

Orphanages: The Role of the Church and State: A New Telescopic View on Mission to the Poor in our Midst

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ABSTRACT

Understanding the role and mission of the Church of Christ is most important in the new evangelization process of our time. It is not enough to understand the readings of theology and doctrines of the church, it is more important to actualize and effect the mandate of Christ to His Church; *“Peacebe with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you”* (Jn. 20:21). What message exactly is Jesus talking about? The message to *bring the light to those in darkness; the darkness of sinfulness, the darkness of timidity, the darkness of ignorance, and the darkness of poverty* (cf. Matt. 4:16, 17). It is the message to bring back life to those who are dying in sin, to set the prisoners (spiritual and physical) free. Jesus unrolled the scroll and found where it was written:

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,

Because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” (Lk. 4:18,19).

This is the same message Christ Jesus leaves with the Church, it is assignment which will continue as long as the world exists, it is a mission the Church sends her members; all Christians, to be conscious about. The entire Bible is a summary of the readings of this message of God. The whole narratives of the Old Testament; the Law and the Prophets are teachings and writings elaborating the message of love and redemption, it is a complete historic records narrating how the world got into bondage and suffering, for which God would send His begotten Son Jesus Christ, in the New Testament to redeem His people. And Jesus in the Gospels would not have exhausted all the mission of emancipation before His glorious death and ascension, so, a need to command his followers to continue this mission of love and emancipation, *“I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”* (Jn. 13: 34 – 35).

One aspect of this mission mandate, which characterizes the sum up of the Ten Commandments of God, is this message of practical **Love, a Christianity in action, practical Christianity**. A mission to revisit the conditions of the poor ones in our midst today. In our world today, everyone sees himself or herself as poor, even those who are very rich in the material things of the world. Yes, we do agree that everyone is poor in one special way or the other, however, the authors here are concerned about those who in the real sense of poverty, you may be far better. The authors are not concerned here also with the *“poor in Spirit”*, Rather we intend to address the issue of physical and material poverty; the **hungry, the physically challenged, the hospitalized, those in prison, the poor widows and widowers, the orphans, the poor fatherless or motherless children, those living on the streets, beggars, abused children, abused girls and girls (teenagers), Refugees, victims of various circumstances such as war, communal conflicts, school dropouts, children outside legal marriages, etc.**

The authors believe there are much more the Church can do to find lasting solutions to these phenomena. Although the Church is very much pathetic about the situation and cries aloud like John the Baptist in the wilderness

against the situation, and also acknowledging that the Church is recorded as the biggest humanitarian in the world, we here intend to further recommend a seemingly better ways the Church can be more practical in achieving this pastoral mandate.

This work will be divided into volumes, volumes addressing these phenomena so outlined above and more. Therefore, this article is limited to discourse on the predicaments of the orphanage homes, their make-ups, their observed situations, the involvement of the governments, the Church, and the general populace. A brief field visits to some Homes and interviews conducted within the area where the authors reside as at the time of doing this study are included. These Homes are just a very few selected to showcase a practical knowledge of what the authors intend to describe, it could therefore be applied to anywhere in Africa and other Regions in the world.

KEYWORDS: Orphanage, Mission, Church, Evangelization, mandate, Youngsters

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THE CHURCH IN NIGERIA AND PASTORAL CARE

This work addresses theological approaches to the “care of souls”, including theologies of suffering, grief, and death. It is aimed at development of skills in interpersonal dynamics of listening, empathy, systems assessment, professional judgement, and liturgical response in relationship to pastoral care of persons and communities. In the study, we examine some established homes and centres for the needy, beggars and the homeless on the streets and others. To assess their needs and situations, and to find out how they are catered for especially by the Church and individuals highly placed in the society. We evaluate the existing pastoral structures put in place by the Church in Nigeria and the stand of the Church regarding pastoral care.

Majority of previous researches carried out on pastoral care and issues focused more on the causes of the phenomena and based their studies on socio-economic and political implications, they failed to also consider moral and spiritual needs of the youngsters. The fact remains therefore, that we cannot be concerned only with the bodily needs and neglect the soul of the individual which is more like unto God. Both the soul and the body must be adequately attended. No doubt therefore, that this study would remind the Church in Nigeria of her mandate to turn her pastoral attention to those children wasting away on the streets and on the margin. It will help the church and Christian workers with ideas on how to promote advocacy programs between the poor people, the bourgeoisie and government, which will enhance a holistic care of each individual, also leading to effective collaboration between the church, the rich, the government and with other relevant agencies and stakeholders to permanently get the poor out of suffering.

In other words, this study will provide a new way of exploring the problems associated with the physical and spiritual natures of persons with special needs. This is important as it could generate new findings aside from the findings already unveiled. Theologians and church ministers, development workers and other professionals as well as the government, would embrace fully the importance of pastoral care of the citizens as one major channel to re-molding their degrading personalities/behaviors and to help them out of poverty of both body and soul for a better living. It will aid the Departments of Religion and Theology to develop further academic curriculum geared towards assisting the church and state in dealing with matters relating to pastoral care and poverty eradication in general. God lives in each of these poor people too, so, giving them the necessary attention is not optional but a theological mandate and a civic responsibility of everybody, especially ministers of the Gospel, if they could imitate Jesus who devoted his mission to serve others, they are equally to look up to His lived-examples and balance it with His words; “Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Mathew 28:19 – 20a. NAB). And, “Whatsoever you do to the least of these little ones, that you do unto me” ... “what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me.” (Mathew 25: 40,45-46 NAB). Therefore, the success of our ministry as missionaries for the suffering children of God would depend largely on the success of this study and the implementation and functionality of its recommendations.

Objective of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to address theological approaches to the “care of souls”, including theologies of suffering, grief, and death. By it, missionaries and social care-givers will develop skills in interpersonal dynamics of listening, empathy, systems assessment, professional judgement, and liturgical response in relationship to pastoral care of persons and communities.

What is Pastoral Care?

Pastoral care consists of “helping acts”, done by representative persons, directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns. Cerni, T. (2020). Etymologically, pastoral care could be traced back to the teachings and organizations of the Christian Church. From the Latin root ‘*pascere*’ (to feed) and articulated by the powerful metaphor of the Good Shepherd. Pastoral care describes the spiritually and morally sustaining concern of the leader for their flock. (*cf. ibid*). For Bromell, Pastoral Care is the Church’s role of giving adequate spiritual and moral attention to the street children. (Bromell, D., 2011), and to all suffering in the society.

Very often, we are tempted to limit our understanding of pastoral care to simply attending to the spiritual needs of the human person, needs which may for some, include praying, reading the scriptures, going to church, receiving all the sacraments, so as not to lose our relationship with God. Hence, the church in the past, especially the Pentecostal-evangelical born-again Christians who generally believes that there is no need to look after the body. The pre-Vatican II penny catechism was equally misinterpreted in its teaching where it asked: “Of which must you take more care, the body or the Soul?” and its response “The Soul, because our soul is like unto God, only by taking care of the soul man attains everlasting life.” This sensitive but undiluted comparison had made some early Christians chastised their bodies with excruciating pain and punishment in the name of subjection of the flesh to the soul or spirit, which we believed is an obstacle to the progress of the soul. The Monasteries of St. Benedict, Pachomius, Anthony of Egypt and others were not left out in their spirituality and teaching of that kind of catechesis which thrived until the dawn of the Second Vatican Council.

In the Semitic line of religions, the Judaic-Christian-Islamic one, the traveler on the spiritual journey is described in terms of a “human spirit” or “soul”, inherently different to the world of its body. “Wisdom” in these traditions frequently involves choosing the world of the “spirit” as opposed to the world of “matter” and striving to arrive at a situation where the “spirit” prevails. In traditional Christian theology, human nature is described in terms of the well-known biblical image of a “half-angel” self, struggling to overcome a “half-animal” self.

Historically, this Christian self-portrait intermingled with the Ancient Greek belief of the soul being immortal and fundamentally different to our perishable bodies. Both in terms of theology and philosophy, the distinction between an eternal “soul” and a transient “body” has dominated Western thought and is usually referred to as “dualism”. In theology, the 5th century priest, St. Augustine of Hippo is usually cited to be the most famous exponent of dualism, while in philosophy, apart from Plato and Socrates, reference is

usually made to the 17th century pioneer of modern science, the French mathematician, René Descartes. Despite all these theories and beliefs, we must realize that the Good News is centered around cosmological justice and the maintenance of universal moral balance. (See Anjam Khursheed, 2018) Such poor theological notion has also affected the attitude of many Christians, that we no longer see the need to concern our Christian acts and mission to the needs of the poor, especially those on the Streets whom we consider as apart from the household. The Gospel is a “Good News” which ‘was’ and ‘is’ preached only for one reason, to turn the attention of the “haves” towards the “have nots”, (See Luke 4: 18 -19, 21. NAB) the “righteous” (Otherwise referred to as the Aabled) to the “unrighteous”, (See Mat. 6: 1 – 4. NAB.) the “Dives” to the “Lazarus”. (Lk. 16: 19-31. NAB). A Gospel to turn from Marginalization to inclusivity, (See Lk. 4:4-42 NAB), and repentance from our selfish and wicked ways to hospitality, sharing and love. (Lk 19: 1-10, NAB). The Gospel of going to finding and feeding the lost and straying Sheep (Mat. 18: 10-14; Jn. 21: 15-17 NAB).

In a broader sense, disability does not only imply physical deformities but involves inabilities in our social, economic, political and psychosocial and religious state in life. The International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) produced by the World Health Organization, distinguishes between body functions (Physiological or psychological). It defined impairment in bodily structure or function as involving an anomaly, defect, loss or other significant deviation from certain generally accepted population standards, which may fluctuate over time. Activity is defined as the execution of a task or action. The ICF lists nine (9) broad domains of functioning which can be affected: Learning and applying knowledge, General tasks and demands, Communication, Basic physical mobility, Domestic life, and Self-care, i.e., activities of daily living (ADL). Interpersonal interactions and relationships, Community, Social and Civic life, including employment (World Health Organization, 2004).

The Theology of Pastoral Care

The Church's areas of pastoral relevance are numerous, ranging from spiritual, social, economic, political and cultural aspects of human living. Pastoral care is the actual doing of public theology, when the love of God in us is extended in action to those around us, especially those who live on the margin. It is theology beyond theory, beyond sermons and write ups. Pastoral care is one practical way of doing mission. When God gathered His people Israel as a family, one of His first command to them was love to one another, a pastoral attention to all who were less fortunate in their midst even if they were strangers among them:

“If one of your kindred is in need in any community in the land which the LORD, your God, is giving you, you shall not harden your heart nor close your hand against your kin who is in need. Instead, you shall freely open your hand and generously lend what suffices to meet that need (Deut. 15:7-8, NAB/Ex. 23:10-11).

The above passage, like similar passages in the old Testament gives us clearer view of the economic situation of the people of God in those times and how God, through Moses and the leaders of the time tried to organize the economy to accommodate everybody, both the rich, the poor, the young and the old. Every law, borrowing from the Law of God through Moses and the prophets is meant to balance the

economy for the common good. (see Prov.3:27 NAB). The tithes we collect in the Churches, according to the Deuteronomic codes, are meant for the disadvantaged in the community, tithes of the third year were specifically assigned for that purpose (See Deut. 26:12 -15; Lev. 27: 30 – 34 NAB), the question then remains; how much is this command been fulfilled in the Church today? God's intention for all His people is to have a community living in love, a communal life where everything is shared in common, and to meet the needs of those who cannot afford those things by themselves. God charged every individual with this leadership service and equally appointed individuals to implement those regulations, to ensure there were no persons amongst them left in need. It is certainly true that there can be no society without the poor, *“Of course there will never cease to be poor in the land; I command you therefore: always be open-handed with your brother (and sister), and with anyone in your country who is in need and poor”* (v. 11). This verse 11 lays more emphasis on the importance of turning attention to the poorest of the poor by the leaders of the covenant community, whom we can conveniently refer to today as Christians. It is the *utopian* (An idealistic reformer) ideal of the abolition of poverty. (cf. Raymond, B., Fitzmyer, J., & Murphy, R., 1989).

We cannot therefore claim to be true people of God or worship Him if we neglect this command of love, this is true Christian practice, the true religion. When God gave this command to care for those on the margin as described above, by implication, He instituted Pastoral care which the Church is commissioned to implement through her Public Theology. We have heard the Good News proclaimed over the centuries, we have received it in good faith, and we are saturated by the gospel message, all we need to see in the Church now is actions; practical Christianity, and this is the foundation of pastoral care. It became the culture and religious practice of the Israelites, no one was left on the streets, not even the orphaned children, not even the widows, but then, how did manipulation and marginalization enter into our society? Andries Van Aarde asserts:

*“In biblical times culture and religion could not be distinguished. That is why it was possible for a “theologian” in the market place to speak about religion in a highly intellectual fashion. The private arena was seen as more holy and much preferable to the public arena which was seen as less holy and less acceptable. That led to the distinction between “insider” and “outsider”. This is the operation basis for manipulation, exploitation and exclusion which, centuries later, led to revolutions by the bourgeoisie and “less miserable”. Distinguishing between the acceptable *here* and the unacceptable *there* was a Christian inheritance from Greek metaphysics. Jesus was the first critical voice of the above metaphysics but ironically, “Roman Christianization” / Eurocentric Religion never took him seriously. Jesus brought “insider” and “outsider” together. He preached in integrity” (See Mat. 5:48; Lv. 19:2; Lk. 6:36.). Aarde V.A (2008).*

It is of great importance to note that the above Greco-Jewish marginalizing tendencies so much degenerated and penetrated the entire society to the extent that Jesus had to dedicate his entire pastoral life towards those pushed out of the community into the streets (cf. Lk. 4:18 – 30 NAB). His pastoral focus became a challenge and a threat to the Chief

priests and elders, he became a lone voice crying out in the wilderness for a change of attitude, for true repentance and true love for all, little wonder he gave us the "Beatitudes". The center of Jesus' life and preaching became that of pastoral inclusivity, from north, south, east, and west he brought all people together, there was no more "Gentile" nor "Jew". When he fed the multitude on the hill-top, he included all – the old, young, sick, women, children, the so-called outsiders (Gentiles or Samaritans), all sat together in colonies and ate together (Mat. 6:34 – 43 NAB), this was a communal meal. Jesus used this meal to heal divisions among the people, he used the meal to teach the importance of being together, no one was left out. It was a meal of inclusivity prefiguring the sacrificial Eucharistic meal, a meal of love.

We reason with O'Murchu, when, remarking on these characteristics of biblical communal meals, in reaction to the style of meal fellowships in our present-day church in which the poor and the street children are left out, wrote:

"... those of a certain economic status were considered blessed by God in their wealth and therefore considered only their own type as suitable companions at the common table. The poor stayed with the poor and the rich with the rich. In this way, the economic classes were stratified, and the facility for reciprocity was streamlined." (Diarmuid O'Murchu, 2015).

"Israel, in the Old Testament, was not chosen in order to keep everyone else out of God's fold; Israel was chosen to make it possible for everyone else eventually to be included". O'Murchu queried also that "it is our Christian devotion to the Eucharist that seriously jeopardizes the subversive inclusivity of Gospel food sharing". According to him, we put so much emphasis on the Last Supper – and its exclusive nature with allegedly only the twelve apostles present – that we do a grave injustice to the egalitarian practice of Gospel commensality and Jesus' unambiguous love for the open table. The preaching and teaching of Jesus made greater sense after people have experienced the liberation and empowerment of inclusive fellowship." (ibid),

The prophetic literature presented a wide range of social traits. This led to the social problem under the monarchy. The Prophet Amos, a social prophet, castigated the abnormalities in the Jewish system: oppression of the poor, the denial of fundamental rights to the poor, harsh laws and exaction of debts were crimes against the poor. Amos strongly rebuked these crimes (Amos 2:7, 4:1, 5:11 NAB). Isaiah, on his part, was not silent over the oppression of the poor and marginalized, and the inhuman treatment meted out to the needy in his time (Is. 5:8). The Psalmist cried out against the Judges who failed to render justice to the poor and needy and to protect them from oppressions of the wicked rich few (Psalm 82:3 – 4. NAB).

The Church in Nigeria in general should go beyond the preaching of Jesus' suffering which was forced on him, and focus more on his pastoral, prophetic courage and passion for a society characterized by justice, equity, freedom and new hope for those relegated to the margin. The Parable of the lost Sheep, the lost coin, and the lost son, in the Gospel of Luke chapter 15 expands more hermeneutically on the foundation of pastoral care, especially to children who are on the streets of Nigeria, who perhaps, by no conscious fault of theirs are no longer connected with the Holy Family of God on Mission. They neither pray, nor receive the sacraments the healing communal meals of the family of God that Jesus

gathered together here on earth, commanding and praying that all may be one, and in onefold. In the parables of the sheep and of the lost coin, Jesus reminds the Church to leave the Ninety-nine already in the Church, enjoying care and protection, enjoying the dividends of socio-economic and socio-religious status, and go out to seek those poor youngsters on the streets who have no hope of survival.

As there was rejoicing and gladness at the feeding of the more than five thousand hungry people by Jesus, so there will be rejoicing and gladness in heaven and in the Church at the return of those lost children into the fold and into their various families, this is the meaning of pastoral care. For Kendall, the lost sheep and the lost coin symbolize those who are helpless. "He tends his flock like a shepherd: he gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young" (Isaiah40:11). *see* Kendall, R. T. (2004)

The parable of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10: 29 – 36 is imperative, and Jesus concluded that parable with a direct command; "Go and do likewise" (vs.37b). Therefore, Pastoral Care could be interpreted as pastoral theology practiced at the grassroots level to benefit the marginalized in our society.

Conciliar and post-conciliar documents

From the Conciliar and Post-conciliar point of view, the Church in the past and in recent times have given us a whole lot of insights, directives and mandates on the need for urgent practical and comparing pastoral care to those relegated to the peripheries due to some unbearable circumstances which they find themselves in the society and the need for the Church in the modern world to be more proactive as part of the New Evangelization.

Paul VI, in the opening paragraph of his Document; *Lumen Gentium*...to the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, wrote, on the Mission of the Church:

"Christ is the Light of nations. Because this is so, this Sacred Synod gathered together in the Holy Spirit eagerly desires, by proclaiming the Gospel to every creature, (1) to bring the light of Christ to all men, a light brightly visible on the countenance of the Church. Since the Church is in Christ like a sacrament or as a sign and instrument both of a very closely-knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race, it desires now to unfold more fully to the faithful of the Church and to the whole world its own inner nature and universal mission. This it intends to do following faithfully the teaching of previous councils. The present-day conditions of the world add greater urgency to this work of the Church so that all men, joined more closely today by various social, technical and cultural ties, might also attain fuller unity in Christ." L.G. (1964) Chap1, Par.1.

In the paragraph, the Pope was totally inclusive in his choice of words, for him, the mission of the church must be directed to every human person irrespective of his state in life. That was the mandate of Jesus Christ. "The Church is a sheepfold whose one and indispensable door is Christ. It is a flock of which God Himself foretold He would be the shepherd, and whose sheep, although ruled by human shepherds; are nevertheless continuously led and nourished by Christ Himself, the Good Shepherd and the Prince of the shepherds, who gave His life for the sheep." (ibid).

Jesus' whole life, his way of dealing with the poor, his actions, his integrity, his simple daily acts of generosity, and finally his complete self-giving, is precious and reveals the mystery of his divine life. Whenever we encounter this anew, we become convinced that it is exactly what others need, even though they may not recognize it: "what therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you" (*Acts 17:23*). Sometimes we lose our enthusiasm for mission because we forget that the Gospel responds to our deepest needs, since we were created for what the Gospel offers us: friendship with Jesus and love of our brothers and sisters. If we succeed in expressing adequately and with beauty the essential content of the Gospel, surely this message will speak to the deepest yearnings of people's hearts: "The missionary is convinced that, through the working of the Spirit, there already exists in individuals and peoples an expectation, even if an unconscious one, of knowing the truth about God, about man, and about how we are to be set free from sin and death. The missionary's enthusiasm in proclaiming Christ comes from the conviction that he is responding to that expectation" John Paul II (1990) encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Missio*, 45: AAS 83 (1991), 292. Enthusiasm for evangelization is based on this conviction. We have a treasure of life and love which cannot deceive, and a message which cannot mislead or disappoint. It penetrates to the depths of our hearts, sustaining and ennobling us. It is a truth which is never out of date because it reaches that part of us which nothing else can reach. Our infinite sadness can only be cured by an infinite love. See FRANCIS, (2013)

Pastoral Care in Nigeria: The Situation

In drawing from the insights of both theological and non-theological fields, practical theology enters into dialogue with the cultural norm as well as the theological norm regarding the human experience within its context. Therefore, the process of theological reflection and understandings is informed not by the imposition of pre-existing theological ideas, but by the lived experience. In a sense, therefore, pastoral and practical theology are "interested in what the traditional theological norm can do to help in understanding a particular experience or issue" (Pattison & Lynch, 2006:412). It is also interested in finding ways in which contemporary experience might lead to a revision of a theological concept or other related practices in faith communities and public space. In essence practical theology asks what the normative text of scripture and tradition imply for praxis. Thus, there is a movement between the theory of the normative text and praxis. Don Browning (1996) called this process "revised critical correlational theology", based on Paul Tillich's critical correlational theology of practical theology. Agbiji, E. O. (2013:12)

According to Biwul, "Nigerian pastors in both mainline and independent churches are increasingly abandoning the responsibility of keeping the flock attentive to God. As Peterson points out, this amounts to a grave dereliction of pastoral responsibility. The pastoral office and ministry have been "badly shaken and bruised" and are in dire need of salvaging and mending" Oden, T. C (1983) *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry*, p. xxi, in Biwul, J. K (2018)

The above assertion of Biwul, though not hundred percent true and garnished with a little exaggeration, it still points to the picture of a problematic ministry in Nigeria. the fact is that Nigerians are well known for her interest in the works of pastoral care. There are two ways the Church looks at

pastoral care – pastoral care for the soul and pastoral care for the body, these two cannot be separated, if the body is weak, the soul suffers, likewise when the soul suffers the body gets weakened. Both the body and soul are special gifts of God to humanity and none of them must be punished or under cared for. At creation, God looked at all he has made and saw that it was very good and he blessed creation especially human person whom he made in his image and likeness.

In Nigeria, the new generation churches pay so much attention to the spiritual needs of man to the detriment of the temporal needs for survival. Churches and ministries are springing up in large numbers every day, and all of these churches embark on radical spiritual evangelism, this is good but they should never abandon the care of the human life who must survive in order to hear the preached Gospel. It pains that instead of the church to be concerned also about the welfare of the people of God, they rather concern themselves with how to get even the little the poor have, to enrich themselves. The pastoral ministry of Jesus in the Gospel was of dual dimensions, he fed the people with both spiritual food and bodily food, even though he said we must not concern ourselves with bodily needs as to the spiritual needs, yet he never ruled out the importance of taking care of our bodily needs.

The Catholic Church and other religious institutions have well organized programs for pastoral care of the people however, the socio-political and economic situation has not provided a very good and enabling playground for pastoral care. Although the work to be done is increasing more and more but the means of carrying out the work is decreasing. More people are getting sick in various ways, poverty rate is increasing geometrically, the rich few are getting richer while the poor getting poorer, the common goods not adequately distributed, no industrial developments to create jobs and wealth. Our leaders spend much money and time on 'never completed' infrastructures and projects which does not generate revenues, yet depends on international borrowing, International Aids, and taxes from poor citizens who are struggling to make ends meet by their own small efforts, income per capita is very low.

For these reasons and more, people are depressed, many are losing faith, many are relapsing into all sorts of crimes and evils to meet up. A situation where a family fights and kill themselves over family Lands and Landed properties, people go into kidnapping and robbery to get rich quick daily, it calls for serious pastoral engagement by the Church ministers. The Boko Haram insurgency, the Herdsmen terrorism and many others which have almost devastated the nation, rendering more people homeless and jobless, calls for urgent social action and pastoral caregivers have serious tasks now than ever.

In Nigeria we have the Catholic Church Caritas, Caritas Nigeria shares in the mission of the Catholic Church to serve the poor and to promote charity and justice throughout the world. This mission is inspired by the Gospel, the teachings of the Catholic Church, the socio-pastoral orientations of our pastors, and the cultural and religious beliefs of the African people. Caritas Nigeria strives to build flourishing communities in Nigeria, where love, reconciliation, justice, peace and prosperity prevail; in the vision to achieve its goals, Caritas carries out her social-pastoral ministry of serving, accompanying, and defending the poor and the

marginalized according to the Gospel and the teachings of the Catholic Church; works in synergy with other social-pastoral institutions of the Church in Nigeria to promote the spirituality of social action in conformity with the teachings of the Church. Caritas Nigeria programmes address issues around integral human development using the structures of the Catholic Church in Nigeria, its broad objective being to have citizens participate actively in decisions that affect their lives, socially, economically and politically and in doing this eliminate inequalities and promote human solidarity.

In his Master's degree thesis on Pastoral ministry to the youths, Akpanessien quoted Gerald Forde thus: "Many priests today feel concerned about, and dissatisfied with their pastoral impact on young people. They fear that in the view of a fairly significant number of young people, they are in many ways irrelevant. Young people appear increasingly indifferent to the priest and often confused about his role in the community. While many priests recognize this urgent need to create effective and developing methods for pastoral contact with young people, they wonder when, where and how this could be done. They point to the fact that young people are never at home when they are on "visitation". They appear indifferent to religion in the formal setting of the post primary classroom, and bored in Church. Such individual experiences of priests are highlighted by surveys and statistics" he then emphasized that; In the above observation, Walter Forde clearly expresses the lack of pastoral care of young people. In Nigeria, there is a form of indifference when observing the attitude of young people as they develop. This then shows the urgent need for effective pastoral methods of care for the youth. Young people in postmodern Nigeria need special attention, both from the adult community, and the Church in particular. In the Church's circle, this attention is categorically known as pastoral care. Akpanessien, A. (2015)

In Nigeria, as in other parts of the globe, I feel the pain of Pope Francis on his outcry over exclusionism in the world. This message and cry of the Roman Pontiff should be resounded in the Nigerian context. In the words of the Pope, on the economy of exclusion: Just as the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say "thou shalt not" to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality. Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless..." in Nigeria, "human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a "disposable" culture which is now spreading. It is no longer simply about exploitation and oppression, but something new... the excluded are not the "exploited" but the outcast, the "leftovers". See Francis (2015).

In article 54 of the apostolic exhortation, Pope Francis goes on to write: "Some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding

economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system. ... Almost without being aware of it, we end up being incapable of feeling compassion at the outcry of the poor, weeping for other people's pain, and feeling a need to help them, as though all this were someone else's responsibility and not our own. The culture of prosperity deadens us; we are thrilled if the market offers us something new to purchase; and in the meantime, all those lives stunted for lack of opportunity seem a mere spectacle; they fail to move us." (ibid)

There is need for the Nigerian Church to re-visit the above papal exhortation and create a strategy to teach it to every church minister and lay leaders of the Church. The Pope was not particular about the Catholic Church, rather his message was all-embracing, it is all inclusive, to both the Church, the government, and private individuals alike. Unfortunately, the Nigerian leaders and stakeholders in the affairs of human development and common good may not have time to study the powerful pastoral document.

An Overview of Orphanages in Nigeria

Like I earlier mentioned, there are many institutions for pastoral care around Nigeria and they are of different kinds. However, for the purpose of this study, we chose to examine the state of orphanage in Nigeria; this is because children are most vulnerable and are not able to stand for their rights on their own. Also, children from the orphanages mostly grow into adulthood to find themselves on the streets, or indulging in one crime or the other due to poor attention, and especially where no one to adopt them into their homes.

Not many researchers have ventured into this aspect of pastoral need and those who dare to do so provide no solution to the problems associated with the management of orphanages in the Country. For this reason, we have decided to embark on a brief study of orphanages in Anambra State, Nigeria, with all due respect, to represent a clearer picture of what we mean to present here. This is also to serve as a yard-stick to measure the problems and necessity of doing pastoral care. Before we embarked on field visits to some homes, the following information was gathered about the orphanages in Nigeria, and our visits would serve as a confirmation of the claims.

According to Suleiman, M. (2013), quoting Terungwa, "The problems facing orphans in Nigeria include; stigmatization/discrimination against orphans, inadequate shelter, malnutrition, poor access to health care, basic education, deprivation of fundamental child rights (Sexual exploitation, child labour, etc.), psychological trauma and low esteem." Suleiman also deposits that "one out of every ten Nigerian children is an orphan." (ibid). An orphan is a child who has lost both parents irrespective of the cause of death. Although many classify children who lost either of the parents as orphans often, my take remains that, a child who lost one of his or her parents is not an orphan, but a motherless or a Fatherless baby. To be an orphan, a child must have lost his or her both parents either by death or by discarding by the parent. Suleiman continued that; "Orphanage on the other hand, is an institution that houses children, who have no parent, are abandoned; or whose parents are unable to care for them. They are established to provide temporary shelter for children before they are either fostered to or adopted by qualified families as prescribed by the child right Acts (ibid).

For Falae Vivian, "Overall staying in an orphanage negatively affects children. Research shows that kids who lived in orphanages have development (and social) issues, problems with nutrition, difficulties in adapting to the outside world, as well as many other problems. If the conditions in the orphanages are subpar, the situation only worsens." Falae, V. (2017).

Various researches have observed a whole lot of problems faced by the orphanages in Nigeria and the orphans living in those homes, critical among them are;

1. Overpopulation of most of the orphanages
2. Lack of accurate data of orphanages by the Nigerian government and the Church,
3. Orphanages being understaffed and those staff available are over worked, underpaid and unstable.
4. 99% of the staff in Nigerian orphanages have no required qualifications for such services, so, the children suffer from poor care.
5. The donations made to most of these orphanages are not utilized for purposes for which they were donated.
6. Most of the infrastructures like buildings, environment, are not properly kept.
7. They suffer poor funding to meet up with the basic needs of the children.

Data Analysis of Field Visits to Orphanages

During the field visits to few orphanages for the sake of this study, the following information was gathered:

		HOME A	HOME B	HOME C
1	Number. of Children	15	35	30
2	Number of Staff	1	2	2
3	Staff Qualifications	WASCE	Elementary/WASCE	BSc / WASCE
4	Financial Supports	Not floating as expected	Individuals visit with food items	Humanitarians visit with foodstuffs, etc.
5	Government Aids	No aids from the government	Once in many years	Government don't give aids
6	Any Church Presence?	Pious groups come once in a while	Not regular	The Church don't help with funds.
7	Any Education Program?	Not really, but we do teach them here.	No, they don't attend School.	Some attend School in the neighborhood.
8	Do Priests/Pastors come for pastoral care?	They rarely come for pastoral attention	Yes, but not very frequent	No, they do not come for ministry, except when they come in company of some groups or families.
9	Are the Children baptized?	No, they are yet to get baptism.	We have never arranged for Baptism	Not really, but pastors do come to pray for them.
10	Is the Home officially approved?	Yes, it was registered with the State ministry of social Development. And pay renewal fees annually.	We were registered with the State government but they do not help us.	We are not yet registered. We are still managing to survive. So, we don't have the money to register yet.
11	Any need for Church pastoral care in your Home?	Yes, we need the Church to take us as their Children and come to help us always.	The Church should please come and help. They need God too, and they need food.	The Church should take it more seriously to come and be with us always and to give pastoral attention.

Table 1: Responses gathered from staff of three different orphanages located in three Cities in Anambra, Nigeria.

QUESTIONNAIRE / RESPONDENTS

Instruction

Kindly fill in the blank spaces provided with appropriate answers, tick (√) where appropriate

Section A: BIO-DATA

1. Sex: (a) Male (50) (b) Female (50)
2. Age: (a) 20-29 year (50) (b) 30-39 years (30) (c) 40-49 years (15) (d) 50 yrs and above (5)

3. Are you a --- (a) Christian (80) (b) Muslim (10) (c) Traditional Religion (10) (d) Others ___ (Specify)?
4. Profession: (a) Clergy/Religious (5) (b) Student (25) (c) Civil/Public Servant (60) (d) Business (10)
5. Marital Status: (a) Married (40) (b) Single (55) (c) Single Mother (5) (d) Divorced ()

Section B

In the following questions table, kindly put a check-mark (√) in the appropriate column as in:

SA – Strongly Agree, A – Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree, UN-Undecided.

Presence of Pastoral Caregivers in Anambra State, Nigeria

		SA	A	SD	D	UN
6	There are many people engaged in pastoral care in Anambra State.	50	40	5	5	---
7	Those involved in pastoral care in the State are mainly priests, religious, and pastors of different Christian Denominations.	--	55	25	20	---
8	The Church owns most of the Homes for the less-privileged in the State and sponsors all their needs.	15	40	10	30	5
9	Pastors of Churches take priority over the care of the poor than the normal pulpit evangelism.	15	30	30	25	--
10	There is serious demand for pastoral care-givers in Nigeria due to the alarming increase in the level of poverty.	55	35	10	--	--
11	The relief materials sent to homes for the underprivileged are not adequately distributed to the right beneficiaries.	35	35	15	5	10
12	The lay people are equally doing well in the areas of pastoral care. They are more involved than the clergy.	35	35	15	15	--
13	There are many Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps in the State, and they are adequately catered for.		30	20	30	20

Challenges

		SA	A	SD	D	UN
14	The pastoral caregivers in the State are not properly trained to do the work.	25	40	15	20	--
15	Lack of adequate provision of free alternative education such as crafts training – sewing, ICT, shoe making, cosmetology etc. for self-reliance.	70	25	--	5	--
16	The government pay little attention to the facilities for the poor. They do not support them financially.	25	40	15	10	10
17	Instead of the government to provide enabling environment for the pastoral care workers, they collect huge amounts of money annually for registration and renewal.	50	40	--	5	5
18	The Church has not really achieved much in the area of pastoral care in Nigeria.	20	40	10	30	--
19	There are so many social institutions established by Pastoral ministers but they are rather too expensive and not affordable. So, the poor do not benefit from them.	70	15	--	15	--
20	Every individual should willingly involve themselves in the works of Pastoral care.	35	45	10	10	--

NOTE:

Pastoral care consists of helping acts, done by representative persons, directed towards the healing, sustaining, guiding, reconciling and nurturing of persons whose troubles and concerns arise in the context of daily interactions and ultimate means and concerns. Pastoral Care is the Church's role of giving adequate spiritual and moral attention to the street children, and to all suffering in the society.

Recommendations and Conclusion

Young people in Nigeria today need training for transformation. A person who has been transformed can be in the position to help others go through the process of change. As society today has become very complex, so are young people confronted with various challenges. Pastoral care programs, such as retreats, seminars and capacity building programs, should help young people to deeply reflect on issues that are relevant to their lives. Each youth should be challenged to become an agent of change, even among his or her peers. As agents of change, young people should be the light of the community in which they live: in their families, in the classroom, and in their relationship with others in the community. Outreach programs in youth ministry, should be directed to the disadvantaged and marginalized members of the community: the aged,

homeless, and those suffering from illnesses, especially HIV/AIDS. Youth programs should also help to provide for the training of young people to respond to issues of social justice, and care for God's creation. Pastoral care programs should help young people to develop the capacity to break down barriers of arrogance, ignorance, racism, sexism, terrorism, tribalism, xenophobia and other social evils plaguing the world. As followers of Jesus, young people should learn to be disciplined and enthusiastic about life. Young people should be encouraged to discover and share with each other that fullness of life which Jesus promises.

The youths are the agents of change for a better future so, there is need to carry the theological and social teaching of pastoral care to the classroom. Universities and colleges should demonstrate the study of pastoral ministry and care

while the training last. Teaching on pastoral ministry should go beyond the classroom and practically take those under training into the social world so as to interact with the suffering people and learn to be of immense assistance around their own communities outside school days.

Adults are not left out of the apostolate for change, so, every adult Christian in his or her capacity is to be his or her sister's or brother's keeper. Everyone must be ready to share his or her blessings with others knowing so well that all fingers are not made equal. Those who have wealth are to realize that what they have will be better enjoyed when shared with those who have not.

Although Pastoral care seems generally to be attached to theological studies and practice, I do believe it goes beyond theological parlance, it is a social responsibility of every individual. Everyone is a pastor, a shepherd in his or her own level and area of operation; a father/mother is a shepherd in their families and kindred, and in their neighborhood. A civil or public servant is a pastor in his or her area of service, so is a teacher, a nurse, a trader etc. we are all called to be pastors to give pastoral care to those around us in one way or the other.

In the Church, we have Men organizations or Christian Fathers Associations, Christian mothers, Youth organizations, Young Professionals, and so on, they are encouraged to care for their disadvantaged members and to extend their care programmes to the orphanages, centers for the physically challenged, prisons, widows, street children and the poorest of the poor. Doing this would go a long way to promoting pastoral care at the grassroots. Orphanages are to be given special attention, the church should extend solidarity towards those homes which are not mission affiliated and ensure that the inmates get equal pastoral and social attention which they give to those affiliated to their churches.

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