) nor any of the other derogatory words used to

describe African religions. In an article entitled, “Can Christianity Dialogue with African

Traditional Religion?” Peter K. Sarpong, Archbishop of Kumasi Diocese in Ghana

explains in detail how any and all of these terminologies are misnomers and an uncharitable way of describing African religions.

The Wa Diocesan Synod affirmed that, Christianity introduced by the White Fathers has overlooked the worldview of the Dagaaba and Sisaala and remarked that,

> … as long as Christianity fails to take into account the worldview of the people through inculturation, it will fail to offer the adherents the means to relate with the powers and realities they daily experience in their world (Wa Synod 55).

Due to the failure of the White Fathers to appreciate and enter into dialogue with Dagaaba and Sisaala worldview their catechesis has resulted in what the Wa Synod describes as follows:

> … so many years after Christianity has been implanted in our Diocese, we still have many of our Christians having one foot in traditional religion and the other in Christianity. In various areas of their lives, they feel torn between their culture and Christianity. Examples of such areas include the belief in the power of Shrines (*kontonle*), the fear of the earth which results in visits to the earth shrine to make oaths or drink the water mixed with the earth as a sign of innocence (*tengan tie per kyenno ane tengan kuo nyub*), the fear of the rain indicative in the practice of climbing the "rain roof" to swear an oath before the rain and so on. There are also those who undergo the initiation into the *bagr* cult, the widowhood rite and initiation rites dedicating them to some given spirit cult (*kontonbage*). Many see no problem in performing traditional sacrifices as a condition

for obtaining herbal treatment. Also, the beliefs and practices relating to
witchcraft, soothsaying, and the notion of the tying of the soul are still
very strong with us. In all these cases, people do not feel psychologically
secure…. (Wa Synod 55).

Curiously, this observation on the state of Christianity based on the ethnocentric
attitude of the catechetical agents is not unique to the Diocese of Wa. Archbishop Buti
Tlhagale of Bloemfontein (South Africa) makes the following observation regarding
evangelization in his part of South Africa 100 years after missionary evangelization:

It is not clear whether the locus of power has indeed shifted from the ancestors to
God or to Jesus Christ or the Trinity for that matter. Ancestors are still not seen as
mere parents who are deceased. Condemnation of ancestor veneration by the
Church has simply driven it underground. Traditional healers who claim to
receive their revelations from the ancestors still ply their trade with a measure of
success. Commands or instructions from the ancestors continue to be
communicated through dreams… the indigenous people continue to be a "cure
seeking" people. They seek protection from evil spirits that populate their
cosmos…. Rituals that are performed within the African social world continue to
be understood as efficacious.

A similar evaluation is observed in Eastern Nigeria by Archbishop Albert K.
Obiefuna. In a pastoral letter marking the centenary celebration of evangelization in
Eastern Nigeria, Archbishop Obiefuna stated that,

Christianity has made an impact on our people…. But times without number the
remark reaches us that our Christians are worshipping 'idols', false gods. They

swear on idols. They erect shrines in their homes, in their compounds. They hide fetishes in their shades in the market places and in their workshops. Catechists, seminarians on apostolic work in the towns and villages are stunned at the degree of idol worship and superstitious practices that still exist among a people that are mostly baptised Catholics. At every retreat, Catholics bring out from their homes fetishes and charms of all kinds. Idol worship, superstitious practices, fear of witchcraft, charms, and all sorts of vain observances are realities among our Catholics. We cannot simply deny they obtain.

According to Hillman, a cultural heritage is necessary for each human being, enabling the person rationally and freely to encounter and interpret reality. Hillman states that we tend to judge pejoratively the ways of other peoples whose historical institutions and cultural matrices are very different from our own. We are inclined to judge other peoples only in the light of the historical experiences of our own people and according to the values emphasized and the norms developed within, and for the purposes of, our own historico-cultural world. In terms of religion, each ethnic-culture group tends to see its own religion as superior; some hold their gods to be exclusively authentic, thus demanding that all peoples bow down before them (Hillman 20).

Hillman states further that when it comes to religion it is important to realize that religions have common purposes insofar as they meet the same general needs experienced by all human beings and find a place in all cultures. Referring to Sizemore, Jr. Hillman states that "No two religious traditions are alike just as no two individuals are alike,…, but it remains true that in terms of religious phenomenology the Christian experience is not radically different from others" (Hillman 20).

Hillman continues that all religious experience, aside from its myriad historico-cultural particularizations, consists at bottom in the experience of God, the experience of self and the encounter with our neighbor, for we experience ourselves by experiencing other persons, not other things (Hillman 20). A people's faith in an established order of existence that accords with their *ethos* and world view occurs within and is expressed through and sustained by an integrated complex of symbol systems, that is, their particular culture. Recognition of the validity of each religion for its own adherents does not imply that all faith communities are equal in every way, or that each has nothing to learn from the varied historico-cultural ways in which faith is expressed in different religious systems, or even in the same religion under the influence of diverse cultures and historical periods. Particular beliefs held in one faith community may offer a more adequate and credible image of the deity than certain beliefs associated with another religion (Hillman 21).

For Hillman, Christian tradition provides grounds for believing that faith is gratuitously proffered by God to every human being, because God truly wills the salvation of everyone. This faith, at bottom, consists in our radical and free acceptance (or non-rejection) of the rational and historico-cultural human nature that, while defining us, enables us to become what we are supposed to be in relation to God and to one another (Hillman 22).

4. Mass Catechumenate

The problem raised by mass catechumenate is the inability of catechumens to imbibe the content of the Christian teaching and interiorize it for their personal spiritual

nourishment and growth. Adrian Hastings has raised and discussed this problem in *Church and Mission in Modern Africa* and I have referred to the problem in the previous chapter. The problem of mass catechumenate is how to make the catechumenate an instrument for conversion in the personal sense, the achievement of a commitment to Christ. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the statistics from the missionary records show that between September 9 and November 7, 1931 over 2000 catechumens were enrolled in Jirapa and by December of the same year over 7000 catechumens were enrolled (McCoy 245-246). The first catechist training program was inaugurated on November 16, 1931 and the first Dagaare catechism appeared in the fall of that year. Given the number of priests and lay catechists (yet to be trained) at this time, one simply wonders how effective catechesis could have been to such large groups of people on a personal level.

5. Memorization of Mini-Scholastic Treatises (the Catechism)

The problem here is not so much the fact of memorization of texts as the subject matter (content) being memorized. In *Catechesi tradendae*, Pope John Paul II expresses his firm belief that certain elements of the history of salvation have to be memorized, such as the Ten Commandments, the Creed, the Our Father, some Biblical texts, and some prayers, etc. But he also believes that memorization as a catechetical method is problematic when the content of catechesis is expressed in deeply philosophical or theological language thereby making its meaning immediately elusive to simple and uneducated people like several Dagaaba and Sisaala. Basically the catechism of the White Fathers was a mini-scholastic treatise.

The White Fathers used stereotyped questions and answers like: who created you? Answer: God created me. Can a person go to heaven if he/she has not been baptized? Answer: No, a person who is not baptized cannot go to heaven, and so on. It was in this context that the Christian faith was taught: God as Father, the mystery of the incarnation, the Holy Trinity, the Church as agent of grace and salvation, life after death and the reward of heaven or the punishment of hell. It was also in this context that the traditional religious beliefs and practices of Dagaaba and Sisaala were denounced as *bonwiir* (useless) (Bekye 276). For example, the final funeral rites that the people performed to ensure the smooth passage of their dead into the afterlife, and all religious rites that had to do with the ancestors were considered wholesale to be superstitious and were to be stopped (Bekye 281). However, when one takes a closer look at some teachings in the catechism and the *bagre* myth of the Dagaaba a significant resemblance or parallel is observed in the religious belief of Christianity and the *Bagre* association. Bekye gives the example of how parallels have been found between the catechism questions and their answers, such as, who created you? Why did God create you? and some religious truth in *bagre* myth.

Catechism: who created us and put us on earth? Answer: God created us and put us on earth.

Bagre myth: It is God that created man, and the beings of the wild, and the fowl, and leaves, and all things, and stones, and guardians, and deities [BB 4117-4126]" (Bekye 281).

Hastings believes that catechisms and traditional methods of religious teaching have been far too atomistic. He states that a catechism consisting simply of a vast series of

questions and answers seems to put everything on to the same level of importance and fails to relate all other doctrines effectively to the great central truths that really constitute the message of life, the Good News (Hastings 145).

Hastings suggests, and I agree with him, that our teaching must be based on Sacred Scripture. Throughout history, the Catholic Church as compared with the Protestant Churches has not had the reputation of encouraging Christians to read and interpret the Bible by themselves in order to allow the Biblical text to speak to them directly. The Catholic Church has always had a suspicion that lay people (people not ordained or trained in Biblical theology and exegesis) will misinterepret the Bible. This is in contrast to the Reformers' insistence on making the Bible available to all people so that they may read it for themselves and be inspired by the message contained in Scripture. If Sacred Scripture is the inspired Word of God why would any Church be afraid to let God speak directly to His people? Obviously, the concern of the Catholic Church has been to preserve doctrine rather than allow God's word (Scripture) to speak directly to people. The catechism of the Council of Trent is a perfect example of the Catholic Church's concern for doctrine over Scripture. In that catechism, the dogmatic teaching of the Church is expressed as a reactionary, anti-Reformers' document that states in clear, unambiguous legal formulations the doctrine of the Catholic Church and the consequence of defection from that doctrine.

Catechesis should be grounded in Scripture and catechumens, in fact, all Christians should be encouraged to read Sacred Scripture by themselves because God speaks in and through Scripture just as he does through human agents. This would be a part of the functions of kaleidoscope catechesis.

Fortunately, there is now a growing awareness within the Catholic Church for the need to encourage Christians and catechumens to read and meditate on the Bible privately as well as communally. Some efforts are being made to rewrite editions of the Catholic catechism that contain Biblical texts and citations to support doctrine not necessarily as proof texts but as an expression that doctrine is part and parcel of the narrative of salvation.

Catechumens and Christians must also be encouraged to read and study Sacred Scripture on its own merit. This means that Scripture must be available in order to be read. As at now, the entire Bible has not yet been translated into Dagaare and Sisaali (the languages spoken by Dagaaba and Sisaala).

As part of kaleidoscope catechesis in the Diocese of Wa it will be imperative to make the entire Bible available to Dagaaba and Sisaala in their own language so that they can hear God speak to them directly and personally.

The question and answer method of religious instruction denied the possibility of dialogue between the religious experiences of the new converts with Christianity. Although some illiterate Dagaaba and Sisaala could memorize the entire catechism, the meaning of these treatises eluded them. Some amount of dialogue or sharing of religious experiences would have been of tremendous help to the catechumens' understanding of the new religion. The consequence of the lack of dialogue is that these people remain infants in the faith, doers of things they did not understand and consequently always dependent on the priests for clarification on every single detail of life that happened not to have been covered in the catechism.

The role of kaleidoscope catechesis in promoting dialogue and encouraging

catechumens to share and reflect upon their personal religious experiences is to posit the importance of such experiences, no matter how nebulous or impure, as a rhetorical framework for their eventual discovery of the religious truth that they have been searching for. St. Augustine's own search for Truth or Wisdom as recorded in the *Confessions* is a clear testimony to the importance of reflecting on one's personal journey of faith (no matter how cluttered or impure).

6. Creation of Mortal Sin Complex

   The catechism of the White Fathers created the impression that the people were constantly in danger of committing mortal sins and this created a "mortal sin complex" (Hastings 140) in many early converts to Christianity. Archbishop Kpiebaya remarks this when he asks this rhetorical question:

> Is it therefore any wonder that the Dagaaba, who had a very sharp conscience in
> their own traditional morality, should more or less become scrupulous now under
> the influence of this so-called Christian morality, the observance of which is
> absolutely necessary for heaven? The Dagao Christian now sees more sins than he
> used to see in his own morality, and being a man excessively conscious he
> inevitably now interprets some of the most natural actions in his life as sinful acts
> (Kpiebaya 137; Suom-Dery 28).

Although Suom-Dery has some difficulty accepting this position of Kpiebaya wholesale, he nevertheless agrees that Kpiebaya's position is

> correctly leveled against a type of presentation of moral theology which failed, in
> the evaluation of human action and behaviour, to emphasise the human subject

and his total existential and relational context, but rather concentrated in a sterile,

casuistic, individualistic and minimalist way on isolated sinful acts, and this is the

moral theology that was transposed onto African Christianity (Suom-Dery 30).

It is important to note that both Kpiebaya and Suom-Dery are referring to the moral

teachings of the White Fathers in Northwestern Ghana.

Hastings cautions that every catechesis must be positive. He states that the life of

Christ and life in Christ is far more than avoiding sins. It is a life of doing and so must the

life of Christians be (Hastings 149). In some places in Africa, even failure (in fact

inability) to pay Church tax could be considered a mortal sin.

Insistence on sin and the creation of a mortal sin complex in the minds of Christians

raises the question of the meaning of life in Christ. The life in Christ is a life of

witnessing to the presence and action of God in the individual's history marked by

fragility and sin. The disciples of Jesus were fragile and sinful. For instance, Judas

betrayed his master (Mt. 26: 14-25), Peter rejected Jesus (Mt. 26: 69-74), and the sons of

Zebedee wanted positions of power in the kingdom (Mk. 10:35-37). Despite these

expressions of fragility and sin, Jesus confirmed them as his friends and sent them on the

mission to confirm and strengthen others in the faith (Jn. 21:15-17). Therefore, both

theologically and rhetorically, life in Christ is a life of humble service in imitation of

Jesus, the master (Mk. 10: 42-45). The creation of a mortal sin complex weakens

enthusiasm and kills the power of creative invention which the incarnation is meant to

restore to humanity. That is why it is important for kaleidoscope catechesis to confirm the

fragility of the human being but at the same time to restore hope and instil a sense of

mission in the minds of fragile and sinful Dagaaba and Sisaala.

7. Treatment of Would-be Polygamous Converts

Dagaaba and Sisaala polygamists who wanted to receive baptism were asked by the White Fathers to "divorce" their wife (ves) except one before they could receive baptism. Although the demand for monogamy is in accordance with the Christian teaching on marriage it raises some pastoral and moral problems. In the first place, polygamy was culturally acceptable in Dagaaba and Sisaala culture. Many of these people were already in polygamous situations prior to their contact with Christianity. The problem therefore was why these people were prevented from receiving baptism when they did not willfully violate the Christian norm. Secondly, the demand that polygamists leave their second or third wife before they could receive baptism raised the problem of what to do with these wives who were let go by their husbands. Was it morally justifiable to leave a woman after she had been married to a man and probably had children with him in a society and cultural context where family is the proper locus for the social and economic support for women and children? Was the "divorce" morally justifiable given the fact that the woman faced the possibility of not being remarried to someone else and therefore becoming an object of social redicule in a society where marriage is highly prized? Was it justifiable to expose her children to the possibility of illtreatment by their step mother and half-siblings?

Regarding this issue Hillman remarks that Christianity teaches the indissolubility of marriage but turns around to dissolve the former marriages of African polygamists. He observes that the Catholic Church has marriage laws that do not seem to have been formulated with the African situation in mind and so many Christians drift into a

permanent state of excommunication even without knowing it (Hillman 165).

The leviratic practice in some areas of Northwestern Ghana is another issue closely related to polygamy and of concern in missionary catechesis. On the issue of the levirate, Michael Kirwen poses this serious question: "The African widow's problem: Does the Church understand?" For many widows in the leviratic system, the levirate is the only decent way of life. Due to the complex nature of marriage among many African societies (see appendix on Dagaaba and Sisaala conception of marriage), Kirwen suggests that the Church should allow the discussion on the levirate and other customs to be done within the specific African context by people who are indigenous members of these various cultures and their evaluations be given major consideration in the formulation of pastoral policies. Kirwen contends that foreign missionaries cannot and should not be the sole guides in judging the fitness or unfitness of particular customs in the life of the African Christian Church (Kirwen 15).

Missionaries could have made concessions to baptize people who were already customarily married to more than one wife without jeopardizing the Christian norm. That is the opinion expressed in *Ecclesia in Ghana*.

8. Creation of a New Social Order

The Christian message taught in the catechumenate introduced new values, beliefs and behavior patterns, which soon clashed with existing ones and led in many cases to the crumbling of existing social structures. Obviously, Dagaaba and Sisaala societies, like all societies, have been subject to social change due to several factors including migration, wars, trade, etc. However, the new social order created due to their contact with the

missionaries and the influence of the missionary teaching on this new worldview was such as they had never experienced before.

Family quarrels and conflicts with the earth priests (*tendaana*) arose, due to increasing disregard by catechumens for certain traditional practices judged to conflict with their new religion such as the *Takodaa. Takodaa* was the traditional day of rest on which no one did any farm work. The missionaries asked catechumens to disregard the *Takodaa* and respect the Sunday instead.

Baptism was often regarded by many young people as a step toward schooling. Education eventually created a new social class and a new system of power and control in a typically illiterate society. The moral authority of men in families was challenged by the teaching of the missionaries. Very soon women began to disobey male orders and often ran to the missionaries for protection. Many catechumens and Christians began to disobey the political authority and were often dragged into the courts or flogged. A new world order had been created for Dagaaba and Sisaala with both positive and negative consequences as Suom-Dery has discussed in *Family as Subject of Morality* (263-282). However, the one single negative consequence of this new social order has been the creation of a new generation of Dagaaba and Sisaala who find themselves without roots. They are not well grounded in the culture of the forebears and they do not also feel fully assimilated into the Western culture. This has often led many of these people to a crisis of identity. Suom-Dery describes this crisis very clearly:

> The real situation is one of tension between tradition (*saakomno/saakonyele*) and modernity (*zielieb/zielieb-yele*), between continuity (*kyaa-aro*) and discontinuity (*liebo*), between Western styles of life (*Nasa-yele*) and African traditional life

(*Teng-kuong-yele*), and between traditional religion (*Saakom-sor-puoru*) and the

Christian religion (*Krista-sor-puoru*) (Suom-Dery 262).

9. Priestly Formation

The problem with the priestly formation program is the uniquely Western style

formation that is given to African seminarians. Until today, directives on the formation of

priests from what is called Mission lands still comes from the Congregation for the

Propagation of Faith in Rome (see Vatican II document, *Optatam Totius* and Apostolic

Exhortation by Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* March 25, 1992). These Mission

lands are basically Third World countries of Africa, Latin America and some parts of

Asia.The program trains seminarians in the model of Europe and North America and then

sends them into an African context.

In the introduction to Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Richard Shaull notes

that, "[T]here is no such thing as a neutral educational process." According to Shaull

education either functions as an instrument to facilitate the integration of the younger

generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it

becomes "the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality

and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world" (Freire 15). The

nature and context of priestly formation designed in Rome and executed in many African

seminaries often results in some African priests becoming uprooted from their own

people and culture. Sometimes they become more severe critics of their own people and

culture. Such a formation program does not empower these priests to become agents of

inculturation within their own cultural environment. Seminary programs make it virtually

impossible for seminarians to immerse themselves deeply in their indigenous cultural worlds. In terms of empowering local clergy with knowledge that leads to creativity and effective inculturation the advice of Paulo Freire would be worthwhile:

> a truly liberating pedagogy sets the task of demythologizing; it regards dialogue as indispensable to the act of cognition which unveils reality; it makes students critical thinkers; it bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of men as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation (71).

In light of Freire's position, seminary formation in Africa should prepare by enabling priests to fully grasp the length and breadth, depth and height of the worldview of their people that includes spirit possession, ancestor veneration, polygamous marriage customs, divination, witchcraft, etc. in order to respond in a uniquely African way to this worldview under the guiding light of the Gospel message.

According to Hillman, seminary formation has too often produced priests who are notably uninterested in the religious and artistic traditions of their own people. Their resocialization experience into the invading culture and their encasement in a clerical subculture shaped by neo-scholasticism and legalism, has led to a situation in which the principle of inculturation can hardly be discussed, much less implemented (Hillman 43).

Priestly formation programs designed from Rome and executed in Africa have often produced "sacramental technicians" rather than ministers who are equipped to inspire, encourage and strengthen people in the faith and hope they share with them (Ecclesia in Ghana 119). Such a formation program "domesticates" young seminarians in the ways and tastes of the dominant Western Christian culture, thereby denying them their

ontological and historical vocation of becoming more fully human.

On a positive note, priestly formation should help priests to become effective preachers of the Good News within the unique cultural context of the people to which they minister. It should empower them with a theology that is willing to bridge life's gaps, a theology that goes to the root of life's tragedies and searches for the creative power to renew it. Seminary formation should help priests to respect other cultures and ethnic groups, and equip them with tools to engage people of other religious beliefs, political affiliation or socio-economic status in a way that promotes peace and harmony within the community in which they find themselves.

10. The Meaning of Conversion

Conversion is the great initial factor out of which a new Church grows. Traditionally, Catholics have come to understand conversion to mean the acceptance of a Church allegiance - the external sign being baptism. The school and the hospital have been the two most effective means by which missionaries have brought many Africans to Christianity. But is it a conversion to Jesus Christ and his offer of salvation or it is a conversion to something else, such as formal education or socio-economic development? Conversion in religious parlance is about a change in the religious beliefs, attitudes, values and practices of a person or group of people. It involves a change from one religious state to another religious state. The change may be permanent or temporary. The mission of the Church is not to achieve a temporary conversion to Christ but a life long commitment to Christ and the Gospel. By this criteria, the success of missionary activity is not in the number of people on the baptismal registers but the quality of Christian lives

lived as a result of a thoroughgoing program of catechesis. That is why the paucity of Christian life among Dagaaba and Sisaala in Northwestern Ghana as evidenced by the Synod of Wa clearly demonstrates the weakness and problems of the catechetical program of the evangelizers, the White Fathers.

In conclusion to this chapter, the summary of William J. Bausch on some of the inadequacies of missionary evangelization is very appropriate. Bausch identifies four main areas in which missionary activity in general may be said to have been a failure. First, most missionary societies did not build on the natural culture and symbols of the natives. They rather sought to replace native talent and genius with European models. Second, most missionaries were consistently condescending and chauvinistic. They paid a lot of attention to their national sentiments and interests. Beside that, most missionaries did not provide a self-sustaining home-grown Christianity, but a caste system of White missionary and subservant foreign people. Third, the rivalries among missionary groups and orders drained effort and often undermined effective work. Fourth, missionary enterprise was overly entangled with the crown, the inevitable trade, and the economic merchants. Christianity became identified with Western colonialism, imperialism, and exploitation.

Hastings corroborates the summary of Bausch by identifying three major problems of poor catechesis in the following way:

First of all, the Europeanness of most of Christian religious practice, the failure to adapt and the consequent lack of relationship with the deepest moods and ways of expression of African peoples.

Secondly, failure at the marriage level which includes the application of crippling

legislation.

Thirdly, failure to cater – except with schools – for the quickly growing numbers who in towns or elsewhere have got outside the traditional pattern of village life, which almost exclusively the missionary Church has attempted to tackle.

I agree with Hastings that the way of teaching any set of ideas must depend upon the context within which they will be understood. If this context is very different for teacher and taught, deep misunderstanding is almost bound to arise. Missionaries have rushed straight into the provision of social services and an extensive catechumenate without any adequate prior initiation into the local tribal mind. The inevitable effect is that Christianity either does not penetrate deeply or becomes seriously twisted. It may be seen as primarily a permit for schooling rather than as a way of faith and life (Hastings 59-60).

Chapter Three

Rhetoric of Catechezing

The rhetoric of catechizing is essentially linked to the rhetorical performance of theology. Both theology and catechesis seek to make the Word of God meaningful and understandable to people within their unique historical and cultural context through theorizing and instruction.

In their article, "Perfoming Faith: The Peaceable Rhetoric of God's Church," James Fodor and Stanley Hauerwas explain that because "theology is first and foremost a way of talking, a way of thinking, a way of using language to make sense of God, the world, and ourselves, it is indelibly marked by both poetic and rhetorical qualities" (Fodor & Hauerwas 385). Refering to Rowan Williams, Fodor and Hauerwas state that theology is a language used by a specific group of people to make sense of their world – not so much to explain it as to find words that will hold or reflect what… is sensed to be solid, authoritative, and creative of where they stand (Fodor & Hauerwas 385). The two scholars affirm that theology is rhetoric – in as much as rhetoric is a way of talking, and a way of transforming and negotiating with or in language. The proper exercise of theology never occurs in abstraction from specific historical contexts. Its form is not separate from its content. In other words, because theology cannot be rightly understood apart from a consideration of who is doing it, with whom, and to what ends, its task is perpetually self-renewing, and in that sense unfinished (Fodor & Hauerwas 386).

In a clearer and more elaborate way Pope John Paul II describes the rhetoric of catechizing in *Redemptor hominis* [RH] (1979) and *Catechesi tradendae* [CT] (1979) as a responsibility for the truth and a service to humanity. These documents and other Post-

Synodal documents express both appreciation for and concern about missionary

catechesis in the Church. In C*atechesi tradendae*, for instance, Pope John Paul II

emphasizes that catechesis must go beyond the narrow meaning and approach expressed

in the formulaic style and commonly given in didactic expositions of the faith. (CT. no.

25.) This observation by Pope John Paul II also applies to the catechism and catechetical

method of the White Fathers. The question and answer method of the White Fathers

focussed on simply teaching the formulas that express the Christian faith but did not

adequaltely prepare Dagaaba and Sisaala to "attain to the unity of the faith and of the

knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the

fullness of Christ." It did not adequately prepare Dagaaba and Sisaala to make a defense

to anyone or situation that calls them to account for the hope that is in them (CT. no. 25.).

As we will discuss in this chapter, baptism and Christian life are rhetorically an

"investment and performance" that co-exist as a result of persuasion. To be truly

persuaded to invest and live out the Christian life Dagaaba and Sisaala needed to be

exposed to the truth about God, about man and about the world as well as their dignity as

individuals and as a people deriving from God's creative act. This needed to be done in

an atmosphere of communicative exchange that is grounded in mutual respect between

rhetor and interlocutor (catechist and catechumen; missionary and indigenous cultures;

Christianity and Traditional African Religions).

In this chapter, I will follow the teaching of John Paul II in *Redemptor hominis* and

Catechesi tradendae in discussing the rhetoric of catechezing as the transmission of the

content of divine truth revealed in Sacred Scripture, witnessed to by the Tradition of the

Church and taught by the Magisterium as a responsibility for the truth and a service to

human dignity. This position is also informed by scholarship on rhetorical theory.

Catechesis in the Church: A Brief Overview

The early Church had ways of transmitting the message of Christ to others (often orally) and welcoming them into the Christian community through baptism. At the request of Deogratias, Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, wrote *De catechizandus rudibus* to help the catechist to realize that both doctrine and method of communication were important in catechesis. In *De catechizandus rudibus*, Augustine introduced the narrative model of catechesis as the rhetorical framework by which catechumens were to be introduced to the history of salvation, the doctrine of the Church in a way took the catechumen's cultural socio-economic or educational background into consideration.

The Augustinian catechetical method was generally followed throughout the Middle Ages until the Council of Trent in the 16th century. The Council of Trent developed an elaborate catechesis in the form of semi-doctrinal treatises mainly as a way of preventing heresy and counteracting the teachings of the Reformers. This catechesis was prepared as a summary of Christian teaching and traditional theology for use by parish priests. Although the Augustinian method of catechesis became the basic model for several centuries up till the Council of Trent several other catechisms were written prior to the Council of Trent. For instance, Cassiodorus' (ca. 490-583) *Institutiones divinarum et saecularium lectionem* followed Augustine's model. So too was the *Etymologiae* of Isidore of Seville (ca. 550-636), the *De institutione clericorum* of Hrabanus Maurus (ca. 784-856), and *Catechismus Ecclesiae* of George Wicelius (1535). Throughout the Middle

Ages preaching was the most revered rhetorical form of catechesis or religious instruction.

The catechetical program of the White Fathers was based on the catechism of the Council of Trent. However, the unique contribution of the catechism used by the White Fathers which has persisted to this day was the introduction of the four-year catechumenate introduced by their Founder, Cardinal Lavigerie. In the first two years of the White Fathers' catechumenate, people who expressed interest in Chrisianity were taught the principles of natural law followed by another two years of teaching specifically Christian truths and preparation for baptism.

In the shadow of the Second Vatican Council Pope John Paul II, building on the teachings of his predecessors and the tradition of the early Fathers, has developed an elaborate rhetoric of catechizing which I will now discuss under various headings.

Catechesis as Pedagogy of Faith

Catechesis is a (systematic) process of sharing the Christian faith from one generation to the other. It is informing in faith, hope and charity that shapes the mind and touches the heart, leading a person to embrace Christ fully and completely. It introduces the believer more fully into experiencing the Christian life, which involves the liturgical celebration of the mystery of Redemption.

Within the process of evangelization, catechesis "is a continual process of initiation into the life of the Christian community, acceptance of the mystery of Jesus' redeeming life and ministry, and Christian witness in the world" (Pollard & Kersanac 25-29). Catechesis always stands in the service of the ministry of the Word.

Church documents consistently underscore the necessity of catechesis in the evangelizing mission of the Church as a moment in the evangelization process. As an element in the evangelization process, the aim of catechesis is to develop, with God's help, an as yet initial faith and to nourish day by day the Christian life of all the faithful.

Catechesis is Christocentric. This means that catechesis aims at revealing in the Person of Christ the whole of God's eternal design reaching fulfillment in that Person. It is to seek to understand the meaning of Christ's actions and words and of the signs worked by him, for they simultaneously hide and reveal his mystery. The ultimate aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion with Jesus Christ because only he can lead people to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make them share in the life of the Holy Trinity.

Christocentricity in catechesis also means the intention to transmit the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Truth that he communicates and not one's own teaching or that of some other master. Catechesis teaches the living mystery of God and not a body of abstract truths. The whole life of Christ was a continual teaching: his silences, his miracles, his gestures, his prayer, his love for people, his special affection for the little and the poor, his acceptance of the total sacrifice on the cross for the redemption of the world, and his resurrection are the actualization of his word and the fulfillment of revelation (CT no. 9).

Catechesis is aimed at making Christians realize that "All Christ's riches are for every individual and are everybody's property" (CCC 519). The Catechism of the Catholic Church states further that "We are called only to become one with Him, for He enables us as the members of His Body to share in what He lived for us in His flesh as our model." By the power of grace, "Christ enables us to live in him all that he himself lived, and he

lives it in us" (CCC 521). Theologically, every baptized person has the right to receive from the Church instruction and education enabling him or her to enter into a truly Christian life; and from the viewpoint of human rights, every human being has the right to seek religious truth and to adhere to it freely.

Catechesis should be a source of nourishment for the other ministries in the Church because all other ministries within the Church have their source in catechesis. The essence of catechesis is to call people to communion with Christ, that is, in communion with the mysteries of His life. Every believer and every generation of believers, must return to this well of Divine life in order to draw living water from it. After the initial conversion of faith, growth in the Christian life comes about through prayer. Catechesis must help people to return to the life-giving waters of the well which is Christ otherwise, catechesis will suffer from what Pope John Paul II calls the drama of our age, the rift between faith and life.

According to Pope John Paul II, catechesis essentially has both vertical and horizontal dimensions. It is an act of fidelity to God the Father (vertical) and a service to man (horizontal). Pope John Paul II also states that all catechesis must be marked by a sense of responsibility to the truth and a sense of service to others.

Catechesis as the Sense of Responsibility to Truth

Refering to this text of Scripture, "The word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me," (Jn. 14:24) Pope John Paul II shows that responsibility for revealed truth which is the property of God himself is something Christ himself as prophet and teacher felt as a need to stress. Therefore, the Pope believes that the same

fidelity to the truth must be a constitutive quality of the Church's faith. In the same way that St. Paul said "I live now not I but Christ lives in me" (Gal 2:20), all who are baptized and most especially all who are engaged in the Church's catechetical activity must likewise be able to say, "My teaching is not mine, but His who sent me" (Jn. 7:16; CT no. 6).

Catechesis should be directed by the same motive that inspired Christ, namely, a sense of responsibility for the truth. In Christ, fidelity to the Father is not an exterior reality; because the Father and Son are one, it is wholly interior. Christ's sense of responsibility for the truth is measured, not by something outside of Himself, but by His own oneness with the Father. Thus, He could say that He is Himself the truth (John 14:6) because He and the Father are one (John 14:10-11).

In contrast to Christ, the human agent of catechesis is not the source of truth, nor is he sufficiently conformed to it so as to be completely, though indeed in a limited way, identified with it. The agent is made for the truth, the truth sets him free, and his task is to conform to Divine truth as thoroughly as possible. But the truth itself always remains greater than he is; it can always make a claim on him and call him to conversion. It can also judge him, and this more than anything else distinguishes his relation to the truth from Christ's identity with the truth. Because the human agent is not the source of truth, since the truth is not identical with the being of the human person, human beings need an objective and divinely guaranteed measure of revealed truth. This is why we cannot free ourselves. Only the Son, who is the Truth, can set us free (John 8:32) Grace makes us sharers in God's very nature (2 Peter 1:4), and this makes us co-naturalized to the truth. According to John Paul II, the truth comes from outside of us, from God, but grace makes

the discovery of Divine truth like a coming home, like a finding of our true and deepest self. John Paul II insists that the prophetic nature of the attitude of Christian testimony is centered in the sense of responsibility towards the gift of truth contained in Revelation. This is expressed through the *sensus fidei* (sense of faith) and determines the close harmony between faith and the teaching office of the Church. The unanimity of pastors and the faithful in maintaining, practicing and professing the faith that has been handed on "is thus guaranteed and conditioned by the supernatural appreciation of the faith possessed by the whole People of God, as well as by the teaching office of the Church." (Douglas Bushman). The *sensus fidei* or supernatural discernment of the faith is the gift of the Holy Spirit to the Church which assures fidelity to revealed truth. Concretely, the sense of responsibility for the truth takes the form of faithfully teaching what the Church teaches, since Christ established the Church as the "pillar and support of the truth" (1Timothy 3: 15), and since He declared to the Apostles: "Anyone who listens to you listens to me; anyone who rejects you rejects me, and those who reject me reject the one who sent me" (Luke 10:16).

Catechesis as Service to Human Dignity

In *Redemptor hominis* (RH), Pope John Paul II states that the Christological foundation of the horizontal dimension of catechesis is that man is the path for the Church because man is the path for Christ. Christ came not to be served but to serve (Mk. 10: 45) and the Church is charged with continuing Christ's mission as the expression of its sharing in His life.

Catechesis transmits Good News about communion with God in Christ, and is therefore a fundamental way of serving man. It is a fundamental path which leads the Church to man and through the service of man to God. Because man is the path for the Church, the Church must be concerned about human dignity and human dignity is defined in reference to the truth: Thus it is that truth makes man what he is. His relationship with truth is the deciding factor in his human nature and it constitutes his dignity as a person. Jesus said that the truth must not be denied to men or concealed from them (Mt. 5: 14-16) but must be openely professed (Mt. 10:32). Truth has a social and a public dimension. Therefore man's right to the truth must never be denied. Every baptized person, precisely by reason of being baptized, has the right to receive from the Church instruction and education enabling him to enter into a truly Christian life (CT. no. 14). No one is acting rightly in interferring with Providence which provides all that we need to respond to the call of God to live according to the truth. Since God's will provides that the truth be brought to us through the agency of others, it follows that there is an obligation to communicate the truth to others, this obligation corresponding to the other's right to the truth.

Part of the truth revealed by God through the Scriptures and taught by the Church is that God created all things and found his creation to be good, indeed very good (Gen.1:31). However, the fall of Adam and Eve, affected all humanity not just by transmission but by generation thereby necessitating the salvific activity of Jesus Christ in accordance with the universal salvific will of God (1Tim 2:4). This means that in terms of catechesis, every agent including the missionary must recognize his fragility and humbly admit that he or she is not the source of all truth, that he is not above sin or

weakness but that he is privileged to be chosen to humbly bring the saving message of God to people who are equally fragile and sinful. The missionary must realize that his culture is as flawed as any other human culture simply by virtue of the loss of the paradisaic state by Adam and Eve therefore rendering it a distortion of truth to present his cultural norms as the objective standard of the Christian way. In many respects, especially in areas that we have discussed in the previous chapter, the White Fathers needed some sense of humility before the truth (about God, about man and about the world [cultures]) in Northwestern Ghana.

Catechesis as Narrative of Salvation (St. Augustine)

In *De catechizandis rudibus* St. Augustine proposes the narrative model of catechesis to Deogratias and indeed to the Church. For him, catechesis should be the teaching of the narrative of God's saving action in human history and its demands for the Christian life.

Augustine urges catechists to know the narrative of salvation, sound doctrine and appropriate methods of transmitting the doctrine to catechumens. These have an intrinsic relationship that philosophers, rhetoricians and theologians call matter and form or *res* and *verba*.

Augustine also urged catechists to take the unique characteristics of the different categories of catechumens into consideration when deciding what and how to instruct them in the Christian faith. The catechist is to strive to discern the motivations of catechumens and possibly to help purify those motivations for seeking instruction and baptism through narrative exchange.

This advice of Augustine to Deogratias remains valid for missionary activity as well as catechesis in the Church in general. The greatest pastoral challenge facing many Churches today is the phenomenon of nominal Christians. This means that there are people who are baptized and confirmed into the Church and although they bear the Christian name never show up for liturgical worship nor act in a way that witnesses to the meaning of their baptism. The variations in interpreting the mass conversion of Dagaaba to Christianity and the dual commitment of some Dagaaba to Christianity and traditional religions show the relevance of Augustine's advice to missionaries and the local Church of Wa. For many missionaries of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the success of their mission in Africa was measured in terms of the number of baptisms recorded on their baptismal registers. It is understandable that these baptismal numbers were important to missionaries because they were often demanded by their donors who wanted to see some concrete evidence of the progress of the missionary activity. However, these numbers on baptismal registers did not necessarily indicate that converts were committed to the Christian life. According to Hastings there were people who followed the catechumenate and received baptism simply because they were obliged by social or family pressure or because they needed to do so in order to show support for their children in the mission schools or because baptism was a requirement in order to remain in the mission school. These reasons for becoming Christians were obviously not adequate to maintain fidelity to the faith especially when the obligation or pressure was removed by the attainment of the precipitating goal.

The narrative of salvation must receive a central place in kaleidoscope catechesis not as distant history but a living event of God's continuous action among his people in the

world including Northwestern Ghana. This narrative must appropriate the good cultural values of Dagaaba and Sisaala as part and parcel of God's involvement in the lives of these people and as the *semina verbi* for the final revelation in Jesus Christ.

Catechesis as Shared Praxis (Thomas H. Groome)

   In an insightful article describing the relationship between catechesis and religious education entitled, "Catechism and Religious Education," Thomas H. Groome states that "beyond 'knowledge about' or 'understanding of' religious tradition(s), the intent of religious education should be to enable people personally to appropriate religious wisdom in a way likely to shape their identity and agency in the world" (40-46). He states further that "catechesis must recognize that the 'being' and 'becoming' of people in faith is shaped and deepened by their 'knowing,' that enabling people to 'put on the mind of Christ' (Phil 2:5) is enhanced by engaging their own minds" (40-46).

   Groome affirms the intimate relationship between catechesis and religious education, Christian revelation and Greek philosophy. In his book, *Christian Religious Education: Sharing Our Story and Vision*, Groome advocates a "shared praxis" model to catechesis and religious education. By shared praxis Groome means "an informed reflective [theory] manner of doing [method] Christian religious education" (137). Shared praxis, according to Groome, "is a relational, reflective, and experiential way of knowing in which by critical reflection on lived experience people discover and name their own story and vision and, in a Christian education context, the Story and Vision of the Christian community" (147). What Groome says about shared praxis may equally be said about kaleidoscope catechesis because kaleidoscope catechesis shares the philosophy of shared

praxis as summarized by Groome. Shared praxis, according to Groome, involves

religious education and intentional catechesis that

> engage students personally as active participants in a dynamic marked by
>
> dialogue and conversation; 2) bring them to look at, to express, and to reflect
>
> critically on the "data" of their own lives; 3) be informed by the best of
>
> scholarship to study the story and encounter the vision of Christian faith;
>
> 4) encourage people to personally and critically appropriate the faith tradition to
>
> their own lives and situations; 5) invite decision making out of the dialogue
>
> between people's own lives and Christian story/vision (184).

Catechesis as Socialization (Berard Marthaler)

Although the term socialization is commonly used by anthropologists, sociologists and

psychologists, some scholars believe that this term is equally applicable to evangelization

in general and catechesis in particular.

A Catholic scholar who is a keen advocate of the socialization model of religious

education or catechesis is Berard Marthaler. For Marthaler, every human being is a

product of socialization, either consciously or unconsciously (Groome 121). Drawing

upon anthropology, sociology and psychology, Marthaler defines catechesis as "a process

whereby individuals are initiated and socialized in the Church community" (Groome 27;

Marthaler 459). For Marthaler, the community of faith with all its formal and informal

structures is the chief catechist (Groome 121; Marthaler 89).

Marthaler believes that catechesis or religious education is meant to achieve three

main objectives: 1) growth in personal faith; 2) religious affiliation; and 3) the

maintenance and transmission of a religious tradition (Groome 122-127). The socialization model of catechesis involves the whole assembly of the faithful or parish community without exception.

However, some scholars (especially Groome) observe potential problems with the socialization model of catechesis or religious education. According to Groome, the socialization model legitimizes society and its structures as they are. Groome believes that the Christian community should be a creative force and influence for the transformation of society and culture. In order to be a redemptive, humanizing, liberating force in history, a constant dialectic must be maintained between Christian communities and their surrounding social environment. Groome also observes that, because the Church is in the process of becoming (*semper reformanda*), religious education must constantly promote a critical dialectical activity. For Groome, the socialization model gives the impression that the Church has already reached its destiny (the Kingdom of God). Groome states further that becoming Christian requires the socializing process of a community capable of forming people in Christian self-identity. However, for Groome, becoming a Christian is not a question of either socialization or education. It is both a socialization process and a critical education in the midst of the socializing process (Groome 122-127).

I find the socialization model of Marthaler to be complementary to the praxis model proposed by Groome. They both complement and enrich the kaleidoscope model. Kaleidoscope catechesis is committed to theory and practice (praxis). It aims at enabling catechumens to discover their true selves (their being) and the possibilities available to them in order to become more fully conformed to the will of God. Kaleidoscope

catechesis also realizes the fact that people are born and socialized into a community and catechesis will also involve some degree of socialization into the life and mission of the Church as the Body of Christ which is one, Catholic, and Apostolic and at the same time subsists in a local context of the Diocese or parish. All these elements must be taken into consideration by kaleidoscope catechesis.

Catechesis as Rhetorical Invention

Rhetoric is often said to deal with contingencies as opposed to necessary truth or reality. Contingency deals with the probable. That is the position expressed by Stanley Fish who opines that rhetoric is sophistic discourse, unconstrained by any sense of responsibility either to the truth or to the good. According to Debora K. Shuger, this position of Fish which in a sense is a summary of the postmodern take on rhetoric fails to account for the ethical and epistemic bases of early modern sacred rhetoric (Shuger 47-48). That is why Pope John Paul's teaching on catechesis in *redemptor hominis* and *catechesi tradendae* as discussed above remains the single most comprehensive conceptualization of the rhetoric of catechesis.

Aristotle distinguished the contingent from both the necessary and the impossible. The contingent is neither something that is necessarily the case nor something that could never be the case. Rather, it is something which sometimes is and sometimes is not the case. It is something whose truth is intermittent. In the case of catechesis the truth is never intermittent. The truth is the Word of God spoken by Jesus Christ as the one who came to witness to the truth. In terms of rhetorical invention, however, Calvin L. Troup affirms, in *Temporality, Eternity, and Wisdom: The Rhetoric of Augustine's Confessions*,

that the truth revealed in Scripture must be interpreted and applied to the temporal realities of a community through public discourse (Troup 119). Catechesis stands out as rhetorical invention by making the truth of Sacred Scripture understandable and meaningful to a people in the unique temporal and historical context.

Catechesis as rhetorical invention links rather than opposes faith and reason. It embraces the ineluctable "interwovenness" of cognitive and emotional experience of faith as essential to faith formation and growth. This position derives partly from the Aristotlian position that emotion is not an irrational perturbation but the offspring of belief (Olmsted 77-78).

Augustine refers to the same issue in terms of love and knowledge. For him, love and knowledge are tightly interconnected. We can only love that which, in some sense, we already know. This sense of the inseparability of love and knowledge found support in the Biblical anthropology of the Renaissance. Both Flacius's *Clavis Scripturae* (1562) and Glassius's *Philologia Sacra* (1623) point out that the Bible does not differentiate between knowing and feeling, as classical philosophy did (Shuger 54-56). In terms of rhetorical invention catechesis prior to Augustine was restricted to the Bible history. In *de catechizandus rudibus* the *narratio* was Bible history right down to his time.

Augustine made it clear that the Decalogue, summed up in the great commandments of love of God and love of neighbor is the foundation of Christian morality and constitutes an essential part of the subject matter of catechesis. As part of the subject matter of catechesis (rhetorical invention) Augustine also added an apology for the dogma of the resurrection of the body, an ecclesiology, and an ethical exhortation.

In terms of delivery Augustine recommended the question and answer style as a dialogical exchange between catechist and catechumen (in contrast to the strictly set question and answer style of the White Fathers) in studying the candidate and in sifting his motives for wishing to become a Christian. He also recommended various pedagogical approaches to instruction as they are relevant to each situation and unique characteristics of the catachumens. For example, he recommended to Deogratias not to confuse the candidate with too much matter, but to explain a little, clearly and thoroughly; to have but one central theme, the love of God; to give, as far as possible, individual instruction; to look to the candidate's bodily comfort; to adapt the instruction to the candidate's intelligence; to keep up interest, cultvate cheerfulness, and combat weariness.

The importance of the incarnation of the Word for Augustine's rhetoric is well known. The works of James J. Murphy and Calvin L. Troup affirm this. According to Olmsted, it is only when the Divine unchanging Word reveals itself in the Word of the incarnation that human beings can discover a road to truth and happiness. Also, it is only when this Word transforms a person's *ethos* – in Augustine's case, before his conversion, the Neoplatonic *ethos* of pride – to the Christlike *ethos* of humility that the person can change sufficiently to pursue and become more able to discern Divine truth. This transformation of *ethos* comes through freely given grace (Olmsted 77).

St. Thomas Aquinas sees love as the bridge between the poles of the ancient dilemma precisely because it brings its object nearer to the lover (*summa,* 1a.2ae.66.6). According to Aquinas, it is through faith that we know certain things about God which are so

sublime that reason cannot reach them by means of demonstration (Shuger 59). But love draws them closer or nearer to the lover.

In the Middle Ages (especially the 13th century) thematic preaching emerged as the main rhetorical form of catechizing. Thematic preaching meant a "systematic, logical form of preaching, as opposed to the informality and lack of structure of the homily…" The theme often took the form of Biblical quotation that the preacher divided into a series of questions and interpreted each part in relation to other passages of Scripture and finally making an application to the lives of his congregation. Thematic preaching presupposed that the congregation already believed in Christ and the duty of the preacher was to instruct them about the meaning of the Bible and exhort them to moral action (Kennedy 190-191).

In *Forma Praedicandi*, or The Form of Preaching, Robert of Basevorn defined preaching as "the persuasion of the multitude, within a moderate length of time, to worthy conduct." In this book Robert of Basevorn treated preaching as moral and instructional bearing the characteristics of preaching that Augustine described to teach, to please and to move (Kennedy 192).

In terms of rhetorical invention, the Tridentine catechesis was basically an abridged dogmatic treatise for pastors. Its content was the dogmatic teachings of the Church mostly written as a response to the Reformers and aimed at clarifying and teaching the authentic tenets of Catholic faith. This Tridentine catechesis was used, substantially, until the Second Vatican Council.

Catechesis should aim at persuasion in the sense of preparing the catechumen to move to faith in Jesus Christ and to willingly immerse himself/herself into the mystery of

Christ's life, passion, death and resurrection through baptism. According to Calvin

Schrag, if the projected end of rhetorical engagement is to persuade, then the content of

the disclosure needs to be persuasive (Schrag 233). In other words, if catechesis is meant

to persuade people (catechumens) to accept the Church's teachings and to become

Christians through baptism, the catechism must be persuasive.

Persuasion as a communicative action that seeks to influence the beliefs, attitudes and

values of the interlocutor involves more than an assent to propositional truth claims. It

requires "both an investment and a performance." It is principally through a specification

of such conditions and contents that we will be able to distinguish rhetoric from

propaganda, coercion, and subjugation by force. That is to say, to be persuasive, the *topos*

of the rhetorical situation must display good reasons in soliciting responses by word and

deed (Schrag 234). In terms of catechesis, this means that both the content and form of

catechesis must be free of coercion of any kind. Catechesis must be in the service of the

truth and human dignity given its Christocentric nature as we have mentioned above. This

also means that the truly persuasive character of the White Fathers' catechesis in

Northwestern Ghana is tested when Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians face medically

inexplicable disease, witchcraft possession, hunger and death. It is tested when young

literate Dagaaba and Sisaala move out into the wider world and contact other cultures or

encounter new and challenging ideas in the colleges and universities. It is also tested

when newer theological discussions or even Church Magisterium declare the value and

even compatibility with Christianity of some of the cultural practices of Dagaaba and

Sisaala that were condemned by the missionaries. It is at such moments that the

"investment and performance" (baptism and Christian life) of Dagaaba and Sisaala

Christians may be judged. In such situations, commitment to the Christian teaching truly indicates the persuasive character of catechesis. Otherwise, commitment to Christ (his life, suffering, death and resurrection) as the persuasive goal of catechesis never really took place.

Situating rhetoric against the backdrop of a philosophy of communicative praxis, the importance of community and the decentered rhetor emerges. This has been facilitated by the scholarship of Hans G. Gadamer and Jurgen Habermas. Aristotle defined rhetoric as an art of persuasion that looks to the common good of the polis. But the concept of the polis in ancient Greek society was weighted down with the substance-oriented categories of determinate ends, fixed orders, necessity, and destiny. However, following Gadamer, it is now possible to explain the historical sense of community in which invariant structures of intersubjectivity and fixed forms of sociopolitical organization are recessed as an accentuation of the intentionality of communal practices, the inventions of the creative imagination, and the reciprocity of dialogic interchange. Against such as backdrop, we can observe the essential function of rhetoric as a genuinely collaborative, inventive, creative process of deliberation and discourse, geared to an understanding, accommodation, and modification of our social practices. The communal and collaborative dynamics of rhetoric has some implications for the texture of intersubjectivity that structures rhetor/interlocutor, speaker/hearer relationships (231). In classical rhetoric the interlocutor was defined as a hearer, passively situated, waiting upon the locutionary activity of a speaker. Within such a relationship the discourse of the rhetor is addressed *to* the other and exists *for* the other. The texture of intersubjectivity proposed by Schrag recontextualizes the relationship between rhetor and interlocutor

along the lines of a being-*with*-the-other (232).

Therefore, the rhetorical novelty pursued by kaleidoscope catechesis within the context of catechist-catechumen dynamic requires a reciprocity of response and dialogical exchange is accentuated and intensified (232) by catechist and catechumen. In this way, kaleidoscope catechesis as rhetoric becomes a communal affair. The result of the decentering of the rhetor (missionary or priest) is admittedly not all that advantageous for the rhetor (authoritative, know all missionary/priest), but it is precisely the design of a communicative rhetoric to subvert the hegemony of the rhetor in the rhetorical situation. This hegemony is of particular concern when a rhetor assumes the role of an expert and uses his/her expertise to persuade someone to make a critical decision on something that is very important in his/her life such as religion (233). In relation to the Church the new understanding of ecclesiology emerging from the Second Vatican Council that describes Church as body of Christ (unity) or people of God or family and ministry within the Church as collaborative action emphasize the importance of decentering authority and the empowerment of every member of the body of Christ to assume his/her proper place in the community of believers and to carry out his/her responsibility as co-creator of meaning within the Christian community under the leadership of the Pope or Diocesan Bishop or local pastor as the context may be. It is in this context of shared responsibility and meaning, that the incarnation will become rhetorical invention within the community or inculturation for Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians.

In the context of a community's search for the common good, catechesis in African societies such as Northwestern Ghana needs to focus on promoting what *Ecclesia in Africa* rightly identifies as important cultural values such as the importance of the family,

respect for life from womb to tomb, the veneration of ancestors, and the sense of

solidarity and community life. Within this context also, catechesis must become a source

of empowerment for Dagaaba and Sisaala to understand and deal with their worldview

and cosmic realities of witchcraft, beings of the wild (*kontome*), shrines, divination, etc.

under the guiding light of the Gospel message.

Catechesis as a Tool of Evangelization

In conclusion to this chapter I refer to the summary of catechesis as a tool of

evangelization drawn from the General Directory for Catechesis. The Directory expresses

elements of catechesis that summarize characteristics that will be essential to

kaleidoscope catechesis.

First of all, the role or function of catechesis in relation to evangelization is one of

being a tool, that is, a means of evangelization aimed at putting people in communion

with Jesus Christ. As an educational process, catechesis is geared toward teaching the

Christian doctrine to believers and nonbelievers, children, young people and adults, in an

organic and systematic way, thereby calling them to conversion. Catechesis plays its role

throughout a person's journey of faith from being a non-Christian through the process of

Christian initiation and into the post-baptismal Christian life.

Secondly, catechesis is a pedagogy which serves and is included in the "dialogue of

salvation" between God and the person. It accepts the principle of progressiveness of

Revelation, the transcendance of and the myterious nature of the Word of God and its

adaptation to different persons and cultures. Catechesis as pedagogy recognizes the

centrality of Jesus Christ, values the community experience of faith, which is proper to

people and the Church, and conducts a pedagogy of signs where words and deeds, teaching and experience are interlinked. Finally, catechesis draws truth from Divine love shared through the Holy Spirit.

It is important in the catechetical process that catechist and catechumen co-create an environment or climate of listening, of thanksgiving and of prayer, that looks to the free response of persons and promotes active participation among those to be catechized. In this way catechesis becomes a journey in which a person is assisted to open himself to the religious dimension of life and offers the Gospel to the person. That is the end kaleidoscope catechesis seeks to effectively accomplish.

Kaleidoscope catechesis must help Dagaaba and Sisaala to see God not as a distant Being unconcerned about their daily routines of pain, hunger, disease, war, political instability and hopelessness but as a God who is personal, close and concerned about their daily lives. It must show to Dagaaba and Sisaala that the Christian message takes their worldview seriously and is eager to engage in communicative action with their cosmic and religious worldview with a sense of respect and sharing. Kaleidoscope catechesis must train, motivate and empower members of the community for evangelization, each according to his or her specific role within the Church. This will enable members of the Christian community to actively contribute in making the Gospel message relevant and applicable to their local contexts.

Kaleidoscope catechesis will achieve these ends by using different methods such as the narrative approach of St. Augustine and Joseph Campbell, the symbolic way of Pierre Babin, the shared praxis model of Thomas H. Groome, the socialization method of Berard Marthaler and the dialogic education method of Paulo Freire and Ronald Arnett.

Chapter Four

Kaleidoscope Catechesis: Rhetorical Theory and Practice

In his book, *My Faith as an African*, Jean-Marc Ela (1988) makes a profound observation that is important both for theological and rhetorical discussion on kaleidoscope catechesis. Ela states that "in the service of Christian communities," [African] theologians "must free themselves from all dogmatism, and open themselves to the life of a people and to the questions and requests of an age, in order to interpret Jesus' message in the context of the people to whom that message is addressed" (162). Ela also states that, "in black Africa, the catechisms used for teaching are generally only a condensation of Christian theology that empties God's plan of any historical dimension" (163).

These statements from Ela raise deep rhetorical issues and serve as a good starting point on which to buttress the theoretical basis for why kaleidoscope catechesis is a compelling rhetorical option in the Diocese of Wa. The theoretical questions that the statements of Ela raise and that kaleidoscope catechesis appropriately answers are: how can the Christian message be presented to Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana without being overly dogmatic, and therefore, barren and abstract and how can Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians free themselves from a catechism that teaches Christianity in a barren and abstract way? In other words, how can the message of Jesus Christ be taught so that it becomes incarnate in the historical context of Dagaaba and Sisaala without being reduced to a system of dogmas expressed in formulaic statements or in the words of Pope John Paul II, how can faith become culture, "if it is to be active?" (*L'Osservatore*

Romano, 28th June 1982, 1-8). Such an effort constitutes a search for a way of making the Christian message part and parcel of the life of Dagaaba and Sisaala. It is not in any way an attempt to formulate an African Christian doctrine or truth.

As Ela rightly states, "the recitation of formulas is no longer important to us" (166). The catechism taught by the White Fathers and that continues to be taught today reduces the Word of God to formulas and commandments. According to Ela, it reduces sin to a moral fault or the breaking of a juridical code and the mystery of salvation to "religious practice" thereby making it fall into the category of an obligation (164) rather than a relationship of love (*hesed*) between God and His people. This kind of catechism, often a poorly translated version of the catechism originating from the Council of Trent has left many Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians speaking a "Christian 'creole'"(164) and without roots in the faith they profess. In other words, many Dagaaba and Sisaala recite Scriptural and Church teachings they have learned in the catechism and practice Christianity as a religious obligation rather than an act of love of a God they know and love as a personal God who is present and active in their lives. Their religious life must go beyond doing or fulfilling obligations to being a free act of love of God and neighbor.

To respond to this situation and in response to their mission to announce the Gospel to their peoples, the important catechetical approach in the Diocese of Wa must be rhetorical. This means that catechesis must try to extricate the contemporary meaning of the Word of God and the plan of salvation, beginning with the historical understanding that [Dagaaba and Sisaala] have of themselves and of the world (166). Dagaaba and Sisaala worldview (their perception of life and death, symbolism, initiation rites, sacrifice, sin and restitution, etc.) must challenge and impel a rhetorical approach to

catechesis whereby the Word of God is re-thought and expressed in a language that translates their relationship with Jesus of Nazareth and is understood by them. In fact, catechesis may rightly be said to be rhetoric.

Catechesis as rhetoric never occurs in abstraction from specific historical contexts. Its form cannot be separated from its content. The catechist (agent of catechesis) must work with his/her audience in order to ensure that the right mesaage and the interpretation of that message are communicated for the benefit of both catechist and catechumen. Because catechesis is "a way of talking, a way of thinking, a way of using language to make sense of God, the world, and ourselves, it is indelibly marked by both poetic and rhetorical qualities" (Jost & Wendy 385). As mentioned in the previous chapter, the equation of catechesis and rhetoric has also been elaborately described by Pope John Paul II in his encyclicals *Redemptor hominis* (1979) and *Catechesi tradendae* (1979) as a responsibility for the truth and a service to humanity.

In his encyclical *Catechesi tradendae* as well as the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1994) Pope John Paul II insists that the content of the deposit of faith must be maintained in its entirety. At the same time, the Pope opens the way for the use of a variety of methods in communicating the faith.

> The age and the intellectual development of Christians, their degree of ecclesial and spiritual maturity and many other personal circumstances demand that catechesis should adopt widely differing methods for the attainment of its specific aim: education in the faith. On a more general level, this variety is also demanded by the social and cultural surrounding in which the Church carries out her catechetical work (CT no. 51).

We can say of catechesis, as well as of evangelization in general, that it is called

to bring the power of the Gospel into the very heart of culture and cultures. For

this purpose, catechesis will seek to know these cultures and their essential

components; it will learn their most significant expressions; it will respect their

particular values and riches (CT no. 53).

It can happen that in the present situation of catechesis reasons of method or

pedagogy suggest that the communication of the riches of the content of

catechesis should be organized in one way rather than another. Besides, integrity

does not dispense from balance and from the organic hierarchical character

through which the truths to be taught, the norms to be transmitted, and the ways

of Christian life to be indicated will be given the proper importance due to each. It

can also happen that a particular sort of language proves preferable for

transmitting this content to a particular individual or group. The choice made will

be a valid one to the extent that, … it is inspired by the humble concern to stay

closer to a content that must remain intact (CT no. 31).

In these instances, the Pope acknowledges the validity of using different methods in

communicating the faith. He summarizes the content of the faith that must, however, be

maintained as follows:

What kind of catechesis would it be that failed to give their full place to man's

creation and sin; to God's plan of redemption and its long, loving preparation and

realization; to the incarnation of the Son of God; to Mary, the Immaculate One,

the Mother of God, and to her role in the mystery of salvation; to the mystery of

lawlessness at work in our lives and the power of God freeing us from it; to the

need for penance and asceticism; to the sacramental and liturgical actions; to the

reality of the Eucharistic Presence; to participation in divine life here and

hereafter; and so on? (CT no. 30).

Furthermore, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* that makes a "statement of the

Church's faith and of Catholic doctrine, attested to or illumined by Sacred Scripture, the

Apostolic Tradition, and the Church's Magisterium" (Catechism of the Catholic Church,

5) summarizes the content of the catechism into four sections: The baptismal profession

of faith (the Creed); the sacraments of faith; the life of faith (the Commandments) and

prayer in the life of faith (the Lord's prayer).

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches the Catholic faith and doctrine and is

"meant to encourage and assist in the writing of new local catechisms, which take into

account various situations and cultures, while carefully preserving the unity of faith and

fidelity to Catholic doctrine" (CCC no. 6). Because "this Catechism does not … provide

the adaptation of doctrinal presentations and catechetical methods required by the

differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial condition among

all those to whom it is addressed" such adaptations will be "the responsibility of

particular catechisms and even more, of those who instruct the faithful" (CCC no. 24).

In response to the Church's openness to using diverse methods in communicating the

faith, Angela Ann Zukowski, Director of the Institute for Pastoral Initiatives at the

University of Dayton, OH wrote an article, "Kaleidoscope Catechesis for the New

Millenium," which she presented to her students during the 1999 Summer session at the

University of Dayton, OH (I was a participant in this session). In this paper Zukowski,

agrees with Edward Schillebeeckx that, "the Gospel's message is too rich to be contained

within one paradigm" (Zukowski 5). Consequently, Zukowski used the metaphor of

kaleidoscope (a series of changing phases or events; or anything that is always changing)

to describe the kind of catechesis the Church should pursue. Zukowski described

kaleidoscope catechesis in these words:

> … I have coined the concept kaleidoscope catechesis. It is intended to be a new
>
> perspective for engaging in our new role as artisans of faith in contemporary
>
> culture. Kaleidoscope catechesis is an integrated interdisciplinary approach to
>
> communicating the Gospel through all media and art forms. The goal is to utilize
>
> all the senses in order to stimulate greater consciousness of our religious heritage
>
> and current reality…. Critical reflection on shifting the paradigm toward
>
> kaleidoscope catechesis can offer catechesis such an impact on the consciousness
>
> of our students (Zukowski 9).

Among the Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana, the kaleidoscope catechism

approach should help catechists to rethink and express the faith of the Church in a

language that is understandable and meaningful to the people. In this regard, the

catechism on protology could be re-thought and expressed in a language of Dagaaba and

Sisaala myths of creation; Christology from the relational ties of Dagaaba and Sisaala;

ecclesiology from the extended family structure of Dagaaba and Sisaala; eschatology

from Dagaaba and Sisaala myths and funeral rites concerning death and the destiny of the

soul; the Eucharist from Dagaaba and Sisaala perception and understanding of sacrifice

and meals of communion; and the healing ministry of Jesus and the Church from

Dagaaba and Sisaala experience of witchcraft, reconciliation and traditional medicine.

(An attempt in this direction has been made by Healey, Joseph & Sybertz, Donald: 1996

in *Towards an African Narrative Theology*). By so doing kaleidoscope catechesis does not equate or justapose Dagaaba and Sisaala traditional worldview and practices alongside Christianity. Rather it makes an effort to render the novelty brought by Christ culturally meaningful to these people in their context and in their own symbolic codes. Augustine affirms the importance of clarity of linguistic expression when he states that, "an unknown word or an unknown expression may impede the reader" (*On Christian Doctrine* Book 2, xiv, 21, 48).

The enormity of the problem of adapting Christianity to local contexts of converts and the rhetorical significance given to this problem by Saint Augustine, Bishop of Hippo, constitute the theoretical basis on which the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis is grounded. For Augustine, just as for the Diocese of Wa, there is no room in catechesis for repeating the sin of the sophist by denying "the necessity of subject matter" (Christian Doctrine) and insisting that "*forma* alone is desirable." There is also no room for "the belief that the man possessed of truth will *ipso facto* be able to communicate the truth to others." This is what James J. Murphy calls the Platonic heresy (Murphy 60). What is required for effective catechesis is a rhetorical approach by which a union of both matter and form are concurrently pursued, that is, the union of Christian teaching and Dagaaba and Sisaala cultural modes of expression. True catechetical eloquence will come about when equal attention is paid to "the necessity of teaching" (Holy Scriptures and Christian doctrine) and "the manner in which we say it" (On Christian Doctrine Book 4, xii, 27, 136). In order to be truly Christian Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians must become more or less proficient in the Holy Scriptures as well as Christian doctrine and understand them properly (On Christian Doctrine Book 4, v..122). Without this proficiency in knowledge

and understanding of Scripture and Christian doctrine commitment to Christianity is missing. As Augustine stated,

> he who speaks when he would teach cannot think that he has said what he wished to say to the person he wishes to teach so long as that person does not understand him. For even though he has said something which he himself understands, he is not yet to be thought of as having spoken to the person who does not understand him (On Christian Doctrine, Book 4, xii, 27).

In other words, catechesis cannot be said to be effective or persuasive if the catechumens or Christians do not understand what has been taught even though the teacher himself may understand and is persuaded by what he teaches. Effective catechesis comes about when catechumens or Christians understand the message being taught. Understanding is enhanced when the language of instruction is familiar to and understood by those being taught. According to Augustine, to what benefit is language that "is not understood by those on whose account we speak?" (On Christian Doctrine, Book 4, x, 24, 134).

Therefore, kaleidoscope catechesis as a pedagogy of faith should not only transmit religious knowledge, it must do so in a language that is familiar to and understood by Dagaaba and Sisaala and that demands a response given as consent to a message received and understood within the context of discursive encounter between catechist and catechumen, preacher and congregation.

As theory and practice, kaleidoscope catechesis is a narrative performance incarnated in a specific cultural and historical context where meaning is sought, shared and acted upon by a community of believers. Within the paradigm of classical rhetoric,

kaleidoscope catechesis may be said to be communication by, about, and for someone.

Communication by: On a deeper (vertical) level kaleidoscope catechesis is communication by God through His Son Jesus Christ, the incarnate Word who enters into human history in order to reveal the mystery of Divine life and love to mankind and to call mankind to a relationship of love with God and with one another. On another (horizontal) level, kaleidoscope catechesis is the communication of the revealed Word of God by the Church through human agency (catechists, preachers) to catechumens and Christians in order to evoke in them an informed and willful response of faith.

Communication about: The subject matter of catechesis is Christ himself. It is about transmitting the teaching of Jesus Christ, the Truth that He communicates or … the Truth that He is (CT no. 6). The disposition of the catechist toward catechesis must be to say: "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (CT no. 6).

Communication for: In Catechesi tradendae, Pope John Paul II states very clearly that everybody needs to be catechized. Specifically and in a more detailed way the Pope mentions and adapts the content of catechesis to the following categories of people: infants, children, adolescents, the young, the handicapped, young people without religious support, adults, quasi-catechumens (those who were born and reared in areas not yet Christianized, and who have never been able to study deeply the Christian teaching that the circumstances of life have at a certain moment caused them to come across [CT no. 44]), and migrants (CT no. 45).

However, as rhetorical theory and practice (praxis) or communicative rhetoric, kaleidoscope catechesis must depart from the classical rhetorical position of privileging the rhetor/speaker/catechist over the interlocutor/addressee/catechumen. In the

framework of classical rhetoric, the receiver/catechumen was regarded as a passive recipient of messages from the speaker/catechist thereby making classical rhetoric "a subject-centered rhetoric" (Schrag 232). The novelty of communicative rhetoric or communicative praxis on the other hand is its emphasis on a "we-experience" that is designed "to subvert the hegemony of the rhetor in the classical situation" (Schrag 233). For Habermas, this means moving the communicative paradigm from "know-how" (implicit communication features) to "know-that" (explicit communication features) (Habermas 21-42; Simpson 88).

Through kaleidoscope catechesis the Christian narrative is embedded in a culture and history where it is told, evaluated and acted upon. Because narratives are open-ended texts whose texture remains open to a multiplicity of interpretations, the social character and historical situatedness of knowledge is essential to the praxis of kaleidoscope catechesis. The narrative character of the Christian message also entails a dissemination or decentralization of authority of the human agency of kaleidoscope catechesis to include both speaker and hearer, narrating subject and audience of the narrative. Therefore, kaleidoscope catechesis as narrative is a communal affair (I Cor 1-2; Acts 20: 17-38).

Christian existence is an activity by a person in community. It is not simply a matter of receiving and transmitting a Divine "deposit" revealed in the Bible and taught by the Church nor is it an array of subjective experiences, beliefs, attitudes and dispositions. Christian life is a participation in the life of God who is pure act: "Our God is a performing God who has invited us to join in the performance that is God's life" (Jost, 382). In the Christian life, word and deed (*dabar*) are inseparable. However, human

experience shows that it is not always easy to live out what we say or to do what we profess with our lips. Christians constantly battle with knowing and doing the right thing because the Church and Christians find themselves in a changing world and constantly have to read the signs of the times. This means that the pastoral task of kaleidoscope catechesis must entail proclaiming the love of God among God's people and eliciting through such proclamation a response of love for God and neighbor. This perspective of the pedagogy of faith makes kaleidoscope catechesis a rhetoric of love in the sense that it has the efficacy to convince and to convert the hearts of people to love God and one another. This makes kaleidoscope catechesis an agent of unity fulfilling the vision and prayer of Jesus for the unity of all God's children (Jn. 17).

As sacred rhetoric, kaleidoscope catechesis must be concerned about the epistemology and hermeneutics by means of which its truth claims can be attested, understood and applied to the temporal and historical context of a people.

Epistemologically kaleidoscope catechesis responds to the following questions: What can we know about God and His will for us? How can we be sure that what we know is true and reliable, and to what end should we put this knowledge? Epistemology as theory of knowledge therefore relates to kaleidoscope catechesis and this relationship informs the theory of kaleidoscope catechesis.

We gain knowledge in various ways. We gain knowledge through perception and understand what we see through cultural significations. According to Augustine, we are able to know God because "Wisdom Himself saw fit to make Himself congruous with such infirmity as ours and to set an example of living for us, not otherwise than as a man" (On Christian Doctrine, Book 1, xi, 11, 13). Sacred Scriptures, which are at the core of

Christian teaching, affirm that Jesus is source and revealer of truth. He reveals God to mankind and also reveals mankind to itself: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (Jn. 1:14); "The Lord created me from the beginning of his ways (Prov. 8:22); "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn. 14: 6, 10).

The epistemology of kaleidoscope catechesis is grounded in the belief that humans can have true knowledge of infinite realities within the finite and contingent context of their existence. This is possible because of the incarnation by means of which the infinite and timeless Word of God breaks into the finite and temporal context of humanity. God speaks through the incarnation and His Word is Truth (Troup 113). The incarnate Word fully integrates speech and thought with Truth [Gadamer in D. W. Johnson 86] (114). Following Augustine and the scholarship on him, kaleidoscope catechesis can claim certitude of Truth because the incarnate Word (content/subject matter of kaleidoscope catechesis) enacts eternal wisdom within human temporal experience and memory (114).

In addition, kaleidoscope catechesis is rhetorical in the sense that the truth revealed by the incarnate Word must be made meaningful, understandable, and applicable through public discourse to a specific temporal context. Just as for Augustine, the means by which the incarnation moves kaleidoscope catechesis toward true rhetoricis love:

> The end of the commandment is charity. For when love of God is placed first and the character of that love is seen to be described so that all other loves must flow into it, it may seem that nothing has been said about the love of yourself. But when it is said, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself' at the same time, it is clear that love for yourself is not omitted" (On Christian Doctrine, Book 1,xxvi, 27, 23; Troup 115).

Whoever, therefore, thinks that he understands the Divine Scriptures or any part

of them so that it does not build the double love of God and of our neighbor does

not understand it at all (On Christian Doctrine, Book 1, xxxvi, 40, 30).

Therefore, returning to our epistemological question, we can affirm that kaleidoscope

catechesis is grounded in the belief that love is a prerequisite for knowledge, true

knowledge of the eternal Word who is formal, efficient, and final cause of reality.

Kaleidoscope catechesis is rhetorical in theory and practice because it seeks to make what

is communicated by the incarnate Word understandable to an audience thereby enabling

the audience to make an investment in terms of conversion to the new life of love.

Therefore, when anyone knows the end of the commandments to be charity "from

a pure heart, and a good conscience, and an unfeigned faith, [I Cor.13:13] and has

related all of his understanding of the Divine Scriptures to these three, he may

approach the treatment of these books with security" (On Christian Doctrine,

Book 1, xl. 44, 33).

Theologically, kaleidoscope catechesis participates in the Church's universal mision

which is born of faith in Jesus Christ and professed in the Creed:

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the

Father…. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven: by the

power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was

made man (RM no. 4).

The Church affirms that Christ is the one savior of all, the only one able to reveal God

and lead to God.

By the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom you crucified, whom God raised

from the dead… there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved [Acts 4: 10,12] (RM no. 5).

The New Testament asserts the universality of this salvation:

there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist" (1Cor.8:5-6).

The Word is the true light that enlightens every man (Jn. 1:9). Again, "No one has ever seen God; the only Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" (Jn. 1:18; Mt. 11:27). God's revelation becomes definitive and complete through his only-begotten Son (Heb. 1:1-2; Jn 14:6). In this definitive self-revelation, God has made himself known in the fullest possible way. He has revealed to mankind who he is. This definitive self-revelation of God is the fundamental reason for the Church's missionary activity and for kaleidoscope catechesis. All who believe in Christ as the one mediator between God and man, the savior of all mankind are called not to be "ashamed of the Gospel: it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who has faith" (Rom. 1:16). The person who has faith in Christ must be excited to share the sublime knowledge of the God made-flesh. God in Christ has given the Christian "this grace… to preach to the Gentiles the unsearcheable riches of Christ" (Eph. 3:8). In this way kaleidoscope catechesis is both a proclamation of the Kingdom Jesus came to preach (Lk. 4:18; 6:20) and the proclamation of the Christ-event witnessed by the Apostles (Acts 8:12; 28:31; Eph. 5:5; Rev. 11:15; 12:10) with conversion (accepting, by a personal decision, the saving sovereignty of Christ and becoming his disciple) as its aim: "a complete and sincere adherence to Christ and his Gospel through faith" (RM no. 46).

The rhetorical function of kaleidoscope catechesis among Dagaaba and Sisaala is to incarnate the Gospel into the indigenous culture. This is incredibly important because when cultural artifacts from an alien culture obscure access to the Gospel by indigenous people, the Church must remedy the situation. Kaleidoscope catechesis is that rhetorical remedy to the situation in which the noble mission of the White Fathers has in some instances obscured access of Dagaaba and Sisaala to the entire wealth of the Gospel. Through kaleidoscope catechesis, people and cultures are led to the mystery of Christ in all its dimensions:

> to make all men see what is the plan of the mystery… comprehend with all the Saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth… know the love of Christ which surpasses all knowledge… (and be filled) with all the fullness of God (CT no. 5).

It is Christ and his teaching that is the content of kaleidoscope catechesis. The agent of kaleidoscope catechesis teaches only to the extent that he is Christ's spokesman: "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me" (Jn 7:6; CT no. 6). The agent of kaleidoscope catechesis teaches what he himself has been taught: "I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you" (1Cor. 11:23), and he must do so by earnestly seeking to adapt the teaching of Christ "to the various situations of believers and the many different circumstances in which the Church finds herself" (CT no. 13).

In *the Redeemer of Man* Pope John Paul II addressed catechesis as responsibility to truth and a service to human dignity. Truth and human dignity are related in a number of ways. Truth as eternal *logos* stands as subject in relation to object (divinity in relation to humanity) or as content/subject matter in the discursive encounter between God and man

or catechist/catechumen. As rhetorical theory, kaleidoscope catechesis conceives truth as both eternal and temporal entity that can be contemplated and rendered meaningful within time and space. The ability of human beings to perceive and understand truth comes through language (Troup 87) and will. In other words, our ability to contemplate the truth and to invest in it is a communal affair because we have the resources of our culture, namely language and other cultural symbols to perceive and make sense of the truth. The Word of God speaks temporally in the flesh through the Gospel to produce belief and speaks eternally as the "sole good Master" to confirm the truth of that belief (11.8.10) (98). However, our ability to understand the truth is mediated by society. John Paul II emphasizes understanding and commitment to the Gospel borne as a result of social and historical interpretation and relevance. This is significant rhetorically because of the recognition that society and history are important elements in creating meaning. Even though kaleidoscope catechesis is certain of the truth, as pedagogy of faith it is not concerned about simply a "question of transmitting human knowledge, even of the highest kind," (CT no. 58) but of sharing the revealed Word and love of God contained in the Scriptures and taught by the Magisterium of the Church. According to John Paul II, catechesis is about teaching the revealed truth and building mature Christians whose lives are Christ-centered or whose words and actions are motivated by the values of the Gospel. This requires a method of instruction, a pedagogy of faith or pedagogy of catechesis, which enables Christians to assimilate the Gospel and to bear witness to it in the daily events of their lives. In order to achieve this end the agent of kaleidoscope catechesis must seek to know the culture into which he goes and their essential components. He must learn their most significant modes of expressions and respect their

particular values and riches. It is only in this way that he will be able to offer the new culture the knowledge of the hidden mystery and help the people of this culture to bring forth from their own living tradition original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought (CT no. 53).

Kaleidoscope Catechesis in the Diocese of Wa

For the Diocese of Wa, kaleidoscope catechesis means making the teaching of Christ meaningful and understandable to Dagaaba and Sisaala situation thereby leading them to conversion, baptism and mature Christain witness. This will come about through various means but the underlying focus must always be to engage Dagaaba and Sisaala in discursive exchange.

The grounds for kaleidoscope catechesis as praxis are already present in Dagaaba and Sisaala culture. Some Papal statements and Church documents affirm the validity of the rich cultural and religious background of Africa for kaleidoscope catechesis thereby opening the doors for engaging and appropriating these cultural values for the benefit of effective catechesis. Some African theologians and bishops have also expressed their belief that Africa has a rich cultural and religious background that should serve as a basis for transmitting and nurturing the Christian faith. Some elements of the African religious and cultural experience they find to be favorable grounds for dialogue with Christianity include the belief in the Supreme Being who is unique and transcendent, belief in the sacredness of life, reverence for sacred places, times, persons and objects; belief in life after death; mediatory role of the ancestors between God and human beings; efficacy of mediatory prayer; reality of sin and need for purification of body and soul, etc. Some

African scholars have used St. Paul's speech at the Areopagus in Athens (Acts 17: 22-31) as the basis for catechesis in Africa. Others, such as Peter K. Sarpong, Archbishop of Kumasi Archdiocese in Ghana, have noted the roots of African religious traditions in faith, morality and worship just as they are in every other religion. According to Sarpong, many religions of the world rely on the power of the word, objects (statues, rosary, crufix, medals, etc), respect or veneration of deceased members (Saints), symbols, etc. in the same way that African religions relied on their own versions of these elements that characterize many world religions. All this shows that the religious and cultural foundation for kaleidoscope catechesis in Africa is solid.

Because Dagaaba and Sisaala religious world comprises the living, dead, ancestors, spirits, ghosts, witchcraft, sorcery and divination, the agent of kaleidoscope catechesis must have a positive outlook toward this cultural worldview. In a cross-cultural catechetical context, especially, the instructor must desist from using his/her personal cultural context as the yardstick of morality or religious performance. The catechist needs to realize that every culture is flawed by virtue of the loss of the paradisaic state by Adam and Eve and that only the grace of God raises people and cultures from brokenness to wholeness and from weakness to strength. This means that the measure of Christian morality must be the life and ministry of Jesus as it is recorded in the Scriptures and taught by the official Magisterium of the Church. The Christian faith is lived as an ongoing relationship of the Church to Christ who continues to direct the Church through his Spirit and is expressed by the Christian community in liturgy, prayer and the active involvement in transforming the society in which Christians live. This community and universal dimension of the Christian faith must be nourished by kaleidoscope catechesis

in a way that does not simply promote in catechumens a blind conformity in thought and behavior but that engages catechumens in a critical reflection and originality.

In this light, the suggestions of Edward B. Tengan in *House of God: Church-as-Family From an African Perspective* corroborate the socialization model of catechesis proposed by Berard Marthaler and will enhance kaleidoscope catechesis in as much as they teach and adapt the meaning and function of Church to Dagaaba and Sisaala conception of household (*yir).* Viewed with the cultural lens of Dagaaaba and Sisaala worldview, Tengan sees the Church as the house of God (*Mwenyir*) or Patri-House, the diocese as that segment of the house that does things in common under the leadership of the bishop and the parish as a section of the diocese (*logr*) (Tengan 85-86). In Dagaaba household or *yir* young people are socialized into the family values, norms and taboos by the community. In the *yir* they learn by observation, participation, ritual celebrations, song, dance and direct instructions from elders to distinguish between good and evil. They learn rituals and ceremonial performances. They learn about social institutions such as marriage. They learn about life, death and the afterlife. These are all part and parcel of being a Dagao/Dagara. In the same way, Dagaaba and Sisaala Christians must be socialized into the House of God (*Mwenyir*) by all the members of the *Mwenyir* especially the priests, catechists, parents, Christian community leaders, etc. This socialization process should help catechumens to know and behave in the Christian way, follow the Christian ritual celebrations, respect and honor the Christian norms on marriage, and live the Christian ethic. In this light, Tengan's book, *House of God*, is a basic and important contribution to attaining the goals of kaleidoscope catechesis.

Oral cultures, like Dagaaba and Sisaala societies, learn by apprenticeship,

discipleship, listening and repeating proverbs, stories, hymns, riddles, art, poems and by participation. The nature of communication in such cultures is basically ritual and symbolic. Education of the young is the collective responsibility of the whole community and attention is given to locating the human person within the context of his environment. This makes a person comfortable and at home with the learning process.

In ritual context, people easily learn by memorization, reproduce what they have memorized but can easily forget what they reproduced if the ritual is not performed regularly enough. In the case of catechesis by memorization Dagaaba and Sisaala can easily learn the teachings of the Church but when they do not repeat these teachings frequently they easily tend to forget them as easily as they learned them. That is the experience of many Catholics in Ghana after basic catechetical instructions and their reception of the sacrament of confirmation. The continuous repetition of the catechism in the form of family catechesis (religious instruction and prayer within Christian families) may be a good way to keep knowledge of the catechism alive among Christians and the younger generation.

As learner-centered pedagogy of faith, kaleidoscope catechesis takes the particular context of the learner seriously. It creates an environment which supports and facilitates the learner's ability to learn, understand, internalize what he is learning, and to share his religious experiences if he chooses to do so. In this way, kaleidoscope catechesis will effectively help catechumens and Christians to grow and mature in their faith within their own cultural situations and be prepared to speak in defense of the hope that they have.

As a rhetorical event, kaleidoscope catechesis must make significant use of the "rhetorical tropes of Dagaaba and Sisaala." Tropes offer a variety of ways of saying

something. They are ways of making what is familiar more familiar. The conventions of rhetorical tropes constitute a code and understanding this code is part and parcel of what it means to be a member of the culture in which it is is used. Stories, proverbs, songs, funeral dirges, drum beats, xylophone notes, and so on, all constitute the rhetorical tropes of Dagaaba and Sisaala. They are another way by which catechesis can make the Christian Doctrine and Sacred Scriptures clearer and understandable to a people for whom the rhetorical codes of these tropes are clearly understood.

Signs and symbols are essential codes of linguistic and ritual expression among Dagaaba and Sisaala. They nurture and strengthen the religious imagination of these people. Therefore it will be important to use appropriate symbolic codes of these people in order to make the teaching of Christ more meaningful and understandable to them.

Aylward Shorter (1977) defines a sign as that which suggests something else and a symbol as one category of signs. According to Shorter natural sign conveys its natural signification within an existential context as well as a conventional signification. Symbols are usually not explained. They speak for themselves through their existential context and appeal to the observer's experience, senses and life processes that are a part of himself (Shorter). James W. Carey's (1989) description of communication in terms of transmission and ritual models further clarifies why in a culture where communication is ritual, communal, drama, song, performance, shared meaning, etc., a transmission model of catechesis may successfully communicate knowledge but not meaning (18). For cultures such as Dagaaba and Sisaala, communication is celebrated in symbolic expressions of folklore, sacrifice, dance, song, performance, etc. and that should also constitute the appropriate channels of religious education. Kaleidoscope catechesis must

therefore employ both the transmission and ritual models of communicating the Christian

message in order to ensure that no one is left out or left behind in the learning process.

The Bible itself uses symbolic language extensively. In the New Testament, for

instance, Christ used parables and was often reluctant to offer explanations (except

privately to His disciples) because the parable as symbol is supposed to speak for itself.

Traditional folklore and symbolism are very useful for catechesis, because they offer the

catechist or religious instructor an understanding of the mind of those to whom he is

transmitting the Christian message.

Symbols that are nourished by human imagination provide an alternative world

having emotional meaning, raised consciousness and more intense relationality. To live

in a world of symbols means that there is the possibility that the social and individual

dimensions of life are brought together and that an intimacy is created through which the

participants feel a nearness to themselves (Empereur 175). Because of the way symbols

operate, the human imagination provides balance and equilibrium for societies and

individuals.

Art, as symbolic expression, must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive,

the world of the spirit, of the invisible, of God. Therefore, it must translate ineffable

realities into meaningful terms. Art has a unique capacity to take one or other facet of the

message and translate it into colors, shapes and sounds that nourish the intuition of those

who look or listen. It does so without emptying the message of itself, of its transcendent

value and its aura of mystery.

Myth is another mode of cultural expression among Dagaaba and Sisaala that can be

used for kaleidoscope catechesis. Myth is a mode of signification, a form. Myth is not

defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message (Barthe 109). Myths are stories intimately bound up with the traditions of a people. They deal with gods, heroes, religious beliefs and cultural traits. They explain how the world was created, how people and animals came into existence, how important customs were established and preserved. Myths are not historical narratives, and they do not pretend to appeal to evidence in support of what they teach. Myths may teach an untruth, just as a historical narrative may in fact be untrue, and the evidence on which it rests is false (Shorter 92). The most comprehensive compilation of one of such Dagaaba myths is done by Jack Goody, an English ethnologist and anthropologist in his work *The Myth of the Bagre* (1972).

In *The Hero With a Thousand Faces*, Joseph Campbell (1973) makes a compelling argument that mythology plays a crucial role in the service of mankind whether a person sees mythology as primitive; a production of poetical fantasy from prehistoric times; a repository of allegorical instruction meant to shape the individual to his group; a group dream, symptomatic of archetypal urges within the depths of the human psyche; as the traditional vehicle of man's profoundest metaphysical insights; or as God's revelation to his children (382). For Campbell, myths have been a rich source of instruction for many societies in their quest to understand and deal with the world and the human condition and will continue to do so.

Kaleidoscope catechesis can benefit from the proper use of the above mentioned indigenous rhetorical tropes as a background to making the Christian faith better understood by the people.

The goal of kaleidoscope catechesis, according to Zukowski, is "to utilize all the

senses in order to stimulate greater consciousness of our religious heritage and current reality" (Zukowski 10). But as Pope John Paul II has rightly observed in *Catechesi tradendae*, faith is more than an intellectual exercise. It is a living experience of a person with God and the expression of that experience in prayer, liturgy, communion with others and acts of love and reconciliation. Kaleidoscope catechesis must go beyond intellectual knowledge to open the whole person - mind, heart and soul - to the riches of the Gospel, thereby enabling his whole being, not just his mind alone, to be transformed by the Gospel, making him a true witness of Christ by the witness of a life generously and joyously spent for Christ and others. Kaleidoscope catechesis must therefore translate the catechism into the language of art and social communications, in order to reach the most varied human milieus.

Because kaleidoscope catechesis aims at enabling catechumens and Christians to live the life in Christ, it is important that it takes into account the spiritual and theological issues that define and account for peoples' beliefs and practices.

For instance, Dagaaba and Sisaala religious beliefs and practices are very practical. For them religion and salvation are closely related to their experience of material conditions of peace and wellbeing, good health and lack of pain. Pierre Babin (1991) rightly observes that African Christians (as many other peoples around the globe) are quite naturally more attracted to a Christianity of salvation than a Christianity of knowledge. They move to faith through concrete acts or experience of healing, education, protection from witchcraft, the spirits, hunger and disease, etc.

Dagaaba and Sisaala live close to nature and find religious elements all around their physical world.

This background makes the symbolic way another practical and effective means of kaleidoscope catechesis. The symbolic way essentially creates knowledge by means of a language of participation. Babin describes the symbolic way as follows:

> Leaving home, walking together, conviviality, helping each other, the festive environment and discovery of an elsewhere, the nights spent in the open air, the pools of living water, the healings, the candles and pious objects, the processions, the singing, and the sermons --- all this confusion of things, activities, and experiences makes up the symbolic way. There have been narrow definitions of the symbol, but the symbolic way is fundamentally a complex and ambiguous whole of sounds, images, words and gestures, relationships, rhythms, scents, and many other factors that bring about a physical conditioning and a psychic emotion, both of which help the deepest demands made by the person and his religious archetypes to be awakened (Babin 155).

This means that a well prepared and celebrated liturgy (Easter vigil, priestly ordination, religious professions, funeral liturgies, weddings, etc.) can be a symbolic catechesis. At such moments, people feel something within them even though they cannot name or explain the experience. It is the symbolic experience and it touches them deep into primal religious instincts.

The symbolic way moves from life to faith. These experiences should be discussed in the catechism class where the positive religious elements will be strengthened by the Christian message while the negative elements are purified by the Christian message in the nature of creating cosmos out of chaos (Genesis 1:1).

Another concrete religious event that serves kaleidoscope catechesis is inculturating the liturgy. For example, Elochukwu E. Uzukwu's description of how to celebrate the liturgy in a way that uplifts African spirits can be an important channel of kaleidoscope catechesis. Uzukwu emphasizes the celebrative aspect of the Eucharist by suggesting participatory sentences at various stages of the litugy that involve the congregation. He also suggests that African Eucharistic prayers should exude the African environment - land, valleys, mountains, rivers and lakes, forests and plains filled with animals –- to join in the rhythmic praise of the creator (Uzukwu 111). In this regard, the Zairean rite (a living sample and result of the liturgical movement and inculturation program in the Zairean Church) is a significant move within the African Catholic Church to celebrate in a truly African way. The Zairean rite (*Missel romain pour les dioceses du Zaire*) was prepared by the Catholic Church of Zaire and approved by the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship in 1988 as a way of opening the liturgy to the cultural values of the people of Zaire (Egbulem 227). Many more Churches in Africa need to follow the example of the Zairean rite in creating their own rites for Christian celebrations. That makes the celebration culturally significant, spiritually uplifting and enhances meaningful participation.

Agency

In kaleidoscope catechesis, the real teacher is Jesus Christ. However, the human agent of kaleidoscope catechesis acts as a spokesperson of the Word. He teaches not his message but the message of Jesus Christ and does so in as far as he is connected and committed to Jesus Christ. The agent of kaleidoscope catechesis among Dagaaba and

Sisaala must be a person who promotes dialogue between traditional religion and Christianity. According to Aylward Shorter, dialogue means that the catechist articulates African traditional religious values for the catechumens in a way that is understandable. The catechist does this by indicating the positive values that could serve as preparatory ground for the Gospel and explaining why certain elements of traditional religion need to be transformed in the light of the Gospel. Shorter is of the strong opinion that, by no means whatsoever, should "anti-pagan" approach be used as a method of instruction for African catechumens (Shorter 157). The reason behind this is simple. No single culture has a monopoly on God, just as no single culture has a monopoly on human experience. Dagaaba and Sisaala religious experiences should not be denied or ridiculed by any person or culture. The agent of Kaleidoscope catechesis must affirm the religious experiences of others and help them to understand those experiences in the light of the Gospel.

The Pre-eminent Role of the Holy Spirit

The ultimate communicator of the Good News of Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit. Human effort alone is important and indeed necessary as Scripture testifies, "But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?" (Rom 10:14-15). However, the ultimate duty of converting hearts belongs to the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit, "they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand" (Mt. 13: 13; Mk 4:12; Is 6: 9-10, 14). For Augustine, prayer for effective teaching (catechesis) is, therefore, important and

indeed necessary.

> Whether one is just now ready to speak before the people or before any other group or is composing something to be spoken later before the people or to be read by those who wish to do so or are able to do so, he should pray that God may place a good speech in his mouth… they should pray that they may deliver it well, and that those to whom they offer it may take it; and for the profitable result of their speech they should give thanks to Him from whom they should not doubt they have received it, so that he who glories may glory in Him in whose "hand are both we and our words" [Wisd. 7:16] (On Christian Doctrine Book 4, xxx, 63).

Chapter Five

Toward a Conclusion: Implications and Applications of the Rhetoric of Kaleidoscope
Catechesis in the Diocese of Wa

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth…he will declare
to you the things that are to come" (Jn. 16:13).

These words of Christ remind us that the work of evangelization and catechesis is
ultimately the work of the Holy Spirit. However, kaleidoscope catechesis is rhetorical
because it has to be done by human agents who must work truthfully and responsibly and
who must recognize that they teach not their own message but the message of truth that is
from God. This requires humility and fidelity to the Bible and the official Magisterium of
the Church.

Humble and faithful agents of the Word of God who teach the deposit of the the faith
in a culturally meaningful and understandable way must be ready and willing to descend
with the Word of God to the grass-root level where ordinary Christians live daily, use
ordinary and unsophisticated language and symbols, learn by observation and imitation
and get involved through participation (Babin 203-204). Such an attitude to catechesis
will be a marked departure from the influence of the Western literary culture in which the
White Fathers were immersed and which tainted their catechetical methods with an
emphasis on dogmatic and theological formulations that catechumens memorized even
though they did not often understand the content of their memorization.

Furthermore, this attitude and approach to catechesis is important because at the heart
of the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis is the affirmation of Scripture: "And the Word

became flesh and made his dwelling among us…" (Jn 1:14). The incarnation event sets

the stage for a new relationship between humanity and divinity and humanity's vision of

itself. Christ introduces man to God and man to man. This has significant implications

and applications for the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis. The incarnation does not

simply imply taking traditional customs and making the best ones fit into Christianity.

Nor is it a matter of Dagaaba and Sisaala cultural values being mediated through Western

culture and thought patterns. Rather, it is a matter of making the Gospel message a leaven

to this new culture. It is a matter of making the message of salvation "at home" (Jn 15:4)

with Dagaaba and Sisaala and Dagaaba and Sisaala "at home" with the Christian

message. Therefore, the important metaphor of kaleidoscope catechesis is "at home"

(Healey & Sybertz 19). The question now is: How can kaleidoscope catechesis make

Dagaaba and Sisaala culture at home with Christianity and Christianity at home with

Dagaaba and Sisaala culture?

1. Acknowledgment of The Reality of Dagaaba and Sisaala Experience

Just as the Word became flesh and dwelt among men so too must the Christian

message through kaleidoscope catechesis become flesh in the existing reality of Dagaaba

and Sisaala world that is populated by invisible spirits, the ancestors, poverty, disease,

hunger and death. There are good elements of Dagaaba and Sisaala culture on which the

Christian message can and must be built (respect for life and elders, hospitality, family

cohesiveness, etc.) just as there are less noble elements of the culture that need to be

purified by the Gospel message (divination, fear of the spirits, etc.). But the encounter

must begin with an acknowledgment of each reality by the other (Christianity of Dagaaba

and Sisaala reality and vice versa). Catechesis cannot begin by condemning Dagaaba and Sisaala culture. It must begin by learning and knowing the culture in order to take out of it what is new and what is old (Mt. 13:52), what is true and what is false, what is good and what is bad. Augustine affirms this observation.

> But we should not think that we ought not to learn literature because Mercury is said to be its inventor, nor that because the pagans dedicated temples to Justice and Virtue and adored in stones what should be performed in the heart, we should therefore avoid justice and virtue. Rather, every good and true Christian should understand that wherever he may find truth, it is his Lord's (On Christian Doctrine Book 2, xviii, 28, 54).

2. Centrality of Christ and the Message of Salvation

The Christocentricity of catechesis means that catechesis must be about sharing the saving message of Jesus Christ with others and inviting them to respond in a personal and committed way to Christ as a life-long investment. The centrality of Christ and His message of salvation also means that every agent of kaleidoscope catechesis must be conscious of the role of Christ as the subject matter or content of catechesis. This awareness should lead the agent of kaleidoscope catechesis to teach not his personal opinions but the message of Christ making an effort to let the Christian message become incarnate in the local context.

The centrality of Christ as content of kaleidoscope catechesis also means that catechesis should be both a means and a moment of salvation (Now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation, [2 Cor. 6: 2]). Through kaledoscope catechesis

people and their culture should realize that in various and diverse ways God spoke to their ancestors in the past but He now speaks to them in a definitive way through His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb 1:1-6) and calls them to a personal commitment to His gracious gift of salvation. The message of salvation which is for all people without exception and which has the capacity to transform every culture without exception from within must be taught to all people without exception as a responsibility to truth and service to human dignity. This demands commitment and enthusiasm of the agents of kaleidoscope catechesis to share the ineffable mystery of God's love with others in a systematic and culturally appropriate way.

3. Conversion

In his Pastoral Letter (1985), "Idolatry in a Century-Old Faith," marking the First Centenary of Catholic Church in Eastern Nigeria, Archbishop Albert K. Obiefuna described the syncretistic faith and idolatrous practices of many Christians in Eastern Nigeria. A similar situation has been described by the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa thereby calling attention to the fact that inspite of astonishing stories of phenomenal achievements of missionary evangelization and the heroic lives of faith of numerous Dagaaba and Sisaala converts to Christianity there is still reason to be concerned about the shallowness of faith, nominal membership, syncretic practices among large populations of Christians in Northwestern Ghana.

For true conversion, kaleidoscope catechesis is essential. Conversion is a lifelong commitment to Jesus Christ and His offer of salvation through the Church as visible sign and agent of salvation. Conversion is measured by the quality of Christian lives and not

simply the numbers in parish baptismal registers. Baptismal registers are important for logistical reasons of pastoral planning and strategizing but are not a sufficient measure of Christian witness.

Conversion is brought about by the Spirit of God and the agency of messengers who bring glad tidings (Is. 52: 7-10; Rom. 10: 14-15). This implies that every agent of kaleidoscope catechesis must be active and enthusiastic bearers of the Word that gives life (Jn. 10:10) through a dialogic approach to teaching the faith, preaching, celebration of the sacraments, home visitations with the sick, elderly, and exemplary Christian lives. By fulfilling their mission to announce the message of salvation and leading people through word and deed, beneficiaries of kaleidoscope catechesis should be able to say: "We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world"(Jn. 4: 42). Augustine also echoes this disposition in his *Confessions* (Books 8, 10, 11).

4. Biblical Hermeneutics and the Biblical Apostolate

Sacred Scripture is a source of salvation and healing for many people throughout the world. In the Scriptures a person finds that God is to be loved for Himself, and his neighbor for the sake of God (On Christian Doctrine Book 2, vii, 10, p.39). For proper and accurate interpretation of Scripture it is of utmost importance to realize that the message of Scripture may be obscured by unknown or ambiguous signs which could either be literal or figurative. Proper interpretation of literal signs comes about through knowledge of languages as well as of things, especially the languages in which the Scriptures were first written, that is, Hebrew and Greek (On Christian Doctrine Book 2,

x, 15, xi, 16, 43).

From a postcolonialist perspective, the Bible (which has inspired Christian doctrine and missionary activity) is said to have been used as a tool of spiritual imperialism. One postcolonialist claim is that to assert spiritual liberation it is important to make the Bible available to people in their native languages so that they can read and re-interpret the Biblical texts from a native or indigenous perspective. In *The Bible and the Third World: Precolonial, Colonial and Postcolonial Encounters*, R. S. Sugirtharajah (175-192; 244-271) describes this postcolonialist phenomenon in terms of nativism and vernacular hermeneutics. Vernacular hermeneutics, according to Sugirtharajah, entails recovery, reoccupation and reinscription of one's culture which has been degraded and effaced from the colonial narratives and from mainstream biblical scholarship. It is a call to self-awareness, aimed at creating an awakening among people to their indigenous literary, cultural and religious heritage (177).

The relevance of vernacular hermeneutics to the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis is that vernacular hermeneutics seeks to overcome the remoteness and strangeness of biblical texts by using indigenous cultural resources and social experiences to illuminate the biblical narratives (182). This is however not new to biblical hermeneutics because biblical interpretation has always been culturally specific and has always been informed and colored by reigning cultural values (190). Nevertheless, vernacular hermeneutics is still important to the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis because of its emphasis on the indigenous worldview.

However, the danger to avoid in vernacular hermeneutics is the over-emphasis on the positive elements of indigenous culture to the neglect of some of its dehumanizing

elements which the Gospel message must purify and transform. Vernacular hermeneutics must also resist the temptation to be hegemonic and close itself to other modes of interpretation. For effective catechesis, vernacular hermeneutics should maintain a connection with the official Church's interpretation of biblical texts. In other words, vernacular hermeneutics must be capable of distinguishing between local and non-local and be able to achieve continuity and unity with the universal Church's understanding of biblical narratives (198). It is also important to note here that there must be a commitment to translate the Scriptures directly into vernacular languages from the best Hebrew and Greek manuscripts available, rather than to paraphrase from an "alien" translation in another language.

In their book, *The Early Church and Africa: A School Certificate Course Based on the East African Syllabus for Christian Religious Education*, Kealy and Shenk (1975) have proposed a workable model that would be significant as a practical application of vernacular hermeneutics in the Diocese of Wa. This course syllabus is aimed at developing students' understanding of events in their own contexts, students' ability to establish the link between early Christianity and present day Christianity, to evaluate African traditions in the light of Christianity and ability to relate contemporary problems to the study of the early Church. The procedure to achieve this consists of understanding the event in its context (for example, the Church assisting the poor, Acts 6); identifying the principle at stake (the Church should care for the poor); identifying a similar situation in our African context (poor people within the Christian fellowship); applying the Biblical principle to the similar situation which has been identified in our African context (effective ways of helping Christians who are poor). Kealy and Shenk advise that in this

process care must be taken to ensure that the two situations are parallel and that the

principle has been correctly identified. This process will hopefully lead to comprehension

(true awareness of what really happened; precise and accurate observation of facts and

events), reflection (capability of analysis), insight (understanding and evaluation) and

action guided by insight (praxis, theory informed action).

Here is an example of how the process goes:

Select a Biblical passage for the catechetical lesson.

- Read it and explain its authentic meaning (from the point of view of the Church's

  teaching).

- Help catechumens identify the value or principle of the passage.

- Let catechumens identify areas in the society or community where the value or

  principle is applicable.

- Ask students how the Biblical text can help in understanding the situation or solving

  the problem For example, care of widows, helping the poor or caring for orphans.

5. Translation

    The task of translating Sacred Scripture into another language is rhetorical by nature.

According to Lamin Sanneh (2003) "[S]ince Jesus did not write or dictate the Gospels,

his followers had little choice but to adopt a translated form of his message" (96).

Therefore, right from the beginning of Christianity, interpretation and translation have

been a necessary and natural agenda of the early Church and missionary activity. By

means of interpretation and translation, the early Church as well as missionaries could

respond to the request of the Jews and converts to Christianity in mission territories for a

plain and unveiled message, "tell us plainly…" (Jn. 10:24). Translation makes vernacular hermeneutics possible. At the same time, it is also an expression of knowledge of a people and its cultural modes of (linguistic) expression.

Within a cross-cultural context, St. Paul's conversion to Christianity and the revolutionary nature of his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts9:1-9; 22:3-16; 26: 2-18) made him convinced (like Peter in Acts 10:34-35) of the transcendent or universal nature of the Gospel. In the words of Sanneh (1990), "the Gentile breakthrough had cast a shadow over any claims for cultural absolutism, Jewish or other" (24). It also made Paul aware of the need to let the Gospel speak plainly and not in veiled language to the Gentiles. This conviction made St. Paul uneasy with the "narrow interpretation of Israel's covenant with God (28) and set him on the path to an ethical and linguistic mission that was universal and emcompassing of all people in God's plan of salvation. Thus, St. Paul could say, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3: 28). For St. Paul, the importance of interpretation and translation of the Gospel in a language that embraced all people and that to spoke to them directly was indisputable (1Cor. 1:17, 20).

St. Augustine affirms the important but difficult task of translating the Scriptures into different languages. He also understands that certain words or expressions cannot be translated and must be maintained in their original form such as "Amen", "alleluia", "hosanna", etc. For such words, Augustine explains that they have been preserved from antiquity on account of their holier authority (On Christian Doctrine Book 2, xi, 16, 43).

One problem that translators encounter in their work is that sometimes the original

language of the Scriptural text is ambiguous making it difficult for the translator to understand. In such situations translators may "transfer the meaning to something completely alien to the writer's intention" (On Christian Doctrine Book 2, xii, 18, p. 45) thereby rendering the message false. This calls for knowledge of the original language in which the Scriptures were written (Hebrew/Aramaic and Greek) as well as of the local language into which Sacred Scriptures are being translated.

According to Lamin Sanneh (1989), translating the message empowers indigenous people because the Word of God is encoded in their cultural symbolic codes thereby making it available to them and enabling them to make a culturally meaningful interpretation of the Scriptures and to act upon the demands of the Scriptures appropriately. Translating the Word of God into vernacular helps indigenous people realize that they are not victims of missionary domination but liberated and empowered people capable to reading, hearing and interpreting the message for themselves and making meaning out of the message for their inspiration, edification and action. After all, as Sanneh points out, since the apostolic times, Christianity has always had a vernacular nature (174).

Creditably, the White Fathers initiated the process of translating the Word by creating the vernacular alphabet and commiting Dagaare to writing. In this sense, the White Fathers must be credited for sowing the seed for the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis. Obviously, the pioneering work of the White Fathers in translating the Word was not without difficulties and flaws. Translations were poor and did not always convey the right message or meaning of the Word of God. Accurate translation of the Scriptures must therefore be carried out as an essential compenent of the rhetoric of kaleidoscope

catechesis. For example, The White Fathers avoided words that had "pagan" connotations such as *dapar* and *dazugevuu* for heaven and hell, and *bagr* for the Sacrifice of the Mass. whereas these are the culturally appropriate terminologies for these Christian concepts. Today, Dagaaba call heaven *dapar* and hell *dazugezuu* without fear of being called pagan. They also use *bagr* in word and song for the Sacrifice of the Mass.

In this regard a robust Biblical apostolate in the Diocese of Wa will require the active involement of priests by their presence at Bible study sessions and pastoral meetings where their input on the Bible will enrich the biblical knowledge and faith of Christians in order to empower these people to make meaning out of the biblical teaching and in order to make informed choices and decisions based on their understanding of the biblical message.

To enhance kaleidoscope catechesis through the biblical apostolate, translation of the entire Bible into the local language is essential.

6. Liturgical Catechesis

Liturgical catechesis must enable catechumens and Christians to respond to their call to live out the Christian message and at the same time to proclaim it to others. By liturgical catechesis I mean instructing catechumens and Christians on the meaning and relevance of liturgical celebration and action in a culturally meaningful way. This means that while respecting the unity of faith of the Church the modes of expressing this one faith especially in the liturgy can and must be culturally specific.

Liturgical catechesis makes the established liturgical rites of the Church meaningful in a given local situation and at the same time develops new dimensions in the Church's

worship patterns thereby bringing some new and authentic experiences of worship into the Church. In other words, liturgical catechesis should be another way of incarnating the mysteries of Christ that are celebrated by the Christian community in a way that exhibits the true sense of the mystery being celebrated and at the same time doing so in an authentically African way.

The sacraments of the Church are celebrated within the context of liturgical celebrations. Sacraments nourish faith and inspire hope. They also commission Christians to go into the world of politics, economics, trade and commerce, social institutions and organizations, etc. with the Gospel message. Therefore, an incarnated liturgical catechesis and celebration empowers people to positively and zealously respond to their Christian vocation to spread the Good News of salvation everywhere.

The Zairean rite (officially called *Missel romain pour les dioceses du Zaire*) and approved by Rome in 1988 is a good example of how the liturgical celebrations of the Church can become a meaningful catechesis in a local [African] Church. Chris Nwaka Egbulem has described the Zairean rite very clearly in his article, "An African Interpretation of Liturgical Inculturation: The Rite Zairois."

In the preparatory stages of developing the rite the Catholic Bishops of Zaire (1961) clearly described the rhetorical significance of liturgical catechesis which is also valid for kaleidoscope catechesis in the Diocese of Wa.

> The liturgy introduced in Africa is not yet adapted to the proper character of our populations, and therefore has remained foreign to them. The return to the authentic traditions of the liturgy greatly opens the way to a fundamental adaptation of the liturgy to the African environment. Such an adaptation is very

necessary for the edification of the traditional (pagan) community on religious grounds, since worship is the most important element which unites the entire community. A living and adapted form of worship can generate the indispensable deepening of the faith which cannot be given through instruction alone… (Conference Episcopale du Congo, "Apostolat liturgique – Adaptation du culte," in Actes de la Vie Assemblee pleniere de l'episcopat de Congo [Leopoldville: Secretariat General de 'Episcopat, 1961] 362-363.).

The Zairean rite accentuates the following values of African culture: Active presence of the creator God in the world; unified sense of reality; life as the ultimate gift; family and community as the place to be born, live and die; the nature and role of the ancestors; oral tradition; sanctity of nature and environment.

The approved text of the Zairean Mass retains two parts of the traditional Roman rite: liturgy of the word and the liturgy of the Eucharist, which are preceded by an introductory part and followed by a concluding part. The introductory part includes the entrance of the announcer (welcome of the assembly and invitation to worship); entrance procession of presider and ministers; veneration of the altar; salutation of the people and introduction of the liturgy; invocation of Saints and ancestors; song of acclamation (Gloria); opening prayer.

The liturgy of the Word includes first reading, responsorial psalm, second reading, enthronement and proclamation of the Gospel, homily, profession of faith, penitential rite, kiss of peace, prayer of the faithful.

The liturgy of the Eucharist includes procession to the altar with gifts, Eucharistic prayer, the Lord's Prayer, Communion and thanksgiving prayer after communion.

The concluding rite includes blessing and sending forth and exit procession. Although the two rites (Zairean and Roman) are basically the same structurally, the difference in the Zairean rite is found in the elaborate opening rite where the role of the announcer is consistent with the native town-crier; and the invocation of Saints and ancestors. The position of the penitential rite and kiss of peace in the Zairean rite significantly reflects traditional custom. The people feel and express sorrow for their sins and desire for reconciliation with God and one another after hearing the Word of God read and explained to them in the homily.

The announcer leads the people to an active and fuller participation in the liturgy. Readers ask for and receive a blessing from the presider before proceding to read the first and second readings for the celebration. In many African societies no one rises to speak without first asking permission from the presiding chief.

The procession songs and the Eucharistic prayer all reflect native touch (the role of orality and music, poetry and dance, native costumes and instruments).

The Zairean rite is therefore a successful story of one aspect of liturgical inculturation and catechesis that many African Churches, including the Diocese of Wa, need to emulate. Similar efforts must be made in the areas of healing and reconciliation because they also touch the core of many African religious experiences. For many Dagaaba and Sisaala, healing is not just physical healing of the body but involves the person as body and soul – integral healing. The interconnection between the physical world and the world of the spirits is very strong for Dagaaba and Sisaala. Their belief in the existence and activity of witches and spirits affects them deeply both physically and spirituallly.Therefore, in order to address this world view on health and healing the

catechesis on healing should reflect the bodily and spiritual healing that the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis must address integral nature and efficacy of the Church's sacraments of healing, that is Anointing of the Sick and Reconciliation and obviously Holy Eucharist. Biblical narratives about the encounter between Jesus and the sick would be a good biblical basis for the catechesis on health and healing.

6. Training or Formation of Agents for Kaleidoscope Catechesis

The importance of training for the rhetoric of kaleidoscope catechesis is elaborately stated by St. Augustine.

> A man fearing God diligently seeks His will in the Holy Scriptures. And lest he should love controversy, he is made gentle in piety. He is prepared with knowledge of languages lest he be impeded by unknown words and locutions. He is also prepared with an acquaintance with certain necessary things lest he be unaware of their force and nature when they are used for purposes of similitudes. He is assisted by the accuracy of texts which expert diligence in emendation has procured. Thus instructed, he may turn his attention to the investigation and solution of the ambiguities of the Scriptures (On Christian Doctrine Book 3, I, 1, 78).

Church documents and leaders have called for formation of clergy, religious men and women and dedicated lay people in the various means of communication to enable them to use the modern media as well as traditional media in evangelization. The Decree on Social Communication, *Inter Mirifica* (1963), the Pastoral Instruction, *Communio et Progressio* (1971), numerous Papal documents on communication (*Ecclesia in Africa*

(1994), *Ecclesia in Ghana* (1997) and the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa (1998) all call for formation in the use of the means of social communication.

The need for well trained catechists is more urgent because as the Pastoral Congress of Ghana observed, "it is common knowledge that some of our part-time catechists are themselves rather ignorant and therefore do more harm than good" (Ecclesia in Ghana, 102).

Part of the formation for kaleidoscope catechesis will involve inclusion of courses or workshops on African Traditional Religions and other culturally relevant subjects in the curriculum of seminary and catechist training programs. This will help equip and immerse the agents of kaleidoscope catechesis in the religious worldview of the majority of indigenous people to whom they will go with the message of the Gospel. Traditional courses in seminaries such as systematic and dogmatic theology need to be taught in a way that opens the way for interreligious dialogue not as a way of watering down the orthodox teaching of the Church but in a way that enables or facilitates understanding of the Church teachings from a cultural background. This requires hard work on the part of those who teach the Catholic doctrine in seminaries and catechist formation houses as well as for the catechists who teach these doctrines to catechumens. This work is rhetorical.

Catechists must demonstrate to catechumens the similarities and differences between their traditional folklore or mythologies and the Biblical narratives without reducing Biblical narratives to mere folklore or mythology. The salvific character of the Biblical narratives must always be brought to light.

Training for kaleidoscope catechesis also requires training in the use of modern as

well as traditional means of communication so that they can effectively reach people on television, radio, audio-tapes, the internet, newspapers, art, song, folklore, etc. This point has been emphasized by *Ecclesia in Africa* (1994), *Ecclesia in Ghana* (1997) and the Wa Diocesan Synod (1998).

Training for kaleidoscope catechesis should ensure that catechetical agents are capable of reaching catechumens in a more personal and effective way than the mass catechumenate of the White Fathers accomplished. In this light, Catechists Training Institutes that train catechists and community animators must focus on Sacred Sripture, Christian Doctrine, liturgy and pedagogy. Some effective pedagogical approaches for kaleidoscope catechesis that I have discussed in a previous chapter include shared praxis (Thomas Groome), socialization method (Berard Marthaler), narrative approach (St. Augustine), and the dialogic approach (Paolo Freire). When this is done, and done well, the cry of the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa over the noticeable deficiency of the catechumenate program in preparing people to respond personally and adequately to the challenges of life (Wa Synod 22) would begin to be effectively addressed.

7. A Call to Dialogue

The Word of God is by nature word, dialogue and communication. Jesus came to restore communication and relations between God and humanity, and to restore communication and relations between people, one with another (Ecclesia in Africa, no. 71). Therefore, kaleidoscope catechesis requires dialogue between God and man through the agency of the catechist.

Dialogue entails an ability to adapt the message to the context of the people who are

being catechized. In other words, catechesis must be made suitable and understandable to children, adolescents, youth, disabled people, adults, migrants, religious, seminarians and priests. Dialogic education takes the learner and his/her situation seriously and engages the learner as a subject and not an object in the educational process. With regard to kaleidoscope catechesis dialogic catechesis must be a form of liberation for catechumens. As such it must be more than transferring knowledge about Christ and Church doctrine. It must lead catechumens to an act of knowledge of Christ. Dialogic catechesis must desist from asking the catechumen to give up anything, but rather to bring his or her concrete historical person to the learning event between teacher and student (Arnett and Arnesson 170). Together, catechist and catechumen learn the meaning of the Word of God and how it speaks to them in their unique contexts.

8. Catechism

The creation of a local catechism that is culturally relevant is called for by *Catechesi Tradendae* and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Such a catechism would contain the content of the Catholic doctrine that is incarnated in the cultural context of Dagaaba and Sisaala by the use of cultural symbols and other modes of expression that render the catechism meaningful and understandable.

The Gaba Syllabus for Secondary Schools has been a significant attempt to create a contextual catechesis for an African Church. This syllabus is a thematic treatment of Christianity, beginning with an analysis of the present [local] situation, going on to the values of African tradition and the experience of the Churches, and finally deepening the findings in the light of Biblical revelation. The syllabus was a conscious attempt to

explore the cultural heritage of Africa in order to see how it would contribute to a Christian understanding of each theme of the catechism (for example, protology [creation], ecclesiology [the Church], the Sacraments, liturgy, grace and justification, eschatology [death and the afterlife], etc.), and to a sense of continuity and identity for the African Christian. Although this syllabus was designed for the classroom setting, it could be adapted to illiterate catechumens as well. The Gaba Syllabus for Secondary Schools is a helpful model catechism that is suited for kaleidoscope catechesis in the Diocese of Wa.

Final Observations

There is some urgency in announcing the Word of God and teaching the saving message of Jesus Christ to all people in a way that is culturally understandable. That has been the post-resurrection experience and activity of the Apostles and early Christians and the mission remains the same for Christians today.

The White Fathers fulfilled their part of the mission by teaching and baptizing Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana amidst limitations and barriers of language and culture. The message of Christ must now be made more culturally accessible and "at home" with Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana.

In describing some implications and applications of kaleidoscope catechesis in the Diocese of Wa, I am fully aware that there may be some practical or political bottlenecks on the way to implementing these suggestions. Nevertheless, I am convinced that where there is a will there will most surely be a way.

As a matter of priority, kaleidoscope catechesis can be undertaken in the Diocese of

Wa by a re-awakening of priests, religious, catechists, parents, Christian community leaders and all Christians to the reality that God through His Son Jesus Christ dwells in and among them (in their joys and sorrows) as *Emmanuel* (Is. 7:14; Mt. 1:23). He is not a foreign or alien God. He speaks to them in their own language and is involved in their daily lives as a God who cares. Such a consciousness is an important first step toward effective catechesis and takes away the notion of Christianity being a foreign religion. The disciples were called Christians for the first time in Antioch (Acts 11:26), not in Jerusalem, therefore, wherever the Christian message is "at home" those people can truly be Christians.

The basic infrastructure for deepening knowledge about and of Christ and the Church is already present in the Diocese of Wa _ The Bible, local clergy and religious, catechists, institutions of learning and above all people with hearts open to the signs and wonders of God's love. The Word of God can only grow and bear fruit – thirtyfold, sixty-fold, or a hundred fold on fertile soil (Mt. 13: 18-23). This fertile soil is present in the hearts of Dagaaba and Sisaala who being "notoriously religious" (Mbiti 3) constantly seek to know and do the will of God. The Divine *semina verbi* can be assited to grow by making the Word of God available in the language of people. This can and must be done by priests through good and well prepared homilies and liturgical celebrations; Bible reading sessions at parish group meetings. It can be done when families pray together at home meditating on the mysteries of Christ's life, passion, death and resurrection.

Kaleidoscope catechesis is done when Christians help one another especially in moments of pain and sorrow (sickness, hunger and death) by sharing time, resources and talent. It is also done when husbands love and respect their wives (and vice versa) and

parents love and care for the children and when children respect and honor their parents (Sir. 3:2-6; 12-14; Ps. 128; Mt. 2:13-15; Col. 3:18-21). That is the catechesis of love.

It is shown when, inspired by the Word of God, the local Church and its members stand up against injustice, hatred or maltreatment of anyone (especially the orphan and widow). That is the catechesis on justice and peace (Is. 10; 11:1-10; Ps. 72; Ps. 85; Is. 35:1-10; Mt. 3: 1-9; Lk.3: 3-14).

It is shown when Christian farmers are taught to refrain from bush burning and indiscriminate felling of trees thereby depleting soil fertility and exposing the land to the hazards of wind. That is the catechesis on preserving the environment (Gen. 1: 28-31).

In these instances, the Divine will (manifested in Sacred Scripture) is obvious and human agency in interpreting and rendering Sacred Scripture meaningful to the local context is crucial. That is the rhetorical activity of kaleidoscope catechesis.

Appendices

Appendix 1

The Diocese of Wa/The Upper West Region of Ghana

The Upper West Region of Ghana covers the districts of Wa, Lawra, Tumu, Jirapa-Lambusie, and Nadowli. The region was created in January 1983 and officially inaugurated on September 28, 1987, by the Chairman of the then ruling Provisional National Defense Council (PNDC), Fl. Lt. Jerry J. Rawlings. Prior to this date, it was administered as part of the Upper Region with its headquarters at Bolgatanga. The region shares a common border with la Cote d'Ivoire in the West, Burkina Faso in the North and the Upper East and Northern regions to the East and South, respectively. It occupies about 18,476 square kilometers, which represent approximately 7.8 per cent of Ghana's total land mass of 258,538 square kilometers. The region is home to about 450, 000 people, about four per cent of Ghana's total population. About 90 per cent of the region is rural.

This area is the territorial conscription called the Diocese of Wa. The three main tribes of the area are the Dagaaba, Sisaala, and Wala. The Wala are mostly Muslim. Other ethnic groups are the Birifor, Manlaale and Chakale. The main dialects spoken are Dagaare, Sisaali and Wali. The dominant tribes that have embraced Christianity are the Dagaaba and the Sisaala. These two tribal groups share many common cultural practices and religious beliefs, as Edward Tengan so clearly explains in his book, *Land as Being and Cosmos: The Institution of the Earth Cult Among the Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana* (Tengan 43). The Manlaale, Birifor and Chakale dialects are closely related to Dagaare.

However, I will use Dagaaba in this study to include the Birifor and Chakale.

The people of the Upper West Region of Ghana are predominantly traditional people, in the sense that they are preindustrial, preliterate and prescientific. Their social organization is characterized by a low degree of role and institutional specialization. In other words, apart from a few specialized roles such as *diviner*, people generally learn to do whatever work is necessary for the upkeep of family or community. Tradition is cherished, and elders have the responsibility to protect the time-honored axioms and mores (Mendonsa 36) of past generations.

In this region, unilineal descent groups are widely dispersed among peoples of different language and social organization. Compounds are scattered unevenly across the countryside in such a way that it is difficult to tell where one settlement ends and the next begins (Goody 17).

The two main tribes, which were the original focus of missionary activity from 1929 until recently, when parishes were opened among the Birifor and the Chakale, were the Dagaaba and the Sisaala. Some amount of study on the social and religious world-view of the Dagaaba and Sisaala has been done by expert ethnographers, anthropologists and theologians, such as Henri Labouret (1931), Robert S. Rattray (1932), L Girault (1959), Jack Goody (1967), Bruce Grindal (1972), Eugene Mendonsa (1982), Edward Kuukure (1985), Edward Tengan (1991), Paul Bekye (1991), Alexis Tengan (2000) and Eugene Suom-Dery (2000). It will suffice here to mention that the social organization, cultural and religious beliefs and practices of the tribes in the Diocese of Wa are basically alike, notwithstanding dialectical differences in names and probably in some details in the way religious rituals are performed by the respective tribes. However, this is not an

ethnographic or anthropological study of the various tribes in the Upper West Region. It is a study of the rhetorical dynamics of catechizing cross-culturally. Therefore, only those aspects of missionary catechesis that relate to the general world-view of the people of this region are considered and accentuated.

The Dagaaba live on both sides of the Black Volta River, which at that point forms the boundary between the Republics of Ghana, Ia Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso. These people live largely in the northwest corner of Ghana, spreading across the border into Burkina Faso, right up to the 12th parallel north (Kuukure 23).

The Sisaala reside primarily in the Tumu and Jirapa-Lambusie districts of the Upper West Region of Northwestern Ghana, but a portion live in nearby Burkina Faso. The largest town in Sisaala-land is Tumu. Some Birifor live in Lawra district, while others live in some parts of Wa district where the Chakale also reside.

Geographically, the area is typical of the Savannah country of West Africa. It is a land of low trees, nowhere denser than the average orchard bush. The year is divided into two clearly marked seasons, dry and wet, the latter lasting from late April through October. The complexion of the countryside changes drastically from one season to the other. Temperatures range between 20 and 35 degrees Celcius. Being so close to the Sahara desert, the area is vulnerable to any human activity that damages the ecology, affects productivity and increases the chances of drought and famine.

Inhabitants are mainly an agricultural people, who derive their livelihood from cultivating the land. Farming is done by means of a hoe, although animal traction is being introduced by agricultural projects funded by government and the Catholic Church. Cereal crops, such as guinea-corn, maize and millet, and shoot crops such as groundnuts

and yams, are cultivated. Livestock include cattle, sheep, goats, dogs, chickens and guinea-fowls. Wild foods include fish, oysters and turtles from the rivers and pools. Wild leaves and fruits include dawa-dawa, baobab and sheanuts. Sheanuts are particularly popular because they contain oil which is easily extracted for domestic use.

Some people specialize in making baskets woven from reeds picked up along the river banks while others are blacksmiths and still others make xylophones and carve wood. Some women make clay pots and brew beer (*pito*). Others have a special skill in decorating pots and calabashes (drinking gourds) and weaving baskets.

The Dagaaba and Sisaala were not organized as a political society in the same way that other African societies, such as the Asante in Southern Ghana were, before the advent of British colonizers. Chieftaincy among the Dagaaba and Sisaala was, therefore, a political imposition by the British colonial masters. The Dagaare word for chief, *naa,* means "either a chief or wealthy person" (Angsotinge 102). The chief exercised political influence at the level at which colonial policies were enforced. The chiefs were also responsible for collecting taxes from the people for the colonial government.

Other sources of traditional authority are the *tendaana* or *tengan sob* (custodian of the land) and village elders. These wielded socio-religious power and authority. The *tendaana* or *tengan sob* is usually chosen from the clan that first settled in an area. Among the Dagaaba, the *teng-gan sob* is a priest or custodian of the shrine that is dedicated to the spirit of the earth.

That the Dagaaba and Sisaala did not have an organized political system does not mean that they were a lawless people. Dagaaba and Sisaala societies are organized around the clan.

Clan members are those who share a common birth-origin. They trace their descent to a common male ancestor whose name may even be lost to surviving members. The whole clan is a family, and members have reciprocal responsibilities toward other members of the clan. In clanship relations, seniority by age is the general rule in the exercise of authority. Decisions are usually reached through discussion and informal consensus among the elders.

For purposes of this study, it is important to consider the basic anthropological and socio-religious world-view that defined the Dagaaba and Sisaala before the arrival of the missionaries and continuing even into the present. This is important because the definition that one gives or holds about the human person influences the way one relates to other human beings, as we will show in subsequent chapters.

Dagaaba and Sisaala Anthropology

I base this section on the research findings of Suom-Dery and others before him, such as Jack Goody, Edward Kuukure, Edward Tengan, Gbaane Dabire and Bekuone Some Deri, just to mention a few authors who have researched Dagaaba and Sisaala cultures.

According to these authors, man (used in its generic form) is *bon-biila*, *bon-banguura* (a puzzle, enigma). It is not easy to know and understand every intricacy about man. According to Dagaaba and Sisaala mythologies, man is either created or appeared out of the earth. Then, the serpent taught male and female how to copulate and beget offspring. Suom-Dery succinctly summarizes Dagaaba anthropology (which is also true for the Sisaala) as follows:

> Divine origin of the total man, the creation of man as male and female

oriented to marriage and to the family life, the pre-existence and sacredness of human life, the uniqueness of the individual by virtue of his name, …a learning being, the place of cultural creativity (Suom-Dery 64).

For some African cultures, including the Dagaaba and Sisaala, man is a composite unit of body and spirit, an organic whole as against a Greek philosophical conception of man as a rational and dualistic being composed of body and soul. Among the Dagaaba, for instance, *Nisaale* (man) distinguishes a human being from an animal while *Nir* connotes an actualized *Nisaale* (human being) with human and moral qualities of which Dagaaba are proud or to which they aspire (Kuukure 83; Suom-Dery 65).The body of man is animated by *vuuro* or *nyovur* (breath or nose-breath) drained by *zii* (blood) pumped by the *sukyir* (heart) which is located inside the body. Without *vuuro* the body is lifeless. *Zii* not only sustains the body, it also defines a person in relation to others. It identifies a person with a network of kinship. *Sukyir* is the seat of emotions, feelings and thought besides its biological function. It is therefore a source of decision-making and action.

There are also immaterial elements of the human being. They are *ya* (mind, reason, intelligence, sense, faculty of moral judgment) and *sie* (spirit-soul) (Suom-Dery 67). The *sie* is the seat of sudden emotions and makes the material or physical body become a person (*Nir*). Without entering into detail about the specific nature and characteristics of *sie* as Goody and Kuukure have done, it suffices to mention that the separation of the body and *sie* indicates physical death. However, shortly after death, the *sie* continues to live first as *nyaakpiin* (ghost) and then as *kpiin* (spirit) as it journeys to, and eventually becomes a member of the spirits in *kpimeteng* (land of the dead).

In Dagaaba anthropology man is also composed of an element called *deor* or *degr*

(dirt, impurity). It is a mystical quality which a person contracts through multiple relations with other human beings and nature.

In summary, man is a composite being of body and soul, *yan* and *vuuro*, *sie* and *degr*. I have left out *dasule* (shadow) from this list because I consider *dasule* to be a part of *sie*. He is a unity of all these parts, a conscious and responsible self capable of relating with others (Kuukure 83; Suom-Dery 72).

For Dagaaba as well as Sisaala, to be a person is to be in relationship with others and the deity within time and history. The most basic unit of human relationships is the family born out of marriage, and to marriage we turn.

Marriage

The importance of marriage in traditional society of Dagaaba and Sisaala cannot be overemphasized. Traditionally, marriage assures both the continuity of life and the cohesion of the social group. For the Dagaaba and Sisaala, marriage is understood as a stable union between families and clans. This does not mean that family and clan relations interfere with the private conjugal life of married couples. Marriage is seen as a social obligation, a factor of individual and collective (lineage) survival and as a sign of moral and social equilibrium. A healthy adult unmarried man is an object of derision and shame.

Before marriage, arrangements are completed and guardianship of the bride is transferred to the clan of the groom. This transfer of rights over the woman is accompanied by a transfer of property (bride wealth/price), which is essential for a valid marriage.

Polygamy is allowed in Dagaaba and Sisaala marriage systems. Levirate marriage is one of the main reasons for polygamy. When a man dies, one of his brothers or nearest of kin in the male lineage inherits the widow, unless she decides to go away. If a man's wife is sterile, the whole clan will feel concerned and will seek to persuade him to get a second wife to ensure the growth of the clan and to save the first marriage. Also, it is quite normal for a woman to encourage her husband to take another wife so that she can have a helpmate in the domestic chores. People glory in having many children, and this is probably one other reason for polygamy. Having many children also raises the social status of the family concerned. It ensures that there will be more hands to help in time of need. It also helps to prevent or reduce adultery and prostitution, especially on the part of the husband.

Divorce is not common. Once the full contract of marriage has been executed, it is "extremely hard to dissolve it" (Kuukure 31). This is probably because marriage is seen as a process which is complete when several children have been born and when all the marriage prestations have been made. The reasons for divorce include sterility or barrenness (unless saved by marriage of a second wife), failure of a man to support his wife with food, shelter, health care and ritual accomplishments. Other reasons for divorce are continued cruelty or physical abuse by the husband, the practice (and suspicion) of magic and witchcraft on the part of the wife, inability or refusal to fulfill a wife's allotted economic, domestic and sexual obligations. Temporary separations between husband and wife are more common than divorce.

Religion

Religion is important to the different tribes in Northwestern Ghana. The existence of God, for instance, is an unquestionable reality in the religious worldview of the Dagaaba and Sisaala. They also believe in the existence of many spirits. These spirits, which are god's agents, have specific functions for man and society.

Bruce Grindal (1972) summarizes Sisaala religious beliefs in the following paragraph:

> Basic to the religious system is a belief in a male high god (*wia*), who is symbolically associated with the sky and the sun, and his "wife," the "Earth" (*tintein*). God is closely related to the notion of fate or "what god brings down" (*wia ne longe*). During sacrifices, "God and his wife Earth" (*wia ari haala tintein*) are acknowledged, but beyond this no cult of worship exists, and these gods are not viewed as having direct association with the everyday affairs of man. Lesser spiritual entities are termed *vesing*, and they include the village and clan section spiritual shrines (*vene*); the ancestors (*lele*) whose shrines are generally located either within the extended family or minor lineage settlement; personal spirits (*tome*) and their shrines; medicines (*dalusun*); and a variety of nature spirits associated with trees (*tia*), the river (*fuo*), and the farm (*baga*) (10).

Dagaaba and Sisaala have myths and stories that try to explain the origins of the world and men, the mysteries of birth and death, and the activities of celestial and mundane beings. The invisible and visible world of the living and the dead dovetail, overlap or even interpenetrate one another, and there is a unity in creation.

Rain Shrine

The rain shrine is found in many Dagaaba and Sisaala houses. It takes a variety of forms. The most common and well-known is the *saa-da-wera*, usually installed near the house, particularly in the *siman* (midden) (Kuukure 62). The rain shrine consists of a stock driven into the ground; a peg about a foot long carved out of a tree that has been struck by lightning is transfixed through a hole in this stock, in the form of a cross. An evil in the family, such as sickness, can occasion the installation of this shrine.

The rain shrine is universally of great significance in oaths and similar procedures. The killing power of lightning is something the Dagaaba dread, and death from "rain" is always attributed to some major offense against the shrine (62).

Rain has the function of procuring the fecundity of the land. Hence, the head of the family makes a sacrifice to the rain shrine before cultivation of the fields to ask a blessing and protection on all those who work on the farm. At the end of the cultivation, a thanksgiving sacrifice is offered by the *tendaana* either during the annual harvest festival or at the request of an individual or family.

Earth Shrine

The earth shrine is the most important focus of religious activity. Through its cult the village emerges as a social unit. Dagaaba, for example, believe that the earth shrine has a mystical or supernatural force called *tengan tiib*. This force is represented by a totem (*tiib*) which is usually placed or built in a thick grove (*tengan tug*). At the *tengan tug*, sacrifices are offered to the *tengan* (Angsotinge 88-89). The earth shrine provides sanctions against interpersonal aggression (bloodshed and witchcraft), against self-

destruction (suicide), against depletion of the community (sale of members), and thievery. It also places some control upon sexuality (Kuukure 64). The *tengan* can be implored as an agent to place a curse on one's enemies. This is done by throwing some dust from *tengan* on the person to be cursed (Angsotinge 92).The powers of *tengan* are, however, limited to a particular settlement. The *tengan* has no power over a person who does not belong to a settlement over which the *tengan* exercises its domain (91).

Among the Dagaaba and Sisaala the earth shrine is guarded by the *tendaana* (custodian of the earth shrine). The *tendaana,* as we have stated earlier, is the first person to have settled in a previously uninhabited part of the area.

The *tendaana* performs ritual sacrifices on behalf of the *tengan*. He also apportions land to new settlers and adjudicates in disputes between people within his geographical jurisdiction. As custodian of the land, the *tendaana*"receives all lost property that has been found in his area and that has not been claimed (88-89). This includes unclaimed corpses that may be found on the land in his care. The *tendaana* supervises economic activities of the area in his charge, particularly the village market (*daa*) which serves many purposes.

Village markets are places where people go to sell and buy commodities and to rendezvous with friends. They are also places where information of a public nature is easily disseminated among the people.

The *tendaana* performs ritual and religious roles in his area. He offers sacrifice for various reasons. A major reason a *tendaana* offers sacrifice is for "intercession and expiation" (101). After harvest, he also offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving.

Ancestors or Ancestor Spirits (*Kpime*)

Ancestor veneration (not worship) is an important ritual function among ethnic groups of Northwestern Ghana. In general, an ancestor is a deceased elder who lived a good and exemplary life on earth and, upon his death, becomes a member of the eternal beings. Among the Dagaaba, for instance, not every human being qualifies to be an ancestor. The ancestors are dead human beings who have been transformed into spiritual agencies and who have spiritual jurisdiction over their lineage kin and, in limited ways, to their matrilateral descendants.

Parenthood is a prerequisite for having an ancestor shrine carved in one's name. The second prerequisite is a proper death as distinct from an evil one. Death is considered evil if it was the result of suicide, leprosy or insanity. Only males who have children born in their name may have a shrine carved in their name. It is the male child who is said to be responsible for carving the shrine of his father. However, there are cases when the daughter can prevail upon her paternal uncle, the dead man's full brother, to perform the required rites on her behalf and create a shrine for her dead father.

Men who die childless or who have suffered an evil death are denied an ancestor shrine, unless the sin that has been committed is first expiated by the prescribed sacrifices. The killing of a fellow clansman is an unforgivable offense against the ancestors, and a shrine is never carved for a man who kills his father or brother. A woman who has left children behind her also has a shrine established in her name. An ancestor must have been well esteemed by the community (Kuukure 65-66). The wicked, especially witches, never get to become ancestors.

Tutelary or Guardian spirits

Dagaaba and Sisaala believe in spirits. The first and foremost of these is the earth shrine itself. Each clan has its spirit guardian, although linked clans may have the same one. The altar is usually different for each local clan sector. Like the belief in a totemic animal, which is also sometimes spoken of as a spirit guardian, this concept is associated with the patrilineal descent group. Each individual has a guardian spirit. Each group has a selection of possible guardian spirits available to its members, including the spirit guardian of the clan itself, individual ancestors, and usually the most important medicine shrines of the lineage (68).

Medicine shrines

Medicine shrines refer to any of the thousands of multi-purpose private and personal shrines. These shrines are mostly placed outside the house. They are made from sticks, stones, clay pots and calabashes (68). There is a proliferation of medicine shrines and they are used for the protection of their adherents, for the restoration of health, for success in war or hunting and for casting spells for good and bad, preventive and curative. Medicine shrines may have been inherited, acquired at the instruction of a diviner, discovered in connection with the wild-bush and with the possession and inspiration of the "beings of the wild" or some spirit. Or they may have been sought or even bought on the initiative of the present owner as remedy for some social, psychological or physical misfortune. All medicine shrines have histories of migration or acquisition from within or without the geographical area (69). Each has its particular taboos and demands of sacrifices and offerings.

Beings of the Wild (*Kontome* or *Kontombili*)

In sculpture, the shrines of these beings consist of a representation of a male and female spoken of as dwarf-like creatures having human appearance. Yet seldom does anyone get to see them. According to Dagaaba and Sisaala, beings of the wild speak with a high pitch and nasal accent. They are believed to have descended from above, from god and are god's children and messengers with powers derived from him. Apparently, they can reproduce their kind. Not only are they always represented as a couple, they are said to have children. They are believed to inhabit the hills, rivers and trees (71). All knowledge of supernatural agencies comes from these beings of the wild. They are indispensable for the diviner, when he is consulted by a client. On the other hand these beings appear to be very difficult to handle. Those who use them will make gains, but they are also bound to offer whatever religious duty they demand. The failure to do this or a breach of their taboo will be severely punished with beating and anything else, not excluding death.

When they are angry, the man who contains them becomes eccentric and behaves like a mad beast. The characteristics of a man possessed by *kontome* (the beings of the wild) are very similar to those of demoniacs in the Judeo-Christian belief, but with this essential difference: *kontome* cannot be exorcised. They can, however, be calmed down by being accepted, making a shrine to them, and offering the duty or ritual they want. It will be curious then to ask what happens to a Christian who is possessed by these beings or fairies, since they cannot be exorcised, especially a Christian who inherits them from his non-Christian parents or heritage.

Economic World-view

Economically, Northwestern Ghana has been, and largely still is, the underdog as far as Ghana's development endeavor is concerned. In no part of Ghana are the problems of under-development so concentrated and so focused as in the Northwest. The people here are beset with many maladies and crises: poor rains, poor crop yields, inadequate schools to accommodate the teeming youthful populations, poor sanitary conditions and lack of potable water. One can hardly talk of a "per capita" income when the majority of people in these areas have virtually no incomes. Substandard living is pervasive in many of these rural communities (Bekye 42). It is no secret that the area largely still lags behind the rest of the country in terms of the provisions of many basic and necessary amenities, facilities and services.

This area remains largely unexplored or un-prospered for mineral potentials or for industrial development possibilities and purposes. The illiteracy rate is about the highest in the whole country (42). The current state of under-development in Northwestern Ghana is the cumulative result of an uncanny combination of several factors.

The distant historical root of Northern under-development is traceable to the British colonial system, which was one of calculated and systematic neglect on the presupposition that the North was "useless" in contributing meaningfully to development of the colonial state. The Northern Territories were annexed to the colony and declared a labor reserve to supply cheap and much needed labor to the mines, cocoa farms, army, police, and general labor in the cities in Southern Ghana (43). The colonial administration also deliberately restricted education in the Northern parts of Ghana. Even when the Catholic missionaries wanted to open schools in the area, they met with great difficulties

from the colonial administration. Permission to open schools was refused the missionaries for a long time.

Infrastructural development - roads, transport and communication - had been reduced to a minimum, just enough to serve colonial administrative needs and trade purposes. Agricultural development had been modest and was restricted solely to cash crop production, particularly cotton, groundnuts, sheanuts and some tobacco.

The health sector fared better, even though only a skeletal health infrastructure was in place. The intensive disease control policy, under the auspices of the Medical Field Unit, the Tsetse Control Department and the Leprosy Unit, led to eradication or great control of major epidemic diseases, such as sleeping sickness, cerebrospinal meningitis, river blindness, leprosy and malaria (50). But even then, the underlying economic interest was to ensure a steady stream of "healthy" northerners for work in the cocoa farms and mines in the South.

After independence, the Nkrumah development policy of rapid industrialization in the shortest possible time saw establishment of the now defunct Pwalugu Tomato factory and the Bolgatanga Meat factory in the Upper East Region. Nkrumah's policy of compulsory free basic education, the Northern Scholarship Scheme (51-52) and an increase in the number of secondary schools and teacher training colleges contributed greatly to the educational effort of the North.

In the 1970s development projects in the North included the Upper Region Agricultural Development Programme (URADEP), the Farmers Services Company (FASCOM), the Ghana/German Agricultural Development Project and the Cotton Development Board. The CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency) water

project, undertaken during the Acheampong regime, greatly improved the water situation of many rural communities. Under the (P)NDC government, notable signs of development were observable. There were progressive improvements in infrastructure; there has been much progress in rural electrification, communications network – TV, telephone and better postal services.

Now, in the education sector many more community-based schools are within reach of rural communities, and there are renewed efforts at agricultural development.

The general socio-economic outlook of the Upper West Region of Ghana may be summarized in the following observations made by some of the chiefs, who are traditional local authorities in Ghana.

> Lack of infrastructure: roads are very poor or non-existent to link one village to the next. Poor road conditions make some communities inaccessible especially during the rainy season. This adversely affects the possibilities of such communities reaching markets and health centres within and outside their districts.
>
> Electricity: outside the district capitals almost all the other communities covered in the districts are not connected to the national grid. This lack of electricity outside the district capitals is a major constraint to development in the affected communities.
>
> Health care facilities are either nonexistent or inadequate to serve the needs of the communities within the district. Some communities are so far from the nearest health care centre and the situation is worsened by lack of roads or poor condition of existing roads. In addition, there is an acute

shortage of health personnel.

Schools are not adequate to serve the populations. Most school buildings

are dilapidated with inadequate school furniture, lack of workshops and

equipment, inadequate teachers.

There is a lack of potable water in many rural communities in Ghana.

Consequently, many communities suffer from water borne diseases such

as guinea worm infestation. Because of the seasonal nature of the rainfall,

ponds and rivers easily dry up during the dry season.

The traditional chiefs of Ghana also identified the following economic problems.

Lack of investment in the communities; lack of or inadequate credit

facilities for farming activities; high levels of poverty; lack of structures

for markets and low agricultural output.

Social problems include: poverty, high school drop-out rate, low level of

education of the people, high unemployment levels particularly among the

youth and hence the rural-urban drift, food insecurity.

Sanitation and waste management problems are not peculiar to the urban

centres. Most communities in Ghana have no or inadequate sanitation

facilities. Poor drainage and erosion are major environmental concerns for

a number of communities (Yankson 163-167).

The consequence of these harsh conditions under which many people in the rural areas

of Ghana live, but most especially people in the Upper West Region, is the mass out-

migratory patterns observable every year from rural to urban areas.

Although migration, per se, can be viewed as a manifestation of initiative and

enterprise, its effects on basically agrarian rural populations, dependent on human labor supply, can sometimes be disastrous for the migrant, the family and community that he leaves behind. Migration usually entails family separation, exposure to different cultural values and adoption of new ways of perceiving the world. Sometimes it entails the acquisition of bad habits, contraction of deadly diseases (especially AIDS), and adoption of, or association with, alien ritual practices which often rival the migrant's traditional gods or spirits.

Despite these inherent problems associated with out-migration, all the mothers, fathers, maternal uncles and other older people agree with the young people themselves that migration is necessary. It is through migration that one's economic situation may improve. The farming communities, in which every able-bodied resident man and woman is a farmer, do not regard farming as work in the general sense; and the compulsion to migrate is regarded, though this is seldom overtly emphasized, as mainly due to lack of lucrative non-farming occupations.

Migration involves permanent or semi-permanent changes in residence and takes into account factors which intervene between the economic opportunities and social conditions of the place of origin and those of the destination. In urban areas, migrants are exposed to better health-care facilities, education and welfare services. There is also the lure of "city lights" and urban excitement. However, migrants miss the traditional African rural life, with its creative entertainment, exciting rituals and vibrant arts and crafts which cumulatively spell their identity.

In the midst of these economic hardships: the clanic social organization, and indomitable eclectic religious fervor inherited from previous generations, the people of

Northwestern Ghana, as Mendonsa states, are willing to approach Allah, Jesus, or the

ancestors to receive relief (Mendonsa 6).

Festivals and Ceremonies

Festivals mean a lot to Africans because they are an expression of culture and

tradition. They are usually held to express appreciation to the deity for good harvest and

other blessings received from god. On important occasions, such as child naming,

puberty, marriage and death, certain rites and rituals are performed to mark the occasion.

This usually brings the whole village and community together for reunification. Festivals

and ritual celebrations, therefore, perform both religious and social functions.

The common features and beliefs expressed in festivals in many African societies are

belief in a supreme being, life after death and nearness of the ancestors to their living

descendants. Festivals are occasions when past leaders of the land, village or tribe are

remembered, honored and their help and protection sought. Festivals are times for ritual

purification of the land so that people can enter a new season with confidence and hope.

Festivals are occasions to display cultural art and affirm cultural values.

The main traditional festivals celebrated in Northwestern Ghana are the *Dumba*

festival among the Wala, the *Kobina* festival in Lawra traditional area and the *Kakube*

festival of the Nandom traditional area. These festivals are agricultural thanksgiving

ceremonies to god for good harvest, protection from enemy aggression and divine

blessing upon the people of the particular area. They are also an opportunity for

indigenous people to come together to celebrate their cultural heritage through sacrifice,

libation, music, dance and drumming. Dancing to folk music, accompanied by *dalare*

(tomtom drums) and xylophone, usually moves crowds to excitement and makes everyone express their joy and thanksgiving by joining in singing and dancing. At these ceremonies new songs are composed to express thanks to god. They also depict social problems and call on people to desist from the problems identified, such as alcoholism, irresponsible parenthood, thievery or diseases. At the end of the festivals, people return home singing the new songs and are obviously being alerted by the songs to social problems that need to be avoided.

Festivals are usually marked by durbars of traditional authority, the chiefs, who display cultural attire by their dress and majestic walking with the elders around them.

Traditional festivals are also occasions for poetry recitals, usually by the youth, singing, dancing and display of art and craft. Festival grounds constitute a snapshot of traditional culture.

The *Bagre* Association

The *bagre* association is a religious community into which a person is initiated through the *bagre* ritual. Scholarly research on the *bagre* association and myth has been done by Jack Goody in his book *The Myth of the Bagre* (1972). Goody's work on the *Bagre* association and myth is so detailed that no elaboration is necessary here. It just suffices to acknowledge that the association is an important religious and socio-cultural event among the Dagaaba.

Divination

Diviners, sorcerers, oracles, magicians and mediums are an integral part of African societies. These people are specialists in various areas of human life. People consult these specialists with their anxieties and fears.

The diviner has a pre-eminent place in traditional African society. He claims the ability to penetrate the invisible world of the spirits and the dead. He also claims ability to discern and interpret the dispositions and attitudes of the spirits in respect to the living. He is, therefore, the link between the physical and spiritual worlds.

The office of the diviner is given by god (*ngmen*) (Kuukure 102-106; Bekye 185). A person knows that he has been selected by god to be a diviner when he begins to experience strange and abnormal occurrences in the form of bad dreams, frequent sickness, recurrent deaths in the family or lack of productivity in his work. When such abnormal occurrences happen to a person, he usually consults a practicing diviner to find out the cause. When the diviner determines that the spirit of divination is at work, arrangements are made with senior diviners of the area, who come together to install the affected person in his home as a diviner in his own right. He is given the necessary tools for divination: *kontonbilii* (statuettes of the beings of the wild), who reveal to the diviner what goes on in the spirit world and the particular dispositions of individual spirits and the *bagbug-wuo* (divination bag).

Divination is carried out by the diviner in order to solve the problems of people who approach him for help. In traditional African societies nothing happens without a cause. There is hardly a natural occurrence. Diviners are usually consulted to reveal the causes of mishaps that a person may suffer.

Prayers and Sacrifices

 Edward Kuukure (1985) and Paul Bekye (1991) have done an excellent job of compiling prayers offered at various shrines and for various purposes. These prayers reveal the spiritual and material concerns of the people who offer them. They also reveal

a sense of trust in god, the *tibe* and the readiness of person in prayer to be faithful to the terms of his prayer request.

The prayers are usually for various needs, from community needs to private needs. They express gratitude as well as supplication.

Post-burial Ceremonies

Dagaaba perform elaborate ritual ceremonies after the burial of a deceased member of the family. Kuukure (1985) has described these ceremonies in detail in *The Destiny of Man: Dagaaba Beliefs in Dialogue with Christian Eschatology* (118-119). It is, therefore, not necessary to repeat the details of the rituals. It is, however, important to remark that these rituals, as part and parcel of Dagaaba religious experience and expression, are invaluable tools of communication that should inspire Christian catechesis.

Communication Methods among the Dagaaba and Sisaala

In predominantly oral cultures of many African societies, communication is basically oral, ritual and symbolic. Information, messages and knowledge are shared by word of mouth, songs (sacred and secular), funeral dirges, stories, myths, fables, proverbs, riddles or through signs and symbols, as well as art (paintings, weaving) and body language (Muzorewa 79; Pobee 21; Sundkler 100).

Oral Communication

Traditional Dagaaba and Sisaala, being illiterate, communicate by word of mouth through words, songs, stories, dirges, etc. By means of language, messages are

communicated to people and feedback or reaction to the message expected. When a person says, for example, *wa ka* (come here) he expects the addressee to understand the message and to respond appropriately by coming to him. Both positive and negative messages may be expressed by means of oral communication.

Messages may also be communicated orally through names. Many Dagaaba and Sisaala names communicate a message about the individual or his family or the circumstances surrounding his birth or even express a wish or affirmation about a thing or person. For example, *Domegyiele* (enemies are envious, or enemies will be envious) communicates a message about a success story in the life of a person or his family that could be a source of envy for the one considered to be an enemy. Another name, *Nbelenyin* (where should I look?) is a name that communicates some form of frustration or desperation. Where should I look? does not only ask a question but also expresses a situation in which a person finds himself at the crossroads of life and seeks direction or help in order to follow the right path.

There are also theophoric names which speak about God and his attributes or express human expectations or affirmations about God. *Mwinbangme* (God knows me) expresses confidence in a personal God who knows the individual. *Angsomwin* (who owns God?) literally affirms that God is a God of all people. He is a universal God.

Songs

Dagaaba and Sisaala love to sing for various reasons and at various occasions. Music is a pastime, a form of entertainment, or a channel to communicate a message that one would find difficult to communicate via another channel. Songs serve a didactic role

besides the other functions just mentioned. They teach moral lessons to children and elders alike. A popular didactic song among the Dagaaba is entitled *Nipkee fola* (anxious elder, shameless elder, selfish elder). This song speaks about an elder who eats food while children watch. This song teaches elders to consider the needs of children before their own and to be conscious of giving a good example to the youth.

As a pastime, songs are sung while people work. For example, women grinding at the mill usually sing as pastime but often to express their frustrations or disappointments. Usually, someone in the family would overhear the song and in that way the message is communicated that the woman is not happy about something. They would then ask what she was singing about, and sometimes she would deny the reason she sang a particular song or would express the pain in her heart.

Some songs are sung for ritual purposes. They relate to the sacred expressing human needs, frustrations or reliance on the help of God. They may also express the desire for mercy and pardon.

Funeral dirges are another form of music. They set a tone and create an atmosphere of mourning. Funeral dirges usually describe the qualities and successes of the deceased or his/her living relatives. By listening to funeral dirges, one can know more about the life and work of the deceased and the family to which he belonged.

Proverbs

Proverbs are another form of communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala. Proverbs are used to express a message in a metaphorical way. For instance, *aa wule bibile wob?* (who shows an elephant to a child?) (Suom-Dery 485). The elephant is self-evident so

that a child will recognize it as soon it sees one. In the same way, certain things (good or bad) are self-evident, such that the child will know when it encounters them. Fire, for instance, will burn the child or anyone if one is not careful so, if a child refuses to listen to the advice of elders, such a proverb is invoked on them. The proverb also teaches that one learns by experience.

The use of proverbs is a sign that one has been successfully socialized into Dagaare or Sisaala cultural expression. It is also a sign of wisdom because of one's ability to use language in a didactic and pithy manner (218). Proverbs are short and effective tools of communication because they speak directly to the mind and heart of the addressee and call upon him to reflect on the message contained therein and to respond appropriately.

Stories

Stories, myths, legends, etc. are all channels of communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala. They teach about the history of the people, their moral values and cultural ideals. They are also a form of entertainment. A compilation of Dagaaba stories has been done by Kuwabong Dannabang (1992), Gervase Angsotinge (1986) and Luke Bangnikon (1999).

According to Sundkler, 'myths constitute an "original revelation," which is re-acted in annually recurrent festivals, in a rhythm which forms the cosmic framework of space and time. The myths span the whole of existence, from heaven to the hut and the heart of the individuals: in fact, from cosmos to clan (Muzorewa 81).

Body Language

Dagaaba and Sisaala also communicate via body language. They do this through dance, eye contact, gestures and other forms of body movements. To understand and interpret body language requires knowledge and familiarity with the cultural context and modes of expression. A head-nod means agreement or consent while a head-shake indicates disagreement. When a parent looks at a child sternly that is supposed to communicate disagreement to the child.

Dance may express joy or sorrow. The form of dance is determined by the circumstance. The way people dance to express joy during festivals is different from the kind of dance performed at the funeral of an elderly person. Ability to perform the appropriate dance indicates the degree of socialization into the culture.

Drums and xylophones are also used to communicate. The way in which drums or xylophones are played communicates particular messages which a well socialized person in the culture would understand and correctly interpret.

Signs and Symbols

Symbols communicate messages to people who use them. They are culturally situated although there may be cross-cultural similarity in the use and interpretation of symbols. Symbols can be signs, objects, images, sounds, gestures and persons (Suom-Dery 228) that evoke and warrant appropriate responses from those who understand them and for whom they are significant. A symbol may express something mysterious whose presence or existence, while still beyond the grasp of our rational mind, may be sensed in a way that is simultaneously "internal" but distant (Baldock 1). According to Suom-Dery, the

Dagara (singular of Dagaaba) child is born into a symbolic world and house of symbols (229). Ashes and water, for example, are symbols of peace and reconciliation among the Dagaaba and Sisaala.

Art and Sculpture

Dagaaba and Sisaala also communicate through art and sculpture. By means of art works such as baskets, clay pots, hats, decorations on calabashes (gourds cut in half for drinking), carvings, buildings, tombs, etc. beauty is communicated. Other messages may also be communicated through art and sculpture. The message usually depends on the artist.

Writing

With the introduction of formal education by European colonialists and missionaries, a number of Dagaaba and Sisaala have become literate, capable of reading and writing. Dagaare and Sisaali stories, myths, proverbs, songs and history are being committed to writing. Dagaaba and Sisaala scholars write on various aspects of their culture. These documents describe and interpret their indigenous culture, correct erroneous perceptions of their culture by other writers and introduce these people and their cultures to the literary world. A cross-cultural study and interpretation of certain aspects of Dagaaba and Sisaala culture alongside other cultures show great similarities either in expression or mindset. An example is the cosmological, anthropological and religious worldview of the *Bagre Myth* considered alongside other myths from the Ancient Near East, the Aborigines of Australia or even the Native American tribal myths and folk narratives (Kennedy 83).

Religious Communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala

It has been stated already that Dagaaba and Sisaala are religious people. Religion permeates and influences every aspect of their lives from birth to death and beyond. One can hardly distinguish between the sacred and profane. We have already described some elements of Dagaaba and Sisaala religious world-view. Therefore, it suffices here to mention that the elements that constitute the religious world-view of Dagaaba and Sisaala also serve as channels of communication between human beings and God. The nature of communication that goes on between people and the spirit world does not only affect divine-human relationship, it also influences interpersonal and group communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala.

The ancestors, for instance, are not just moral symbols, they are also channels of communication between human beings and God. People send their messages to God through the ancestors or the divinities or spirits or diviners. They do so through prayer, sacrifice (usually animal sacrifice), pouring of libation, or some other ritual performance relating to life or death, such as the *bagre* initiation or funeral rites.

Although the conception of an ancestor is not uniform among all Dagaaba and Sisaala tribes, the fact of their being a channel of communication is not disputed (Suom-Dery 100). The following prayer, said in front of ancestral shrines, shows the mediatory role of the ancestors:

> We ask you (our ancestors) to present our offering to him (*Naabile-ngmen*). We offer it to him with one hand but may he kindly accept it with both hands (Kpiebaya 62; Kuukure 91; Bekye 202).

 Dagaaba and Sisaala do not approach God directly in sacrificial offerings, the latter being considered too great and human sacrifices being too meager to be given to him directly (Bekye 202). The position of the ancestors and the spirits enhances the dignity of the gifts.

Prayers before the *Tibe* show a similar belief in the mediatory role of these spiritual agents. For example, the following prayer is said before *Teng-gan*:

> Receive these fowls and the cow and take them to *Saazu-ngmen* (God-of-
>
> the-above).

Tibe are agents of communication. In fact, they are said to be *Naangmen na-kyiinbe* (the shepherds of God) with the responsibility of watching over a precise domain of the world. As stated earlier, they are localized in a shrine and act as agents of protection over the people within their jurisdiction. For instance, *Kpime* (ancestors) watch over and protect the family; *Wie* (Lord of the bush) reigns over the vast domain of the wild nature. *Teng-gan* (Earth Spirit/shrine) watches over the village, the cultural sector and human civilization. *Saa* (Spirit of rain) reigns over the celestial phenomena while the *kontome* (Beings of the wild, Spirits of divination) are the wise counselors of human beings (Bekye 204).

The reference to the *Tibe* as shepherds is significant because, among the Dagaaba and Sisaala, shepherds are usually not owners of the animals they herd. They are mere caretakers. In the case of the *Tibe,* they are mere intermediaries or communication channels between God and human beings (Bekye 205).

Dreams are also an important channel of religious communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala. It is common belief, among Dagaaba and Sisaala, that God or the ancestors

communicate their will to people through dreams. This is particularly the case in deciding whether one should enroll for the *bagre* initiation or not. As Paul Bekye describes, when an elder of a house sees the ancestors (in his dream) appearing to him in great numbers, he gets up in the morning and goes into the *kyaara* (byre) where the carved wooden images of the ancestors are placed in order to pay homage to the *kpime* (ancestors). There he performs a ritual called *kuo-puuru* (spurting of cold water over the ancestral images) to ask for peace. Then he consults a *bag-bugre* (diviner) to find out why the ancestors have come in his dream. It is usually the diviner who determines the reason the ancestors came to him in his dreams (Bekye 155-156). When the diviner determines that it is *bagre-ngmen* (deity of the initiates) who has come upon the dreamer, then the latter will consult elders in the family, who will cross-examine the matter with another diviner before asking the dreamer to enroll for the *bagre* initiation rite.

Nature of Human Communication among Dagaaba and Sisaala

In a male-dominated society, communication is horizontal among males and vertical between adult males and females and children, the women being considered "adult children." Females may communicate on a horizontal level among themselves as they usually do on their way to fetch wood or water from the river.

Adult males, as we have stated already, usually gather together to make decisions bearing on their family or clan. If or when a woman or child is present at such gatherings, they are expected to be silent observers, having no contribution to make, and no objection to raise.

The model of communication is, therefore, one of dialogue among adult males and submission and obedience to male orders by women and children.

The description of social roles among Dagaaba and Sisaala also indicates another form of communication. There are distinct male roles and female roles in these cultures. For example, men farm, build and repair homes, defend the family or clan in times of war or conflict, etc. while women sow crops on the field, fetch firewood and water, prepare food, bathe the children, sweep the rooms and surroundings. It is unusual for men to perform women's duties, just as it is for women to perform men's duties. Any such performance is ridiculed and the victim made fun of or avoided.

Even without the luxury of writing by means of which modern society easily makes reference to past events, traditional and illiterate Dagaaba and Sisaala were able to remember events, ritual formulas and prayers, moral values, genealogies and the migration stories of their ancestors, which all defined their identity. Obviously, things they remembered were limited to only those events or stories that had a distinctive relation to the individual, family or clan. In the words of Walter J. Ong, protracted orally based thought, even when not in formal verse, tends to be highly rhythmical. Oral cultures also learn to retain information by mnemonic devices (Ong 34-36).

Oral cultures like that of traditional Dagaaba and Sisaala societies learn and communicate by apprenticeship, listening, repeating and participating. These are essential elements in the communication model of these cultures (Ong 9; Suom-Dery 213).

Implications for Missionary Activity

The implications of such a model of communication for missionary activity are that, when adult males decide to join Christianity, the decision includes women and children. Women and children follow the decision of their adult males.

Another implication of the communication system for missionary activity is that males who decide to follow the new religion of the missionaries would lose their authority and decision-making role to the missionaries. Until this time, they were the custodians of family history, morals and community wisdom. By discarding the religious heritage of their forebears in order to become Christians, adult males lose their moral authority within their families and communities because missionaries now become moral authorities. Whatever authority a male Dagao (singular of Dagaaba) or Sisaala Christian had in his family or village now derives from the authority of the missionary. *Saakumno* (ways of the ancestors) now becomes *faara yel ke* (the priest says).

The effects of losing their moral authority to the missionaries will eventually become evident as missionaries introduce new concepts and moral norms that challenge the existing moral system of Dagaaba and Sisaala thereby initiating a kind of social and moral revolution among Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana.

Appendix II

Taxonomy of Practical Catechetical Approaches

For Africans, kaleidoscope catechesis is a method that is sensitive to and respectful of their religious experiences and worldview. Kaleidoscope catechesis recognizes that the African is "notoriously religious" because religion permeates every sector of African life. Kaleidoscope catechesis also acknowledges that traditional folklore, myths, art forms, music, fables, sculpture, drama, dance, and many other media of traditional communication are crucially significant in defining the identity of the African and, furthermore, that these aspects of African culture and anthropology must be seriously considered alongside modern media in the evangelization process.

In the early Church, Christians were open to diverse means of communicating the Gospel. In an oral culture, the early Christians spread the Gospel by word of mouth and traveled on foot, by boat/ship, horseback or donkey to spread the Gospel. Faith was being taught and shared through architecture, liturgy and pious devotions. The following description depicts the multidimensional way in which the Church aroused the religious imagination of Christians:

> The Catholic church of yesterday had a texture to it, a feel: the smudge of
> ashes on your forehead on Ash Wednesday, the cool candle against your
> throat on St. Blaise's day, the waferlike sensation on your tongue in
> communion. It had a look: the oddly elegant sight of the silky vestments
> on the back of the priest as he went about his mysterious rites facing the
> sanctuary wall in the parish church; the monstrance with its solar radial
> brilliance surrounding the stark white host of the tabernacle; the indelible

impression of the blue-and-white Virgin and the shocking red image of the

Sacred Heart. It even had a smell, an odor: the pungent incense, the

extinguished candles with their beeswax aroma floating ceilingward and

filling your nostrils, the smell of olive oil and sacramental balm. It had the

taste of fish on Friday and unleavened bread and hot-cross buns. It had the

sound of unearthly Gregorian chant and *flectamus genua* and mournful

Dies Irae. The Church had a way of capturing all your senses, keeping

your senses and your being enthralled (Bausch 192).

With the growth of technology, beginning with the printing press in the 16th century,

Christianity readjusted its means of instruction by inventing the catechism. The catechism

is a literary document containing the basic elements of the Christian faith that

catechumens or Christians preparing for various sacraments need to learn, often by heart.

The method of instruction using the catechism was usually by memorizing the texts and

formulae written in the catechism. With further advancement in technology to include

telecommunication and electronic media, the methods of religious education or catechesis

need to be readjusted to meet the demands of telecommunication and electronic

populations. Catechetical methods cannot remain within the four walls of a classroom,

because electronic devices are capable of trespassing the boundaries set up by space and

time, thereby exposing people to many sources of information and value systems. The

religious instructor is no longer the only person who instructs or imparts values to

catechumens. Not even parents can claim sole responsibility for imparting value systems

to their children. Doubtless, the electronic media have established a new world order that

calls for new ways and methods of religious instruction, in both developed and

developing countries. The reality is that modern technology of any kind -- television, telephone, computers -- can be found in remote parts of the world, and their effects on populations are without measure. That is yet another reason for a multidimensional approach to catechesis.

In an oral society that is gradually becoming literate, any catechetical approach that is adopted for evangelization must recognize that oral patterns of thought, memory, and logic are not exactly the same as literary cultural patterns. At the same time, oral cultures are not necessarily illogical, even if they do not conform to traditional Aristotelian deductive methods of syllogism. In fact, Walter Ong rightly observes that "All thought including that in primary oral cultures, is to some degree analytic" (8).

Oral cultures, like Dagaaba and Sisaala societies, learn, possess and practice great wisdom, even though they do not go to schools to learn or study. They learn by apprenticeship, discipleship, listening, repeating, and participation. Organized classes in the form of catechism sessions introduced by missionaries were, therefore, an innovation in Dagaaba and Sisaala "educational" practice. However, because oral cultures have a powerful retentive memory, Dagaaba and Sisaala converts to Christianity could easily learn to recite word-for-word the question-and-answer type catechisms designed in the tradition of the Baltimore Catechism. However, this did not mean that they necessarily understood or took to heart the things they memorized. People can learn by memorization, reproduce what they have memorized and easily forget what they reproduced. Learning by memorization is not always a good way to judge knowledge.

The downside of this form of instruction is that, when people do not recite these formulas for a long time, they tend to forget. This is particularly true among emerging

literate Dagaaba and Sisaala populations. Therefore, to continue using a model of religious instruction suitable for a basically oral culture among an emerging literate culture is definitely anachronistic and unsuitable. The question-and-answer method of religious instruction worked in the past in a culture with a powerful retentive memory. As Dagaaba and Sisaala children go to school and are introduced to literate models of thought and practice, the use of question-and-answer catechism style alone will no longer be feasible. Pope John Paul II acknowledges the disadvantages of this method of instruction in the following words:

> We are all aware that this method can present certain disadvantages, not
> the least of which is that it lends itself to insufficient or at times almost
> non-existent assimilation, reducing all knowledge to formulas that are
> repeated without being properly understood (CT no. 55).

That is one other reason kaleidoscope catechesis is more feasible as a method of catechesis in the Diocese of Wa.

It should also be noted that religious peoples in oral cultures are very practical. For them religion and salvation are closely related to the experience of material conditions of peace and wellbeing, good health and lack of pain. Pierre Babin rightly observes that African Christians are quite naturally more attracted to a Christianity of salvation than a Christianity of knowledge. They move to faith through concrete acts or experience of healing, education, protection from hunger and disease, etc. The practical nature of African religiosity is a crucial point to remember when designing catechetical programs for oral-based African societies that are not particularly excited with philosophical explanations of abstract religious ideas or truths. Kaleidoscope catechesis must address

these concerns among the indigenous peoples of Northwestern Ghana by embracing a myriad of methods than just the question-and answer method. It must engage the whole person as an intellectual, emotional and physical being.

The human person's creative abilities cannot be confined to one paradigm. Being nondiscriminatory in nature and practice and not affiliated with any ideological agenda designed to promote a particular cultural value against another, kaleidoscope catechesis must satisfy the creative potential of Dagaaba and Sisaala and strengthen their religious imaginations by putting to use every cultural and technological tool that will facilitate the spread of the Good News of salvation and enable the hearers to understand and live the Good News in their respective social and religious milieu.

Because Dagaaba language is symbolic and descriptive, rather than abstract, a catechetical model that values and appreciates the use of symbolism and descriptions, rather than abstract ideas and formulas, is essential. The Bible itself uses symbolic language extensively. In the New Testament, for instance, Christ used parables and was often reluctant to offer explanations (except privately to His disciples) because the parable as symbol is supposed to speak for itself. Traditional folklore and symbolism are very useful for catechesis, because they offer the catechist or religious instructor an understanding of the mind of those to whom he is transmitting the Christian message (Shorter 83).

The Dagaaba and Sisaala religious world comprises the living, dead, ancestors, spirits, ghosts, witchcraft, sorcery and divination. To enter into such a socio-cultural and religious world-view requires from the European missionary an initial affirmation of the differences between this new culture and his home culture. It also requires some degree

of familiarity with the environment and culture of Dagaaba and Sisaala, in order that the Christian message may be adopted by them.

The locus of conversion for the human person may be in human imaginations. Human imaginations have this ability because symbols are born in and fed by the imaginative process. Human imaginations have the ability to point to several different meanings at the same time. They call for a response even though they are the seemingly irrational causes of our emotions and desires.

The symbols which are nourished by the human imagination provide us with an alternative world having emotional meaning, raised consciousness and more intense relationality. To live in a world of symbols means that there is the possibility that the social and individual dimensions of life are brought together and that an intimacy is created, through which the participants feel a nearness to themselves (Empereur 175). Because of the way symbols operate, the human imagination provides balance and equilibrium for us.

The visual arts are a way in which we can modify our world so that we can responsibly engage it. Imagination, nourished by the visual arts, can enhance personhood, restore balance to human lives and help people deal with oppressiveness (Empereur 175-176). Art, sculpture, drama, folktales, myth, photographs, paintings, newsletters, magazines, email, the internet and audio/video tapes are all media language that have their respective persuasive power -- qualitative or quantitative -- to change people's opinions or actions as they are affected by the chosen media.

Art work is an interpretation of popular culture. Whether the artist is an important figure in history, such as Michelangelo, or a modern ceramics expert, such as Gertrude

Notzler, the work that an artist creates informs us about prevailing cultural values. Art is more than just the expression of a single individual; it is a statement of a people (Mungazi 149). Art often originates from certain events and ideas that acquire a high degree of importance in human life in terms of religious, social, or political activity.

In classical Greek tradition, religious art and buildings -- temples, treasuries, theatres and free-standing statuary -- were clustered together in sacred precincts. Images at these sites served various functions. First of all, they were sacred. The temple, for instance, was considered the dwelling place of the deity. For some people, the temple and statues were mere symbols. Secondly, images commemorated special persons, both living and dead, who distinguished themselves in various areas of culture, such as games, battle, or political life. Thirdly, images were used as pedagogical tools or narrative forms of the culture that spoke visually to people, especially uneducated populations, in a way that stimulated their visual imagination (Goethals 38). Art rendered visible the events, myths and deities of particular significance for the populace.

For some time, early Christians were opposed to images, because they thought it idolatrous and opposed to the second commandment of the Decalogue. Tertullian, as an example, insisted that not only was the worship of an idol forbidden, but also the making of an idol by a Christian worker (39). However, images continue to be used in Christianity, because the common people that Christians sought to convert were accustomed to seeing and hearing sacred stories, just as literate people were accustomed to reading sacred stories.

To be able to reach these visual cultures, the Church needed to communicate, in the visual language that was popular and understandable to the receiving cultures. Bishop

Paulinus of Nola, for instance, recognized that, in order to attract people to Christianity

from pagan religions, images were an important tool of instruction. St. Felix also

recognized that the people who came to him were peasants who were not devoid of

religion but who were not able to read. These people, according to St. Felix, were

converted to Christianity through gazing at images of the works of the saints

(Godschmidt, 1940, p.63; Bevan, 1940, pp.124-125) (Goethals 40).

The use of images as a means of instructing people in the Christian faith is, therefore,

not new. It has a long tradition. During the era of Constantine, for instance, the use of

visual art in Christianity developed dramatically. Church buildings and decorations

accelerated. By the late sixth century, images were found in Churches throughout

Christendom. Gregory the Great sanctioned the narrative role of images. He, however,

made a distinction between worshipping an image and learning from it. Images, as visual

art, served a story-telling or narrative role as far as Christianity was and is concerned

today. They provide a narrative of biblical history and religious instruction for the

unlearned (illiterate), just as reading the Bible enabled the educated to learn about their

faith from the Scriptures.

Additionally, images are a tangible, visible aid to devotion and contemplation. St.

Thomas expanded this reasoning by stating that the soul moves toward the image, insofar

as it is an inanimate carved or painted object, but it is also attracted to the image because

it represents a reality other than itself. Images inspire devotion. They are not worshipped.

Although some reformers, such as John Calvin and Ulrich Zwingli, rejected all images,

Martin Luther defended the importance of images as tools for instruction and aids to

devotion (53). The Second Vatican Council continued to defend and support the use of

art in the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy: "the Church has always been a friend of the fine arts" (SC no. 122).

The use of art created by indigenous people is, therefore, essential in catechesis. Emphasis on indigenous art is important, because indigenous artists share common experiences, aspirations or anxieties with the people with whom they live and can meaningfully express community or cultural sentiments in art. In addition, because art tells a story, it is beneficial if the story-teller is an indigenous person. In that way listeners understand the language or imagery or even the environment being described as the story unfolds. In this way, art work speaks for itself.

In Africa, art has always symbolized various manifestations of beauty. Many African art objects have served the dual purpose of aesthetics and utility. Art forms in Africa could depict anything ranging from the human desire for dominance to the immortality of the soul and communication with the spirit world, to man's closeness to nature and the interdependence of man and his environment. Art forms in traditional African societies expressed values, ideas, philosophy, human emotions or feelings (Mungazi 154). Mural art, for instance, enhanced artistic expression in African socieites. This type of art is particularly visible among the Kasena and Gurensi people of Northeastern Ghana. Among the Dagaaba, artistic expression is found in many objects including clay pots, baskets, walking sticks, hats and smocks.

Music and Songs

Music was and still is closely related to the cultural practices that give meaning to Africans. Music is one of the art forms of traditional African society. Its appreciation

demands an understanding and appreciation of the culture from which it derives. Traditional African cultures celebrate events with music and dance. Funerals, installation of kings or chiefs, initiation rites and harvest festivals, all involve music. Sometimes, music is used as a channel of correcting deviant behavior in the community or village (Suom-Dery 236-237). The richness of music was evinced from the variety of musical instruments used. The drum, flute and xylophone all give African music significance.

The Second Vatican Council expressed the inestimable value of music in the following words: "Sacred scripture…has praised sacred song (Eph 5:19; Col 3:16). So have the Fathers of the Church and the Roman pontiffs…Sacred music is to be considered the more holy, the more closely connected it is with the liturgical action…." (SC no.122). The council encourages the teaching of sacred music to youth, seminarians, novices and all Christians. Sacred music is a catechetical tool, because the texts reflect the doctrine of the church, are mostly derived from scripture and other liturgical sources, and make prayer more pleasing, thereby promoting unity of minds, or conferring greater solemnity on the sacred rites.

African art could therefore be a fertile source of inspiration for evangelization. Unfortunately they were not taken advantage of because colonial governments and European missionaries refused to appreciate them. This lack of appreciation for African art did irreparable damage to the need to bridge the gap between speculation and the actual knowledge obtained from empirical evidence (Mungazi 152-153). Kaleidoscope catechesis is an opportunity to reclaim these rich cultural forms for the benefit of the Good News.

In a letter to artists, Pope John Paul II states:

Every genuine art form in its own way is a path to the inmost reality of

man and of the world. It is therefore a wholly valid approach to the realm

of faith, which gives human experience its ultimate meaning. That is why

the Gospel fullness of truth was bound from the beginning to stir the

interest of artists, who by their very nature are alert to every "epiphany" of

the inner beauty of things (Pope John Paul II to Artists 1999).

Xavier John Seubert also states very eloquently that

art is also properly sacramental in that it is the orchestration of intuited

and transcendent presence into an experiential instance which is the actual

work of art. It is the performance of this connection which allows the

characterization of the effect of an artwork as real presence. In this sense

art is an indispensable mode of human religiosity (Suebert 27).

In order to communicate the message entrusted to her by Christ, the Church needs art.

Art must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive, the world of the spirit, of the

invisible, of God. It must, therefore, translatethe ineffable into meaningful terms. Art has

a unique capacity to take one or other facet of the message and translate it into colors,

shapes and sounds which nourish the intuition of those who look or listen (Suebert 27). It

does so without emptying the message of itself, of its transcendent value and its aura of

mystery.

Art and craft are ways in the human imagination where we can find the resources to

combat social injustice and inhumanity of any kind. Here is a simple and non-threatening

way to use art for catechesis.

- Let catechumens select the art piece(s) or music to be discussed by the catechism

class.

- Catechumens spend some time looking at the art or listening to the music.

- Catechumens write down (or note in their minds) what they see and what themes or emotions they feel while looking at or listening to the art piece.

- Catechumens share their impressions about the art piece or music with the rest of the class.

- Catechists write down catechumens' impressions or comments on a board or piece of paper, which is later read out to all.

The varying impressions or comments reveal that there are different ways of perceiving and appreciating the same piece of art or music. The same art work speaks differently to different people. By sharing their impressions, catechumens enrich one another's perception, appreciation and understanding of a piece of art. The different themes that they share equally enrich their understanding of an art piece by offering different perspectives from which to view reality. This exercise also shows that no single approach to reality is adequate. This is the kaleidoscope approach. The exercise also helps catechumens realize that their unique perspectives on reality add value and meaning to the larger vision of the reality that they share with others. This exercise can be done with a small group of literate catechumens in a school context, but it can also be done among illiterate catechumens. The only difference with illiterate catechumens is that, instead of writing down their impressions, they express them vocally.

Oral Catechesis

It is important to emphasize that the function of kaleidoscope catechesis is to offer

communication methods or channels by which the faith of the Church is taught and shared. The content of catechesis is not under discussion here. Priests, catechists and other Christians are called upon to proclaim the Gospel and to teach the faith of the Church because they already know their faith and the basic teachings of the Church. It is, however, important for people who proclaim the Word of God to do so in a clear and distinct manner so that their audience can hear the saving Word of God. Agents of catechesis must also assume a physical demeanor that inspires and communicates faith in what the preacher is saying.

The catechesis of the Church, translated into Dagaare as *Naamwin Sore Wullu Gan,* for example, can be taught orally to catechumens within the context of a class or using other occasions such as homilies (occasionally the priest would ask the congregation a question from the catechism), or in prayer groups or organizational meetings.

Myths, Legend, Folktale

Myth is a type of speech. Myth is a system of communication. It is a message. It is a mode of signification, a form. Myth is not defined by the object of its message, but by the way in which it utters this message (Barthes 109). Myths are stories intimately bound up with the traditions of a people. They deal with gods, heroes, religious beliefs and cultural traits. They explain how the world was created, how people and animals came into existence, how important customs were established and preserved. Myths are not historical narratives, and they do not pretend to appeal to evidence in support of what they teach. Myths may teach an untruth, just as a historical narrative may in fact be untrue, and the evidence on which it rests is false (Shorter 92).

Legends entertain with a narrative that is supposedly based on fact. Folktale refers to various forms of traditional narratives. A major characteristic of the folktale is its long and continuing life. It is traditional, handed down from one generation to another. Originality is undesirable and the story is often preserved intact, often in oral form (Christ 2). Dagaaba and Sisaala of Northwestern Ghana have their myths that explain creation, how different animals came to be the way they are. The most comprehensive compilation of one of such Dagaaba myths is done by Jack Goody, the English ethnologist and anthropologist in his work *The Myth of the Bagre.*

Oral communication is something that cannot be done without, not even by advanced technology. Literate and electronic cultures are still bound to express themselves, using some amount of oral communication. The telephone, television, movies, and even now some computer programs all involve some oral-type communication.

The oral mode of catechesis, therefore, can never be outmoded as a relevant tool in religious instruction. Homilies, liturgical and para-liturgical celebrations, administration of sacraments and pastoral counseling are all basically carried out by oral-type communication media. In the Diocese of Wa, in particular, where a majority of Christians are illiterate, oral catechesis is absolutely necessary. However, audio-visual aids are necessary wherever and whenever possible. Use of audio-visual aids, in addition to direct instruction by the catechist, puts the other senses besides the auditory to use and offers catechumens a greater chance to understand, imagine and retain what has been taught and demonstrated.

Liturgical actions are catechetical tools because they narrate and celebrate Christian happenings. Pierre Babin describes "happenings" as "the kind of show that becomes an

event because it is direct and realistic, contains a number of unforeseen incidents, and involves the audience personally" (Babin 197). The happening is derived from the word of God. The celebration of the Eucharist, for instance, celebrates and narrates the saving events of Jesus and expresses Christ's perpetual presence among his people. As a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, Christians are instructed by the word of God, nourished by the paschal food of the Lord, and sent forth by Christ to bring his love and peace and hope to all they meet.

In an article, "Africans Celebrate Jesus Christ," Francois Kabaselle Lumbala describes how the sacraments and sacramentals of the Church can be celebrated to make the saving effects of Jesus felt and experienced by Africans. He describes how African Easter Celebrations can be contextualized to become meaningful and liberating. He also suggests some sacramentals that address particular African concerns such as rites of religious consecration, prayers and blessings for various reasons including prayers for bewitched children (Lumbala 78-93). In the Diocese of Wa prayers for various occasions have already been compiled into a booklet for use by priests. They need to be celebrated in a way that inspires hope and faith. They also need to be celebrated in a way that expresses communion and solidarity.

Homilies

The homily, during liturgical celebrations, is catechetical in nature. It instructs, exhorts and calls the faithful to action. As a catechetical tool, the homily should be

> simple, clear, direct, well-adapted, profoundly dependent on Gospel
>
> teaching and faithful to the Magisterium, animated by a balanced apostolic

ardor coming from its own characteristic nature, full of hope, fostering

belief, and productive of peace and unity (EN no. 43).

Homilies can serve a number of catechetical functions. First of all, homilies can be

kerygmatic or evangelical when they aim to communicate the basic Good News of Jesus

Christ and call those who have not yet heard about Jesus to faith. Secondly, homilies

deepen and expand the understanding of faith of those who have already been baptized.

Thirdly, when homilies are preached in the context of the sacramental celebrations, they

allow God's word to prompt people to enter into the celebration of the sacred mysteries

in their lives. Fourthly, homilies, as parenesis, give moral exhortation to people who face

difficult or complex sets of moral choices. Lastly, homilies can and should be prophetic

addressing social situations in the light of the demands of God's word.

St. Augustine expresses the catechetical function of the homily when he

states that

the expositor and teacher of the Divine Scripture, the defender of right

faith and the enemy of error, should both teach the good and extirpate the

evil…he should conciliate those who are opposed, arouse those who are

remiss, and teach those ignorant of his subject what is occurring and what

they should expect (On Christian Doctrine Bk. 4, IV, 6).

Because the homily is so important in the liturgy and catechesis, priests and deacons need

to make abundant use of the Bible, be familiar with the Patristic, theological and moral

tradition of the Church. They also need to have a penetrating knowledge of their

communities and of society in general. Without this background, preaching could easily

become a rootless teaching without universal application to (Williams 133). The homily

is an appropriate place to use stories and parables. Stories and paraples can serve as attention-grabbers. They can also help the preacher to establish a rapport with his congregation. Stories and paraples may also delight the congregation thereby disposing them to listen more attentively to the message of hope. By means of stories and parables, the preacher could enable the hearers to better understand the message, because of their familiarity with the story or parable. In addition, parables or stories are graphic and vivid descriptions of realities the audience can easily identify with or easily recall. In that way, people are aided to remember the morale of the story. Jesus often used parables and stories in his public ministry, and that approach to preaching the word of God is still applicable today in many cultures, including Northwestern Ghana.

Liturgical Reading

Reading sacred scripture during liturgical or para-liturgical celebrations should be done as proclamation so that people hear and feel that God is personally inviting them to faith, hope and love. Liturgical reading should be done with enthusiasm, reverence and conviction. Without this spirited proclamation of the word people will be bored, distracted and perhaps go away without the wealth of God's word. Poor and dull liturgical reading does a lot of disservice to people who are unable to read scripture by themselves due to illiteracy or otherwise, and the Sunday (or any other litugical) scripture reading is their only opportunity to hear the word of God. The importance attached to the word of God will be reflected in the way pastors ensure lively and spirited proclamation of scripture or allow poor, dull, inadequate or incompetent reading during liturgical celebrations. Good liturgical reading is catechetical.

Catechism Classes

Catechism classes can either take place at the parish or in the schools (junior or senior secondary schools, vocational and technical institutions, colleges, polytechnics and universities). Wherever the location may be for catechism class, catechetical instruction should be dialogical. The mode of catechetical instruction should allow adult catechumens to share their religious experiences and to freely ask questions about how Christianity relates to their religious experiences or offers meaning to them.

The catechetical program should include not only an open and insightful discussion on elements of traditional African religion but also an exploration of how some of those elements can enhance the understanding of the catechism and Christian living. If this is not done, young people will grow and will experience a crisis as adults when they realize that the whole truth was withheld from them as children. The truth being referred to is that there are other ways of expressing belief in God beside the Christian way and that there are good elements in African traditional religions. Shorter also believes that the catechism should "echo developments in theology" without teaching those theological discussions as doctrine (Shorter 156). Mention of theological discussions in the catechism class should serve only to clarify an issue or explain prevailing and ongoing discussions.

In addition to emphasizing dialogue during the catechumenate, a certain amount of memorization is necessary and may be tolerated. Certain tenets of the Christian faith that need to be memorized may include important Bible passages, the Ten Commandments, formulas of profession of faith, liturgical texts, essential prayers, and key doctrinal ideas (CT no. 55).

Many of the young people who enroll for catechism in Wa Diocese are primary and

junior secondary school students. By virtue of initial education in schools, these people begin to develop a mind-set that is not identical with the mind-set of a primary oral-based culture, as Walter J. Ong describes in his book, *Orality and Literacy*. Because their young minds are gradually being attuned to deductive and abstract thinking, catechetical methods should not be designed to draw back their mental faculties to primary oral-based characteristics that are basically inductive and situation-bound. A balance of perspectives is required. School-going catechumens should be enabled to use their imagination as well as their reasoning to grasp and express their faith. Catechumens who are exposed to education can either read, or will soon be able to read, the Bible and other religious literature by themselves; therefore, the period of instruction should be a period of dialogue, discussion and common search to identify, understand and fruitfully use their religious archetypes for an active life of Christian witnessing. This is what the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA) is all about.

The RCIA was promulgated by Pope Paul VI in 1972 as a rite focused on conversion that enrolls candidates for an extended period of time during which an extended catechesis is offered. RCIA is a sacramental process involving the following stages:

- Period of evangelization and the pre-catechumenate.

- Rite of acceptance into the Order of Catechumens.

- Period of the Catechumenate.

- Rite of Election or enrollment of names.

- Period of purification and enlightenment.

- Celebration of the sacraments of initiation.

- Period of *mystagogia* or post-baptismal catechesis.

Detailed descriptions of the various stages in the RCIA process are not offered here, because the intention of mentioning the RCIA is simply to alert the catechist or reader to the existence of this catechetical method. It will be the responsibility of the catechist to delve into the details during his or her training.

The RCIA is also applicable to children of catechetical age (between seven and fourteen). Special catechisms exist for people who were baptized as infants and need to prepare for the other sacraments.

Class Size

The mention of class does not necessarily refer to the four corners of a room. In many parts of Africa, including the Diocese of Wa, catechism classes are held under trees or any open and shady place. This increases the chances for distraction among catechumens and necessitates small and manageable class size.

Class size for religious instruction as it obtains now in the Diocese of Wa needs to be greatly reduced to a manageable number of 20 at most. When catechism classes number 40 to 100, it is difficult for one catechist to control the group and ensure that every catechumen is actually learning. Because catechumens are usually asked to memorize statements or lessons in chorus, it is difficult to find out who is learning and who is not.

The concomitant problem, yet an opportunity of reducing class size, is the insufficiency of trained catechists. However, it is an opportunity, because the need for more instructors opens the door for parishes to recruit and prepare responsible volunteers within the parish to assist in instructing catechumens, just as major seminarians do during their summer vacation. Adult literate Christians in parishes can be easily recruited and

prepared by the pastor and his catechetical team to join hands with the catechists in religious education. In this way, the catechetical ministry of the parish is shared with parishioners, and volunteer catechists revise the catechism while preparing classes. The period of revision and instruction is also a period of further learning for the instructors themselves.

John Mbiti provides a very succinct summary of how oral communication can enhance evangelization when he writes

> The Bible should be given free hand to circulate orally, just as it did in its original stage of development. Churches should facilitate and exploit oral tradition through more public readings of the Bible, more story telling from the Bible, more memorization of passages and verses, more songs and hymns based on and actually using Bible passages, more biblical plays, and naturally more scholarly studies comparing oral tradition in the Bible and African oral literature (Mbiti 30).

Kinesthetic Method

Some people learn better by physically doing something with their bodies. They learn better when they are actively engaged in some form of movement, such as writing, clapping hands, drawing, jumping or dancing. In order to reach out to such people, the kinesthetic method of catechesis, which may take the form of drama, dancing, painting, sculpting or drawing is very useful. This method may involve asking catechumens to draw pictures depicting a particular biblical story the catechist has taught the class or coming up with some dramatic ways of expressing the story. This method of catechesis

brings out the imaginative power of catechumens and helps them to concretely

understand what they have heard spoken or read to them.

The Symbolic Way

Another method of religious instruction, the symbolic way, is suitable to oral-type

communication and involves the other senses as well. According to Pierre Babin, the

symbolic way was the one Jesus used, and it is still the dominant language of the media

today. The symbolic way involves "adding modulation to abstract words, putting thought

on show, pilgrimages, camping, and group education. It has the ability of awakening

human archetypes or religious feelings." Pierre Babin describes the symbolic way as "an

experiential process that, by stimulating fundamental religious feelings, leads toward

their historical connections in revelation" (Babin 149).

The symbolic way is very powerful as a means of religious education because symbols

speak directly to people in their hearts. Symbols do not need explanations. They contain

adequate meaning in themselves for the observer or user and open up to them other

realities.

According to Pierre Babin, the symbolic way is an activity and an experience. It can

be both an individual and a social activity and produces both individual and social effect.

For example, people on a pilgrimage, or just walking silently in the woods, feel at one

and the same time that they are alone and yet with others. A sense of community is felt.

The presence of others sustains the participants. The symbolic way is an experience that

is lived together with others and that has a real emotional impact (163). The symbolic

way is not just any experience. It is the experience that is capable of stimulating religious

archetypes.

European missionaries often tend to deny the religious experiences or beliefs of the African, because they do not appear to missionaries as logical, verifiable or meaningful to science. Even though religious experiences may not be reasonable to a scientific mind, they cannot be denied or dismissed as untrue. The gulf of difference between the world of science and the experiential world of the illiterate but religious African is not a good enough reason to deny genuine religious experiences of people. Religious experience for Africans is a relational experience that does not need scientific explanation to be true. That is the value the symbolic way offers to catechesis, namely, that religious experiences of any kind open doors to greater insight into the mystery of God. They constitute the grounds on which to build Gospel.

Photographs, Paintings and Drawings

Photography is another catechetical tool. Introduced to Western Europe in 1839 the photograph was perceived as the "ultimate means of creating an objective reproduction of reality" (Gilman, 1996, p. 164) and is a symbolic form of communication, "relatively independent of the literal identification of the events portrayed" (Schrader 58). Photographic images have the ability to represent ideas in ideographic terms, as well as to provide illustrations for words (Templin 1982, p.124). They are a form of socially constructed visual language.

One way to view and interpret photographs is to regard the images as constructed pictorial statements and not as a real recorded record of unfolding events. Photographs may be regarded as a narrative medium because they convey experiences and ideas from

socially constructed realities (Schrader 60-61).

The use of photographs for catechesis is, therefore, important. Photographs familiar to the catechumens are particularly useful, because familiar images or environment help catechumens to easily reconstruct the narrative behind the pictures. Pictures from foreign backgrounds may also be used to illustrate a point relevant to the picture used and the subject matter under discussion. However, care must be taken not to use pictures that communicate a message that is counterproductive to the faith or the human dignity of the catechumens. For instance, if in trying to depict the beauty of God's creation to Africans one uses pictures of a particular group of people (White people) or a particular environment (Europe or North America) that is totally alien to the world-view of the catechumens, one may give the impression to African catechumens that they are not beautiful images of God or that their environment is not beautiful. It is important to use pictures that communicate positive messages for a people and their culture and that stimulate the imagination of the catechumens.

Puppet Shows

This is a simple, inexpensive and nonthreatening method of instruction or catechesis. It is adaptable to any culture. By means of puppet shows the Gospel message can be dramatically presented to children and adults. Puppet shows have an appeal, not only by being funny, but for their ability to capture the human imagination.

Puppet shows also offer an opportunity for catechists to dramatize indigenous myths or legends and show how those myths or legends relate to similar stories in the Bible. The important thing in a puppet show is its ability to capture the imagination of people and

awaken in them some religious archetypes. One great advantage that puppet shows have as a tool of instruction is their adaptability to any situation or event. Puppet shows can be used to teach or entertain. They are an efficient mode of engaging several senses all at once. They do not need any expert knowledge to create or execute.

Life Witness

To witness to something means to testify or provide evidence of what one has seen, touched, heard, felt or smelled. Christians are called by the Gospel to be witnesses of the Good News to the world, to proclaim that Jesus is Lord, that he arose from the dead, ascended into heaven and instituted the Church to continue his saving work on earth. People usually look for many qualities such as sincerity, integrity and moral uprightness in the life of a witness. These qualities were also regarded as important to Quintillian, Cicero and St. Augustine.

Kaleidoscope catechesis or evangelization in general requires that Christians be witnesses to what they profess and celebrate in their liturgies. Christian life means living out the values of the Gospel in daily life, thereby making the Kingdom of God present in the world. Christians witness to Christ as a community and as individuals. Pope Paul VI states:

> In the Church the witness given by a life truly and essentially Christian
> which is dedicated to God in an indissoluble union and which is likewise
> dedicated with the utmost fervor of soul to our neighbor is the primary
> organ of evangelization (EN no. 41).

> As an ecclesial function, the entire Church needs to be a credible witness

of the Gospel. That is why the Church as institution needs a constant

conversion and renewal (EN no. 15).

Being a credible Christian witness means knowing Christ and being in union with him

through prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It means walking in the ways of Jesus and being

his disciple. It means taking up one's cross daily and following Jesus. It means forgiving

a neighbor who wrongs you and turns to you asking for forgiveness. It means sharing

bread with the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and imprisoned (Mt 25: 31-

46). It means doing our daily tasks in the way Jesus would want us to do them.

Witnessing to Jesus also means being personally interested in the lives of others and

being available to the needs of the neighbor. It involves personal contact with others in

their homes, at their work places, in their moments of joy and sorrow. This was the way

of Jesus, and this way of catechesis and evangelization is still valid and appropriate in the

Wa Diocese today.

Catechisms

It must be emphasized that there is still a need to evolve catechisms that contain the

essential message of Jesus Christ and seeks to make that message meaningful to local

situations. Such catechisms should recount the stories of the ministry and life of Jesus,

and the activities of the early Church. They should contain the basic doctrines of the

Christian and Catholic faith and their development within history. They should be

designed to promote dialogue in a way that makes catechumens ask themselves how

Christian faith should influence their lives in the world.

Catechetical Events

Every occasion, time and place is a catechetical moment. No occasion lacks a spiritual

dimension because no place is foreign to the Gospel. Therefore, every agent of catechesis

must find ways and times to speak of and for Christ. This can happen in the hospital,

funeral ground, family table, party, bar, restaurant, everywhere.

Below are other catechetical events.

Sacraments

In the parish setting, preparations for the various sacraments of the Church are crucial

catechetical moments. Priests and catechists should take advantage of opportunities to

celebrate the sacraments in order to instruct candidates and, if possible, their families and

friends. It should be noted that these events are opportunities for parents and friends to be

instructed as well. As an example, infant baptism is a fitting occasion to revisit the

baptismal catechesis with the infant's parents and godparents.

Fortunately, many parishes in the Diocese of Wa take religious instructions or

catechesis seriously, and every effort is made to give instructions to people before they

receive the sacraments.

One other way to offer catechetical instruction to parishioners on the sacraments, and

particularly the sacrament of the anointing of the sick, would be to organize annual or

semi-annual healing/anointing services at the parish center or in the villages. On such

occasions, the catechism on the anointing of the sick would be shared in the form of a

homily and the sacrament administered. Presently, many Catholics still associate the

sacrament of anointing of the sick with death and dying, rather than with reconciliation,

healing and strength. The liturgical seasons of advent and lent are also opportune occasions for catechetical instruction on the reconciliation and love. Such opportunitues should not be allowed to pass without adequate catechesis on what the season is about.

Elochukwu E. Uzukwu has interesting ideas on how to celebrate the liturgy in a way that uplifts African spirits. He emphasizes the celebrative aspect of the Eucharist by suggesting participatory sentences at various stages of the litugy that involve the congregation. He also suggests African Eucharistic prayers that exude the African environment – land, valleys, mountains, rivers and lakes, forests and plains filled with animals – to join in the rhythmic praise of the creator (Uzukwu 111).

Retreat and Isolation

In many cultures, including traditional religious communities in Northwestern Ghana, isolation is a temporary phase in almost everyone's life. This is particularly true in the preparations prior to the *bagre* festival among the Dagaaba.

Retreats and periods of isolation should be encouraged among Christians as another mode of religious experience and spiritual growth. As a catechetical tool, it may be recommended that catechumens spend a day or two in a guided retreat, especially immediately prior to the reception of the sacraments. Catechumens should not move from the boisterous mood of choral repetition of memorized statements in catechism to the sacraments. Some amount of time for interior meditation and preparation for a special encounter with God in the sacraments should be an important and integral part of catechesis.

Sacrifice

Sacrifice is a religious ritual in which an object or some form of life (usually animal) is offered to a divinity in order to establish a desired relationship between humanity and the sacred order. In West Africa, an altar may be built in each family's compound, often in the shape of a dome, which is sprinkled with the blood of chickens sacrificed to the ancestors. These altars are a point of contact with the ancestors, fulfilling the same basic function as a temple or Church elsewhere.

As a catechetical tool, the virtue of sacrifice as self-abnegation or readiness to suffer some discomfort for the sake of others should be taught. In a society like Northwestern Ghana, where many people suffer hunger and many privations of life, it is important to instill in catechumens the virtue and readiness to sacrifice some of their meager comforts in order that other less fortunate people may learn from them the love and providence of God. The virtue of sacrifice is particularly necessary in the Diocese of Wa, because many old Christians who experienced the paternalism of missionaries still do not realize that Christianity demands sharing or giving to others, even from the little that one has. In fact, one of the main emphases of the Wa Diocesan Synod is the need for a self-reliant Church. Self-reliance can be achieved locally when people learn to share what they have with one another through the Church.

Prayer

Prayer is the expression of a wish, plea or attitude; it is the central act of communication from humans to the divine. Sacrifice, offerings and even construction of buildings can all be seen as a form of prayer. Preaching and reading from holy texts are

forms of communication from the divine through a human intermediary.

As a catechetical tool, catechumens should not only be taught the liturgical and devotional prayers of the Church, they should actually be helped to pray as individuals and groups. Prayer sessions during catechism would enable catechumens to enter into dialogue with God, expressing their praise, gratitude and supplication to their loving and merciful God.

Africans should be encouraged to make extemporaneous prayers that come from the depths of their hearts and express their interior faith, anxieties, desires and hopes. Some extemporaneous prayers offered by Dagaaba and Sisaala at shrines or during sacrifce (as we have cited earlier) indicate the personal nature of these prayers. Unfortunately, many African Christians have been instructed to think that the only salvific prayers are the official prayers of the Church (Our Father, Hail Mary…) which they learned during catechism lessons. This mentality of reducing prayer to only formal prayers of the Church empoverishes the essence of prayer, which is an intimate and personal dialogue between a person of faith and God. Christians should be able to pray the offical prayers of the Church but should also be encouraged to make prayer a more personal and intimate relationship with God.

Procession and Pilgrimage

Procession and pilgrimage highlight a focal point of sacredness, in which a site or a building serves as a source of religious power on earth. Often humans move toward the source of this power but they may also carry this power with them in the form of a statue or relic.

A procession thus links separate places by creating a corridor of sacredness. Processions may lead out from a sacred building when a divine power that ordinarily resides there goes out to the world.

Christians make different kinds of processions during the liturgy of the Eucharist but also outside the liturgy. The most popular procession is the procession on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ (*Corpus Christi*). The importance of processions and pilgrimages to holy places should be explained to catechumens and, if possible, they should be taken on a pilgrimage to some local holy place such as *Jesu Tang,* where prayers and other devotions could be organized to crown the experience.

Rituals, Ceremonies and Festivals

Traditional rituals, ceremonies and festivals are another means of catechesis. Through ritual ceremonies, such as naming a child, marriage, healing services, funeral rites and festivals such as *Kobina* and *kakube*, basic cultural values are espoused.

Ritual, according to Aylward Shorter, is an authoritative communication about crucial social values and the relationship of values to each other, the value system. Ritual is a system of ends and means which consists in the manufacture of certain key symbols designed to have an effect on people. This effect may be achieved by a non-rational-technical process such as magic or sorcery, or it may be achieved by religious appeal to ultra-human agencies (Shorter 124). Ritual is the product of the interaction of different human actors who represent different social categories. Some rituals are merely expressive. Others are instrumental. Instrumental rituals appear to be trying to influence events, make events happen, prevent them from happening. Religious rituals make an

appeal to God or spiritual beings. They are never merely expressive, but always instrumental, because they appeal to spiritual beings that influence events.

It is important that catechesis is grounded in knowledge of these practices and the rationale behind them, because the Christian message will be expected to respond to those situations that call for ritual performances. A catechesis on rituals that responds to the daily life experiences and anxieties of the people is called for. Such a catechesis will be grounded in the genuine experiences of the people, or without any excuses being made or pretensions to their illogic. Such a catechesis will be biblically inspired and in conformity with the mission of Jesus, who came to save and to liberate people from things that hold them in bondage. A catechesis of this nature will avoid purely western mental categories and structures which are abstract and seek rational explanations. African mental categories are symbolic, non-abstract, community-oriented and expressive. The current catechism for religious instruction (*Naanwin Sore Wuluu Gan*, and ritual blessings for various purposes are woefully inadequate because of the literate and logic-based formulations. Christians in the Wa Diocese need appropriate rituals for their farming and hunting activities, funeral performances, post-burial activities, cleansing or retrieving people's souls after they have been taken by a witch, and so many other events that mark their life experiences.

Christian Funerals

Funerals have an important place in the social organization and life of the Dagaaba and Sisaala. Funerals are appropriate times to express community solidarity. They are moments when people come together from different houses and villages to mourn and bid

farewell to the deceased. Christians, Moslems and traditional worshippers all meet at funeral grounds. The funeral of a Christian is, therefore, a very fertile ground for catechesis. At such occasions, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist or a para-liturgical service by the priest, religious or catechist is very appropriate and, in fact, essential to express our belief in the resurrection of the dead and to express our love and solidarity with the bereaved family. In many parishes of the Wa Diocese priests and catechists use this opportunity to give instruction on death, our faith in the resurrection of the dead and on Christian solidarity. There are other parishes, however, where pastors do not consider the funeral ground to be an appropriate place for liturgical celebration. This is an unfortunate loss of opportunity to share our faith with the many people who regularly do not attend our liturgical celebrations. The reason for neglecting to celebrate at unsanitary funeral grounds constitutes yet another subject matter for catechesis, namely, environmental sanitation and hygiene.

Sacred Architecture

Sacred architecture consists of places built to symbolize the meanings and accommodate the rituals of the particular belief system of its time. In other words, it is limited to structures intended for communal religious uses. In sacred architecture, human beings attempt to bring themselves closer to the divine by creating a special space to hold this powerful and precious contact. Use of expensive and long-lasting materials, for instance, clearly reflects human longings for eternity. A building's sacredness, however, lies not in the idea of permanence, but in the concentration of sacredness that it embodies or makes possible. In many parts of the world there is no equivalent of the temple, and all

contact with the divine takes place in the open air or in the domestic dwelling. The growth of specially designed sacred buildings was allied with very special social and political developments.

Sacred buildings express a fundamental paradox. The gods are the living force within everything on earth; yet they are not of this earth. They are both in their cult objects and icons (immanent) and beyond them (transcendent). They can be encountered in the sacred building, and, although they may leave behind holy relics as objects of veneration and tokens of their presence, they cannot be contained within it.

Some populations are not able to read, and in some traditions buildings themselves become vast teaching systems filled with images intended to be understood at different levels by both educated and uneducated. Like the spoken and written teachings that they illustrate, such images are based on a repertoire of conventional emblems and gestures. Stained glass windows in architecture serve as vehicles for spiritual expression. They combine pictorial story-telling with a sophisticated use of color and light to influence feelings in the viewer. Like most religious art, stained-glass windows are intended to instruct by their subject matter, using recognizable imagery. Themes, usually taken from the scriptures, include scenes from the lives of Christ, the saints and the Virgin Mary, and depictions of vices and virtues. Due to their high cost and foreign origin, stained-glass windows are not common in Northwestern Ghana, but their relevance as an effective catechetical tool is worth mentioning.

Pastoral Communication

Catechesis is at the root of every pastoral activity. Whatever people do in the parish is

rooted in the common faith, hope and love that they share as parish community. That is why good pastoral communication planning and some amount of pastoral public relations is necessary.

Pastoral agents touch the lives of many people who pass through the parish set up every day. How pastoral agents relate with parishioners and visitors is catechetical in nature because you can teach faith, hope and love by both word and action. Pastoral agents must, therefore, strive for the following communication skills:

- Credibility in life witness and message: people tend to read, watch or listen to messages that present points of view with which they sympathize or in which they have a personal stake. Audiences buy ideas mainly from communicators they trust.

- Capability to convey a message in a clear and concise manner: Messages are usually transmitted by word of mouth, symbols or images (this includes written) that the audience can decode. Pastoral agents should always remember to keep the nature of their audience in mind when sending messages.

- Relevance of Message: The message must be relevant to the audience (parishioners) and should enable them to make a decision.

To ensure that a message effectively accomplishes its purpose, the following elements need to be addressed:

- The message must be an attention-getter.

- The message should illustrate a problem or need that people identify with: physiological needs, security needs, love, self-fulfillment, esteem and meaning in one's life.

- The message should illustrate how to solve that problem or meet that need.

- The message should show people how to respond or to act (Cormier 73-75).

For a communications program to be effective, it must be based on sound objectives, directed at the right audience and presented in a manner that is appealing to that audience. Planning in general and pastoral planning in particular entail establishing a detailed strategy to accomplish an objective. The process of designing an integrated pastoral communications plan involves both modern electronic and traditional media. The following questions are helpful in developing a communications plan:

- What are the objectives of this program? For example, to raise funds for a new school, or to have parents participate in baptismal catechesis, or to raise funds to build a new parish hall.

- Who is the principal audience for this program? Who are you trying to reach with this program? It is important to be specific. For instance, "parishioners" is too vague. You need to specify which parishioners you are targeting.

- What message do we want to communicate to them? What do you want them to know about this program? What do you want to do?

- What channels will best communicate this message? How do you reach this target audience? What is the most effective way to tell them about this project or event? One-on-one meeting, phone call, letter, slide-show, audio/video tape, television/radio spots, email, etc.? Repetition helps the audience to remember, retain and to act on information.

- What resources are available now and what other resources will be needed? Where and how can they be obtained?

- What is the timeline for the project, and for each specific stage/agenda of the project?

- Remember to evaluate the event and take note of responses and comments of your audience (Cormier 78-80).

Pastoral communications planning, whether on the diocesan or parish level, should be team-based. This requires leadership that respects the value and contribution of every team member in realization of a project from beginning to end. It is of utmost importance that the leadership of the pastoral communications plan is cognizant of the vision of the diocese and works within the parameters of the diocesan vision to evolve plans that would serve diocesan or parish goals.

Pastoral communications planning, according to Angela Zukowski, can serve to restore people's individual and collective dignity, create awareness and open the way for dialogue. Zukowski continues:

The greatest challenge… the Church faces today is attempting to evoke alternative scenarios for designing, implementing and supporting integrated diocesan pastoral communications initiatives which enable the Church to exercise a profound dialogue of faith with culture and the community of faith in these postmodern times (Sundaraj 113).

The means of social communication could become a vehicle for divisive ideologies and distorted ways of looking at life, the family, religion and morality and for attitudes that lack respect for man's true dignity and destiny. That is why literacy in using and evaluating messages from the media is of crucial importance.

Practical Approaches toward Pastoral Communication

In *Ecclesia in Africa*, Pope John Paul II states that it is the bishop, assisted by priests, religious, catechists and other lay faithful who are responsible for the pastoral activity of the Church. He calls on each diocese to establish the necessary communication structures without neglecting the different Councils within the Diocese.

Parishes should have communication teams that coordinate communication activities within the parish and that have liaison with other parishes and the Diocesan Communication Commision. Diocesan Communications Commission (DCC) should have the duty and ability to advise the Bishop on all issues of communication, thereby helping him formulate policies for each level of communication in accordance with the mind of the Universal church and the Conference of Bishops. The commission will also ensure that diocesan communication policies are carried out at the parish level.

Parish Level

The pastor and his associates, as communicators, should possess a facility with words and images, as well as an attitude and vision that is able to see the world from the perspective of their parishioners. They need to know and understand the nature of the church, the mission of the Diocese and the parish in which they serve. They need to know the socio-economic situation in which they and their parishioners live, educational levels of the people with whom and among whom they work and the strengths and weakness of the parish.

Every public person, product, service and institution projects an image, and everyone connected with such a person or group, has a hand in forming that image. An

organization's image is a composite of the attitudes and beliefs various people have about an organization. Images are communicated neither directly nor immediately. They are built over time, developed through the cumulative effect of many messages. For most organizations images are not universal. Images vary from one group to another. Pastors, priests, religious and other pastoral staff, along with the parishioners, all have a role to play in building up the image of their parish. Projecting an image of welcome begins with the many simple and ordinary ways the parish makes contact with the public.

Diocesan Department of Social Communications (DEPSOCOM)

The Diocesan Department of Social Communications (DEPSOCOM) should coordinate the communication activities within the Diocese. The following activities should be carried out by DEPSOCOM in order to facilitate communication and catechetical activities within the Diocese.

Self Media

Audio Tapes

One of the common communication resources that are affordable and available in many homes within the Diocese is a cassette tape recorder. People are often glad to make their cassette recorders available to the community. They sometimes carry their recorders to Church to tape Church music and the homily and after mass play the music on the street at full volume for all to hear. Such an attitude shows an eager yearning of people to carry the Word of God and anything that supports their faith and social life.

The production of audio tapes (self-media) on various themes is, therefore, an

essential tool of catechesis in the Diocese. The Wa Diocese has the minimum technology required to produce good audio tapes for the spiritual growth and human development of Christians. The technology at DEPSOCOM is sufficient to make this kind of production. Here is an inexhaustive list of themes that these audio tapes can carry:

- Prayers: The Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory be to the Father, Angelus, Morning Prayer, Evening Prayer, the Creed, the Rosary, Divine Mercy.

- The catechism of the Catholic Church as translated in *Naamwin Sore Wullu Gan.*

- Homilies, lives of the saints, the Bible read book-by-book or according to the weekday or Sunday lectionary, devotional books.

- Liturgical music/Dagaare church music.

- Human development topics such as alcoholism, bush burning, hygiene, guinea worm eradication, funeral rites and bride price.

Video Tapes

DEPSOCOM is also adequately equipped to produce local videos covering the same topics as indicated above and even more. Video productions at DEPSOCOM should involve local people and focus on local issues and events. People relate to a message better when it is close and familiar to them. The productions that have already been made at DEPSOCOM, such as AIDS, the documentary on WANYE and priestly ordinations, are all material that can enhance our catechesis. Some parishes have already been provided with television monitors and decks by DEPSOCOM, and some have been able to acquire TV's and decks by themselves. This equipment should be put at the service of catechesis in the parishes. DEPSOCOM also has an audio and video library on religious

and human development themes, which should be expanded in order to render greater service to parishes and individuals. Parishes can organize their own catechetical programs and obtain the needed resources from DEPSOCOM until they are able to acquire all the resources they need to be on their own.

Video/Radio Documentaries is building up an audio-visual Diocesan history for posterity. Local video production depicts day-to-day lives of the majority of the people and paints a picture of the people and their culture as they see and live it, not as a foreigner sees it. Creative videos express our hopes and anxieties and help us to see how we could develop.

Music videos, using catechists in training at the Pastoral Training Center, can also be produced locally to influence perception and appreciation of some music which would, otherwise, be interpreted differently.

Mass Media

The mass media include the press, radio, television, cinema, magazines and newspapers. It is important to realize that television or radio or even the print media do not automatically supply content. It is the role of the catechist to supply the mass media with the required content of instruction. A number of religious programs can be prepared for any of the mass media.

Churches can use the media to inform the public, to teach values or discuss social justice issues, to comfort and encourage, to exhort and to reprimand. The media can be used to sell products, especially religious products that can inspire faith and devotion. They can also be used to entertain. Sitcoms, sports and music are sources of

entertainment via the mass media for many people.

Although many people in Northwestern Ghana do not have access to television, the majority of them have access to radio. Therefore, religious radio programs designed for any or all of the above reasons could effectively reach a good number of people through the local FM Radio Progress in Wa.

To avoid propagating undesirable effects, programs for mass media should be carefully designed and tailored to achieve specific goals. That is what advertisers do all the time.

Television

Television provides information about society and the world. It can be a means of imparting values. Television heightens visual senses and sharpens human appreciation for symbols. It can restore a sense of presence and immediacy lost in writing or print. It touches emotions, bringing them closer to consciousness, restoring a psychic balance missing from linear or logical reasoning. By joining visual and oral communication into one image, it integrates the nonverbal with verbal communication (Soukup 63). Television can promote an appreciation for more complex narrative structures.

Radio

Radio has ability to serve local needs and interests. It is a source of information, inspiration, and entertainment. It can uplift the spirits of listeners, especially through the music and talk show programs. Radio can encourage attitudes that make the listener more receptive to the Christian message and its values, contribute to catechesis by broadcasting

religious and educational programs on health and hygiene, agricultural practices, general or public service announcements and by publicizing and explaining events (within the country and outside) and their consequences on the Diocese. All these services can also provide companionship to the lonely.

In summary, television and radio can be outlets to share information about the Christian faith. Religious broadcasting can help lead people to understand what the Gospel message is and can encourage them to go where they can get more answers, that is, to the church. Television and, indeed, all mass media must be used as tools, but used very critically.

Newspaper/Bulletin

A Diocesan newspaper or parish bulletin disseminates information about the Diocese or parish and is also an opportunity for people to develop writing skills, express opinion and share vision for development. It creates a sense of participation, which is a democratic value. Most magazines and newsletters are targeted to a specific audience. In the case of the Diocese of Wa, the immediate target of a Diocesan newspaper is the literate Catholic population. The newspaper is also available to other literates within Ghana and abroad who have an interest in the Diocese and who may be interested in reading or contributing articles to the paper as subscribers. The newsletter should sustain itself mainly through advertisements and, of course, through subscription and direct sales.

To get the Diocese in the national spotlight, interesting and development-related events should be reported to the National Catholic Standard for publication. This serves a public relations function and also offers another way of catechesis -- sharing the word

and ministry of the Diocese with the entire nation.

Printing Press

The printing press promotes literacy. As a catechetical tool, the multiplication of literary material which people can read by themselves is important. The printing of summarized information on leaflets on various topics such as avoiding gossip, dealing with the loss of a relative, keeping your environment clean, obtaining and drinking potable water, educating the girl child, informing about preventing AIDS and other STDs is an effective way to share the faith and enhance personal growth and development. The obvious limitation of this tool is that only literates can read such leaflets. However, if a few people are adequately informed and act as yeast in their communities, the message will spread to the illiterate.

Pastoral Letters

Sometimes the local ordinary or the National Conference of Catholic Bishops issues pastoral letters to their flock or to all Catholics and people of good will in Ghana. These letters usually address specific issues or concerns that have a bearing on faith, morals, human rights or other socio-economic issues that affect God's people. Pastoral letters are catechetical tools. They contain instructions that build and sustain faith. These pastoral letters should be made widely available to the faithful in parishes. The practice is that pastors get these letters translated and read during mass in place of the homily. However, to enable many more parishioners to read and share the contents of such letters to illiterate relatives and friends, it is important to make these catechetical tools available to

many people by copying and distributing them to literate parishioners. The initial cost may scare the Diocese, but the desired result of informing and effecting change in attitudes and behavior is a noble cause.

Electronic Media

Electronic media is becoming very popular and is obviously a quicker way to communicate with other people both near and far. The common electronic media are e-mail, use-nets groups, and list-serves. These media move electronic messages via the internet from person to person. Sometimes the messages go from one individual to another. It is also possible to distribute the same message to several people at once provided they have internet access. E-mail makes communication easy and quick. It is less intrusive than a phone call. It is a medium through which a person who is shy to say something in person or on the phone may speak up boldly. E-mail preserves a textual record of all thoughts and comments. Because it is less formal, readers tend to ignore or forgive slips in e-mail that might disturb them in another type of message. Because of the ease and speed of response in e-mails, one needs to exercise caution when sending a reply or rebuttals that may be less carefully considered than those sent by slower mail. E-mail can be easily forwarded to other people whom the sender did not intend the message for. This calls for more caution.

Use-net is an electronic network that provides users with access to thousands of news groups, interactive discussion forums classified by subject and open to anyone with e-mail access to the network. List-serves also use the internet to bring together people with common interests, but they are more specialized: the user has to subscribe to a particular

list-serve. In both cases messages consist of email-like postings. Unfortunately, the

relative anonymity of online communication has removed an important rhetorical

component from some debates -- the respectable ethos. Because postings are so easy in

either type of forum, more responsible groups can be inundated, or "spammed" with

pointless messages, unwanted advertisements or irrational diatribes (Lundsford &

Ruszkiewicz 244).

Internet Relay Chat (IRCs) or chatrooms, allow for relatively straightforward online

conversations between people gathered together electronically to discuss particular

subjects or topics. Typically, IRCs involve people in different and distant locations.

MOOs (MUD Object Oriented) resemble IRCs in that participants communicate online in

real time. MOOs have a spacial dimension: participants enter an imaginary place, take on

assumed characters, and follow specified routines (245). Arguments in MOOs can

involve powerful stretches of the imagination, because a participant can be anyone he or

she wants to be. Thus, the environment encourages writers to create an ethos self-

consciously and to experience what it is like to be someone else (245).

Web Sites and Visual literacy

These sites consist of electronic pages of information (which may include words,

images, sounds, or film clips) that are linked hypertextually, meaning that you can move

from one page to another by clicking your computer's mouse button on parts of a page

that are identified as "links" (249). All your pages need to be graphically interesting to

persuade readers to enter your site and to encourage them to read your lengthier

arguments. It is important that at the bottom of the home page you include your name, e-

mail address and the date you created or last updated the site. This information will help

other readers cite your work or reach you one-on-one to continue a discussion (233).

In the pastoral context, electronic media can bring priests in different parishes together

to share ideas, information, homily ideas and jokes. They can do this via e-mail or

through a list-serve. They can also arrange an online chat room where people can share

ideas, ask questions and receive responses. Parishes can also disseminate information to

parishioners and the wider public via electronic media.

The Diocese or parishes can share their information with the world via the internet.

Such a resource is particularly useful and handy in requesting funding for parish projects

and reporting progress on such projects. The constraint in this mode is financial. Many

parishes in Wa Diocese are not yet financially capable of acquiring computers.

The World Wide Web

Due to high costs and limited resources, not all parishes are able to acquire computers.

With the one or two computers available at DEPSOCOM, relevant internet information

that enhances parish life should be printed and disseminated to parishes. A daily visit to

the Vatican web site (http://www.vatican.va) would help to disseminate relevant and timely

information to parishes and diocesan offices instead of waiting for a week or a month to

read from the Catholic Standard about events that happened two months ago or longer.

The same service at DEPSOCOM would assist diocesan personnel in obtaining

information and addresses for various projects and programs, such as funding agencies,

institutions and workshops.

Diocesan Web Site

   A Diocesan web site will open the Diocese to the world and invite the world into the Diocese. On a web site information is shared and obtained. Since many diocesan projects are funded with financial support from abroad, the web site will give instant information about the progress of projects, explain events and correct errors. The web site will also provide immediate information on weather, water, sanitation, etc. which can enhance development. The ability to write and disseminate information about a people and their way of life is significant in preserving culture.

Media Education

The following excerpt offers a good rational for media education.

> When advertisements for sneakers are powerful enough to lead some
>
> people to attack, even to kill others in order just to possess a pair of the
>
> covered footwear; when five-and ten-second images and soundbites are
>
> responsible for deciding presidential elections; when the image of a Joe
>
> Carmel is accused of enticing increasing numbers of young people to take
>
> up smoking; when music videos mesmerize millions; when video game
>
> images seem almost addictive to many children… then it is time to start
>
> paying careful attention to visual arguments (Lundsford & Ruszkiewicz
>
> 233).
>
> It is important for consumers of such products to be able to analyze them
>
> and not just accept them as Gospel truth. Media literacy, among other
>
> things, includes analyzing audio-visual arguments, that is, arguments

presented through radio, television, music and art.

The critical analysis involved in media literacy can be rightly said to be a participation in production. In this case, it is production in the final outcome of the product that is presented via the mass media. By analyzing mass media products, the viewer or listener shows that he /she is not just a passive audience who will accept socially constructed programs as reality or factual truths. He becomes a co-producer of the product by asking critical questions in order to judge what to accept and what not to accept as true. He/she realizes that the mass media constitute channels through which we see constructed realities presented in the form of images that are often designed to constitute points of reference for present and future appreciation of similar images.

Here are some critical and analytical questions I have compiled from various sources to help in assessing audio-visual productions.

- How was radio or TV program developed?

- In whose interests was the program developed?

- What information does the program (a graph, a chart, an illustration, a photograph, an advertisement, a television or film image, a multimedia text) convey? What is it intended to convey?

- Whose voices and views are presented and whose are excluded?

- Who owns or controls access and the views presented? What economic, political, social, etc. interests does the ownership represent?

- What alternative media sources are available to those whose voices are excluded?

- Who wrote the script or report?

- Who executes or publishes the script or report? What is the editorial policy of the newspaper, magazine, radio or TV producers?

- Who plays what role in the production and why?

- Does the visual argument highlight particular information (a name, a face, a scene) to attract viewer attention?

- How is the visual argument composed? What is the eye drawn to first? Why?

- What is in the foreground? What is in the background? What is in or out of focus? What is placed high, and what is placed low? What is to the left, in the center, to the right? What effect do these placements have on the message of the visual?

- How are light and color used? What effect (s) do they have, or are intended to have, on viewers?

- What details are included or emphasized? What details are omitted or de-emphasized? To what effect?

- Does the visual evoke positive – or negative – individuals, scenes, or ideas?

- What emotions does the visual argument text evoke? Which ones does it intend to evoke? Desire? Envy? Empathy? Shame or guilt? Pride? Nostalgia? Something else?

- What values or ideals does the visual argument suggest -- the good life, love and harmony, tradition, beauty, power, sex appeal, youth, adventure? Does the visual reinforce these values or question them?

- What cultural goals does the visual argument suggest or evoke? Progress? Control of nature? Peace on earth? Why are these goals evoked, and what do they do to

strengthen the visual argument?

- Is anything in the visual argument repeated, intensified, or exaggerated? What effects are intended by these strategies, what effects do they have on the viewer?

- Is anything in the visual argument downplayed, ambiguous, confusing, distracting, or obviously omitted? To what ends?

- What is the role of any print that accompanies the visual argument? How does it clarify or reinforce (or perhaps blur or contradict) the message the visual argument sends?

- What is the purpose of the visual argument? What do its creators intend for its effects to be? (234).

Media education is necessary because many people are not yet sophisticated enough to consume information and images in ways that are of maximum benefit to their health. People should be taught to read television, especially the hidden meanings behind signs and symbols, and the language of visuals, such as close-ups, camera fade-outs, camera-angles and editing. They need to know issues, such as power and control in production, how advertising and profits affect what is covered in the news and other programs, how viewing violence affects us, and how media imperialism affects other people (Fore 132). Since media education is not part of the curriculum in many public schools in Africa, the Church should be a pioneer in introducing media education in her establishments, such as Catholic schools, catechist formation programs, novitiates and major seminaries. Values education, dealing primarily with the visual media such as television, holds tremendous potential for educating Christians.

Avenues or Forums for Kaleidoscope Catechesis

The Family

The family is the basic unit of the Church. It is the first institution from which cultural and religious values are imparted to younger generations. Consequently, the family is an avenue and agent of catechesis. Parents share their faith with their children at home by praying with them, taking them to Church, enrolling them in Church programs and organizations, ensuring that children follow the required religious instruction classes and become examples of Christian faith, hope and love.

For the Dagaaba and Sisaala in particular, the role of the family as avenue and agent of catechesis is more poignant. This is because Dagaaba and Sisaala place great emphasis on observation (*yele pigru*), listening (*ber-wong eru*), imitation (*i-kyogru*) and identification (*ire-tuuri*) in the education of their children, as Suom-Dery describes (Suom-Dery 213). This means that parents and elder siblings need to give good witness of life so that the younger generations may imitate.

Good interpersonal relationships among family members promote Christian virtues of love, patience, tolerance and forgiveness. When these virtues and others are enshrined in the family, they will also reflect in the way family members relate to other people outside their family or immediate environment. As the apostle John says, if people cannot love their neighbor whom they see, how can they say they love God whom they do not see? (1 John 4:20). Good interpersonal relationships within families are, therefore, crucial as a tool of catechesis.

Loving parents provide their children "with the fundamental images of life" (Babin 170). In a word, parents are their children's first catechists. On the other hand, children

also become signs of hope to their parents and in many ways stimulate the faith of their parents.

Children within the family also learn from one another. They learn to appreciate their differences and to forgive and to love one another. In all these interactions, the family truly becomes an institution of learning and provides numerous moments for catechesis.

Institutions and Houses of Formation

By their very nature, Catholic institutions and houses of formation are catechetical avenues. The institutions referred to here are Catholic schools, vocational institutions, hospitals and clinics, seminaries and novitiates, renewal/retreat centers and pastoral institutes. Each of these institutions has or should have a specific program designed for the education and instruction of their students.

The General Directory for Catechesis states that the relationship between religious instruction in schools and catechesis is distinct and complementary. It states that what confers on religious instruction in schools its proper evangelizing character is the fact that it is called to penetrate a particular area of culture and to relate with other areas of knowledge. Religious instruction in schools should be scholastic in discipline, engaging in an interdisciplinary dialogue with other disciplines and yet impregnating the students with the Gospel message, thereby enabling them to harmonize the Gospel message with the cultural and social realities they encounter in life (GCD 73).

It is important that formation programs in seminaries, novitiates and other educational institutions include the indigenous culture and its values, Christian and Catholic doctrine, scripture, the social teachings of the Church, ecumenism, pastoral theology, prayer and spiritual direction. When lay people, religious and priests receive a good formation, they

will hopefully share that faith and religious experience with others.

In Catholic health institutions, the healing ministry of Jesus (Lk 4: 18; Is. 61:1) is preached and concretely brought to bear through doctors, nurses, priests (especially hospital chaplains) and all those who work in the health institutions. Sickness, which affects the entire human person, can be a big test of faith for many Christians, and the nature of care Catholic health institutions offer patients should be a crucial medium of communicating the healing care of God. For many Africans, healing encompasses physical and spiritual needs of a person. Doctors, nurses and chaplains should keep this in mind as they set about to bring the healing ministry of Jesus to their patients. It is important that health service personnel in Catholic health institutions see their work as catechesis and apostolic activity. Their professional practice should reflect the faith they profess and the values that the Church teaches.

For effective catechesis, it is important that qualified individuals who exhibit some zeal in witnessing to the Christian faith, are employed or appointed to teach and instruct students in a way that builds up, enhances and sustains their faith and prepares them to execute with apostolic zeal their respective roles in society and the church.

Formation programs for the laity should be organized in some of these institutions to prepare some adult lay people in helping the priests, religious and catechists to instruct catechumens and to take up political, economic, social and professional responsibilities.

In all Catholic institutions, it must be emphasized that Christian formation is a lifelong process. Catholic schools and institutions should be closely associated with parents in teaching children to know and love both God and man. In the words of Pope John Paul II, "the Catholic family, school and parish must each in its own way become more and more

a school of faith and holiness, a sanctuary where God is worshipped and a service to a broken world" (John Paul II to Bishops of Malaysia, Singapore and Brunei at the Vatican).

Bookstores and Libraries

Bookstores and libraries are catechetical avenues. The diocesan or parish bookstore should supply religious and catechetical material for personal study and spiritual and human development. The bookstore should be accessible in parishes and diocesan offices.

Diocesan and parish libraries will also enhance research into areas of doctrine, spirituality, scripture, Church history, liturgy, the sacraments and so on. This can enhance and build up the faith of Christians.

The Biblical Apostolate

This is another tool of kaleidoscope catechesis that targets literates in particular. However, illiterates may join Bible study groups if the scriptures are translated and read in the local language. This apostolate is important because, besides the biblical readings used at mass, many Christians in Wa Diocese do not read the Bible. The Bibilical Apostolate will, therefore, be an opportunity for Christians to read, reflect and act upon the word of God. The structures governing Biblical Apostolate will be determined by the local ordinary or the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

It is important to recall here the clarion call made by John Mbiti to intensify the promotion of biblical knowledge by means of the oral communication. This can be done

by reading the Bible publicly, telling biblical stories, memorizing texts or passages from the Bible, composing and singing songs and hymns based on the Biblical texts and acting plays based on biblical stories or themes (Mbiti 30).

Movements and Organizations

Another tool of kaleidoscope catechesis is the movements within a parish, which pursue specific objectives that support and sustain the faith of members. They constitute an avenue for members to meet in order to share the word of God, to pray, to undertake specific projects that benefit members or the community at large. These parish organizations are apostolic in character and seek to spread the Gospel, particularly in various places where members work or meet other people.

Small Christian Communities

As base communities, Small Christian Communities comprise small groups of Christians, usually between six and twelve, living around the same neighborhood, who come together to study the Bible and Catholic doctrine, pray together, and commit themselves to spreading the Gospel in the world. Because of the homogeneous community-based structures in Northwestern Ghana, the Small Christian Communities concept does not seem to be applicable as an effective tool of evangelization in the Diocese of Wa. The Bishop of Wa, Most Reverend Paul Bemile, expressed his doubts to me about the suitability of this method in Wa Diocese. It is, therefore, sufficient just to acknowledge the Small Christian Communities as a method but to defer it as an effective method of kaleidoscope catechesis in parishes until a suitable time when the current

social structures in Northwestern Ghana have changed.

However, the Small Christian Communities concept may be operable in boarding

institutions, such as Nandom Secondary School, St. Francis Girls Secondary School,

Lawra Secondary School and others that have Catholic chaplains.

Renewal Prayer Groups

The renewal prayer groups are another avenue through which Christian faith can be

shared and strengthened. These prayer groups meet to worship, pray, read and meditate

on scripture and express their thanksgiving and petitions to God. They can be a source of

deepening of faith for those who participate in them. They can also prepare members to

take up leadership roles in various ministries in their parishes.

Places

Shrines

Modern shrines are built in a diversity of styles. Sacred shrines in honor of particular

saints or grottos in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, or outdoor Stations of the Cross

provide sacred space for personal and group prayer and devotion. Their availability in

parishes needs to be encouraged. Local artists/sculptors should be encouraged to design

statues instead of parishes waiting to obtain European-made images of the Blessed

Mother or some other Saint, which are usually expensive to procure and are made to

satisfy European aesthetic tastes.

Monuments

No kind of structure expresses concern with permanence more single-mindedly than the public memorial. Architecturally they are usually simple and designed to be conspicuous from afar. Artists and sculptors in Northwestern Ghana are capable of designing monuments that honor persons or events. As public pieces of visual narrative, monuments teach history and values. They are instant occasions for instruction. A monument in honor of an individual becomes an opportunity for people to ask who that person was and why the monument was made in his honor. In the same way, a monument in honor of an event equally becomes an occasion to teach something about the event and why it is important for a community. In the Diocese of Wa, for instance, monuments in honor of individuals like Father McCoy, Dr. Archambault and Msgr. Songliedong, could be put up in honor of the immense contributions these individuals made to the diocese and the people of Northwestern Ghana.

Cemeteries

The practical faith of Christians regarding the cult of the saints is a living out of the Church's understanding of itself as a Communion of Saints. This belief, found already in the Apostle's Creed by the late fifth century, goes back much further in popular practice. It describes the Church as a community or fellowship of all the faithful, living and dead, called together by God and transformed in Christ and the Spirit. This whole community is present and is most effectively expressed and celebrated when people gather for the Eucharist. In the traditional language, this fellowship of the faithful includes the Church Triumphant (Saints in heaven), the Church Militant (pilgrim Church on earth), and the

Church Suffering (those in purgatory). This doctrine was reaffirmed by the Second

Vatican Council:

> For all who belong to Christ, having his Spirit, form one Church and
>
> cleave together in him (Ephesians 4:16). Therefore, the union of the
>
> wayfarers with the brethren who have gone to sleep in the peace of Christ
>
> is not in the least interrupted. On the contrary, according to the perennial
>
> faith of the Church, it is strengthened through the exchanging of spiritual
>
> goods (GS no. 49).

Our faith in the resurrection of the dead and our communion with the saints is visibly

expressed in the proper care of cemeteries. The cemetery is the place we bring the mortal

remains of our loved ones to rest in anticipation of the final day when the dead will rise to

meet the Lord: "For the Lord himself, with a word of command, with the voice of an

archangel and with the trumpet of God, will come down from heaven, and the dead in

Christ will rise first.…" (I Thess. 4: 16). Proper care and maintenance of cemeteries is a

Christian responsibility and an act of catechesis.

Unfortunately, many parish, village or family cemeteries in Wa Diocese are in

deplorable condition. Little attention is paid to the cemeteries, many of them being

overgrown with grass. Some graves collapse and are never refilled. Some people's graves

cannot be identified.

People hardly visit the grave site of a loved one unless perhaps they are brought to the

cemetery to bury another relative or friend. Cemeteries in general are places that bring

fear to people, especially the youth. They are like haunted places where "ghosts" dwell

and threaten people. At night people run fast to pass a cemetery for fear of being caught

by the "ghosts" or spirits of the dead. If cemeteries were properly maintained, they would be an outward expression of our faith in the resurrection of the dead. People would visit their loved ones who are resting there to show their communion with them, and the fear of cemeteries would be eliminated.

Agents of Kaleidoscope Catechesis

In a very broad and general sense, all Christians are agents of kaleidoscope catechesis by virtue of their baptism. This general classification of the agents of kaleidoscope catechesis falls in line with Dagaaba and Sisaala conception of an agent of education of the youth in their societies. As Suom-Dery explains, "education is not the concern of only the child's immediate or nuclear family, but of the whole household, and, indeed, of the whole neighbourhood, of the whole village community" (Suom-Dery 210). However, specific tasks within the Church are given to people, each according to their special calling (vocation) talents, and training. This reality is also known among the Dagaaba and Sisaala in the education of their youth. Suom-Dery acknowledges this when he states that "the obligation to consciously educate is most urgent in the familial and home environment…" (211).

The direct agents of kaleidoscope catechesis are Bishops, priests, deacons, catechists, and religious. Other people within the Christian community, or even outside the Christian community, may be asked to assist in the process of catechesis because of their special professional competence in particular fields.

Pope John Paul II reminds Bishops of their role as agents of catechesis: "You are beyond all others the ones primarily responsible for catechesis, the catechists

par excellence. Together with the Pope, in the spirit of episcopal collegiality, you too have charge of catechesis throughout the Church" (CT no. 63).

The role of bishops in in cateording to John Paul II, is to be personally interested in this noble and essential mission of the Church, putting into operation the necessary personnel, means, equipment and financial resources.

Priests assist the bishop in catechesis. They are instructors in the faith (PO no. 6). Pope John Paul II exhorts priests "to neglect nothing with a view to a well-organized and well-oriented catechetical effort (CT no. 64).

Deacons and religious who are assigned to catechetical duties in parishes assist priests in ensuring that Christian instruction goes on in their parishes.

Lay catechists carry the bulk of catechetical duties in parishes. Many people receive their initial notions of catechism from lay catechists who instruct and prepare people for the sacraments.

To all agents of catechesis the words of Lamentations 4: 4, "Let it not be said that the children beg for food, but no one gives to them," are crucially important. Catechesis is simply too important for evangelization for an agent to make light of the task it imposes. Without catechesis there is no evangelization. Catechesis in pastoral ministry involves "catechumenal catechesis which leads to the sacraments of Christian initiation, the systematic catechesis of children baptized in infancy (educated and uneducated), to lead them to the adult faith through confirmation, and the catechesis of deepening of the faith through homilies and other preachings" (Wa Synod 70). It must be carried out with the firm and certain assurance that the Holy Spirit, principal agent of catechesis, is always present in whoever instructs others in the name of the Church.

Familiarity with the tools of communication alone cannot guarantee effective communication of the Gospel. The guiding and driving power of the Holy Spirit is necessary. Therefore, catechists and all those who teach and instruct others in the faith must open themselves to the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. Another dimension of communicative power motivated by the Spirit is love. Love is the outward expression of the inner spiritual power which makes an individual want to communicate.

In an oral-based culture that is slowly growing toward literacy, it is important that the agents of catechesis take people from where they are. The catechist should start from the known elements of indigenous culture and work with the catechumens toward the unknown message and saving word of Jesus. It is important that the agent of evangelization or catechesis in Northwestern Ghana recognize that being within an oral-based culture, he or she needs to use words, pictures, paintings, stories, ceremonies and graphic modes of communication to instruct the catechumens.

Jesus used parables and other graphic word pictures to teach. Similar graphic word pictures are found in the Book of Revelation as an effective way of calming down the fears of an exiled Christian community.

The catechist, in the context of Wa Diocese, is usually a lay person who has received some basic training offered by the local Church that qualifies him to instruct catechumens and prepare them for the sacraments of the Church. Catechists may be full-time or part-time or even volunteers. The difference between full-time and part-time is in the kind and amount of financial remuneration they receive for the services rendered.

For Dagaaba and Sisaala there is no dichotomy between the spiritual and the material, the sacred and the profane. The catechist, therefore, needs to know that analytic thinking,

that is, seeing religion as a clear-cut system of beliefs and practices, coordinated by

principle and authority, is not the way the Dagaaba and Sisaala people think and see

religion. This awareness will help the catechist in the way he instructs catechumens.

The catechist also needs to know the importance of community for the Dagaaba and

Sisaala. Because the sense and experience of community play a central and vital role in

Dagaaba and Sisaala society, the catechist needs to establish a church that is community-

based, regardless of family or clanic relationships.

Dagaaba and Sisaala relate religion to practical activities of everyday life. The

catechist needs to emphasize practical ways in which the Gospel is made flesh in the lives

and daily experiences of Dagaaba and Sisaala.

Dagaaba and Sisaala are motivated to do things by respect for authority, elders and the

mysterious. Sometimes, for them, respect turns into fear. The catechist needs to teach the

motive of love, which casts out fear.

The catechist among Dagaaba and Sisaala must be a person who promotes dialogue

between traditional religion and Christianity. According to Aylward Shorter, dialogue

means that the catechist articulates African traditional religious values for the

catechumens in a way that is understandable. The catechist does this by indicating the

positive values that could serve as preparatory ground for the Gospel and explaining why

certain elements of traditional religion need to be transformed in the light of the Gospel.

Shorter is of the strong opinion that, by no means whatsoever, should "anti-pagan"

(Shorter 157) approach be used as a method of instruction for African catechumens. The

reason behind this is simple. No single culture has a monopoly on God, just as no single

culture has a monopoly on human experience. African Christians should not be forced to

have a certain kind of religious experience; neither should their particular religious experiences be denied or ridiculed by any person or culture. Catechumens must be taught to affirm their religious experiences and seek to understand those experiences in the light of the Gospel.

Angela Ann Zukowski sums up the characteristics of a catechist in six statements: a catechist is communicator of the Good News; a catechist is nurturer of faith communities; a catechist is team builder; a catechist is artist (creative); a catechist is dialogue; a catechist is a role model (Zukowski).

Training or On-Going Formation

In any field of work or pastoral endeavor, continuous training or on-going formation is absolutely necessary. Training workshops help people to update their skills and/or to learn new ideas and trends in their field and related fields. Practical workshops designed to share information on communication skills, such as conducting a meeting, writing minutes, writing articles for publication, preparing a public relations plan, or developing communication marketing plans, should be organized as part of ongoing formation for priests, laity and diocesan personnel.

The Pre-eminent Role of the Holy Spirit

After any or all the means of communication have been used, it still remains a fact that the ultimate communicator of the Good News of Jesus Christ is the Holy Spirit. Human effort alone is important and indeed necessary as Scripture testifies, "But how can they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how can they believe in him of whom

they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to preach? And how can people preach unless they are sent?" (Rom 10:14-15). However, the ultimate duty of converting hearts belongs to the Holy Spirit. Without the Spirit, "they look but do not see and hear but do not listen or understand" (Mt. 13: 13; Mk 4:12; Is 6: 9-10, 14).

Abbreviations

AAS   Acta Apostolicae Sedis

AG   Ad Gentis

CCC   Catechism of the Catholic Church

CT   Catechesi tradendae

EN   Evangelii Nuntiandi

GDC   General Directory for Catechesis

GS   Gaudium et spes

NA   Nostra aetate

OT   Optatam Totius

PO   Presbyterorum ordinis

RH   Redemptor hominis

RM   Redemptoris Missio

SC   Sacrosanctum concilium

Wa Synod   Instrumentum Laboris of the First Synod of the Diocese of Wa

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