

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL
P I E T E R M A R I T Z B U R G

MANDLENKHOSI ZWANE (1932-1980) : FIRST
AFRICAN BISHOP IN SWAZILAND.

Submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement
for the Degree of Master in Theology.

School of Theology

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I declare that

MANDLENKHOSI ZWANE (1932-1980) :
FIRST AFRICAN BISHOP IN SWAZILAND
(Title of dissertation)

is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

Clement Johane Langa

28th March, 1996

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

This thesis attempts to give a sketch of the life of Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane (1932-1980) who was bishop of Manzini for only four years. His enemies thought that he was magnificently prevaricating, his friends saw him as plain-dealing and bound by invisible power.

Being the first Catholic African Bishop in Swaziland, he brought many changes in the life of the Church. Consecrated to the episcopate when the diocese of Manzini and the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference urgently needed a leader who would challenge injustice and the lack of authentic African spirituality, Zwane felt compelled to fight for justice and promote inculturation, thus building the church. Though at a certain stage he was declared *persona non grata* by the South African Government; he did not stop helping the victims of injustice, in fact later on in our discussion we will find that Zwane had been at a certain stage publicly branded a politician. He was not interested in political leadership, but he was interested in spiritual leadership. Since he was also interested in social justice some governments in the Southern Africa region felt threatened by his presence.

Let us look briefly at the method. For many years Catholics in Swaziland have felt the need for a biography of Bishop Zwane. Surprisingly, no one has yet written the biography of Zwane. Since very little has been written on Zwane, in an endeavour to write his biography I felt compelled to conduct many interviews with some of the people who knew him. This means that for our knowledge of the life and the episcopate of Zwane, we are almost entirely depended upon interviews conducted fourteen years after his tragic death. A tape-recorder and questionnaires have been used.

Other people who should have been interviewed have been unintentionally missed. We have made an effort to screen out errors and discrepancies. By far the most important written source for the life of Bishop Zwane is the collections of

speeches and writings compiled and published by the Catholic Institute for International Relations.

The oral and written sources provide new insight into Zwane's character and philosophy. They also throw certain aspects of his life into new perspective, in particular Zwane's feeling towards the poor whom he adored unequivocally.

Our discussion is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals with inculturation, which seems now to have attracted many people in Africa especially these days when the Church is preparing to enter into the third millennium. Also in that chapter, we shall try to understand how the Church looks at inculturation. Some documents of the Second Vatican and Post-Vatican Council will be used. Our reflection on inculturation will be reintroduced in the third chapter where we will be looking at Bishop Zwane's life. The inculturation we discuss in the first chapter is designed to help the reader understand how the church looks at inculturation.

The second chapter looks at the Catholic Church and evangelization in Swaziland. That chapter will help us to understand how the church in Swaziland has carried out the work of evangelization amongst the Swazis. We are going to look briefly at how different religious congregations that engaged themselves in the work of evangelization established themselves in the country. When religious congregations arrived in Swaziland they discovered that there were many social problems. It will be interesting to look how they tried to address those issues as foreign missionaries. That discussion will certainly prepare us to see how Zwane who was the first African Bishop addressed similar problems. After one has understood the different approaches she or he will not hesitate to call Zwane a pioneer. Zwane tried to lay the foundations for the encounter between the Swazi culture and the Gospel.

The principal aim of chapter three is to throw light on the life and the episcopate of Zwane. This chapter will consist of a careful study of some of the main issues discussed in the previous chapters such as inculturation,

relations between Church and State, and other issues. Also in that chapter we shall see that the Church is one of the institutions that have a strong sense of social responsibility. The Church concern for justice was obvious in many conferences which were held during Zwane's episcopate.

Our study on Zwane will enable us to learn how to build a prophetic Church. Finally, we shall be looking at the mysterious death of Bishop Zwane. Many questions have been raised about his death.

C H A P T E R O N E

I N C U L T U R A T I O N

1. NOTION

Many people understand inculturation in different ways. Some think that eating certain types of food or clapping hands during liturgical celebrations is inculturation. In our discussion, we shall try to find out how certain authors look at inculturation, as such. Since we are concerned about the transmission of Christian faith, it would be necessary to include culture, local theology and other important points in this chapter.

It is not always easy to define inculturation. We cannot speak of inculturation without looking at culture. It is important to note that the Second Vatican Council did not use the term, 'inculturation'.

The only terms used by the Second Vatican Council were 'adaptatio'¹ and 'accommodatio'. Later, the post-conciliar literature ignored these terms, and followed new terms such as: incarnation, contextualization, inculturation² etc.

According to Stuart Bate: "the term inculturation is very new in Missiology"³. In 1973, G.L. Barney, a Protestant missionary coined the term inculturation⁴. Stuart Bate argues

1. Sacrosanctum Concilium, 4 December 1963, NQ37,47.65, IN Flannery Austin, OP, 1984, *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, page 13-21.

2. Rossano, P., 1975, *Acculturazione del Vangelo*, page 3, IN *Congresso Internazionale di Missiologia "Evangelizzazione e Culture"*, Rome: Pontificia Universita' Urbaniana.

3. Bate, C., Stuart, OMI, 1995, *Inculturation and Healing: Coping - Healing in South African Christianity*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, page 230.

4. Chupungco Anscar, 1992, *Liturgical Inculturation, Sacramentals, Religiosity, and Catechises*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press.

that the term inculturation "emerged during the period 1974-1981"⁵. Anscar Chupungco says that the term inculturation "was used in the context of frontier missions" by Barney, and two years later, Jesuits adopted the Latin inculturatio⁶.

We could say that Anscar Chupunco gives a personal support to those who argue that the term was adopted in the 70's. In his book: *Liturgical Inculturation, Sacramentals, Religiosity* and Catecheses, he affirms that the term was introduced into the official documents of the Roman Catholic Church by Pope John Paul II, in 1979, when he was addressing the Pontifical Biblical Commission⁷. After the Second Vatican Council, the idea that inculturation enables the Gospel to be incarnate in different cultures the became popular⁸.

Dealing with inculturation, Pope John II in his *Redemptoris Missio* says: inculturation is-

"the intimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity and the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures"⁹.

5. Bate, C., Stuart, OMI, 1995, op.cit., page 230.

6. Chupungco Anscar, 1992, op.cit., page 25.

7. Ibidem, page 26.

8. John Paul II, Pope, 7 December 1990, *Redemptoris Missio: Encyclical letter on the permanent validity of the Church's missionary mandate*, Article 52, IN Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, *Pastoral Action N°53*, Pretoria: V&R Printing Works, page 275.

9. Ibidem, Article 52, page 275.

2. DIALOGUE BETWEEN CHURCH AND CULTURE

Dialogue is an essential element in inculturation. The Second Vatican Council teaches that:

"In his self-revelation to his people culminating in the fullness of manifestation in his incarnate Son, God spoke according to the culture proper to each age¹⁰".

There is a need of a dialogue between the Church and the contemporary culture. The dialogue can take place if there is a relationship between the two, that is between the culture and the church. Their cooperation will enable one to understand the significance of the Gospel brought by the Church. On the other hand, the Church will be in a position to understand the mind of today's generation, to whom it is ministering.

The plurality of cultures which exists today is based on the historical development of various cultural groups. These cultural groups have a good culture. The medieval theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas, taught that Christ was above all cultures¹¹; since he was above all cultures, he could lift any culture to perfection through grace¹². We also have the concept of culture given by Martin Luther. The concept of Luther presupposes that culture cannot be lifted. The problem with that way of looking at culture is that we could be tempted to condemn those cultures that seem to be un-Christian to us, thus following Martin Luther's two kingdoms

¹⁰. Gaudium et Spes, 7 December 1965, No58, IN Flannery Austin, OP, 1984, *Vatican II The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, page 962.

¹¹. Senn, C., Frank, 1983, *Christian Worship and its cultural setting*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, page 91.

¹². Ibidem.

doctrine¹³. If we insisted that some cultures were under God's right hand and other cultures were under God's left hand, then it would be difficult to make an assertion that social expressions and institutions can be christianised. Though original sin broke the harmony which existed between God and humanity, human nature is still capable of good acts. Human beings make culture which is essentially good. The goodness of the culture reflects the goodness of God, the Creator. The encounter of the culture of the people with Christianity can help christianise those aspects of the culture of the people that have to be christianised.

There has always been a tension between the Church and the world. In fact for many years, the Church has been struggling to maintain a healthy balance between its openness to the world and its flight from the world.

The lack of dialogue between cultures manifests itself in the tendency of levelling other cultures. We could say that there is a danger of assuming that a culture of a certain group of people is better than other cultures. That assumption may lead to the suppression of other cultures. For example, the Western culture could be taken as the model. If it is taken as the model; everything will be judged according to the standards imposed by the Western culture. In the past, some missionaries have been tempted to consider the Western culture as the model. There is a need of purging Christianity from some elements of the Western culture which are not in harmony with the culture of the people in a given cultural context.

All over the world the clergy and the laity have been discussing about the method of transmitting the Gospel. Symposiums and Conferences have been held on that theme. It is interesting to find out that on the grassroots level some ideas about the transmission of the Gospel and living of the Gospel have been mushrooming. The Catholic Pastoral Plan is one example. Let us therefore look at what has been going on

¹³. Ibidem, page 92.

in the Universal Church and in the Particular Church.

a. Global discourse on Inculturation

The Second Vatican Council paved the way for the understanding of different cultures. Some values contained in those cultures could be given a theological interpretation. When we look at the documents of the Second Vatican Council, we find that cultural multiformity in the Church is acknowledged to be in existence. The International Congress of Missiology on Evangelization and Culture held at the Urban Pontifical University, Rome, from the 5th to the 12th October, 1975, dealt extensively with the problem of culture¹⁴.

The agenda for the symposium of the Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar included religious ecclesial indigenisation¹⁵. The gatherings helped the Church to understand that in an endeavour to establish harmony between the local culture and Christianity, the religiosity and the philosophy of the people which serve as a base for understanding of the religious moral options, are to be evaluated. Evaluation enables the Church to acquire some knowledge which helps her to determine appropriate rituals, morals, etc for the people who have their own cultural identity. The Author, Seumois, writes:

"The Bantu culture will not be christianised unless, there is a Bantu Catholic Theology"¹⁶.

¹⁴. Pontificia Università Urbaniana, 1975, *Congresso Internazionale di Missiologia "Evangelizzazione e Cultura"*, Rome: Pontificia Università Urbaniana.

¹⁵. Buhlmann, W., 1977, *Forward, Church! Essays in ecclesial spirituality*, Slough: St. Paul Publications, page 45.

¹⁶. Seumois Andre', 1975, *Significato e limiti della "Cristianizzazione" delle culture*, "Così, la cultura bantu, ad esempio, non sarebbe veramente cristianizzata se non quando esisterà una teologia bantu", page 10, IN *Congresso Internazionale di Missiologia "Evangelizzazione e Cultura"*, Rome: Pontificia Università Urbaniana.

In order to avoid confusion and lack of focus on the goal, it is always advisable for those who are engaged in any kind of worship or function to know what is taking place. The knowledge will enhance participation. Should they be familiar with the whole ritual process in case of religious ritual; their confidence will be boosted. The more people are empowered to be spontaneous and to express their feelings using symbols which they are very comfortable with, they will feel the urge to reconcile whatever the Christian culture brings to their own culture.

b. Local Church: Pastoral Plan

When bringing the Gospel to the people; the culture of the people must be taken into consideration. This means that those who belong to the group are to be allowed to take an active role in the decision making process for the Pastoral Plan. A Pastoral Plan is one of the instruments which could be used to propagate inculturation.

Different Christian Churches have their own Pastoral Plans. Let us take a quick look the Catholic Church of Southern Africa. The Pastoral Plan has been written after a strenuous work which has been done by the clergy and the laity, in their endeavour to build a local Christian community. The Pastoral Plan has been prepared to be used in Southern Africa by all Catholics. The main objective is: to make them build a community and become a church that serves humanity. All the issues which have been addressed in the chapters in the Pastoral Plan are interconnected and cannot be dealt with in isolation.

Christ is the model of the community that serves humanity. The operation *ad extra* is the archetype of the Pastoral Plan: Creation, Incarnation and Pentecost are the three missions of the Trinity that reflect God's plan to serve the world. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit do everything in common as a community. Their unity is based on their nature: they have only one nature, though there is no

division; there is distinction between them. The lack of division shows the profound unity that exists, hence it excludes any form of subordination of any of the three persons in the Trinity. Parishes can serve humanity if they work as a community and respect the identity of an individual. Respecting one's identity is respecting one's culture.

One gets justification if s/he belongs to the community of believers, and does what is expected of him or her in the community of believers. This is because justification has a communitarian dimension¹⁷.

The Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church affirms that the urge to build a human community comes from the Divine community. This therefore means that the community to be built must be Christocentric. A Christocentric community will enable Christians to express their faith with their cultural values. Jesus expressed his religiosity by way of his culture. The centre will always be Christ.

Those who will be ministering should have a deep knowledge of the culture of the people with whom they work. Prior to the Pastoral Plan there was Pastoral Consultation. The laity and ordinary people are given opportunity to brainstorm their ideas including their expectations on the Church. One can observe the importance the Pastoral Plan has in the transmission of the Gospel¹⁸.

The Pastoral Plan follows the inductive way of doing theology: everything comes from the grassroots. Citing Fr. Meyer in his book *Considine* wrote:

"...a sound, social, as well as a spiritual, base

¹⁷. Ladaria Luis, 1986, *Antropologia Teologica*, Rome: Edizioni Piemme, page 269.

¹⁸. SACBC, 1989, *Community Serving Humanity: Pastoral Plan of the Catholic Church in Southern Africa*, IN *Pastoral Action No50*, Pretoria: Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference.

is requisite to provide Christian community"¹⁸.

The community of the baptised is moved by the Holy Spirit to commit itself to serving humanity, as the Apostles did, and above all, to witness the Gospel in fraternal communion. The commitment is rooted in baptismal consecration. The community, serving humanity entails a constant effort to conform itself to Christ who served people. If values proper to different cultural groups are not acknowledged, harmony will not be maintained in the contemporary Christian community, which has been shaped by immigration.

3. A GOOD APPROACH TO CULTURE AS A PREREQUISITE TO INCULTURATION

Each and every group of people have their own way of expressing life, religion, etc. The expressions that are used reflect the culture of a particular group of people. Rituals and other practices can help us understand culture. Victor Turner, carried a field work amongst the Ndembu people of Zambia. The results of his research show that rituals play an major role in translating religion into action. This is important; its makes religion not to remain at a level of speculation.

Rituals can teach us more about the religion of the people, thus enabling us to have a good understanding of their culture. The understanding of the culture favours inculturation. We cannot ignore rituals when speaking of culture; rituals are important in a life of a person. The daily life of people is reflected on the way in which symbols are used by a particular group of people.

The Ndembus have an interesting ritual used in

¹⁸. Considine John, 1960, *The Missionary's Role in Socio-Economic Betterment*, New York: Newman Press, page 194.

strengthening a woman who has given birth to twins. In most African societies, giving birth to twins plunges the couple into a pensive mood: the couple do not know where to get extra milk to feed the other baby. According to Victor Turner, when twins are born, a certain ritual dance is performed in the village to strengthen the woman.

"During the dance the woman is expected to expose the source of her fecundity and solicits offerings of clothing and money by circulating her basket before the onlookers"²⁰.

Collecting medicine to be used in strengthening the woman marks the beginning of the ritual. We have to mention that the chemical properties of the clay used are not important; only the colour of the clay is important. We could say that in a society where symbols are used even a speck of dust acquires a significant role because of its colour. This is because the colour of the speck of dust has a certain meaning. For example black would normally be associated with evil and white with luck.

The panoramic survey he carried out amongst the Ndembu people has made us to understand that: in society in which the instinct to be homogeneous is strong, symbols play a very important role²¹.

In an endeavour to promote inculturation, the thrust of the instincts and the symbols should not be ignored. If symbols are ignored there will be conflicts between the traditional African religion and Christianity. Certainly, conflicts would be detrimental to inculturation. The conflict has already been observed between people belonging to the millenarian movements and their compatriots who are staunch followers of the traditional African religion, especially in rural areas. This is also due to the fact that tradition expects those people who live within the boundaries of the

²⁰. Turner Victor, 1991, *The Ritual process*, New York: Cornell University Press, page 45.

²¹. Ibidem.

kingdom to follow rituals prescribed by tradition which has been inherited from ancestors.

The Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity states clearly that the Church should implant itself amongst every group of people, and the socio-cultural aspect should not be ignored²². The socio-cultural deals basically with those things that affect the daily lives of the people. Therefore culture has a significant role to play under this aspect.

We have already mentioned dialogue as one of the ways which could lead to the reciprocal respect of cultures. After the dialogue between two or more cultures, elements that need to be introduced or changed in any process of inculturation will be apparent. This is not a difficult task given the fact that Christian message is present in each and every culture. In the quest for local theology, it is important to listen to the Word of God in the culture itself.

The study of culture can be effective if the approach is holistic: all aspects of the culture are to be taken into consideration. We have to bear in mind that technology has played a major role in the shaping of culture: media and improvement in the means of communication have helped in the transference of some elements from one culture to another culture. We also have multicultural countries like Brazil, etc, where the interaction between cultures has been much faster. Since contemporary culture cannot be defined without mentioning its newly acquired elements; one has to try and understand those elements which were borrowed from other cultures. Christ identified himself with the people with whom he lived.

22. Ad Gentes Divinitus, 7 December 1965, n^o10, IN Flannery Austin, OP, 1984, *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, page 824.

4. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF INCULTURATION

After having carried a research amongst Indians in South America the author, Nida, found out that in fifteen years some missionaries working amongst Indians succeeded in helping three thousand Indians change their life-style, and work towards the building of the local Church. The three thousand Indians had been victims of drunken debauchery and paralysing fear of black magic.

The author compares that tribe [*tribe A*] with another tribe [*tribe B*] not living far from tribe A. Another group of missionaries worked with tribe B for thirty years, and could barely notice results of improvement. Tribe B became suspicious of the missionary leadership, consequently, they became indifferent to the Church.

After a close examination of the missionary work of the two groups of missionaries, the author discovered that the missionaries who worked amongst tribe A were able to identify themselves with the people, and they tried to communicate in "terms which have meaning for the lives of the people"²³. This shows that identification and proper communication, yielded positive results to tribe A. Working for the people typical of the paternalistic mentality produces less fruits than working with the people, which is a sign of the willingness to accept a person as s/he is and work together for the common good. Accepting a person as s/he is also the acceptance of his or her culture. The reciprocal acceptance can serve as a foundation for inculturation. The problem of preaching the Gospel to people of other cultures was not felt for the first time when missionaries from Europe went to other continents to preach the Gospel.

During the time of the Apostles, the very same problem

²³. Ibidem, page 250.

was felt. When looking at the writings of St Luke²⁴, we find that St. Peter had difficulties with regards to giving instructions to people who were not Jews, and yet [they] wanted to embrace Christianity. This comes from the fact that St. Peter grew up in the Jewish culture, and the way in which he did things was also influenced by his cultural background. On the other hand, St. Paul seems to be more open to other cultures. St. Paul gives a good example of how to adapt to a different culture. The following passage shows that St. Paul tried to identify himself with all people so as to draw them to his side:

"And to Jews I become as a Jew, that I might gain Jews....to them that are without law as without law that I might gain them that are without law"²⁵.

St. Peter yielded to pressures from those who wanted to Judaize Christianity²⁶. Though he was a son of a Greek, Timothy, was circumcised by Paul²⁷; paradoxically, in the letter to the Galatians²⁸, Paul says that Titus a Greek who was with him was not compelled to be circumcised. In his endeavour to use the language which would be comprehensible to his readers, St. John adopted the Hellenic-Pagan concept, *Logos*.

Making disciples means helping people to develop a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; it does not mean persuading the people to renounce spiritual and moral values found in their tradition and culture²⁹.

²⁴. *Acts of the Apostles* 15:28

²⁵. *Corinthians* 9:20-21.

²⁶. *Galatians* 2:11-16.

²⁷. *Acts of the Apostles* 16:13.

²⁸. *Galatians* 2:3.

²⁹. Metzler, J., 1975, *Il nuovo corso missionario iniziato con la fondazione della Sacra Congregazione "De Propaganda Fide", nei confronti delle culture locali, " Fare*

The legitimacy of the mission to the uncircumcised is sealed in the Council of Jerusalem³⁰. The Council of Jerusalem laid foundation for the Apostles to preach the Gospel to the people of different cultures. The Church preaches the Gospel to every tribe, tongue, and nation³¹, since it is universal. The preaching of the Gospel can be effective when the symbols and signs used are known by the people to whom the Gospel is preached. Proper symbols and signs do carry a universal message. Understanding the way they are perceived by the people would be advantageous.

In order to serve humankind from sin, God sent the Word into the world. The Word assumed human nature, so that He could serve humanity from sin. The Son of God who became incarnate in the womb of a woman, Mary, was a full human being. In the Bible we are told that Christ became man in everything serve sin. His humanity made him to share the human identity with all people, so that he could communicate to human beings the message of Salvation.

In the Bible, we find Jesus Christ emptying himself thus taking the nature of a person³². When reflecting on the above Christological hymn, we discover that Jesus Christ did not empty himself of his nature as God, but he emptied himself of the divine way of doing things. When studying inculturation carefully one will understand that there are things that can be changed and things that remain immutable.

It is also important to mention that when taking the

discepoli` significa mettere gli uomini in rapporto diretto e personale con Gesu` Cristo. Un tale rapporto non implica la rinuncia ai valori spirituali e morali della propria tradizione e cultura..., page 25, IN *Congresso Internazionale di Missiologia "Evangelizzazione e Culture"*, Rome: Pontificia Universita' Urbaniana.

³⁰. *Acts of the Apostles 15.*

³¹. *Revelation 5:9.*

³². *Philippians 2:6-11.*

human nature, Jesus Christ accepted everything except sin³³. Christians who are actively involved in inculturation should know to make a distinction between things that can be taken or rejected in a particular culture. In fact when bringing the new religion, Christ did not hesitate to reject the distorted ideas about holiness and Sin, amongst the Jews³⁴.

In the account of the conversion of Cornelius who was a Roman citizen³⁵, we see the mission of the Church extending to non-Jews, and Christianity is compelled to enter into dialogue with the non-Jewish culture, if it aims at accomplishing its task. Stuart Bate says in his book:

"... the Church does not exist for itself but it is at the service of God's divine plan of salvation...³⁶".

If he were not incarnated; the effect of his message perhaps might not have acquired the significance it has nowadays. If we need to get good results in inculturation we should be prepared to carry a critical reflection on faith³⁷.

5. CONCLUSION

There is tension between in-groups and out-groups. The former is constituted by people sharing the same cultural background: who have more in common. The out-group is for strangers. The quest for the sense of belonging makes those who have a lot in common to establish an in-group consciousness. Once a person

³³. *Hebrews 4:15*.

³⁴. *Mark 2:23*.

³⁵. *Acts of the Apostles 11:15*.

³⁶. Bate, C., Stuart, OMI, 1995, op.cit., page 236.

³⁷. "Being the Authentic Gospel to the African Culture", Address to Zairean Bishops, 1981, IN *John Paul II African Address*, Bologna: E.M.I, page 1.

inherits the in-group consciousness s/he may ignore other groups. If that person is sent to another part of the world as a missionary, s/he may be tempted to look down upon the values found in the culture which is foreign to him or her. Likewise a person who is to be evangelised could develop a negative attitude towards the missionaries bringing Christianity to him or her. The negative attitude could be due to the fact that s/he considers the culture s/he inherited from his or her group to be absolute. Such a practice could become an obstacle to inculturation. Pride and sense of superiority are reinforced by the in-group consciousness. The sense of superiority is a common phenomenon in many in-groups. Jews believe that there are the race chosen by God because of the covenant in the book of Exodus³⁸.

We could say that in an endeavour to solve the problem of the tension between in-groups and out-groups we have to treat people as people. This could happen if we are prepared to:

"adapt ourselves to local customs of etiquette; show a vital interest in the beliefs of others and seek to find matters of essential agreement and identity of attitudes between people of different cultural backgrounds³⁸".

There is indeed an urgent need to address these issues.

It is not easy to pursue inculturation if there is no support especially from the people on the grassroots level. When working for inculturation one may feel ambivalent towards the people s/he is called to serve. At times s/he may feel supported by them; and at times one may desire to surrender his or her duty.

When the church incarnates itself in a particular culture she should remain conscious of her prophetic role. Her prophetic role will enable her to be critical in a

³⁸. Exodus 34:10.

³⁸. Nida Eugene, 1983, *Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*, Pasadena: William Carey Library, page 71-72.

constructive way. Inculturation makes an invaluable contribution to the transmission of the Christian message without neglecting those values which are traditionally found in every cultural system. This is achieved after a profound dialogue between the culture of the people and Christianity.

Every human group looks at the universe and tries to interpret it in its own way. The interpretation reflects the understanding the group has of the universe. That is why we often find that different cultural groups have their own way of expressing religion, art, moral, etc.

Due to the movement of people plurality of cultures can no longer be viewed as a new phenomenon. The cultural pluralism has brought competition amongst different cultures. Some cultures tend to dominate others simply by passing a moral judgment on them. We could free those cultures which have been considered to be inferior to other cultures by adopting inculturation.

We are living in the era of reconciliation. Healing past wounds should be our main concern, and if it is done in a Christian spirit, it will definitely encourage dialogue between the two cultures.

C H A P T E R T W O

**THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND
EVANGELIZATION IN SWAZILAND****1. THE RELATIONS BETWEEN
CHURCH AND STATE****a. Before independence**

During the period preceding independence, there was a considerable amount of agricultural development in the Kingdom of Swaziland. Commercial farming was done mostly by whites. In 1964 iron ore mining industry was begun⁴⁰. The opening of the mine helped Swaziland to improve transport: a railway line was built to Maputo. After the independence the country tried to open other industries between Mbabane and Manzini. Since then, there has been a steady growth of both primary and secondary industries after the independence of the country.

The improvement of telecommunication and travel has reduced Swaziland to something like a village. After gaining independence, Swazis thought that the gap which divided the poor and the rich would be narrowed. Unfortunately, it was made wider and wider. As a result there has been renewed explosion of hatred which manifested itself in banditry, prostitution, political uncertainty and anarchy.

The economic growth in the country can be seen as an agent of social transformation in the kingdom: people felt compelled to abandon some of practices found in their tradition. The culture of the Swazi people was greatly affected, and that had repercussions in the economy and in the interpersonal relationships. A lot of people emigrated into the industrial areas, as a result of that migration, the number of poor people rose.

⁴⁰. Omer-Cooper, J.D., 1987, *History of Southern Africa*, London: James Currey LTD, page 252.

We have to bear in mind that before the arrival of the Western civilization, Swazi people had cattle, farms, and they could support their families.

The Catholic Church in Swaziland has worked under the British Colonial Government for more than five decades after having been entrusted to the Order of the Servants of Mary. The first Catholic missionaries were Oblates of Mary Immaculate, who arrived in the country in the nineteenth century⁴¹.

In 1894, Swaziland became a British Protectorate and was ruled by King Sobhuza II for a period of sixty one years (1921- 1982). King Sobhuza II was considered to be a prophet by the entire Swazi nation, due to his openness towards missionaries, who brought Christianity to the Kingdom⁴².

In 1913, Rome gave permission to the Order of the Servants of Mary to carry out missionary activities in Swaziland⁴³. Among the first Catholic to enter Swaziland were Fr. Gratl, Fr. Mayr and Brother Obrleitner on the 27th January 1914⁴⁴. In October 1915 Fr. Mayr was murdered near Matsapha Swaziland⁴⁵.

After his ordination to priesthood, Fr. Pellegrino M. Bellezze, OSM, was sent to Swaziland by the Order of the Servants of Mary. While he was in Swaziland he became a great friend of king Sobhuza II, Fr. Bellezze also became the first

⁴¹. Brandy, *Swaziland*, IN *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1967, volume 13, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, page 829.

⁴². *L'Osservatore Romano, Weekly Newspaper of the Vatican City* (Italian edition), 9 September 1988, N9213, page 8.

⁴³. *Ibidem*.

⁴⁴. Tsabedze M. Michael, OSM, *The foundation of the Catholic Mission*, IN Kasenene Peter (Editor), [1990], *The Catholic Church comes of age*, Mbabane: Apollo Printer, page 12.

⁴⁵. *Ibidem*, page 13.

prefect apostolic of Swaziland⁴⁶.

During the period of colonialism the Catholic Church in Swaziland did not address the question of social justice. The Catholic Church was only interested in education and health until the years following Vatican II. Social justice was not on the agenda of the Church. This has affected the progress of the Catholic Church. We have to bear in mind that Christianity was not brought by the Catholic Church; the Protestant Churches brought it to the country. When the Catholic Church arrived in Swaziland, the British colonial government allowed the Catholics to build schools and hospitals. The British Government might have allowed the Catholic Church to build schools since it did not have enough financial resources to provide education and primary health care to all inhabitants in her dependencies including Swaziland.

The two World Wars: 1914-1918 and 1939-1945 enhanced the growth of the Catholic Church. This is because material aid coming from Europe was suspended, and the missionaries who were already in the country had to intensify their interaction with local people so that they could get more within the country. We ought to mention that the Church did not empower the people to work towards their political liberation. The Church was only interested in providing primary needs to the people.

Some religious congregations working in Swaziland felt compelled to have schools for a particular race of people. Having schools for a particular race is sheer segregation.

In 1939 at the outbreak of the Second World War Swaziland became an Apostolic Vicariate and in 1959 it became a diocese⁴⁷. At the beginning of missionary activities in Swaziland, Servite friars were directly under the control of the central government of the Servite Order. The juridical

⁴⁶. Bellezze M. Pellegrino, *50 Iminyaka yomsebenzi wokhandisa ukholo*, IN *Miscellanea Maria*, Rome: (un-edited)

⁴⁷. *L'Osservatore Romano*, op.cit., page 8.

power was then inherited by the Tyrolese Province; finally, the Tuscan Province became responsible for the missionary work. The Servite Vicariate of Swaziland took over from the Tuscan Province⁴⁸.

The Vicariate of Swaziland in collaboration with the Tuscan Province made a foundation in Uganda in 1988. Most of the Catholic Priests belong to the Servite Order. They work together with the two Servite Congregations and other congregations of sisters present in the country. The two congregations of Servite Sisters are the Servite Sisters of Pistoia and the Servite Sisters of Swaziland. Catholics are a minority in Swaziland, this is due to the fact that Protestants arrived before Catholics in Swaziland.

b. After independence

Swaziland got her independence from Britain in 1968. After independence the Church began to show great interest in the lives of the people. We could say that the Second Vatican Council helped the Church to change its attitude towards the people. If in the post-conciliar era the Swazi Government and the Holy See had diplomatic relations, the process would have been much faster.

Following the Soweto uprising, Swaziland became a refuge for South Africans who were fleeing their country because of the apartheid regime.

During the colonial days, the Catholic Church did not have a concordat with the then government. The non existence of a concordat did not impede the Church from engaging itself in social issues. In fact schools, health centres and other social services were offered by the Church. In most cases the concordat gives the Church right to exercise religion and carry its charitable duties freely. Since a concordat is a bilateral pact it obliges the Church and the State in justice, this means that the State and the Church do both have power to

⁴⁸. *Ibidem*.

alter it unilaterally.

After independence the Swazi people understood that they were free and they had to develop the economy of their country. Their freedom coincided with the promulgation of the documents of the Second Vatican Council especially those documents that deal with the human dignity. The documents of the Second Vatican Council have been used by the Swazi Church that emerged after the independence of the country.

The superficiality of the relations between different Christian Churches and Sects found in the country reflects the conflicts that exists between them. For example, Swazis have been practising polygamy for many years. Different Christian Churches and Sects have been divided over that issue. Churches and Sects that tolerate polygamy are easily accepted by the people. There are other issues that determine membership to a particular Church. Under this aspect we could speak of moral questions such as contraceptives and divorce. It is apparent that those who held liberal views on polygamy, contraceptives and indissolubility of marriage would move away from the Catholic Church. That could be one of the reasons why only ten percent of Swazis are Catholics. The Catholic Church adheres to the belief that it has a prophetic role to play in the society.

The brief historical survey which we have completed has left us with a clearer understanding of what happened to the Catholic Church as Swaziland was transferred from the British rule to the local Swazi rule. We have observed that the subtle distinction between the Church and the State, especially during the reign of King Sobhuza II, made it possible for the social structures of that period of time to opt for the separation between the State and the Church. That is why there have been no major confrontations between the Church and the State.

Our reflection on the role played by the Church has enabled us to follow the development of the relations between ecclesiastical and secular authorities, when the kingdom was

under the influence of absolutism: after the first elections to the electoral college, Swaziland remained an absolute monarchy.

"Swaziland was governed by the King in consultation with traditional chiefly council known as *ligogo*"⁴⁸.

What we have said above could explain the success King Sobhuza II had in implementing certain policies.

2. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH AND RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS IN SWAZILAND

Soon after the arrival of first Catholic missionaries in Swaziland many women religious congregations became aware of a mission to reach the masses. These congregations started working in the country. The congregations understood that their task was divine.

a. Benedictine Sisters

After the First World War, German Missionaries were expelled from Tanzania. Sisters belonging to the Congregation of the Daughters of St. Benedict were amongst those that had to leave Tanzania, and in 1920 they arrived in Swaziland. While in Swaziland they worked in the school which was under Mbabane Mission. They also helped in nursing, gardening and in teaching faith⁵⁰.

b. Servite Sisters of Pistoia

In 1926 Benedictine Sisters left Swaziland, and the Servite Sisters of Pistoia who had arrived in Mbabane three

⁴⁸. Omer-Cooper, J.D., 1987, op.cit., page 252-253.

⁵⁰. Tsabedze M. Michael, OSM, [1990] op.cit., page 16.

weeks earlier replaced the Benedictine Sisters⁵¹. The future Prefect Apostolic, Fr. Pellegrino Bellezze OSM invited the Congregation of the Servite Sisters of Pistoia to Swaziland⁵², and on the 5th November, 1922 four sisters were sent to Swaziland from Italy⁵³. These sisters were: Sr. Martina M. Genovese, Sr. Claudia M. Gonfiantini, Sr. Cecilia M. Grimoldi and Sr. Maria M. Savina⁵⁴.

The four sisters began their work at St. Joseph's Mission, which belonged to the Servite Fathers. The work of the sisters consisted in giving lessons on catechism. They were indeed of a great help to the Servite Priests. On the 2nd February 1926 the Congregation established a community in Hluti. Their convent was called Our Lady of Sorrows. On the 17th May 1926 the sisters went to Luve to open their house⁵⁵; at Luve there was a mission run by the Servite Priests called Annunziata, which had been founded in 1922⁵⁶.

In the very same year on the 27th September another community of the sisters was established in Mbabane, in the premises of the mission of the Servite Priests called Mater Dolorosa⁵⁷.

⁵¹. Ibidem, page 21.

⁵². OSM, 1984, *Golden Jubilee*, Mbabane: Apollo Printers, page 11.

⁵³. OSM, *Presenza missionaria in Swaziland*, 1989, (*unpublished notes*) page [1] (*pages not numbered by the one who wrote the article*).

⁵⁴. Ibidem, page [2].

⁵⁵. Cosmo, 1994, *Mantellates*, In Lino Pachin (Editor), 1994, *Bulletin of the Secretariat for the communications of the Servite Order*, Rome: Curia Generalizia dell'Ordine dei Servi di Maria, page 15.

⁵⁶. OSM, [1989] *op.cit.*, page [3].

⁵⁷. Ibidem.

c. Servite Sisters of Swaziland

In 1926 troubles broke out in the school where girls were schooling. The Servite Sisters of Pistoia were in charge of the hostel where young Swazi girls were living at St. Joseph's Mission, Mzimpofu, where Fr. Constantino Barneschi OSM was parish priest. Then ten days after that incident, a group of Swazi girls approached the Prefect Apostolic, Mgr. Pellegrino Bellezze, OSM and asked him if they could become religious. Seemingly, he did not understand them for he thought that they were asking him permission for leaving the school. A courageous girl explained to him very well, as a result he understood that they wanted to embrace religious life. Mgr. Bellezze was astounded to hear from the girls that they had opted for religious life, and he praised God; he said to them:

"I am very pleased that our Lord has given you this good resolve, however, do not think for a moment that you can become sisters in the twinkling of an eye"⁵⁸.

The prefect Apostolic then gave them a piece of advice, warning them not to tell anybody about their intention of becoming religious, and he also exhorted them to pray fervently, for themselves and for himself. Unfortunately, the girls did not keep the secret; everybody came to know about their vocation. At the same time, another group of girls, having the same intention approached Mgr. Bellezze⁵⁹.

Vocations came from two missions: at that time, St. Joseph's Mission, Mzimpofu, was the residence of the Ecclesiastical Prefect. The same phenomenon spread to Mbabane, where Fr. Gratl was working. As a result, Fr. Barneschi of St. Joseph's Mission and Fr. Gratl of Mater Dolorosa Mission, Mbabane took the matter of vocations seriously but with

⁵⁸. Bellezze Pellegrino, *The beginnings of Religious life in the Apostolic Prefecture of Swaziland*, IN *Le Missioni dei Servi di Maria*, June and July 1932 (*consecutive issues of the Magazine*), Roma: San Marcello, page 1.

⁵⁹. *Ibidem*, page 1-2.

prudence⁶⁰.

After a short period of time, two mothers came to St. Joseph's Mission to meet Mgr. Bellezze. They told him that they did not want to see their daughters becoming sisters. The Prefect Apostolic tried to convince the mothers, using arguments based on natural law; he explained to the mothers that no one could force the girls to marry against their will, and in the same way, no one could stop them from giving themselves to the Lord; if they feel that they have been called to serve God in a consecrated life, they should do so. Mgr. Bellezze then asked the girls before their mothers whether they wanted to embrace religious life or get married, but they told him that they wanted to remain in the convent as religious⁶¹. The girls disappointed their mothers with the answer they gave to the Prefect Apostolic.

Seemingly, there have been conflicts between the Swazi culture and the Italian culture with regard to the question of marriage. Swazis believed that when a girl reached puberty she must get a husband. On the other hand the Italians believed that a girl is free to get married if she wanted. The Italian culture was greatly influenced by Christianity, which has been in Southern Europe for almost two thousands years. When the missionaries came to Swaziland they thought that people should get married if they wanted to get married, and nobody should choose a force them into a marriage against their will. The incident at St. Joseph's Mission, Mzimpofo, where two mothers came and asked their daughters to leave religious life and go home to get married. The Sisters and the Priests told the mothers that no one should force the girls to get married.

Finally, Rome gave permission to the Swazi sisters to set up a congregation, and the name of the new congregation was *Izithunywa zika Maria Olusizi*, meaning: the Messengers of Our

⁶⁰. Ibidem, pages 1-2.

⁶¹. Ibidem, page 3-4.

Lady of Sorrows. The Servite Sisters of Pistoia were then entrusted with the responsibility of helping the newly founded Swazi Congregation with formation⁶². The names of the eight candidates in 1927 were: Fedele Bhembe, Helena Dlamini, Josephina Dlamini, Wilhelmina Gama, Elizabeth Nkabinde, Elizabeth Nkosi, Emma Thwala and Natalia Zwane⁶³. The ceremony of religious initiation was held on the 14th February 1932, during the feast of the Seven Holy Founders⁶⁴.

d. Dominican Sisters of Oakford

In 1931 Sisters belonging to the Congregation of St. Catherine of Siena of Oakford arrived in Swaziland after having been invited by Servite friars to work in the country⁶⁵.

After Mgr. Bellezze had left the country for Italy, his successor, Mgr. Romualdo Migliorini OSM took the Swazi sisters to Manzini in 1933 for a novitiate. At the novitiate, the Swazi sisters were no longer under the Servite Sisters of Pistoia but they were under the Dominican Sisters. Their prioress was Rev. Sr. Prisca OP, assisted by Rev. Sr. Cosma OP⁶⁶.

In 1935 the Servite Sisters of Swaziland adopted the

⁶². Ibidem, page 5-9.

⁶³. Kinch Edwin, OSM, 9 September 1947, *The History of the congregation of the Native Servite Sisters in Swaziland*, (unpublished notes, copied from the original script of Sr. M. Jacomina OSM), page 2.

⁶⁴. Bellezze Pellegrino, op.cit. page 6.

⁶⁵. Munro Alison, *The Contribution of Missionary Sisters*, IN Kasanene Peter (Editor), [1990] *The Swazi Church comes of age*, Mbabane: Apollo Printers, page 39.

⁶⁶. Bellezze Pellegrino, op.cit., page 6.

Congregation of the Servite Order⁶⁷. The Servite Sisters of Swaziland which had been founded in 1932 by Mgr. Bellezze, would have been the first profession of the first Swazi Sister in 1936⁶⁸.

After the outbreak of the Second World War, 1939 - 1945, the Congregation of the Servite Sisters of Pistoia stopped sending sisters to Swaziland. The sisters who were in Swaziland during the Second World War worked very hard despite the shortage of sisters. Apparently they were helped by the Swazi sisters.

In 1939 some Swazi sisters left Manzini for Mzimpofo to teach, and in 1940, sister Philippina OSM and sister Jacomina OSM, both Swazis were sent to Mariannhill in South Africa for the teacher's course⁶⁹. The first novitiate house of the Swazi Servite Sisters was built on the Mahlabane hill, and Sr. Victoria OSM of the Servite Sisters of Pistoia was nominated superior of the professed Swazi sisters⁷⁰.

e. Other congregations

After the Second Vatican Council more congregations were invited into the country: Bishop Casalini invited the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus into the country, and they arrived in 1971⁷¹. The Irish Dominican Sisters arrived in 1975 after having been invited by Bishop Casalini, and they established a centre for the deaf at Enjabulweni Orphanage in Manzini⁷². At the Good Shepherd

⁶⁷. Ngwenya Stephania, OSM, *Swazi Sisters: Servants of Mary*, IN Kasenene Peter (Editor), [1990], *The Swazi Catholic Church comes of age*, Mbabane: Apollo Printers, page 45.

⁶⁸. Ibidem.

⁶⁹. Bellezze Pellegrino, op.cit., page 6.

⁷⁰. Ibidem, page 6.

⁷¹. Munro Alison, [1990], op.cit., page 41.

⁷². Ibidem, page 41.

Hospital in Siteki there are Franciscan Sisters sent from Mozambique by their superiors and are working there. Their convent is near Good Shepherd Catholic Church which is entrusted to the Servite Order. The sisters also helped a lot in pastoral work.

There are other congregations of sisters who once worked in Swaziland. Moreover, had we continued with our discussion, it would have been necessary to look at those congregations. We could mention the School Sisters of Notre Dame from England and the United States of America taught at Mater Dolorosa and at William Pitcher Teachers' Training College in the '70⁷³.

3. HOW TO FACE THE CHALLENGES AS RELIGIOUS

We have seen that most of the congregations were asked to come to Swaziland by the Servite Priests who were working in the country. They were asked because there was a need of evangelising the people. The congregations that came to the country did not only evangelise the people but also gave them some education which helped them develop their own skills. Some of those who had been evangelised found religious life to be more attractive. As the lifestyle of the religious attracted many vocations to religious life, the missionaries felt the need of helping them become religious. We have to bear in mind that when missionaries came to Swaziland they thought that they would only be involved in teaching Swazis catechism and other things, and did not to think of recruiting people. Some congregations did not to think of recruiting local candidates into religious life.

Their unwillingness to recruit local candidates was also

⁷³. Charboneau Damian, OSM, (Catholic Priest and former lecturer at the University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni Campus and Peace Corp volunteer). Interview in English, St. Alexis Priory, Merrivale, 27-28 April 1994.

based on the prejudices typical of those days that, Swazis were not ready for religious life. In fact the Prefect Apostolic once told the first Swazi Sisters not think that they would become religious in a twinkling of an eye. It was generally believed by missionaries that the indigenous people were to be civilised and evangelised. This is because the culture of the people in missionary territories was considered to be inferior.

Nevertheless, the Swazis who were living together with the non-Swazi sisters helped the non-Swazi sisters in their apostolate. Due to the fact that they knew the tracks very well and could speak the local language they were of a great help to the non-Swazis.

a. Personnel

The Church believes that if it has to survive it must have a vision. Above all good leadership is necessary; it helps to promote development at various levels. All dreams of any congregation could be realised if that particular congregation gets vocations.

In Swaziland, many congregations have tried all their best to promote development. Their work was hampered by the lack of personnel. It seems as if it took years for the congregations to understand that their future depends on the intake of vocations. In fact many convents had to be closed because of the lack of vocations. For example one could ask himself or herself a question why did the Servite Sisters of Pistoia close some of their convents? It is difficult to give a satisfactory answer to the above question. However we could give a general answer to the question and say that it is because of the lack of vocations.

Let us establish that the question of vocation does not exhaust other hypotheses that could be brought forth. For in Swaziland there has been a considerable number of vocations to feminine religious life. If there were no vocations the Servite Sisters of Swaziland could not have become a

congregation. There was a great cooperation between the two congregations especially on the level of formation.

The Servite Sisters of Pistoia have been getting sisters from Europe, and in the past few years, in Europe there has been a decline in vocations to religious life. As a result few sisters were sent to Swaziland. The Swazi sisters also have been experiencing the same problem: the intake of local vocations was very low. The Servite Sisters of Swaziland decided to take candidates from other countries such as Zambia and Uganda. It is interesting to find that the Servite Sisters of Pistoia have adopted the same philosophy. At the present moment they have sisters with simple vows from Swaziland and Uganda. It would be interesting to follow the developments in Swaziland.

Due to the fact that the Church has still a lot to do in Swaziland, it must equip itself with personnel and good philosophy.

b. The Prophetic role of the Church

The Church can be prophetic in Swaziland if the religious men and women who brought the Gospel to the people follow the example of their founders and founderess. Most of those who founded religious Orders and Congregation accepted poverty voluntarily. When Missionaries came to Swaziland they received a lot of land from local chiefs. Since they knew how to manage land, they ended up possessing great material wealth. The material wealth has drained some prophetic and moral power from the missionaries. Though the religious may feel the need of narrowing the gap between themselves and the people who are living at the level of survival, the religious might find it difficult to do that. This is because the Clergy and religious in Swaziland have the idea of the self supporting Church. Church projects are mushrooming everywhere. Church projects might lead the Church into the glory of the past Centuries in which the Church was very rich. In Church history we find that the period of the glory of the Church was followed by the

period of the decline in spiritual life and in moral life. It is however important to mention that not all Church run projects could cause the replica of the period of the glory of the Church.

Projects aimed at helping people develop their skills are to be pursued. There is an urgent need of empowering those people who are poor, disabled, orphans to develop their skills. It will help them boost their self-esteem for they are also created in the image of God. It is interesting to find that the congregations which have worked in Swaziland and those that are working in Swaziland have contributed in one way or another towards the empowering of those whom society rejects. We have projects such as Ekululameni which are run by the disabled, and those projects have been initiated by the religious. Service to the poor is central in the Charism of most of the religious Orders and Congregations. Service as a charism is extended even to all women religious congregations aggregated to the Servite Order. We have seen earlier on in our discussion that the Servite Sisters of Pistoia came to Swaziland to work with the poor. They did work with the poor.

Even if some convents which initially belonged to the Servite Sisters of Pistoia have been taken by the Servite Sisters of Swaziland, the service rendered to the people of God has not been affected adversely: The Servite Sisters of Swaziland continue to Serve the people as the Servite Sisters of Pistoia did. They have understood the importance of integrating some aspects of holistic salvation in their working with people: They do not teach only catechism, but they also teach school children how to read and write. They are also involved in development; in most of their convents they teach sewing to young women so that they could have means of generating income.

4. CONCLUSION

In our discussion we have seen the life of the Catholic Church from the beginning of the twentieth century up to the Second Vatican Council. The missionaries both male and female helped a lot in the bringing of Catholicism into the country. The activity of missionaries in the country showed that the Church has for its end the eternal salvation of souls. Missionaries tried all their best to save souls. It is important to mention that the Catholic Church like any other institution is made up of people, and it is also spiritual on account of its end for which it was founded. Due to the fact that the end at which the Church aims is noble; in its interaction with the State it cannot play a subordinate role in society, otherwise its decisions would be overridden by the State. The Church in Swaziland has acquired a great deal of experience in conducting her life as a voluntary society. We have to mention that though there were problems such as racism and injustice especially during the colonial period in the country the Catholic Church remained silent. The hierarchy never tried to address those issues which were affecting the lives of the people to whom it was ministering. By being silent it managed to keep the possible sources of friction few and small.

In the following chapter we shall see what happened to the Catholic Church during the episcopate of Zwane. The relation between Church and State changed after Zwane's consecration to the episcopate. The change was inevitable since Zwane being a local Bishop had his own way of looking at the Church.

C H A P T E R T H R E E

BISHOP MANDLENKHOSI ZWANE**1. THE WAY TO THE EPISCOPATE****a. Before Seminary**

In April 1932 at Msunduza, Mbabane, Isaac Aloysius Mandlenkhosi Zwane who was to become the first Swazi Bishop was born⁷⁴. The name of the father of Mandlenkhosi was Mashongolo Zwane who had five wives of whom four were related by blood. Zwane was born to a family of nine boys and seven girls. The name of the elder brother of Mandlenkhosi Zwane was Isaac, and when Mandlenkhosi was baptised in the Anglican Church he was given the name of his elder brother, Isaac. The mother of Mandlenkhosi was Zamekile Dlamini, daughter of Prince Maloyo of Esigangeni. Zamekile Dlamini had three sons and one daughter⁷⁵.

Mandlenkhosi Zwane began his formal education in the early 40's at Esigangeni Primary School, since he had been a shepherd before going to school. Later on, he went to Mbabane Central where he completed his primary school education after having started at standard three. In the early 50's he then went to Matsapha for secondary school education. Since there was a strike he had to stop schooling at Matsapha⁷⁶. The strike was organised by some students, and Zwane was unjustly accused of being a ringleader. As a result he was jailed for nine months together with other students. After serving his sentence, he went to work in the bottle factory at Wadeville,

⁷⁴. Moitse Frances, (Sister of Bishop Zwane and lecturer at the University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni Campus). Interview in English, University of Swaziland, Kwaluseni, 23 May 1995.

⁷⁵. Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

⁷⁶. Same interview.

in Benoni⁷⁷, where he lost one of his fingers⁷⁸. After having worked, he came back to Swaziland to continue his studies.

When Zwane came to the Salesian High School he was above the average age⁷⁹ since his schooling had been interrupted⁸⁰; that was a usual thing in those days.

In 1954 Fr. Francis Flynn, SDB who had been sent from Ireland by his provincial arrived in Swaziland. He was welcomed by the students at the Salesian High School. The welcome was led by Mandlenkhosi Zwane. At that time he was not a Catholic; later he became a Catholic when he was schooling at the Salesian High School. Zwane who was influenced by the way of life of the Salesians and he asked to become a Catholic.⁸¹ The Salesians who had a great influence on him were Frs. Stubbins and Flynn. When he became a Catholic he took the name Aloysius⁸².

In the school he was not a brilliant student but he was a hard worker, and sensitive by nature. The school at that time was small and had a small boarding school. In general his companions had a great respect for him. He was an outstanding leader amongst the students. He respected his companions also. There was a time in which Zwane was captain of the school football team⁸³. At the end of the academic year there was

⁷⁷. Lupupa Moses, (Catholic Priest and former classmate of Bishop Zwane). Interview in English, Minor Seminary, Manzini, 24 May 1995.

⁷⁸. Moitse Frances 23 May 1995. Same interview.

⁷⁹. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸⁰. Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸¹. Charboneau Damian, 27 April 1994. Same interview.

⁸². Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸³. Fleming Patrick, SDB, (Catholic Priest, Diocesan Councillor during the episcopate of Zwane and teacher at Salesian High School). Interview in English, Salesian House,

music and dancing, and Zwane participated since he was in charge of a musical group. The rector, Fr. Stubbins because of his love of music, had suggested to Zwane to start a musical group, the intention of the rector was that the group would keep the students busy thus deterring them from doing bad things.

In the hostel there was no life at all; the boys used to sit down and do nothing. Fr. Flynn who was one of the teachers said to Fr. Stubbins:

«To get them to stand up, you have to get them moving»⁸⁴.

Though he was a teacher, Fr. Flynn used to walk with different groups of boys in town. Later on, he established a basket ball team with the help of Zwane who also took part in music, concerts and in drama. Even though drama was new to him, he took a leading role in one of William Shakespeare's plays.

When the school went to play football at Matsapha, he was a captain. Zwane had schooled at Matsapha School before coming to Salesian High School. He proved to be a good captain. The headmaster at Matsapha was an old retired Yorkshire cricket player. Salesian High School had a cricket team also. Zwane did not shine much in cricket. The former Yorkshire cricket player said:«Zwane is a real gentleman»⁸⁵. In Manzini, the Salesian School once had a football match with the Nazarenes. The Nazarenes were stronger than the Salesians, and they were regarded as rivals. Zwane was the referee, apparently he did not give satisfaction to the Nazarenes who were losing. When the game was over he found himself in the middle of a group all talking to him, there was no way he could have run away. Zwane did not show his fear. Though he was not a good

Manzini, 4 July 1994.

⁸⁴. Flynn Francis, SDB, (Catholic Priest and former high school teacher of Bishop Zwane). Interview in English, Salesian House, Manzini, 4 July 1994.

⁸⁵. Flynn Francis, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

footballer he was a good leader of the team⁸⁶. In 1958⁸⁷ he completed his high school education at Salesian High School⁸⁸.

b. Seminarian

After matriculation Zwane asked to join the Seminary. Bishop Constantine Barneschi, OSM welcomed Mandlenkhosi Zwane as a candidate for priesthood and Mandlenkhosi Zwane was sent to the Seminary at Pevensey, Natal. At Pevensey he was with Patrick Mkhathshwa and Moses Lupupa. In 1963 the Seminary was transferred from Pevensey to Hammaskraal. Due to racial laws of that time, the Seminary at Hammaskraal had to be divided into two: the lecturers who were whites had to stay in the white area while the black seminarians stayed in the black area. The boundary that divided the seminary passed through the chapel⁸⁹.

A priest who had arrived in Swaziland on the 3rd of December 1963 met some seminarians at the Bishops' House in Manzini, Swaziland. One of those seminarians was Aloysius Mandlenkhosi Zwane, who impressed the priest with his enquiring mind. The seminarians were on holidays. The priest and the seminarian talked about the appropriateness of authentically African hymns and use of Swazi names for Christening children and other issues of inculturation⁹⁰. At the end of his studies he obtained a Bachelor's degree in Theology from the Pontificia Universitas Urbanianum.

⁸⁶. Same interview.

⁸⁷. Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸⁸. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸⁹. Same interview.

⁹⁰. Charboneau Damian, 27 April 1994. Same interview.

c. Priest

Mandlenkhosi Zwane was ordained to priesthood in Manzini on the 12 July, 1964 by Bishop Constantine Barneschi, OSM. He was the second Swazi to be ordained priest in the history of the Roman Catholic Church in Swaziland⁸¹. Fr. Albert Mndzebele, OSM who is the first Swazi Priest was ordained in 1954⁸².

After his ordination Zwane worked in the Cathedral for a while. Since he was interested in development, he went to study cooperatives at the Antigonish University in Nova Scotia, Canada in 1968⁸³. Fr. Damian Charboneau, OSM phoned him from Chicago inviting him to visit the Servite Priory in Chicago⁸⁴. He was also sent overseas to learn radio broadcasting⁸⁵. The idea was that he was going to be involved on religious broadcasting.

In the parish Zwane was very dynamic and he reached out all segments of the Manzini parish, i.e he was good to the Swazis, Europeans and Coloureds. He started a group named **Catholics in Conversation** in his parish. This shows that he was not afraid of controversies, since Zwane did those things during the time of the Second Vatican Council. In those days forming such groups could lead to conflicts with the authorities in the church. A number of people were invited to give talks including Zwane himself and Fr. Mkhathswa. It was well attended by all ethnic groups and all ages. The laity and the clergy were discussing issues facing the church. They

⁸¹. Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983, *A Man for All People: The message of Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane*, Nottingham: Russell Press Ltd, page 1.

⁸². Mndzebele Albert, OSM, (Catholic Priest). Interview in SiSwati, St. Philip's Priory, Mhlatuze, 19 January 1995.

⁸³. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

⁸⁴. Charboneau Damian, 28 April 1994. Same interview.

⁸⁵. Fleming Patrick, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

were saying that they had been Catholics for a long period of time and did not get an opportunity to express their views.

In 1967 when Mr. Dlamini was at the Seminary there was a certain foreign priest with whom they were not in good terms. At some point they engaged in a heated discussion which ended in a dreadful quarrel. Mr. Dlamini went to Zwane for some advice. Zwane told Mr. Dlamini to go back to that priest. Though the priest was a racist he also apologised. That incident helped Mr. Dlamini who could have abandoned Catholicism if things went wrong⁸⁶. Zwane was interested in young people and they responded positively. He started the Young Christian Workers (YCW) in Swaziland.

Joseph Cardijn a Belgian Priest founded the Young Christian Workers in Belgium after having begun working amongst young workers in 1924. By 1964 there were two hundred young pioneers in Africa, Asia, Middle East and in Latin America⁸⁷. The YCW were discussing labour issues. Pope John XXIII in his encyclical: *Mater et Magister*, used points from the YCW. In Manzini, Zwane encouraged the GRAIL movement which was for women. The movement had centres in Durban and in Johannesburg. It is interesting to find out that as early as 1963 they were working interracially. The movement was against the racial laws imposed by the South African Government. The Sebenta program brought to Swaziland by Anne Hope of the Grail, borrowed its underlying philosophy from Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*⁸⁸. After having worked in Manzini, Fr. Mandlenkhosi Zwane was transferred to Mater Dolorosa Parish in Mbabane. Zwane's interest in social

⁸⁶. Dlamini Leo, (Parishioner at Mater Dolorosa Parish). Interview in SiSwati, Mater Dolorosa Parish, Mbabane, 17 July 1994.

⁸⁷. Fievez, M., *Young Christian Worker*, 1967, IN New Catholic Encyclopedia, vol. 14, New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, page 1076-1077

⁸⁸. Charboneau Damian, 28 April 1994. Same interview.

issues did not fade. After he had been transferred to Mbabane he began working towards a self-reliant Church, by empowering the parishioners of Mbabane to support themselves. In 1973 while working in Mbabane as a parish priest Zwane had a dream of developing one of the poorest suburbs of Mbabane, Msunduza. As a priest he was attentive to the needs of his parishioners. In fact he discovered that most of the Catholic families in Mbabane were not stable, he then decided to establish a youth group and the men's group. Let us look at the activity of the latter.

In Mbabane he wanted to unite all men of the parish and make them responsible of their duties as men belonging to a particular Christian community.

At one point Zwane called a meeting of all men both married and un-married. In that meeting he asked about the problems encountered by married men in relation to their faith. Fr. Zwane therefore raised the issue of being irresponsible men such as failing to support the family financially and yet support oneself by spending the money in town by alcoholic habits, finding that they get home and they start grumbling with their wives who complain about those habits where by the man would start lying claiming that he is not paid enough money where he was working.

Fr. Zwane went on advising men that love is the basic ingredient in families without which trouble is prone to take place, he even went on to say that even if the partner [wife] in marriage is troublesome the man should not try to correct the situation by avoiding her, maybe by spending most of their time in the pub with other people.

He therefore proposed that men form an association of men. He did that in Mbabane so that they could be able to care for a fellow who is encountering problems like unemployment. Fr. Zwane went further to suggest that if as men they could embark on a project like making bricks and selling them to the public at a lower price they could help themselves. Zwane was indeed a man of reason like one Salesian priest, Fr. Stubbins,

who once encouraged the Salesian boys to start a small business.

Zwane told the men of Mbabane that they should improve the quality of music in the Church. During his time guitars were once played in the church. The elderly were not pleased about that. They utterly disapproved of that act claiming that they had never ever come across such a practice in the church. All the same Zwane maintained his peace because he said that if it was in the Bible that we are told of God being praised using all sorts of instruments like, trumpets. Therefore Swazis should used also use musical instruments in liturgy. They used the songs in the hymn book (emaculo) with the tunes corresponding with the guitars.

In one particular year the Church was restricted by the Prime Minister of that time from celebrating the Mother's Day. He told the men that there was no need to celebrate it since it was already celebrated by the nation at the Somhlolo National Stadium. The church did not approve of that; they decided to keep sealed lips. It could be as a result of this that Zwane once said that politics and Christianity go hand in hand. In order for one to have peace in his spirit he should first have peace and freedom in the place where he lives.

Zwane asked the men of Mbabane what it meant to be a Catholic. Since they were very much theoretical they answered "*kwandzisa lukholo*" (propagation of Faith). After that response he asked them how is that done they got stuck. Zwane therefore explained to them that they could achieve that by applying the principles: "charity begins at home", and he gave them an example of a man who is a Catholic. Zwane told them that a Catholic man ought firstly to be responsible in matters pertaining to the welfare of his family, and then he could go out to preach to others. He further told them of the inefficiency of teaching catechism to the people which is all about the theoretical aspect of Faith^{ee}. In Mbabane he had

^{ee}. Dlamini Leo, 17 July 1994. Same interview.

been a member of the Town Council Board¹⁰⁰.

d. Episcopate

The appointment of Mandlenkhosi Zwane to the episcopate came while he was parish priest in Mbabane, he was chosen to be the successor of Bishop Rio Girolamo Casalini, OSM. On the 15th May, 1978 he was consecrated to the episcopate¹⁰¹ by Bishop Mansuet Biyase¹⁰² of the Eshowe diocese, KwaZulu-Natal. The liturgical vestments he wore at his consecration were half Swazi and half Roman vestments¹⁰³.

At his consecration to the Episcopate a lot of people came. The ceremony was held in the sports field of the Salesian High School. At the dinner in the evening at the Dominican Convent, he gave a talk saying:

«the missionary era is finished it is the time for the local church»¹⁰⁴.

He announced that they had realised that the South African Bishops knew nothing about the Black Church. There was a Bishop from Tanzania who happened to be there. The Tanzanian Bishop stood up and said:

«I am delighted to hear that the missionary era has ended in Swaziland, I am inviting all you missionaries to Tanzania we will bury you there»¹⁰⁵.

¹⁰⁰. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

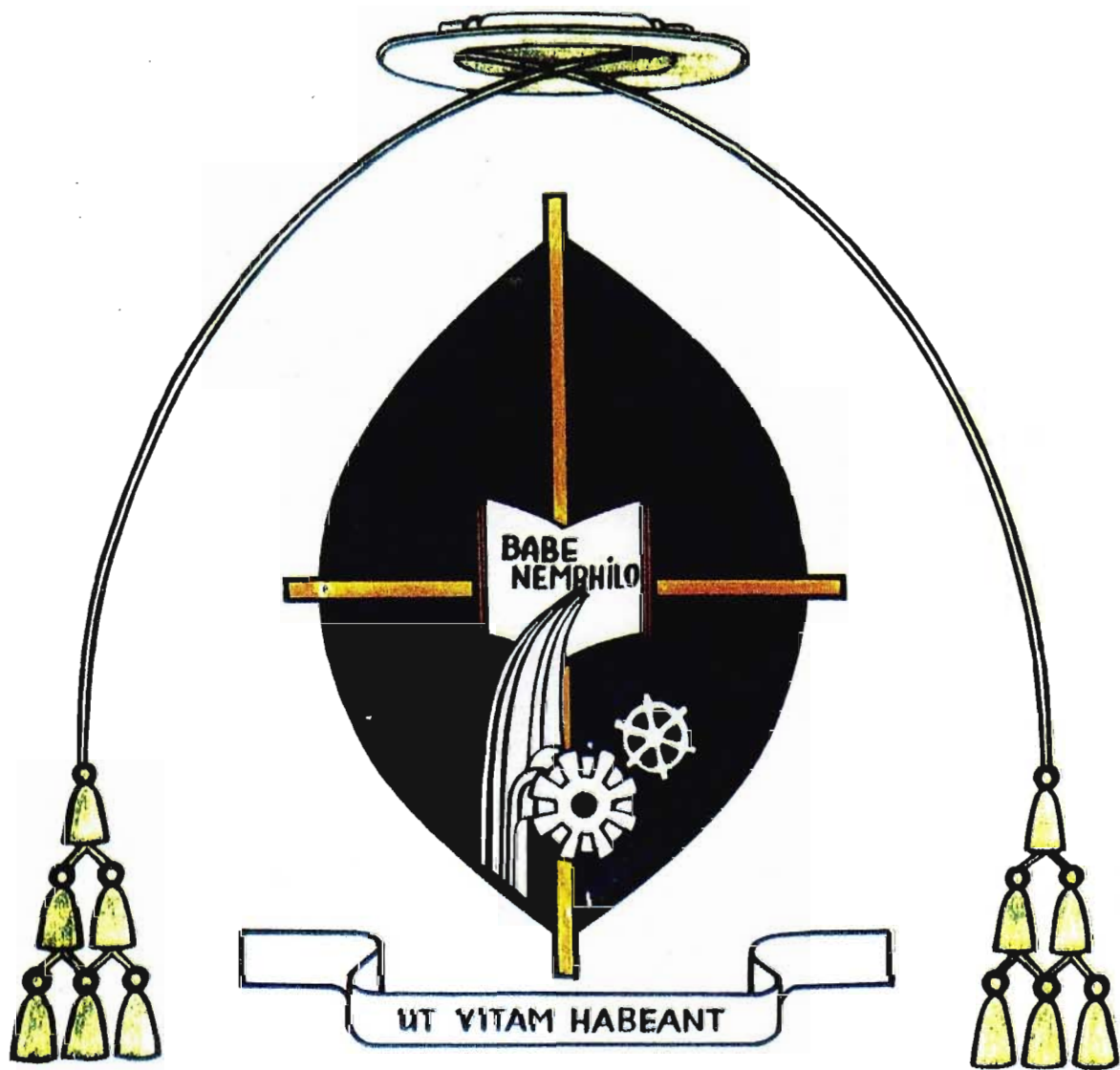
¹⁰¹. Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983, op.cit., page 1.

¹⁰². Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁰³. Levine Nonceba, (Former staff member at the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service). Interview in English, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, 28 October 1994.

¹⁰⁴. Charboneau Damian, 27 April 1994. Same interview.

¹⁰⁵. Magrath Oswin, OP, (Catholic Priest, former rector at St. Peter's Seminary, and Theological Advisor of Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane). Interview in English, Las Casas, Cedara, 30 April 1994.



(i) **Coat of arms**

The motto of Bishop Zwane was *ut vitan habeant* (so that they may have life). He wanted to empower people in every aspect of life, so that they may have life. Bishop Zwane was concerned about evangelization. He wanted people to be evangelised - we get this from his coat of arms. In the centre of his coat of arms there is a Bible. Living water flows from it. When it flows it turns the wheels. Bishop Zwane taught that evangelization should follow the model of the wheels driven by the living water flowing from the Bible. The Coat of Arms was designed by Johanna Senn, CPS at Mariannahill¹⁰⁶.

(ii) **Simplicity of lifestyle**

The Clerics and the Laity were taught by Zwane the meaning of the Evangelical beatitude: **blessed are the poor in spirit**. The only things the Bishop had were books¹⁰⁷. But before coming into the seminary he dressed flamboyantly¹⁰⁸.

The Bishop himself did not boast of being a bishop; his wearing of jeans showed that he wanted to identify himself with ordinary people. Though he was a very simple man; he was very intelligent and prophetic¹⁰⁹. Even though he was often out of the country he was humble as a person as he was when he was a boy¹¹⁰. He never wanted a golden ring¹¹¹. His ring was designed by Sr. Maria Johanna Senn, CPS, at Mariannahill.

¹⁰⁶. Senn Johanna, CPS, (Catholic Sister and Artist). Interview in English, Precious Blood Sister's Convent, Mariannahill, 9 November 1994.

¹⁰⁷. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁰⁸. Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁰⁹. Ndlovu Louis, OSM, (Bishop of Manzini and President of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference and Chairman of the Administrative Board). Interview in English, Bishop's House, Manzini, 6 July 1994.

¹¹⁰. Flynn Francis, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

¹¹¹. *Cfr.* page 75.

What happened in Kenya shows his simplicity: when he had gone to Nairobi, Kenya, for the meeting of the bishops, he did not dress elegantly as a bishop. He was in his jeans, and he told them that he was a bishop. They wanted to give him a suit to wear, but he told them that they should accept as he was. Some of them thought that he was a chauffeur of one of the bishops, and some even thought that even as a chauffeur he looked too casual. During the celebration of the Holy Mass they were amazed to see him concelebrating as a bishop.

At times, he would dress officially if he had to; sometimes people would come to the Bishops' House to see the bishop, and they would find him outside. Not knowing that he was a Bishop they would tell him that they wanted to see the bishop. Zwane would take them upstairs into his office and ask them how he could help them; they would say that they wanted to see the bishop, and he would say humbly: «the Bishop is the one speaking to you»¹¹².

2. THE CHURCH LEADER

a. In the Bishops' Conference

In the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops's Conference Zwane was once chairman of the Commission for Social Communications. He also became the Episcopal Secretary General of Inter-Regional Meeting of Bishops of the Southern Africa (IMBISA) in 1979. IMBISA had bishops from the following countries:- Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia, Mozambique, Swaziland, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In the South African Bishops' Conference, Bishop Zwane played a major role. He could speak to them and disagree with them profoundly, making them see that there was another point

¹¹². Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, OP, (Catholic Sister and former teacher at St. Teresa's High School). Interview in English, Oakford Priory, Verulum, 21 October 1994.

other than what they had¹¹³.

There was no contact among the Bishops' conferences of Southern Africa. Zwane saw that in East Africa and in other parts of Africa big areas were coming together to form a super-conference. The coming together of conferences remained powerful in the eyes of Rome; this is where inculturation would come in. Zwane believed that if people want to get something they need to have a strong organization. Zwane once convened a meeting in which Archbishop Fitzgerald and Do Santos, a Franciscan Bishop from Mozambique, participated. The meeting was aimed at increasing cooperation through IMBISA, which is the organ of liaison and cooperation between the Episcopal Conferences of Southern Africa. The meetings were held in Lesotho and in Swaziland. The constitution for IMBISA was drawn up and Zwane was behind it. He wanted the IMBISA to have a head office in Manzini, but it ended up being in Harare. Archbishop Fitzgerald became President, Archbishop Alexandre Cardinal Dos Santos became Vice-President and Fr. J. Coleman, SDB became the first General Secretary.

Zwane was not keen on having power, rather he wanted to get things done. He believed that what was important was to have structures. We have seen that even in his diocese he encouraged structures. One of the structures that came into existence just before he died was the Women's Organization¹¹⁴.

Prior to the Plenary Session held in 1977 by the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference, the Bishops were worried about offending the South African Government. Their worry made them turn a blind eye to what was happening in the country. They did not have enough courage to address issues such as injustice and racism. Zwane who had just joined the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops's Conference tried to make the

¹¹³. Flynn Francis, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

¹¹⁴. Magrath Oswin, 30 April 1994. Same interview.

Bishops to be interested in social issues.

The Plenary session of 1977 was in the light of the Soweto uprising of 1976. Zwane told the Conference that the Bishops should confront the government and speak against injustice and racism. Archbishop Denis Hurley, OMI who had founded Diakonia¹¹⁵ which was involved in the struggle for justice, supported Bishop Zwane¹¹⁶.

The Declaration of Commitment which followed was a result of the Plenary Session. Quest for freedom, injustice and development are amongst issues discussed in the document. We have to bear in mind that before the Declaration of Commitment bishops and priests who spoke against the South African Government were in a danger of being jailed or having their residence permit withdrawn if they were foreigners, and the religious were also afraid of losing their school if they did not dance to the music of Pretoria¹¹⁷. The Declaration of Commitment made the Church to be united and speak with one voice¹¹⁸. For example, the Conference would make a statement on behalf of the bishops of the Conference. As a result, it became difficult for the then government to discourage the bishops from speaking against social evil. The following phrase shows that the Bishops belonging to the

¹¹⁵. *Diakonia is one of the organizations that offer service to the needy. The staff is drawn from different Churches. It is interesting to note that Diakonia has also been providing bursaries for primary, secondary and tertial education. The offices of Diakonia are in Durban.*

¹¹⁶. Mkame Elizabeth Marie, (Community Resource Centres' Programme Coordinator). Interview in English, Diakonia Council of Churches, Ecumenical Centre, Durban, 28 June 1995.

¹¹⁷. Loftus Mel, OSM, (Catholic Priest, President of the Inter Southern Africa Servite Jurisdictions, ISAC). Interview in English, St. Alexis Priory, Merrivale, 8 July 1995.

¹¹⁸. O'Shea Michael, OSM, (Bishop of the Vicariate Apostolic of Ingwavuma, and Third Episcopal Member of the Finance Commission at the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference). Interview in English, Good Shepherd Mission, Hlabisa, 27 July 1994.

Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference are against some laws enacted by the then government of the Republic of South Africa.

«We affirm that in this we are on the side of the oppressed and, as we have committed ourselves to working within our Church for a clearer expression of solidarity with the poor and deprived, so we commit ourselves equally to working for peace through justice in fraternal collaboration with all other churches, agencies and persons dedicated to this cause»¹¹⁹.

The Bishops' Conference was united in its acceptance of the necessity of change. Prior to the events of 1976, Archbishop Fitzgerald was not active. The events of 1976 made some bishops to be interested in young people. Archbishop Fitzgerald started visiting young people who were in prison. Zwane's attitudes were confirmed by what Archbishop Fitzgerald was doing, Fitzgerald had a high opinion of Zwane¹²⁰.

He was very active in the Bishops' Conference in Pretoria, and he was straight forward, such that some of the Bishops' could not stand him, especially Germans. Fitzgerald, Mcann, Hurley and other members of the South African Bishops' Conference worked with him very well. He used to tell the bishops' quite bluntly what they should be doing¹²¹.

The following report was given by Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane at the Third Plenary Assembly of IMBISA held in Lesotho in 1978. When speaking of the economic situation the Bishop tried to tell the bishops of the economic achievements by the government of Swaziland.

¹¹⁹. Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, *Declaration of Commitment: Addressed to all Catholics by their Bishops*, Pretoria: Henkos Printers (Pty) LTD, page 1.

¹²⁰. Hurley Denis, OMI, (Archbishop Emeritus of Durban, Chairman of the Pastoral Conference of the Zulu Region and Chairman for Justice and Peace Commission at the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference). Interview in English, Catholic Cathedral, Durban, 14 May 1994.

¹²¹. Magrath Oswin, 30 April 1994. Same interview.

«In terms of economic development, Swaziland has moved ahead fairly rapidly. The road network and electrification are good»¹²².

With the limited resources available, the Catholic Church in Swaziland helped refugees coming from South Africa and Mozambique. The report on refugees given by the Bishop reflects his humility. He does not mention the role played by the Church; instead he gives credit to the government of Swaziland. In his report Zwane said:

«The government of Swaziland welcomed refugees and treated them as humanely as possible. For the most part, the majority of these were members of the ANC and PAC, especially since 1960. The country tried as much as possible to integrate them into the main-stream of Swazi community.

When Soweto blew out in 1976, Swaziland's attitude towards refugees was revised. Two schools for refugees were set up, jointly sponsored by the government and the United Nations and another by the UN and the Swazi Christian Council. The situation remains extremely fluid. Serious doubts have been expressed about the wisdom of erecting these special schools for refugees»¹²³.

The brief report on Pastoral work was followed by a reflection on future of the country. When giving the report he said:

«Swaziland had all the advantages of developing into a peaceful, prosperous and democratic country. For a long time[,] Swaziland had the opportunity to teach its people to live together and to solve its problems by peaceful discussions. There is only one language and all the Swazis pay allegiance to one King. The climate of Swaziland, her rich mineral deposits and strong cultural tradition were ingredients for a potentially prosperous country. Some of the admirable values were serious concern for spiritual life, sharing, concern for neighbour, respect for parents, generosity, hospitality, etc. Unfortunately,

¹²², Inter-regional Meeting of Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference, (IMBISA), 1978, *Swaziland Situation Report*, Mazenod: paper presented by Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane, Bishop of Manzini, *Report of the Third Plenary Assembly of IMBISA*, 26 - 28 September, 1978, Annexure 7 IPA/78 (unpublished notes)

¹²³. Ibidem.

Swaziland did not always anticipate the heavy socio-cultural pressures [coming from] her neighbour as well as the pagan materialism from Western Europe. These pressures coupled with other factors have divided Swaziland into traditionalists and Progressives. The resultant contradictions have generated their own stresses and strains. The kingdom does not seem to be able to withstand the onslaught of external and other forces. Swaziland which used to boast of a solid cultural tradition appears to be losing many of the wonderful cultural values. The visible presence of the police and the armed forces are symptomatic of the state of disturbing uneasiness. So far the relations between the Church [Roman Catholic] and the State are correct. In some respects they could be described as quite fair¹²⁴.

b. Ecumenism

Bishop Zwane brought a new vision of looking at the Church. Those who belonged to the Catholic Church and those who did not belong to the Church were inspired to develop a new vision of the Church. They were helped to understand the way of looking at the Church *per se* but not in terms of membership to any of the Churches¹²⁵.

The Bishop told Catholics that they should cooperate with other churches, but he warned them of the danger of confusing Catholic doctrine with the teachings of the other churches. Ecumenical development projects were initiated by him. Evangelicals used to come and ask permission to use a catholic church for their services. This shows that the Bishop was interested in both corporeal and spiritual well being of an individual. Even in the state funeral he would be asked to participate. He participated in the funeral of the late Prime Minister of Swaziland, Prince Makhosini¹²⁶. When Prince Maphevu, the successor of Prince Makhosini died Bishop

¹²⁴. Ibidem.

¹²⁵. Levine Nonceba, 28 October 1994. Same interview.

¹²⁶. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

Mkhabela participated¹²⁷.

That new way of looking at the Church helps one change the attitude and prejudice. This is fundamental for ecumenism. What was important for Zwane was what united people rather than what divided people. Zwane grew up and was baptised in the Anglican Church. His elder brother, Isaac Zwane of Hlathikhulu, persuaded him to join the Roman Catholic Church. Zwane was greatly concerned about many churches when there was only one Jesus Christ. The new brand of ecumenism was introduced by him in Swaziland: He worked especially with the Anglicans and the Lutherans. These three churches, historically were delighted in working separately, and he introduced this phenomenon of ecumenism.

He found it difficult to work with the Swaziland Conference of Churches dominated by Evangelicals, especially Dr. Samuel Hynd in particular. He felt that he could not work under the Conference of Churches. He said once referring to one white man; "*ase uyekele labantfu batikholelwe*". He was implying that the missionaries have introduced the subject Christianity and they seemed not to realize that they should let Africans develop it on their own line instead of imposing always. Those were the days of colonialism but he did not expect such to be the case also in Church. He believed that Christianity should depend on local brothers, local priests and bishops as well. Bishop Zwane appealed to Bishop Mkhabela of the Anglican and H. Mdziniso of the Lutheran Church to work for ecumenism. If Zwane had lived longer, ecumenism would surely have developed¹²⁸.

In the formation of the Swaziland Council of Churches he was very much influential. There existed the League and the

¹²⁷. Dlamini Mandla, (Anglican Priest). Interview in English, AN House, Pietermaritzburg, 2 August 1995.

¹²⁸. Zwane Phesheya Ambrose, (Doctor, relative and founder of the Political Party: Ngwane National Liberation Congress). Interview in English, Embhuleni, Matsapha, 8 September 1994.

Conference of Churches. The League was for Zionists and the Conference was for the other Churches. There was no Council of Churches. In one of the meetings they suggested that Dr. David Hynd become the life president of the Conference. Zwane, the Anglicans and the Lutherans did not accept the fact that Hynd be the life president. They said that they wanted a local person but Dr. David Hynd was a white man¹²⁹.

The king was trying to get three different groups to agree in setting up one religious broadcast programmes. Bishop Zwane joined the Conference of Churches which was mainly evangelical. It included Nazarene and other Christian denominations. When he joined it, the South African General Mission pulled out because Catholics had come in. Zwane found out that it was hopeless, since it was difficult to make the Evangelists get interested in social affairs. So, he started a new group, which was called The Council of Churches, which included the Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans and Presbyterians. There was another group, the African Independent Churches, based at Lobamba. The king wanted the group to work together especially on religious broadcasts. They had a meeting. The Nazarenes came along and suggested that, there should be conditions, since the broadcasting was going to be for religious purposes. According to them, conditions for the person who is going to broadcast as follows; he must not smoke, must not drink and must not be from a polygamous family. The bishops from the Independent Churches stood up and said:

«how can you be a true Swazi if you do not smoke and have only one wife»¹³⁰.

The Catholics and the Council of Churches told them that they were not interested in those qualities, but were interested in a person who would broadcast. The Nazarene got the programme.

¹²⁹. Ndlovu Louis, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹³⁰. Magrath Oswin, 30 April 1994. Same interview.

Zwane used to do a bit of broadcasting.

c. Preparations for the Pastoral Plan

The document of the Pastoral Plan is a fruit of a strenuous work done by the dioceses of Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC). It came up after it had been prepared in parishes by all Catholics. The Swaziland Pastoral Consultation was done before the actual document of the Pastoral Plan could be produced. Each and every diocese belonging to the SACBC had to work.

Pastoral Planning started during the episcopate of Mandlenkhosi Zwane; people were encouraged to discuss about the needs of their fellow citizens¹³¹.

Through the Pastoral Plan, Zwane and other bishops empowered the laity to work together. He died before the actual document of the Pastoral Plan was released. About one hundred and fifty delegates from all over Swaziland participated at the opening of the Pastoral Consultation on the 14th September, 1977¹³². During the Swaziland Pastoral Consultation, Zwane divided the whole Diocese of Manzini into small communities; from each and every community a man, a woman and a young person, attended the meeting: there were about seventy eight participants in that meeting. That meeting was held a year after the Swaziland Pastoral Consultation has been launched. Archbishop Edward Cassidy, the undersecretary of the Vatican State, came for the opening of the Swaziland Pastoral Consultation. He was amazed to see that there were people who were highly educated and those who could not even write their names; some of the participants were old and others young, both male and females from all races present

¹³¹. Dlamini Adelia, OSM, (Catholic Sister and musician). Interview on SiSwati, Holy Family Convent, Manzini, 8 September 1994.

¹³². Biondi Terenzio, OSM, 1984, *Missionari qualunque*, Bologna: E.M.I., page 109.

in the Diocese of Manzini. These people were representing their communities. Archbishop Edward Cassidy who had come only for the opening decided to prolong his stay in the country so that he could take part in the meeting of the Swaziland Pastoral Consultation. He once said jokingly:

«Every community that does not have a Parish Council by next year, will be fined a cow¹³³».

Thus reminding the Christians of the importance of having Parish Councils in their own communities.

The Pastoral Consultation which preceded the Pastoral Plan was aimed at finding out how Catholics viewed the Church. It also wanted to find out from the people what they wanted to do in the Church as the laity. The Church wanted things to come from the grassroots. There was a famous diagram of a lorry without an engine. All the people were on the lorry. The Priest was in front of it trying to pull it, and the nuns were pushing it; the people were sitting comfortably without doing any thing. The diagram was trying to show the people that if there is no priest, people should get out of the lorry, perhaps taking turns to pull and push it. That model was very significant in the Pastoral Consultation.

Florence Mission and Manzini Cathedral worked very well in the Pastoral Consultation. Mater Dolorosa Parish in Mbabane tried also to commit itself but it was let down by changes it had in the parish. In rural areas, the Pastoral Consultation was a success, due to the socio-economic situation, people felt compelled to work together. Around the Manzini area: Moneni, etc. it worked very well. Fr. Murphy, SDB and Fr. Papini, OSM were champions of the Pastoral Consultation in the whole Diocese of Manzini. After the death of Zwane the people continued the Pastoral Consultation.

Zwane never wore the purple zucchetto. He had a head ring similar to that which is worn by the *indunas* (traditional

¹³³. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

community leaders); the ring worn by Bishop Zwane was covered with a purple material. Zwane thought that the zucchetto was introduced into the Church when bishops used to shave the middle part of their heads; they used to cover the bald patch with the zucchetto, therefore the zucchetto had no meaning to the Swazi people, since it was used to cover the tonsure.

According to the Swazi culture if one is not married he is not considered to be a grown up; community leaders wear a ring on the head. In order to show people that he was an elder he wore a purple ring on his head. People could easily understand that sign. When Zwane came from his *ad limina*¹³⁴ visit in Rome he told the Dominican Sisters at Teresa's Convent, Manzini what had happened to him in Rome. When he was in the Vatican City Pope John Paul II saw the ring on the head of Bishop Zwane. The Pope wanted to know to which Church Bishop Zwane belonged. Zwane told him that he was the Bishop in the Roman Catholic Church. Zwane told the Pope that the only sign people understand for the leader was what he wore on the head.

Pope John Paul II asked him from which country he came; Zwane answered the Pope telling him that he was from Swaziland. Then the Pope exclaimed saying:

<You are Zwane, Archbishop Edward Cassidy told me that the Pastoral Consultation was the best in your diocese>¹³⁵.

Archbishop Edward Cassidy had been in the Diocese of Manzini the whole week, and was astounded by the work and the spirit of team work which existed amongst the Swazis and those who were involved when they were working on the Pastoral Consultation.

¹³⁴. A periodic visit to Rome by a residential Bishop.

¹³⁵. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

3. THE MAN OF PEOPLE

a. Zwane and the Social teaching of the Church

Bishop Zwane was interested in development, small enterprises, information and broadcasting.

Since he was very keen on the Social teaching of the Church he read extensively about it. That made him to be aware of the importance of developing the Local Church. He laid a foundation for the building of the local Church by giving two principles:

(i) -the necessity of teaching the Christian doctrine to the people; so that Christians may understand christianity in their own culture, and to be able to appreciate and inculturate it.

(ii) -economic development; so that the people may be able to earn living and raise their quality of life.

The above thoughts were written by the Bishop in his Pastoral Letter entitled *Lukholo lolutinsika letimbili* (Faith with two pillars). In the letter he stressed the point that Christianity should not only be perpendicular, but it must also have the horizontal dimension, whereby the socio-economic situation of a Christian is taken into account. The Bishop gave an example saying that, if in your neighbourhood, people have got enough land to plough and some do not know how to do it; it may also happen that there is a person who does not have a good house and his children are suffering from malnutrition, and yet he has got enough land. It is a duty of Christians to try and teach that person how he could improve his or her quality of life. Improving the quality of life will make the person feel better about him or herself. The first thing which he did when he became Bishop was to empower people so that they could be able to build a Church which does not depend much on foreign aid. He tried to purge the mentality which was incarnate in the minds of the local people that priests are to obtain money from Europe and elsewhere, and give it to the Christians in the country. Since training local

leaders was a priority during his episcopate; he asked for help from overseas and from the South African Bishops' Conference, so that they could help in the training of religious priests, religious women, and other members of the laity, in development. The clergy and the laity were sent to different institutions around the world to acquire skills which would be vital to the development of the personality of a Christian. Mrs. Gloria Musi recalls how Zwane would encourage people to further their studies:

«I am one of those who were sent abroad to study leadership. We were taught how to set goals and to have a vision. This is what Zwane wanted us to do¹³⁶».

We could say that as a bishop, Zwane was involved in many Associations and he was also determined to help political movements especially in South Africa¹³⁷.

b. Education

Bishop Zwane was concerned about the education of young people. According to him, good education could only exist if there was cooperation between parents and teachers. He used to challenge students by asking them what they were prepared to offer to the school, youth group, church and the country. In the beginning and the closing of the academic year he would visit students and address them. He used to say:

«I am not going to foster vocations to religious life, the way in which people live in the family is to be given priority»¹³⁸.

One of his dreams was that the youth be creative; in fact during sports day and other special functions he would be

¹³⁶. Musi Gloria, (Caritas staff member and former YCW member). Interview in SiSwati, Caritas, Manzini, 6 July 1994.

¹³⁷. Dlamini Leo, 17 July 1994. Same interview.

¹³⁸. Balsufulland "Juba" Evangelista, OP, (Catholic Sister and former teacher at St. Teresa's High School, Manzini). Interview in English, Good Shepherd Dominican Convent, Hlabisa, 26 June 1994.

present.

The relationship Zwane had with teachers helped him pursue his goal in the education of young people. Teachers were exhorted by him to be exemplary to students. They were encouraged to do their job very well. If things were not in order Zwane would challenge them. On the other hand, teachers were very appreciative of him, some of them were also visited by him in their homes. The Bishop also invited teachers to work in the church and in their communities, especially during the scholastic break.

Parents were also encouraged through the inputs they were receiving from the Bishop to cooperate amongst themselves. They were drawn to schools and would not just miss meetings if there were no grave reasons. Basic family values were taught to the parents, and they [parents] felt compelled to improve their family life style, so that they could be examples to their children. In those days most of the rich families in Swaziland were sending their children to boarding schools so as to escape the responsibility of instructing their children on matters of faith and the way to live in a society.

The Bishop discovered that sending children to hostels was just a way of running away from responsibility by parents. Parents were justifying their practice by saying that students who live in hostels receive better education since they have a lot of time at their disposal to study.

Cooperation was a very important issue. Zwane wanted people to see parents and teachers cooperating. He taught that cooperation favours christian education. Education for Zwane meant:

«bringing gifts God has put into the child so that the child could work in a community»¹³⁰.

At times Bishop Zwane would intervene in favour of schools. He did it when the Dominican sisters wanted to keep the girls hostel and give away the school. The bishop

¹³⁰. Same interview.

suggested the opposite, that is; they keep the school instead of the girls hostel. He said that the school was more important than the boarding school. Parents used to send their children to boarding schools so that they may be free from them¹⁴⁰.

As a result of the Soweto riots and the consequences of the exodus of students into Swaziland, he thought that something needed to be done. The Swazi Government was reluctant to take the South African Students. Bishop Zwane tried to set up a free-school for students so that they could pursue their studies and enter the University. He did that together with the Anglicans and other Churches¹⁴¹.

c. Zwane and development

The Spirit makes the church to be alive. According to Barth: the church is the living congregation of Christ¹⁴². St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians does not hesitate to place charity above all the gifts of the Spirit. Where there is love, there is no selfishness; selfishness can be an obstacle to development. Love is important in Christian leadership, it is the: «..sole motivation of Christian leadership»¹⁴³. St. Francis of Assisi was indeed a great 'prophet', in the twelfth Century. As a prophet, he did not only preach the Gospel with words but he proclaimed it with deeds. During his episcopate, Zwane tried to proclaim the Gospel with words and deeds. That is why he would not keep quiet if injustice was done to a person. Accommodation, food and education was provided by him to the young people from

¹⁴⁰. Magrath Oswin, 30 April 1994. Same interview.

¹⁴¹. Charboneau Damian, 28 April 1994. Same interview.

¹⁴². Mondini Battista, 1986, *La chiesa primizia del regno*, Bologna: Edizione Dehoniana, page 137.

¹⁴³. Cobble, F. James, JR, 1988, *The Church and the power: A theology of Church Structure*, Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, page 119.

South Africa, after the Soweto uprising in 1976. He did encounter resistance especially from the oppressors. By doing so he gave a lesson to Christians.

The Order of the Servants of Mary had its Annual Seminar at St. Joseph's Mission, Mzimpofo. Zwane was amongst the speakers who had to give a talk on the question of "Church's involvement in Development". The seminar began on the 14th September and ended on the 16th September, 1979. Fr. Mel Loftus spoke before Zwane and analyzed the Puebla Document saying that: religious should be in the fore front of evangelization. When Zwane's turn came to give a talk he shocked the audience by saying the opposite of what Mel had said. According to Zwane: Diocesan Priests should be in the forefront of evangelization¹⁴⁴. In fact Zwane tried during his episcopate to send diocesan priests to rural areas so that they could work with the people¹⁴⁵.

In Swaziland those who are sent to rural areas are religious. Diocesan priests are in urban areas because of economic reasons. Zwane wanted the diocesan clergy to work especially with people living in rural areas.

We could say that helping the poor to fight against poverty has long term benefits for the entire society. It is more effective than asking for financial assistance. In most cases, what the donor offers is conditional. If one would like to be helped materially he or she should be prepared to dance to the music of the donor.

In the Catholic Church, we have missionaries who brought the Gospel into different parts of the world including Swaziland. When they brought it into Swaziland they found that Swazis were under the British Colonial Government.

When missionaries were propagating the Gospel of Christ the standard of living of the Swazis had already fallen.

¹⁴⁴. Loftus Mel, 8 July 1995. Same interview.

¹⁴⁵. *Cfr. page 65.*

Missionaries built schools for the people so that they could have access to education which would eventually lead them to better life. Health centres were also built by missionaries to help reduce infant mortality and to provide medical care to the people of Swaziland.

After many years of missionary activity there were still a lot of people who did not benefit from the educational structures set up by missionaries. We have to mention that, though some did not benefit, those who benefited from the educational structures helped their countries to fight for political independence from colonial governments.

In order for the society to develop vision becomes '*conditio sine qua non*'. A few people have a vision, and they try to set principles that would develop their community. Bishop Mandlekhosi Zwane was amongst those few who had a vision, who could read from the present situation and understand the future or destiny of the community. Understanding the future helped Zwane to set goals that are still worth to pursue. As a churchman Zwane understood the problems faced by ordinary citizens. He responded by setting priorities. Development is one of the important issues Zwane was concerned about. For him it was the priority. According to Zwane development is the:

«Conscious and unconscious movement of man towards his fullness and that is in God the Creator and Father who has communicated through various ways the abundance of his goodness in which man has a share»¹⁴⁶.

There are things that Bishop Zwane did in development. Development and justice were encouraged by him; he could not have achieved that if he was not in close contact with people with whom he worked¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴⁶. Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983, op.cit., page 79.

¹⁴⁷. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

In November 1979, Zwane went to England after having been invited by CAFOD, CIIR and Worth Abbey to give a talk on problems facing the church in Southern Africa, and he also visited the dioceses of Clifton, Hexham and Newcastle¹⁴⁸. It is also intriguing to note that Zwane was welcoming Peace Corps volunteers into Swaziland. He gave talks to them, and they liked him very much. On the 29th of July, 1980, Bishop Zwane was scheduled to address Peace Corps volunteers who had come to Swaziland from the United States of America. He had been asked to speak on religion and legal system in Swaziland at the Sebenta National Institute in Mbabane¹⁴⁹.

What he learnt at the Coady Institute in Nova Scotia on development he put into practice. Development was one of the issues he had pursued most in his ministry as a priest, in Manzini and Mbabane and as a Bishop. People were exhorted by him to support the local clergy. Zwane was aware of the fact that the church in Swaziland was depending much on funds coming from overseas, he therefore endeavoured to limit that dependency by applying the principles of the people centred development. In this work he was also inspired by the book "Small is Beautiful" by E.F Schumacher¹⁵⁰. The social encyclicals of Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI, shaped his thinking, since he read extensively and had an enquiring mind. He was interested in young farmers, for he knew that the older farmers were under the strong traditional influence of the chiefs. Zwane planned to lease land to young farmers so that they could grow crops thus developing their economies and become successful farmers¹⁵¹.

¹⁴⁸. Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983, op.cit., page 102.

¹⁴⁹. The Times of Swaziland, 29 July 1980, vol. 78, n0142, page 1.

¹⁵⁰. Schumacher, E.F., 1973, *Small is Beautiful*, London: Blond & Briggs Ltd.

¹⁵¹. Charboneau Damian, 27 October, 1994. Same interview.

At Mhlatuze in the southern part of Swaziland he wanted to start a development project at Mhlatuze¹⁵². After receiving some money from overseas. The Bishop believed that the local people had to be developed.

The project would have also consisted in opening a community project that would have helped the local people generate income for their own good. Proper housing was going to be provided for the local people. Bishop Zwane wanted to get a person who would run the construction project.

He asked permission from the local chief to set the project in the area belonging to the chief. Some local people were chosen to take part in the project.

After a certain period of time had elapsed, the chief approached the Bishop and told the him that amongst those elected to take part in the project were people whom the chief did not want. Then Bishop Zwane solved the problem by asking Fr. Moses Lupupa to go to St. Philip's in January 1980 and be responsible for the project. The project was to be run by Fr. Lupupa who had been sent by Bishop Zwane to the Antigonish University in Nova Scotia, Canada to do a course on development in 1977. The Mhlatuze area was to be irrigated, and land was to be given to young Swazis who did not have land but skill to farm the land¹⁵³.

After having spoken to Fr. Lupupa he went to Hlabisa, KwaZulu-Natal, to meet Bro. Andrew "Andy" Matsko, OSM while Bishop O'Shea was still a monsignor. Zwane wanted to build houses for the people at St. Philip's mission, Mhlatuze. He thought that Bro. Andrew would run the construction project. The Bishop was determined to get Andrew Matsko, OSM a religious brother belonging to the Order of the Servants of Mary so that he could help in the housing project. Unfortunately, that project could not go ahead because of two

¹⁵². Mhlatuze is one of the poorest regions in the Southern part of Swaziland.

¹⁵³. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

reasons. The first reason is that the Servite religious brother did not know Swazi and Zulu languages and the other reason could be that Bishop did not live long enough¹⁵⁴.

4. THE PASTOR

It is impossible to speak of Zwane as a pastor without looking at YCW, self-reliant Church and inculturation. Bishop Zwane was concerned about the physical and spiritual well being of a person.

a. Zwane and Young Christian Workers

Outside the Theological School there was a great phenomenon of the Young Christian Workers founded and promoted by Joseph Cardijn, a Belgian priest. It had profound effects on the church, especially on catechetical teachings and on the theological study because it stresses the fact that christians should look at the situation and the facts of life of a christian. That was a huge conversion for the Church, that mentality had been in the Church already in the early 1930's. Zwane's working with the Young Christian Workers showed that he had entered into that mentality easily. That mentality reached the point of culmination in the Second Vatican Council with the promulgation of the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the modern world, **Gaudium et spes**, though it was not on the agenda.

Since Zwane was very close to the youth, and wanted to get the youth together he tried to popularise the YCW (Young Christian Workers). Some religious did not know the YCW, and they were helped by Zwane to know it. Amongst those who were helped by Zwane to know the YCW is Sister Hermine, OP, a

¹⁵⁴. Matsko "Andy" Andrew, OSM, (Catholic Lay Brother). Interview in English, St. Alexis Priory, Merrivale, 15 July 1994.

former teacher at St. Teresa's High School, Manzini¹⁵⁵.

Zwane wanted the Young Christian Workers (YCW) to be faithful in their commitment. Zwane used to conduct classes for the YCW members. The members themselves had a Bible sharing and other forms of pious exercises aimed at helping them to improve their spiritual lives. He exhorted Young Christian Workers to have a Christian spirit in whatever they did and to take full responsibility in their jobs.

The Bishop emphasised that YCW should be faithful stewards and respect the property of their employer; instead of looking only for benefits from the employer. In those days most of the business people were recruiting workers from the YCW because they trusted them. Employers were looking for faithful people to employ. Bishop Zwane did a good job by encouraging the YCW to be responsible.

The Bishop wanted Christians to practise their Christianity day in and day out. The youth were encouraged by Zwane to visit families and try to find out how things were going there.

b. Self reliant-Church

The Diocese of Manzini had paid catechists. The catechists were paid by *Propaganda Fide* in Rome. Every parish had one or two paid catechists. At a certain stage Bishop Zwane wanted to stop catechists since they were detrimental to the development of the local Christian community. The Bishop foresaw that the paid catechists could not understand what he was trying to implement in the diocese because of their training. It did take time because christians wanted paid catechists. Zwane wanted the christians to do things themselves but not to expect catechists to do things for them.

¹⁵⁵. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

The Bishop decided to train people in communication and in other things, so that they could not depend on catechists. Ndlovu became Bishop in 1984 and took a decision to stop paid catechists, Zwane is the one who paved the way. Those who have been trained are doing the job better than the catechists, this is because they work in teams. Zwane believed in team work. Bishop Zwane thought that if lay people were to be involved in the work of the Church, something should be done with the catechists. The Bishop was aware of the fact that the catechists had acquired some status in the parish.

In August, 1976, Bishop Zwane set up the Interim Diocesan Pastoral Council (IDPC). One of the aims of the IDPC was to identify needs and set priorities for the whole diocese¹⁵⁶.

Zwane believed that the Church should be self reliant. Rural communities were encouraged to have their own funds. Urban communities were asked to pay for the fuel when priests were visiting rural communities. The bishop wanted the people to stop thinking that money should come from the priest¹⁵⁷.

When Louis Ndlovu became bishop, some of the people who had been working very well with Bishop Zwane disappeared. Fortunately, some who had worked with Zwane came back. Zwane had a dream of building a self supporting Church. By following on his footsteps; the diocese of Manzini is trying to implement what he could not implement, since he was Bishop for only four years.

The main aim of the diocese is to make the Church self reliant and self supporting. At first the Lenten appeal was targeted, so that it could be improved; parishes were expected to contribute some money for the formation of those who are involved in lay ministries, seminarians of the diocese and seminars. In 1981 the Diocese of Manzini collected about E8 000 and this year (1994) it has collected E29 000. This means

¹⁵⁶. Musi Gloria, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁵⁷. Lupupa Mose, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

that people are becoming aware of their responsibilities in the Church. Some of the people who were trained when Zwane was still a Bishop are helping a lot. Other people have been sent to Lumko for training, especially in the area of communication. In July, 1994 in Manzini at the premises of St. Teresa's School, a course (learning for transformation) run by the Swaziland Council of Churches aimed at empowering young people. Some students from the University of Swaziland attended it. At least twenty six out of thirty six participants were Catholics. The aim of the course was to empower young people to change their attitudes, it also gave skills of how to work with ordinary people. The above is a continuation of what Bishop Zwane was doing¹⁵⁸.

The elderly and poor people were helped by the Bishop so that their standard of living could be improved, he was inspiring them to do something about the problems they were facing. The best way of helping people according to Bishop Zwane was not the immediate way: that is, providing material goods to the person in need, but it was the mediate way, that is, teaching people how to help themselves. The Bishop was much concerned about self-reliance. He wanted to develop the person as a whole so that s/he may be able to develop his or her talents, thus contributing to the development of the community.

Bible study was promoted by the bishop, he said that people should not read the Bible and claim to be knowing everything. According to him, each individual must read the Bible and try to get some explanation from those who have been enlightened in Scriptures and that must be followed by sharing what one has understood from the Scriptures with the other members of the Church. What has been taught by the Bible must be put into practice. A Christian is the one who shares his or

¹⁵⁸. Ndlovu Louis, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

her religious experience with the rest of humanity¹⁵⁹.

5. THE ACTIVIST

a. Zwane and politics

In post-colonial system, political life in traditional sense can be eliminated. People could be denied their right to express themselves politically in public. Nevertheless, there are individuals who do not abandon politics as a vocation. These individuals strive to be independent in their thinking. Zwane ruled the Church in Swaziland during the time when the post-colonial system was influencing the lives of the Swazis. In those days, Dr. Ambrose Phešheya Zwane and other local politicians were challenging the political system of the day. On the other hand Bishop Zwane was concerned about the social welfare of the people. At times the ideas of Zwane would be similar with those of Dr. Ambrose Zwane, and that would make people to call Bishop Zwane a politician just because he was critical of the social evil¹⁶⁰. For many years the Catholic Church in Swaziland had been withdrawn from politics and, had limited herself to an irresolute defence of its traditional positions. The Church was politically unprepared to address social issues. That is why it made no effort to influence the course of events. Christianity is therefore important in the lives of the people since it is capable of ensuring that democratic programmes are instituted on a firm moral ground.

Later on we will see that at times the bishop's house would be raided by the Royal Swaziland Police since the Bishop was not afraid to confront the government which claimed to be democratic and humane, and yet it rejected any criticism of its undemocratic and inhumane nature. The detention without

¹⁵⁹. Musi Gloria, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁶⁰. Zwane Ambrose, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

trial showed that the government was distancing itself from democratic principles.

Before Zwane became Bishop, not anyone was allowed at the Bishop's House. It was known that the Bishops' House was meant to be used by the bishops, priests and brothers for purposes like convening meetings etc. But Zwane violated that habit because he accommodated even some refugees from South Africa. It was because of that during his absence that some people with an order from the government went to raid his house thinking that they would get documents that maligned the government. They were also looking for the South African refugees. This made Zwane upset for the fact that the government did not trust him.

When Dr. Ambrose Phešheya Zwane was released from detention he fled to Tanzania. Some members of the police went to search the Bishop's House. They believed that the Bishop was a politician and at one time he was made to testify in a Political case in South Africa. Due to the fact that Zwane was sincere and spoke frankly about human rights he was banned from South Africa by the Government of South Africa¹⁸¹.

The government of South Africa withdrew the visa exemption of Bishop Zwane. This meant that Zwane would not go to South Africa without a visa. But since the Bishop was a Swazi citizen he did not have to obtain a visa in order to go to South Africa; Swaziland was one of the countries belonging to the Custom Union Agreement. His visa exemption was withdrawn apparently after he had shown his support to the young South African refugees. In fact in 1978 the Bishop spoke in favour of the young people who were considered to be terrorists¹⁸².

Some of the discussions Zwane had with the youth were on

¹⁸¹. Dlamini Leo, 17 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸². The Times of Swaziland, 12 August 1980, page 5. Same interview.

the political sphere: how to help the poor and he also discussed the conditions of the majority of the population in South Africa. He was one of those people who were against discrimination in South Africa. He felt that if a wrong was done it was not done to a Catholic but it was done to a person. Zwane believed that people should come together and work towards resolving their conflicts¹⁶³.

He was too outspoken for the Swazi government in many cases. He was criticising the government for detention without trial. He also criticised the government for not being truly African. Zwane was extremely African¹⁶⁴. Though he stayed in Swaziland, in South Africa he was hated for his justice by those who were propagating apartheid practises¹⁶⁵.

Bishop Zwane played an important role in the reconciliation processes. His relative, Dr. Ambrose Phesheya Zwane was detained for his political party called Ngwane National Liberation Congress which was strong around the area of Tshaneni. In 1964, Ngwane National Liberation Congress was affiliated to the African Liberation Committee Front of the Organization of African Unity (O.A.U), but not to the ANC, to SWAPO or to any party. The ANC, the PAC and the SWAPO were also affiliated to the African Liberation Committee Front. Each party had its own principles. Nevertheless, Ngwane National Liberation Congress together with the other parties were in favour of one man one vote, freedom of assembly and freedom of speech¹⁶⁶. The party of Dr. Ambrose Phesheya Zwane was in great opposition with the Imbhokodvo party. The Imbhokodvo was a party of the Dlamini. Imbhokodvo party was of the idea that people should be selected under trees. This

¹⁶³. Levine Nonceba, 28 October 1994. Same interview.

¹⁶⁴. Magrath Oswin, 39 April 1994. Same interview.

¹⁶⁵. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁶⁶. Zwane Ambrose, 16 May 1995. Same interview.

is a common practice in the traditional *Tinkhundla*¹⁶⁷ system. The Imbhokodvo got its name after the British had drafted a constitution for Swaziland. There was a strong body of the Swazis who were apparently rejecting the constitution because it was too English and King Sobhuza II said:

«listen there is a story of the hare and the lion, the lion was chasing the hare and when they came into the river the hare turned itself into an **imbhokodvo** (stone), the lion took the imbhokodvo and threw the imbhokodvo across the river, the imbhokodvo turned into a hare»¹⁶⁸.

The King said the constitution given by the British to the country was to be thrown away. The Imbhokodvo was the king's party, Ambrose Zwane's party was an opposition party and it was banned.

Dr. Ambrose Zwane who was jailed at Matsapha prison was already ending a period of sixty days and his wife went to Matsapha prison to bring him home if released. The renewal order for further sixty days had not arrived; he was able to jump on the car alone and drive off. After reaching the Mozambique boarder (about 100 km) he went to Dar-es-Salaam. Police were looking for him and they raided the Bishops's House in Manzini. They thought that he was hiding in the Bishops' House. They looked around the cupboard, under the bed etc. The Bishop made a protest, and King Sobhuza II was very upset. The Police had to apologise and later on Ambrose Zwane went to Tanzania to stay there.

Dr. Ambrose Zwane went to Tanzania after the king's decree on sixty days of detention without trial. In Arushua, Tanzania, Bishop Zwane was at the International Meeting in which he had been invited. While Bishop Zwane was in Tanzania

¹⁶⁷. Traditional way of conducting elections, young people and most of the educated people do not like its philosophy. Swaziland adopted a no-party state which is rooted to Tinkhundla. Some people feel that Tinkhundla is not democratic.

¹⁶⁸. Magrath Oswin, 30 April 1994. Same interview.

he met Ambrose Zwane¹⁶⁹. The 1973 king's decree was against the formation of political parties. Seemingly the Imbhokodvo Party which won the democratic elections in 1964 felt threatened by the presence of opposition. Amongst the victims of the 1973 king's decree were Dr. Ambrose Phesheya Zwane and other people. Over the past few years, PUDEMO (People's United Democratic Movement), SWAYCO (Swaziland Youth Congress) have emerged in spite of the ban. We could say that the government of the Kingdom of Swaziland is not in favour of the existence of political parties in the kingdom.

b. Dirty Tricks

(i) Speech

Bishop Zwane was asked to give a speech at one of the big meetings in Puerto Rico, South America. He made out main points of what he thought could be done. He formed a committee for the speech to be given in Puerto Rico. The committee was composed of clerics and laity; both men and women. One of the members in the committee was the present minister for Environment in the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland. The Committee would discuss the points, and the secretary, Fr. Somers, SDB would take down notes. In the following meeting the secretary would read out what was said in the previous meeting. The committee would make corrections, and this would be done every week.

The preparation of the speech of Puerto Rico took four months. When he arrived in New York, he found that his bag had been opened. The speech, the crozier and the golden ring were missing. Zwane told participants at the Annual Servite Seminar that the speech might have been taken by members of the South African Police or the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)¹⁷⁰.

¹⁶⁹. Same interview.

¹⁷⁰. Mel Loftus, 7 July 1995. Same interview.

When he arrived in Puerto Rico, he told them that he had no speech, so he had to sit down all night and reconstruct the speech from memory¹⁷¹.

(ii) Golden Ring

Zwane wanted to have a simple ring: he did not want a precious ring made out of gold or silver, he thought that a precious ring was expensive. Sr. Johanna Senn, CPS agreed to make a copper ring which was gold plated. The ring made out of copper made the skin around his finger to have anomalies of sensation, such as pruritus.

The Dominican Sisters of Oakford offered to pay for his golden ring. Sr. Johanna sent the design to the jeweller after having designed the ring of Zwane. That ring was lost in the hotel in the United States of America, when his bag was opened¹⁷².

(iii) Crozier

Zwane met Fr. Mel at Mariannahill and told him that he wanted to have a wooden crozier. Zwane told Mel that he wanted his crozier to have the design of the honey badger. The honey badger is the totem of the Zwanes, it is vicious and aggressive small animal. Fr. Mel went to meet Mr. Bernard Gwensa, a sculptor living in Hlabisa. Mr. Gwensa carved the crozier of Bishop Zwane. Unfortunately, the crozier was stolen together with the speech Zwane had prepared to deliver in Puerto Rico.

The author Dina Cormick in her book says that the crozier is kept in the Bishop's House in Manzini and was carved by Reben Xulu¹⁷³. I spoke to Fr. Mel who asked Mr. Gwensa to

¹⁷¹. Somers James, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁷². Senn Johanna, 9 November 1994. Same interview.

¹⁷³. Cormick Dina, 1983, *Bernard Gwensa and Reben Xulu: Christian artist of Natal*, Pretoria: Academia, page 65.

carve the crozier, and who later on delivered it to Zwane on the day of his consecration to the episcopate, the crozier was wrapped in newspapers. I also went to the Bishop's House in Manzini to look for the crozier unfortunately I could not find in there. The people who live and work at the Bishop's House told me that the crozier of Bishop Zwane was not in the Bishop's House.

c. Refugees

Bishop Zwane considered migrants and refugees to be the voiceless victims of injustice. The Bishop was once quoted saying:

«Justice is violated by forms of oppression both old and new springing from restrictions of the rights of individuals»¹⁷⁴.

The successor of Zwane, Bishop Louis Ndlovu, OSM of Manzini was elected by the South African Bishops' Conference to care for refugees, but Zwane did it voluntarily though that set him under pressure. He was the first to care for the refugees, taking them to his house to the effect that some priests did not want to come to his house¹⁷⁵.

The question of refugees touched the Bishop very much. At one time, the Bishops' House was full of refugees. Zwane was staying with them, some people were accusing him for making the Bishops' house a refugee house: Especially for the whites it was the first time for them to see the Bishops' House full of Africans. Many people were suspicious. The Bishop was fortunate since he had friends overseas who were helping him with funds to help the refugees¹⁷⁶. He liked and helped refugees, especially, those who were fleeing Apartheid

¹⁷⁴. The Times of Swaziland, 12 August 1980, page 5, op.cit.,.

¹⁷⁵. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁷⁶. Ndlovu Louis, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

oppression in South Africa¹⁷⁷.

He was the first one to appoint a priest to look after refugees and this shows that he was concerned about people¹⁷⁸. Following the 1976 uprising of school children in Soweto, South Africa some South African students came to Swaziland¹⁷⁹. They had no place to go and no place to study. And it was not easy for them to be recognised by the United Nations so that they could be assisted¹⁸⁰. Bishop Zwane liked social justice, as one could get that from most of his sermons which are kept at the Bishops' House¹⁸¹. He hired a house in Zakhele, Manzini, for some of the young people from Soweto. They began coming to the Bishops' House for meals. The young people from Soweto showed themselves to be ungrateful, it became so bad, that the Bishops' House became absolute impossible to live in¹⁸².

They slept in his house [Bishops's House]. Some of them had unconventional behaviour: they used to make a lot of noise, his property was also stolen, at a certain stage the safe was broken. Some of the religious were not happy about the presence of the youth in the Bishops' House, and they told the sister of the bishop, Frances. ^{she} Frances approached the Bishop and told him to get ^{rid of} the youth ~~out of the Bishops' House~~. The Bishop told her that he did not have a place to send them. The Bishop did not get them out of his house¹⁸³.

¹⁷⁷. Zwane Ambrose, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁷⁸. Flynn Francis, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁷⁹. Somers James, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸⁰. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸¹. Zwane Ambrose, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸². Somers James, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸³. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

The Bishop went through a tough time because he wanted to help them. His interest in refugees brought him trouble because the South African Police said he was pro ANC (African National Congress) and at that time the ANC was a banned organization. The South African Police accused him of harbouring terrorist after refugees had gone to the Bishops' House. Some of the Swazi police officials were friends of the South African Police. It became obvious that he was mistrusted by the Police and by the Government. In the beginning there had been a tap in his phone, we know that because one day when he wanted to make a phone call they said:

«you cannot phone because the tape recorder has come to the end of the spool of the taping»¹⁸⁴.

The next thing is that ultimately he was told not to drive his car in South Africa. He was told by some of his friends in South Africa that if he drove, the South African Police would arrange an accident¹⁸⁵.

Though there are no longer refugees who are victims of the Soweto uprising in Swaziland, the Catholic Church in Swaziland under the leadership of Bishop Louis Ncamiso Ndlovu has identified people who are in desperate need of shelter, food, clothing, education and counselling. This has led to the formation of the Swaziland Caritas¹⁸⁶. The Swaziland Caritas is run by the diocese of Manzini. It has been helping those who were victims of civil war in Mozambique. After the end of the civil war in Mozambique, some Mozambicans went back into their country. Recently, there has been an influx of refugees from Somalia, Rwanda, Liberia and from other war torn countries in Africa. The Swaziland Caritas looks after them. Food is provided to them even before they are granted refugees

¹⁸⁴. Somers James, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸⁵. Same interview.

¹⁸⁶. Musi Gloria, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

status by the Ministry of Interior in the Kingdom of Swaziland.

Swaziland Caritas is becoming a big non profit organization in the country. The youth from every Catholic parish go around rural areas with Mr. Zikalala providing manual labour if there are development projects going on. One of the main aims of Swaziland Caritas is to help people living in rural areas embark on income generating projects.

Projects aimed at developing rural areas were initiated by Bishop Zwane. He knew that if rural areas were not developed, there would be a great exodus of people from the countryside into urban areas. Urban areas would be susceptible to banditry and moral decadence, and that would threaten the security of the citizens. He was aware of the fact that speaking about the importance of development without doing anything could not help in solving the problems people had in their community.

Bishop Louis Ndlovu formed the Diocesan Pastoral Council (DPC) and the main aim of it is to monitor the growth of pastoral activities in the Diocese of Manzini. The idea of having that kind of organization came from Bishop Zwane. This shows that the Catholic Church in Swaziland has tried to develop some of the things that Bishop Zwane initiated¹⁸⁷.

In his book, James Cobble writes: «power that comes from God edifies rather than destroys»¹⁸⁸. Zwane did not use the power he had as a Bishop to seek prestige or for social recognition, but he used it to build the Church.

¹⁸⁷. Musi Gloria, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸⁸. Cobble, F. James, JR, 1988, op.cit., page 116.

6. THE PIONEER OF INCULTURATION

When missionaries arrived in the country they thought that Swazis did not have a knowledge of the true God. This belief was common amongst most of the missionaries who brought Christianity to the people of Southern Africa. Those who evangelised the Xhosa people of South Africa held the same views¹⁸⁹. Since Swazis were said not to have a clear concept of God, their culture was considered to be inferior to the culture of those whom they thought had a concept of God. Whites who considered themselves to be civilised considered blacks to be amoral. All what was found in the Swazi culture was rejected. When reflecting on the era preceding Christianity and colonialism we find that people were obliged to follow traditional norms, and no one was living in isolation.

The traditional Swazi social structures through rigorous norms succeeded in discouraging deviations and subversion of the common will. The society was more important than the individual in decision making. A person could not get fulfilment outside the boundaries of his or her society. All those things contributed to the strong social homogeneity and conformism. The coming together of people having different cultures gives rise to the "new" culture. In the past few years, many Swazis have moved into urban areas, and have become extremely individualistic. Since the unified cultural ethos is depleting, individuals are becoming more and more important than the society, and as a result it becomes difficult for them to be influenced by the society. This leads to the growth of egotism and can be seen in the way a person makes moral judgements. The moral judgements he or she makes are influenced by the instincts which try to dominate his or

¹⁸⁹. Crais, C., Clifton, 1992, *The making of the Colonial Order: White Supremacy and Black Resistance in the Eastern Cape, 1770-1865*, Cambridge: Press Syndicate of the University of Cambridge. page 101

her life.

Inculturation becomes difficult in such a case. This comes from the fact that the so called civilization has made people to be allergic to the culture their ancestors had. Zwane tried to help Swazis to value traditional customs and norms which were compatible with Christianity for example respecting one's dignity. Zwane would visit pupils and would asks parents to teach their children how to respect elders and not to alienate society. The Bishop discovered that the expression of faith of the Swazi people was foreign to the culture of the people. Inculturation was the only vehicle to bring catholicism alive within the hearts of Swazis. Being the first Swazi Bishop in Swaziland, he felt compelled to do something about inculturation since he was the first Bishop to fully understand the culture of the Swazis. Zwane endeavoured to close the gap between Christianity and the Swazi culture, so that Swazis could have a broader vision of Christianity. He tried as a priest and when he became Bishop he had more opportunity to make his dream come true.

When working for inculturation he realised that people had been used to following religious practices common to the era preceding the Second Vatican Council. Zwane tried to show the people the importance of inculturation by his own way of life: he rejected the zucchetto and used the **umbodze** (a head ring worn by Swazi elders).

Zwane tried to use some of the local things, for example his pastoral staff was made out of wood, he did not want his pastoral staff to be imported from Europe, metallic pastorals are derigueur for bishops. The chasuble of the Bishop was made of local material. Seminars on music were organised, and people were invited to compose hymns. Some people liked the changes he brought in Church music, but other did not like those changes. Zwane was a prophet: he could read the signs of the time and understand what would happen in the future¹⁰⁰.

¹⁰⁰. Ndlovu Louis, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

It is particularly intriguing to note that during his episcopate, he set up a committee to study culture. For he believed that before any changes could be brought in liturgy the culture of the Swazi people should be understood. As a result some people were encouraged by the Bishop to attend traditional Swazi ceremonies such as *incwala*¹⁸¹ to learn more about music. Music was a priority amongst the goals he had. The Bishop believed that in liturgy music should be Swazi and African. He wanted people to sing use their own music. A workshop was held, and the main aim was to study music¹⁸². Zwane did not want the whites to impose their culture on Africans since Africans, had their own culture. He encouraged the composition of SiSwati songs to be used during liturgical celebrations in church. «I was one of the composers»¹⁸³. Audio cassettes were used to keep the hymns which had been composed. These audio tapes are still kept at the Bishops' House in Manzini. Some of the hymns which were composed were not strictly Swazi but were African¹⁸⁴.

The Swazi instrument known as "Makhweyana" was used. The fact is that in the Church SiSwati was the medium. There are about a hundred pieces of hymnal books in SiSwati, which had to be produced during his episcopate. The white priests were convinced about his emphasis on SiSwati usage, and that was accepted¹⁸⁵.

He understood problems very well. He often came up with original views, he looked beyond the conventional, he was original in his thinking and reacted in that way to many problems. One of his greatest advantages is that it was very easy for him to live in two different cultures, that is the

¹⁸¹. Incwala is the most sacred of the ceremonies.

¹⁸². Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁸³. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸⁴. Lupupa Moses, 24 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁸⁵. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994 Same interview

African culture and the culture of the Europeans. The two cultures were appreciated by him. Zwane was very interested in the African culture and was very enthusiastic. The Western culture was appreciated by him, he would give Western views. This made him to be able to bring the two cultures together in his mind and this played a major role in his comprehension and communication¹⁸⁶.

In fact some Swazis had a problem in accepting the new changes Zwane was bringing. They were fast taken by the Western culture, and believed that traditional instruments should not be in churches, but may be used elsewhere. Fr. Angelo Ciccone, OSM worked hand in hand with Bishop Zwane. The Bishop worked like many politicians who were against discrimination. He loved people, and could easily interact with them. Since he was a Swazi, he held his culture in high esteem and wanted to serve God as a Swazi and not as a Westerner. He easily mixed with the populace because he humbled himself, and that helped him to get a profound knowledge of the Swazi culture. If there was a party he would leave the delicatessen prepared for him, and go to eat with the general public¹⁸⁷.

Mrs. Nonceba Levine, Jabulane Mdziniso, Mphumelelo Ginindza and Dr. Thoko Ginindza helped Zwane a lot with translations. It is interesting that he also discussed inculturation with them. The group tried to find out in their discussion the impact Christianity had on the local culture and how the local people would try to bring a balance between the Swazi culture and the culture brought by Christianity in the Church whether they are churchgoers or not. The group argued a lot whether or not he should change his liturgical vestments¹⁸⁸. Zwane succeeded at inculturating some aspects of the Gospel since, as a pastor he knew his flock in the

¹⁸⁶. Hurley Denis, 14 May 1995. Same interview.

¹⁸⁷. Dlamini Adelia, 8 September 1994. Same interview.

¹⁸⁸. Levine Nonceba, 28 October 1994. Same interview.

diocese; Zwane worked through his priests such as; Frs. Ciccone, Lupupa, Matthews, O'Dea, Peoples, etc. He did not want religion to appear theoretical or as mystery to people. People were encouraged to get closer to the Bible by him, through seminars, retreats etc.

7. THE THEOLOGIAN

Without the proper use of the gifts of the Holy Spirit there cannot be *Sensus fidei*. The Holy Spirit through its gifts of prophecy etc, continues to reveal the mystery of Salvation. The *magisterium* which is part of the *depositum fidei* helps in the transmission of that which has been revealed to believers.

According to Zwane, the gifts of the Spirit are for the good of the community. If they are used properly, the whole Christian community benefits from them. Certainly, Zwane had the gift of prophecy which he used especially during his episcopate to develop the community of believers. As a prophet he understood that there was an urgent need to change the theology which had been followed since the arrival of the first Catholic Missionaries. Inspired by the teachings of the Second Vatican Council, Zwane introduced a new way of doing theology into his diocese. There are two ways of doing theology, i.e one can follow the method of the "*theology from above*" or the method of "*theology from below*". Zwane opted for the latter. The method of the "*theology from below*" consists in asking the laity to interpret the Scriptures the way they understand them; in an endeavour to understand the Divine Revelation in their own way.

Even when he was a priest in Manzini he encouraged the laity to read the Bible and to have bible discussion groups. He used to be present in most of those group discussions. It was in one of those discussions that Zwane had an idea of

establishing the YCW¹⁹⁹. By doing, so he propagated the Gospel to all sectors of life especially in the industrial work.

In Mbabane where he worked as parish priest, Zwane tried to introduce bible sharing to the youth belonging to different Christian denominations. His interest in the ecumenical bible sharing helped him to develop the theology of ecumenism²⁰⁰. That theology was becoming popular amongst the youth of different denominations. One of the points to mention is that the theology of ecumenism which he developed under the auspices of the interdenominational youth encouraged Zwane to borrow some elements of Christian worship, for example the clapping hands during Mass which was taken from Protestants.

If Zwane was not open to the "*theology from below*" or from the grassroots he would not have succeeded in bringing the Catholic Church to the people of Swaziland. Even his work on ecumenism would have been hampered. In fact, before Zwane's episcopate, the Catholic Church in Swaziland had been considered to be more Western because of the influence it had from the "*theology from above*".

Zwane led the church in time of transition, from the missionary dominated church to the local church. He had to develop theology which would help the church in Swaziland to be truly Swazi. The missionary dominated church was characterised by many laws, some of the laws were oppressive to the Swazi Catholic. For instance Catholic were discouraged from wearing traditional Swazi attire when going to liturgical celebrations. Clapping hands in church was discouraged since it was considered to be un-Christian²⁰¹.

It is not difficult to imagine a society with good laws that are fully respected in which it is impossible to live. Conversely, a society can have imperfect laws which are not

¹⁹⁹. Musi Gloria, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

²⁰⁰. Levine Nonceba, 28 October 1994. Same interview.

²⁰¹. Lupupa Moses, 4 May 1995. Same interview.

respected but it could be much easier to live in society where every law is respected. Bishop Zwane understood that the strict observance of the law could have disastrous impact on the lives of Swazi Christians. These laws were detrimental to the building of relationship between Christianity and the Swazi culture.

8. HIS DEATH

The Bishop died at the age of forty eight years, on Saturday, 9th August, 1980²⁰² on the Mbabane industrial site - Mhlambanyatsi junction²⁰³. Where he died there were no traffic lights, the traffic lights were installed after his death.

Many things have been said about the mysterious death of Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane. Contradictions are inevitable in the account of his death due to the fact that there are many people who have different versions of the story of his death. In our endeavour to get the most accurate description of the car accident in which Bishop Zwane lost his life.

The story of Zwane's death has been reconstructed from various sources. Perhaps some local politicians and the Royal Swaziland Police would have made an invaluable contribution to this research if they had shared their knowledge on that subject. Nevertheless, we did get some information from the National Archives at Lobamba. The material widely used comes from the interviews. We ought to mention that it is from his friends' panegyric that most of the information on his death is derived.

²⁰². Loftus Mel, 12 May 1994. Same interview.

²⁰³. The Times of Swaziland, 11 August, 1980, page 1, op.cit.,.

a. Farewell

Bishop Zwane paid a short visit to the Dominican Sisters at St. Teresa's Sisters Convent, Manzini, on Saturday evening, 9th August, 1980. He told the Dominican Sisters that there were many things which he wanted to tell them, and yet there was little time available. He added saying that: there were many people whom he had to meet. In those days, Zwane was also preparing himself to go to Germany for an operation. While at St. Teresa's Convent, he asked to be reminded of the two German phrases which he was taught at table by the parents of one of the German Dominican Sisters, Hermine Kloker, while he was in Germany. The two phrases in German are:-

(i) **Bier auf wien das lass sein.**

(ii) **Wein auf Bier das rat ich dir²⁰⁴.**

The two above German phrases were written on a piece of paper and given to him. He put the piece of paper in one of the pockets of his pair of jeans. After he had died, the piece of paper with the two German phrases was found in his pocket²⁰⁵.

Amongst the others things he had to do that evening was to give a talk during the opening of the International Forum on Adolescent Fertility Management at the Swaziland Institute for Health Science in Mbabane²⁰⁶. At that meeting, he was scheduled to be a guest speaker.

After discussing with the Dominican Sisters in Manzini, the Bishop drove to the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service (SBS) studios in Mbabane. On that evening, it was raining in Mbabane, and Mrs. Nonceba Levine was on duty in the studios of SBS.

She was told by the Bishop told he had come to deliver a

²⁰⁴. (i) Beer is not good for you after wine.
(ii) Wine after beer is good for you.

²⁰⁵. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

²⁰⁶. The Times of Swaziland, 11 August, 1980, vol. 78, n0151, page 1.

speech which he was to deliver at the meeting to be held shortly at the Institute for Health Science in Mbabane. He told her that he wanted her to put it on the air together with the evening bulletin of news. She told him that it was too late, since it was about fifteen minutes to the six o'clock evening news. He said:

«Do not worry, you can read it and translate it into SiSwati for the seven o'clock news, and you can make a summary for the nine o'clock evening news in English»²⁰⁷.

She agreed to do that. The news was in English at six o'clock; at seven o'clock it was in SiSwati, and the news summary in English was at nine o'clock. He told her that by the seven o'clock news bulletin, he would have spoken, since he was scheduled to speak just before dinner. That conference was to start at about half past six²⁰⁸.

b. Accident

Zwane was driving from the hill near Mbabane Government Hospital. His car approached the stop sign and stopped. He moved forward, and as his car reached the middle of the road²⁰⁹, apparently a car coming from the Manzini direction hit the right side of the bishop's car, as the Bishop was joining the main road to Manzini²¹⁰.

Many people including the press believe that the Bishop was involved in a car accident about midnight as he was coming from the meeting at the Swaziland Institute of Health Science. Almost everybody agrees that the Bishop died when coming from the meeting. But there is one person interviewed who believes

²⁰⁷. Levine Nonceba, 28 October 1994. Same interview.

²⁰⁸. Same interview.

²⁰⁹. Kloker "Thandi" Hermine, 21 October 1994. Same interview.

²¹⁰. Catholic Institute for International Relations, 1983, op.cit., Page 2.

that the Bishop died before seven o'clock in the evening as he was going from the Swaziland Broadcasting studios to the Swaziland Institute of Health Science for the meeting.

«He [Zwane] left and he did not reach the place of the conference [Institute for Health Science], he died on his way from the Broadcasting Station to the conference; turning from Malagwane road to the Hospital»²¹¹.

Strong arguments have been brought by the interviewee. The argument of the interviewee can be summarised as follows:-

The interviewee continued with her powerful arguments saying that she and her colleagues at the Radio Station were amongst the first ones who received the news about the death of Bishop Zwane. The staff at the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service got the story that he had died, and they did not announce it over the radio, immediately. The interviewee was in a dilemma whether to put on air what she had already prepared in the item of the news. She rearranged the story saying that Bishop Zwane did not give the talk. She told the audience what the Bishop was going to say at the meeting²¹².

In our research, we have tried to find out whether the Bishop died on the spot as it has been said by a number of people. Some people argue that the Bishop died on the spot, meanwhile others say he did not die on the spot. The Times of Swaziland (Daily newspaper) reported that the Bishop died on the spot²¹³. A famous politician says that he does not know why Zwane was not rushed to the hospital which was not far from the place where the accident occurred²¹⁴. When reading between the lines, we find that it would be illogical to sustain that the Bishop died on the spot if it is said that he

²¹¹. Same interview.

²¹². Same interview.

²¹³. The Times of Swaziland, 11 August 1980, page 1, op.cit.,.

²¹⁴. Zwane Ambrose, 21 May 1995. Same interview.

could have been rushed to the Mbabane Government Hospital immediately after the accident.

We still believe that a report from the traffic cops in Mbabane which we were unable to obtain due to unknown reasons, could help us solve the above problem. Let us establish that the death of the Bishop is a mystery: There are still problems to be solved about the death.

c. Rumours

It is particular intriguing to find out that most of those who have been interviewed in Swaziland and in South Africa are reluctant to speak about the death of Bishop Zwane in details. There is a rumour that some people might have been involved in planning the accident. Those who have mentioned that, have wished to remain anonymous. According to the information given, Zwane's relationship with the governments of South Africa and Swaziland was not always good. The reason behind that is that he would not hesitate to challenge them if injustice was done to people. In fact, it is widely known that Zwane was the Bishop of the people: He was concerned about their welfare and he wanted their dignity to be respected.

We recall that in the 70's and in the 80's, Southern Africa was not stable politically. In Swaziland we had the law of detention without trial in the early 70's. The coming to power of the Frelimo government in Mozambique which was backed by the Soviets. The influx of the young people from South Africa. We could recall the Soweto uprising in 1976, the death of Steve Biko on 12th September 1977. These events contributed to the instability of the Southern Africa region. The lives of the people on the grassroots level were affected. A person like Zwane was needed to address those issues.

In his sermons, he would speak against the oppression of the poor and the importance of the respect of the human dignity. It is obvious that a person like Zwane, who had courage to speak for the oppressed would not be a friend of the oppressors, since he was challenging the injustice they

were doing. Apparently some top officials in the government felt that he was critical of their leadership which had alienated transparency thus bringing suffering to the innocent people. Since he was the Bishop of a Church; it was not easy for them to stop him from propagating his ideas from the pulpit. His death can be interpreted as one of the possible ways of denying him the "pulpit" in a shrewd way.

d. Funeral

The requiem Mass was celebrated on Friday, 15th August, 1980 at Mater Dolorosa Church in Mbabane. Some of those who did not get the opportunity to pay their last respect to the late Bishop Zwane on Friday at Mater Dolorosa Church, converged on Manzini from all the four districts of the country. There were many people from different parts of the world at his funeral which was on Saturday, 16th August, 1980 in the Cathedral of Manzini²¹⁵. When preparing his body for the funeral, they dressed him in his jeans before putting on the cassock²¹⁶.

During the funeral at the Cathedral in Manzini, messages of condolences from different parts of the world were read. Thousands and thousands of mourners listened to speeches given by important speakers amongst whom were:- Archbishop Edward Cassidy who was representing Pope John Paul II; Archbishop of Cape Town Owen Cardinal McCann; President of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference Archbishop J.P Fitzgerald and other churchmen spoke at the four hour funeral. The government of the Kingdom of Swaziland was represented by Senator Ben Nsibandze; while the All Africa Conference of Churches was represented by Miss Isabella Johnson. The Message from the UN High Commissioner for Refugees in Geneva was read by Godfrey Sabita. Other speakers were Rev. H. Mdziniso who

²¹⁵. The Times of Swaziland, 18 August, 1980, page 1, op.cit.,.

²¹⁶. Ndlovu Louis, OSM, 6 July 1994. Same interview.

was Acting Chairman of the Council of Churches of Swaziland and Mr. S.S. Mokgokong, a member of the Parliament in the government of Swaziland and others²¹⁷.

The tomb of Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane in the northern wing of the Cathedral near the tomb of Bishop Constantine Barneschi. When giving a talk at the funeral of Bishop Zwane, Archbishop Edward Cassidy said:

«Zwane had the ability to disagree profoundly with every one of us without losing our respect and our friendship»²¹⁸.

At the unveiling of the tomb stone a year later, Fr. Benedict Biagioli, OSM gave a talk saying:

«for us Zwane was a model of leadership in the social teaching of the Church»²¹⁹.

Zwane was concerned about justice, and he wanted the Church to be involved in the struggle for justice²²⁰.

²¹⁷. The Times of Swaziland, No156, page 1, op.cit.,.

²¹⁸. Flynn Francis, 4 July 1994. Same interview.

²¹⁹. Moitse Frances, 23 May 1995. Same interview.

²²⁰. Walshe Peter, 1995, *Prophetic Christianity and the Movement in South Africa*, Pietermaritzburg: Cluster

C O N C L U S I O N

People who knew Zwane well have described him as timid, generous and kind. Like most humble people, he saw no particular glamour in his career.

The greater the need to build a Community Serving Humanity, the greater the need to study more about Bishop Mandlenkhosi Zwane. There is a greater enthusiasm in the diocese of Manzini and in the entire Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference to empower the poor and to address the question of justice. On the other hand, small Christian communities that seek to create a link between the Bible and the concrete problems of daily life are mushrooming. Such communities need not to be neglected. They help in the development of local theology and in the promotion of inculturation.

The far sighted Bishop had during his episcopate encouraged Christians of different denominations to work together. The Christians of Swaziland are united in the search for continuing peace and ecumenical collaboration.

The Catholic Church ministers to people of different cultural backgrounds. Different cultures demand different approaches to theology. Zwane is indeed the pioneer of inculturation who wanted a creative encounter between the Gospel and the Swazi culture. That existence is guaranteed by an ongoing dialogue between the two. Being the first African Bishop, he tried to promote Catholicism in the diocese of Manzini. As a person who could read the signs of time; he realised that Catholicism could only be promoted if people understood and appreciated their own culture. As we have seen in our discussion, Zwane included inculturation in the process of evangelization. His main aim was to make believers authentic Christians who still maintain their culture.

The process of inculturation requires an ongoing critical review of the local culture. We did mention in our discussion that Zwane used to encourage seminars designed to study the Swazi culture. This

inculturate and evangelise themselves before seeking to inculturate and evangelise others.

As a good leader, Zwane had the skills to work with other community leaders in solving the complex problems faced by people in their communities. If these problems were not solved, the segments of the community would have been affected negatively.

Charity towards all men and women was a distinguishing feature in the character of Bishop Zwane, and it has been inherited by his successor and other people who are involved in various development projects in the diocese. He was ready to sacrifice his life for the relief of others. One of the most tenacious antagonists against whom tyrants regimes of Southern Africa had to contend with was Zwane due to the fact that he never feared to speak against oppression.

Finally, encouraging different Church groups is a viable way to be the Church in one's time and culture. This can be achieved if the leader is able to reflect critically on the life of the people. That should be followed by the sharing of ideas with other people.

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A P P E N D I X

EXTRACTS FROM INTERVIEWS

(i) Fr. Francis Flynn, SDB
Place: Salesian House, Manzini.
Date: 4 July 1994

Interviewer: Did Zwane show symptoms of leadership when he was very young?

Francis Flynn: When I came to Swaziland in 1954, they had a warm welcome for me at the Salesian School. I had been sent by my provincial from Ireland. The school had a three storey building. The welcome was led by Isaac Zwane, he was not a Catholic at that time, he had come from Matsapha school; later he became a Catholic. When Zwane came to the school, he was above the average age, and he was a very sensitive kind of person. At the end of the academic year there was music, dancing, Zwane participated, he was in charge of a musical group. The rector, Fr. Stubbins because of his love of music, had suggested to Zwane to have a musical group, the intention of the rector was that the group would keep the students away from doing bad things.

In the hostel there was no life at all; the boys used to sit down and do nothing. I spoke to Fr. Sturbbins, he said: «.....you have to get them moving». I used to walk with different groups of boys in town. Later on, we established a basket ball team. Zwane supported me in that; in everything I was doing he would support me. We were more like brothers in some ways rather than pupil-teacher. He took part in music, concerts and also in drama. We had a book on William Shakespeare's plays. Even though drama was new to him, he took a leading role. When we went to play football at Matsapha, he was a captain. Matsapha was the school he came from he had schooled there for a number of years before joining the Salesian School. He proved to be a good captain. The

headmaster at Matsapha was an old retired Yorkshire cricket player, we had a cricket team also. Zwane did not shine much in cricket. The former Yorkshire cricket player said: «Zwane is a real gentleman». In Manzini, we had a football match with the Nazarenes, they were stronger than us, and they were regarded as our enemies. Zwane was the referee, he did not give satisfaction to the Nazarenes who were losing. When the game was over he found himself in the middle of a group all talking to him. There was no boy who could not have run away. Zwane did not show his fear, though he was afraid. Though he was not a good footballer he was a good leader of the team (...).

(ii) Mrs. Nonceba Levine

Place: University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Date: 28 October 1994

Interviewer: How did you come to know Bishop Zwane?

Nonceba Levine: I met him [Mandlenkhosi Zwane] in the 70's when he was still a Priest at Mater Dolorosa Parish in Mbabane. At that time, I was working for the Swaziland Broadcasting and Information Service (SBS).

Interviewer: What did Zwane offer to the Church?

Nonceba Levine: He brought a new vision of looking at the Church. Those who belonged to the Catholic Church and those who did not belong to the Church were inspired by him to develop a new vision of the Church. The laity were encouraged to look at what the Church was suppose to be. Bishop Zwane wanted to purge the people from the conception of the Church they had: Most of the people believed that the Church had to be European. Zwane tried to make the people understand that the Church came for them.

Interviewer: How was his relationship with non-Catholics and do you remember some of the things he used to do with young people belonging to different Christian denominations?

Nonceba Levine: I am not a Catholic. I grew up in the Methodist Church; at home we were very staunch Methodists. As a Methodist, I did not feel discriminated by him [Zwane]. He knew that I was not a Catholic.

He wanted to challenge people especially the youth. He wanted to find out what the youth were thinking. For example, we talked of the cosmos influencing the life of a person. We [youth group] used to have debates. The arguments were also based on the books which had been read. Gradually, we developed friendship. Whenever he came for his announcements or preaching on the radio, he would challenge me and try to find out my thoughts about the subject. At a certain stage he got into the point where he said: «why don't we meet as a youth and discuss».

He had some ideas about the youth in the Church. He mentioned clearly that he never meant the youth in the Catholic Church only.

He said he had an idea of working with a youth. Mphumelelo Ginindza, and many other people including students from Mater Dolorosa High School worked with him. After a certain period of time had elapsed, he told us that he had an idea of translating the Catholic Catechism into siSwati language. He told us that he would not like to do the translation himself. He wanted the youth to be fully involved with the work of translation.

We did form a group, and translated the Catechism. According to him it was necessary for the youth to translate the Catechism that would be used by young Swazis.

I remember vividly that, after he had moved from Mbabane to Manzini, where he was to be consecrated to the episcopate, the translation of the catechism continued. I, Jabulane Mdziniso, Mphumelelo Ginindza and Dr. Thoko Ginindza, worked together. We moved on to other writings of the Church. I am not sure whether some of those translation are still being used.

During his consecration to the episcopate, the litany of all Saints which was sung was prepared by us.

We did not limit ourselves to translations: we tried to find out in our discussion the impact Christianity had on the local culture. And how the local people would try to bring a balance between the Swazi culture and the culture brought by Christianity in the Church whether they are churchgoers or not. We used to argue a lot whether he should change his liturgical vestments. During his consecration he was in half Swazi and half Roman vestments.

(ii) **Archbishop Denis Hurley, OMI**

Place: Cathedral, Durban.

Date: 14 May 1994

Interviewer: Did Zwane's joining of the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference have an impact on the activity of the Conference?

Denis Hurley: My recollection of Bishop Zwane was of a very able person a man of many gifts with a very pleasant personality it was easy to communicate with, he had a very sharp intelligence. He understood problems very well, he had original intelligence. He often came up with original views, he looked beyond the conventional, he was original in his thinking and reacted in that way to many problems. One of his greatest advantages is that it was very easy for him to live in two different cultures: that is the African culture and the culture of the Europeans. The two cultures were appreciated by him. Zwane was very interested in the African culture and was very enthusiastic. The Western culture was appreciated by him, he would give Western views. This made him to be able to bring the two cultures together in his mind and this played a major role in his comprehension and communication. He was what was called in those days a progressive in the Church, in his attitudes and in his theology. He was progressive because he wanted to see the faith relating much intensely to the on

going experiences of life. It is unfortunate that he died while he was still young. He had a great opportunity opened up before him. I was in Rome in the 1930's, in those days I discovered in the two Universities I was attending²²¹, I noticed that it was quite easy to make the acquaintance of certain aspects of the teaching of the church. It became a second nature to me to be interested on the social teaching of the church. Outside the Theological School there was a great phenomenon of the Young Christian Workers. Founded and promoted by a Belgian priest. It had profound effect on the church, especially on catechetical teaching and on the theological study because it stress that christians should look at the situation and the facts of life christians find themselves in. That was a huge conversion for the Church, that mentality had been in the Church already in the early 1930's. Bishop Zwane entered in that mentality easily. That mentality reached the climatic point of culmination in the Second Vatican Council with the promulgation of the Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the modern world, **Gaudium et spes**, though it was not on the agenda.

The Bishop's Conference was united in its acceptance for the necessity of change. The events of 1976 made some bishops to be interested in young people. Archbishop Fitzgerald started visiting young people who were in prison. Zwane's attitudes were confirmed by what Archbishop Fitzgerald was doing. Prior to the events of 1976, Archbishop Fitzgerald was not active. In those days the question of inculturation was not far advanced. If he was alive he would have played an important role in the present synod.

²²¹. Angelicum Pontifical University and Gregorian Pontifical University.