



CHRIST’S LOVE AND THE CHURCH IN AFRICA AMIDST COVID - 19 PANDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

Africans are known for their traditional commitment to harmonious relationships at all levels of existence; a harmonious universe in which life is lived meaningfully. Unfortunately, African memory is one painfully scared as a result of deep divisions, gross injustice and severe conflicts. Added to the list today is the global Covid – 19 havoc which has not only complicated but also compounded the already existing problems in the continent. As world leaders are working to contain the pandemic and its havoc on human society, ascertaining the role of the Church in the entire scheme becomes pertinent. Amidst the pandemic, how is the Church responding to her universal mission and mandate? How is the Church witnessing and living out this mission in the pandemic? It is on this basis that the paper investigates the role of the Church in Africa as a source of communion, hope and strength in this period of crisis.

Keywords: Christ’s Love, the Church, Church Mission and mandate, Covid – 19 Pandemic, the Africa experience

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INTRODUCTION

Understanding the relationship between Christ and the Church is one that Christians of every age will continue to explore as they continue to live in the world with its enormous challenges. Christianity is not just a theory; it has existed throughout human history. Christianity is actually about: A person, Jesus Christ, the religion's founder; a group of people that God created on earth; a way of life that God has entrusted to his people (Alan, 2008). It is within these three perspectives that the relationship between Christ and the Church is clearly expressed. Exploring the relationship between Christ and the Church, and the divine nature of the Church, Waite (cited in Onwubiko, 1999) writes:

Jesus himself is the founder of the Church. Thus, Jesus' words to Peter in the Gospel of Matthew: "And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my Church, the powers of death shall not prevail against it... I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Mt. 16:18; 28:20)...The Church as a whole, as a community, as an organic unity, is a divine creation (Onwubiko, 1999: 22-23).

The messianic people, according to the affirmation of *Lumen Gentium*, have Christ for its head (LG, no.9).

The analogies of the 'bride' and 'the Seamless robe' were respectively used to describe the unceasing love that exists between Christ and the Church in this relationship. Writing to the Ephesians, Saint Paul extends this existing love of Christ and his Church to the marital union:

Because Christ is the head of the Church, which is his body, and is also its Saviour, the husband is the head of the wife. Husbands, love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself up for her, that he would cleanse her, sanctify her, and present her to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or anything else like that, that she may be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5: 23-27, 32)

The fulfillment of Jesus' work of preparing his bride, the Church, for himself is described in the Book of Revelation:

Christ, the lamb of God, weds his bride, the Church, at the end of time"...The marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has prepared herself; it was given to her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure- for the fine linen is the righteous works of the saints" (Rev. 19: 7-8)

According to Unitatis Redintegratio (UR) Article 13, the Church is the "seamless gown" in the analogy of "the seamless robe," and "through her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate oneness with God and of the unity of all mankind" (no. 1). She serves as a tool for achieving this togetherness and unity as well (LG, no.1).

The mission of the Church is derived from and within this existing relationship between Christ and his Church. The Post- Synodal Apostolic Exhortation-Ecclesia in Africa of Pope

Benedict XVI was more specific on the mission of the Church in Africa. Having called on African theologians to develop a new theology of the Church as “a family of God”, it challenges the Church in Africa to rediscover its mission and fulfill it, which is to be at the service of reconciliation, justice and peace (EIA, no. 1). This is, therefore, its primary mission, its *munus*, i.e., office, function, employment, duty, gift and responsibility in Africa.

It was based on this universal mission of the Church and the unique mandate of the Church of God in Africa that the present paper investigates the role of the Church in Africa as a source of communion and hope in this period of Covid – 19 pandemic. How far has the Church lived and is living up to this noble mission and mandate in Africa, especially at this critical period? In pursuance of these objectives, the topic is addressed under four major headings, namely: an exploration of Christ's love and the Church's mission on earth, an overall experience of Covid – 19 in Africa with particular emphasis on the history, responses and challenges, an examination of the role of the Church in Africa amidst Covid – 19 crises, and finally, a general conclusion.

CHRIST'S LOVE AND THE CHURCH'S MISSION ON EARTH

God is love (1 John 4:8), his essence is love and all his attributes flow from his essence. According to the author of Hebrew 1:1-3; at the appointed time, God expressed this essence in a very unique manner. Unlike what he did in the past with the prophets of old, he did not express his love in a statement of faith or in set truths; rather he did so by tying it to a person, who is the source and beginning of everything: the very person of Jesus Christ (Ladaria, 2009). God sent his only begotten Son, Jesus Christ into the world as his love for it. John presents this expression of love in a dramatic way when he stated that God loves the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, promising eternal life to anyone who trusts in him (John 3:16).

Consequently, an important aspect of Christian belief is that while the world was still in sin and death, and human beings still recalcitrant and rebellious, God showed it unconditional love. He did not send his son to judge or condemn it. Instead, He sent him to save it (John 12:47-48) from the most destructive force of death that was fuelled by sin. It was not a love based on giving of things but that which is truly out of God himself.

Because the gift of Jesus Christ is the gift of self, at its root is Christ's humbling of himself to become a human person. Though he was God, he did not count equality with God but obediently emptied himself, taking the form of a slave and coming in human form (cf. Phil. 2:6-8). He made his life a gift of love to humanity, so that humanity may become like God. The basis for this is his dual nature as true God and true human being. Consequently, it is in the union of this dual nature of Jesus Christ that salvation is achieved. Jesus Christ is the salvation of the world, in the sense that in his person God and human beings are one (Okwuosa, 2016). Invariably, then, salvation is at the core of God's love for the world in Jesus Christ.

Christ's love for humanity is, thus, built on his incarnation and in his making himself a ransom for the world. In the former, the presence of God incarnate in the world changed

definitely the face of the world. Because of his entry, he divinized the history of the world and gave it a transcendent quality (Ladaria, p.102). He united the heavenly and earthly spheres together. He showed solidarity to the downtrodden humanity by becoming a human person like all human beings except in sin. The possibility of humanity's overall salvation rests on Christ's assumption of human nature (*Dominus Iesus* DI, no.10). The Son of God has made an intimate connection with every person through his incarnation. He performed human tasks with human hands, reasoned with a human mind, made human decisions and felt human love (*Gaudium et spes* GS, no.22). As a result, He elevates and illuminates every new human being as the divine light that shines forever (cf. John 1:9). The mystery of humanity and its purpose only becomes clear in the mystery of the incarnate Word (GS. no.22). As we mentioned earlier, the incarnation portrays a loving, free God.

The love of Jesus Christ for the world is the gift of communion and reconciliation with the world, in such a way that the world could become one with Him (John 17), share in His nature and fellowship (1 John 5:20). All these Jesus conceptualized in his person, words and deeds. So, the love of Christ to the world is the gift of the presence of God (Emmanuel) in the world which was lost in a way through the original sin.

Incorporating the prophecy of Isaiah to his person, Jesus proclaimed the presence of the Kingdom of God in the world in his person. He said: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor". He has sent me to "proclaim the year of the Lord's favour, to loose the chains of the afflicted, to open the eyes of the blind, to set the captives free" (Luke 4:18-19). Christ's love for humanity is about changing human fate with the good news of salvation. To realize this, he made himself a servant and ransom for all (Mark 10:45). He went about doing good. He fed the hungry (John 6:1-14); healed the sick and preached the good news to those who were with no shepherd (Mathew 9:36). At the end of his earthly life, he manifested God's unconditional love for the world by sacrificing his life as a ransom. He shared in the pains of death with human beings and in the process conquered it. He destroyed the bane of all human life through his resurrection from the death. All these sum up the fact that the love of God is eternal.

Christ's mission of love is continued by the Church. During his earthly mission, Jesus called to himself some men whom he taught and sent out to preach the good news of salvation to all the people. Before he gave up himself to be crucified, Christ, constituted a new people with the apostles as the foundation, after he had said to Peter, "Upon you I will build my church"(Matt 16:18). Jesus instructed his followers to "go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit..." before ascending into heaven (Matt 28:19). In this way, the Church is the sacrament of Christ's salvation, in the sense that:

God has assembled and formed the Church as a symbol of saving unity for all persons who, in faith, look to Jesus as the source of their salvation and the author of their unification and peace. Though it simultaneously transcends all

of time and all human bounds, it comes into human history in order to reach all areas of the planet (LG.no.1).

As the sacrament, the Church is the sign of God's presence and his kingdom in the world. The Church is a type of sacrament or indication of close union with God and of the unity of all humanity because of her relationship with Christ. She serves as a tool for establishing this togetherness and unity as well (LG, no.9, 48). To actualize this, the Church in obedience to Christ's mandate to the apostles to evangelize the whole world in his name (cf. Lk. 10:1ff) announces that:

The Kingdom of God summons people to repentance through evangelism, the proposal and provision of the tools necessary for peace, freedom and salvation, and her desire to spread the Spirit-mediated revelation of the Father and the Son to everyone. She boldly asserts that she is the one carrying out these duties, and that her Lord, Jesus, has given her this mission and this doctrine (International Theology Commission, 1985: 10).

This function has a threefold nature that is, the Church of Christ as a ministry of service (*diakonia*), a living testimony of truth (*martyria*) and a fellowship of love (*koinonia*). The Church manifests and brings about God's salvation by carrying out these three tasks on earth (LG. no.11-13). As a people, who have seen and witnessed the love of Christ and are commanded by him to love one another as he loved them, the mission of the Church includes testifying of the presence of Christ in their midst through the way they love one another and the world. Jesus mentioned that this would be the indication for people to know that they are his disciples (John 13:34-35). So, the love of Christ that is evident in the Church is a mission of the salvific love of God for the world.

With the witnessing of the truth, the Church, as a body of Christians, lives out that characterization of her by Christ himself as the light and salt of the world (cf. Mt 5:13-16) "through her evangelical activities in the world. She makes the salvation of other people possible by granting access to them to God's unconditional and infinite self-bestowal through the historical tangibility of Jesus Christ" (Rahner,1983). This confirms the role of the Church as the witness of God's indelible presence in the world not just in institutions but in the redeemed people of God. In this way, the Church's mission is not only the revealing of Christ but also as the redeemed people of God, who are the fruits of the kingdom of God in the world. What this means is that:

The Church reveals to the entire humanity that eternal life, which all people long for and which has already commenced in the life of all who are intimately related to Christ in the *koinonia* of faith and love. It reveals also that in Christ's resurrection that man has become victorious over suffering, sin and death (Okwuosa, 2016:133).

By imitating Christ, who came not to be served but to serve (Mark 10:45), the Church is not only in the service of God but also of the world. The Church offers her service to the world through

her sacraments and is the go-between the world and God, in the manner of Christ who mediates between God and humanity. The Beatitudes, which are the teachings of Jesus on the Mount (Matthew 5:1-10), serve as the model in the Church's service of love to the world. They are revolutionary and are done only for the sake of God and humanity, bearing in mind that the world has the capacity to be against her.

COVID – 19 AND THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE

Having been declared a pandemic, Covid – 19 became a threat to global health. African continent constitutes a reasonable proportion of the world's population widely threatened by the pandemic. The first index case of the virus on the continent was reported on 14th February 2020, in Cairo, Egypt (Africa CDC, 2020). With exception of countries whose first confirmed cases fall within February, April and May respectively, most of the countries in the continent reported their first index cases in March 2020 (Los Angeles Times, 2020). The virus spread across the entire continent in less than three months, with Lesotho being the final independent African nation to report its first case in May 2020.

The peak period in the rise of the virus in the continent was experienced between June, July and first and second weeks of August 2020 (see table 2 below). On July 20, 2020, the World Health Organization issued a statement expressing serious concern about the virus' expansion in Africa, warning that "South Africa's increasing numbers could be a prelude for additional outbreaks across the continent" (Allan, 2021). Total Covid – 19 cases increased by August, with 5 countries marking up over 75% of the total confirmed cases; South Africa, Egypt, Morocco, Ethiopia and Nigeria (Burke, 2020). In late August, a downturn on the number of new cases was reported in the continent. However, an increase in the number of confirmed cases was reported in some countries, particularly in North Africa (Africa CDC, 2020).

In 2021, African witnessed the third wave of the virus. By the 27th of June, the number of cases had risen once more and was approaching 202,000 each week. A rise in new cases was observed in more than 16 African nations. Thus, WHO dubbed the recent pandemic in Africa as the "worst pandemic week ever" (Dahir, July, 2021). 2022 witnessed a decline in the weekly number of Covid – 19 cases in the continent. According to the statement released by WHO on Thursday February 10, 2022, for the first time since the peak of the fourth wave caused by the Omicron strain, the weekly number of Covid – 19 cases in Africa has dramatically declined and the number of deaths has also fallen (WHO, Africanews, 2022).

The current status of Covid – 19 on the 47 affected countries in the WHO African region, as captured by the UNDP, has South Africa as the leading state in the continent, with cumulative cases of 3,702,042 (45.34% of all the cases in the region), 99,868 cumulative deaths with a CFR of 2.70%, 3,587,145, cumulative recovered (96.90% of cumulative cases) and 15,029 active cases, while Sao Tome and Principe was the least affected country in the continent with cumulative cases of 5,938 (0.07% of all the reported cases in the region), cumulative deaths of

72 with a CFR of 1.21%, cumulative recovered of 5,862 (98.72% of cumulative cases) and 4 active cases (UNDP, March, 2020, see table 3 below).

As a global public health threat, Covid – 19 pandemic challenged the world to an urgent response. Countries were forced to implement various policies aimed at quick response to the rapid spread. For example, the field of research has experienced the widespread of implementation of policies prioritizing the publication of research related to Covid – 19 and providing free access to such research. Over 82,000 articles about Covid – 19 were published in the Scopus database in just one year (Luqman, 2020).

In Africa, responses and interventions were recorded at the continental, regional and states levels. These include the activation of emergency operations Centre for Covid – 19 and mobilization of a continental-wide response by the Africa CDC, establishment of Africa Task Force (Marguerite et.al., 2020). The Partnership to Accelerate Covid – 19 Testing (the PACT initiative: Test, Trace, Treat in Africa) was then launched, with the goal of increasing testing capacity in member states and providing the necessary support as part of a joint continental strategy to help member states limit Covid – 19 transmission through measures like staff training. To help test, trace and test Covid – 19 cases promptly in order to decrease the pandemic's impact on the African continent, a team of experts, community workers, supplies, and other resources were organized (African CDC, 2020). Other responses at the continental level include vaccination campaign in African countries.

Responses at the regional and states levels include regional workshops for the African Union (AU) members states, quarantine, border closure, prohibition of crowded gatherings, such as social and religious gatherings and activities, total and partial lockdown of public and private institutions, enforcement of compulsory compliance to Covid – 19 prevention protocols, such as, wearing of face mask, regular hand sanitizing etc.

Both the pandemic and the policy interventions employed in curtailing the disease as seen in many countries in Africa, have either directly or indirectly affected the people in the continent, with effects cutting across the health care, socio-economic and political sectors. With specific reference to the health sector, reports from World Bank and UNEC Africa reveal:

The majority of nations experienced difficulties because of weak health care systems, a severe shortage of medical professionals (0.2 per 100,000 in sub-Saharan Africa versus 1.5 per 100,000 worldwide), a sharp reduction (by 75 percent) in the import of medical supplies and commodities as a result of border closures and export restrictions and a lack of financial and other resources (Marguerite et.al., 2020: 1001).

Physical-distancing measures enforced to limit transmission, World Bank further observes, will also restrict access to essential non-Covid – 19 healthcare services.

According to a study by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the pandemic's socioeconomic repercussions will cause economic growth to fall from 3.2 percent to 1.8 percent, potentially pushing up to 27 million of people into extreme poverty (UNEC Africa,

2020). As a result, the findings of the Covid – 19 Enterprise Survey follow-up modules, which were carried out in nine African countries between 2020 and 2021, show a serious economic impact. "In nations where Covid – 19 follow-up surveys were completed, almost 88 percent of firms were experiencing reduced liquidity, with more than 55 percent of them temporarily closing during the Covid – 19 epidemic" (Public Health, 2020). According to the survey study conducted by Josephson, Kilic and Michler (2021) on the conditions and means of subsistence of individuals in four African countries:

Since the start of the pandemic, 42% of households in these nations have experienced a job loss, business closure, disruption of farming activities, increase in input prices, decrease in output prices, increase in food prices, or the illness or death of an income earner. During the epidemic, 77% of the people in these countries lost their jobs. This leads to a loss of income affecting 25 percent million people (Josephson, Kilic and Michler, 2021: 558).

The survey also finds out evidence of potential food insecurity, struggle to access basic supplies, especially, medicine and stable food which cumulated to affected households resorting to live off savings, selling assets and reducing consumption. The poorest people have been disproportionately burdened by the pandemic and policy changes (Patrick, 2021). The government's fast response to this pandemic, albeit beneficial, cannot be sustained for long given that the majority of Africans live hand to mouth. Governments must implement other mitigating measures in addition to these limits in order to strengthen economies and give the general public essential benefits (Shabir & Aijaz, 2020). The political sector was not free either. The study by ACET reveals the devastating political impact of Covid-19 on African continents:

Is not just a health or socio-economic crisis; it is a governance crisis, testing the resilience of governance systems and institutions. It has exposed the flaws of inadequate institutions and leadership at all levels of government, as well as the inherent difficulties of development in a poor institutional context (ACET, 2021: 1).

ACET went further to observe certain practices that enhanced political crisis during this period to include lack of inclusive governance, human right abuse and corruption.

THE CHURCH OF GOD IN AFRICA AMIDST COVID – 19: THE EFFORTS SO FAR

With the devastating situation created by Covid-19 pandemic in the world, it has become pertinent to ask if God's intervention through Christ and passed to the Church still have any effect in today's world? This question becomes acute against the backdrop of the misery of many people in Africa who are fed with the gospel of hope and yet seemed to be undermined by all. With this in mind, some people are forced to ask, where is God in Africa? Where is God when things go bad and the innocent suffer and die? This inquisition could be extended to the Church, where is the Church in human suffering? This seems to be the concern of World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) when the body affirmed that religious leaders, faith-based

organizations and faith communities can make a significant contribution to the prevention of Covid – 19 -related sickness and the saving of lives.

The organization (WHO) went further to suggest ways that religious bodies and leaders could help in sustaining the fight against Covid – 19 to include sharing health information, protecting the faithful and the entire community by observing recommended procedures. Religious leaders were called upon to provide pastoral and spiritual care to persons in their community. This could come in the form of providing personal protecting equipment, counseling and comforting the sick; consoling the bereaved and engaging in safe burial practices.

The Church tapped on this, thus making the role of the Church to include advocating for the needs of the most vulnerable people, reducing fear among the populace and stigmatization as a result of the pandemic. In order to help curb the novel virus, Christian groups were advised to hold their services in small spacious groups and avoid rituals that might compromise the situation (WHO, 2020). All these, in a way, set the role of the Church in Africa in the fight against Covid-19.

In response to this situation, many Churches adopted collective, regional and local policies. For example, many Catholic Episcopal conferences and dioceses in Africa responded to the WHO's directives by taking the radical and painful decision to suspend masses, confessions, way of the cross, retreats, pilgrimages, visits to shrines, vigils, choir rehearsals, catechesis and all parish activities that involved gatherings of people (Sarr, 2020). These measures are considered effective in limiting human contact which is a key factor in the spread of the virus (Mat et.al. 2020; De Franza et al., 2020 & WHO, 2020).

In line with the injunction to imitate the love and compassion of God and be the salt and light of the world, it thus, falls to the Church to offer both spiritual and material help to the most vulnerable and isolated people throughout the pandemic. This involves delivering food and medicines, providing shelter, supporting key workers and their families and supporting the elderly in their homes. The Church in Africa responded to the countless requests for material needs. Some Christian institutions like the Catholic Church in Nigeria, which has a well-established programme for helping the poor through Justice, Peace, Development Commission was able to assist so many people during this period. They provided food stuffs, fuel and medications to families and motherless baby's homes. Religious worships, where they are permitted, were turned to occasions for deliberations on relevant knowledge for life and solicitation for material support of the needy.

Church leaders delivered sermons on love, hope, faith and repentance. One of the church leaders interviewed states:

“we read some Bible passages, Psalm 91 and other passages that assure them that the disease will not come close to them because of their faith, because God is watching over us” (Osei-Tutu *et. al.*, 2021: 2241).

The sermons on the pandemic were also opportunities for conversion hence talks about repentance and reconciliation with God and neighbours. According to Osei-Tutu et al, some

church leaders taught their followers to repent of their sinful ways, seek divine forgiveness and petition God to alleviate the consequences of the pandemic and if eventually they cannot survive it that they may gain eternal life.

Some churches sensitized their members on health hygiene. Besides providing sanitizers and face masks for the congregants, many of them employed health workers to educate their congregation and suggest ways they can adjust their programmes to avoid the spread of the virus. Health education sensitization followed health and hygiene protocols which include hand washing, sanitizing and social distancing.

Efforts were also made by religious leaders in Africa to de-stigmatize those who contracted the virus. This was essential in a cultural milieu where everything has spiritually connotation. Many of the leaders took time to explain to their congregants that the pandemic is not the work of evil spirits and is not a death sentence.

Because of the lockdown in almost all parts of the continent, many religious leaders who could afford it resorted to online family apostolate. It was an opportunity to check on their members, who risked being isolated or lonely. They used the opportunity to pray and read the Bible with them. While some families used the opportunity to rediscover themselves, the online family apostolate revealed that:

Lockdowns have also reinforced family members' living away from one another and they have demonstrated how lonely it may be to live alone and be separated from one's family. Real physical danger exists in dysfunctional homes, especially for women and children (Makgoba, 2020: 2).

In view of this, many Christian groups offered online counseling services to families and people in distress. Topics like child abuse, domestic violence and family communication were offered by church counselors to families with the intention of helping them adapt to their new reality.

Burying of the dead was one area that proved difficult for the church. People were afraid of being infected and, thus, extricated themselves from burying the dead. It was an uphill task for Christian leaders to educate and mobilize their congregants on how to bury the dead without any risk of contracting the disease. It was a big relief for Christians to know that whatever happened that they would at least be given a dignified burial.

The pandemic was another opportunity to remind the people of their vocation to love one another as God loves them by constructing a compassionate community, rendering essential services to the most vulnerable, the sick, the needy, elderly people and children. In this way, religion served as medium for people to help and seek support, hope, relief and manage anxiety using religious practices (Wilson et al., 2020). This is very understandable because the pandemic in Africa has a collateral effect, it did not just hit the economy of nations but affected many people directly. Many people lost their sources of income as the offices were closed. The lockdown prevented farmers and traders from going to the farms and markets respectively, thus making it extremely difficult for people who fend for themselves on a daily basis to do so. They resorted to seeking help from Christian communities.

One of the remarkable roles of the Church in Africa during the novel pandemic is the sense of collaboration and unity among the different Christian denominations. The Churches cooperated with one another in order to find an effective solution to the problem. Bishop Sipuka affirmed this in these words: "No matter which church they attend, we collaborate with Ministers of other churches to identify persons who are negatively impacted by this in our area so that we can access means of supporting them" (Mayaki, 2020). This sense of unity and collaboration reflects the intention of Christ for his Church to be one just as he and the Father are one (John 17:21). It also showcases the presence of God in the Church, thus making gospel realistic, practical and believable to the world.

CONCLUSION

The universal mission of Church of Christ as the study reveals, is embedded in the tripartite nature and functions of fellowship of love (*koinonia*), living witness on earth (*martyria*) and ministry of service (*diakonia*). It is within the third function that the Church in Africa is summons to services, which will among other things bring about reconciliation, justice and peace to the continent. As a matter of fact, it is only by fulfilling these tripartite roles and responsibilities on earth that the Church manifests and brings about God's salvation to humanity. Interestingly, there is no better place and time when these services are needed most than in Africa and at the peak of Covid – 19 challenges in the continent. As can be seen in the paper, the Christian Church in Africa has indeed demonstrated in various capacities this love and mission during this period of Covid – 19 crisis in the continent. The paper however, calls on the Church to be persistent in fulfilling this mission, especially, in the local Churches in the continent. Finally, the paper was able to explore the role of the Church in Africa amidst Covid-19 pandemic; a role that was sanctioned by Christ himself, the founder and head of the Church.

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Table 1: List of Abbreviations

ACET	African Center for Economic Transformation
Africa CDC	Africa Centers for Disease Control
AU	African Union
CFR	Case Fatality Rate
Covid- 19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
DI	Dominus Iesus
EIA	Ecclesia in Africa
GS	Gaudium et spes
LG	Lumen Gentium
UR	Unitatis Redintegratio
PACT	Partnership to Accelerate COVID-19 Testing
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNEC Africa	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
WHO	World Health Organization

Table 2: Top Three Africa Regional Countries' Distribution of Covid – 19 Cases and Deaths as of 9th June, 2020

Regions and Countries	Confirmed Cases	Reported Death
Northern Region		
Egypt	35,444	1,271
Algeria	10,265	715
Morocco	8,302	208
Southern Region		
South Africa	50,879	1,080
Zambia	1,200	10
Malawi	443	4
Western Region		
Nigeria	12,801	361
Ghana	9,910	48
Guinea	4,221	23
Eastern Region		
Sudan	6,242	372
Djibouti	4,278	31
Kenya	2,862	85
Central Region		
Cameroon	8,060	206
Democratice Republic of Congo	4,106	88
Gabon	3,247	21

Source: Africa Center for Disease Control (CDC), June, 2020

Table3: Cumulative Cases, Deaths, Recovered and Active Cases in Top Three Affected Countries in WHO African Region (one from Northern Region) March, 2020

Regions & Countries	Cumulative Cases (% of cases in the region)	Cumulative Deaths (% CFR)	Cumulative Recovered (% of cumulative cases)	Active Cases			
Central Africa							
Cameroon	119,414	1.46%	1,926	1.61%	117,383	98.30%	105
Angola	99,003	1.21%	1,900	1.92%	96,951	97.93%	152
Democratic Republic of the Congo	86,461	1.06%	1,335	1.54%	64,656	74.78%	20,470
Eastern Region							
Ethiopia	469,419	5.75%	7,488	1.60%	421,604	89.81%	40,327
Kenya	323,255	3.96%	5,647	1.75%	317,546	98.23%	62
Zimbabwe	244,318	2.99%	5,423	2.22%	233,873	95.72%	5,022
Northern Region							
Algeria	265,524	3.25%	6,871	2.59%	178,156	67.10%	80,497
Southern Region							
South Africa	3,702,042	45.34%	99,868	2.70%	3,587,145	96.90%	15,029
Zambia	315,623	3.87%	3,962	1.26%	310,706	98.44%	955
Botswana	263,950	3.23%	2,619	0.99%	259,434	98.29%	1,897
Western Region							
Nigeria	255,103	3.12%	3,142	1.23%	249,460	97.79%	2,501
Ghana	160,791	1.97%	1,445	0.90%	159,277	99.06%	69
Senegal	85,820	1.05%	1,964	2.29%	83,814	97.66%	42

Source: https://www.africa.undp.org/content/rba/en/home/coronavirus.html?utm_source=EN