An Analysis of the Catholic *Magisterium*'s Theology of Interreligious Dialogue and Its Influence on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in the Archdiocese of Lusaka–Zambia since Vatican II

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I, Jones Kawisha, declare that:

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Jones Kawisha		01 April 2025
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Prof. Lilian C. Siwila		01 April 2025
Supervisor	Signature	Date

Dedication

This work is dedicated to my late young sister, Esther Kawisha, for her love of education. May her soul continue to rest in peace.

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to thank Almighty God for the gift of religious diversity. It has allowed me to produce this work. Secondly, I want to thank the Society of the Missionaries of Africa for allowing me to do my PhD studies and for their unwavering support. Thirdly, in a particular way, I would like to thank Prof. Lilian Siwila, who agreed to direct my research. Her theological direction and encouragement were critical to this work. Fourthly, I am grateful to all those who accompanied and supported me in this intellectual journey: Dr. Andrew Chilombo, Dr. Wilbert Gobbo, Dr. Quinbert Kinunda, Dr. Michael Mapulanga, Fr. Ignatius Malwa, Fr. Robbin Simbeye, Fr. Daniel Nana, Fr. Albert Chilufya, Fr. Christian Mulenga and Fr. Francis Barnes. I also want to thank Dr. Felix Phiri and Dr. Nelly Mwale for providing me with their writings on Islam in Zambia and Dr. Karen Buckenham for editing my thesis. Fifthly, I want to thank the parish priests and the curates who allowed me to conduct my research in their respective parishes. I am also grateful to all the participants from St. Lawrence Parish, Good Shepherd Parish, St. John Paul II Parish, St. Ignatius Parish, Matero Parish, Mary Immaculate Parish, the Muslim community of Makeni and the Muslim community of Chilenje, Burma Road Mosque. Sixthly, I want to thank my Merrivale Formation House community for their support and encouragement. Thanks also to St. Joseph's Theological Institute: lecturers, students, and the auxiliary staff for their intellectual and moral support. In particular, I want to thank Fr. Patrick O'Sullivan for proofreading the entire work (from the initial proposal to the last draft). His comments and suggestions were greatly appreciated. Finally, thanks to my father, Robert Kawisha, my mother, Esther Mshanga Kawisha, my siblings, my nephews, and my nieces for their support in my missionary journey and intellectual formation. Thanks to my friends and family.

Abstract

This thesis focuses on analyzing the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue since Vatican II within the *kenosis*, and peaceful coexistence and friendship frameworks and their influence on Catholic-Muslim dialogue (dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and Muslims). From the Church Fathers, *kenosis* or incarnational theology underscores the *kenotic* nature of the Catholic Church. Thus, the Church must be humble and faithful to its identity – to its singularity. In being humble, she must be open to religious otherness. The growth of Islam in Lusaka, Zambia, provokes a theological reflection on the relevance and influence of the documents of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Through a qualitative research methodology inquiry, this thesis brings to the fore that the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue still need to be brought down to the grassroots. Many Catholic lay faithful are unaware of the different Magisterial documents that promote the coexistence of different religions and hence, unaware of the theological stances of the Magisterium on religious alterity. Therefore, the research proposes a theological shift in document communication from parish-centered to Small Christian Communities (*ifitente*) centered. This shift highlights three essential elements for a *kenotic* Church: (I) Interreligious-oriented Small Christian Communities will narrow the gap between the documents of the Magisterium and their knowledge by the Catholic faithful and consequently their translation into the action plan; (II) it will underpin the authentic synodality of the Catholic Church. There is no Synodality of the Church without the involvement of the grassroots in the mission of interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue; and (III) Small Christian Communities will integrate the teachings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue and the epistemology of the local people on religious otherness, which provides a framework for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Ad Gentes	AG
Africae Munus	AM
Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa	AMECEA
Asian Integral Pastoral Approach	ASIPA
Byzantine Textform	BYZ
Communio Et Progressio	CP
Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith	CDF
Christifideles Laici	CL
Dei Verbum	DV
Dialogue and Mission	DM
Dialogue and Proclamation	DP
Dialogue in Truth and Charity: Pastoral Orientations for Interreligious Dialogue	DTC
Dignitatis Humanae	DH
Dominum et Vivificantem	DVi
Dominus Iesus	DI
Instruction *Donum Veritatis*	IDV
Eccesiam Suam	ES
Ecclesia in Africa	EA
Ecclesia In Medio Oriente	EMO
Evangelii Gaudium	EG
Evangelii Nuntiandi	EN
Faith & Encounter Centre Zambia	FENZA
Fratelli Tutti	FT
Gaudium et Spes	GS
Gravissimum Educationis	GE
Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together	HFD
Inter Mirifica	IM
Laudato Si	LS
Lumen Gentium	LG
Maximum Illud	MI

Mysterium Ecclesiae	ME
Nostra Aetate	NA
Optatam Totius	OT
Parish Pastoral Council	PPC
Pastores Dabo Vobis	PDV
Querida Amazonia	QA
Redemptor Hominis	RH
Redemptoris Missio	RM
Sacrosanctum Concilium	SC
Small Christian Community	SCC
Tertio Millennio Adveniente	TMA
The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church	PC
Unitatis Redintegration	UR
United Independence Party	UNIP
Ut Unum Sint	UUS
Veritatis Gaudium	VG
Zambian Conference of Catholic Bishops	ZCCB
Zambia Statistics Agency	ZamStats
Zambia Episcopal Conference	ZEC
Zambia Interfaith Network Group	ZINGO

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Chapter One

General Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Since the birth of Islam, the relationship between Catholics and Muslims has moved from confrontation to mutual understanding. Since Vatican II, efforts to promote interreligious dialogue have resulted in growth, tolerance, and acceptance. Renowned theologians such as Karl Rahner (Schleiermacher 2010:91), Jacques Dupuis (O'Collins 2013:167-180), Hans Küng (Dupuis 1997:153-155), John Paul II (O'Collins 2013:169-176; Dupuis 2001:69) and Pope Francis (Lefebure 2018:303-327) are often acknowledged for their contributions and insights that aim at promoting a theology of interreligious dialogue. In several countries worldwide, some dioceses and episcopal conferences have endeavored to take forward the vision and some theological insights of Vatican II. *Nostra Aetate* is singled out as being an important document that paves the way for solidarity and mutual understanding among men and women regardless of their current religious affiliation or cultural background. However, the vision and aspirations of Vatican II of promoting unity and love among people (NA 1) are still far from being fully realized. Religious persecutions in some Muslim and Christian countries call for critical reflection to undo tensions and unnecessary conflicts among people. In this perspective, this study looks at Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese, Zambia.

1.2 The Rationale for Undertaking the Research

This study aims at examining the influence of the writings of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Therefore, it focuses on the analysis of the documents of the Catholic Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and their influence on the relationship between Catholics and Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese, Zambia. I chose the Magisterium as my point of departure because of the importance of its teachings on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular, for Catholics, and its contribution to Christian theology of religious otherness. The writings of the Magisterium provide a framework within which to study and analyze Catholic-Muslim dialogue from a Catholic point of view.

1.2.1 Scope of the Research Study

This work analyzes and examines the theology of the Catholic Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular within the frameworks of *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship. From this theological perspective, I have analyzed how the corpus of Magisterial teaching resonates with the reality in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. In a country like Zambia, where the Muslim population is steadily increasing, interreligious dialogue should be a central concern of the whole Church and one in which every Catholic should be involved in one way or another. Because of the current scenario, the relationship between Christians and Muslims is often characterized by fear and inherited attitudes of suspicion, religious superiority, competition, and mutual mistrust. In the world today, the value and need for dialogue, cooperation, tolerance, and appreciation of difference are being promoted in politics, religion, and human affairs. Against this background, the Church cannot remain unconcerned and detached from its deep conviction that interreligious dialogue is necessary. This conviction underpins the scope of this research on the dialogue between Catholics and Muslims within the Archdiocese of Lusaka.

Therefore, I studied and analyzed some prominent Catholic Magisterial documents which have emerged in the wake of Vatican II and evaluated their influence on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese. In other words, the study investigates how these Magisterial documents have shaped the thinking and attitudes of Catholics in their determination to promote a productive Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Consequently, the research examines the situation/context and factors affecting the Catholic-Muslim relationship in Lusaka. This helps to discover if the writings of the Magisterium concerning Catholic-Muslim dialogue are successful or convincing and why. And if they are not successful or convincing to Catholics, what are the underlying issues in the Catholic-Muslim relationship in Lusaka?

1.3 The Magisterium

It is essential, after discussing the scope of the research, to explain what the Magisterium is. According to the Catholic Church, Magisterium refers "*almost exclusively to the teaching office of the pope and bishops or to these men themselves*"[1] (Glazier & Hellwig 19945:36); or, simply, it refers to "*the teaching role and authority of the hierarchy*" (Komonchak, Collins & Lane

[1] 'Themselves' in this quotation refers to the Roman pontiff and the whole college of bishops, those who assume the teaching authority of the Church or the hierarchical structure of the Catholic Church instituted through apostolic succession. According to *Lumen Gentium*, the Episcopal consecration has been transmitted from the apostles to today (LG 21).

1991:617). A comprehensive and more detailed explanation of the Magisterium is given in *Lumen Gentium*, the dogmatic constitution of the Church. The collegiality of bishops is the supreme teaching authority of the Catholic Church (LG 18-23). The bishops' teachings in communion with the Roman Pontiff are to be respected by all Catholics as witnesses to divine truth and Catholic truth (LG 25). Rightly put, the Pontiff and bishops are brothers in ministry (UUS 95) who form a college as successors of the Apostles (LG 29). Consequently, individual bishops exercise ordinary teaching authority in their local churches. Therefore, "*In matters of faith and morals, the bishops speak in the name of Christ and the faithful are to accept their teaching and adhere to it with religious assent*" (LG 25). The dogmatic constitution further underlines that submission of mind and will have to be shown in a special way to the authentic Magisterium of the Roman Pontiff even when he does not speak *ex cathedra* (LG 25). For Sullivan (1983:154), this underlines the obligation of the faithful to accept and embrace or adhere to the teachings according to the pope's mind. However, the teachings of the Magisterium in matters of faith and morals are abiding for all Catholics when taught with extraordinary teaching authority[2].

According to the Instruction *Donum Veritatis*, on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian (IDV), by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), the Magisterium is at the service of the Word of God, and its function arises directly from the economy of the faith (IDV 14). "*They have been entrusted then with the task of preserving, explaining, and spreading the Word of God of which they are servants*" (IDV 14). Their primary task is evangelization (RM 63). The Roman Pontiff (the pope) is the servant of the servants (*servus servorum*). The response of the faithful to the Magisterial teachings must be 'religious *obsequium'*, meaning religious loyalty or submission or with due respect[3]. For Sullivan (1983:164), religious *obsequium* means "*to make an honest and sustained effort to overcome any contrary opinion I might have, and to achieve a sincere assent of my mind to this teaching*." Different documents are used to communicate these teachings of the Magisterium or the doctrines: the council documents, encyclical letters, apostolic letters and exhortations.

Thus, this research is concerned with interreligious dialogue, which is within matters of faith. Since there are several Magisterial documents on the relationship between the Catholic Church

[2] The extraordinary teaching authority, also called infallible teaching authority, is teaching through either an ecumenical council or a teaching that is proclaimed through the communion of the bishops around the world with the Roman Pontiff.

[3] Sullivan (1983:159) gives different interpretations of *obsequium*; for example, Abbott Flannery understands it as 'submission,' and Bishop Butler understands it as 'due respect'.

and Muslims or on interreligious dialogue (including a declaration of an ecumenical council, *Nostra Aetate,* and several encyclical letters), this work seeks to investigate the influence of the writing of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Any Catholic theological work is done in communion with the Magisterium, which is responsible for preserving the deposit of faith (IDV 6). However, it is a task of theology to analyze the consistency of these Magisterial teachings about the concrete experiences of the faithful. This is because the Magisterium does not overlook the responsibility of individuals, groups, and communities in the mission (RM 61). Consequently, the pastoral participation of Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese in the mission of interreligious dialogue cannot be overlooked.

1.4 Context of this Research Study

The research was done in the Lusaka Catholic Archdiocese in the province of Lusaka[4] - the most populated and economically developed province of Zambia and one of the fastest-growing cities in Southern Africa. Its economic growth is due to its location, which is the central part of the country. According to the 2022 census[5], the population of Lusaka is 3 079, 964 compared to the population of 2, 191 225 in 2010. Lusaka's population comprises people from different parts of Zambia and other countries, explaining the presence of various religions. Both the Catholic Church and Islam enjoy steady growth in Lusaka.

Lusaka was elevated to an Archdiocese in 1959. The Archdiocese of Lusaka is a metropolitan archdiocese with different dioceses under its suffragan. According to Fahlhusch *et al.* (1999;844), the word diocese comes from *dioikesis*, which means housekeeping, government. In the Catholic Church, it designates local or particular churches or territories of the people of God entrusted to a bishop for pastoral care with the help of the presbyterate. In a diocese, the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church is present and operative (Can 369). The diocese is divided into parishes that are regrouped into deaneries (Cross & Livingstone 1983:404). Each parish is divided into SCCs (*ifitente*) that participate in the one mission of Christ. Different parishes in the Lusaka Archdiocese have well-established SCCs.

Since Lusaka is a metropolitan Archdiocese with an extensive territory, this research only involved six parishes. I considered different factors when choosing the six parishes: their

[4] Zambia has 10 administrative provinces: Lusaka, Copper Belt, Central, Western, North Western, Eastern, Northern, Luapula, Muchinga and Southern.
[5] The statistics are found on the website of Zambia Statistics Agency: https://www.zamstats.gov.zm.

contact with Muslims, the congregation of its clergy, and the socioeconomic situation of the area where the parish is situated.

1.5 Research Background and Motivation

I was born and raised in Zambia, a self-proclaimed Christian nation. Despite the presence of other faiths (African Traditional religions [ATR], Islam, Hinduism, etc.), President Chiluba declared Zambia as a Christian nation in 1991. However, this declaration has been controversial. It has received some criticism from some religious leaders like the Zambian Episcopal Conference (ZEC)[6]. According to Njovu (2002:47), ZEC produced a pastoral letter highlighting that a nation can only be Christian by deeds (acts of love, justice, care for the poor) and not just by a declaration. And Cheyeka (2012:53) notes that Muslims cite high levels of moral decay in the country as indications that Zambia is far from being a 'Christian Nation'. The meaning of the declaration remains unclear. The declaration is theologically and constitutionally unclear for Muwowo and Buitendag (2010:1). It seems to me that the declaration was more political or constitutional than theological. A declaration by a president, even though it might be included in a country's constitution, does not justify a country being a Christian nation.

My interest in doing this study is motivated, first, by the context of my country, Zambia (a Christian nation where Islam is proliferating); second, by my two-year pastoral experience among the Muslims in Mali, and 5-year experience of my involvement in interreligious dialogue with Muslims in Algeria. The aforementioned pastoral experience eventually motivated me to pursue a master's degree in the Theology of Religions, Missiology, and Interreligious Dialogue.

My encounters with some Zambian Catholics give the impression that some have a negative view of Muslims and Islam. Therefore, looking at the context of Lusaka and considering that the Roman Catholic Church is among the country's most prominent and most influential churches, which has promoted interreligious dialogue since Vatican II, I find it essential to research the Catholic-Muslim relationship. In addition, after my experience of some years of terrorism[7] in Algeria, I feel that research in Catholic-Muslim dialogue is fundamental.

[6] ZEC has now become The Zambia Conference of Catholic Bishops.

[7] I arrived in the Northern part of Algeria, Tizi-Ouzou, in 2008 as a young priest. At that time, the dark years of terrorism were coming to an end, but they were still a number of terrorist attacks every month. It was in the same community that 4 of my confreres Missionaries of Africa were killed in 1994. Many Catholics questioned

1.6 Significance of the Study

There is a great deal of literature of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue. However, this empirical study explores the context of Lusaka, where, due to the growth of Islam, Catholic-Muslim dialogue faces challenges such as a lack of communication of Magisterial documents from top to bottom (in the sense of the Catholic hierarchy), lack of reading culture, land problem, and poverty. This study proposes a framework that resonates with the epistemology of the context to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese as its contribution to the theology of religious otherness. Therefore, the importance of this study is to understand the influence of the documents of the Magisterium on dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese, which will lead to proposing a contextual framework. Hereafter, the study will contribute to promoting Catholic-Muslim peaceful coexistence and friendship in Lusaka.

1.7 Research Problem

In Zambia today, especially in the city of Lusaka, Islam is growing at a fast rate. This has caused fear among Zambian Christians because of their ambivalent image of Islam, which is also circulated by the media and the film industry. Thus, the spread of Islam in Zambia leaves people with mixed feelings. Some associate its spread with Muslim extremist groups whose primary concern is to Islamize the Southern African region. Dr Nevers Mumba, a Zambian politician and former evangelist, is reported to have said: "*Zambia is under siege. We are being invaded by the Muslim religion at an amazing speed. Spiritually speaking Zambia has no direction. ... Zambia must decide if it is a Christian nation or not. Those in leadership must put in black and white that Zambia is established on Christian values and not on the values of all religions*" (Cheyeka 2012:54).

Some Zambians may look at Islam as a violent and missionary religion that might even disturb the peace of their country. According to Cheyeka (2012:54), the fear of the growth of Islam in Zambia led to the declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation in 1991. Against this background, a question about how Muslims are currently viewed in the Lusaka Archdiocese and Zambia must be answered. Thus, this empirical research investigates the aforementioned problem.

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my choice of Algeria for my mission. In 2009, I joined the group RIBAT ES SALAM (Bond of peace), a group of Christians and Muslims for dialogue of religious experiences. This also pushes me to do a research on Christian-Muslim dialogue in the context of my country, Zambia. Although I am a Catholic priest, I have come to appreciate and love Islam.

On the other hand, the Catholic Magisterium has, since Vatican II, produced several documents on the relationship between Catholics and Muslims that encouraged collaboration and mutual understanding between the Church and other religions. Furthermore, Vatican II asks Catholics to look at Muslims with respect and esteem (NA 3). But one needs to question if the attitude of Catholics towards Muslims has changed. Consequently, this has motivated me to begin questioning what influence such documents have on Catholics concerning Catholic-Muslim dialogue. According to Mvumbi (2006:155), the Christian-Muslim dialogue is the building up of a relationship between Christians and Muslims. It is also an attempt to overcome their doctrinal and mutual prejudices and to broaden areas of mutual agreement as far as possible. It is both urgent and necessary; it is not optional.

1.8 Key Research Question

To what extent have the documents of the Catholic Magisterium on dialogue with Muslims broadened, influenced, or shaped the mindset of Catholics in their commitment to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese since Vatican II?[8]

1.8.1 Research Sub-Questions

1. What is the theology of the Catholic Magisterial teaching on interreligious dialogue?
2. Are the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue effectively communicated to the laity?
3. How do Catholics view Islam and Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese?
4. Given a steady increase in the number of followers of Islam in Zambia, to what extent has the Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka used the Magisterial Documents to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue?

1.8.2 Objectives

1. To examine the theology of the Catholic Magisterial teaching on interreligious dialogue.

[8] In this research question, 'Catholic' refers to a member of the Roman Catholic Church. It is not used in the sense of Catholicity in historical creeds.

2. To examine if the Magisterial Documents on interreligious dialogue are effectively communicated to the laity.

3. To assess how Catholics view Islam and Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

4. To critically assess the extent to which the Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka has used the Magisterial Documents to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

1.9 Theoretical Frameworks

Two theoretical frameworks support the research: (1) *Kenosis,* and (2) Peaceful Coexistence and Friendship Frameworks. The research underlines that there is an inherent relationship between the two frameworks. *Kenosis* is understood within the Catholic incarnational theology. It brings to the fore the importance of humility in interreligious dialogue or in the relationship between Catholics and other religious communities. Humility leads to a peaceful coexistence and friendship. Therefore, this research shows that the writings of the Magisterium must be understood within these frameworks, and consequently, they are the lenses through which I analyzed the influence of the writings of the Magisterium on Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

1.10 Research Methodology

A qualitative research approach was used aligned with the key research question and objectives. A qualitative research method is both a creative practice and an analytical one. The researcher has to make the intentional decisions necessary to transform interviews into a complete study (Vanover & Mihas 2022:1). The purpose of this research is to understand the phenomenon of the influence of the writings of the Magisterium on Catholics through the understanding of the participants' or key informants' and informants' experiences and perceptions. In the methodological chapter, I have given my decisions, which are essential to transforming the data collected through interviews into a study. All the methodological instruments used have qualitative objectives. Therefore, the research tries to understand the depth of the collected data, not the generalization of the results.

1.11. Limitations

The scope of this research is limited to studying the influence of the Catholic Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. Therefore, it does not tackle the perspectives of different Christian denominations on interreligious dialogue or how they view

Muslims and Christian-Muslim dialogue. As pointed out, Zambia is a self-declared Christian nation with many Christian churches (Mainline, Pentecostal, and African Independent churches). However, the interest of this research is in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. The research focused on Catholics to render it practical and precise.

1.12 Structure of the Study

Chapter One: General Introduction

This is the current chapter. It sets the background to the research problem, location, my research questions and objectives, and my limitations. It gives my research's general perspective, including my chapter outlines.

Chapter Two: Literature Review on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue

The chapter reviews the literature. In the quest to understand Catholic-Muslim dialogue today, it is relevant to first understand its past. This helps to understand the paradigm shifts in Catholic-Muslim dialogue from the perspective of the Church. Therefore, the chapter will review the literature on Catholic-Muslim polemics at the beginning of Islam, then the literature in the writings of the Magisterium from Vatican II to Pope Francis, and finally, the literature on Islam and the Catholic Church in Zambia.

Chapter Three: Understanding *Kenosis* and the Peaceful Coexistence and Friendship Frameworks

This chapter seeks to grasp the consequences of the incarnation and abasement of Jesus Christ through which we discover his unconditional love for humanity. In this sense, it acknowledges that one's glory is not found through dominating, but through *agape* and humility, which must serve as the framework of interreligious dialogue. The chapter also underlines the framework of peaceful coexistence and friendship in interreligious dialogue, which goes together with the *kenosis* theory.

Chapter Four: Interreligious Dialogue in the Documents of the Magisterium

This chapter focuses on the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular. Therefore, it analyzes some of the documents within the frameworks of *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship from Vatican II to Pope Francis.

Chapter Five: Research Methodology

The chapter highlights the methodological roadmap of the research. I used the qualitative research approach. Therefore, this chapter justifies the decisions that aligned with my research approach, such as data collection and analysis methods.

Chapter Six: Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data was analyzed using the NVivo software. According to Vanover, Mihas and Saldana (2022:xiii), "*Analyzing data refers to a close reading of data, an examination of the component parts, listening and relistening to what we have gathered, and using practices, such as coding and memo writing, to systematically discern what we are reading, based on a priori knowledge or what one might call 'emergent' discernment.*" Data was gathered through individual interviews, focus groups, and questionnaires from six parishes in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Data were interpreted. Vanover, Mihas and Saldana (2022:xiii) underline that "*Interpreting data refers to conceptualizing or making larger meaning of what we have examined. Here, we tell the meta-story, or build themes that tie together the seemingly disparate threads across data*." Therefore, this chapter discusses the themes that emerged from interpreting the empirical data.

Chapter Seven Discussion of Findings

The chapter provides a theological discussion of the findings. It discusses how the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue/Catholic-Muslim dialogue are communicated in the Archdiocese. It brings to the fore the implementation of the Magisterial documents within the pastoral plan of the different parishes (the communication or failure of communicating). The chapter also critically discusses how Catholics view and relate to Muslims in Lusaka. Thus, the chapter discusses the influence of Islam's "steady growth" on interreligious dialogue in Lusaka. Finally, after discussing how the documents of the Magisterium are communicated and how Catholics view Muslims, this chapter provides a theological basis for communicating the different documents that resonate with the reality of Lusaka to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Chapter Eight: The *Ubuntunse* Framework for Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese

This chapter provides a theological framework to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka. The chapter tries to conceptualize interreligious dialogue

according to the context of Lusaka that would promote unity in diversity and harmony. It considers the context of Lusaka or the local epistemology. It encapsulates my theological proposal of how Catholic-Muslim dialogue can be lived in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

Chapter Nine: General Conclusion

This chapter gives the general conclusion of the research. It highlights my significant findings. Interreligious dialogue is not just necessary for the Archdiocese; it is a way of being a church today in Zambia.

1.13 Conclusion

This chapter has underlined the rationale and scope of the study. It has highlighted the research problem, motivation, context (location of the study), key research question and subquestions, objectives, and structure of the study. Furthermore, it has discussed what the Catholic Magisterium is. This sets the tone for understanding the Catholic-Muslim dialogue, which is underpropped by the writings of this teaching authority of the Catholic Church. After this introduction of the research, the next chapter discusses the literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Chapter Two

Literature Review on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue

2.1 Introduction

In chapter one, I have given the general introduction of my research. In chapter two, I delve into presenting the existing literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Given that there is substantial literature on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim, the literature reviewed in this chapter is aligned with the research problem. However, it must be noted that, although there is enough literature on Christian-Muslim dialogue, there is very little literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Zambia.

The chapter is divided into 3 parts: (1) The First Catholic-Muslim encounters; (2) Contemporary literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Magisterium; and (3) Islam and the Catholic Church in Zambia. The first part discusses the historical context of Catholic-Muslim dialogue. The history of the Catholic-Muslim relationship is shaped by theological, political, economic, and social issues that still impact it up to this time. In the past, the Christian-Muslim encounter was rather conflictual. Gaudeul (2000) underlines the theological polemics between Christians and Muslims that characterized their first relationships. This approach needed a more critical analysis of otherness. The second part discusses literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Magisterium. There has been a paradigm shift from Ecclesio-centric perception of religious otherness to an inclusivist perception of religious otherness within the Catholic Church. Today, the Catholic-Muslim dialogue must be lived in the greatest respect of the faith of the other (McBrien 1994:386; de La Hougue 2011:301). The third part discusses literature on Islam and the Catholic Church in Zambia.

2.2 First Catholic-Muslim Encounters

The discussion in this section is based on the literature on John of Damascus since he was among the first to write about Islam from a controversial point of view. This is important in the study because in the context of Zambia, the exponential growth of Islam is seen as a recent phenomenon. Mushangalusa (2017:29) has argued that "*John of Damascus' writings on Islam could serve as a model for any scholar who investigates the area of inter-religious dialogue between Christians and Muslims*." In a way, John of Damascus presents to us the subject of the first Christian-Muslim encounters. Sahas (in Janosik 2009:21) shows that John's writings on Islam made it known to the Christian community and made interfaith dialogue part of history.

John of Damascus was concerned with defending the Orthodox faith (Mushangalusa 2017:211) and fighting against the deviation of doctrines (Ducellier 1996:103); however, this is also common to other Christians who encountered Islam in its early centuries. Gaudeul (2000a:33-37) gives examples of Theodore Abu Qurra (740-825) and Catholicos Timothy I (728-823). John of Damascus saw Islam not only as a new religion but also as a new heresy. He explained the Islamic faith from the lens of his Christian faith.

2.2.1 John of Damascus

John was probably born about 675 or earlier in Damascus (Thomas *et al*. 2009:295; Schadler 2018:99). Gaudeul (2000a:30), Coz (1992:45) and Küng (2007:8) affirm that his family worked for the financial administration of the Umayyad caliphs in Damascus. His family may have been originally from Syria but was immersed in Greek culture (Le Coz 1992:43; Mushanalusa 2017:194). John's family situation allowed him to be familiar with the Muslim aristocracy, which permitted him to deepen his knowledge of the Arabic language and his knowledge of Islam.

2.2.2 The Religious Situation

The Church before and at the time of John of Damascus was divided. It had faced various theological problems, such as the controversy surrounding the discussion of the equality between the persons of the Trinity (The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) and the definition of the divine and human natures of Jesus (Christological problems). These theological differences sometimes led to disagreements and even divisions within the Church. Those who deviated from the doctrine of the Church were called 'heretics'. A heresy, in one way or another, is a deviation from the doctrine of the Church. Davie *et al*. (2016:396) define it as the "*teaching or belief which claims to be Christian and yet is contrary to orthodox doctrine*." For St. Augustine, it is an "*erroneous doctrine, introduced by men, who in defiance of the authority of the Christian Community, arrogated to themselves the right to teach*" (Muller 1956:42). Heresies have influenced Christian thinking and have also nuanced Christians' view of other beliefs. The birth of Islam coincides with the era of heresies.

Le Coz (1992:24) points out that since the councils of Ephesus in 431 and Chalcedon in 451, Christians were divided into three Churches which were in bitter conflict with each other, and each of which was soliciting the support of ruling powers in its efforts to eliminate the others. The basis of this division was Christological. At the Council of Ephesus, the Monophysites

prevailed. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon condemned the Monophysites of Euthyches (the patriarch of Byzantium) because he radicalized the doctrine of Cyril, affirming that there is only one nature in Christ (Le Coz 1992:25). He emphasized the divine nature of Christ to the point that his human nature was subsumed into his divine nature (McBrien 1994:474)[9]. Therefore, the verb had only the divine nature. However, the Council of Chalcedon reaffirmed the formulation of Nicea (325), Constantinople (381), and the *Tome of Leo* (449)[10] on the nature of Christ (McBrien 1994:476).

In the 7th century, the Chalcedonian Church now dominated the Byzantine Empire; this era saw a resurgence of certain Christological disagreements. The Chalcedonian church again found itself shaken by the heresy provoked by Sergius, the patriarch of Constantinople (McBrien 1994:479). The emperor, Heraclius, wanted to reconcile the churches (Le Coz 1992:24) and offered his support to Sergius, who created a Christological heresy, *Monthelitism* (one will) or *Monenergism* (one action) (McBrien 1994:479). This heresy argued that if there is one will in Christ, there is one nature (McBrien 1994:479). Thus, it further separated the Christian faithful of the Council of Chalcedon Orthodoxy and the Monophysite Christians.

Goddard (2000:14) reports bitter opposition among the three: the Monophysite Christians, the Orthodox Christians of the Council of Chalcedon, and the Nestorians. This rivalry was both theological and political. The Monophysites tended to see the Muslim conquest as a liberation from the persecution of the Byzantines, while the Chalcedonians were considered to be supporters of the Byzantine Emperor. For some Monophysites, Islam was sent by God to set them free. Their arrival was, therefore, seen as an opportunity rather than as a threat (Le Coz 1992:26).

In 431, the Council of Ephesus condemned the priest Nestorius (McBrien 1994:471). His heresy consisted of distinguishing two natures in Christ, each having its own personal manifestation (McBrien 1994:472). Thus, for him, the Virgin Mary was not the mother of God

[9] To understand Monophysitism, McBrien (1994:470) has highlighted that we need to go back to the controversy that broke out in Antioch around 360 which saw the emergence of two distinct and opposed parties that led to Christological definitions at the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. McBrien (1994:470) writes, "*on the one side, there were those who regarded the unity of the Word and the human in Christ rather loosely and who were intent upon defending his full humanity. This was the Antiochene school, and Nestorianism was its extreme expression. On the other side, there were those who tended to exaggerate the unity of Christ to the point where, as in Apollinaris, the human soul was entirely supplanted. They were intent upon defending Christ's divinity. This was the Alexandrian school, and Monophysitism was its extreme expression*."

[10] According to McBrien (1994:475), the *Tome of Leo*, Pope Leo the Great gave the clearest expression of the doctrine of the incarnation, that is, in Christ there are two distinct natures united in one person.

but only the mother of Jesus with human nature (the man Jesus). Le Coz (1992:27) highlights that the Church that followed Nestorius bore the name of the fallen patriarch, and its members sought refuge in Mesopotamia, then located in Persian territory. Both the Nestorians and the Monophysites had adopted the Syriac language.

In conclusion, it is clear that the Christians were divided into three groups at the time of John of Damascus. This disharmony remained one of the factors that allowed Islam to conquer the Byzantine Empire which had been weakened by such divisions. Le Coz (1992:53) notes that, with the Muslim conquest, the different Christian Churches, instead of coming together and uniting against the foreigners or Muslims, accentuated their division with each Christian community trying to obtain the favours from the established Power (rulers) to the detriment of the others. As already said, the crux of these divisions was Christology and this problem had persisted and taken different forms for a few centuries.

2.2.4 Presentations of John's Writings

John of Damascus' writings on Islam can be found in two of his works: *The Book of Heresies* (*De Haeresibus*); and *The Controversy between a Muslim and a Christian*[11]. The *Book of Heresies* treats and considers Islam as one of many heresies. Islam is treated in Chapter 100[12] (Gaudeul 2000a:30; Küng 2007:8). Thomas *et al*. (2009:298) have pointed out that Chapter 100 is the longest and most important in the whole book on heresies. John shows that the Ishmaelites (Muslims) were idolaters and Muhammad was a false prophet influenced by an Arian monk (Thomas *et al*. 2009:298). *The Controversy between a Muslim and a Christian* is an apologetic work of the Orthodox faith. Both these works date from the time when John was at the monastery.

The work on *The Controversy between a Muslim and a Christian*[13] is found in different sources (Le Coz 1992:80; Deferrari *et al*. 1958: xx). It is addressed to Christians so as to provide them with possible answers to objections and questions being raised by Muslims (Gaudeul

[11] Although this book is attributed to John of Damascus, it is not agreed among the scholars if the work comes from him. Küng (2007:8) argues that the *Disputatio Christiani et Saraceni* does not come from John of Damascus. However, scholars such as Gaudeul (2000b:24) attribute the work to John of Damascus. For this reason, in this work, much of John's information that is discussed is from his work on Heresies, which is part of his work, *Fount of Knowledge*. This work was composed, according to Deferrari *et al*. (1958:xvii) at the request of Cosmas, bishop of Maiuma.

[12] Thomas *et al*. (2009:297) write, *"[t]he precise date of composition is unknown. It is part of the Pēgē gnōseōs that was completed after 743, but it is possible that several chapters were written earlier*."

[13] To use the exact translation from Latin, '*Disputation between a Saracen and a Christian'*. We have used Muslim instead of Saracen for the purpose of comprehension as it is the word used today.

2000a:31). In each dialogue, the Muslim always asks the question, and the Christian replies. With this way of presenting things, the author reveals his intention to offer ready-made answers to Christians in the face of Muslim objections and questions.

John of Damascus called Muslims Ishmaelites or Hagarenes (Dressler *et al*. 1999:158). The name "Muslim" was not yet in the vocabulary at the time of John. They were called Ishmaelites because they are the descendants of Ishmael, son of Abraham and Hagar (Gaudeul 2000b:20). Muslims were also called Saracens, apparently for having been sent away by Sarah (Dressler *et al*. 1999:158; Gaudeul 2000b:20). Thus, the word "Saracen" in the context of John of Damascus, meant dishonored by Sarah. Conversely, it is essential to note that according to Adamec (2017:389) "*[b]y the 12th century, the term 'Saracen' came to be used as an ethnic and religious term for Muslims. They were described as dark skinned compared to the lighter-skinned Christians*."

According to John of Damascus, the Saracens belong to a misguided religion that misleads people by announcing the antichrist to them. They were also an idolatrous people who worshiped the morning star and Aphrodite (Gaudeul 2000b:20). They embraced a false doctrine preached by a false prophet Muhammad (Gaudeul 2002:20; Ducellier (1996:105), who, having had knowledge of the Old Testament and the New Testament by chance and following a discussion with an Arian monk, developed his heresy (Dressler *et al*. 1999:158). Janosik (2009:100) highlights that "*in linking Muhammad to Arianism, John perhaps is indicating that he recognizes the essence of the Muslim objection to Christianity since Arianism denies that Jesus Christ is consubstantial with the Father, making Jesus only a created being, much as the Muslims argued that God could not have any associates*." This contradicts the Christian understanding of the Trinity or the divinity of Jesus. Consequently, I can argue that John looked at Islam not as a new religion with its coherence, rationality, and spirituality but as a pure heresy among many heresies of the time. The writings of John influenced Abu Qurra (740-820), who also considered Muhammad a false prophet who transmitted to his followers a false and impious doctrine (Gaudeul 2000b:26). His main objective remains, like of John of Damascus, to defend the Christian faith (Orthodox faith). However, he used Islamic rationality and Islamic discourse to defend the authenticity of the Christian faith (Mugler 2015:2). In the same line of thought as John of Damascus and Abu Qurra, the Catholicos Timothy I (728-823) tried to prove the authenticity of Christianity over Islam. He considered Muhammed as fraudulent (Beaumont 2013:84).

This refutation of the prophethood of Muhammad makes it interesting for this research on the influence of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in the context of Lusaka, Zambia. How do Catholics consider or view Islam or Muslims? Do they look at it or at Muslims with respect? In fact, *Nostra Aetate*, a Magisterial document, according to Fitzgerald (2018:29), "*is concerned with both people who belong to different religions and also with the religions that influence them*." Some years ago, as I was growing up, Christians used to sing songs like '*ka Muhammad kena kalifya, Yesu ena wamwewo'* meaning 'Muhammad died, but Jesus is everlasting.' By putting '*ka*' in front of the name Muhammad, it is a despising way of saying his name. However, the song also underlines the doctrine of eschatology based on the belief in the resurrection of Christ reserved for Christians only.

2.3 Islamic Perspective

Demichelis (2021:12) writes, "*John of Damascus' understanding of Islam is far from being 'truly encyclopaedic', and lacks an objective presentation of the content of Islamic faith*,..". It lacks an objective presentation of Islamic Christology. In the 8th century, Muslims started replying to Christian polemics or criticism. Al-Jahiz (776-869) considered Christians as not being men of deep reflection (Gaudeul 2000b:36). Different Muslim exegetes, such as Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Jarir ibn Yazid al-Tabari (known as Tabari), Ibn Abbas, and Ibn Khatir[14], have explained the understanding of the Qur'anic Jesus or Jesus in Islam that is coherent with the Islamic faith. But as underlined by Griffith (2008:40), it is important to keep in mind the pioneering work of figures such as Wahb ibn Munabbih (d. ca. 728), Hasan al-Basri (d. 728), Muhammad ibn Ishaq (d. ca. 767), and al-Waqidi (747–822), the Muslim scholars who contributed substantially to the shape of the Islamic religious discourse, produced in the social context of the encounter between Jews, Christians, and Muslims.

Tabari, a Qur'anic commentator of the 9th Century, a Muslim historian and exegete born in 839 in Iran and later settled in Baghdad (Martin 2004:671), demonstrated that Christ was only a man and the miracles are not proof of his divinity (Le Coz 1995: 215-234). They are proof of his prophethood, according to Muhammad, reported by Ibn Ishaq (Beaumont 2022:198). He is the son of Mary (*al_Masîh Îsâ ibn Maryam*) (Gode 1986:81). Jesus was created. Ibn Abbas (2014:234) and Ibn Khatir (2003:56) have also argued that he was a created being. God can create as he wants, just as he created Adam and Eve without a father. This idea is supported by

[14] It is important to underline that the earliest Muslim writing that criticizes Christianity is the biography of Muhammad by Ibn Ishaq written in the middle of the 8th century (Beaumont 2022:198).

Ibn Ishaq (Beaumont 2022:198). Jesus is not the son of God. However, for Tabari, the expression, Jesus son of Mary, highlights Jesus' ancestry (Gode 1986:82), and thus, he is a mortal being (Parrinder 2013:22). Thus, where previous religious communities 'altered' or in one way or another distorted the revelations sent to them, the Qur'an reveals the truth (Khalidi 2003:19).

2.4 Theological Paradigm Shift

Catholic-Muslim dialogue has shifted from polemics to exclusivism. For a number of centuries, the Catholic Church embraced the exclusivism paradigm translated in the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church no salvation)[15]. Different theologians have highlighted that the axiom was first intended for members of the Church (Grzelak 2010:53; Sullivan 1992:22-23). In his book *The "Inclusive Pluralism" of Jacques Dupuis*, Grzelak (2010:53-55), brings to the fore that from the fifth century, the axiom was applied to other religions. When Christianity became the official religion of the empire, the axiom was applied to Jews and pagans (Dupuis 1997:89). However, '*In the Middle Ages extra ecclesiam nulla salus was mainly directed towards Muslims …*' (Grzelak 2010:54). Grzelak (2010:55) further underlines that during the Crusades, the exclusivist declaration was strongly emphasized. Thus, it was included in the official documents of the Church (Grzelak 2010:55; Dupuis 1997:86,92). Polemics (controversies) and the exclusivism paradigm did not favor a constructive dialogue between Catholics and Muslims.

Before the positive change of paradigm of Vatican II, a positive attitude towards religious otherness was evident in the works of Raymond Lull (1232-1316), Nicholas of Cusa (1401-1461), and the discovery of the "New World"; but the openness in official Catholic teaching was with Leo XIII with the encyclical letter *Immortale Dei* which stressed religious freedom (Grzelak 2010:56-57).

The Church has moved from exclusivism to inclusivism. The theological perspectives of religious otherness surrounding Vatican II were crucial in this shift of paradigm. Western theologians developed the fulfilment theory (Dupuis 1997:133-140). The French theologian Jean Danielou considered other religions to belong to the order of natural reason and Judeo-Christian revelation to the order of supernatural faith (Dupuis 1997:134). Henri de Lubac holds

[15] Pope Innocent III (DZ 423), the Fourth Lateran Council (DZ 430), Pope Boniface VIII (DZ 468), and the Council of Florence held the exclusivist paradigm (no salvation outside the Church).

the same theological perspective. For Henri de Lubac, "*Christ reaches the members of other religious traditions as the divine response to the human aspiration for the union with the divine*" (Dupuis 1997:138). For both Jean Danielou and Henri de Lubac, these religions do not play a role in the salvation of their members. However, a more nuanced position indicates a shift from fulfilment theories to the presence of the mystery of Christ in other religions. This position is held by theologians such as Karl Rahner, Raimon Panikkar, Hans Küng and Gustave Thils (Dupuis 1997:143-157). The two theological positions affirm the possibility of salvation outside the Church in Jesus Christ (Dupuis 1997:158). But Dupuis (1997:158) highlighted that Vatican II did not take a stand between these two theological positions because the Council's standpoint was pastoral and not doctrinal. Thus, the Council wanted to foster mutual understanding and dialogue.

Therefore, from the Catholic standpoint, the desire for mutual understanding and cooperation is crucial in dialogue today and in the future. If there is a spirit of competition, Christian-Muslim dialogue will be contentious, polemic, and exclusivist. Following the example of John of Damascus and other Christian writers, the difficulty comes from the fact that we do not understand other religions in the way they would want to be understood. We understand them from the limited perspective of our own religious framework and not from the framework of *kenosis*. Moreover, different revealed religions monopolize the revealed truth which stimulates the spirit of competition – controversies and polemics, exclusivism and not the spirit of friendship and peaceful coexistence.

Since Vatican II, there has been a growing commitment on the part of the Catholic Church to dialogue with Muslims. However, this research is interested in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the context of Lusaka. The study will show whether genuine interreligious dialogue occurs between Catholics and Muslims or if the situation has remained at the level of controversy as described in the work of John of Damascus. The nature of Jesus, the Qur'an, Prophet Muhammad, and the authenticity of each religion: are they still contentious between Catholics and Muslims? Are they still relevant in Catholic-Muslim dialogue? In this line, it is essential to turn to the literature on interreligious dialogue in the Catholic Magisterium. Therefore, authors such as O'Collins, Dupuis, Küng, Knitter, and Fitzgerald provide important scholarly literature to understand the stance of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue.

2.5 Magisterium and Interreligious Dialogue

Scholars have underlined the importance of interreligious dialogue. It enhances collaboration among religions (Francis LS 13-14; Cornille 2008:104; Knitter 2017:57; Neuner & Dupuis 1981:300). It allows Christians to discover their deepest selves and look for authentic ways of living and expressing their faith in the light of a given context (Brazal 2017:425). Ultimately, it is both a way of being church and being human (Knitter 2017:56). Through it, the Church collaborates in God's plan (AG 10-12; ES 41-42; RH 11-12), and it leads to mutual enrichment (Fitzgerald & Borelli: 2006:28). And for Francis (EG no. 250), peace in the world, and serving justice or new social situations are outcomes and aims of interreligious dialogue. Dialogue is a necessary condition for these outcomes/aims[16].

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Catholic Church has been promoting interreligious dialogue. Vatican II was the first Council that saw other religions in a positive light. In the words of Hunt (2005:143), "*Vatican II pressed forward to a much more optimistic and positive stance in its regard to other religions*." For Heft (2012:4), it was the first Council to "*say something systematically and sympathetically about other world religions.*" In addition, Knitter (2002:75) considers Vatican II as a milestone in the history of what the church has said about other religions and about itself in relation to them. Knitter (2002:75) further underlines, "*Never before had a church, in its official pronouncement, dealt so extensively with other religions; never before had it said such positive things about them; never before had it called upon all Christians to take these religions seriously and dialogue with them.*"

Subsequently, the Council produced the first official document *Nostra Aetate* (NA), to promote a peaceful coexistence between the Church and other religions. Some scholars regard it as the most important document that has promoted dialogue between the Catholic Church and other religions (cf: Michel 2011:12; McBrien 1994:382; Fitzgerald & Borelli 2006:54; O'Collins 2014:115; Küng 2005:108). It is considered as the Magna Carta for a constructive relationship between the Church and other religions (Brockman & Habito 2010;136). For Fitzerald (2018:25) and Machado (2018:42), *Nostra Aetate* is a foundational document for the Catholic perspective of interreligious dialogue. It gives the basic orientations to Catholics engaging in

[16] In addition, Fitzgerald (2003) highlighted that there are several aims for dialogue including peace and harmony, working together in the service of humankind, and overcoming prejudices. And Schmidt-Leukel (2017:144) emphasizes that dialogue brings about growth and transformation; for example, "*the revision of traditional prejudices and misrepresentations of religious other inasmuch as these have become part of one's own tradition.*"

interreligious dialogue. However, the theological perspectives that underline the Catholic theology of dialogue are also found in other conciliar documents such as *Lumen Gentium* (LG 1, 5, 9, 16), *Ad Gentes* (AG 9, 11, 15), *Gaudium et Spes* (GS 10, 22, 38), *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC 18) and *Dei Verbum* (DV). These documents support *Nostra Aetate's* positive and constructive perception of other religions.

Some theologians claim that without Vatican II, the Catholic Church would still hold a negative view of other religions. Vatican II fostered mutual understanding, dialogue, cooperation, respect, and esteem between the Church and other religions (Dupuis 1997:158; 2002:59). Küng (2005:108) argues that "*without the Council, the Catholic Church would still regard religious liberty and tolerance as dangerous products of the modern Zeitgeist and Catholic countries would still deny other ('heretical') religious bodies the right to practice their faith*." It is paramount to recognize that Vatican II did not condemn or pronounce dogmas against other religions or in defence of its own theology. Instead, it recommended that the Church remain open to other religions. Highlighting the scope of the Council, Küng writes (2005:110), "*enmity between Christians and Muslims should be replaced by mutual understanding and shared commitment to social justice, peace and liberty.*" Consequently, the impact of the Council on the way the Church sees other religions enables us to understand and appreciate the theological and pragmatic efforts of the Magisterium aimed at genuinely promoting peaceful coexistence and friendship through dialogue with other religions like Islam. Vatican II gives the lenses through which to understand the Catholic openness to religious otherness.

Although theologians have praised Vatican II, some have criticized it based on the fact that it posits that the Catholic Church does not reject what is true and holy found in other religions (NA 2). It acknowledges the rays of Truth in other cultures and religions (NA 2). The "ray" of truth is the Truth of Christ. Different religions reflect the ray of the Truth of Christ. However, due to this Christocentric nature, the document has received some criticism from different theologians: for Hacker (1980:61-76), other religions are not appreciated from a theological perspective; for Ruokanen (1992:61), other religions have no independent status as to the revelation of the Divine Mystery; for Knitter (2017:50), it shows supremacy of Catholic Christianity over all other religions; and for Thatamanil (2017:290), it remains captive to an ethos of religious self-sufficiency. It is a hierarchical inclusivist document that merely affirms the presence of truth in other religions. Thatamanil (2017:290) further argues that *Nostra Aetate* affirms: (1) graded inclusivism – all religions are not equal; and (2) hierarchical inclusivism – other religions have rays of Truth and the Church has the fullness of Truth. Theologians like

John Hick[17] (in Hick & Knitter 1994:23) have proposed a theocentric understanding promoting dialogue and recognizing other religions' role in the modern world. Jacques Dupuis (1997:191; 2002:88), trying to make the Catholic's position understandable, proposed an inclusive pluralism[18], which led him to a theological misunderstanding with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) under Cardinal Joseph Aloisius Ratzinger.

I think that the criticisms against *Nostra Aetate* are based on doctrinal humility[19]. However, they do not focus on the importance of religious identity in interreligious dialogue. Humility does not imply compromising one's identity. It does not mean uniformity. Therefore, this research proposes to understand *Nostra Aetate* from two perspectives: (1) We need to situate it in its context and (2) the importance of identity in interreligious dialogue. The heart of Vatican II was to promote unity and not division. Second, the theology of Vatican II is coherent with the Christocentric theology of the Catholic Church. Interreligious dialogue presupposes identity and does not compromise our religious identities. Curran (2018:57) argues that by insisting on dialogue and collaboration with other religions, the Church recognized that she does not have all the answers and that she can learn from others, which is the *kenosis*/humility of the Church.

2.5.1 Interreligious Dialogue According to Roman Pontiffs

Different popes have tried to promote interreligious dialogue, from Paul VI to Francis, within the framework of Vatican II. Although Vatican II did not define interreligious dialogue, a number of Magisterial documents have attempted to do so. In general, according to Post-Vatican II Documents, Dialogue and Mission (DM 3), dialogue "means not only discussion, but also includes all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment." The same definition is echoed in DP 9 and DTC 2. Dialogue is seen as part of the evangelizing mission of the Church, oriented towards communicating the salvific truth (DP 2), which is God's love.

[17] Hick and Hebblethwaite (1981:52-53) have also argued against the Christian claim of salvation – equality of religions. In the same line of thought, Knitter (1995:34-35) argues for the legitimate possibility of God revealing Godself through other religions.
[18] For Dupuis (2002:88), Christian theology is theocentric by being Christocentric and vice versa.
[19] According to Cornille (2008:33), doctrinal humility is the way in which the ultimate truth is grasped and presented in doctrinal formulations.

In *Ecclesiam Suam,* Paul VI defines dialogue as the "*internal drive of charity which tends to become the external gift of charity*" (ES 64), and consequently, "*the Church should enter into dialogue with the world in which it exists and labors. The Church has something to say; the church has a message to deliver; the Church has a communication to offer*" (ES 65). If the mission of the Church is to evangelize, it must dialogue with the world in which it exists. It must develop constructive relations with others. The Church looks at other religions with respect and esteem (EN53). This demands both humility and friendship. Benedict XVI adds that the Church's universal nature and her vocation demand that she dialogues with people from other religions (EMO 19).

John Paul II gives some essential elements of dialogue in his definition. In his message for the celebration of World Day of Peace on 1 January 1986, he defines dialogue as:

> *a means by which people discover one another and discover the good hopes and peaceful aspirations that too often lie hidden in their hearts. True dialogue goes beyond ideologies. Dialogue breaks down preconceived notions and artificial barriers. Dialogue brings human beings into contact with one another as members of one human family, with all the richness of their various cultures and histories. A conversion of heart commits people to promoting universal brotherhood; dialogue helps to effect this goal* (John Paul II 1986).

The different elements underlined by John Paul II demand an attitude of self-abasement that leads to peaceful coexistence. Let us note that the Magisterium's understanding of interreligious dialogue resonates with the above definitions that clearly promote universal fraternity and collaboration.

A critical examination of John Paul II's theology of interreligious dialogue reveals that it is rooted in the Christology and Pneumatology of Vatican II. His theology of dialogue is articulated in his encyclical letters, *Redemptor Hominis* (RH), *Redemptoris Missio* (RM), *Dominum et Vivicantem* (DVi), his apostolic letters like *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (TMA), and his different speeches. O'Collins (2013:87), in his analysis of John Paul's II theology of dialogue, argues that it is grounded on: (1) the common origin (*imago Dei*) and destiny of humanity (cf: also Kuruvachira 2011:7; Bransfield 2010:79), which, according to Dupuis (2002:68), is the foundation of a Christian understanding of otherness highlighted in *Nostra Aetate*; (2), Christ is both the universal revealer and universal Savior (O'Collins 2013:99). Fitzgerald (1999:212) and Borelli (2006:39) concur with O'Collins that this universality of Christ – incarnation is an important theological point in John Paul II's perspective; John Paul II in line with Vatican II, constantly brought to the fore the universal dimension of the

incarnation. (3) the universal activity of the Holy Spirit (O'Collins 2013:169). No other pope had ever written a comprehensive theology on the Holy Spirit in relationship to other religions more than John Paul II. Dupuis (2001:69) considers the universal presence of the Holy Spirit in other religions as a contribution of John Paul II toward the theology of religions.

Following in the footsteps of his predecessors, Pope Francis has been promoting dialogue since the beginning of his pontificate. He has advocated for interreligious dialogue in *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), *Laudato si* (LS), *Fratelli Tutti* (FT) and *Querida Amazonia* (QA). The fundamental element of his understanding of interreligious dialogue is human fraternity – friendship rooted in humility. As Archbishop of Buenos Aires, Bergoglio (later Pope Francis) together with Rabbi Skorka pointed out that dialogue entails respect and acknowledging that the other has something good to say (Bergoglio & Skorka 2013:219).

Although humility is important for Francis, he maintains Christ's universality (QA 107) and the importance of identity in dialogue (EG 250; QA 106). In addition, "Fraternity" summarises his practical theology of dialogue (Francis: 2014; LS 13-14; EG 250; Cervenkova & Vizina 2021:62; Kropacek 2021:34), which underlines the social-ethical implications of dialogue.

However, theologians have noted that Francis' approach to interreligious dialogue is rather practical; it is not expressed in the language of systematic theology (Phan 2022:27; Goshen-Gottstein 2019:183). Phan (2022:30) has argued that his approach, articulated as it is on the values and imagery of human fraternity, does not answer some theological questions such as: (1) the uniqueness and universality of Jesus; (2) the truth and superiority of Christianity; (3) revelation in Christianity and its character in other religions; (4) the Christian missionary mandate; and (5) the necessity of converting others as the Church possesses all the means of salvation. Francis avoids these essential questions in the theology of interreligious dialogue. From the publication of *Nostra Aetate* to this day, such theological questions have been at the heart of criticism of the Catholic theology of religions. Phan (2022:30) adds that Francis' mode of "*interreligious dialogue often, for strategic purposes, tends to eschew doctrinal dialogue and leaves unexamined and unchanged the theological claims that have fuelled suspicion, hatred, and violence in the first place*." On the other hand, Fredericks (2014:14), argues that "*Francis will leave theory alone and focus more on the practical aspects of dialogue.*" He is more interested in universal human fraternity coherent with Vatican II that underlined the *imago Dei* of each person – human dignity.

Therefore, since the dialogue that is promoted by the Catholic Magisterium is to be understood from a Christocentric perspective (ES 73, GA 22, NA 2, DV 1-4, RM 4-6, etc.) that promotes human fraternity based on the theology of *imago Dei*, I propose a *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship as lenses for understanding interreligious dialogue in the writings of the Magisterium and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, Zambia.

2.6 The Catholic Church and Islam in Zambia

Taylor (2006:25) has highlighted that "*Zambia is a religiously pluralistic environment that welcomes both world religions, such as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism, as well as traditional practices.*" The United States Department of State produced a report on Zambia's 2022 International Religious Freedom. It reported that "*The U.S. government estimates the population at 19.6 million (mid-year 2022). According to Zambia Statistics Agency (ZamStats) estimates, 95.5 percent of the country's population is Christian. Of these, 75.3 percent identify as Protestant and 20.2 percent as Roman Catholic*" (United States Department of State 2022). When I contacted ZamStats in Lusaka about statistics on religions, I was informed that only 2010 statistics were available, which estimated that 0.5% of the population was Muslim (ZamStats 2010). However, the United States Department of State (2022) estimates that 2.7 percent of the Zambian population is Muslim. Both Islam and the Catholic Church are growing at a fast rate. It is important to note that although it is a Christian country, Zambia holds freedom of conscience and religion (The United States Department of State, 2022).

2.7 Origin of Zambian Islam

Although Muslims are the minority in Zambia, the contact between Islam and Zambian tribes is older than what most of the people might think. Today, according to Taylor (2006:35), Muslims have a prominent position in Zambian society, especially in Lusaka and Livingstone. In his book, *Muslim Associations and the Resurgence of Islam in Zambia*, Phiri gives a relatively detailed history of the origins of Zambian Islam. Four groups provided the gateway of Islam into Zambia: (1) the Arab traders or Coastal traders (Phiri 2008:36-54); (2) the early Indian Immigrants (Phiri 54-58); (3) the Yao traders from Malawi (Phiri 58-66); and (4) African immigrant Muslims (:67-69). Phiri's (2008) work provides a framework for understanding Islam's origin and growth in Zambia. In the first place, he recognizes that Islam has imposed a significant change on the religious landscape of Zambia (Phiri 2008:35)[20]. It

[20] Phiri (2008) has identified three groups that provided the gateway of Islam into Zambia: Arabs and Swahili traders, Indian migration to Africa, the Yao people and Muslims from other African countries. In this literature

constitutes a real alternative to traditional religion. Indeed, it could now be argued that Islam is not only an alternative religion but that it could easily be seen as a threat to established Christianity and, more significantly, to the notion that Zambia is, as was declared in recent times, 'a Christian Nation'.

2.7.1 Arabs and Swahili Influence

Different scholars have pointed out that Southern and Eastern African Islam arrived through Arab traders (Nkrumah 1991:94; Mvumbi 2008:115; Insoll 2003:376). As for Zambia, Phiri (2008:35) underscores that Islam entered Zambia through the coastal traders, the Arabs, and Swahili from the Eastern coast. Stephenson (1972:4) highlights "*Although loosely spoken of as Arabs, the Muhammedans who entered what is today known as the Katanga of the Congo Belge Belgium Congo and Ndola District of Northern Rhodesia, could more correctly be designated 'coastal traders' seeing that… the majority came from "Mpwani" otherwise the coastal region*"[21]. It is worth noting that Phiri, in his book (2008), does not mention either the type of Islam or its school of law that came from the Eastern coast.

According to Eastman (1971:228), "*A Swahili… in the more confined sense of the word, is a descendant of one of the original Arab or Persian-Arab settlers on the East African Coast. In the broader sense of the word, it includes all who speak a common language, Swahili*." Hall (1965:43) reports, "*The name Swahili has sometimes been applied to Arabs of inferior standing and comes from the word sawahil, the plural of Sahil, meaning 'the coast'. Closely allied to the Arabs were the Yeke or Yongo, who were Africans of the important Nyamwezi tribe*." The Nyamwezi, learning from the Arabs, also involved themselves in ivory and slave trading (Hall 1965:43). Their influence would go from Mwata Kazembe to Katanga and the Copperbelt in the Lamba country (Hall 1965:44).

Zambia was a connecting route for Arab and Swahili traders in search of slaves and ivory. By the 1820s and 1830s, there was a strong market for ivory at Zanzibar due to demand for it in Britain and the USA (Roberts 1976:120). The economic policies of Sultan Sayyid Majid of Zanzibar encouraged Arab traders to go beyond Lake Tanganyika (Insoll 2003:376) in search of ivory and slaves. Phiri (2008:37) highlights that attempts were made to venture on alternative

review chapter, I have used the work of Phiri as my main framework of literature on Islam in Zambia. His work gives substantial information to understand Islam in Zambia.

[21] The Muhammedans that Stephenson refers to are the Muslims. In recent literatures, authors use the 'Muslims' because they are followers of Islam (which is the religion).

routes further South and Bemba-land became a favorite route. Unomah and Webster (2008:277) point out that the Southern route "*diverged inland from Kilwa and passed through territories inhabited by such people as the Yao, Hehe, and Bena, in the direction of Lake Malawi, and beyond to the Bemba country in present-day Zambia*." It is against this background that we can understand the arrival of Arab and Swahili traders into present-day Zambia. Roberts (1976:121), Vansina (1966:235) and Hall (1965:41) pinpoint that by 1831, the Swahili had already reached the court of Kazembe. Therefore, the Swahili and Arab traders brought to Zambian tribes not only their trade skill but also Islam, as Phiri (2008:55) asserts, "*Although coastal traders were only incidentally interested in the propagation of their religion, their very presence provided a conducive framework for conversions*." I would also agree with Insoll (2003:376) that "*Obviously their religion, Islam, came with the traders, but the effects of Islam were by no means uniform*." Scholars have recognized that the primary purpose of the traders was mercantile and not proselytism (Insoll 2003:376; Ceulemans 1966:189). Nonetheless, they provided the initial contact between Zambian tribes and the Islamic religion and culture.

2.7.2 Indian Immigrations to Africa

It cannot be denied that the presence of Islam in Zambia has also been influenced by the presence or the arrival of Indians. Most Indians migrated to Central Africa during the British conquest of Central Africa. India was seen by the British colonizers as a source of personnel capable of doing administrative and skilled work as well as providing labor (Dotson & Dotson 1968:26). The arrival of the British in Northern Rhodesia (present-day Zambia) contributed to the migration of Indians to this part of Africa.

In a general sense, Indian migrations could be understood in two ways: (1) Indentured (Dotson & Dotson (1968:27-8); and (2) Passenger (Jain 1989:156). For Dotson and Dotson (1968:27), the difference between the indentured laboring class and the passenger class shows a considerable social distinction between Indians in the diaspora (the poor and the rich). This distinction gives us a possible framework to understand Indian migration to Zambia (Northern Rhodesia) and its economic and religious influence on the local population. Most of the Indians who came to Central Africa were involved in commercial activities (Phiri 2008:56; Dotson & Dotson 1968:28); they were "passengers." This explains the reason why, in most parts of Zambia, Indians are still shop owners.

In central Africa, and Zambia in particular, they came from Gujarati (Dotson & Dotson 1968:33; Kamini 2016:638; Phiri 2008:56). The majority were Hindus as opposed to Muslims. Among the Muslims, Phiri (2008:56) reports that most migrated from India to the Eastern part of Zambia. In addition, Muslims, according to Dotson and Dotson (1968:54), came to Zambia either through Nyasaland or by contact ultimately traceable to Nyasaland. The Asian population in Nyasaland (Malawi) was predominantly Muslim (Dotson & Dotson 1968:53). Phiri (2008:56) claims that the unification of North-east and North-west Rhodesia into 'Northern Rhodesia' in 1911 provided a gateway for Indians from Nyasaland and Southern Rhodesia into 'Northern Rhodesia', which was later to be named Zambia. Interestingly, Phiri (2008:56), referring to the work of Dotson (1968), identifies these Indians as *Sunni*.

The first Indians from Nyasaland to settle in Fort Jameson (Chipata), Eastern Zambia, in 1905 were the Khamisa brothers (Dotson & Dotson 1968:50; Phiri 2008:57). They were Muslims. According to Phiri (2008:57), most of their descendants are members of the Ghusiyya Islamic Trust, an Asian *Qadiriyya Sufi* community in Lusaka. This provides a vivid example of the movement of Indian Muslims from the Eastern part of the country to other provinces like Lusaka. Since Indians were, for the most part, traders, the economic opportunities provided by Lusaka were an attraction. Their impact on Lusaka was not just in the economic field; they also changed the religious and social landscape and established flourishing Muslim communities. Alpers (2000:317) highlights that in Zambia, the main mosque in Lusaka is known locally as the "Indian Church". Until now, during the fieldwork for this research, some Catholics were still calling mosques as Indian or Muslim churches.

2.7.3 The Influence of the Yao People

The Yao people are initially from Mozambique; they started moving to Southern Malawi in the mid-eighteenth century (Insoll 2003:393; Alpers 1975:15; Thorold 1987:21). They converted to Islam in large numbers (Insoll 2003:393). Their conversion to Islam was mainly brought about by Swahili traders from the East African coast (Bone 1982:126). According to Bone (1982:128) and Thorold (1987:21), in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Yao started adopting the religion of their trading partners, the Muslim Swahili traders. Islam is synonymous with being Yao (Alpers 1972:181; Phiri 2008:59). The Islamic culture has become *ipso facto* their identity.

Phiri (2008:61) underscores that "*The Yao are of interest to the situation of Islam in Zambia for two major reasons*." In the first place, he highlights that the massive conversions of the Yao

to Islam makes them "agents of Islamization" among the Zambian people with whom they have come into contact (Phiri 2008:61). In the second place, he argues that "*the commercial mobility of the Yao motivated them to reach out to many people, and in so doing, introduced these people to some aspects of Islamic religious practices*" (Phiri 2008:61). This background information of the Yao incursion into Zambia provides us with the context within which we can understand the presence of Islam in Zambia. The mosque, Masjid Awwal in Burma Road, Lusaka, was constructed over 100 years ago. The area is known as *pa Chikoleka*. It is believed that Chikoleka was the first Malawian Yao Muslim to settle there. This is according to the information I was given by a key informant at Masjid Awwal Mosque.

2.7.4 The Hospitality of Zambia to Other African Countries

Most people migrated to Zambia from West Africa (Senegal, Mali, and Nigeria) to work in the Copper mines. It is the opinion of Phiri (2008:67) that "*the arrivals of African Muslims in the country has more to do with economic and socio-political reasons than with a desire to propagate Islam*." Nonetheless, this does not exclude the influence of Islam on the Zambian population. Zambia has also attracted Africans from Somalia, Ethiopia, and Tanzania. Not all at the same level, but each community has contributed to making Islam known to the Zambian people. They have provided a gateway for Islam into the country. There is a more extensive community of Ethiopians and Somalians in Lusaka.

2.8 Growth of Islam in Zambia: Current Situation of Islam

The article of Phiri (2008) on Islam in post-colonial Zambia and Cheyeka's (2012) article, Zambia, a Christian nation: An incentive for Muslim identity and Christian-Muslim dialogue, give important scholarly information about the growth of Islam and Christian-Muslim dialogue in Zambia respectively. In the context of Zambia today, the Muslims are, according to Cheyeka (2012:47), "indigenous Bantu speaking people and Zambian citizens of India, Pakistan, Tanzania, Malawian, Iranian, Lebanese, Senegalese, Malian, Sudanese, Nigerian, Congolese, Mozambican and Somalian origins; the majority are Indo-Zambian Sunni Muslims." The paragraph below highlights the growth of Islam based on the existing literature, especially the work of Felix Phiri (2008).

According to Phiri, different factors have led to the growth of Islam in Zambia: the *da'wa* activities (diffusion of Islamic literature, classes for Islamic religious instructions, invitation of non-Muslims to enter the fold of Islam, etc) (2008:165), socio-political factors (2008:168),

Muslim immigration from West Africa (2008:174), local Muslim associations linked to the socioeconomic condition of Zambia (2008:176), spiritual quest (2008:178), and Islamic network outside the country (2008:179). The work of Phiri (2008) gives us a global understanding of the factors leading to the growth of the Muslim community in Zambia today, from socio-political to spiritual factors. For Cheyeka (2012:52), Islam uses the same methods that Christianity used to expand: education, charity, mass media, Muslim Propagation Centres (2012:51), etc. There are visible signs of their presence (2012:52). The spread of Islam in Zambia can also be linked to the work of a number of different Muslim associations operating in the country. The number of registered Muslim associations has increased rapidly (Phiri 2008a:176). Mwale (2022:52) highlights further, "*The local Muslim associations provide a basis for understanding contemporary Islam as an outward manifestation of Islamic social involvement in public life*". However, Islam is growing in Zambia and Africa in general. Mvumbi (2008:112-124) critically analyses the Islamization or Arabization of Africa and the multiplicity of Islamic phenomena, such as mosques, Islamic books, schools, health centers, and hospitals, which have contributed to the growth of Islam.

2.9 Islam Practiced in Zambia

In the world today, there are two major groups of Islam: Sunni Muslims and Shi'a Muslims. Scholars estimate about 90%-85% of the Muslim population is Sunni, and about 15%-10 % of the Muslim population is Shi'a (Ryan 2013:16). There is equally a tiny percentage of Ahmadiyya Muslims[22]. In the context of Zambia, according to Mwale (2022:51) and Phiri (2008:175), the majority are Sunni Muslims, then the Shi'a Muslims and a very small group of the Ahmadiyya Muslims. In Zambia, a self-proclaimed Christian nation, the three groups of Islam seem to coexist in relative peace. However, it is possible that most Zambian Christians do not see or understand the differences within Islam.

2.10 Islam and Zambia as a Christian Nation

In 1991, Zambia was declared a Christian nation by President Chiluba[23]. Some Church bodies were not consulted before this proclamation was made (Gifford 1998:198). The declaration has

[22] According to Ryad (2016:74), this movement of Islam, Ahmadiyya Muslims, was established by Mirza Ghulam in India in the late nineteenth century. The movement became popular in Britain.

[23] President Chiluba declared Zambia as a Christian nation by highlighting that he entered a covenant with God to submit himself, the government, and the whole nation to God. The country would be ruled by righteous principles of the word of God (Muwowo & Buitendag 2010).

been controversial – its objective and the consideration of the minority are questionable. Gifford (1998:199) highlights that this declaration shows the Old Testament theocratic ideas, based on the book of Kings and Chronicles with their linking of a godly ruler and national prosperity. Ultimately, it might have been intended to put the Zambian population in a political slumber and to give an impression of religious unity and cohesion. Thus, Chiluba used Christianity to his own political advantage.

Scholars have criticized it on different grounds: it is a religio-political phenomenon (Kunda 2017:297); it could be misused by Christian fundamentalists (Muwowo & Buitendag 2010); it violates the Zambian core value of freedom, and is inconsistent with the human rights (Muwowo & Buitendag 2010); and the main agenda of the declaration was political domination through Christianity (Mukuka 2014:33). However, looking at the growth of Islam in the country, it may be argued that the declaration has not had a significant negative impact on the growth of other religions like Islam. It would appear not to have inhibited the growth of other religions.

The Christian nation government has failed to respond effectively to the economic problem of the Zambian people due to high levels of corruption. The country has not been governed by the righteous principles of the word of God as promised by President Chiluba. He himself faced charges of corruption when Mwanawasa became the president of Zambia. Chiluba's government contributed to the catastrophic economic decline of the country (Gifford 1998:207). Therefore, today, the presence of Islam is more and more visible due to its social economic activities[24]. Zambian media houses have contributed positively to making Islam known. Mwale (2022:57) underscores that "*Islam has been mediatised by way of being represented as a public religion by virtue of being selected by different media houses as worth making visible in the news.*" This is due to the positive contribution of Islam in the country. Thus, "*Contrary to conclusions that have often-portrayed Islam as a violent religion and have framed Muslims negatively, local Muslim associations' acts of social responsibility have been represented positively by the recipients of the alms and the state in the media as gestures of service to society since the 2010s*."

[24] The Zambian constitution, in its preamble, foresees the freedom of a person's conscience, belief, or religion (The Constitution of Zambia 2024).

2.11 The Zambian Catholic Church

Let me note that the Zambian Church is missionary. Mission is a participation in the trinitarian life or God's love. The church participates in this divine life through different paradigms: witness and proclamation (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:65; AG 6; RM 42-45), conversion and baptism (RM 46-50), liturgy, prayer, contemplation (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:66), justice, peace, the integrity of creation (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:67), interreligious and secular dialogue (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:68), inculturation (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:69; EN 18; RM 52-54) and reconciliation (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:70). These paradigms have defined the Zambian Catholic Church since its beginning. The commitment to some of these paradigms in different dioceses has fostered the growth of the Catholic Church in different parts of the country. They provide the framework for the apostolic life of the Catholic Church.

2.11.1 Short History of the Catholic Church in Zambia

The founding congregation of the Zambian Catholic Church is the Missionaries of Africa (also better known as the White Fathers). They were founded in 1868 (Bevans & Schroeder 2011:133) by Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, during the third phase of the Evangelization of Africa. According to the African Synod of African Bishops, "*The third phase of Africa's systematic evangelization began in the nineteenth century, a period marked by an extraordinary effort organized by the great apostles and promoters of the African mission*" (EA 33).

In his major work on the history of the Catholic Church in Zambia, Hinfelaar (2004:1) highlights that 1891 is often considered as the year the Catholic Church was founded in Zambia. The first mission station was Mambwe-Mwela. In 1895, they established a mission in Kayambi, Bembaland (Hinfelaar 2004:24; Carmody 2002:776). In 1898, the Missionary of Africa, Joseph Dupont (*Moto-moto*) penetrated the interior of the Bembaland after Chief Mwamba (Chitimukulu), who was ill at that time, invited Dupont because of his healing skills (Carmody 2002:776). By April 1899, a mission was established at Chilubula in the heart of the Bembaland (Hinfelaar 2004:34). In Southern Zambia, the Jesuits (Frs Moreau and Torrend) settled in Zambia in 1905 at Chikuni (Hinfelaar 2004:60; Carmody 2002:777). The Franciscan Conventuals arrived in 1930. They took charge of evangelization in the Lambaland, the Copperbelt (Hinfelaar 2004:129). The Franciscan Capuchins arrived in 1931 in Southern, Livingstone. They moved to the West, where they established the first Catholic mission in the Western Province (Hinfelaar 2004:139).

2.11.2 Growth of the Church

In the year 1919, Benedict XV produced an apostolic letter on mission, *Maximum Illud*, on the propagation of the faith worldwide. This letter promoted a significant expansion of the Catholic Church in different parts of the world. It encouraged the formation of the local clergy (MI 14). Benedict XV emphasized good training of the local clergy (MI 15). According to Hinfelaar (2004:150), in Zambia, "*As early as 1919, the White Fathers had opened a junior seminary in Chilubula*." Junior seminaries, in addition to giving formal secondary education, prepared boys for the priesthood. Thus, education was used as a tool of evangelization (Carmody 2016:622).

According to Mwale and Simuchimba (2018:7), "*The primary purpose for the establishment of the church in Zambia was to convert indigenous people to Catholicism*." The beginning and expansion of the Church in Zambia should be understood in the context of the Church's mission as it was understood in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Bevans and Schroeder (2011:133) highlight that during this time, *"[t]he work of mission was varied: schools, universities, hospitals, clinics, charitable services, and material aid. Most people had a clear idea of the ultimate goal of mission work was the salvation of souls and the implantation of the church.*" Even today, the Zambian Conference of Catholic Bishops (ZCCB) embraces these diverse forms of apostolate. In 2020, the ZCCB pinpointed that "*health care is a way of evangelization, for its core is the implementation of the Word of God*" (ZCCB 2020). It further underlined that "*Catholic education is above all a question of communicating Christ, of helping to form Christ in lives of others… and of enabling His uplifting Gospel to take root in the hearts of the faithful*" (ZCCB 2020). Although rooted in Christ, it should lead to a holistic development of the person (Carmody 2016:62). Religious education should demonstrate a lived reality in which the faith is enacted and not just professed. Christian principles and the Gospel values are lived (Carmody 2016:69). It cannot be denied that the Church's provision of both health and education services has contributed significantly to the growth of Catholicism in Zambia and, even at the present time, the Catholic Church runs some of the best schools in the country.

The Catholic Church promotes social justice and human rights (DM 12). In this perspective, the Zambian Catholic Church has served the sick, the poor, the young, and the old. It has been a witnessing Church (RM 42; AG 12), charitable, and nurtured by a foundation laid by small local churches. It has been the voice of the voiceless, challenging corruption (Gifford 1998:211) and promoting human rights (Carmody 2002b:15). In 2020, the Zambia Conference

of Catholic Bishops produced a pastoral letter emphasizing catechesis, reconciliation and peace building, care of creation, and others (ZCCB 2020). These are but some of the many approaches that the Zambian Catholic Church has used in its efforts to evangelize. Evangelization is the nature of the Church. In its endeavors at evangelization, the Catholic Church in Zambia has been involved in different programs aimed at revamping the economy (Gifford 1998:225). However, not much has been said or written about the Church's involvement in interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Today, the growth of the Catholic Church is also seen in the increase of congregations and dioceses (creation of new dioceses). The country is divided into 9 dioceses with 3 archdioceses (Ndola, Kasama and Lusaka). Different congregations, with their different charisms, contribute to evangelization in Zambia, including primary evangelization, peace and justice, catechism, proclamation, and others. In the Archdiocese of Lusaka, between 2001 and 2021, the Catholic Church's population grew exponentially. According to the statistics, in 2001, the population of Lusaka was estimated to be 3,084,284, of which the Catholic population was 709,156, thus 23% of the population. After 20 years, the population of Lusaka was 4,629,250 of which the Catholic population was 1,839,260, which is 39,7%[25]. In 2001, the Archdiocese had 37 diocesan priests and 114 religious priests, 223 male religious (Not ordained religious) and 655 female religious. It also had 68 parishes. In 2021, the statistics were 78 diocesan priests, 119 religious priests, 284 male religious (not ordained religious), and 728 female religious. The Archdiocese had 66 parishes[26]. It can be noticed that the number of local clergy between 2001 and 2021 has increased as compared to the religious priests (most of whom are missionary congregations). This shows the growth of the local Church.

2.12 The Place of Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Zambia

Lusaka Times Newspaper reported that a Lusaka-based politician, Patrick Mungo, suggested that the Zambian government must restrict the construction of Mosques due to the growth of Islam in the country (Lusaka Times Newspaper 2015). For Mumba, the threat covering Africa is Islam. It is steadily moving from the Northern part to the southern part of Africa. It is a plan that Islam has mooted over many years. They are pushing their agenda (Cheyeka 2012:54). This depiction of Islam as a threat needs to be analyzed critically and theologically so as to promote peaceful coexistence.

[25] All these statistics were obtained from: https://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dlusa.html
[26] https://www.catholic-hierarchy.org/diocese/dlusa.html

Looking at the situation of Islam in Zambia, there is not much literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue or interreligious dialogue. Nevertheless, Cheyeka (2012:60-61) has underlined that there have been tentatives for promoting interreligious dialogue through conferences or seminars; however, at the time Cheyeka (2012:63) did research for his article, it was noticed that many Zambians did not know much about Islam. Some Zambians expressed the importance of interreligious dialogue, although some saw it has an endeavor limited to elitists (Cheyeka 2012:64).

It is important to point out that in the past 15 years, interreligious encounters have increased in Zambia. Already in 2011, Fr. Mathorel, a Catholic priest, started organizing Christian-Muslim encounters (Cheyeka 2012:63) at FENZA in which Catholics participated. In addition, Fr. Felix Phiri gave sessions on Islam and interreligious dialogue to seminarians at St. Dominic Major Seminary and at Kabwata Parish[27]. A Catholic laywoman was formed in interreligious dialogue at Tangaza College. To foster Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, a Catholic priest has been sent to study Islamology in Cairo, Egypt. In 2024, a Missionary of Africa was asked to teach a course of interreligious dialogue at St. Dominic Major Seminary in Lusaka.

The works reviewed above do not analyze the influence of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, Zambia. I want to investigate if the church's documents on interreligious dialogue reach and influence people from the grassroots in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Fundamentalism continues to grow among some Christians and Muslim groups. The spread of terrorism in Africa and the Middle East signals the danger with which humanity is currently facing. Christian fundamentalism against Islam in Zambia is well publicized on media such as Facebook with conferences being organized to Evangelize Muslims in Zambia. This situation negates the possibility of mutual spiritual and human enrichment for a better coexistence among people of diverse faith backgrounds. Such unpleasant events create fear and promote negative attitudes towards Islam and Muslims. Thus, the rapid spread of Islam in Zambia challenges us to analyze the influence of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue.

2.13 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed literature on Catholic-Muslim dialogue from three perspectives. It has demonstrated that the first Christian-Muslim encounters sprang up following religious

[27] The information was from a conversation that I had with Fr. Felix Phiri. Not only was he the provincial of the Missionaries of Africa in Southern Africa, but he is also an expert in Islam. He has lectured Islam at PISAI.

polemics. In polemics, there were normally elements both of superiority and apology. Each religion defended its authenticity vis-à-vis the others. This reality is still, in one way or another, relevant today because both religions are still missionary religions. This justifies the relevance of literature on Catholic-Muslim polemics. The past still marks Christian-Muslim encounters because the same theological controversies dealt with at the birth of Islam are still relevant today. Therefore, controversies still impact current relations between the two religions, and the relationship between Catholics and Muslims in Zambia is not an exception. After several centuries of the appearance of Islam, the question of understanding (the) Christian-Muslim dialogue in today's context is ultimately important. On the other hand, the chapter has demonstrated the openness to religious otherness in the literature of the Catholic Magisterium.

Finally, I have presented and discussed literature on Islam and the Catholic Church in Zambia. I have brought to the fore that the presence of the Muslim community in Zambia is old, as highlighted by different authors. The two religions coexist in most parts of the country. Therefore, the encounters between Muslims and Catholics in Zambia, and particularly in Lusaka, led me to analyze the Catholic perspective, especially the influence of the writings on the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue today. However, to understand this influence, it is necessary to discuss the framework within which to understand the Catholics' openness to religious otherness. Thus, the following chapter discusses the frameworks of the research.

Chapter Three

Kenosis and the Peaceful Coexistence and Friendship Frameworks

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter underlined the paradigm shift in religious otherness from religious polemics or controversies to interreligious dialogue, or a shift from interreligious confrontation to interreligious dialogue. Interreligious dialogue, from a Christian perspective, should be understood within the concept of *kenosis*. The concept was developed by the Church fathers and theologians such as Luther (1483-1546), Jacob Boehmer (1575-1624), Friedrich von Schelling (1775-1854), Georg W. Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831), and in the 20th century by Moltman, Bonhoeffer, Varillon, Boulgakov, von Balthasar (1905-1988)[28], and others. Recently, more theologians have tried to understand interreligious dialogue in the context of *kenosis*. The concept refers to Jesus' self-emptying act in the incarnation by sharing human nature (Frederik 2005:216).

From the Catholic theological viewpoint, the incarnation provides an important theological framework for interreligious dialogue. It would be difficult to imagine Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue without reference to the incarnation. Merrigan (2017:17) has claimed that "*[t]he appeal to the doctrine of the incarnation is motivated by the twofold claim that (i) it has shaped the character and the self-understanding of (Roman) Catholic Christianity, and that, therefore, (ii) any adequate Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue must accommodate (and resonate with) this doctrine*." Within the framework of the incarnational concept, we can best understand the theology of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and how it influences Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Humility understood within *kenosis* leads to peaceful coexistence and friendship. In today's context of religious pluralism, coexistence is not an extra option for religions. For Schmidt-Leukel (2017:112), religious pluralism is understood not as a theory above and beyond the religions but as an interpretation of religious diversity that can and needs to be developed within each religion.

[28] Courau (2014:50-55) gives a short history of the development of the concept of *kenosis*.

3.2 The Historical Development of *Kenosis*

The emergence of a theological understanding of the *kenosis* of Jesus Christ has led to contentious Christological discussions in the Church. The letter of St. Paul to the Philippians provides the core of the Christo-kenotic theological discussion. Courau (2014:50) has pointed out that the discussion on *kenosis* has passed through the Patristic era, the reformation, and the mediating theologians of Germany and Britain, significantly influenced by Hegelian philosophy[29]. Courau (2014:51) further points out that in the twentieth century, theologians from both the Eastern Orthodox Church (like Bulgakov) and the Western Christendom (like von Balthasar) have contributed to the understanding of *kenosis*. Let us now see how *kenosis* was understood during the patristic age.

3.2.1 The Church Fathers

3.2.1.1 Preliminary Considerations

It is important to advance two considerations before elaborating on the teachings of the Church Fathers. Firstly, *kenosis* has a particular place in the Eastern Orthodox Church and Western Church. The rupture between the East (Eastern Orthodox Church) and the West occurred in 1054 AD. However, according to Lossky (1990:8), "all that is prior to this date constitutes a common treasure of the two parts." He argues that the Orthodox Church would not be what she is if she had not Saints Cyprian, Augustine, Gregory the great, and the Roman Catholic Church would not have been the same without saints Athanasius, Basil, Cyril of Alexandria and others (1990:8-9). Recently, there has been a compelling desire for the unity of all Christians (UR). With this ecumenical conviction, we choose to study the Church Fathers in their togetherness.

Secondly, with von Balthasar, it can be recognized that the Church Fathers developed their understanding of *kenosis* in defense against controversies raised by Arius, Apollinarius, Nestorius, and Eutyches[30] (1990:25). The Church Fathers fought hard to establish the orthodox belief of the fullness of Christ's divinity and his humanity, as well as the indivisibility of his

[29] Nyembo, in his article, 'The Kenotic Dimension of the Church in Interreligious Dialogue' agrees with Courau.
[30] Arius overstated the oneness of God, and went as far as denying that Jesus was God. Apollinarism was the antithesis of Arius. He emphasized that the Godhead of Christ was stronger than his human soul. St Athanasius, the main champion of the Nicene Creed, brought about the term the *Homoousius* against Arianism and Apollinarism. Afterward, Nestorius preached against the divine maternity of Mary. He refused to give her the title of *Theotokos*, which means Mother of God; instead, she was, he said, *Christokos*, Mother of Christ. Cyril and the council of Ephesus (431), against Nestorius, defined the hypostatic union of the two natures in Christ and acknowledged Mary as Mother of God. Afterward, Eutyches taught that in the incarnation, the human nature was absorbed in the divine (*Monophysitism*). Pope Leo and the council of Chalcedon (451) condemned the monophysites and affirmed Cyril and Ephesus (Orlandis 2004:38-42).

person (Gavrilyuk 2005:255). John of Damascus, discussed in the previous chapter, is an example of those who were defenders of the Orthodox faith[31].

3.2.1.2 Kenosis in Patristic Writings

The understanding of *kenosis* found in the Patristic writings is coherent with the Church's approach to the doctrine of the incarnation. The self-emptying of Christ does not make him lose his divine nature. Although different theologians of the Patristic era used different terminology in their explanations of the *kenosis* of Christ, they nonetheless defended the divine-human nature of Christ. Thus, the early Church Fathers saw the "*self-emptying as referring to the incarnation*" (Lounibos 2011:39). They all sought to elucidate this doctrine, each with his own distinctive approach.

According to Athanasius, the incarnation clearly describes the meaning of *kenosis*. In *Against the Greeks*, he describes four ways in which God made the knowledge of himself accessible to humanity. Firstly, through the structure of human beings created in *imago Dei* (Lounibos 2011:7); secondly, through the order and harmony of creation (Lounibos 2011:12); thirdly, through the law and the prophets (Lounibos 2011:40); and fourthly, through the humanization of the Word (Lounibos 2011:46). He believed strongly that these four ways of God's revelation are intimately linked to one another (Lounibos 2011:4). Nevertheless, the incarnation is, according to Athanasius, the "nadir point of the divine condensation, wherein God encounters humanity at the very place to which it had fallen" (Anatollis 2004:42). Besides, he sees the incarnation as the divine solution to the catastrophe caused by the fall (Lewis 1989:43). God stoops to our level in His love and Self-revealing (Lewis 1953:33). Thus, it is through the incarnation that God overcomes the distance between Himself and humanity. God bends down to reach humanity while raising humanity to Himself (Anatollis 2004:33). God came down to their (humanity) level using simple means, took a body to Himself, and lived as Human among human beings.

In addition, Athanasius defines the incarnation as a loving-kindness condescension, a descent, a humiliation, a going down to corruption, a becoming weak, and a descent to death (Anatollis 2004:56-57) of the Son of God. It aims at human ascent (*theosis* or divinisation)[32]. In other

[31] See the previous chapter and his most important work *De haeresibus*. Most of the Church Fathers from both the Eastern and Western Christendom fought Christological heresies with the Church, John of Damascus included Islam among the heresies.

[32] According to Athanasius, Incarnation has as its aim deification of humanity. He argues, 'For he [the Son] was incarnate that we might be made god; and he manifested himself through a body that we might receive the

words, the Son of God, true God by nature, humbled himself to bring humanity to exaltation. It is in this sense that expressions like "*the Son of God humbled himself so that in humbling we may be able to advance*" (Anatollis 2004:43) find their place, and "*the exaltation belongs exclusively to humanity, whereas the humiliation pertains to the divine word's appropriation of human condition*" (Anatollis 2004:44). Moreover, condescension is not limited to creation but extends to Christ incarnation and his death, which is "*the extreme descent of the Word into our condition*" (Anatollis 2004:45).

Gregory of Nazianzus equates self-emptying with self-divestiture (Lieb 1970:344), and Hilary de Poitier argues along the same lines (Lieb 1970:344). However, they both maintain that Christ never lost his divine nature. Hilary of Poitier argues, "*When He emptied Himself (se evacuaverit) to become Christ the man, . . . the changing of His bodily fashion, and the assumption of another nature (in corpore demutatio habitues et assumptio, naturae), did not put an end to the nature of His eternal divinity, for He was one and the same Christ when He changed His fashion (demutans habitum), and when He assumed our nature*" (Lieb 1970:346). Hilary de Poitier's perspective must be understood within the framework of refuting Arianism. Thus, the self-emptying of Christ does not result in the loss of his divine nature.

For Gregory, "*kenosis is His (Christ) second communion with human nature*" (Tsirpanlis 1984:219). It is more marvelous than the first (creation), in which humanity shared in the *imago Dei*. In the incarnation, Christ partakes of the "*worse mortal flesh*" (Tsirpanlis 1984:8). In addition, Gregory understands *kenosis* as Christ's "*absolute humility and self-emptying, a diminution of his glory that being God he took upon human nature*" (Tsirpanlis 1984:217). It is also an unselfish service, a denial of the world, which he qualifies as '*katharsis*' (Tsirpanlis 1984:169). After Athanasius, Gregory argues that it is through actions of humility that one reaches '*Christopoiesis*' (Tsirpanlis 1984:217) or becomes Christ-like. Gregory insists that "*the mind must get rid itself of sinful attitudes and conceptions in order to approach what is absolutely Holy and infinite*" (Tsirpanlis 1984:171). In other words, Christ emptied himself so that humans could be emptied of themselves and find God in a state of union (Tsirpanlis 1984:220). *Kenosis* is the way and the source of a person's true liberation.

idea of the invisible Father; and he endured the insults of human beings, that we might inherit incorruptibility' (Morris 2018:38).

Origen's[33] doctrine of the incarnation presents another *kenotic* idea. *Kenosis* is understood from the perspective of incarnation. *Kenosis* is about God becoming human. In other words, God humbled Godself and became small so that people may welcome him (Harl 1958:232). Lieb (1970:344) highlights that in Origin's understanding, the official doctrine of the Church asserts that the Son of God, by "emptying himself (*se ipsum exinaniens*) and becoming human, was (in truth becoming) incarnate." Origen's famous quotation says that "*if Jesus Christ had manifested himself in his totality[34], the whole world would not have been enough to receive him*" (Harl 1958:233). In short, for Origen, *kenosis* is seen as the condescension of God, who willingly lowers himself and descends (Harl 1958:233) into the world for the salvation of humanity. Furthermore, for Origen, "*the role of Christ is instructive and educative*" (Harl 1958:110). He considers *kenosis* as a form of 'the divine pedagogy' (Harl 1958:239) in which humanity is invited to assimilate itself to God. According to Origen, *kenosis* has occurred from the first stages of humanity's education (Old Testament). In the second stage, Christ 'brings the higher teachings' and supports them with the events of his life, especially his death, and shows us the way of salvation. In other words, for Origen, "*the Son made himself obedient unto death (Phil 2:8) to teach obedience to those who could only obtain salvation through obedience*" (Harl 1958:110).

Furthermore, different Church fathers have understood Christ's *kenosis* (the self-emptying) in the sense of the incarnation, the taking of the human form. Lieb (1970:344) underlines that "*Clement of Alexandria, Irenaeus, and Tertullian all make use of the concept of self-emptying denoted by the word ekenosen*." Furthermore, Lieb (1970:344) and Macleod (1998:216) highlight that for Augustine, Christ emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, but his divinity did not change. He thus added the human form, which did not detract from his divine nature. John of Damascus supports the same idea of Christ not losing his nature; he argues, "*The natures were united to each other without change and without alteration. The divine nature did not give up its proper simplicity, and the human nature was certainly not changed into the nature of the divinity, nor did it become non-existent*" (John of Damascus 1958:270). He adds that the Word did not overstep the bounds of His own divinity or the divine prerogatives belonging to it just because He was made flesh (1958:317). Aquinas has also

[33] It is important to mention that Origen spent his life commenting on Scripture, but his work has largely disappeared because it was thought to be heretical. He developed many allegories, which became common in the school of Alexandria. It was not the case with the school of Antioch in the East.

[34] *Si le fils s'est manifesté 'totalement' le monde entier n'aurait pas suffi à le recevoir* (Harl 1958:233).

argued along the same line and insisted that Christ's divine nature was not changed (Richard 1982:186).

The preceding patristic surveys broadly indicate that the theological understanding of *kenosis* is linked to the doctrine of the incarnation. They argue in favour of a *kenotic* Christology that envisages a real abasement of the *Logos* in the incarnation; moreover, in expanding their teaching further, one can situate the *kenosis* in the Trinity and talk about the self-emptying of God. The self-emptying of the Father and the Son 'are closely intertwined and mutually correlative' (Anatollis 2004:45). In the next point, let me turn to a biblical understanding.

3.3 Understanding the Christological Hymn

St. Paul's Hymn in Phil 2:5-11, considered one of the most beautiful Christological hymns, serves as a primary text for *kenosis/incarnational theology*: although he was in the form of God (v.6), Christ emptied and humbled himself (vv.7-8), and because of this, God exalted him (v. 9). This hymn has received much attention among theologians and biblical commentators. Dawe (2011:26) considers Phil 2:5-11 as "*the locus classicus of all kenotic thought*", meaning the cornerstone of the whole *kenosis* idea (McClain 1967:5). It is, and has been, the subject of widespread analysis and comment.

The key phrase is *emptied himself* (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν - v.7), from the Greek verb κενόω, which means 'to empty'. To some extent, interreligious dialogue requires the ability to "empty" oneself in order to see the good in the other person and to allow oneself to be enriched by the other. Self-emptying (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν) goes together with humility (ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸνν - v.8) and identity (the Son did not cease to be divine). An arrogant mind is, essentially, closed to dialogue.

The Christological interpretation of Phil 2:5-11 varies from one theological school to another and from one theologian to another. Therefore, because of the central relevance of this Hymn to my study - without pretending to do original or detailed exegetic work - I will try to examine its different elements.

3.3.1 μορφῇ θεοῦ (Phil. 2:6): The form of God

V.6 has been interpreted in a variety of ways. Biblical scholars have tried to understand the meaning of Christ being in the μορφῇ θεοῦ (*en morphē theou/*in the form of God). At one

level, this statement gives the impression that Christ was less than God. However, in line with the patristic understanding of 'being in the form of God', different theologians have underscored that it does not mean that Christ was less than God, and this is supported by McClain (1967:6), Best (1985:58) and Williams (2009:29). It (*en morphē theou/in the* form of God) does not refer to Christ losing his divine nature or attributes. For Dawe (2011:36), it implies that "*he shares fully in the nature of God; he is consubstantial and coeternal with God*." In his analysis of the philosophical foundation underpinning this phrase, Schumacher (in Martin 1997:101) argues that 'form' is the exact equivalent of *ousia.* Thus, he saw in the Pauline term a clear proof of the divinity of Christ. McClain (1967:8) has remarkably argued that *en morphē theou* refers to the pre-existence of Christ.

Thus, it can be argued persuasively that '*en morphē theou*' does not deprive Christ of his true divine identity. He is of the divine order (Dawe 2011:40). Martin (1997:148) concludes that Christ possessed the divine equality *de jure* because He existed eternally in the 'form of God', but did not seize the glory and honor of the acknowledgment of that position *vis-à-vis* the world, but accepted His destiny as the incarnate and humiliated One. This perspective, which does not reduce the understanding of '*en morphē theou*' to Christ being less than God, resonates with the biblical perspective 'I and my Father are one' (Jn 10:30). An understanding of '*en morphē theou*' to mean less than God, does not do justice to the true nature of Jesus Christ. On the one hand, such an understanding will place Jesus Christ in the past; on the other hand, it will ignore an essential element in the nature of Jesus, namely the reference to his divinity. Jesus was aware of his sonship/divine nature and unity with the Father. The disciples, moved by the Holy Spirit, had made progress in understanding the divinity of Jesus (cf. Jn 12:45; 14:9-10). This understanding became more evident to them after His death and resurrection. It is, nonetheless, essential to underline that, although the disciples were all devout Jews, they ventured without hesitation into a true knowledge of the nature of Jesus. '"Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."' (Mt 16:16). This answer goes beyond regarding Jesus to be less than God, but equal in divinity with the Father.

I can conclude that Christ was equal to God the Father in divinity. Therefore, in the dialogue between God and humanity that finds its fulfillment in the incarnation of the Son, the Son did not lose his divine nature or his divine identity, nor was he less than God. He was true God and true man.

3.3.2 ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν (Phil. 2:7): He emptied himself

The self-emptying of Christ has always been contentious. What did Christ empty himself of? Thus, v.7 (ἑαυτὸν ἐκένωσεν) is the key verse of any *kenotic* Christology. In the patristic writings, the Church Fathers agree that Christ did not empty himself of his divinity, which would have been against the official teachings of different Councils[35].

However, some theologians have understood the self-emptying of Christ as the relinquishing of his divinity. In this perspective, Crisp (2007:119) underlines the ontological *kenosis*. He highlights:

> *[O]ntologically kenotic account of Christology claims that, in the Incarnation, the Word abdicates certain divine properties, perhaps for the duration of the Incarnation, perhaps from the Incarnation onward, at all subsequent moments in time. An alternative, and stronger, ontological kenotic account of the Incarnation involves claiming that, at the Incarnation, the Word relinquishes his divinity altogether, emptying himself out in order to become a man, and then taking his divinity up once again at the ascension.*

Wolfgang Friedrich Gess[36] holds the stronger ontological position (Crisp: 2007:120), while Donald Macleod and Richard Swinburne argue in favor of Christ abandoning his divine nature (Crisp 2007:120). Furthermore, for the German Philosopher Hegel, in order that the Absolute subject (God) be rendered concrete (while remaining himself), He must first render himself finite in nature (von Balthasar 1990:31). Thus, Hegel perceived the incarnation as "*the self-limitation by the Son of his divine mode of existence*" (Dunn 1989:2).

However, other theologians have understood self-emptying in line with self-abasement. It is worth noting that, "*All modern continuations of the nineteenth century kenosis have emphatically excluded even a partial renunciation by God of his divinity ... thereby the idea of self-emptying loses the radicality of self-relinquishment*" (Pannenberg 1968:319). Thus, for Martin (1997:194), the self-emptying of Christ is understood as the assuming of humanity. It does not mean the relinquishment of his divine attributes or divinity. For Thornton, the self-emptying of Jesus means His voluntary self-giving to the utmost, most shameful humiliation, which is denoted in v.8 (Martin 1997:168). Lightfoot underlines that He emptied Himself,

[35] McBrien (1994:469) writes, "*Against the Arian view, the Council of Nicea solemnly proclaimed the oneness ("consubstantiality") of the Son with the Father. He is "God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, one in being (homoousios) with the Father*…" We can also highlight the faith of the Council of Chalcedon (451) as discussed in the previous chapter.

[36] Law (2013:40) highlights, "*In his Die Lehre von der Person Christi (1856) and Christi Person und Werk (1870–87). Gess criticizes the Chalcedonian Definition as docetic and rejects the immutability of the Logos on the grounds that this doctrine is not supported by Scripture*."

divested Himself, not of His divine nature, but of the glories, the prerogatives of Deity. This He did by taking the form of a servant. Emptying Himself of His divine nature is impossible (Martin 1997:166). Hansen (1997:172) comprehends *kenosis* as "*Christ's willingness to step out of the Father, and this He must do in order to take human form' (2009:147). Furthermore, Martin sees that Christ 'became poor*" and associated himself with the poor, and Dunn (1998:82) sees *kenosis* as "*an act of self-abasement during Jesus' life*", which is an act of humility. I would consider *kenosis* as the total openness of God to humanity, a model to imitate.

Therefore, the self-emptying of Christ, God's pedagogy, becomes a point of reference and a model to imitate (Martin 1997:71). Christ's humility, as expounded in the Letter to the Philippians and some patristic interpretations, is a model to imitate. Consequently, for Martin (1997:lii), Phil 2:5-11 articulates the relationship among the Philippians and their attitude towards others, which should be selfless regard for others, an active desire to promote their neighbour's well-being and interest in preference to their own. Similarly, for Warren (19961:231), *kenosis* is the ability to 'identify' with the other person. According to Fee (1995:200), the Philippians were invited to learn to develop 'attitudes of selflessness and humility.' For Courau (2014:53), "*The kenosis of Christ opens man (sic) to assume a kenotic outlook. The Epistle to the Philippians connects the two aspects of faith in Christ: Christology and Christian ethics*."[37]

In the humility of the Son is the humility of the Father. The humility of God is the openness of God, a divine total listening to humanity, because the self-emptying of the Son implies the self-emptying of the Father and the Holy Spirit. Bulgakov (in Gavrilyuk 2005:255) argues that "*the Father pours himself out, empties himself in begetting the Son*". Bulgakov (2004:180) further adds that "*the Father has depleted himself by engendering; the Son has depleted himself by being engendered; and above these (Father-Son) there is the life-giving Spirit, the breath of divine Love in its fullness*". von Balthasar (1994:323) agrees with Bulgakov when he argues

[37] Courau (2014:53) makes a link between *kenosis* and the will to power over others. He argues that salvation in Christ does not come about without a profound conversion of the human being, without configuring him/herself to the Christic reality in his relationships with others. The relationship with others is conceived in a commitment to them and to the renunciation of any will of power over others. This requires developing one's ability to be able to stand back, to master oneself in order to withdraw from any temptation to oppression or to be an instrument of power. When humility is not at the center of a religion, it may lead to oppression of others or to making religion an instrument of power.

that "*the Father's self-utterance in the generation of the Son is an initial "kenosis" within the Godhead that underpins all subsequent kenosis*". Consequently, for von Balthasar, incarnation and the cross show the "*high points of the revelation of God's love for us*" (O'Hanlon 1990:14). As argued by both Bulgakov and von Balthasar, *kenosis* is Trinitarian. Using the patristic understanding, it is God's condescension, God's pedagogy. The way of God to humanity is humility. Consequently, human humility is the manifestation of God's image in us.

3.3.3 ἐταπείνωσεν ἑαυτὸν (Phil. 2:8): His abasement

Christ humbled himself. This action was free and voluntary (Martin 1997:199). Martin adds that "*He came into the world, a choice which included His pre-incarnate decision (v.6) and His acceptance of the "form of a servant". By the same token He is now described as consenting to what P. Henry calls "a double kenosis" by following a path that will mean His humiliation*" (Martin 1997:199). In the same line of thought, scholars such as von Balthasar (1996:62), Williams (2009:259), and Frederiks (2005:216) have pinpointed this abasement of Christ as the manifestation of love (*agapē*) with the cross as its ultimate gesture. This abasement of Christ, his humiliation, is a free action that translates his total expression of love for humanity.

Kenosis expresses the total giving of Godself (the Father, source of all divine life) and the total response to the Father's love (by the Son) for the reconciliation of Godself and humanity. Thus, in *kenosis*, a dialogue of salvation between God and humanity is established through the humility of God, who abases Himself. Subsequently, love is the foundation of the dialogue of salvation and, therefore, the foundation of interreligious dialogue.

3.4 Importance of *Kenosis*

The *kenosis* concept brings to our attention the importance of two principles: (1) humility-abasement and (2) the nature of identity. These principles will come into focus in our research on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, Zambia. On the one hand, they are cardinal principles of interreligious dialogue. On the other hand, the theology of the Catholic Magisterium can only be understood within the framework of *kenosis* (humility and identity).

Williams (2009:315) argues that Christian life is, in its essence, *kenotic* because Christ's very incarnation was *kenotic*. Consequently, the hymn to the Philippians sets Christian ethics on the foundation of imitating Christ. Williams (2009:315) writes, "*an ethic based on the imitation of*

Christ becomes most demanding, for the Philippian hymn lifts up as the ideal the example of Christ who gave himself to the uttermost, taking the form of a slave, humbling himself even to accepting death on the cross (Phil 2:6-7). And all for the sake of sustaining the relationship with people." Imitating Christ implies humility in our relationship with others regardless of religion or race. Williams (2009:318) further argues that since God's nature is *kenotic*, the fullest expression of humanity is in the practice of *kenosis*, and Murphy and Ellis (1996:118) stress self-renunciation for others as the highest good. Thus, humility is the highest good in human relationships. Since God's way of being is *kenosis* (humility), the Christian way of being must be *kenotic*.

The glory of *kenosis* is love. In this sense, I can argue that the glory is not in the question of the domination of the other but in the manifestation of love, *agape*. For Bird and Gupta (2020:27), "*[f]or Paul, the best explication of love is found in the story of Christ, a tale he tells in 2:6–11 – the one who once knew the highest and best status chose to accept a low station […] and die on a cross […] for the sake of love, both Christ's obedient love toward God his Father and Christ's compassionate love for helpless sinners (cf. Gal 2:20)*." The theology of dialogue must be founded on the manifestation of love and not of one of domination or superiority over others. This is only possible through the *kenosis* of the Church or a *kenotic* posture of the Church. Consequently, humility and identity should guide the Christian relationship with other religions. Since interreligious dialogue leads to mutual understanding and enrichment (DM 3), Christians must be open to learning from and sharing with others. This requires, on the one hand, an attitude of humility and not an attitude of self-sufficiency, and on the other hand, faithfulness to one's own identity, which leads to reciprocity in learning from one another.

To enter into the plan of the incarnation is to enter into the project of divine humility. This humility is an openness to living together, which is the starting point for Christian friendship, interconnection, hospitality, respect, acceptance, and coexistence with others (Cornille 2008). In her book *The Im-possibility of Interreligious Dialogue*, Cornille has developed these conditions). As Gregory has mentioned, through humility, we become Christ-like. The Christian understanding of interreligious dialogue can only be imagined through the *kenosis*-incarnation. Thus, the *kenosis* framework is the lens through which we can understand the openness of Christians to other religions. Incarnation is God's openness to humanity, and interreligious dialogue is the human response to God's openness. Since God's openness to

humanity cuts across cultures, races, religions, etc., interreligious dialogue is humanity's response to God in a manner that goes beyond cultures, races, and religions.

Therefore, using *kenosis* as my framework, my research investigation is grounded on humility and identity. As Schmidt-Leukel (2017:130) has noted, 'interreligious theology is not based on the "art of mistrust" or a "hermeneutics of suspicion" but on the "benefit of doubt" […].' He further adds that it is based on the theological credit of trust. Talking about a theological credit of trust would be impossible without humility and identity. Interreligious dialogue risks being an "art of mistrust".

3.4.1 *Kenosis* and Interreligious Dialogue

My research question that seeks to understand the extent to which the documents of the Catholic Magisterium on dialogue with Muslims have broadened, influenced, or shaped the mindset of Catholics in their commitment to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese since Vatican II, to a greater extent, seeks to understand the openness of Catholics toward Muslims in Zambia where Islam is growing fast. This openness is underpinned by humility and identity. However, the findings of my research revealed that this openness to religious otherness is also underpinned by the local epistemology that embodies humility.

Cornille (2008:9-10) argues that interreligious dialogue requires two forms of humility: (1) humility in the face of other traditions; and (2) humility towards one's own religion. The former is a recognition of our limited knowledge and understanding of other religions, and the latter is the recognition of our constant limitations, which, in Heft's terms, is a combination of 'intellectual humility' and 'learned ignorance'. For him, different authors use "*Intellectual humility to underscore our limited ability to describe our religious experience*" (Heft, Firestone & Safi 2011:3). Conversely, learned ignorance refers to religious believers' recognition that their understanding of God and God's ways is continuously beyond their capacity to completely comprehend and effectively communicate what they have experienced (Heft, Firestone & Safi 2011:4). The human capacity to understand and articulate the experience with God is limited. Thus, humility entails acceptance of the limitation in which the ultimate truth has been grasped and described in the teachings and practices of our traditions (Cornille 2008:10). In fact, St. Bernard (1929:11) defines humility as a virtue that enables us to see ourselves in our true colours and thereby to discover our worthlessness, our limitedness. This same point of view is echoed by Cornille (2008:14).

Recognizing our limited knowledge and understanding of the other opens us to encounter the other in their differences and to know them better. It is this posture of humility that makes us go beyond the preconceived ideas that we have about others. The temptation to understand the other from the confines of our worldview and religious traditions needs to be avoided. Our understanding and knowledge of other religions are often conditioned by history that fosters prejudices. In the same line of thought, Cornille (2008:10) underlines that "*religious knowledge is related to power, and in which representations of the other may become distorted through religious and cultural prejudices*." Consequently, without humility toward other religions, there is a risk of falling into polemics or confrontations because, as Cornelle (2008:23) argues, any attitude of arrogance and condescension rules out any form of mutuality in dialogue. It rules out the possibility of mutual enrichment. But in humility, people gain in relationships (Williams 2009:30). In my qualitative research, informants understood interreligious dialogue from the perspective of *ubuntunse* centered on human relationships. It provides a framework that avoids arrogance and patronizing others. From a theological perspective, it is *kenotic*. It is essential to note that there is an essential link between the Theology of the Magisterium and *ubuntunse* because they can be both understood within the frameworks of *kenosis* (humility), and peaceful coexistence, and friendship. However, although the documents of the Magisterium can be understood within the framework of *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship, my research highlights that some Catholics might not to be open to religious otherness because there is lack of communication of the documents of the Magisterium to the lay faithful.

The Christian understanding of humility is linked to the *kenosis* of God, as it has already been discussed. I can argue that our humility is our response and participation in God's humility. It implies relating to God and others. For Aquinas (in Cornille 2008:19), humility entails subjecting oneself to God and to all there is of God in others. It is "*accompanied by an attitude of interest in the other and by a self-critical awareness of the possibility of distortion in one's own understanding of the other*" (Cornelle 2008:25). Thus, it demands a total listening to the other and to an abandonment of preconceived ideas that we have of others. With Aquinas, I would say that humility is listening to God in others. Through humility, we can create genuine fraternal relationships with others. And only through it can we look at others (people of different religions, cultures, and traditions) with esteem and respect. In my findings, this esteem and respect of others is achieved through the human-centeredness of *ubuntunse* which also

underpins the national motto ‘One Zambia, One Nation’, on which the multiculturality of the country is built.

Therefore, with its understanding of the incarnation from the *kenosis* point of view, Christianity is a religion of dialogue. *Kenosis* is the way of being Christian. On the one hand, it shows us that God is relational and takes a radical way to enter into communion with humanity; on the other hand, it demonstrates that Christian identity is based on openness to dialogue, but this theology should be communicated to all Catholics. Zizioulas (in Hunt 2005:45) argues that a human person adopts God's way of life as soon as they join the church. Relationships with God, other people, and the world are necessary for that way of being. Hence, the Church is a communion event, and because of the communion of humans, the Church is an image of God. The Church's existence is relational because God's existence is relational. Through dialogue, the church lives its singularity as a religion of dialogue or a relational Church expressing God’s universal love without discrimination.

Since *kenosis* is God’s image, the Church’s image should be *kenotic*. Frederiks (2005:217) underlines that the model of *kenosis* gives a paradigm for a joint human pilgrimage toward God, and he further highlights that the Christian testimony on this pilgrimage is that God’s love for the world was so profound that he became human in Christ and died on the cross. To a greater extent, the *kenotic* way shows that we are on a pilgrimage with others, not without their identities, but with their spiritual and moral convictions and ways of responding to the same One True God’s love. This pilgrimage calls for respect for every religion and culture.

Therefore, it seems to me that this *kenotic* approach to interreligious dialogue is vital in our encounters with other religions. Frederiks (2005:218) puts it rightly when he writes:

> *The model sees radical self-emptying as a necessity to establishing meaningful relationships with people of other faiths and other cultures. It is only in true and radical openness to the other in the totality of his/her being and openness to his/her deepest motivations in life, that the witness of God’s love for all people can be shared. Inculturation and interreligious dialogue, therefore, are not just optional for the interested few, but according to the model of kenosis, they belong to the core of the Christian calling to imitate Christ in his self-emptying love for people. They are authentic expressions of the Christian identity.*

This model imitates the radical openness of God. Interreligious dialogue can only occur within an authentic, open atmosphere founded on true humility. The culture of interreligious dialogue can be promoted by accepting, respecting, and welcoming others without the desire to contradict, manipulate, or convert them. The true attitude of hospitality visa-a-vis other

religions implies welcoming the totality of the person, which recognizes our differences. Hospitality toward different religions and cultures for Christians is not an extra option but a response to the very nature of Christianity.

Christianity is not in competition with other religions. Interreligious dialogue is, first and foremost, a divine initiative in which we participate. Following Paul VI (ES 70-72), I can say that since the dialogue of salvation was inaugurated by God, by encountering people from other religions by creating fraternal relationships with everyone, we are participating actively in the dialogue of salvation, which will be accomplished when God will be all in all (1 Cor 15:28). Therefore, I conclude that we can neither have peace nor live an authentic Christian life without establishing or repairing our relationships with people from other religions, with whom we have a common origin and destiny.

3.5 Humility and Interreligious Hospitality

Different theologians have written about the importance of hospitality in interreligious dialogue (Cornille 2008; de Béthune 2007, 2016; Moyaert 2011). In Christian-Muslim dialogue, it is an essential element due to its importance in both Islam and Christianity. In this section, I want to link religious hospitality and humility in interreligious dialogue. Genuine hospitality presupposes an attitude of humility.

Hospitality is generally understood as the welcoming of a guest or a stranger. According to the *New Bible Dictionary* (1999:485), the Greek term used is *philoxenia* – love of strangers. This love is expressed through the welcoming of strangers or guests. The letter to the Hebrews 13:2 points it well, "*Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it.*" This biblical passage underlines the importance of caring for people regardless of race, religion, and so on. The life and examples of Jesus Christ underpin it. He showed hospitality to different people, such as the Syro-Phoenician/Canaanite woman (Mk 7:24-30/ Mt 15:21-28) and the Centurion (Mt 8:5-13). O'Collins (2018:7) underlines that in Mark, Jesus performed two miracles in Gentile territory: the restoration of hearing and the speech to a deaf-mute (Mk 7, 31-37); and the feeding of the four thousand (Mk 8:1-10). O'Collins (2018:7) further highlights that in Luke's Gospel (LK 17:11-19), Jesus cleansed ten lepers. One of them was a Samaritan whom Jesus called 'a stranger'. And finally, there is the meeting of Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:5-30).

Based on the different verses of the above paragraph, Daou (2014), in his book co-authored with Tabbara, *L'hospitalité Divine*, brings to the fore three elements concerning Jesus' meeting with religious otherness: (1) Jesus is far from the communitarian logic which establishes a rigid separation between the 'us' communitarian and the 'others' (Daou 2014:27); (2) Jesus admires the faith of those who are neither Jews nor among his disciples (Daou 2014:27); and (3) he insists on the internal dimension of faith and the spiritual experience of each one than on external practices (Daou 2014:28). Jesus offers hospitality to non-Jews in a *kenotic* posture. To move beyond the religious rigidity of some doctrines within our religions, to admire the faith of others, and to appreciate the internal spiritual experience of each person presupposes an attitude of humility leading to openness and interreligious hospitality. Therefore, in the examples of Jesus, I can argue that interreligious hospitality requires humility.

From a Christian perspective, ultimately, the incarnation of Christ is the *locus focus* of the divine hospitality toward humanity. Through the incarnation, God communicated the totality of Himself in His Son, who is the sign of his eternal pledge of hospitality. For Athanasius, "*through the creation and incarnation God engaged in the deification not only of Christian believers but also of all other human beings*" (O'Collins 2018:2). Creation expresses divine hospitality, and through the incarnation, God enters into the human 'house' through His self-communication and communion with humanity. Therefore, divine hospitality underpins human communion with God and fellow human beings. Consequently, Christian hospitality must be understood as entering into God's hospitality. In this sense, hospitality has a sense of communication and communion in humility. For de Béthune (2007:6), hospitality is a more vital form of communication and communion. In fact, for O'Collins (2018:66), in order to experience the unreserved divine hospitality of eternal life, we are on a pilgrimage towards the completion of everything, when all people and everything shall be gathered together in the glorious body of Christ. This implies that we are on a pilgrimage of communion toward the final and total communion of everything and everyone in divine hospitality.

de Béthune (2007:6) also argues that "*Hospitality involves permitting another to enter one's house, or oneself entering the house of another*." It presupposes recognition of difference; thus, a stranger is welcomed not despite everything about them that is irreconcilable but with everything about them that cannot be assimilated. It is encountering the whole person (de Béthune 2016:36). It is to welcome the religious other despite religious differences (de Béthune in Cornille 2008:177). This can be linked to Cornille's (2008:177) view, who understands

hospitality as an attitude of openness and receptivity to differences as a possible source of truth. It is a recognition of truth in difference. She further argues that humility and hospitality have a special relationship (2008:177) because "*hospitality toward the truth of the other requires recognition of the limitation or the partiality of one's own understanding of truth*." Consequently, Cornille (2008:195) emphasizes that religious hospitality should embrace openness toward accepting the truth of the other without domestication or totalization of the religious other. With humility in hospitality, we can discover positive aspirations in other religions. Discovering any inspiring thought or practice may or should lead to a constructive engagement (Cornille 2013:28) or constructive interreligious dialogue.

I can conclude that interreligious hospitality, the welcome or the love of religious otherness, requires humility. Instead of seeing other religions as competitors or threats, we must promote the love of religious otherness, welcoming others in their singularity. Again, Cornille (2013) argues that genuine hospitality requires epistemic humility. This requires a modest understanding of the restricted or finite ways in which one's religion can grasp or represent the ultimate truth (Cornille 2013:21).

3.6 From Humility to Coexistence and Friendship

Interreligious dialogue can also be understood within the framework of peaceful coexistence and friendship. It is acknowledged to be an important mechanism for promoting peace, coexistence, and friendship between people from different religions. Different organizations of interreligious dialogue have been created to promote peace, for example, the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP). Representatives from different religions meet every five years to discuss topics related to peace and disarmament (Cornille 2008:102). Another organization is the United Religious Initiative. Its mission is to promote enduring interfaith cooperation to end religiously motivated violence and to create cultures of peace, justice, and healing for the Earth and all living beings (Cornille 2008:102). Many other different religious groups try to promote peace, coexistence and friendship through interreligious dialogue.

Küng (1998:92) has succinctly argued that without peace between the religions, there will be no peace between civilizations. Furthermore, without dialogue, there cannot be peace between religions. Against this background, it could be argued that there will never be a peaceful coexistence between peoples if this is not preceded by dialogue between religions and the establishment of a friendly and peaceful co-existence of religions. Thus, Ehrenkranz and

Coppola underscore the importance of living together. They underline that coexistence "*allows for individuals, families, and communities to grapple with ideas and the values that foster human dignity, the common good, and the authentic moral choices*" (Ehrenkranz and Coppola 2010:88). They further argue that peace fosters fulfilled lives because it creates an environment of security, tolerance, freedom of speech, and religion (2010:88). If religious diversity is positively understood, it promotes peaceful coexistence. Ultimately, "*to live in peaceful coexistence is to promote a respectful and healthy tolerance for diversity, pluralism, and equality […]*" (Ehrenkranz & Coppola 2010:88).

However, the German philosopher Spaemann quoted by Scheffler (2007:173), pointed out that the religious wars of the 16th and 17th centuries had been preceded by 'endless interreligious dialogues' and that the subsequent pacification of Europe was rather based on the principle of *cuius regio, eius religio* (1555, 1648) that separated the issues of politico-territorial peace from theological disputes. This objection argues against the contribution of interreligious dialogue to peacebuilding. This happens when, according to Scheffler (2007:174), "*[i]n its narrowest sense, the term 'dialogue' refers to logocentric interactions between two or more persons*" but also in circumstances when interreligious dialogues become polemics, as seen in the case of the writings of John of Damascus. In this case, the main purpose of dialogue is to prove the superiority of one's own views and expose the weaknesses of the opponents (Scheffler 2007:174) or what Cornille (2018:196) has called monologue, when the truth of other religions is judged on the basis of one's own religious framework and norms. In this line, I think that the peaceful coexistence and friendship framework of interreligious dialogue depends on the theological framework of *kenosis* – humility – openness to religious otherness. The *kenosis* framework supersedes the narrow understanding of dialogue and the illusion of superiority.

Kenosis, which does not seek to possess others but to respect them and allow them to retain their own identity, leads to friendship and coexistence because it provides a framework of openness and respect, which resonates with the values of *ubuntunse*. Jensen (2001:216) has pointed out that the radical openness towards and respect for the other, while preserving one's own identity, can also serve as a Christological basis for interreligious dialogue. On this basis, *kenosis* can be understood to provide an essential basis for the friendship and coexistence of people from different religions, which is fundamental in today's religious context of Lusaka. Interreligious dialogue is critical to the coexistence of religions and peoples. Moreover, Christians are called to be a presence of friendship, of respect, and welcome and to be a sign

of God's tenderness for the people (McGee 2015:21). My findings, through focus groups in the Lusaka Archdiocese, propose SCCs as places for friendship, respect and welcoming.

Ehrenkranz and Coppola (2010:88) argue that promoting ethical living in the love of God and neighbor, which can lead to peace, is a fundamental belief of the Abrahamic religions. Good-willed individuals must set aside their differences and work towards understanding and reconciliation, particularly through respectfully learning about and teaching about the other, in order to coexist peacefully. Moreover, all the Abrahamic religions derive their spirituality from the same God, worshiped as loving and compassionate (Hinze & Omar 2005:20). They are typified by a merciful God (Hinze & Omar 2005:29). However, in practice, religions in the modern world frequently seem to promote religious violence rather than the love of God and neighbor. Kronish (2008:224) asserts that Judaism, Christianity, and Islam preach peace, but too often, they are corrupted to fuel hatred and violence, and Cornille (2008:103) adds that although religions preach peace, it cannot be denied that they continue to be implicated in the logic of wars and violence. Furthermore, for Knitter (2017:53), there is a link between religious supremacy and violence.

However, I argue that authentic interreligious dialogue can promote a culture of peace focusing on fostering peaceful relations among peoples (Kronish 2008:226). Different religions possess ethical and social resources for cultivating peace between peoples (Cornille 2008:103). Interreligious dialogue provides a foundation for the peaceful coexistence of different religions. Promoting love for God and neighbor or the culture of peace requires humility and respect for the identity of the other. Respecting the identity of others is achieved by recognizing their existence and allowing them to be who they are in their singularity, thus, promoting the culture of religious tolerance or religious otherness.

Scheffler (2007) has listed ten achievements in peace promotion that can be expected from inter-religious workshops. Among the most relevant of these are the following six (Scheffler 2007:183):

- *They help de-legitimize violent actors who claim to speak in the name of their respective religions.*
- *They demonstrate, by way of firm, but peaceful discussions of controversial issues that there are other ways than violence to voice protest or deal with other religious communities.*
- *They help develop, systematize, or popularize new, dialogue-promoting concepts […].*

- *They encourage theologians and committed lays of various traditions to search the theologies, myths, and legends of their own religions in order to (re-)discover new emotional and dogmatic sources of peace work and peace-supporting virtues […].*
- *They develop emotionally appealing symbols and public rituals of multi or interfaith communities and reconciliation – a prominent example being the multi-faith peace prayers in Assisi, inaugurated by Pope John-Paul II in 1986.*
- *They provide new personal experiences by promoting inter-communal encounters, helping deconstruct mutually held prejudices, popularizing the recognition of religious "other(s)" and facilitating the development of individual friendships across inter-communal boundaries.*

I agree with Scheffler (2007) that authentic interreligious dialogue contributes to peacebuilding or peaceful coexistence of peoples or religions for the reasons mentioned above. However, in addition, religious humility and identity are required if interreligious dialogue is to be a factor of peaceful coexistence or peacebuilding.

For the core of global ethics, Küng proposes four principles: commitment to a culture of non-violence and respect for all life, commitment to a culture of solidarity and a just economic order, commitment to a culture of tolerance and a life of truthfulness, and commitment to a culture of equal rights and partnership between men and women (Küng 1998:111). According to Cornille (2008:104), these four principles were ratified at the 1993 World's Parliament of Religions and signed by representatives of all the major religions. They serve as the basis for mutual understanding and collaboration toward creating a just and peaceful world. Thus, they serve as the basis for interreligious dialogue in view of promoting peaceful coexistence because interreligious dialogue can foster a culture of religious tolerance, non-violence, respect, and friendship between religions[38].

3.7 Conclusion

The Christological hymn to the Philippians (the *kenosis* – abasement of) highlights two important elements for interreligious dialogue that can be deduced from patristic interpretations of the hymn to our modern times: humility and identity. Consequently, since *kenosis* is God's image, the Church's image should be *kenotic*. Humility is at the heart of Christianity. It is the basis of peaceful coexistence and friendship. Within interreligious relationships, the *kenotic*

[38] Cornille (2008:105) has, however, argued that to engage in interreligious dialogue for peace, one must be prepared to forgive the sins and violence of the other religion as well as acknowledge and forgive the sins and violence of one's own religion. This dialogue may help to break through the religious violence but also give a vision of hope and energy to transform the world. Dialogue for peace in the world appears not only an interesting possibility but a moral obligation. This perspective implies that humility is a required condition for interreligious dialogue for peace. The willingness to recognize and apologize requires an attitude of humility.

outlook is essential in the paradigm shift from polemics (religious controversies) to interreligious dialogue.

Self-knowledge and humility imply knowing and accepting one's limitations. Interreligious pride hinders dialogue and leads to the wrong images of oneself and others, and to an attitude of religious self-superiority and self-sufficiency. The *kenotic* posture leads to the renunciation of prejudices, preconceived ideas, and negative mental and emotional representations, which affect our image of other religions and, consequently, relations between religions. We must see other religions in the coherence of their singularity. Therefore, humility is an essential condition in interreligious dialogue, in avoiding religious polemics. From a Christian perspective, it is grounded in the humility of Christ, who took the human form, emptied himself, and humbled himself. The self-emptying of Christ does not entail the loss of his divine nature or his divine identity. In the same way, interreligious dialogue requires humility and identity. Humility leads to the love of the other with their religious identity.

I can conclude that humility makes us understand that in different religions, there is interpretation, understanding, and explanation of revelation (hermeneutics of revelation). Although revelation is accomplished in Christ, who is God's self-communication (using the language of Karl Rahner), Christ is still greater than ourselves. He is not the property of Christians or a particular religion. It is in this sense that we can understand that there is mutual enrichment in dialogue. This requires openness to the truth of the other or as Cornille (2008) has put it, it requires both spiritual and doctrinal humility. I would say that being Christian is being *interreligiously* humble.

Any authentic interreligious dialogue leads to peaceful coexistence. Dialogue is the foundation of productive coexistence. Humility leads to religious tolerance in social contexts because it implies an interest in the other. And it is the foundation on which interreligious hospitality stands. The documents of the Catholic Magisterium on interreligious dialogue promote this same interreligious hospitality – interreligious coexistence. Thus, in the context of Zambia, this should influence Catholics and all people of goodwill on how they relate with Muslims. However, as it will be highlighted in the discussions of the findings, this humility is more linked to the local epistemology of the people due to the fact that people are unaware of the documents of the Magisterium.

The documents of the Magisterium have received both positive and negative criticisms since the time of Paul VI. The next chapter analyzes these documents of the Magisterium within the frameworks of incarnational theology, *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship. The openness of the Catholic Church to other religions is underlined by the imitation of the humility of Christ, with the cross as his ultimate expression of love (*agape*). From the Catholic point of view, *kenosis* gives the Christological basis for interreligious dialogue. This chapter will argue that the call to interreligious dialogue, which is the call to enter into God's plan of universal fraternity, is based on this same Christological foundation and does not require a compromise of one's own religious identity.

Chapter Four

Interreligious Dialogue in the Documents of the Magisterium Understood within *Kenosis* and Peaceful Coexistence and Friendship

4.1. Introduction

This chapter highlights the theology of interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim/Christian-Muslim dialogue articulated in the documents of the Second Vatican Council and then in the different documents of the Magisterium. It is worth noting that the relationship between Christians and Muslims is complicated and frequently antagonistic. The relationship between these two biggest religions in the world is perhaps more significant than ever in today's postmodern, postcolonial, globalizing, and multifaith society (Todd 2016:31). In recent years, after Vatican II, Christian-Muslim dialogue has gained great momentum in Christian and, perhaps to a lesser extent, in some Muslim communities for instance, the Southern Africa Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) and other Catholic episcopal conferences like the French episcopal conference of bishops have departments of interreligious dialogue. However, the major challenge that has to be faced is that of building bridges of understanding and friendship between Christians and Muslims (McGee 2017:9). To discuss this meaningfully, it is necessary to summarize how the Magisterium in Vatican II and other documents of the Magisterium have encouraged the building of bridges between Catholics and Muslims within the background of *kenosis*-incarnation.

Vatican II is a turning point in Catholic theology in general and in the Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue in particular. The Council was faced with the challenge of updating the pastoral approach to the Catholic faithful and to the outside world while remaining true to the unchanging deposit of faith (The Documents of Vatican II 2014:VI). Thus, the objective of the Council was an *aggiornamento* that operated within the unchanging deposit of faith (Scripture and Tradition). "*What is more, this was to be done not in a confrontational fashion, but in keeping with the spirit of the times, the world was to be engaged in a respectful dialogue*" (The Documents of Vatican II 2014:vi). The relationship between the Church and other religions was to be understood within this same spirit of openness and dialogue, but at the same time, the Church was committed to remaining faithful to Scripture and Tradition. One of the religions discussed in the conciliar documents is Islam. Thus, this chapter will also focus on relations between the Church and Islam within the general theology of interreligious dialogue of Vatican II and in the writings of different popes.

It is worth noting that before the Council, some congregations like the Missionaries of Africa (The White Fathers) founded in Algeria, the Dominicans, individuals like Louis Massignon (1883-1962), Henri Le Saux (1910-1973), Louis Merton (1915-1968), known worldwide as Thomas Merton, Bede Griffiths OSB (1906-1993), Raimon Panikkar (1918-2010), Aloysius Pieris SJ, and others, already had positive experiences of religious otherness (de Béthune 2016:9). By the middle of the 20th century, it became clear that the Church needed to reflect on its relationship with the world and with other religions. The response of Vatican II was revolutionary in its refocused approach to religious otherness and its vision underpins the current Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue. The dynamic of this theology is openness to others by including them in the Christian economy of salvation as can be seen in *Nostra Aetate*, *Lumen Gentium*, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Sacrosanctum Concilium*. In this perspective, Dupuis has highlighted that Vatican II "*tends in the direction of attributing to them [other religions] some saving value*" (O'Connell 2017:262). This openness is based on the Trinitarian theology, which cannot be comprehended without the incarnation, and paschal mystery of Christ which extends beyond the borders of the Church. Relying on the documents of the Council, the different teachings of the Magisterium have continued to develop the Catholic understanding of interreligious dialogue.

The chapter examines the different documents of the Council to understand the Church's view of religious otherness. Although *Nostra Aetate* is regarded as the most important document on the relationship between the Church and other religions, other documents are equally important. Therefore, with the conciliar documents, I start with *Sacrosantum Concilium* because of the importance of liturgy in the life of the Church. I will then discuss *Lumen Gentium*. The ecclesiology of Vatican II shows openness to others. I will discuss *Nostra Aetate* due to its significance in dialogue and finally the writings of the different popes.

4.3 *Sacrosanctum Concilium*

What is the scope of Vatican II on interreligious dialogue? From the first document promulgated on December 4, 1963, called *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (SC), Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, we can see the Church's openness to other Christian churches and other religions. This document affirms the universality of Christ as a mediator and the importance of the incarnation in the human history of salvation.

SC 2 stresses that because it is the liturgy that accomplishes the work of our redemption, particularly in the holy sacrifice of the Eucharist, the faithful have an exceptional opportunity to express in their lives and make visible to others the mystery of Christ and the true essence of the Church. It continues by underlining that the Eucharist "*strengthens their power to preach Christ, and thus show forth the Church to those who are outside as a sign lifted up among the nations under which the scattered children of God may be gathered together, until there is one sheepfold and one shepherd*" (SC 2). In this passage, two ideas are combined: (1) the concrete witness of a Christian life – being Christ-like to others, which resonates with SC 12, liturgy makes the life of Jesus manifested in our bodily frame; and (2) eschatological time – the total unity of humanity, when according to SC 48, God will be all in all. O'Collins (2013:63) highlights, "*from the outset, Sacrosanctum Concilium presented Eucharist as also involving an open desire to 'preach Christ' and "manifest" his mystery to the world*". I would add that from the onset, SC underlines the human pilgrimage toward unity of all people, which must start here and now. The Eucharist, which is the source and summit of the Christian life (from a Catholic standpoint) (SC 10), is understood within the framework of openness; Christians must manifest the mystery of Christ to the world, which is the manifestation and the communication of God's saving love to the world. The Eucharist is a sacrament of love (SC 47). This gives a basis for interreligious dialogue because the Catholic community is a Eucharistic community, meaning becoming what they receive in the Eucharist – the universality of Christ's love. Thus, Christian love must be universal in its nature.

Furthermore, for the Catholic community, the sacrament of the Eucharist is the prayer par excellence through which human communion is achieved. According to *Sacrosanctum Concilium*:

> *At the Last Supper, on the night when He was betrayed, our Saviour instituted the eucharistic sacrifice of His Body and Blood. He did this in order to perpetuate the sacrifice of the Cross throughout the centuries until He should come again, and so to entrust to His beloved spouse, the Church, a memorial of His death and resurrection: a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet […]* (SC 47).

The Eucharist is the sacrament of the invisible grace of love, communion, and unity. It is the real presence of Christ to whom all humanity belongs. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* insists that through the incarnation, Jesus the High Priest joins the entire community of humanity to Himself, associating it with His own singing of the canticle of divine praise (SC 83). O'Collins (2013:67) concludes that by taking on the human condition in his incarnation,

Christ, in his high priestly role, is said to have started the singing of the divine praises on earth. He is depicted as identifying with the entire human race, not just those who know and believe in him. In this perspective, I can argue that the openness of the Church to other religions through the Eucharist (sacrament of love and bond of Christian charity) is underpinned by the incarnation, as discussed in the previous chapter. O'Collins (2013:67) continues that it must be understood that the crucifixion, resurrection, and outpouring of the Holy Spirit reinforced and confirmed the unity of the entire human race in him, which had begun with the incarnation. Christ, who abases himself by taking the human condition and going to death on the cross (the *kenosis* of the Christ), is the source of openness of Catholics to other religions. However, through the Eucharist, the community becomes the Body of Christ to themselves and others (Claverie 1996:115). Hence, Christ is incarnated in the real-life experiences of Christians.

For Ciraulo (2022:19), the Eucharist, as a sacrament, is best understood in relationship to the fundamental mystery of the incarnation, on which it depends and of which it is the expression. Quoting von Balthasar, he adds, "*The revelation of the Son has from the very outset a eucharistic structure, which also implies that the faith that answers this revelation as its echo has the same structure*" (Ciraulo 2022:18). Since the mystery of the incarnation is the full expression of God's saving love, it must be accepted that, as von Balthasar (in Ciraulo 2022) states, faith that answers this revelation echoes God's saving love. Thus, within the framework of incarnation, we can understand the Eucharist as a source of openness to religious otherness because God's saving love embraces the entire humanity. It seems that for von Balthasar (in Ciraulo 2022), Eucharist and incarnation point to the same reality: the universal love of God concluded in a new covenant in the *kenosis* of the Son. He (in Ciraulo 2022:22) argues, "*In the Eucharist of his surrendered Son, God concludes his new and eternal covenant with mankind (sic), committing himself to it utterly and with no reservation*". This is an impetus for Christian openness (in humility) to others because of the universal and *kenotic* sense of the new and eternal covenant.

True unity is achieved in the Eucharistic celebration. For Catholics, Eucharistic liturgical celebrations are places of communion, signs of unity (SC 47), and union with God and with others (SC 48). This communion and unity should be both intra-ecclesial and extra-ecclesial – communion (unity within the Church and outside the Church) because Christ, the cosmic choir master has associated both the baptized and unbaptized (the entire humanity) with himself (SC

83). Since the Eucharist is the communion of all (the bread and wine offered during the celebration, the eucharistic species, are the fruits of the labor of all women and all men of the earth, signs of communion), the Church cannot be confined within herself. She must be an expression of the universality of the love of Christ. This can promote the relationship between the Church and other religions. Thus, leading to peaceful coexistence and friendship with others regardless of their religious identity.

4.4 *Lumen Gentium*

Lumen Gentium (LG) is the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, which was promulgated on November 21, 1964. It is a revolutionary document in the self-understanding of the Church. Rausch (2016:192) explains that *Lumen Gentium* depicts the church as a sacrament, mystery, body of Christ, people of God, and pilgrim church, in contrast to the ideal society model of the Church that predominated at Vatican I and described the Church in terms of its institutions and hierarchy. The Church is a mystery because she shares in the divine life (Rausch 2016:193).

4.4.1 Church as Sacrament

Vatican II Fathers understood the Church as the Sacrament of unity of the whole human race. The mother Church is the sign and instrument of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race (LG 1) and the universal sacrament of salvation (LG 48; GS 45). She is the sign and instrument of the Kingdom of God (EN 59). These themes are essential in understanding the importance of interreligious dialogue in the works of the Magisterium. However, Gassmann "*has shown that the same terminology [church as sacrament-sign and instrument] is being increasingly used in Protestant circles particularly in the Commission for Faith and Order (FO)*" (Bosch 2011:383). In the Protestant circle, according to Bosch (2011:383) this tendency can be traced to the 1927 FO meeting in Lausanne. It is an important ecclesiological image of the Church in both the Catholic and Protestant Churches. Gassmann (quoted by Bosch 2011:384) argues that the terminology is essential in describing the place and vocation of the Church and its unity in God's plan of salvation.

Explaining 'Church as Sacrament', Sullivan (1988:10) notes that she is a sacrament because of her association with Christ. In fact, the Church, is the 'sacrament of Christ' (*sacramentum Christi*) just as Christ is the 'sacrament of God' (*sacramentum Dei*). Rausch (2016:213) on the other hand underlines that the incarnation doctrine is at the root of the Catholic sacramental imagination. According to Schillebeeckx (1963:15), Jesus is the primordial sacrament. "*God's*

dialogue with creation achieves its full realization in the person of Jesus who is himself the visible embodiment of God's saving grace. As such, he is sign and reality, sacramentum and res sacramenti" (Rausch 2016:219). Understanding the Church as a sacrament is linking it to the risen Jesus (the glorious Christ). Therefore, the Church is to be understood as being both human and divine. I agree with Rausch that, "*With the risen Jesus no longer present in his humanity, the church carries on God's offer of salvation, made visible in space and time. Thus the church becomes the fundamental sacrament of salvation, the sign of God's self-communication in Christ […]*" (Rausch 2016:219). She communicates God's grace. Rahner (1992:390), discussing the Church as the basic sacrament of the World's salvation, is of the opinion that the Church is the authentic manifestation of grace in history, a manifestation that offers universal salvation. Rahner (1992:392) goes further by arguing that, the Church must be envisioned and experienced by the Catholic as the "vanguard," the sacramental sign, and the historical expression of the saving grace whose efficacy transcends the boundaries of the "visible" church as sociologically definable. For him, the sacramental nature of the Church takes it beyond its physical boundaries. Gribaudo (2015:110) pinpoints that, "*Rahner's insight that the Church is a sacrament for the world also carries with it a dynamism. The Church walking in history brings the grace of Christ to the world and is a means of infusing the world with grace, thereby making the world holy.*" For this reason, the Church should have a positive attitude toward others because she is the 'sacrament of the world' (*sacramentum mundi*).

Although not writing in line with Vatican II on the Church as a sacrament, Schillebeeckx gives some interesting ideas on the sacramental nature of the Church. He argues that "*what Christ is doing invisibly in this world through his Spirit, he is at the same time doing visibly through the mission of his apostles and of the members of the Church community*" (Schillebeeckx 1963:50). In his later work, '*Church: The Human Story of God*' Schillebeeckx (1993:13) goes further by recognizing not only churches but also religions as 'sacrament' of the salvation that God brings about in the world he has created. The Council would have hesitated to adopt this position because it seems to put different religions at the same level in their salvific effectiveness.

Vatican II, by considering the Church as a sacrament, implied that she is a sign of God's grace. A sacrament confers a particular grace. Sullivan (1988:10), discussing the Church as a sacrament, pinpoints that she is an 'efficacious sign of grace', he explains:

> *The council specifies a twofold grace of which the church is "sign and instrument": namely, "intimate union with God" (the vertical dimension) and the "unity of all humanity" (horizontal dimension). Intimate union with God involves the reconciliation of sinners with God, the*

enjoyment of friendship with him in this life, and the intimacy of the beatific vision in the life to come. The "unity of all humanity" describes the universal peace and harmony that would prevail from the recognition of God as the one Father of all peoples and nations, and the practical living out of the love which all owe to one another as children of God and members of his family. The role of the church: to be a sign and instrumental cause of such realities as these, is surely grounds for recognizing the church as a "mystery," containing and effecting results that go far beyond what any merely human institution could accomplish. Of course, it is only "in Christ," that is, as his instrument, that the Church can have such a role.

Sullivan's (1988) explanation is coherent with Catholic theology. The Church as a sacrament is understood within a Christocentric or incarnational doctrine as pinpointed by Rausch (2016). The Church perpetuates the presence of Christ in the world. Because of her intimate relationship with Christ (the vertical dimension), as Rausch (2016) explains, she makes visible God's salvation through her missionary endeavours (the horizontal dimension), or what Schillebeeckx would say, she makes visible the invisible work of Christ. For de Lubac, she is the sacrament of Christ because she continues the salvific mission of Christ until he comes (Gribaudo 2015:110).

4.4.1.1 The Implications of the Church as a Sacrament on Interreligious Dialogue

The Roman Catholic Church cannot pretend to be the visible sign of the invisible grace of God of unity of the whole human race or salvation without creating fraternal relations with people from other religions. Teissier (1984:96) argues that the Church as a sacrament means that she is the sign and agent of God's action in the world. The Church is a visible signal from God to express to the world His universal call to all people: the salvation of all souls. John Paul II also underlines that, in the Church as sacrament, God has established her and made her a part of his plan of salvation (RM 9), which is the unity of humanity with its creator and which starts here and now through peaceful coexistence and unity of peoples. This model of the Church gives her the responsibility of being at the service of all, or as John Paul II has put it being challenged to be the light of the world and the salt of the earth (RM 9). She has to prolong God's love to all without discrimination. Therefore, she is the 'sign and instrument' not only for Christians but also for different religions. Through interreligious dialogue (creating fraternal relationships with others, living in harmony, promoting peace and justice, and upholding human dignity)[39],

[39] The Church in North Africa lives this vocation of creating friendship with Muslims, thus promoting a peaceful coexistence. The former Archbishop of Rabat, Landel, highlighted that 'For us, Christians in North Africa, we receive the Lord's invitation to be "sent into the world", to be just simply this presence of friendship, of respect and welcome, able to live in truth this encounter as a "sign of God's tenderness for people"' (McGee 2015:21). In Algeria, the group Ribat-el-Salam (Christians and Muslims) promotes a dialogue of religious exchange between Muslims and Christians. Furthermore, the different Roman pontiffs have tried to friendship,

she makes visible God's salvation to others, thus, she is both *sacramentum* and *res sacramenti* (sign and reality) of unity of humanity.

4.4.2 The Church as the People of God

Lumen Gentium has discussed at length the theme 'People of God'. The Council teaches that through his blood (1 Cor 11: 25), Christ has made people one in the Spirit, the new people of God (LG 9). They are established as a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people who were not a people in the past but are now the people of God (1 Pet. 2:9–10). They are reborn not from a perishable but from an imperishable seed through the word of the living God (cf. 1 Pet. 1:23), not from the flesh but from water and the Holy Spirit (Jn. 3:5–6) (LG 9). They are a messianic people, seeds of unity, hope, and salvation of humanity (LG 9). The Council Fathers see the new people of God as the instrument of redemption (LG 9). The Council emphasizes the participation of everyone in the threefold ministry of Christ. Through their baptism, the new people of God/the Church: (1) share the common priesthood of Christ (LG 10-11); (2) share in Christ's prophetic office (LG 12); and (3) the kingship of Christ (LG 13).

LG 13-17 discusses the Catholicity of the Church. All people belong to the new people of God. According to Sullivan (1988:87), "*In the first of these articles, the council provides a brief theology of catholicity, of which the principle headings are: (1) the trinitarian source of catholicity, (2) catholicity as universality of races, nations and cultures, (3) catholicity as unity is rich diversity, and (4) catholicity as relationship with all of humanity*." It is in discussing the Catholicity of the Church that the Council, according to Sullivan (1988:91), discusses the '*Catholicity*' of Christ. It articulates the uniqueness of the mediation of Christ and the universality of salvation (LG 14). Sullivan (1988:91) highlights, "*There is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved (Acts 4:12). His catholicity is his universal role as the one mediator, one redeemer, one hope of salvation for all of humanity.*" *Lumen Gentium* gives a Catholic dogmatic framework.

harmony, peace, and justice through dialogue between the Catholic Church and different religious communities. This will be highlighted in this chapter when discussing the contributions of each Catholic pope.

4.4.2.1 The "Catholicity" of Christ and Religious Otherness

The 'Catholicity' of Christ explains why this Dogmatic Constitution of the Church recognizes that the people of God are a diverse community. The Council Fathers looked at different ways people belong (pertinent) or are ordered (ordinantur) to catholic unity (O'Collins 2013:73). Against this background, LG 16 underlines how different communities outside the Christian fold belong to the people of God. It first mentions the people of Israel, then those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place, the Muslims with whom we worship the one and merciful God (LG 16).

LG 16 shows the openness of the Church and also its humility in accepting that all people (Jews, Muslims, those who seek the unknown God, and those who through no fault of their own do not know God) are related to the new people of God and also by acknowledging that God's salvation is inclusive. Thus, it reemphasizes that the Church no longer supports the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the church no salvation). John Paul II would even argue that not just people who have joined the Church and openly believe in Christ are saved. Since everyone is eligible for salvation, it must be made specifically available to everyone (RM 10). Our understanding of salvation determines our respect for religious otherness.

4.4.2.2 The People of God and Catholic-Muslim Dialogue

Since my research is on the Catholic-Muslim relationship, it is essential to underline that LG 16 recognizes that we worship the same God with Muslims. In this regard, O'Collins (2013:73) writes, "*For the first time since the Arab prophet Muhammad (d.632) founded Islam, an ecumenical council of the Catholic Church offered some explicit teaching on Muslims*."[40] But in 1966, Caspar had already acknowledged that it was the first time that the Magisterium pronounced itself on Islam (Caspar 1966). This was a significant shift in the way the Church looked and looks at Muslims. From the birth of Islam to recent times, Christian-Muslim history is mainly marked by polemics, hatred, misunderstanding (as already discussed), competition, and sometimes wars. Here, the Church recognizes that we worship one God with the Muslims and this marks a significant change in the relationship between the Church and Islam [41].

[40] Although O'Collins (2013) talks about Muhammad founding Islam, it can be argued that Muhammad did not regard himself as founder of a new religion. He is rather a reformer of both Christianity and Islam. He brings to the fore the real meaning of religion, which is the unicity of God, Tawhid.

[41] Although Vatican II Council does not talk about Islam, it talks about Muslims, we would think that by mentioning Muslims, the Council does not detach them from their religion, which is Islam.

For Fitzgerald and Borelli (2006:112), Vatican II represents a significant shift in the Church's stance towards Islam and other religions. However, there is still an obstacle because some Christians do not wish to accept that Christians and Muslims worship the same God (Fitzgerald & Borelli 2006:113). This attitude has continued even today. For Caspar (1966), there is only one God and every person of good faith adores this same God, but he/she calls Him by different names. The fact that the names and conceptions given to God are not the same does not show the difference in God. They show the difference in grasping, interpreting, and explaining the divine revelation. Moreover, our languages and conceptions are incapable of describing God. The CDF in *Mysterium Ecclesiae* (ME) underlined important elements with regard to God's revelation, they recognized that God's Mysteries: (1) "*by their nature so far transcend the human intellect that even if they are revealed to us and accepted by faith, they remain concealed by the veil of faith itself and are as it were wrapped in darkness*" (ME 5)[42]. (2) Our historical condition affects the expression of revelation (ME 5), and (3) Faith declarations are influenced in part by the expressive capacity of the language employed at a certain moment and under specific conditions (ME 5). This can be applicable to religions in general and not only to the Church. If we comprehend the totality of God, we would be gods. Therefore, the difference between Christianity and Islam with regard to God's nature is hermeneutical rather than essential.

For Caspar (1976), the Council highlighted two privileges of Islam, which must be particularly dear to the heart of every Christian. On the one hand, it places Islam at the forefront of the great non-biblical monotheistic religions. On the other hand, the Council boldly asserted that Christians and Muslims worship the same One God. We no longer have the right to say that we do not worship the same God, even if we give him, on both sides, different names. This admission provides an argument in favour of Christian-Muslim dialogue and the possibility of respecting and learning from one another.

4.5 *Nostra Aetate*

This important document is a declaration on the relation of the Church to Non-Christian religions that was promulgated on October 28, 1965. It is a reflection on what we have in common with other religions and on what provides a foundation for unity and friendship among religions. It is a short document with just five paragraphs. It is the shortest of the sixteen

[42] The Sacred Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith produced the document, 'Declaration in Defense of the Catholic Doctrine on the Church against certain errors of the present day, *Mysterium Ecclesia*' in 1973.

documents of Vatican II. However, it is one of the most significant documents on the subject of interreligious dialogue. In the Catholic Church, it gives guidelines for interreligious dialogue that the different Popes have tried to implement. Its theology of dialogue and the subsequent document of the Magisterium on dialogue are Christocentric. The Council Fathers wanted to focus on what we have in common with other religions as a source of dialogue and to reverse the old tradition of inter-religious hostility or polemics as seen with John of Damascus. They wanted to show that religions must be sources of peace and not of persecution or wars, especially in the context of antisemitism. Thus, the document is silent on an important question of the salvific values of other religions in themselves (Brazal 2017:422). It also has to be noted that the document does not use the word 'dialogue'. In this regard, Fitzgerald (2018a:25) posits that even though dialogue is not mentioned explicitly, it is surely understood as being a means to achieve mutual understanding and collaboration.

It is the first Magisterial document, according to de La Hougue (2011:105) that pinpoints these elements: (1) Religions are not first approached from the angle of their shortcomings in relation to the Christian faith (like heresies) but from the angle of their positive significance (this is a different approach from the polemics as discussed in chapter two). (2) The declaration reminds us that a dialogue between religions is possible and fruitful. For this, the Church invites us to take an in-depth look at other religions, knowing that it will always have to discover something new (humility). This cannot be detached from the third element found in other conciliar documents: (3) the possibility of salvation of people from other religions and religious freedom as the basis of human dignity. We can see a big shift in the way the Church looked at other religions in other councils and Vatican II. The document gives new theological and revolutionary insights into religious otherness.

Nostra Aetate, first, highlights the unity of the human family. The Council Fathers argued that because God created the entire human race to inhabit the world, one is the community of all peoples, which is also their genesis. Additionally, God is their ultimate objective (NA 1). Thus, the document highlights the common origin of humanity, the *imago Dei,* and common destiny (humanity is on the same pilgrim journey), and the common unsolved riddles of the human condition. "*Nostra Aetate thus prioritizes an emphasis on unity, commonalities, and sameness. Unity is the goal of interaction and dialogue, and unity arises from commonality in experience, origin, destination, and human nature*" (Lamptey 2017:204). Furthermore, both de La Hougue (2011:106) and Lamptey (2017:204) have pointed out that *Nostra Aetate* does not show that

religious difference is an important element or that it is a basis of unity. NA 2 discusses Hinduism and Buddhism, NA 3 discusses Islam, and NA 4 discusses Judaism. In all cases it envisages the possibility of peaceful coexistence and friendship between Christians and the people coming from different religions.

From a contextual point of view, *Nostra Aetate* was first intended to address the troubled relationship of the Church and the Jews (Borelli 2017:26). Borelli (2017:28) further adds, "*Nostra Aetate would not have happened without the initial seed planted in the mind of Pope John (XXIII) by Jules Isaac in June 1960 that the church needed to address its relationship with Jews in order to correct church teachings and address antisemitism*"[43]. This view is also held by Connelly (2012:240) who has argued that John XXIII would not have requested the text on the relationship with the Jews without his encounter with Jules Isaac, a holocaust survivor. In the development of the text, the Council Fathers working in Africa, the Middle East and Asia also opted that other religions be included in the document. Moreover, discussing only Judaism without including religions like Islam could have been considered by some as more a political option than and a religious option. However, the document aimed at highlighting positive elements among religions so as to facilitate dialogue with them and among them. This justifies the limitation of the scope of the document. I would agree with de La Hougue (2011:106) that, *Nostra Aetate* does not seek to develop the "how", that is to say, the relationship between the Christian faith and other religions. But, it is essential to note that the work of finalizing the modalities of dialogue is left to theologians. I would agree with Fitzgerald (2018a:30) that the Council did not want to encourage polemics[44]. Thus, dialogue must not aim at the defeating of one's opponent but at the development of mutual understanding.

[43] According to Borelli (2017:30), when Gregory Baum, an Augustinian friar wrote his first report on the relationship between Christians and Jews, he highlighted that the problem was a theological matter; certain ancient and medieval views were incompatible with theology. He suggested to clarify the points on what St. Paul says about the Jews in his letter to the Romans in order to enable Christians to appreciate better the Jews and so to stem the tide of antisemitism. Furthermore, it has to be noted that Borelli (2017:23-43) gives an interesting historical development of the document *Nostra Aetate.* He meticulously highlights the different stages it went through from being a document on the relationship between Christians and Jews, to being a document on Christians and Non-Christians that would integrate other religions. He points out the four major crises that the document went through: (1) Overcoming initial opposition and disinterest; (2) Mixed messages about the Church and the Jews; (3) Splintering the draft and its message; and (4) Oppositions from Middle East Bishops (some bishops voted against the document *Nostra Aetate*).

[44] This same position is also supported by Machado (2018:40), who highlights, 'Nostra Aetate did not attempt to enter into polemics and create a debate between religions'.

It is a document written within the framework of Catholic theology, which is Christo-centric due to its incarnational theology. Interreligious dialogue presupposes a theological identity. Simon (2021:883), Dialogue and Mission (DM 49) and Heft (in James & Heft 2012:11) underline the importance of differences in interreligious dialogue. If dialogue respects difference or alterity, it leads to coexistence and mutual enrichment. I can argue that difference in theological identity is not an obstacle but makes interreligious dialogue possible. It is the condition of its possibility; dialogue does not imply '*sameness*' or agreement. I would also agree with Fitzgerald (2018a:38) that through difference, we understand better our different systems of belief, which helps to break down stereotypes and overcome prejudices. Consequently, I would argue that *Nostra Aetate*, although it is a Christocentric document, does not develop the Christocentric theology to underpin its theology of dialogue, and its theology is not detached from that of other conciliar documents. In dialogue, we need to envisage respect for the agreements and disagreements that lead to a mutual understanding of differences.

Although *Nostra Aetate's* theology is related to other conciliar documents, its theological stance is linked to that of *Gaudium et Spes* which underlines that "*by his incarnation, he, the Son of God, has in a certain way united himself with each man (sic)*" (GA 22) and it adds "*since the ultimate vocation of man (sic) is in fact one, and divine, we ought to believe that the Holy Spirit in a manner known only to God offers to every man the possibility of being associated with this paschal mystery*" (GS 22). The paschal mystery is the heart of the Christian faith. Christian life is a configuration to this mystery, which embraces the entire humanity because we are all associated to this mystery in a way that only God knows through the Holy Spirit, and it is this same Holy Spirit of Christ that is the ray of Truth (NA 2) in other religions. It is within this Christocentric theology of incarnation and Paschal Mystery that we can understand *Nostra Aetate*.

Therefore, instead of understanding *Nostra Aetate* as a document expressing the superiority of the Catholic Church or the self-sufficiency of the Catholic Church due to its Christocentric nature, it has to be understood in the context of the Catholic theology of incarnation and which presupposes not only humility but also the lines of linkage and complementarity as was discussed in chapter two. Moreover, to include others in one's economy of salvation must be seen as a sign of humility. As already argued, interreligious dialogue does not entail compromising one's identity. *Nostra Aetate* gives important directives but without much

theological development. It has a limited theological development[45]. Later documents of the Council and Magisterium develop its theology.

4.5.1 *Nostra Aetate* and Islam

I now turn to see how Islam is discussed in *Nostra Aetate* because my research is on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Let us first note that there is a link between LG and NA. D'Costa argues "*LG 14–16 is crucial to understanding the dogmatic framework within which NA operates*" (Lamb & Levering 2017:427). As has already been discussed, LG 16 includes Muslims among people related to the New People of God. *Nostra Aetate* also gives the Magisterium's view on Muslims. Below is a comparison of the texts of *Lumen Gentium* and *Nostra Aetate*. These are the two most important texts of the Council on Islam.

Table 1

	Lumen Gentium 16		*Nostra Aetate* 3
1	*The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator. In the first place amongst these there are the Mohammedans.*	*1*	*The Church regards with esteem also the Moslems.*
2	*They profess to hold the faith of Abraham, along with us adore the one and merciful God.*	*2*	*They adore the one God, living and subsisting in Himself; merciful and all-powerful, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to humanity. They take pains to submit wholeheartedly to even His inscrutable decrees, just as Abraham, with whom the faith of Islam takes pleasure in linking itself, submitted to God.*
3		*3*	*Though they do not acknowledge Jesus as God, they revere Him as a prophet. They also honor Mary, His virgin Mother; at times they even call on her with devotion.*
4	*They adore God who on the last day will judge humanity.*	*4*	*In addition, they await the day of judgment when God will render their desserts to all those who have been raised up from the dead.*
		5	*Finally, they value the moral life and worship God especially through prayer, almsgiving and fasting.*

[45] Cardinal Augustin Bea said: 'The goal of the doctrine is not to make a complete expose of religions, nor to point out divergences the religions present among themselves and with the Catholic faith. By this declaration the Council wishes to show the link which exists between people and their religions, in order to build the foundation for dialogue and for collaboration.' (Machado 2018:42) This justifies the reason why the document is limited in its scope. Cardinal Augustin Bea was in charge of the presentation of *Nostra Aetate*.

		6	*Since in the course of centuries not a few quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Moslems, this sacred synod urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual un-understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind, social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom*

I can agree with Caspar[46] (1976), this text (NA) is much more developed although it does not make any reference to either Muhammad or to the Qur'an. It is made up of two parts: the first, doctrinal (rows 1-5), describes the values of the Muslim faith and worship; the second, of practical scope (row 6), invites mutual understanding and collaboration. As compared to LG 16, NA 3 adds rows 3 (acknowledging Jesus as a prophet and honoring Mary), row 5 (on morals and some pillars of Islam) and row 6 (invitation for mutual understanding and corroboration – dialogue). This is why Caspar (1976) argues that it must be understood that the first part of NA 3 opens the way to common action, which is the goal and summit of the text. He has considered this a Copernican revolution, a change in the attitude of the Church towards Islam (esteem and respect) and recognizing the values we have in common. It prioritizes religious commonality and sameness as the basis of dialogue and positive interactions among Catholics and Muslims (Lamptey 2017:203). Anawati (in D'Costa 2014:161) argues that it represents a change in the Church's stance towards Islam after nearly continuous condemnation until the twentieth century. Both Casper (Missionary of Africa) and Anawati (Dominican) were involved in the composition of this text of *Nostra Aetate*. They were among the specialists in Islam at Vatican II.

Although theologians like Lamptey (2017:205) argue that in *Nostra Aetate* "*when Muslims people – conspicuously not the Islamic tradition – are esteemed in the decree, they are esteemed for beliefs and practices […] that are familiar to the church*", it has to be noted that *Nostra Aetate* does not pretend to give a detailed theological reflection of a theology of religion or a comparative theology of religions. It has already been said that theologians have been invited to develop its theology. I agree with de La Hougue (2011:107) that Vatican II in general, and *Nostra Aetate*, in particular, marked a turning point in the history of relations between the Catholic Church and other religions like Islam by inviting Christians, in general, to change

[46] Robert Caspar was a Missionary of Africa (a congregation also known as White Fathers). He was among the specialists (consultants) on Islam during Vatican II Council. He was among those asked to help with the passages on Islam. He worked together with Georges Anawati (Dominican), Josef Cuoq (Missionary of Africa), Jean Corbon (Diocesan) and John Long (Jesuite) (Borelli 2017:37).

their view of other religions, and to show esteem and respect for the members of these religions, with a view to establishing new collaboration and greater human fraternity that contributes to peace. Catholics can no longer consider Muslims as heretics or people worshiping a false god but as a monotheistic religion worshipping the one true God. This must be a basis of collaboration and universal fraternity.

However, in as much as we appreciate the efforts of *Nostra Aetate*, I would suggest its rereading in today's context of religious pluralism. Thus, as suggested by other theologians, it must take into account the religious difference. Furthermore, the Christian theology of dialogue with Islam (at theological level) must not only look at the commonalities but also analyze the relations between Muhammad's revelation and Christian revelation. It must also take into account the diversity of Islam (Sunni Islam and Shia Islam). *Nostra Aetate* did not make any distinction between Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims, between whom there are significant historical and theological differences. It was not the objective of the document at the time. However, in our time, it is an important element and needs to be taken into consideration in Christian-Muslim dialogue. It is essential to identify the branch of Islam with which we are entering into dialogue. Finally, since Christian-Muslim history is marked by controversies, polemics, confrontations, and mutual mistrust, the Christian-Muslim theology of dialogue must still focus on reconciliation, friendship, and peacebuilding or peaceful coexistence.

4.6 Understanding of Vatican II on Christian-Muslim Dialogue

Following *Nostra Aetate*, I can argue that the fundamental objective of dialogue is not to convert the other or to show that the other is wrong, but to create a space for sharing for greater mutual knowledge, collaboration and understanding (Kawisha 2023:1). Christian-Muslim dialogue, like any other interreligious dialogue, does not aim to unite the two religions in one single entity, but to exchange, share, learn and enrich each other. I would argue with Swidler (2000:7) who posits that "*dialogue is a two-way communication between persons who hold significantly differing views on a subject, with the purpose of learning more truth about the subject from the one another*." While in past controversies, the objective of dialogue was often to prove the authenticity of one's own religion, Christian-Muslim dialogue, from the perspective of Vatican II, must be carried out in an atmosphere of mutual respect for the faith of the other in listening, in openness, and in recognizing the religious freedom of each faith group. According to the Declaration on Religious Freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae* (DH), every person has a right to religious freedom (DH 2). This respect for each individual's right to

religious freedom is based on the respect for the dignity of each person. If religious freedom is respected, Christian-Muslim dialogue will be fruitful.

4.6.1 The Complexity of Christian-Muslim Dialogue and the Models of the Church

Although the interreligious theology of Vatican II is revolutionary, it has not resolved the greatest challenge in Christian-Muslim dialogue; the temptation to defend one's own position to the detriment of the other. The history of the Christian-Muslim relationship is marked by theological problems that still retain their influence today. In addition, sometimes the language of Vatican II can be contentious and unhelpful if not well understood. For example, according to *Lumen Gentium* 16, Christians belong to the New People of God, and other religions are related. This implies that Christians are in the right place and other religions are just connected to that right place. This kind of language needs to be critiqued if the Church is to promote authentic dialogue with other religions. Again, the Council declares that "*We believe that this one true religion subsists in the Catholic and Apostolic Church, to which the Lord Jesus committed the duty of spreading it abroad among all men*" (DH 1). The Council attests also that the one Church of Christ subsists in the Catholic Church which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the bishops in communion with him (LG 8). If such language is not well understood within its theological framework, it may lead to an exclusive interpretation and understanding of the Church and the people of God or even going back to the rationality of John of Damascus. These statements could be misunderstood as Christianity does not need other religions because it is more established in the truth than other religions, and in doing so, militates against the possibility of authentic dialogue.

The image of the Church as a 'Sacrament' has also been criticized by some Protestant theologians. According to Bosch, Ernst Käsemann (a prolific New Testament Commentator) "*criticized the terminology. In light of the absence of intercommunion among Christians, he finds it 'almost frivolous' to call the church a sacrament*" (Bosch 2011:384). Rahner (1967:357) contests this assertion and argues that if we cannot acknowledge Christianity, the Church, and life in her as God's grace and, thus, God's grace in the Church as 'necessary for salvation', we would be frivolous, cowardly, superficial, and loveless. Another argument against the Church as a sign and instrument of salvation is that it can blur the abiding difference between Christ and the Church (Bosch 2011:384). There could be a danger of identifying the Church with Christ (Bosch 2011:385). This can pose the danger of an exclusive interpretation of religious otherness, which is often an issue in Christian-Muslim dialogue. To a certain

extent, Christian missionary zeal is rooted in this exclusive interpretation. But let us acknowledge that the exclusive interpretation of scriptures is common to both Christianity and Islam. Todd (2016:31) has argued that one of the complicating factors in the Christian-Muslim relationship is the historical tendency toward exclusivism and the competing missionary zeal of both traditions.

Although interreligious dialogue has a vital place today, the fact remains that even after the invitation of the Council to look at Muslims with respect and esteem, the same old sentiments are sometimes repeated. How has Vatican II helped to improve the Christian approach to Islam? Arguing on traditional polemics, Küng (2007:487) underlines how sometimes Islam is perceived in the Western world as a religion of violence propagated by the sword, a religion devoid of morality, especially sexual restraints, a religion that contains many false claims and misrepresentations of reality. Muhammad, with all his moral failings, could only be the devil's instrument or agent, or the founder of a false religion. Todd (2016:34) has also highlighted that on the Muslim's side, dialogue is met with resistance and suspicion for reasons like the Church's role in the Crusades. From this, I can already say that fuelled by polemics and the complexity of Christian-Muslim historical relations, Christian-Muslim dialogue is, even after the teachings of Vatican II, in certain circumstances, complex but not impossible. Although we can argue that dialogue must not result in polemics, it is difficult to overcome the burden of historical problems (theological and political) and the antagonisms, conflicts, and condemnations to which they gave rise.

Accordingly, it seems to me that Christian-Muslim dialogue is controversial because of, on one hand, the influence of the historical theological and political polemics (that I have already discussed), Islam is considered to be the most formidable rival that Christianity has ever faced (Lefebure 2000:99), and on the other hand, the failure to go beyond polemics or controversies that, in the past have led to the mutually hostile images in which members of each religion tended to hold the other. Küng (2007:3) reminds us that "*[t]he hostile image represents a more or less structured totality of perceptions, notions, and feelings which, unified under the aspect of hostility, are foisted on to a person, a group of people or peoples and states."*

Do Catholics use and respect the teachings of Vatican II in the Catholic-Muslim relationship? Maybe we need to critique the transmission of the teachings of Vatican II to the faithful. If the interreligious dialogue theology of Vatican II remains in books without becoming existential, then the Council might have wasted its time. In the context of Lusaka-Zambia, it will be

interesting to analyze how these writings have influenced Catholic-Muslim encounters. Have we gone beyond theological and political controversies that engender competition, hostility, and intolerance among Christians and Muslims? Do the people from the grassroots live interreligious dialogue even without knowledge of the different documents of the Magisterium?

After analyzing the teachings of Vatican II, let me also analyze the writings of the different Roman Pontiffs. This is important because, on the one hand, they have tried to implement the recommendations of Vatican II and on the other hand, their writings are important for the Catholics as highlighted in chapter one.

4.7 Interreligious Dialogue in the Works of Paul VI to Francis

4.7.1 Paul VI and *Ecclesiam Suam*

During the Second Vatican Council, Paul VI wrote an encyclical letter, *Ecclesiam Suam,* which was promulgated on 6 August 1964 and focused on cultivating a spirit of dialogue between the Church and the world. It was published between Vatican II's second and third sessions. Up to this time, very few important texts had been approved by vote. One would wonder if Paul VI wanted to influence some decisions of the Council by writing this encyclical letter. It clearly has some links with Vatican II with *Gaudium et Specs* on the renewal in the way the church presents itself to the world, self-awareness, and dialogue with the world since both emphasize dialogue as the preferred mode of functioning of the church in its relation to the world (Comeau 2014:25). The point of departure of dialogue for Paul VI is the dialogue of salvation, the dialogue between God and humanity. In fact, Dupuis (1999: 258) notes that the Pope explains that the history of salvation is a continuous dialogue between God and the human race; consequently, the role of the Church is to prolong this dialogue. The Church is in a privileged position to engage in dialogue with the whole world on different levels.

Paul VI underlined that the dialogue of salvation originates in God (ES 70). He sees revelation as a dialogue between God and Humanity realized in the incarnation (ES 70). I can safely argue that according to Paul VI, the dialogue of salvation was inaugurated through the *kenosis* of the Son, who emptied himself by taking the human condition. In this sense, Paul VI would say that dialogue is God's initiative (ES 72). However, this has a theological implication. Aware of this divine initiative, Christians are challenged to initiate dialogue with others. They should not wait for others to summon them. Nor should they wait for others to reciprocate (ES 72). In this sense, reciprocity is understood not as a Christian value, but gratuity and generosity are

(Madigan 2012:68; Cornille 2013:256). Madigan (2012:69) adds that we open our tables and provide without expecting anything in return, especially to those who would not return our hospitality (Luke 14:12-14). Setting parameters for our dialogue with other people is completely out of the question. We would be betraying our faith.

Dialogue is an act of love because, according to Paul VI, the dialogue of salvation sprang from God's goodness and love, who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. Consequently, our motivation to enter into this dialogue must be nothing other than a love that is ardent and sincere (ES 73). Any interreligious dialogue founded on the *kenosis*-incarnation of Christ brings to the fore the importance of love of otherness in dialogue. Paul VI further highlights that since dialogue of salvation was made accessible to all and not on merit, our efforts at dialogue with others should not set limits or seek advantages (ES 74); it must be *kenotic* and universal. It should be a dialogue that calls for universality where humanity is treated without distinction (ES 76). Two theological truths are highlighted in Paul VI's ideas: firstly, interreligious dialogue is God's initiative and God's *kenosis* through the Son, not ours, and secondly, it provides an existential possibility of participating in our own history of salvation through universal love or fraternity. Love as the motivation of dialogue is best understood within *kenosis*/incarnation.

Paul VI gives four (4) characteristics of dialogue: charity, meekness, confidence, and prudence. However, he emphasizes that, following the example of Jesus, dialogue should be accompanied by meekness or an attitude of humility. We should be humble, thus avoiding condescension or aggression because "[*o]ur approach must be peaceful, avoid extreme methods, be patient under contradiction and inclines towards generosity*" (ES 81). This is a *kenotic* attitude that can lead to peaceful coexistence going beyond polemics in dialogue.

Furthermore, Paul VI describes four concentric circles in which dialogue needs to occur. He advised that the Church should dialogue with the entire humanity (ES 97-106)[47], with those who worship One God including Muslims (ES 107-108), with other Christians (ES 109-112), and finally with its own sons and daughters, the Catholics (ES 113-115).

[47] We can argue that Paul uses strong language against atheism, which he considers a growing evil (ES 99). Although he shows openness towards other religions, he does not seem to show openness towards atheists. This seems to us as one of the weaknesses of ES.

4.7.1.1 Paul VI and Islam

Paul VI showed a positive attitude towards Muslims. He saw them as worshipers who adhere to a monotheistic system of religion, and we admire them for all that is good and true in their worship of God (ES 107)[48]. Paul VI had a particular interest in enhancing the relationship between Catholics, Jews, and Muslims. In January 1964, he visited Bethlehem on the Feast of Epiphany, where "*he greeted "those who profess monotheism and directed their religious worship to the one true God," the first time a pope had publicly invited Jews and Muslims into dialogical relationship*" (Borelli 2017:33). The choice of the Feast of Epiphany seems theological. It seems a sign of recognition of the manifestation of God in different religions or religious experiences.

Finally, I can conclude that Paul VI's understanding of dialogue of salvation, which God inaugurated through the incarnation of the son, is better understood within the framework of *kenosis*. His interest in dialogue with Muslims and other religions can only be understood within this framework. However, it is surprising that in his Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, produced almost 10 years after *Ecclesium Suam* in 1975, Paul VI does not discuss interreligious dialogue or Islam. In the whole Apostolic Exhortation, he uses the word 'dialogue' once in the context of priestly pastoral work (EN 46). However, Pope John Paul II who succeeded Paul VI regularly referred to issues related to interreligious dialogue.

4.7.2 John Paul II

4.7.2.1 Redemptor Hominis

This is the first encyclical letter of John Paul II promulgated on 4 March 1979, about five months after he was made pope. It is about Christ, the Redeemer of humanity (RH 1). It sets the tone of his understanding of the universality of Christ and the universality of salvation.

[48] In different speeches, Paul VI insisted on respecting Muslims and recognizing that they worship the same God with us. On October 29, 1967 in Rome, addressing himself to the Catholic Hierarchy and to all the peoples of Africa, Paul VI said, "*we desire to manifest our esteem for all the followers of Islam living in Africa, who possess elements in common with Christianity from which we enjoy drawing hope for a beneficial dialogue*" (Gioia 2006:191). He also underlined the mutual respect between Christians and Muslims and harmonious action – both religions must defend the fundamental human rights (Gioia 2006:191). On August 1, 1969 in Kampala, addressing himself to the Islamic Communities of Uganda, he again expressed the Christian high respect for the faith of Muslims and the hope that what we hold in common may serve to unite Christians and Muslims as brothers and sisters (Gioia 2006:2004). On 3 December 1970 in Djakarta, addressing the Faithful of Indonesia, quoting *Nostra Aetate* 3, he emphasized that we look upon Muslim with esteem (Gioia 2006:216). On 4, June 1976, addressing himself to the Ambassador of Morocco, he recognized Muslims as our brothers and sister in faith in the one God (Gioia 2006:243).

In *Redemptor Hominis*, John Paul articulates his openness to other religions that can be analyzed within the framework of *kenosis*/incarnation. For him, incarnation reveals God's love (RH 9), and because God is love, in Jesus, he gives himself. He communicates Godself. Furthermore, incarnation expresses the greatest dignity of human beings and their unity because, John Paul II (RH 10), quoting Gal 3:28, underlines that there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for all are one in Christ Jesus. Thus, we must appropriate and assimilate the whole reality of the incarnation (RH 10). This should, in the understanding of John Paul II, lead us to express our fraternal love in order to find the true meaning of humanity.

"*In Christ and through Christ God has revealed himself fully to mankind (sic) and has definitively drawn close to it*" (RM 11). In Christ, God's revelation is definitive and complete (RM 5); this summarizes the history of salvation/revelation. God has always revealed Godself, but in Christ, there is the fullness of revelation. This resonates with Rahner's theology of the self-communication of God in Christ. Rahner (1978:153) would say that "*As God's real-communication in grace, therefore, the history of salvation and revelation is coexistent and coextensive with the history of the world and of the human spirit, and hence also with the history of religion.*" Ultimately, in Rahner's theology of grace, God's self-communication finds its fullness in Christ, thus, he is the fullness of the revelation of all religions and human history. This shows the universality of Christ. In the same line of thought, John Paul II underlines that he is the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (Rv 22:13; RM 6). He is the Word of God made man for the salvation of all (RM 6). His two encyclical letters *Redemptor Hominis* and *Redemptoris Missio* recognize the fullness of revelation in Christ and the universality of Christ's salvation. Not limiting Christ to the Church (the universality of incarnation – Christ took the human nature) and the universality of salvation are theological underpins of the humility of the Church visa-a-vis religious otherness.

In his incarnational perspective, John Paul II was also inspired by GS 22. He writes, "*by his Incarnation, he, the Son of God, in a certain way united himself with each man (sic). The Church therefore sees its fundamental task in enabling that union to be brought about and renewed continually*" (RH 13). In this line, we can understand his openness and respect for other religions and cultures within the *kenosis* theology. For him, the union of Christ with each human person is in itself a mystery (RH 18). Humanity partakes in God's life and is newly created in Christ for the fullness of grace and truth (RH 18). In his book, *A Christology of Religions*, Gerald O'Collins (2018) seems to agree with John Paul as he develops a Christology

of the universal presence of Christ. Incarnation puts Christ into a material solidarity with all human beings (2018:61). This should provide a reason for, on the one hand, our unity with people from other cultures and religions and on the other hand, the humility to recognize the grace and truth of Christ in other religions and cultures. Christ is the "*fulfilment of the yearning of all the world's religions and, as such, he is their sole and definitive completion*" (TMA 6).

John Paul II recognizes the spiritual values of different religions as voiced by Vatican II. He highlights that "*the Council document on non-Christian religions, in particular, is filled with deep esteem for the great spiritual values, indeed for the primacy of the spiritual, which in the life of mankind (sic) finds expression in religion and then in morality, with direct effects on the whole of culture*" (RH 11). John Paul II also insists on looking at Islam with esteem, as stressed by Vatican II (RH 11) in *Nostra Aetate* (NA 3) and *Lumen Gentium* (LG 16).

4.7.2.2 Redemptoris Missio

Redemptoris Missio was promulgated on 7 December 1990. As its first paragraph highlights, it is about the Mission of Christ the Redeemer entrusted to the Church (RM 1). We can see the trinitarian foundation of mission that echoes *Ad Gentes* 1. John Paul II pinpoints different elements of mission witness (RM 42-43), proclamation (RM 44-45), conversion and baptizing (RM 46-47), etc. The document sees interreligious dialogue as an element of *missio ad gentes* (RM 55-57).

Analysing *Redemptoris Missio* on interreligious dialogue, let me start with its problematic sentence. Referring to *Unitatis Redintegration* (UR) 3 and *Ad Gentes* (AG) 7, John Paul II underlines that "*the Church is the ordinary means of salvation and she alone possesses the fullness of the means of salvation*" (RM 55). For some theologians, this can be a hindrance to dialogue. There is a seeming contradiction in a position that looks at other religions with esteem and, at the same time, articulating an opinion that one's religion possesses the fullness of the means of salvation or truth. For Swidler (2007:7), any dialogue based on the pretence of possessing the fullness of the truth appears to be merely an opportunistic manipulation of the term dialogue, and for Knitter (1996:142)[49] "*when one already has the fullness of truth, there can't be too much still to learn.*" This is a theological problem worth explaining better.

[49] It has to be noted that it was during the pontificate of John Paul II that Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, as the prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF), on 06th August 2000, signed the declaration *Dominus Iesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church*, which argued against religious pluralism understood as *de iure* [in principle] (DI 4). Some theologians have labelled *Dominus Iesus* as a conservative document containing pre-Vatican II ideas (Edward Kessler and Eugene Fisher 2000:1556; Michael

How can we do justice to the point of view of John Paul II? It is essential to underline that John Paul is coherent with interreligious dialogue principles: humility and identity. On the one hand, he recognizes (respect and esteem) other religions, and on the other hand, he reasons within the framework of Catholic theology, which is Christocentric. His openness and respect for other religions do not compromise his Catholic faith. Interreligious dialogue does not mean theological accommodation/compromising one's faith. Moreover, John Paul II insists that in dialogue, we must be consistent with our religious traditions and convictions and at the same time, be open to understanding those of others without pretence or prejudice but with truth, humility, and frankness, knowing that dialogue can enrich each side (RM 56). In the same line, Dean (1995:61) posits that in dialogue, "*one is able to honor one's own commitment as absolute and at the same time respect the different absolute commitments of others*." For Cornelle (2008) commitment and openness are virtues that need to be cultivated. John Paul (RM 56) further argues that in dialogue:

> *There must be no abandonment of principles nor false irenicism, but instead a witness given and received for mutual advancement on the road of religious inquiry and experience, and at the same time for the elimination of prejudice, intolerance and misunderstandings. Dialogue leads to inner purification and conversion which, if pursued with docility to the Holy Spirit, will be spiritually fruitful.*

In the same line of thought, in his speech to the religious leaders in Jakarta on 10 October 1989, John Paul II (in Cory & Hollerich 2016:231), emphasizing the necessity of interreligious dialogue argued that respectful dialogue with others also allows us to be challenged by their inquiries and learn more about the truth. By its very nature, a dedication to the truth of one's religious tradition makes communication with others both necessary and beneficial, rather than inhibiting or making it unnecessary. With this conviction, he encourages all faithful to participate in interreligious dialogue. For him, dialogue is founded on hope and love and bears fruit in the Spirit (RM 56), without compromising one's faith. Theological differences make dialogue fruitful. In fact, recognizing that the Church has the full means of salvation, is to objectively recognize that she was founded by Christ who instituted the sacraments that are means of salvation. Her holiness and full means of salvation is because of her mysterious relationship with Christ. Subjectively, in her human nature, she fails and thus, she needs perpetual purification. She is both holy and sinful (both divine and human). For de Lubac, "*the*

A. Fahey 2000:14). Although the document *Dominus Iesus* has received many criticisms, it was signed with the authorization of Pope of the time, John Paul II. It highlights the Catholic understanding of the economy of salvation and its incarnational character (Merrigan 2010:68) but in a narrow sense. The document emphasizes the fullness of the truth in the Church and evangelization as the finality of dialogue.

Church can be seen as sinful as it exists in time and as holy because it exists beyond time" (Gribaudo 2015:110). He further argues that the dynamic of the sinfulness of one member in the church affects the whole body. However, this does not affect its holiness (Gribaudo 2015:114). Therefore, the point of view of John Paul II on the full means of salvation can only be problematic if understood from a fundamentalist or extremist point of view and not from an ecclesiological point of view that would be coherent with the patristic and Vatican II ecclesiology.

According to John Paul II (RM 56), the Church is challenged by encounters with other religions because they encourage her to recognize and understand the signs of Christ's presence and the working of the Spirit. This allows the Church to examine her own nature so as to testify to the completeness of revelation that she has received for the benefit of everyone. He goes on to say that the Church uses dialogue to find the "seeds of the Word," a "ray of that truth which enlightens all people," which are present in both people and religious traditions of people (RM 56). O'Collins (2013:172) underscores "*Like Nostra Aetate, Ad Gentes, and Gaudium et Spes, John Paul II supported coming together in dialogue with followers of other faiths*." For him, interreligious dialogue is neither an extra option nor an activity for the clergy only. Interestingly, John Paul recognizes the laity's role in promoting interreligious dialogue. He writes, "*The contribution of the laity is indispensable in this area, for they can favor the relations which ought to be established with the followers of various religions through their example in the situations in which they live and in their activities*" (RM 57). Thereafter, he outlines the different forms of interreligious dialogue in which each one can partake: (1) exchanges between experts in religious traditions or official representatives (RM 57), which is dialogue of theological exchange (DP 42); (2) Cooperation for integral development and safeguarding of religious values (RM 57), which is dialogue of action (DP 42); (3) Sharing of spiritual experiences (RM 57), which is a dialogue of religious experiences (DP 42); and dialogue of life (RM 57; DP 42). This gives the possibility for each one to participate in dialogue at different levels and areas of focus.

Therefore, I can say that John Paul II's theology of interreligious dialogue is rooted in incarnation-redemption inclusivist theology or simply in an incarnational, redemptive, inclusive theology. Within this framework, he recognizes the universality of Christ and the openness of the Church towards other religions. His different endeavors vis-à-vis other religions must be understood within this perspective. This universality of Christ must lead to dialogue that leads to the promotion of peaceful coexistence. Kasimow (1999:2) writes,

John Paul II seems to be convinced that interreligious dialogue is a path that can promote respect among members of different religions and help to bring peace and harmony to a world torn by conflict and war, poverty, and the destruction of the environment, a world that is captivated by materialism and secularism, in deep need of finding significant existence.

I agree with Kasimow (1997:7) that "*John Paul II, who was sincerely dedicated to inter-faith relations as a means of promoting justice and peace and mutual understanding among religions, was at the same time the most devoted and influential Christian missionary of our century*". However, I would add that the understanding of 'missionary' in this sentence must be nuanced by taking its definition from the document, 'Dialogue and Proclamation' where mission is defined as the "*saving love of God that has been communicated to mankind (sic) in Christ and is present and active throughout the world by means of the Holy Spirit. The Church is the living sign of that love in such a way as to render it the norm of life to all*" (DP 9). Interreligious dialogue is an element of mission – a way of communicating God's saving love. It must not be understood in an exclusive way but in a Christocentric or inclusive way. In this perspective, John Paul II understands interreligious dialogue as part of Mission *ad gentes* (RM 55)[50].

4.7.2.3 The Holy Spirit and Interreligious Dialogue

Redemptoris Missio not only gives a Christological foundation to interreligious dialogue, but it is also rooted in the pneumatology of Vatican II. In this encyclical letter, John Paul II argues that "*The Spirit manifests himself in a special way in the Church and in her members. Nevertheless, his presence and activity are universal, limited neither by space nor time*" (RM 28). Marking reference to AG 3, 11, 15; GS 10-11, 22, 26, 38, 41, 92, 93, he asserts, "*The Second Vatican Council recalls that the Spirit is at work in the heart of every person, through the 'seeds of the Word,' to be found in human initiatives-including religious ones-and in mankind's (sic) efforts to attain truth, goodness and God himself*" (RM 28). The Holy Spirit offers each one the possibility of sharing in the Paschal mysteries (RM 28; GS 22). For him, the Holy Spirit is operative even beyond the confines of the Church (RM 28 & RH 13; Dupuis

[50] According to John Paul II, Inter-religious dialogue is a part of the Church's evangelizing mission and an expression of mission *ad gentes* (RM 55). How to understand this idea of John Paul II has been controversial. Apparently, on the one hand, there is openness to other religions, promoting interreligious dialogue and on the other hand, other religions are seen as object of conversion. I argue that this is not a correct understanding of John Paul II. We have to understand evangelization to mean the totality of the mission of the Church. Communicating God's love to others does not imply converting them. It is living the values of the Gospel with them, although they do not know Christ. Christians are called to communicate God's love to everyone, including believers from other religions, but with respect to religious otherness. In this sense, we can understand that interreligious dialogue is an expression of mission *ad gentes*.

2002:69). Therefore, Catholics should embody a loving concern for religious others (O'Collins 2013:100). Catholics should respect not only individuals but also their religions and cultures because "*The Spirit's presence and activity affect not only the individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions*" (RM 28). Respect for the Holy Spirit impels us to respect every individual, including their religious experiences. In this sense, John Paul is convinced that "*very authentic prayer is prompted by the Holy Spirit, who is mysteriously present in every human heart*" (RM 29). Thus, the authenticity of a prayer does not depend on one's religion.

For John Paul II (RM 29), "*Whatever the Spirit brings about in human hearts and in the history of peoples, in cultures and religions serves as a preparation for the Gospel and can only be understood in reference to Christ, the Word who took flesh by the power of the Spirit so that as perfectly human he would save all human beings and sum up all things*." This incarnational theology resonates with NA 2 which suggests that there is a ray of Truth of Christ in other religions and cultures. Whatever is correct in them is the work of the Spirit of Christ, the incarnate Son. There are two ways of understanding this fact: (1) One would argue that this expresses the superiority of the Catholic Church (same arguments as against *Nostra Aetate*); and (2) One would argue that it is respecting other religions and cultures within the theology of one's religion, a theology that considers religious otherness. I argue that the latter does justice to John Paul II's ideas. Following the spirit of Vatican II, he esteems other religions without compromising his faith. His pneumatology leads to interreligious dialogue that promotes peace and coexistence[51]. There is coherence between his conviction in the universality of the Holy Spirit and his interreligious actions. In fact, for Dupuis (2002:223), the acknowledgment of the universal presence of the Holy Spirit is John Paul II's most significant contribution to the theological development of interreligious dialogue.

[51] Organizing the Assisi meeting, John Paul II addressed everyone: "*The coming together of so many religious leaders to pray is in itself an invitation to the world to become aware that there exists another dimension of peace and another way of promoting it, which is not a result of negotiations, political compromises or economic bargaining. It is the result of prayer, which in the diversity of religions, expresses a relationship with a supreme power that surpasses our human capacities alone*" (Blee & Peelman 2013:220). This was a pragmatic way of living according to his interreligious convictions. However, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, prefect of the CDF, criticized the Assisi prayer. For him, it was not an interreligious prayer but a multireligious service (Blee & Peelman 2013:220). However, Sherwin and Kasimow (1999:208) argued that the most critical initiative that John Paul II had taken in interreligious relations was the Assisi Day of Prayer for Peace.

4.7.2.4 John Paul II and Islam

John Paul II's commitment to dialogue with Muslims is practical and theological. On one hand, he made several journeys to Muslim countries. In 1985, at the invitation of the king of Morocco, he addressed himself to the Muslim youth in Casablanca. In 1986, he organized the prayer day in Assisi that regrouped different religions, including Muslims, to be together to pray for world peace. In 2000, he visited the al-Azhar in Cairo. In 2001, he visited the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus. He was the first Pope to enter a mosque for an official event (Fitzgerald & Borelli 2006:137). On the other hand, his Christian-Muslim theology of dialogue is rooted in the theology of Vatican II. Gioia (2006)[52] devotes a great deal of attention and importance to the journeys and speeches of John Paul II.

Just like Paul VI, John Paul II, in his views of Muslims, often quoted *Nostra Aetate* 3 that we adore and esteem the same God as Muslims. Addressing the Catholic Community of Ankara, on 29 November 1979 (Gioia 2006:258); addressing the Muslim leaders of Kenya, Nairobi, 7 May 1980 (Gioia 2006:264); addressing the leaders of Ghanaian Muslims, Accra, 8 May 1980 (Gioia 2006:267), he quoted *Nostra Aetate* 3. However, his speech to the Muslim youth in Casablanca on 19 August 1985 focused extensively on the issue of Catholic-Muslim dialogue. In the first place, he acknowledges the difficult Christian-Muslim history. He points out that, in general, Christians and Muslims have a poor understanding of one another, and in the past, we have occasionally opposed each other in polemics and wars (Sherwin & Kasimow 1999:63). Then, following the spirit of Vatican II, he also brings to the fore that the Church looks with esteem at the Muslims with their faith in one God[53], their moral life, and their prayer life (Sherwin & Kasimow 1999:61). This is a shift from polemics to a demonstration of esteem of the religion of the other and an implicit foundation of dignity, brotherhood and human freedom (Gioia 2006:258). Like *Nostra Aetate*, he looks at the things we have in common with Muslims as a way to promote dialogue (Sherwin & Kasimow 1999:61).

However, he goes beyond *Nostra Aetate* by understanding that Christian-Muslim relationship/ dialogue demands recognition and respect for our differences with humility (Sherwin &

[52] The work of Gioia, 2006, Interreligious Dialogue: *The official Teachings of the Catholic Church from Second Vatican Council to John Paul II (1963-2005)* is a collection of official documents of the Magisterium and speeches of the Roman Pontiffs on interreligious dialogue translated in English.

[53] 'It is only within this framework of religion and its shared promises of faith that one can really speak of mutual respect, openness, and collaboration between Christians and Muslims. Then comes willingness to work together, to build a more fraternal society.' Address of John Paul II to representatives of Muslims of the Philippines, Davao, February 20, 1981 (Gioia 2006:273).

Kasimow 1999:63). In this respect, he is aware that there are theological formulations to which Christians and Muslims will never find agreement (the nature of the Qur'an, the nature of Jesus, incarnation and redemption, the Trinity, the mission of Muhammad, the cross, and others). These differences, if respected and with a *kenotic* attitude/humility, can be the source of unity, not polemics and controversies. I would argue with John Paul II that humility is needed to move from polemics to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. By looking at Muslims as our brothers and sisters in faith in one God (Gioia 2006:271), John Paul II shows his openness to religious otherness with humility which can lead to a peaceful coexistence. It is within this context that when addressing himself to the Islamic Leaders of Senegal on February 22, 1992, in Dakar, he argued that Christians and Muslims could put efforts into building a harmonious society, which is the way of God the Creator. Consequently, they must be people of dialogue (Sherwin & Kasimow 1999:67).

For John Paul II, Christian-Muslim dialogue can promote unity, friendship, and peaceful coexistence of the people. He highlights (Sherwin & Kasimow 1999:68):

> *One of the greatest scourges of humanity in the century now drawing to a close is that of war. How many lives have been lost, how much destruction has been caused, how much anger and resentment have come about due to these conflicts! How many men, women and children have lost their livelihood, residence, possessions and even homelands due to these wars! Christians and Muslims have a special duty to work for peace, to collaborate in building the social structures, national and international for reducing tensions and to prevent them from escalating into violent conflicts. For this reasons, I encourage Christians and Muslims to take an active part in interreligious meetings and organizations which have been working and praying for peace as their goal.*

I can conclude that John Paul II's view on Muslims is the implementation of *Nostra Aetate*. However, the two principles of interreligious dialogue, humility and identity[54], are important to him. Respecting others or looking at them with esteem can only be understood within the framework of humility (it takes theological humility and openness to recognize that we worship

[54] The pontiff after John Paul, Benedict XVI's version of dialogue is within a framework of faith and reason. In this framework, religious identity must not be compromised. For him, dialogue must aim at theological truth and reject relativism; this seems to be the key theology of Benedict (Ratzinger 2003; Anton 2017:903; Clooney 2005:14; DTC 14). He upholds religious freedom and tolerance in this context and advocates that religious minorities should be defended and protected. In his view, there must be no force or constraint in religion. For example, he argues that Muslims share with Christians the conviction that there should be no constraint or use of force in religious matters; he sees the use of constraint, which can take multiple and insidious forms on the personal and social, cultural, administrative, and political levels as contrary to God's will. It gives rise to political and religious exploitation, discrimination and violence, leading to killing each other (EMO 26). We would agree that when religious otherness (identity) is respected, it avoids religious violence. However, religious relativism may provoke religious fundamentalism by some groups as a way of reacting to it. But we need to point out that religious fundamentalism is a complex reality. Its scope is beyond this work.

one God with Muslims). His Christian-Muslim theology promotes peace, mutual trust, and fraternity. Therefore, the Magisterium of John Paul II encouraged Christian-Muslim dialogue based on humility (both spiritual and doctrinal humility) that leads to peaceful coexistence and mutual enrichment. He clarifies that "*meeting with Islam may encourage a deeper interiorization of faith*" (Gioia 2006:284). Islam can positively challenge Christianity. This is possible if Christian-Muslim dialogue is done in an atmosphere of friendship. Ultimately, for John Paul II, Christian-Muslim dialogue is, in the first place, a question of friendship (Gioia 2006:283). The next section now turns to Pope Francis and I discuss how he understands interreligious dialogue.

4.7.3 Francis

4.7.3.1 Evangelli Gaudium

The first apostolic exhortation of Francis, *Evangelli Gaudium* (the Joy of the Gospel), was issued in 2013. Francis defines interreligious dialogue within the framework of peaceful coexistence and friendship. He defines it as first of all a conversation about human existence through which we learn to accept others and their different ways of living, thinking, and speaking. And consequently, we can join one another in taking up the duty of serving justice and peace, which should become a basic principle of all our exchanges (EG 250). This definition points to human connectedness, human relationships, or friendships. It presupposes that with other religions, we can hold a conversation about human existence, which is only possible if we have created relationships with others. I would say, for Francis, dialogue is a conversation about human existence that presupposes a search for mutual learning and mutual enrichment leading to a peaceful coexistence. It is a by-product of Francis' theology of universal friendship (fraternity). It must reflect and contain the spirit of 'human fraternity' and 'social friendship' (Phan 2022:28-29). Fredericks (2014:14) underscores, "*Rooting dialogue in friendship brings with it an important advantage over more theoretical approaches. Friendships provide an environment that allows for the recognition and honoring of religious differences*." Interreligious friendship can create an environment of peace and justice.

Fredericks (2014:14) highlights, "*Francis believes that the foundation for interreligious dialogue should be the mutual commitment to peace and justice*." This is clear in *Evangelii Gaudium,* where Francis writes, "*Interreligious dialogue is a necessary condition for peace in the world, and so it is a duty for Christians as well as other religious communities*" (EG 250). Evidently, Francis agrees with Hans Küng (1991:105). However, Francis further outlines the

different conditions for interreligious dialogue: faithfulness to one's identity, deepest convictions, openness, and conviction that dialogue leads to mutual enrichment (EG 251). He understands true openness as involving remaining "*steadfast in one's deepest convictions, clear and joyful in one's own identity, while at the same time being 'open to understanding those of the other party' and 'knowing that dialogue can enrich each side*'" (EG 251). This attitude of humility demands faithfulness to one's identity and a constant openness to religious otherness. "*Dialogue does not mean compromising the basic affirmations of Christian faith in the hope of arriving at some abstract common denominator. For Francis, the alternative to such pretence is a dialogue that is 'friendly and sincere*'" (Fredericks 2014:14).

4.7.3.2 Fratelli Tutti

Fratelli Tutti is an encyclical letter of Francis on Fraternity and Social Friendship promulgated on 03 October 2020. As the title of this letter suggests and its content, Francis pushes his agenda of promoting universal fraternity in different contexts: social, economic, political, and religious. Cervenkova and Vizina (2021:62) posit that *Fratelli Tutti* "*is concerned with social dialogue in a broader sense, in the individual, political, and economic contexts*." Interreligious dialogue must be understood within these contexts. This social-ethical approach points to his concern for the peripheries – an option for the less privileged. Nonetheless, there is a relation between interreligious dialogue and the peripheries. Francis shows that love impels us towards universal communion, which makes every periphery converge in a greater sense of mutual belonging (FT 95), social friendship, and universal fraternity that acknowledges the worthiness of every human person (FT 106). He invites everyone to uphold the dignity of every person irrespective of their colour, religion, or place of birth and to acknowledge their equal worthiness (FT 118). I can agree with Cervenkova and Vizina (2021:62) that the interconnection between faith and ethics is crucial in the hermeneutics of this document of Pope Francis, especially in understanding his ethics of brotherhood/sisterhood, which is not primarily a social but a theological category. Being created in the image of God (*imago Dei*), our individual likeness to God gives each of us the same level of human dignity.

Consequently, "*Th[e] ethical approach has a strong theological foundation. The foundation refers to God the Creator of all and the call to brotherhood (sic) of all human beings*" (Cervenkova & Vizina 2021:62). Francis holds that "*as believers, we are convinced that, without an openness to the Father of all, there will be no solid and stable reason to support our claim to essential fraternity*" (FT 272). This idea is expressed and summarised in the

prayer to the Creator, one of the two prayers that conclude *Fratelli Tutti*. The prayer underlines (1) human fraternity – family, (2) equality in dignity, (3) a spirit of dialogue, justice and peace, (4) moving together to the peripheries, and (5) unity because of the divine origin of humanity underpinned by the recognition that we only have one creator or, in the terminology of *Nostra Aetate*, a common human origin. Therefore, religions must make a substantial contribution to fostering brotherhood/sisterhood and upholding justice in society because they recognize every human being as a being called to be a child of God (FT 271). In this sense, "*the goal of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace, and harmony, and to share spiritual and moral values and experiences in a spirit of truth and love*" (FT 271). In humility and quoting *Nostra Aetate*, Francis recognizes that the Church esteems how God works in other religions (FT 277). This mutual respect promotes human fraternity and peaceful coexistence. Hence, religions "*must never incite war, hateful attitudes, hostility, and extremism, nor must they incite violence or the shedding of blood*" (FT 285).[55]

Francis seems to be interested in people more than just ideas. For example, "*in March 2015, during Holy Thursday Mass, Francis washed the feet of male and female Muslim, Catholic, and Hindu refugees from Nigeria, Mali, Syria, India, and Pakistan*" (Hrykow & Power 2018:41). Fitzgerald (2023:76) argues that the closing of *Fratelli Tutti* with the two prayers suggests that he does not want his teaching to remain enclosed on the shelves of libraries, but rather to be lived out practically with our brothers and sisters from other religions. Francis is more interested in promoting the universal brotherhood/sisterhood than in feeding speculation and arguments. Doctrines will fuel hatred and violence only in the absence of authentic interreligious friendship or authentic fraternity. Moreover, his definition of brotherhood/sisterhood "*is based on the notion that since God created people equal in rights, duties, and dignity, all people are also called equally to common relationships of brotherhood (sic) so to share values of goodness, love, and peace*" (Cervenkova & Vizina 2021:63). This acknowledgment of our common human origin is seen as providing a theological foundation for interreligious dialogue. However, I can argue that this *imago Dei* is also well-understood within the *kenosis*/incarnational theology framework. Through the incarnation, Jesus restored our *Imago Dei*. Moltmann, quoted by Nengean (2013:99) underlines it well:

[55] This *Fratelli Tutti* quotation is from the document on 'Human Fraternity for Word Peace and Living Together' that will be discussed later. It is the first time that a papal encyclical letter is inspired by a document written by a pope and a Muslim imam.

> *Only the Son becomes human, and embodies the image for which human beings are created. Christ is the only begotten Son and, as the image of God the Father, is at the same time the first-born among many brothers and sisters. So as the imago Christi human beings are gathered into his relationship of the sonship, and brotherhood of Christ the Father of Jesus Christ becomes their Father also.*

For Moltmann, the *imago Dei* is the image of Christ in us (*imago Christi*). "*The Imago Christi is a synthesis of Christ with humans resulting in an adoption of Christ-likeness as one's behavior or lifestyle*" (Nengean 2013:99). Understanding the *imago Dei – imago Christi*, we can understand the universal brotherhood/sisterhood that compels us to go to the peripheries.

I would argue that coming from Latin America, Francis is well-immersed in the Theology of Liberation, which is a theology of praxis. His theology is practical with a see-judge-act methodology. He observes the social, political, economic, and religious situations, judging them within the framework of peaceful coexistence and friendship. His judgment stems from his appreciation of our common origin (One and Same God) and our creation in *imago Dei*. Based on these considerations he invites religions to participate in creating a universal brotherhood/sisterhood (universal fraternity) that dares to go to the peripheries.

Finally, it is clear that for Francis, in promoting universal fraternity, interreligious dialogue must progress beyond prominent religious leaders and involve interreligious friendship in everyday life, not just among elites (Harmakaputra 2021:15). It concerns everyone. This universal fraternity is also extended to nature, as shown in his earlier encyclical, *Laudato Si*.

4.7.3.3 *Laudato* Si and Interreligious Dialogue

This is Francis' encyclical letter issued on 15 May 2015 on care for our common home. I argue that Francis' practical understanding of interreligious dialogue can be seen in this encyclical letter *Laudato Si*, in which, according to Fitzgerald (2023:67), "*dialogue is not simply a conversation for conversation's sake but is practical in nature and promoting common efforts with regard to social issues of great concern to humanity*." For example, Francis is concerned about the environmental degradation of our mother earth (our common home) caused by pollution and climate change (LS 2-26), the problem of water (LS 27-31), loss of biodiversity (LS 32-42), and global inequality (LS 48-52). Therefore for him, he calls for a fresh dialogue on how we are influencing the planet's future. Since the environmental crisis we are facing and its human causes affect and concern us all, we need a discussion that involves everyone (LS 14). For Knitter (2017:56), Francis is urging that "the cry of the earth", which is the "cry of the

poor", must become the cry that calls all religious communities into a new form of dialogue and collaboration.

Following Francis, I argue that peaceful human coexistence depends not just on human fraternity but also requires fraternity and peaceful coexistence with the natural world**.** Different religions can collaborate to protect our common home, the earth. This kind of dialogue is what Knitter has named "green interreligious dialogue" which responds to the signs of our times. Knitter (2017:57) writes:

> *Francis urges a green interreligious dialogue. In doing so, he does not intend to exclude other topics for religious conversations, but he does call for what we might term "a preferential option for the earth." For interreligious dialogue to respond to the signs of the times, it must take the needs of our suffering earth and its creatures as its primary concern.*

In this regard, interreligious dialogue is more than theories: it is, in fact, a lived experience. It articulates, on the one hand, a peaceful coexistence beyond humanity because this coexistence is with the entire creation. On the other hand, it recognizes that "*Shared caring for the earth brings us, necessarily, to care for each other*" (Knitter 2017:58) or to interreligious friendship.

Therefore, Francis' theology of dialogue is practical but with a solid theological foundation. It promotes universal human fraternity. However, this fraternity is extended to the whole of creation. Knitter puts it well when he highlights "*For Francis, dialogue is both a way of being church and of being human*" (Knitter 2017:56). Being human is caring for oneself, others, and nature. This requires humility towards oneself, humility towards others, and humility towards nature.

4.7.3.4 Francis and Islam

Fitzgerald (2023:68) points out that "*Francis does not only teach – 'talk the talk' as it is said – but he also 'walks the walk.' He is himself engaged in interreligious relations, particularly with Muslims.*" Since the beginning of his pontificate, he has made several journeys to Muslim communities and countries. "*His first journey outside Rome was to Lampedusa, an Italian island, the landing ground of many migrants crossing the Mediterranean, of whom a large number, perhaps the majority, are Muslims*" (Fitzgerald 2023:68). In 2014, he visited Albania and Turkey. In 2016, he visited Azerbaijan (the majority of the Muslims are Shiite Muslims). In 2017, he visited Cairo, Egypt. Fitzgerald (2023:69) recalls that Francis made an apostolic journey to Myanmar and followed this with a visit to the Rohingya Muslims (Muslims expelled

from Bangladesh). In 2019, he visited the United Arab Emirates (Abu Dhabi), where with the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, Ahmed al-Tayyeb, signed a document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together (HFD). In 2021, he visited Iraq (Fitzgerald 2023:69). These journeys show that Francis is concerned with promoting friendship with the Muslim communities, setting an example for Catholics. This is coherent with his theological conviction on interreligious dialogue – universal friendship.

From the beginning of his pontificate, as seen in *Evangelli Gaudium*, he recognizes the common elements between the Christian faith and Islam, a position for which a foundation is found in *Nostra Aetate*. He also acknowledges the ethical and moral life of Muslims. He writes:

> *We must never forget that they "profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, who will judge humanity on the last day". The sacred writings of Islam have retained some Christian teachings; Jesus and Mary receive profound veneration and it is admirable to see how Muslims both young and old, men and women, make time for daily prayer and faithfully take part in religious services. Many of them also have a deep conviction that their life, in its entirety, is from God and for God. They also acknowledge the need to respond to God with an ethical commitment and with mercy towards those most in need* (EG 252).

Just like his predecessors, Francis calls for respect not only for Muslims but also for their religion. However, the weakness of EG 252 is that while the pope shows appreciation of Islamic writings and especially the Qur'an, he does so from the Christian point of view that they 'retained some Christian teachings.'[56] Has Islam retained some Christian teachings about Jesus? Is the Qur'anic Jesus and the biblical Jesus the same person? Before concluding if Islam has retained Christian teachings about Jesus, it would be important to situate the Qur'anic Jesus and Mary in the coherence of Islamic rationality. Traore (2021:261) argues that Francis' point of view justifies that "*The teachings are Christian because they are indeed similar to what the Catholic Church holds, such as God is one, God is merciful, God will judge humankind*." Although we acknowledge the openness – humility – of Francis, it must be admitted that EG 252 poses a theological problem of otherness. Islam seems to be understood or appreciated

[56] Siddiqui has also argued that 'the document remains a Christocentric one and Muslims should not expect otherwise. *Evangelli Gaudium* praises the daily Muslim prayers, performed by old and young and men and women, for their "deep conviction that their life, in its entirety, is from God and for God." Interestingly, it further suggests that the Islamic scripture "retained some Christian teachings." While the encyclical admires Muslim beliefs concerning Jesus and Mary in the spirit of *Nostra Aetate*, it repeats the mistake that Muslims venerate Jesus and Mary' (Kasimow & Race 2018:174). However, I argue that Francis did not understand 'veneration' in the way Siddiqui understood it. It should be understood to mean 'honoring', as Traore (2021:263) puts it: "*To venerate means to regard with reverence and respect. Veneration of a person, a created being, simply means honoring the person for having a praiseworthy degree of sanctity and holiness. Unfortunately, the term has been associated with adoration or worship*." The term should not be understood to mean adoration or worship. It is clear that neither Jesus nor Mary is an object of worship in Islam.

within the coherence of its similarities to Christianity. This is not only a theological mistake made by Francis but also by his predecessors Paul VI and John Paul II. I can include others in my economy of salvation but at the same time, I must try to understand them in the coherence of their religious rationality because they are differently religious.

However, Francis' theology of Christian-Muslim dialogue is also theologically sound because the "*realisation that our Muslim brothers and sisters are truly sons and daughters of the one God offers the Christian Church a way to reimagine its relationship with Islam*" (McGee 2015:77). In other words, the humble realization that Muslims and Christians adore the same and one God the Creator impels us to reimagine our relationship with Muslims. For Francis, this must be the basis of interreligious friendship.

Francis goes further by highlighting the pertinence of suitable training in promoting dialogue with Muslims. He stresses that "*in order to sustain dialogue with Islam, suitable training is essential for all involved, not only so that they can be solidly and joyfully grounded in their own identity, but so that they can also acknowledge the values of others, appreciate the concerns underlying their demands and shed light on shared beliefs*" (EG 253). He further highlights the reciprocity in the freedom of worship in both Muslim and Christian countries. This is another weakness of *Evangelii Gaudium* from a Christian perspective. As it has been pointed out, reciprocity is not a Christian virtue. Christocentric Catholic theology has traditionally resisted such reciprocity in all its forms. Moreover, Islam does not have the same structure as the Catholic Church (the Magisterium) and has no mechanism with which to grant such reciprocity in its teachings on interreligious dialogue.

Considering the image of Islam circulated by the media today and by some Islamic groups, Francis wants to highlight the importance of avoiding all forms of stereotyping and caricaturing it as a violent religion. He argues that "*faced with disconcerting episodes of violent fundamentalism, our respect for true followers of Islam should lead us to avoid hateful generalizations, for authentic Islam and the proper reading of the Koran are opposed to every form of violence*" (EG 253). The true followers of Islam wish to promote a peaceful and spiritual Islam. Francis writes within the context of the West. However, even in Africa, Islam is sometimes understood as a violent religion. It is unfortunate that fundamentalism continues to grow among some Muslim groups.

In 2013, sending a message to Muslims on the occasion of *Id al Fitr*, Francis wrote, "*turning to mutual respect in interreligious relations, especially between Christians and Muslims, we*

are called to respect the religion of the other, its teachings, its symbols, its values. Particular respect is due to religious leaders and to places of worship" (Message of Francis to Muslims throughout The World for the End of Ramadan Id Al-Fitr). This is underpinned by the broader understanding of friendship in Francis' framework of interreligious dialogue, which requires mutual respect for religious otherness. It is within this framework that Francis sees dialogue between Muslims and Christians. He went further by encouraging the education of the youth with regard to Christian-Muslim dialogue. He writes "*Regarding the education of Muslim and Christian youth, we have to bring up our young people to think and speak respectfully of other religions and their followers, and to avoid ridiculing or denigrating their convictions and practices*" (2013 Message of Francis to Muslims throughout The World for the End of Ramadan Id Al-Fitr).

In addition, his 2012 visit to Iraq and meeting the Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani is of a great significance in Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Let me note that Francis met and prayed with Ali al-Sistani, leading Shiite, and with representatives of all the religious groups in Iraq (Fitzgerald 2023:69). This gives a new perspective of Catholic-Muslim dialogue. It shows that the Church is interested in dialogue not only with Sunni Muslims, but with the whole Islamic community including Shia Muslims.

4.7.3.4.1 Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together[57]

On 4 February 2019, Francis and the Grand imam of Al-Azhar, Ahmed Al-Tayyeb of Al-Azhar signed a document on Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together (HFD) in the United Arab Emirates. This document was signed in the name of "*fraternity torn apart by policies of extremism and division, by system of unrestrained profit or by hateful ideological tendencies that manipulate the actions and the future of men and women*" (Francis & Ahmed Al-Tayyeb 2019). As McEvoy and Malone (2019:328) put it, this document arises from prayer and reflection by both Francis and Al-Tayyeb. It sets a tone on the importance of dialogue between Christians and Muslims today, which should promote human fraternity and not division or extremism. This common humanity or human fraternity should be an impetus for dialogue between Muslims and Christians.

[57] Let me note two elements: (1) this document was written before *Fratelli Tutti*. It is the reason why *Fratelli Tutti* quotes some of its ideas. In my work, I have put it after *Fratelli Tutti* because the part on Francis and Islam comes after Francis' understanding of interreligious dialogue in general. (2) This is not a document of the Magisterium. It is a document of both Francis and Ahmed al-Tayeb.

The document emphasizes human fraternity based on faith in God, the Creator, which also gives a responsibility of safeguarding creation and the entire universe. Francis and Ahmed Al-Tayyeb (2019) write:

> *Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need.*

Fitzgerald (2023:70) argues that "*[t]he document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, Dominus Jesus (2000), made a distinction between the 'theological faith' found among Christians and the 'belief' of the followers of other religions (DI 7). No reference to this distinction is made in the HFD*." For *Dominus Iesus*, faith is the human response to the truth revealed by the One and Triune God, which must not be confused with the belief in other religions. However, it seems to me that Francis and Ahmed Al-Tayyeb (2019) were not concerned about the theological understanding of faith in Christianity and in other religions as argued in *Dominus Iesus*. It is noteworthy to point out that *Dominus Iesus* has been a controversial document. Its narrow understanding of faith needs to be critiqued. However, with the HFD, I can argue that faith is understood as the human response to God's self-communication. Different religions and cultures respond to God's communication in diverse ways. It is this faith, which is the basis of human fraternity.

Francis and Ahmed Al-Tayyeb (2019) express that dialogue should promote a culture of tolerance and of living together in peace and should lead to conditions amenable to a cessation of the "*shedding of innocent blood and bring an end to wars, conflicts, environmental decay and the moral and cultural decline that the world is presently experiencing*." Consequently, the document condemns anything that threatens life such as terrorism, genocide, and there are other such scourges and afflictions that threaten life. Religions must not contribute to any form of violence. Since Francis and Ahmed Al-Tayyeb (2019) write within the framework of peaceful coexistence and friendship, they are aware that manipulation of religion can lead to religious violence and extremism. They write:

> *These tragic realities are the consequence of a deviation from religious teachings. They result from a political manipulation of religions and from interpretations made by religious groups who, in the course of history, have taken advantage of the power of religious sentiment in the hearts of men and women in order to make them act in a way that has nothing to do with the truth of religion. This is done for the purpose of achieving objectives that are political, economic, worldly and short-sighted* (Francis & Ahmed Al-Tayyeb 2019).

Therefore, it is in the context of fighting for peace and justice for each and every human person that they call for dialogue because religions can contribute to the peaceful coexistence of people. They underscore that "*dialogue among believers means coming together in the vast space of spiritual, human and shared social values and, from here, transmitting the highest moral virtues that religions aim for*" (Francis & Ahmed Al-Tayyeb). McEvoy and Malone (2019:329) support that through this document, Francis "*aspires to build bridges with Islam and rejects approaches that assert a clash of cultures between the Christian and Muslim faiths or exclude them from living together in peace, harmony, and mutual respect.*"

4.8 Conclusion

Vatican II has provided the framework within which the Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue operates. It recognized the universality of salvation in Christ, the common origin and destiny of human beings. If understood within the framework of incarnation, the relationship between the *imago Dei* and the *imago Christi*, is the basis of universal fraternity, "*We cannot truly call on God, the Father of all, if we refuse to treat in a brotherly (sic) way any man (sic), created as he is in the image of God. Man's relation to God the Father and his relation to men his brothers are so linked together that Scripture says: "He who does not love does not know God" (1 John 4:8)*" (NA 5). Even after the fall of humanity, through the incarnation, Christ has restored our true image, our sonship/daughtership with God (vertical relationship) and our human brotherhood/sisterhood (horizontal relationships). Thus, the Council has invited Christians to look at other religions with esteem and respect. By recognizing the rays of Truth in them, the Church recognizes the work of the Holy Spirit in them and acknowledges the elements of holiness in other religions. Consequently, the Magisterium asks Catholics to collaborate with people from other religions.

In Catholic-Muslim dialogue, Vatican II is a milestone Council. It is a complete shift of paradigm from condemnation and condescension to respect and collaboration, inviting everyone to "*forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve as well as to promote together for the benefit of all mankind (sic) social justice and moral welfare, as well as peace and freedom*" (NA 3). Polemics and controversies set the tone of the historical complexity of Catholic/Christian-Muslim dialogue. Vatican II shows a totally different tone of this same dialogue, a Copernican revolution, using the concept of Casper. As it has been said, it is the first Council to have said positive things about Islam.

Inasmuch as I recognize the importance of Vatican II, I would propose that there is still a need to produce a new Vatican II understanding focusing on interreligious dialogue in the context of today. Although it is true that the Church has moved from considering others as 'non-Christian' to 'other religions', I suggest that it might be more appropriate in the modern theological context to label them as not as 'other religions' but '*differently Religious*'. Thus, I would consider a document like *Nostra Aetate* as a document on the relationship between the Church and the '*differently religious'*. This is within the framework of *Nostra Aetate* which recognizes holiness in those who are religious in a different way.

Magisterial documents post-Vatican II insist that there is only one history of salvation with one salvific divine will, the salvation of all souls[58]. The incarnation of the Son introduces humanity to the divine life. The Church has a special relationship with the incarnated Son, Jesus Christ since she is the body of Christ. However, Christ and the Holy Spirit cannot be confined within the boundaries of the Church, and the Church is wider than its physical and legal confines. The different Catholic popes discussed in this section, following the inspirations of Vatican II Council, have promoted interreligious dialogue with other religions. This dialogue is motivated by love and a positive attitude towards religious otherness.

Following Vatican II , Paul VI to Francis, the Magisterium has paid particular attention to the relationship between Catholics and Muslims. The emphasis has been placed on respecting Muslims and creating fraternal relationships with them. With this emphasis, I am interested in knowing how these writings, speeches, and concrete examples of the popes have influenced the Catholics of Lusaka Archdiocese in their relationships with Muslims. Therefore, let me now discuss the methodology used in my empirical research.

[58] We can talk about one history of salvation which is coexistent with God's revelation to humanity. Crzelak (2010:17), argues "*[b]ecause of God's constant self-communication to people salvation and revelation history must be one and must coincide with world history*." There has never been a time when God did not communicate Godself to religions and cultures/humanity. In this sense any particular history of salvation is only subordinate to one and single history of salvation of humanity, which from a Christian point of view culminate in Jesus Christ. The particularity is in the sense that the accomplishment of salvation and revelation history of other religions and cultures in Jesus Christ is not without their specificities or particularities. I can, thus, argue that other "*religions might serve as historical mediations of God's self-revelation to their members and as possible channels of reaching salvation*" Grzelak (2010:117).

Chapter Five

Research Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This methodology chapter describes the research method and strives to justify the decisions taken and aims to provide a roadmap for my research. Methodology "*reflects an overarching process or plan for researching phenomena*" (Lukenchuk 2017:61). Polkinghorne (1983:5) understands methodology as an "*examination of the possible plans to be carried out – the journey to be undertaken – so that an understanding of phenomena can be obtained*." As the name suggests, methodology describes the methods used in the study. Lukenchuk (2017:60) describes methods as "*a systematic and orderly process of employing specific procedures, tools, instruments, techniques, and/or measurements, each of which depends on the requirements of a particular research design*." Therefore, this chapter first discusses the research design and methodology, including philosophy, research type, strategy, sampling strategy, data collection methods, and data analysis methods. Second, the chapter discusses the methodology's limitations, highlighting the challenges or risks related to my methodology and how I resolved them. Finally, the conclusion of this chapter summarizes the content.

It is essential to highlight that my research is qualitative. Because of this, decisions are aligned to the achievement of the aim of the study which is: 'To find out the extent to which the documents of the Catholic Magisterium on dialogue with Muslims broaden, influence, or shape the mindset of Catholics in their commitment to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese since Vatican II'. The research is designed so as to provide a coherent and informed answer to this research question. The previous chapter has outlined the Magisterial teachings on interreligious and Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

5.2 Research Designs and Methodology

5.2.1 Preliminary

The study has used both empirical data and theoretical (see Chapter Four) or primary and secondary data sources. The empirical (primary) data was collected through interviews and questionnaires in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Therefore, the research has proceeded from the analysis of theoretical data (the theological writings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue/ Catholic-Muslim dialogue) within the framework of *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship to an examination of the empirical data (the Catholic-Muslim

situation in Lusaka). The frameworks have provided the research with criteria to evaluate how writings of the Magisterium have reshaped the Catholic understanding of Islam and, more broadly, of interreligious dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. The theoretical data reviewed the shifting understanding of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Most of this data has come from the writings of the Magisterium starting from Vatican II and ending with the statements of Pope Francis. This data included the writings of Pope Paul VI, who published an encyclical letter, '*Ecclesiam Suam*', during Vatican II that many Catholic theologians consider an important piece for promoting interreligious dialogue.

5.2.2 Research Philosophy

A fundamental epistemological reflection makes it possible to specify the appropriate method for achieving reliable results in a given research. There are different ways in which phenomena can be investigated and how data can be collected, analyzed, and interpreted. Lukenchuk (2017:63-69) proposes six paradigms or models for research such as empirical-analytic, pragmatic, interpretive, critical, poststructuralist, and transcendental. Among these paradigms, this research employed the interpretive paradigm (interpretivism research philosophy). This type of research has its origin in existential-phenomenological and hermeneutic inquiry (Lukenchuk 2017:67; Polkinghorne 1983). My choice of this paradigm was guided by the fact that my research aimed at understanding and interpreting the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue as it is understood in documents of the Magisterium and in the concrete experience and outlook of people in the Lusaka Archdiocese. The documents of the Magisterium provide Catholics with an informed perception of how to live with members of other religions. For this reason, it was important to research the influence of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Understanding the peoples' perspectives (participants) is an important factor in shaping this research. It involved understanding interreligious dialogue from their thought pattern (categories). Consequently, the research revealed the concept of *ubuntunse* was essential in the informants' understanding of religious otherness.

Theological work does not happen "*in vitro*". It is always situated in time and in a specific geographical location. Theology has to be contextual. Thus, as Danneels (2002:11)[59] explains, doing theology means taking cultural changes into account, reflecting on faith, and putting it

[59] «Le rôle d'une Faculté de théologie. Réflexions d'un pasteur. », in La théologie entre deux siècles. Bilan et perspectives, Actes du colloque organisé à l'occasion du 575e anniversaire de l'Université catholique de Louvain.

forward intellectually in a given world and culture. There is, therefore, inevitably a correlation between the discourse of faith and cultural discourses. We live in an age of religious pluralism and this study is shaped by the current religious culture of one geographical location (Lusaka) and informed by the vision of interreligious dialogue that is proposed in the Magisterial documents. This is a core epistemology of this research.

Eberle, discussing the phenomenology of Alfred Schutz, argues that "*in order to explain social actions, social scientists need to learn what th[e] actors know, how they orient themselves, what is relevant and irrelevant to them, how they perceive the situations they are acting in, what goals they strive for, how they conceive of others and so on*" (Eberle 2022:113). This would suggest that the researcher must learn how the community of believers orient themselves, how they perceive not only their religious experiences but also religious otherness or religious pluralism, and the goals they strive for. This can be achieved mainly by the use of an epistemology of interpretivism, which investigates the concrete experience of people with reference to faith and their concrete realities in Lusaka, such as the problem of poverty, land, and other pressing concerns. From a theological point of view, taking into account the current cultural context of Lusaka, interreligious dialogue must be a lived experience by the Catholic community of believers.

5.2.3 Research Type and Methodological Framework

This study has utilized qualitative research within a deductive research approach. Qualitative research crosscuts disciplines, fields, and subject matters with a complex, interconnected family of terms, concepts, and assumptions surrounding it (Denzin & Lincoln 2000:2)[60]. Different researchers have defined it from various points of view. Some researchers have used its key characteristics to describe it (Ritchie & Lewis 2003:2). However, different scholars would agree that the qualitative is concerned with the in-depth understanding of an issue or its meaning (Patton 1980:13; Keegan 2009:11). Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3) define it as follows:

[60] Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:166) add that, according to a qualitative viewpoint, knowledge is created via interaction and conversation; as a result, it exists within each person's perceptions and interpretations rather than "out there." To put it briefly, people construct or produce knowledge. According to a qualitative approach, you must look at the broader context in which people and knowledge operate rather than analysing and comprehending an item by looking at its constituent pieces. The social production of reality is the term used to describe this idea. Vanderstoep and Johnston (2009:165) give the epistemology underlining qualitative studies, which is distinct to that of quantitative studies which presupposes that knowledge is out there to be discovered. This understanding of qualitative research that, knowledge is constructed through communication and interaction, underpins my choice of qualitative for this research project.

> *Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into a series of representations including fieldnotes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*

This definition pinpoints the in-depth inquiry that is an inherent characteristic of qualitative research, which is the interest in this empirical study. Creswell (2003:75) states that qualitative research is exploratory. It is interpretive (Creswell 2003:182). In light of these assertions, my choice of qualitative research aligns with my research philosophy and underpins my research question and objectives. By conducting qualitative research, I hoped to understand and interpret the influence of the theology of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. I anticipated that my in-depth inquiry through interviews, focus groups and questionnaires would provide me with an insight into the understanding of the content or the concrete experience of the Catholics of Lusaka vis-à-vis Islam and Muslims. However, since my research tried to use the theology of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue as basic, it was clear that the data would be collected and analyzed from that perspective. Thus, the study was designed to be deductive in approach and was to move from the theories of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue to the collected data. In brief, it was planned that the study would examine the influence of the interreligious dialogue theories of the Magisterium on the concrete experience and outlook of Catholics in Lusaka.

This research approach justifies my choice of first analyzing the theology of the Magisterium within the framework of *kenosis*. However, to properly understand the perspective of the Magisterium, familiarity with the history of Catholic-Muslim relations is fundamental. In order to summarize the important details of this relationship, I have first presented Catholic-Muslim dialogue during the first encounter between the two religions in my literature review chapter. In the 7th century, Islam was a new religion that found an already established Christianity. In the context of Zambia, although the contact between Islam and Zambian tribes is ancient, the phenomenon of the expansion of Islam in the country is relatively new. This justifies my choice of discussing the writings of John of Damascus before discussing the Magisterial documents.

5.2.4 Research Strategy

There are different qualitative strategies proposed by qualitative researchers: Ethnographic Approach (Patton 2002; Rossman & Rallis 2012; Marshall & Rossman 2016); Phenomenological Approach (Patton 2002; Marshall & Rossman 2016); Grounded Theory Approach (Corbin & Strauss 2014; Marshall & Rossman 2016); and Case Studies (Creswell 2013; Flyvbjerg 2011; Marshall & Rossman 2016; Lapin, Quartaroli & Riemer 2012). According to Edmonds and Kennedy (2017:168), researchers use a phenomenological approach when they are trying to explore meaning and the core lived experience of phenomena. They further argue that the phenomenological approach can be used when (1) examining the experiences of others, (2) investigating how people interpret their experiences, (3) examining the connections between occurrences and how people have come to interpret them, (4) examining how people perceive the core of a given phenomenon, and (5) looking at the similarities across people (Edmonds & Kennedy 2017:179).

Since this research is trying to understand the influence of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in Lusaka, it endeavors to understand the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue (Catholic-Muslim dialogue) as experienced and perceived by Catholics (individually and collectively) and how that response can be traced to the writings of the Magisterium. The study has used a phenomenological approach, which is underpinned by the interpretivist philosophy. In line with Edmonds and Kennedy (2017), other authors point out that this approach tries to bring to the fore how individuals live an experience or a reality, how they understand and perceive it, and talk about it with others (Patton 2002: 104; Marshall & Rossman 2016:66). In this research, religious pluralism is considered as a phenomenon. How Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese understand, perceive, live, and talk about the relationship with Muslims has been my concern. Thus, the study analyzed how Catholics view Muslims or the growth of Islam in Lusaka.

Therefore, an understanding of the variations of the religious affiliation of people resident in the area of Lusaka Archdiocese is essential because this approach involves studying how we make sense of our interreligious experiences, which is coherent with a phenomenological approach as understood by Bogdan and Biklen 1998:26; Spencer, Pryce and Walsh 2014:88. Furthermore, Spencer, Pryce and Walsh (2014:88) conclude that researchers cannot presume that they are aware of the interpretations that people give to certain events. For instance, they

cannot assume that a person in their study experiences sadness or any other emotion, even though they may believe that this is the typical reaction following the death of a parent.

In approaching my research, I did not assume that the Magisterial documents have had an influence on the way Catholics relate to Muslims, even though I know that the teachings of the Magisterium are binding for Catholics in matters of faith and morals. It was on an analysis of their responses that I came to my conclusions with regard to the influence that the Magisterial documents exerted on Catholics. Consequently, this strategy demanded that I research and explore my pre-existing personal biases (Spencer, Pryce & Walsh 2014:88). For this reason, I have described my positionality and reflexivity in this methodological chapter.

5.2.5 Sampling Method

Lewis and Ritchie (2003:104), quoting Burgess, underline that any study that involves a population requires decisions concerning the people, settings, and actions. Consequently, decisions had to be made since the research involved the population. In the first place, data was collected from both men and women aged between 21 and 60. No data was collected from minors. This choice was not only methodological but also entailed consideration of ethical clearance requirements. Secondly, discussing Qualitative research, Devers and Frankel (2000:264) argue, "*In essence, the researcher must make the design more concrete by developing a sampling frame (i.e. criteria for selecting sites and/or subjects) capable of answering the research question(s), identifying specific sites and/or subjects, and securing their participation in the study*." In view of this, given that Lusaka is a Metropolitan Archdiocese with about 66 parishes, it was obvious that not all could be involved in the research. Ultimately, the research focused on six parishes, all of which were situated in the areas with high densities of Muslims. The inclusion of rural parishes where there are few Muslim communities was avoided. The research also involved the Faith Encounter Center Zambia (FENZA), which is a Catholic center specializing in interreligious dialogue and ecumenism that was created by the Missionaries of Africa.

Table 2 summarizes the criteria and the justification for choosing the different places for the samples.

Table 2

Sampling selection criteria

Criteria	Justification
Geographic location	Good Shepherd Parish in Kabwata. Due to its proximity to Kamwala, the area has a high population of Muslims. The business center of Kamwala is mostly run by Indian Muslims. St. Lawrence Parish in Misisi compound. Like Good Shepherd Parish, St. Lawrence Parish is adjacent to Kamwala South. It too has a high population of Muslims. St. Ignatius' parish in Lusaka. It was included because of its historical importance in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. It is the first parish to be established in Lusaka by the Jesuits. It is in the town centre of Lusaka where a wide variety of religious affiliation can be found. Although Christianity is dominant, Muslims are present in the area. Christians and Muslims often live in the same neighborhood. John Paul II Parish in Makeni is an area known for having a high Muslim population. Matero Parish. It has been noticed that in the past few years, Islam has grown fast in Matero. New mosques have been constructed. Mary Immaculate Parish in Kabulonga. Although the area is predominantly Christian, more and more Muslims are settling this affluent area. For example, in 2020, the Muslim Association ZEMA established a cemetery in this area and adjacent to the presbyterium of the Catholic priests. FENZA. It is a Centre for Faith and Encounter. It was created by the Missionaries of Africa to promote both ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. It was selected because of its *raison d'etre*. Makeni (Muslims community). It was chosen because of the population of Muslims around the Makeni Islamic Trust. Masjid Awwal Mosque, Burma Road. Because of its historical importance and the presence of Catholics in Chilenge. Due to the high population of Catholics in Chilenge and Libala, it can be presupposed that Muslims have a great deal of contact with Catholics.
Congregation	Good Shepherd Parish in Kabwata and St. Lawrence Parish. Both parishes are under the Missionaries of Africa. The congregation of the Missionaries of Africa has been very involved in interreligious dialogue since its foundation in Algeria. Interreligious dialogue is part of their charism and missionary identity. St. Ignatius' parish in Lusaka. It is under the Jesuits. The congregation of the company of Jesus (Jesuits) are well known for their spiritual formation and intellectual formation. They are recognized for giving holistic formation to their Christians.

	John Paul II Parish in Makeni. It is under the *Fidei Donum* priests. *Fidei Donum* priests are typically priests from a different diocese (for instance, a diocesan priest from a European diocese assigned to work in an African diocese). Thus, coming from a different priestly formation background, they come with their expertise in pastoral work. Their formation and experience may be essential in their pastoral approach, including interreligious dialogue. Matero Parish in Matero. It is under the diocesan priests. Diocesan priests are local priests. They are not only trained in encounters with people from other religions, like Islam, during their theological studies, but they also know well the milieu and the people. Their knowledge of the people, milieu and language might be fundamental in their approach to Islam. Mary Immaculate Parish in Kabulonga. It is under the Oblate of Mary Immaculate congregation. It is a missionary congregation that has extensively contributed to the intellectual formation of people. The priests are trained in different countries and in different theological institutions. Thus, this may have an influence on their approach to religious otherness and its influence on the Christians.
Economic	Different parishes have different social-economic realities. These realities could be important in the way people look at Muslims or Islam or how they relate to Muslims.
Commitment	Since this research tries to look at the influence of Magisterium, it presupposed that only people who are committed to their religious life (attending Masses and Small Christian Communities) could be interviewed.
Gender	The groups were mixed. This balanced the general experiences of people. Since the research was on the influence of the documents of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue, it did not focus the study of this influence on a particular gender. Men and women were interviewed.
Age	This was to ensure that the ethical protocols were respected. Interviewing minors of less than 18 years would have required the consent of their parents. On the other hand, the research sought to ensure that participants have had a wide experience in their catholic life and their encounters with Muslims.

Each of the selected parishes has a population of Catholics and Muslims (as neighbors) from different parts of the country. In other words, the selected parishes could be classified as being multicultural. These parishes are run by diocesan priests or missionary congregations as shown in the table above. This choice was methodological because diocesan priests and missionary congregations tend to have different pastoral approaches and priorities and these variations could easily have an influence on the application of the teachings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue.

Regarding Muslim communities, the research was carried out at Makeni and Burma Road Mosque (Chilenge). Makeni was chosen because of the large population of Zambian Muslims. Islam is very visible in Makeni. The Burma Road Mosque (Chilenge) was selected because it is the first mosque to be constructed in Lusaka; therefore, historically, it is an important mosque

for Muslims in Lusaka. Its proximity to the Catholic Church and the Catholic population, as highlighted in Table 2, was also considered when it was being selected.

Since the research used a qualitative approach, a non-probabilistic sampling approach was used, which aligns with the research questions and objectives. The choice of this approach in qualitative research is desirable because "*qualitative studies seek to generate rich, contextually laden, explanatory data and are therefore not concerned with generating population-based estimates and p-values*" (Guest, Namey & Mitchel 2013); they are not concerned with statistical outcomes (Lewis & Ritchie 2003:78; Keegan 2009:11). A non-probabilistic approach in sampling is appropriate when a group is deliberately selected because of their features within the sampled population (Lewis & Ritchie 2003:78). For this reason, the six parishes, FENZA and Islamic centers were chosen even though this meant that many parishes and mosques were not directly included in the research[61].

There are three non-probability methods: (1) Purposive sampling; (2) Convenience sampling; and (3) Snowball sampling. This research employed both purposive sampling and convenience sampling. The convenience sampling is within purposive sampling. In purposive sampling, the researcher singles out individuals or people based on their perceived potential to provide a contribution to the research (Lewis & Ritchie 2003:80). This kind of sampling, as argued by Richard (2005:41), makes the data of the researcher relevant to the purposes of the research project. According to Devers and Frankel (2000:264), purposive sampling techniques are intended to advance knowledge about the experiences of certain people or groups or to advance theories and conceptions. In order to achieve this, researchers choose "information rich" cases—that is, people, organizations, groups, or behaviors that offer the most insight into the research subject.

In sampling, priests from different parishes and FENZA were chosen as key informants because of their knowledge of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue based on their studies and coming also from their pastoral responsibilities. In the case of FENZA, interreligious dialogue and ecumenism define their *modus operandi* and *eorum modus essendi* (their way of operating and being). The selection of the six parishes was also purposive[62].

[61] My research is not a quantitative approach which would be concerned with generating population-based estimates and would, ideally, include many available members of the targeted population in the data collection. A probabilistic approach is appropriate for the quantitative approach and not for a qualitative research.
[62] Saldana (2011:33) underscores "*if your fieldwork is at a site where there are several people from which to choose, consider whose perspectives will best represent the diverse landscape of the social and cultural setting*." Lusaka can provide us with many parishes and different centres to collect data, however, for the relevance of

However, this research also employs convenience sampling, which depends on the accessibility and availability of participants (Kumer 2011:188). Although parishes or SCCs or mosques were selected, as already explained, members of the Catholic and Muslim faithful who participated in the research were those who announced their availability and who were accessible. Two reasons favored this choice: as a researcher, I did not know the participants personally prior to the research. They were recommended by their religious leaders, taking into account their contexts; for instance, I asked them to recommend SCCs or Catholics living in a milieu with Muslims[63]. Secondly, since the targeted population was the urban population and given that Lusaka has become a busy city, the research depended on the availability and accessibility of the participants. With the help of the parish priests, chairpersons of some SCCs, the Parish chairpersons, and imams who introduced me as a researcher, participation was widespread and enthusiastic.

5.2.6 Data Collection Method

Researchers have identified two possible ways of collecting data: quantitative and qualitative. Recently, a third way has been suggested; the mixed method. This research, as already highlighted, only used the qualitative method. Therefore, all the instruments for data collections were aligned with the qualitative approach.

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:3) point out that, qualitative research has also been linked to specific data-gathering techniques, including narratives, in-depth interviews, group discussions, observational methods, and the examination of documentary evidence. This research relied on group discussions, and in-depth interviews for my data collection.

Consequently, data was collected through key informants and focus groups. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:58):

> *a key feature of in-depth interviews is their depth of focus on the individual. They provide an opportunity for detailed investigation of each person's personal perspective, for in-depth understanding of the personal context within which the research phenomenon is located, and for very detailed subject coverage. They are the best way to collect data where it is important to set the perspectives heard within the context of personal history or experience.*

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the data collected, I considered the places that could provide me with data that could best represent the Archdiocese because of their contacts with the Muslim population.

[63] On my first meeting with the participants, I clearly explained to them that their participation was voluntary and that they could quit at any time without being held accountable. Furthermore, the consent forms were thoroughly explained before they could be signed by the participants.

Similarly, Roulston and Halpin (2022:668) highlight that to understand people's beliefs, viewpoints, opinions, lived experiences, and meaning-making, researchers conduct interviews. To understand the influence of the Magisterial documents, it was essential to have a detailed investigation that would elicit people's beliefs, perspectives, ideas, and concrete experiences.

Focus groups were crucial for the data collection. They are important because they necessitate participant interaction (Caillaud, Kalampalikis & Doumergue 2022:686), and such encounters can be expected to generate rich research data. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:58) highlight that:

> *[f]ocus groups also provide a social context within which the phenomenon is experienced, and they display the way in which context can shape people's views, showing how data are generated through conversation with others. This context also means that they vividly display differences between participants, and create an opportunity for differences to be directly and explicitly discussed.*

Data was generated from discussions with Catholics in SCCs or Christians from different SCCs in each of the targeted parishes, priests, FENZA, and two Islamic centers. Some discussions revealed differing and sometimes conflicting points of view, enriching the data research. Such discussions showed that the same reality can be understood or lived differently by participants from the same parish. For example, participants appreciated differently the growth of Islam in Lusaka.

The focus groups were composed of 6–8 people. This size of the group was chosen because, as underlined by Patton (1990:18), *"[a] much smaller sample of open-ended interviews add depth, detail, and meaning at a personal level of experience*." In this research, the small focus groups yielded not only individual perspectives but also collective perspectives on how Catholics view Muslims and also on the extent of their own familiarity with Catholic-Muslim dialogue as advocated in Magisterial documents. Brown *et al.* (1989:40) argue that "*Groups are not just a convenient way to accumulate the individual knowledge of members. They give rise synergistically to insights and solutions that would not come about without them*." They provide qualitative insights into the individual and personal experiences (Patton 1990:18). Thus, in line with Creswell (2003:19), the emerging data from groups helped develop the themes that are presented and discussed.

As already pointed out, data was collected from three categories of informants in Lusaka Archdiocese: (i) priests, Catechists and one lay person[64] (key informants); (ii) the Catholic laity; and (iii) Muslims. Key informants in field research are respected and knowledgeable people with whom a researcher can cultivate a close relationship (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016:65) and they are a primary source of information (Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault 2016:65). In this research, the selection of priests and catechists as key informants was done in the hope that they would provide me with an overview of the extent to which the Magisterial documents are known and understood and have positively influenced their own perception of Muslims and the extent to which they have had an impact on their pastoral activities. It must be noted that the clergy knew the different documents of the Magisterium and not the catechists. Priests from different parishes provided me with the primary information and introduced me to other participants. They were supportive of this research. This cooperation was enhanced by the gatekeeper's letter.

In the second place, focus groups were conducted with SCCs or Catholics from different SCCs (informants). SCCs are seen as ideal places for evangelization. They allow all Christians to participate actively in the Church's life and in its evangelization work. This research also included Muslims because data on the extent and manner of how Muslims feel welcomed and perceived by Catholics could be expected to help understand Catholics' attitudes toward Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese. The imams were key informants because of their responsibility as leaders of the Muslim communities. The Muslim faithful were informants. In a city like Lusaka, Muslims are in ongoing contact with Catholics/Christians. It has to be noted that the research only involved Sunni Muslims.

Table 3 summarises the map of respondents interviewed for primary data collection.

Table 3

Respondent	Respondent category	Research tool and approach	Justification for inclusion
Priests	Key informant	Interviews	Because of their knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium and their overview of the sentiments of the practicing Christians

[64] She was chosen as a key informant because, after her studies in interreligious dialogue in Nairobi, Kenya, she returned to Lusaka where she was meant to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue at FENZA.

Laity	Informant	Focus groups	The laity are the majority in the Church and they participate in the one Mission of Christ. The Magisterium addresses itself to both the laity and the clergy
Catechists/trained	Key informant	Focus groups/interviews	Because of their training in the teachings of the Church and their regular contact with members of the faithful.
Imam	Key informant	Interview	Because of their position as leaders of Muslim communities
Muslims	Informant	Focus groups	Because of their day-to-day contact with Catholics.

5.2.7 Data Analysis Methods

Several methods are used to analyze data in a qualitative method, known as qualitative data analysis (QDA). However, the most used are content analysis (Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor 2003), discourse analysis (Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor 2003), thematic analysis (Naeem *et al*. 2023), grounded theory (Creswell 2003; Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor 2003), and narrative analysis (Creswell 2003; Spencer, Ritchie & O'Connor 2003). These are widely used. This study mainly used thematic analysis because it corresponds to the nature of the research project. "*It involves the identification and reporting of patterns in a data set, which are then interpreted for their inherent meaning*" (Naeem *et al*. 2023:2). This approach is encouraged by Braun and Clarke (2006) and Xu and Zammit (2020). The paper of Naeem *et al*. (2023), 'A Step-by-Sep Process of Thematic Analysis to Develop a Conceptual Model in Qualitative Research', provided a framework for my qualitative data analysis. The analysis proceeded in six distinct steps namely: "*transcript creation and data familiarization; keyword identification; code selection; theme development; conceptualization through the interpretation of keywords, codes, and themes; and, finally, the development of a conceptual model*"[65] (Naeem *et al.* 2023:2). Braun and Clarke (2006:78) consider thematic analysis to be the foundational method for qualitative analysis in that it is flexible and can be used for many different forms of qualitative analysis. Using this thematic analysis, three major themes emerged: (I) Archdiocese of Lusaka and Magisterial documents on dialogue; (II) Islam viewed by Catholics in Lusaka;

[65] For the 6th step, instead of developing a conceptual model, I conceptualized the understanding of interreligious that resonates with the context of Lusaka and the epistemology of the local people.

and (III) Communicating Magisterial documents and living Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

Following the six steps, after coding (according to the coding method) and regrouping the data into themes (the coding was done to enable emerging themes from the respondents to be noted), I strove to interpret the data so as to develop a framework of interreligious dialogue in the context of Lusaka. Naeem *et al*. (2023:4) describe the final step as the development of a conceptual model as the last phase in the thematic analysis process. This procedure, which is frequently directed by existing theories, entails developing a distinctive representation of the data. The model highlights the study's contribution to knowledge and provides answers to the research questions. This stage marks the end of the study and summarizes all the findings and insights drawn from the data.

The interviews were recorded between December 2023 and March 2024. The recordings were transcribed and the NVivo software was used for coding the varying responses. According to Creswell (2003:192), coding is the process of breaking up the content into manageable chunks. It entails collecting text or images, classifying them into groups, and assigning a term to each group—often a phrase derived from the participant's native tongue. Different ways can be used for coding qualitative data depending on the research questions and objectives. There are two main approaches: deductive and inductive. In deductive or *a priori*, the researcher uses predetermined codes (Bingham & Witkowsky 2022:133). The research employed inductive coding. In this analytic strategy, the researcher goes through the data, and the codes emerge from it (Bingham & Witkowsky 2022:134). For the data familiarization and initial coding, I used the descriptive method of coding, using Microsoft Word to identify similarities in the data collected.

Every effort was taken to interpret the data in a critical manner. This approach to assessment, interpretation and analysis can be expected to provide a nuanced and informed view of the influence of the documents of the Magisterium on the responses to the central query of this study. And this encapsulated all the findings and provided a basis on which to propose a way forward. In studies like this, the interpretation brings to the fore the lessons learned and how the research question is understood and how the data make a theological sense. Creswell (2003:194) highlights that the lessons could be the researcher’s personal interpretation, couched in the individual understanding that the inquirer brings to the study from her or his own culture, history, and experience. This statement articulates the certainty that my own prior

studies and experiences would, to some extent, play a role in data interpretation. However, this does condone a lack of objectively. Furthermore, Creswell (2003:195) warns of the possibility of drawing conclusions from distorting information gleaned and from extant theories. To prevent these errors, my interpretation of the data was guided mainly by Magisterial theology on interreligious dialogue. For Creswell (2003:1995), interpretations can also take different forms but must be adapted to the different types of designs and must be flexible enough to convey personal, research-based, and action meanings. In this research, the meanings were the insights attained in understanding – interpreting the data.

5.3. Validity, Reliability, and Rigor

5.3.1 Validity

Merriam (1995:61) defines validity "*[a]s the degree to which the researcher has measured what he set out to measure*." Authors have distinguished between internal and external validity, which entails the trustworthiness of the research. According to Edmonds and Kennedy (2017:8), external validity focuses on how the results can be generalized to a relevant population. Merriam (1995:53) points out that, "*internal validity asks the question: How congruent are one's findings with reality? In quantitative research, the question is often more precisely stated: Are we observing or measuring what we think we are observing or measuring? Key to understanding internal validity is the notion of reality*." However, in qualitative research, although the trustworthiness of research is essential, the methods used to measure it differ from those used in quantitative research. Different strategies can be used to prove the trustworthiness of qualitative research: Triangulation, member-checks, peer debriefing, prolonged time in the field (Marshall & Rossman 2016:124; Creswell 2003:196), clarifying the bias, presenting negative or discrepant information and using an external auditor (Creswell 2003:196; Maxwell 2013:125).

To be more objective in this research or to make sure that my findings are objective, I used the member-checking strategy[66], which, according to Creswell (2003:196), is used "*to determine the accuracy of the qualitative findings through taking the final reports or specific descriptions or themes back to participants and determining whether these participants feel that they are accurate.*" This helped to maintain the accuracy and trustworthiness of the interpretation. Since the research carried out in-depth interviews with different groups and individuals, I equally

[66] The Checking was not done with all the informants who took part in this research. It was only done with those that could be accessed via email.

employed the triangulation method for the credibility and validity of my findings. There are various forms of triangulation. This research employed data triangulation, which uses different sources of data (Denzin 1970:301; Flick 2018:12). Furthermore, discussing triangulation, Creswell (2003:196) underscores that it uses "*different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and using it to build a coherent justification for themes*." To meet this requirement in this study, data from focus groups and individual interviews were examined.

The research also attempted to discuss and mention negative or discrepant information against the themes about interreligious dialogue, like fear of interreligious dialogue. Creswell (2003:196) argues that "*because real life is composed of different perspectives that do not always coalesce, discussing contrary information adds to the credibility of an account for a reader*." For this reason, care was taken to include points of view and sentiments of Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese that are negative or discrepant concerning the teaching of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue[67]. Even though the Magisterium promotes interreligious dialogue, some Catholics may not see its importance; for example, for some informants, Islam is heretical. Although it contradicts the teachings of the Church, it is nonetheless an important element in research in that it provides a more nuanced understanding of the perceptions and experiences of people. Furthermore, the research also used peer review and debriefing sessions. "*This process involves locating a person (a peer debriefer) who reviews and asks questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher*" (Creswell 2003:196).

5.3.2 Reliability and Rigor

According to Merriam (1995:55), "*Reliability is concerned with the question of the extent to which one's finding will be found again. That is, if the inquiry is replicated, would the findings be the same?*" Reliability entails the strength or the sustainability of the research. Because of

[67] Saldana (2011:31) argues well that "*To live in the social world is to experience and reflect upon it daily. But to understand it deeply from a researcher's perspective requires that we collect sufficient evidence to document the patterns, categories, and meanings that humans have created. This documentation helps us to systematically and credibly examine, extract, and construct from the complexity of living its essences and essentials in order to exist in a better world. But there are also times when the complexities and ambiguities of being human are exactly what we need to document and report to contemplate the messy mysteries of it.*" Looking at the negative or discrepant information, can be essential to complete the understanding of a lived experience. It is in this perspective that we think it is important to include the negative and discrepant results of our research so as to have a complete understanding of the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese.

the ideas of replicability, different authors have argued that reliability concerns quantitative research and not qualitative research due to its nature. Leung (2015:325) agues:

> *In quantitative research, reliability refers to exact replicability of the processes and the results. In qualitative research with diverse paradigms, such definition of reliability is challenging and epistemologically counter-intuitive. Hence, the essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency*.

I do not use 'reliability' in my research as a term, but rather consistency, which entails rigor. I agree that talking about replicability in qualitative research is more complicated. However, consistency – and rigor give strength or sustainability to qualitative research. My fieldwork in the Archdiocese of Lusaka was carried out consistently, and after collecting data through in-depth interviews and focus groups, I systematically analyzed and interpreted the data as critically and as methodically as possible. In this sense, objectivity is when intelligence looks for intelligible patterns in presentations and representations (Cronin 2001:57) or when intelligence looks for intelligible patterns in the given data to constitute meaning. I constituted the meaning of each theme by discussing each theme theologically. I considered that this research involved three worlds: (i) the world of the researcher, (ii) the world of the participants, and (iii) the world of meaning (interpretation). The world of the meaning depended on the intelligence of the world of the researcher and his understanding of the world of the participants and the world of theology. Therefore, a critical, objective interpretation of data strives to avoid both the personal biases of the researcher and his preconceived ideas or judgments. I strove for this rigor in my research project.

5.4 Methodological Limitations

Research designs have different limitations. I have used the qualitative method, limiting my data collection to 6 parishes. Admittedly, the limited range of the sample could be seen as inadequate. As a researcher, I am aware that the results of my research cannot pretend to give a quantitative overview. It must be remembered that the study was focused not on the production of generalized results but rather on producing an in-depth understanding of the subject and an experience of qualitative research. Therefore, to ensure the strength of my research, decisions on validity, reliability, or rigor were taken as discussed in the above section.

In-depth interviews were used as instruments for data collection. All the interviews (group and individual) were recorded. Devers and Frankel (2000:269) argue that "*qualitative researchers often assume that once the decision has been made to use audio- and videotape, few decisions*

remain. However, there are number of methodological issues involved in transcribing audio- and videotapes." It is essential to underline that transcribing the interviews was not an easy task. The words can be written but the tone and emphasis cannot be reproduced in a text. Three languages were used: English, Bemba, and Nyanja. This in itself produced difficulties, although I have been using all three languages since childhood, as I was born and grew up in Kabwe. For transcription, I used the orthographic or verbatim style. Braun and Clarke (2013:161) note that this style pays attention to the spoken words in recorded data. I tried to be as accurate as possible in transcribing what was said. Not only this was difficult work, but it also took me a lot of time; I spent many hours listening to the recordings. Furthermore, I was aware of the danger of losing or even changing some information when translating from one language to another. I thus set my aim, as Braun and Clarke (2013:163) have highlighted, "*to create as clear and complete a rendering of what was uttered as possible*." I distanced myself from what was said so that I could be more objective in transcribing the data and not transcribing a personal interpretation of the data.

Roulston and Halpin (2022:668) argue that "Limitations of interviews as a method include the problems of using self-reported data to examine research questions (e.g. people do not always do what they say they do, mis-remember, or lie)". This research uses only the data that was collected. As indicated in the ethical considerations, this data will be kept for five years before it is disposed of, and the data itself will be made available to my supervisor for verification. All the participants were informed about and agreed to these conditions. Furthermore, the purpose of this methodological chapter is not only to give the roadmap of my research but also to be available to other researchers who might wish to use similar methods and to compare their findings with mine.

Using qualitative research has other limitations, including: (1) the bias of the researcher; and (2) the authenticity of the collected data. Brink (1993:35) highlights, "*In a qualitative study the data-gathering instrument is frequently the researcher himself. Thus questions of researcher bias and researcher competency, if unchecked, may influence the trustworthiness of data considerably.*" He further argues that the presence of the researcher can affect the validity of the data collected (Brink 1993:35). Participants may try to present themselves in the best possible light, or they may choose to camouflage or alter important facts; in other words, the researcher can induce social behaviors in others that would not have happened otherwise (Brink 1993:35). Agreeing with Brink, I would say that qualitative research poses this twofold risk.

Therefore, I was aware that, being a Catholic priest, my presence could condition the responses of the laity. Consequently, different strategies were used for data collection, as already explained, to strengthen the collected data's validity. Second, going into the field, I was not dressed in the Cassock or the Roman collar/Roman collar shirt, which made people free to share their ideas. Priestly habits may affect the openness of people because of the way they relate to and with members of the clergy. As for the bias of the research, I must discuss my positionality and reflexivity.

5.4.1 Positionality and Reflexivity

As has been emphasized, the research was conducted in Lusaka, the capital city of Zambia. My first real encounter with Islam goes back to my junior secondary school. In Kabwe, my hometown, in the early 90s, there was one mosque, and it was situated on Ghana Avenue. It was associated with Indians. We did not interact with Kabwe Indians apart from buying goods from their shops. I grew up with a perception that Indian Muslims did not pray to a real God. We mocked Muslims with some songs. At that time, we did not think such songs suggested religious bigotry or that they could lead to religious conflicts. In grade 8, I met for the first time with a classmate who was also a Zambian Muslim. This triggered my curiosity to learn more about Islam. After completing secondary school, I went to study philosophy in Tanzania, where I found a more significant population of Muslims. In 1999, for my weekend apostolate, I was visiting Muslims in different mosques of Arusha with two other students (from Malawi and Uganda). After Tanzania, I did my priestly formation in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Ivory Coast (all in West Africa), where I also encountered and interacted frequently with Muslim communities. After my ordination, I worked in Tizi Ouzou, Algeria, for six years, where my primary apostolate was interreligious dialogue with Muslims. I also studied interreligious dialogue in France. This personal history gives a clear indication that I have been in contact with Muslim communities for the past 25 years.

My personal background, as outlined above, has given me practical contact with Muslims. My study of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue have also been extensive and long-lasting. Therefore, I entered the fieldwork with this background, knowing the importance of interreligious dialogue with Muslims from personal, practical and academic perspectives. It was evident that the Magisterial documents encourage all Christians to dialogue with people from other faiths or to show them respect and esteem. However, it must be accepted that our worldview is shaped by our background, education, shared or common beliefs, cultures, and

so on. According to Jacobson and Mustafa (2019:2), "*It is known that the way that researchers perceive the social world is largely dependent on their position within it, which further impacts the way that the research is approached, interacted with, and interpreted*." My recognition that my personal position, having been shaped or at least influenced by my background was essential; in fact, Jacobson and Mustafa (2019:2) consider positionality as a tool for research, and Chilombo (2019:133) underlines that research calls for a recognition of one's positionality and reflexivity.

Knowing that since 1999, I have spent most of my time outside Zambia and observing the number of Muslims in Lusaka during my holidays made me realize how the religious landscape has changed in the country and, consequently, the interactions between different religions have also changed. Ultimately, this has an influence on people's worldviews. This recognition, regardless of my positionality, helped me learn more about how, today, Catholics view Muslims in Lusaka and how the documents of the Magisterium influence or do not influence their endeavors in interreligious dialogue. My approach was to ask questions aligning with my research objectives and let them share their experiences and not my experiences. I have had very positive experiences with Muslim communities in different countries; thus, in my fieldwork, I was aware that this could influence how I asked questions of the participants. In being objective, listening to the experiences of people and their understanding of the relationship between Christians and Muslims challenged my understanding and gave me a new experience of knowledge of Catholic-Muslim dialogue, especially the complementarity between the teachings of the Magisterium and the concept of *ubuntunse*. They were informative and cooperative. My intellectual openness made me learn the possibilities and the challenges of Catholic-Muslim dialogue from the grassroots and the difference between the Catholic intellectual or theological world and the concrete lived experiences of people. These encounters helped me to become aware of and overcome some of my subjective biases as a researcher.

5.5. Conclusion

This chapter has underlined my research methodology. According to Schwardt (2007:195), methodology could be understood as "*a theory of how an inquiry should proceed. It involves analysis of the assumptions, principles and procedures in a particular approach to inquiry*." Kothari (2004:8) further suggests that in research methodology, one examines the different approaches that a researcher typically takes while examining his research problem and the reasoning behind them. This chapter has outlined the methods that I employed in this research

project. It described the different steps that were taken and the reasons for which they were chosen. My research question, aims, and objectives determined the logic behind the decision taken with regard to my research approach. I have used a deductive research approach and a phenomenological research strategy, employing purposive and convenient sampling methods, qualitative data collection methods, and thematic data analysis methods.

For trustworthiness, this research uses a combination of different strategies. On the other hand, due to the nature of the qualitative studies, the research is more concerned with rigor or consistency than reliability, as understood in the quantitative approach (the replicability of the research). Thus, knowing the risks that the researcher can have on both collected data and its interpretation, and for intellectual honesty, the chapter has included my positionality and reflexivity.

The next chapter will present the data analysis. Four themes emerged from my collected data. I will systematically present them, but the theological discussion will be done in a different chapter. Therefore, there is a close relationship between chapter six and chapter seven.

Chapter Six

Data Analysis and Presentation

6.1 Introduction

After conducting focus group discussions in six parishes of Lusaka (in-depth interviews), different themes emerged that answered my research question. It is important to point out that, in my research, I have endeavored to answer the question, 'To what extent have the documents of the Catholic Magisterium on dialogue with Muslims broadened, influenced, or shaped the mindset of Catholics in their commitment to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese since Vatican II?' This question can be answered through the different sub-questions aligned with my research objectives. Accordingly, after collecting data using the thematic approach, four themes emerged. I will present the results of each of these themes. Thus, this chapter comprises four sections according to the themes. After presenting the themes' data analysis report, each theme will be discussed theologically in the next chapter. However, the fourth theme will discussed in a separate chapter because it conceptualizes a framework for interreligious dialogue in Lusaka, taking into consideration the other three themes.

6.2 Theme One: Archdiocese of Lusaka and Magisterial Documents on Dialogue

In the present section, I discuss the theme of the Archdiocese of Lusaka and Magisterial Documents on Dialogue. Looking at the importance of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Catholic Church, I strived to understand how the different documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue/Catholic-Muslim dialogue are communicated in the Lusaka Archdiocese. In order to understand the influence of the documents, it is essential to understand how accessible they are to the people, especially the faithful.

The Catholic Magisterium is known for producing a great number of documents that are rich in theological content, which must have an influence or impact on the pastoral plans in different dioceses. Therefore, in this data collection, I first collected data about what people knew concerning the documents of the Church on interreligious dialogue/ Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

6.3 Presentation of Results

Table 4 highlights the connection between the first sub-research question (Are the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue effectively communicated to the laity?), the

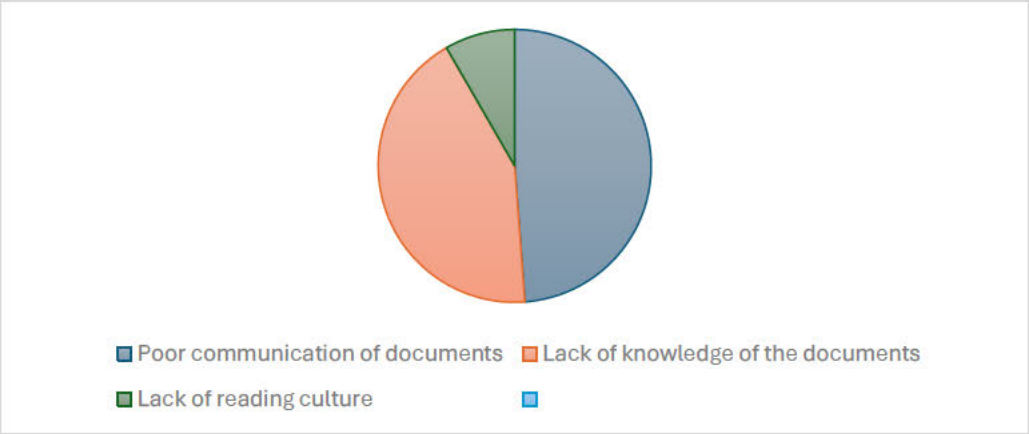
theme and the different codes that have contributed to the theme of Catholics and Magisterial documents.

Table 4

Themes	Codes
Archdiocese of Lusaka and Magisterial Documents on Dialogue	Poor Communication of Documents Lack of Knowledge and Implementation of Documents Lack of Reading Culture

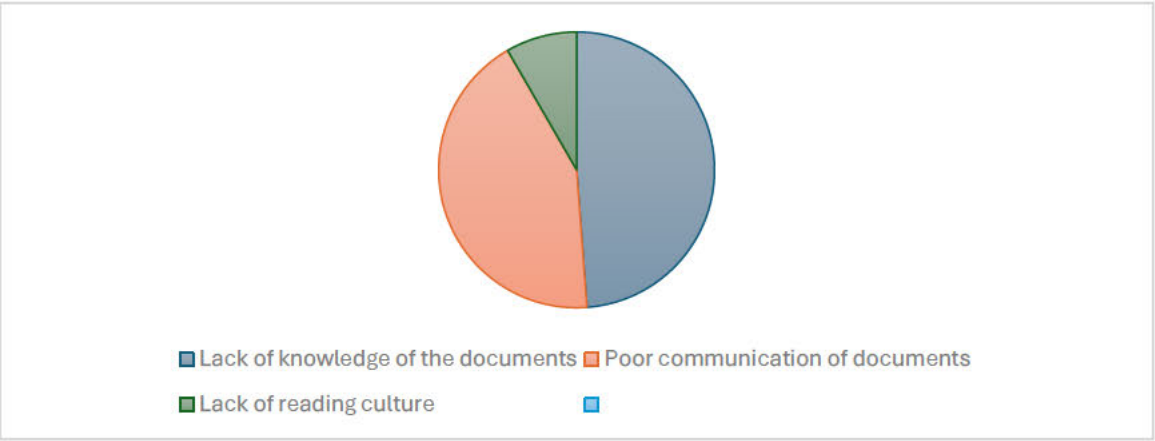
Fig 1 shows the hierarchy chart of codes of the different focus groups. Fig 2 shows the hierarchy chart of the key informants.

Fig 1[68]



[68] Fig 1.1 demonstrates that in FGs with informants, poor communication of documents was emphasized, followed by lack of knowledge of the documents. In the third place was lack of a reading culture.

Fig 2[69]



Figs 1 and 2 underline the area of emphasis of the two groups: the informants and the key informants. It is clear that informants emphasized more on the poor communication of the documents to the lay faithful and the key informants highlighted more on the faithful's (the lay) lack of knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium. The two are related.

6.3.1 Poor Communication of Documents

The poor communication of the content and meaning of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue was highly underlined among the laity. The different focus groups (FG) in the 9 files emphasized that they did not have access to the various documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. Table 5 gives some selected statements of the informants.

Table 5

Code	Selected Statements	Aspect
Poor Communication of Documents	1. We have no access to the documents. 2. Are the documents with the bishops? 3. We have never heard about them. 4. I am not aware of the documents. 5. Documents are not well communicated.	Lack of access to the Magisterial Documents.

[69] Fig 1.2 illustrates that with the key informants, lack of knowledge of the documents was highlighted, followed by poor communication of documents, and in the third place, the lack of reading culture. However, in Fig 1.2, lack of knowledge of the documents refers to the lack of knowledge of the documents by the informants and not the key informants. The key informants underlined that most of the Catholic faithful in the Lusaka Archdiocese lacked the knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue.

	6. No, we are not aware of these documents. 7. We do not know very much about the documents, but sometime back, I found something in a Catholic bookshop on the aim for Muslims in Africa, which is to Islamize Africa.	

It is worth noting that the key informants, primarily the clergy, acknowledged poor communication of the Magisterial documents to the laity (see Fig 2). The findings concluded that the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue need to be adequately communicated to the laity in the Lusaka Archdiocese. They need to reach the grassroots. In other words, information must be communicated from top to bottom.

6.3.2 Lack of Knowledge and Implementation of Documents

On the knowledge of the documents, it was noted that the poor communication of the documents to the laity has affected both the knowledge and the implementations of the Magisterial recommendations on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. According to the findings, in the 10 different focus groups, only one person mentioned knowing some documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. Of the 10 focus groups, just one group mentioned that the parish has a committee that promotes interreligious dialogue[70]. Members of that one group had visited some mosques. Nevertheless, nothing much has been done, and Catholic-Muslim dialogue is more than visiting mosques. In another group, it had been suggested that the relationship between Catholics and other religions be discussed in SCCs in connection with discussions on the theme of synodality[71]. However, through the media, some were aware of the efforts of the Church to promote dialogue with other religions. Table 6 gives some selected statements.

Table 6

Code	Statements	Aspect

[70] The parish is run by the Missionaries of Africa. As already mentioned in the methodological chapter, interreligious dialogue is part and parcel of the charism of the Missionaries of Africa.
[71] This was mentioned in a second parish that is run by the Missionary of Africa.

Knowledge and Implementation of Documents	1. We have visited about 3 mosques in Lusaka.	Little knowledge
	2. For me these documents I am aware of some of them.	
	3. John Paul II tried to unite Muslims and Christians.	
	4. We may only see it in practice. I see the pope talking to Orthodox, and other religions, being at one table. So how is it that this ecumenism we only see it at a higher level and we don't see our bishops having some meetings with all the other religious leaders?	Knowledge through Media
	5. I went to a Catholic school, and we used to have a religious education. We talked about how we accommodate other religions.	Knowledge through school
	6. We are a synodal Church. That question we were given in the small Christian Communities: 'How do you relate with people from other religions, for example, Muslims, Hindus?' Some of the answers were, 'We just accept them because we are in the same locality; my neighbor is a Muslim, so we just respect each other's tradition.'	Synodality Discussion

Therefore, this implies that the informants were not prepared for interreligious dialogue, which explains the lack of knowledge and the implementation of the Magisterial documents on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese despite the presence of Islam.

The key informants[72] all underlined that they knew different documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue due to their theological formation. Some had done their research papers during their studies on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. For some, this has influenced their relationship with Muslims. Their engagement with Muslims is mainly done at an individual level (friendship), except FENZA[73] (Missionaries of Africa at FENZA work as a community in promoting friendship with other religious communities or Christian churches) and one parish (as already mentioned, lay people have visited some mosques around Lusaka although they did not have much knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue).

[72] The key informants were priests (clergy) and one layperson who was trained or did studies on interreligious dialogue at Tangaza University in Kenya. This was done with a view to promoting interreligious dialogue among the laity and also so in view of helping at one of the Catholic centers to promote interreligious dialogue.
[73] Although the FENZA community promotes both interreligious and ecumenical dialogue, their engagement did not have an influence in the different parishes where I carried out my research.

Therefore, my findings showed that there is a correlation between the knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious or Catholic-Muslim dialogue and their implementations. An informant underlined that "policies can never be implemented if they are not known." They can be implemented or translated into action plans if they are made known to the people in the spirit of synodality.

6.3.3 Lack of Reading Culture

Another issue that was highlighted was a need for the development and provision of support for a reading culture. The laity (in focus groups) and the clergy mentioned it as a common phenomenon. Table 7 shows some selected statements from different focus groups.

Table 7

Code	Statements	Aspect
Lack of Reading Culture	1. We are not a reading culture society. 2. When it comes to reading, Catholics, we are behind. 3. As a Sunday Catholic, generally, to describe many Catholics or many parishioners that are not necessarily priests or nuns, you find that we may not be familiar with most of the literature in the Church that talks about the relationship between the Muslims and the Catholics. 4. In general, how many Catholics read the documents of the pope? That is where the problem is. 5. But again, the reading culture generally, not only among Catholics among Zambians, is also very poor. 6. The reading culture is very bad.	Poor reading culture

Captivatingly, lack of reading culture is not just a problem among the laity; some key informants underlined that it is equally a problem with some clergy. See Table 8.

Table 8

Code	Statements	Aspect
Lack of Reading Culture	1. Generally, we are not very good at reading. 2. Most of the priests have not read the recent documents. 3. Sadly enough, even priests do not read the documents.	Poor reading culture

The analysis concludes that since most of the documents of the Magisterium are communicated in writing, if there is no good reading culture, their knowledge, and implementation are likely to be adversely affected.

Finally, the analysis of the first theme, Catholics and Magisterial documents on dialogue, has brought to the fore that the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue have not been effectively communicated to the laity in Lusaka (based on the data collected from six parishes run by different religious congregations and in diverse socioeconomic contexts). This informs the research on determining how Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese view Muslims despite the problems pertaining to the dissemination of information and the different levels of knowledge found in informants and key informants. It also leads to analysis of how informants understand Catholic-Muslim relationships or collaboration (within humility and peaceful coexistence and friendship frameworks) despite this lack of knowledge of the documents.

6.4 Theme Two: Islam Viewed by Catholics in Lusaka

Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, from a Catholic perspective, would also depend on how Catholics perceive Muslims. Despite the fact that a range of Magisterial documents promote a positive attitude and esteem for Muslims, as already outlined, there are other factors that influence how Catholics view Muslims, and some of these militate against trust and good relations. Interreligious dialogue does not happen in a vacuum or empty space but in concrete realities. These realities condition how Catholics talk about Muslims or the Muslim world that they construct.

In this theme, the findings are presented here and then discussed in the next chapter. The discussion is about the interpretation of the findings and how they resonate with the ideas of other scholars. The data analysis shows that the Catholic view of Muslims and Islam in Lusaka is conditioned by the growth of Islam, poverty and religion, and land. They all impinge on the relationship and have had a shaping influence on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

6.5 Presentations of the Results

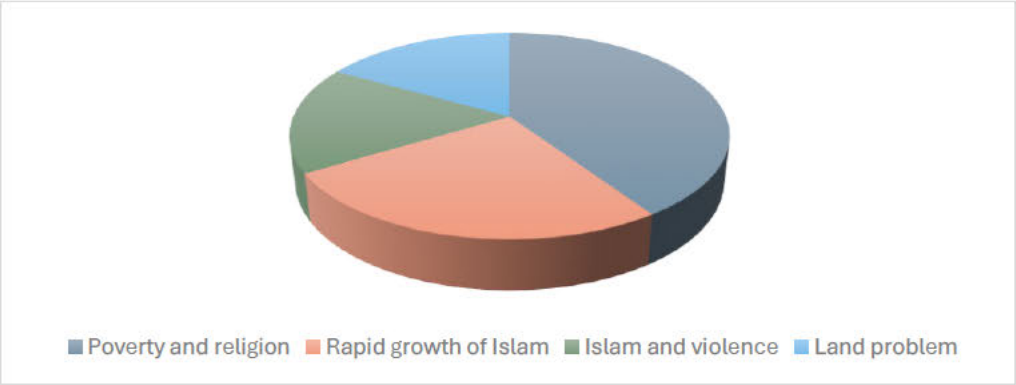
Table 9 underlines the connection between the second sub-research question (How do Catholics view Islam and Muslims in Lusaka Archdiocese?), the theme, and the different codes

that have contributed to the theme of Islam viewed by Catholics in Lusaka. Fig 3 and Fig 4 represent hierarchy charts of codes compared by the number of coding references. Fig 3 shows focus groups' data and Fig 4 shows key informants' data.

Table 9

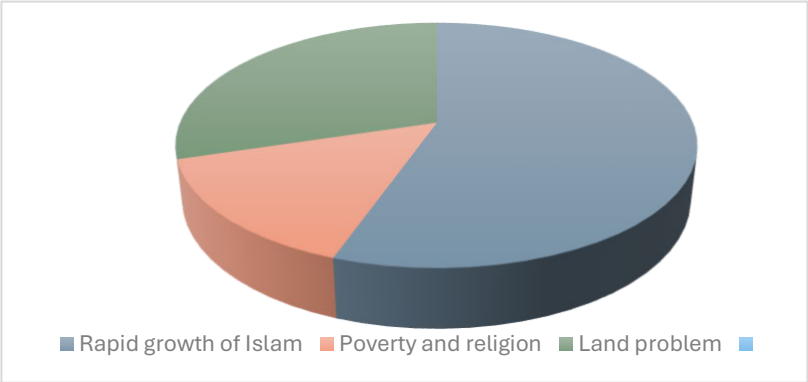
Theme	Codes
Islam viewed by Catholics in Lusaka	Rapid Growth of Islam Poverty and Religion Land Problem

Fig 3[74]



[74] Fig 3 shows that in FGs, informants highlighted the link between poverty and religion, in the second place, they underlined the rapid growth of Islam, and in the third place, the land problem caused by the buying of lands by Muslims and the link between Islam and violence.

Fig 4[75]



6.5.1 Rapid Growth of Islam

In both focus groups and interviews with key informants, it was highlighted that Islam is growing at a fast rate in Lusaka. People interviewed did not base their perception of the growth of Islam on official statistics but on their concrete experiences: noticing that a considerable number of Zambians are identifying themselves as Muslims and several mosques are being constructed around Lusaka. Notably, this growth of Islam has been evident regardless of the socioeconomic levels and conditions of the area. In all the different parishes, it was highlighted.

Here are some of the statements from focus groups on how people expressed or saw the growth of Islam. In all the 10 focus group files, it was underlined.

Table 10

Code	Statements	Aspect
Rapid Growth of Islam.	1. They are growing at a faster rate. 2. Islam is growing fast because of the number of mosques constructed. 3. We had opportunities to visit the mosque and other places. From this survey, I can say Islam is going fast here in Lusaka. 4. During the time of Kaunda, there were Muslims who come to Zambia. Their children also became Muslims. 5. Now there are Bembas who have become Muslims. 6. Intermarriages have favored the growth.	Observable aspect Historical aspect

[75] Fig 4 illustrates the key informants, in the first place, highlighted the rapid growth of Islam, in the second place, they underlined the problem of land and in the third place the link between poverty and religion.

	7. Muslim people have reached the level of marrying Zambian women, not one, not two but four to five. 8. Their aim is to wipe away Christianity by force 9. We are heading to a situation whereby if they become majority, the question is what are they going to do? 10. They are targeting Catholics.	Islam is Zambian Islam as a threat to Christianity

The interview with key informants produced similar results in terms of the perception of the growth of Islam in Lusaka. They perceived it as a fast-growing religion, as shown in Table 11.

Table 11

Code	Statements	Aspect
Rapid Growth of Islam.	1. Islam is growing in Zambia because of what the leaders of Islam are providing for the people. Sometimes they entice them to join their region. 2. They are building more mosques in Lusaka. 3. We have programs where we visit different kind of parishes in the Archdiocese of Lusaka and the challenge that we see is the mushrooming of Islam. 4. The growth of Islam is the concern for the Archdiocese. 5. I think Islam is growing at the fastest rate if we look at the number of mosques built here and there. But also the number of Muslims who are even penetrating most traditional Christian areas such as Kabwata. 6. They grow from the fruit of the womb and also the word, their preaching is so quick, "the dawa". 7. Before, it used to be for Asians, but now there are more Zambians. 8. The Muslims have the strategy and a plan to make Zambia an Islamic State in 40 years to come. 9. There is a visible increase in the arrival of Asians and some Arabs.	Observable aspect Islam is Zambian Islam as a threat to Christianity Migration of Asians and Arabs

It is important to note that some look at this rapid growth of Islam in Lusaka as a threat to Christianity (to the Catholic Church in particular) and to the country. They question the intention of Muslims and articulate a suspicion that they target Catholics, or they want to make

Zambia a Muslim country. Such a perception can have possible consequences for Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

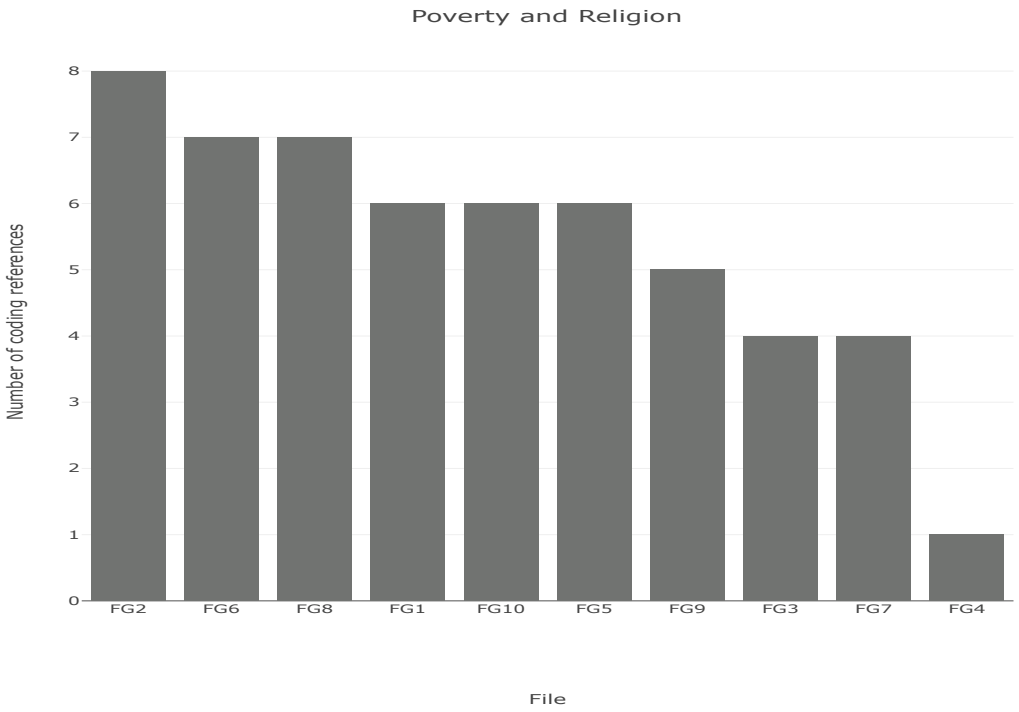
The data analysis shows that Catholics view Islam as a fast-growing religion in Lusaka, and some Catholics perceive this as a concern for the Archdiocese and the Catholics, which resonates with other research. In 2017, the Pew Research Center revealed that Muslims were the world's fastest-growing religious group. Muslims are expected to grow from 1.8 billion in 2015 to nearly 3 billion in 2060. According to the Pew Research Center (2017), the growth of Muslims is due to demographics. Muslims have more children than other religions. Thus, they have a relatively younger population. They also pointed out that "*religious switching is expected to hinder the growth of Christianity by an estimated 72 million between 2015 and 2060 – is not expected to have a negative net impact on Muslim population growth*" (Pew Research Center 2017). The findings in Lusaka, Zambia, reveal that Islam is growing fast but is mainly linked to the economic situation of Lusaka. Therefore, I will now present the data on poverty and religion.

6.5.2 Poverty and Religion

According to Yar and Nasih (2024:10), "*Poverty is defined as a state of deprivation where individuals or communities lack access to essential resources such as food, clean water, healthcare, education, and adequate shelter.*" Citing Keme *et al*., Yar and Nasih (2024:10) point out that poverty is influenced by different socioeconomic factors including income inequality, unemployment, limited social mobility, and systemic barriers. In this research, most of the key informants and informants identified that there was an inherent connection between poverty and the growth of Islam in Lusaka. However, this link was more stressed in the different focus groups than in the data collected from the key informants through in-depth interviews, as seen in Figs 3 and 4. However, in focus groups, the manner in which the link between poverty and religion was understood varied from one group to another, depending on the socioeconomic-religious status of the place. Fig 5 gives the relationship between number of coding references and the Files[76].

[76] Files = data collected from each focus group. FG 1 & 2= St. Lawrence. FG3 & 4= Matero. FG 5 & 9 Makeni, FG 6 & 7 Mary Immaculate. FG 8=St. Ignatius. FG 10=Good Shepherd.

Fig 5



The above Fig 5 shows that St. Lawrence strongly connected the growth of Islam with the economic situation. A focus group from St. Ignatius and one group from Mary Immaculate provided a similar range of references (although one focus group from Mary Immaculate has fewer references than the two). These groups come from similar socioeconomic and religious backgrounds. One group of St. Lawrence, Makeni, and Good Shepherd are in the same range of references due to their similarities in the religious landscape. The least is Matero, an area where it is also noticed that Islam is growing fast in recent times.

In the data analysis, I concluded that poverty/economic situation was an essential factor in understanding Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Participants understood that there is a relationship between the growth of religion and the economic situation of the place. In a very different context, in Madagascar, the same reality has been observed. Cardinal Tsarahazana (2018:125-129) argues that Islam is growing due to the finances from the Gulf countries and Pakistan. They buy people. They construct mosques everywhere, even where there are not enough Muslims. In the context of Lusaka, although a number of Catholics had similar points of view as Cardinal Tsarahazana, some informants had a positive view vis-a-vis the charitable works of Muslims. An informant argued, "*at least Muslims are helping people*." Another informant added, "*Muslims get money from the mosque, but for Christians, we bring*

money to the Church." Another informant said, "*The church just preaches the word of God, but they have forgotten about the needy, like the old people. The old people are given something by Muslims in town, even if it is a 50 kwacha*." This challenges the Catholic Church vis-a-vis the option for the poor. However, let me note that the growth of Islam in Lusaka is linked to the response of the Muslims through different Muslim Associations to the economic situation of Lusaka. They operate within the charity framework of Islam. According to the research of Yar and Nasih (2024:17), for Muslims, "*Both the poor and the destitute deserve compassion, sustenance, and financial support, and it is a rational and religious obligation for the wealthy to fulfill these responsibilities. One of the ways to show compassion for the poor is through charitable acts such as feeding them*."

Therefore, this research reveals two elements: (1) the same phenomenon (the growth of Islam and its help to the people through charitable works) was either seen as a threat to the Catholic Church (by the majority of the informants) or as an opportunity – as a concrete response of Muslims to the economic challenges of people. For some informants, it challenges the Catholic Church to be adamant in its options for the poor (preferential option for the poor). (2) There is a big gap between the Zambian Catholic understanding of Islamic charitable works and the way Muslims understand it or even the way they would want it to be understood within their framework of "*Zakat (obligatory charity), Sadaqah (voluntary charity), Waqf (endowment), and Islamic finances*" (Yar & Nasih 2024:17). Catholic-Muslim dialogue can narrow this gap. In a focus group, an informant said, "*Maybe we need a little information from our Muslim brothers to just educate our locals, what they are about, what their religious practices are concerned and their connection to charity work so that we all have a clear picture*." However, this presupposes *kenosis* (ready to listen and learn from the Muslims/appreciating their rationality) that would lead to knowing each other better, which would lead to friendship and coexistence going beyond mutual suspicions and distrust. This can only be a result of both spiritual and doctrinal humility underpinned by a *kenotic* attitude.

6.5.3 Land Problem

In the different focus groups, it was highlighted that Muslims are buying a great deal of land from Christians, especially from the less privileged. They offer prices that are difficult to resist. For some Catholics, although the land is being purchased, the end result is that the poor are being dispossessed of their land. This is an important issue in our understanding of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

This problem was primarily underlined in focus groups at St. Lawrence, Good Shepherd, and Makeni parishes. Again, as mentioned, these three parishes are situated in a similar religious landscape. Participant A said, "*Islam is challenging: it is challenging because our Christians are now selling houses to Muslims*." Participant B added, "*If we are not careful, Zambia will become an Islamic country*." Participant C underscored, "*In terms of houses, they offer sums of money that Catholics and Christians, in general, find it hard to resist*." According to one respondent, "*maybe only 2% refuse the offer for the purchase of their land, but up to 98% accept.' Another participant, D, argued that 'Christians are forced to leave or sell the land*." It is in this context that Islam is seen as a threat where land is concerned.

In focus groups, it was underlined that this problem is linked to poverty or the economic situation of Lusaka. An informant pointed out that:

> *In general, it still boils down to the issue of poverty and unemployment. I don't think any of us would be able to sell a piece of land if we could afford to provide for the family. There would be no reason to sell it. It is when we reach a point of poverty-stricken situation, failing to provide for my family and Muslims offer abnormal offers. Consequently, you sell it because of the situation of your family*.

This has led to the division of family members. There is a struggle between those who would want to sell land (because of a substantial amount proposed to them) and the family members who want to keep it. This was mostly an issue that was underlined in a Kabwata focus group. Furthermore, some informants argued that poverty should not be the reason to sell land. Land has value because "*Some have personal traces to particular areas. Land defines us; it gives us originality and identity. But now we are giving up our identity*." "*We will reach a point where we will become foreigners in our own land*." This tension would definitely hinder Catholic-Muslim dialogue in some places in Lusaka.

In the in-depth interviews with key informants, the land problem provided a focus. In some cases, priests described the experiences or complaints of the Christians. Father E said, "*We have to know that because of the growth of Islam, their buyers tend to go to an area, they buy off all the houses in the area so that they can, thereafter, live just on their own*." Father F adds, "*In terms of land, I have concrete examples where I had people who have had to sacrifice their land to an Islamic community or person because it proposes a lot of money*." Father G further adds, "*We are near Kamwala. You can see that several Christians have sold their houses*." Finally, Father H added, "*Even last week, a report came to the parish that in one of the*

Christian communities, four families have relocated to Kamwala-South, leaving their houses which were sold."

Therefore, the analysis of the data indicates that Islam is seen as a religion that is taking the land of Christians because of its economic situation. Hence, looking at the question of interreligious dialogue, it is necessary to analyze the implication of this view of Muslims, which is now held by a significant proportion of the Catholic and Christian population. It is an obstacle to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. It leads to a negative perception of Muslims and Islam in Lusaka. Different scholars that have researched Islam in Zambia (Taylor 2006; Phiri 2008; Cheyeka 2012; and Mwale 2022) have not brought to the fore this problem of land in Christian-Muslim relationships. However, the research of Phiri (2008) and Mwale (2022) has highlighted the growth of Muslim Associations in Zambia, the background against which we can understand the growth of Islam in Zambia and its contribution to the country. These studies have not discussed the problem of land, which is now linked to the growth of Islam in Lusaka. It brings to the fore the importance of identity as underlined by informants and the questioning of the Zambian government's framework of selling and buying land from the less privileged (land justice).

6.5.4 Islam and Violence

In the focus groups, the majority of the participants were of the opinion that Islam was a violent religion. A comparison of Figures 3 and 4 (see pages 127-128) shows the difference in perspective between the informants and the key informants. The key informants did not look at Islam or Muslims as violent; however, the informants, through different expressions, underlined it in 6 files out of 10 files. See Table 12.

Table 12

Code	Statements	Aspect
Rapid Growth of Islam.	1. Muslims are terrorists. 2. I usually watch Muslims killing Christians, which does not give me the courage to dialogue with Muslims. 3. The negative thing is that for them if you talk negatively about Allah, you can even be killed. 4. For them, it is a tooth for a tooth. 5. There is no forgiveness with Muslims. 6. But what I know about them is that they are rough; they have no mercy. 7. Muslim, to me, is a danger to society.	Influence of the media Merciless religion

The data collected showed that the media influenced the Catholic perspective of Islam as a violent religion. Muslims are viewed as merciless: rough, not forgiving, and willing to kill to defend their religion, and thus they are a danger to society. These elements were underlined as obstacles to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This explains why some people are afraid to engage in fraternal relationships with Muslims in Lusaka. This view of Islam and Muslims opposes the teachings of the Magisterium. Francis asks Catholics to avoid hateful generalization because authentic Islam opposes violence (EG 253). This view of Islam cannot promote the peaceful coexistence and friendship between Catholics and Muslims in Lusaka. Moreover, it compromises the *kenotic* nature of the Christian community. In this regard, the data in this study shows the importance of the communication of the Magisterial documents to the faithful.

Comparing Figures 3 and 4 (see pages 127-128), it leads to the conclusion that the study of the documents of the Church on Catholic-Muslim dialogue has positively influenced how the key informants perceive Muslims and Islam. In this sense, it indicated that Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese would depend on the knowledge of documents or the right information about Islam/Muslims. Consequently, it determines the Catholic openness – and hospitality – toward Muslims. Fear hinders the Catholic-Muslim relationship in Lusaka.

Although in this second theme, the question of violence in Islam was discussed, there were no pieces of evidence given by informants suggesting that Muslims have been violent in Lusaka. However, the socioeconomic situation of Lusaka has a major influence on how Catholics view Muslims (positively or negatively) and, consequently, an influence on Catholic-Muslim dialogue or the openness of Catholics to Muslims. The matter of land that was much discussed in some areas such as Kabwata, St. Lawrence and Makeni is also linked to the socioeconomic situation of Lusaka. It shows that the relationship between Catholic-Muslim dialogue and the economic situations in Africa, and Zambia in particular, requires consideration of various aspects, such as land, which are important in understanding the relationship between Christians and Muslims or how we see religious otherness. Having discussed the theme of how Catholics view Muslims in Lusaka and the first theme on the communication of the documents of Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in the Archdiocese of Lusaka, it was essential to consider how Catholics would want the documents of the Magisterium to be communicated.

6.6 Theme Three: Communicating Magisterial Documents and Living Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka

In the first theme, it was concluded that the documents of the Magisterium needed to be communicated to the grassroots. Therefore, participants were asked how best these documents could be communicated in the Lusaka Archdiocese. They proposed SCCs, the clergy and pastoral agents, and media (radio and Facebook) as means for the communication of the Magisterial documents.

Since interreligious dialogue is the work of the whole Church, this section, and the next chapter on theological discussion of the findings, discuss and evaluate the strategies suggested by those who participated in this research to help interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue (in the case of this study) to be more effective at grass-root level.

6.6.1 Presentation of the Results

Table 14 highlights the connection between the third sub-research question (Given a steady increase in the number of followers of Islam in Zambia, how can the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue be communicated effectively to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka?) and the theme, and the different codes that have contributed to the theme of communicating Magisterial documents and living Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

Table 14

Theme	Codes
Communicating Magisterial Documents and Living Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka	Interreligious Dialogue and Small Christian Communities. The Role of Priests and Pastoral Agents. Modern ways of Communicating Documents

This section presents 3 possible ways to communicate the Magisterial documents in the Lusaka Archdiocese to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

6.6.2 Interreligious Dialogue and Small Christian Communities

The Zambian Church is celebrating 50 years[77] of the existence of SCCs. During data collection, in both the focus groups and interviews with key informants, it was suggested that SCCs could be the places for communicating the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue. See Table 15 for the participants' views.

Table 15

Code	Statements	Aspect
Interreligious Dialogue and Small Christian Communities	11. It will even be better to discuss them in Small Christian Communities. 12. Information should come from the pope down to reach the Small Christian Communities. 13. Small Christian Communities would be more appropriate for the discussion of the documents on Catholic-Muslim dialogue from the Church leaders. 14. But I will also argue that, in a way, we need to reset the way we carry out businesses in Small Christian Communities. We do not spend time, in my view, talking about some of these emerging issues, whether it is the documents of the pope or these questions of dialogue. We are more interested in Bible sharing.	SCC as places for discussions.

On the other hand, the key informants also highlighted the importance of SCCs in the communication or discussion of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue. See Table 16.

Table 16

Code	Statements	Aspect
Interreligious Dialogue and	1. When people gather in Small Christian Communities, it should not just be about money; these things could be shared at the grassroots, at the parish.	SCC as places for discussions.

[77] The 50 years of the Small Christian Communities was celebrated in 2024. The archbishop of Lusaka, Aleck Banda, declared 2024 as the year of Small Christian Communities.

Small Christian Communities	2. For us pastors, we should rather sometimes, if need be, if the opportunity presents itself, incorporate these teachings in our homilies or interactions in small Christian communities. 3. Sometimes we need to discuss these documents in small Christian Communities. 4. Documents can be discussed in small Christian Communities. Priests have the responsibility to communicate the documents to Christians.	

Therefore, according to the findings, SCCs were considered by participants as places where Magisterial documents could be discussed and reach the grassroots. Furthermore, both informants and key informants noted that documents could be translated into local languages and simplified because sometimes they are excessively abstract, academic, and bulky. A key informant said, "*Because in some documents they use big words, which are understood only by the priests. For the laypeople, we need to simplify them so that they will suit their understanding and be able to enlighten them*." An informant added, "*They should be summarized. If they are bulky and so technical, we will not understand them. Summarize them in a simpler way maybe we can understand them.*" Another informant argued, "*They should be simplified. I think they are too intellectual. What is the main message? The material should be presented in a way that the content is suitable and challenging ….so that it gets down to the people in the most remote parts of any geographical area*." Furthermore, an informant underlined that sometimes, documents of the Church use Latin words, which the majority of Christians do not understand.

6.6.3 The Role of Priests and Pastoral Agents

In both focus groups and interviews with key informants, it was pointed out that priests and other pastoral agents must play a significant role in transmitting the Magisterial documents to the laity. In focus groups, this was suggested because priests are seen, on the one hand, as people who have access to Magisterial documents and, on the other hand, because of their theological studies. They should also be expected to integrate some of the documents of the Magisterium into their homilies and teachings. See Table 17.

Table 17

Code	Statements	Aspect

The role of Priests & Pastoral Agents	1. The priests should make them available them to Christians. 2. Maybe the priest could organize something in the afternoon discussions of the documents. 3. Priests can give a workshop.	Sharing of Knowledge

In the same line of thought, the key informants underlined the role of priests, however, some went further to include other pastoral agents of the parishes. Pastoral agents include catechists and the people on the pastoral committee of parishes. See Table 18.

Table 18

Code	Statements	Aspect
The role of Priests & Pastoral Agents	1. I think the key people to do this are us priests…..Church leaders should make a deliberate program to engage our brothers, the Muslim. 2. I think the key players are the priests and the leaders of the Catholic Church. 3. When the documents come out, priests should be interested, and the pastoral workers in parishes should be interested. 4. From the priest also, if the priest is not interested in Islam, he will not bring it to his community. 5. Some priests are zero about Islam, they are zero about other religions. 6. The bishops or the church leaders must put an effort into communicating these documents. 7. Priests have the responsibility to communicate the documents to Christians.	Pastoral Interest in documents Communication of documents

Therefore, the findings point to the fact that for the effective communication of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue, priests and all pastoral agents must be involved in the transmission of the documents. This would suggest a need for a framework within which they can operate to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue or to integrate interreligious dialogue into a systematic pastoral approach of the Archdiocese of Lusaka. Although priests knew the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue, the catechists (people in charge of catechism) did not know the existence of these documents. Consequently, the importance of co-responsibility and collaboration in mission (collaborative ministry) regarding interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue is questioned. Francis (EG 253) proposes that suitable training in Catholic-Muslim dialogue will be essential for all involved. Those involved must

include the Catholic lay faithful. Although the data shows that Muslims now have a significant presence in Lusaka, the lay faithful have very little involvement in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Archdiocese.

6.6.4 Modern Ways of Communicating Documents

In addition to the SCCs as places for communicating the Magisterial documents and the role of priests and pastoral agents, other means were suggested. However, here the focus is on two means that were suggested. Almost all the dioceses in Zambia have radio stations and many use social media outlets. In the data collected, participants insisted on the importance of the media, see Table 19.

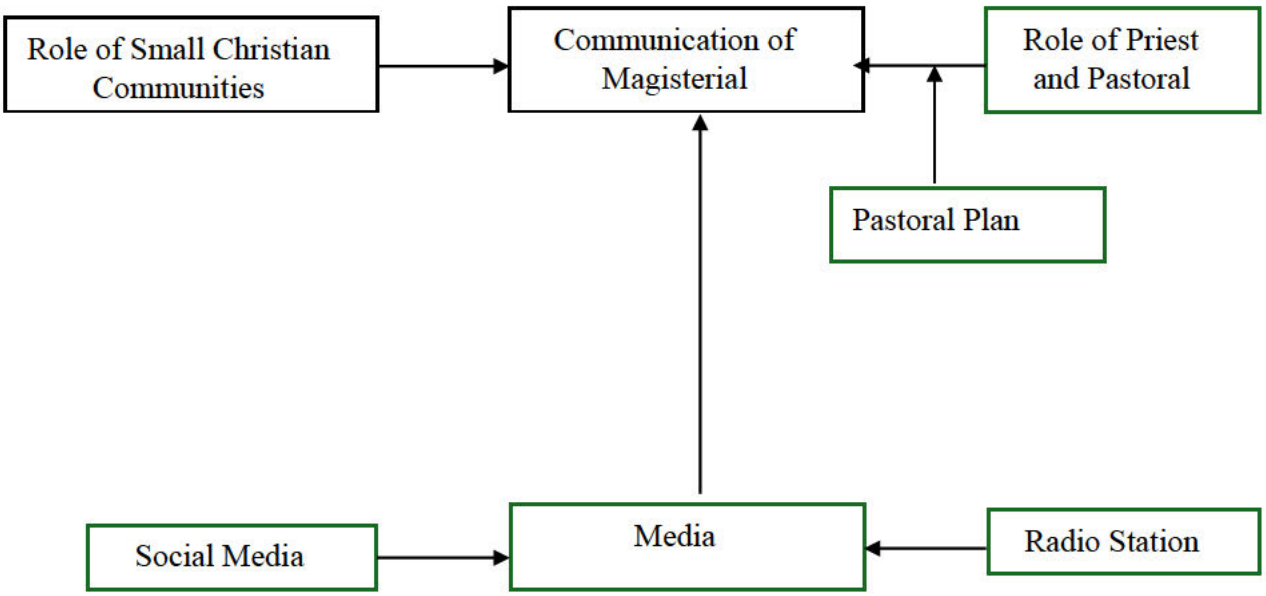
Table 19

Code	Statements	Aspect
Modern ways of Communicating Documents	1. And because of these social media, many people are learning actually from social media rather than from the documents and from the Church. 2. We need to take advantage of the networks, and the media that we have as a Catholic Church to start speaking about some of these documents. 3. Social media can be used to discuss the documents so that Catholics can be informed about them. 4. Even Catholic radio stations can have programs explaining the documents.	Social Medias & Networks Radio Stations

This proposal must be analyzed in relation to the first theme. It was made in a community in which there is not a strong reading culture regarding the documents of the Church. The Archdiocese of Lusaka has the radio station Radio Maria which is followed by many Catholics. Furthermore, there are many Facebook pages linked to the Archdiocese. Therefore, the data suggests these to be instruments for providing knowledge of the Church's documents on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Finally, Fig 6 gives a summary of the collected data.

Fig 6



Among the means proposed by the informants and key informants for the communication of documents, SCCs were much emphasized. This is because the Archdiocese has well-established SCCs in line with the theological underpinnings of Vatican (LG). They play a big role in the Christian lives of Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese. They are, as John Paul II says, "*the sign of the presence of God in the world*" (RM 49). Additionally, they can be considered to be the *kenotic* presence of God. In different research done in Tanzania, Gobbo (2016:104-106) concludes that living together (*syn-bios*) is at the heart of SCCs. They reveal the Trinitarian communion of love; thus, Gobbo (2016:104-106) underlines that they are the focal points of Trinitarian communion and God's mission. Without giving much detail, he points out that there is the experience of 'walking together' '*syn-hodos*' in SCCs. However, the current study reveals that, in the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese, the '*syn-hodos*' or the 'walking together' in SCCs must include interreligious dialogue/ Catholic-Muslim dialogue as an element of mission due to today's context of Lusaka.

Therefore, if interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue is an important element of mission, in the context of Lusaka, it must be brought down to the grassroots level in SCCs. There must be a collaborative ministry in Catholic-Muslim dialogue within the framework of Vatican II theology and the local epistemology. It demands knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue/Catholic-Muslim dialogue and the involvement of other pastoral agents who are capable of bringing interreligious dialogue to the grassroots.

Therefore, theme four presents data analysis on the Catholic-Muslim framework in the Lusaka Archdiocese (Opportunities for Catholic-Muslim dialogue).

6.7 Theme Four: Opportunities for Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese

If the *kenotic* nature of the Church and *ubuntunse* values of religious otherness are taken seriously, Catholic-Muslim dialogue will be seen as an opportunity for Catholics to live according to their religious singularity informed by their cultural values/local epistemology. Although in the previous sections presented some issues like land that seem to be obstacles to Catholic-Muslim dialogue, during the data collection, after listening to the informants and key informants, I realized that Catholic-Muslim dialogue was possible in the Lusaka Archdiocese. This is because some informants and key informants showed openness to Catholic-Muslim dialogue based on either the local values of *ubuntunse* or the theological understanding of the *imago Dei* (the latter being the perspective of key informants who have done theology). Remarkably, Muslims also showed openness to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Therefore, this fourth theme takes into account the above three themes and it opens to an understanding of a framework for interreligious dialogue/Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese amid some challenges that this dialogue poses.

Table 20 highlights the theme and the different codes that have contributed to the theme of Opportunities for Dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

Table 20

Theme	Codes
Opportunities for Dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese	Challenges of Dialogue Catholic-Muslim Collaboration Epistemology of the Local People Informing Interreligious Dialogue The Possibility of Dialogue in the Muslim Perspective

6.7.1 Challenges of Dialogue

The perspective of informants who were not theologically informed with regard to the challenges facing Catholic-Muslim dialogue or even for Catholic-Muslim collaboration was shaped primarily by their personal perceptions of Muslims. This is linked to the previous theme of how Catholics view Muslims (the problems of Islam targeting to convert Catholics because of poverty, the problem of land, etc).

6.7.1.1 Lack of Openness as a Challenge to Catholic-Muslim Dialogue.

After conducting focus group interviews, the challenge presented by the widespread lack of openness of Muslims to Catholic-Muslim dialogue (according to Catholic informants) was clearly highlighted. Different ideas linked to fear were underlined: Muslims are not flexible, they are difficult people, and they are not open to religious otherness. Below are some selected statements from the Catholic informants. See Table 21.

Table 21

Code	Statements	Aspect
Challenges of Dialogue	4. Those people are difficult. 5. Those people cannot be together with Christians. 6. What I have observed is that as Christians, we are flexible, not Muslims. 7. Islam is not an open religion. 8. We found out that their aim is not to collaborate but rather to convert more people to Islam. 9. If we promote co-existence with Muslims I fear that we are going to lose more Christians. 10. In terms of discussion, these people who have been converted are complicated and very argumentative, and they like to compare their experiences with other religions.	Lack of openness

However, a few participants underlined doctrinal challenges and pointed out that Catholic-Muslim dialogue was challenging due to differences in doctrines or beliefs.

The in-depth interviews with key informants revealed that fear (looking at Islam as a threat to the Church) was stated to be the main obstacle to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. This fear is at the grassroots level and is found in different levels of the Church community. It determines the attitude of the Church toward Islam. Table 22 gives some statements of the key informants.

Table 22

Code	Statements	Aspect
Challenges of Dialogue	1. Some leaders of the Catholic Church in Zambia see Islam not as a religion which should have a right to coexist with other religions, but as a threat. 2. I think the other person is a threat to me because we don't know them. 3. One threat to dialogue is the negative perspective in which the majority of Christians and Muslims hold each other.	Fear

Therefore, according to my findings, in Lusaka, the apparent lack of openness to the religious otherness of Muslims and fear contribute to Catholic-Muslim dialogue being seen as an impossible mission. It has to be underlined that fear must be understood in three ways: fear of not knowing the other (the Muslims); fear that Muslims do not accommodate others; and fear of the objectives of Islam in Zambia. However, despite these fairly common misgivings, a high proportion of the participants still envisaged the possibility of Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

6.7.2 Catholic-Muslim Collaboration

Catholic-Muslim dialogue was also seen as an opportunity. Participants recognized that there is still a possibility of dialogue with Muslims in Lusaka. Some informants understood it as a necessity because they were already living or working with Muslims. Table 23 shows some views on Catholic-Muslim collaboration according to informants.

Table 23

Code	Statements	Aspect
Catholic-Muslim Collaboration	1. I know there are some areas where we work together with Islam as Christians. 2. Even if we are different from them, we can meet at a certain point. 3. We have to work on avoiding segregation.	Dialogue is possible.

	4. The solution between Muslims and Christians is to know each other better. 5. If political dialogue is possible, why not religious dialogue? 6. My argument is that the dialogue is already happening. 7. We live with them in communities. 8. If you go to Kanyama, you find Muslim families. They experience the same problems as non-Muslims such as of lacking access to water and poor sanitation. 9. It is clear that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are guiding some Muslims.	Dialogue is happening. Universal presence of the Holy Spirit

In this perspective, the possibility of dialogue is grounded on the proximity of Christians and Muslims living and working in the same areas and the acknowledgment by Christians of the positive values in Islam and seeing it as guided by the Holy Spirit. This shows the humility of some informants despite not having done Theology.

On the other hand, the key informants, even though the documents of the Magisterium are not effectively communicated to the laity, emphasized the importance of dialogue between Catholics and Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Table 24 shows some views of key informants.

Table 24

Code	Statements	Aspect
Catholic-Muslim Collaboration	1. I would say the growth of Islam is more of an opportunity than a threat, so the benefits for the church would be positive engagement, meaning informing its own people on what this phenomenon is about and how they can remain steadfast in their faith while they are interacting with people of other religions. 2. Dialogue has become inevitable by the nature of the way society has developed. 3. We depend on one another, so it can be good to engage our brothers over the same interreligious dialogue. 4. I think today, more than ever before, dialogue is key in evangelization because we need each other. 5. One of the things that we must accept is that Islam is among us. That is a reality.	Necessity of formation

Therefore, the findings show that, in the Lusaka Archdiocese, interreligious interaction is perceived to be both a challenge and a necessity. Given that, 91% of the participants recognized that the Catholic Church can learn something from Muslims, it is an act of humility that resonates with the documents of the Magisterium within the framework of *kenosis* that can lead to coexistence and friendship between Catholics and Muslims.

6.7.3 Epistemology of the Local People Informing Interreligious Dialogue

This encapsulates the possibility of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. In this finding, dialogue is not based on theological foundations as articulated by different Magisterial documents but on the local people's perception and sense of reality. Table 25 highlights some views of informants.

Table 25

Code	Statements	Aspect
Epistemology of the people	1. Muslims have their doctrines, and Christians have their doctrines but because of *ubuntunse*, there is no problem. 2. If there was dialogue, we could find a way because we are all human beings (*ubuntunse*). 3. We talked about Ubuntu. That in itself is a concept that is important because we realize that, as individuals we cannot exist without the rest of the community. 4. *Ubutunse* is there, but the church should help in promoting it. 5. These people are Zambians. They know our culture, and sometimes they know Christianity.	*Ubuntunse*

In the discussions, the word '*ubuntunse*' was often used as the possible foundation for dialogue between Catholics and Muslims in Lusaka. Due to its importance in the mind-set of the local people, this study analyzes it from the perspective of interreligious dialogue. However, the key informants tended to underline the shared common humanity of the different parties as providing the best foundation for dialogue of life. Table 26 shows some views of key informants.

Table 26

Code	Statements	Aspect
Epistemology of the people	1. We are all human beings, we share one human history. 2. It is necessary because they are all created in the image of God, they are people of God.	Humanity – understood theologically.

Therefore, in my findings, I concluded that, as was highlighted by many participants, *ubuntunse* is an essential concept in facilitating an adequate understanding of interreligious dialogue in Lusaka, especially among people who are not theologically well informed. It implies that any understanding of interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim framework of interreligious dialogue must integrate the epistemology of the local people. However, some informants, in line with *ubuntunse*, underlined the Zambian national motto, 'One Zambia, One nation,' as an essential element in understanding the peaceful coexistence of Zambians, and consequently, it could help respect religious others and collaboration.

6.7.4 Possibility of Dialogue in the Muslim's View

Although the research aimed at researching the Catholic understanding of Catholic-Muslim dialogue, as outlined in the methodology chapter, it included a study of the Muslim community's perception of how it feels viewed by Catholics in Lusaka. As already stated, only 20 Muslims of Zambian descent were involved from two different mosques.

In the focus groups, some Muslim informants underlined that they feel accepted as Muslims and that their religious practices are accepted and respected by Christians, although some still feel segregated, especially since the country was declared a Christian nation. However, the majority recognize that there is a peaceful coexistence with Catholics/Christians[78]. Furthermore, they unanimously pointed out that they would promote interreligious dialogue between Muslims and Catholics.

The Muslim key informants also said that they receive respect from the majority of Christians. Below are some of their statements in Table 27.

[78] I say Catholics/Christians because many Muslims were not making a difference between Roman Catholic Christians and other Christian church members.

Table 27

Code	Statements	Aspect
Muslims Accepted	1. We receive support from Christians.	Respect
	2. We do receive respect from the majority of Christians despite the country being a Christian nation.	
	3. In the context of religion, Zambia is the most country that has given people a lot of freedom.	
	4. I do think there is a possibility of collaborating between Christians and Muslims.	Collaboration
	5. When there is cholera Muslims are very busy going to help out mingling with Christian churches and see how they can help out.	

Although it was said that they feel respected, it was also pointed out that people still mock them in some places. A key informant said, "One day, I was going to the mosque, and a few people came singing badly about Islam in a vernacular language (Bemba)." However, there is a considerable change in the way Zambians see Muslims. Compared to the past, mockeries have reduced. According to the key informant, "the majority have changed probably because social media and technology have helped people to spread a more positive image of Islam."

From my data, I concluded that Muslims are open to engaging in constructive dialogue with Christians. Although they feel respected, coexistence must still be promoted. At the national level, they feel discriminated against because, while many Christian feast days are public holidays, their feast days are not public holidays.

6.8 Conclusion

From the data collected from both key informants and informants (before a theological discussion in the next chapter), with the first theme, it was concluded that there was little knowledge of the documents of the Church on interreligious dialogue among the laity; nonetheless, through the media, a few have acquired some knowledge or ideas about the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue. Only one informant mentioned having had some knowledge of interreligious dialogue through a Catholic secondary school. The documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue need to reach the grassroots; in other words, my data analysis demonstrates that the Magisterial documents were not communicated to the

grassroots and reliable information on the priority of interreligious dialogue was not taken seriously to have an influence or impact on Catholics. The documents have not influenced the Catholics' attitudes (the laity who are the majority members of the Church) toward Muslims in Lusaka. They also have little or negligible influence or impact on the key informants because they are not implemented. Even FENZA needed to be more involved in communicating the documents or bringing their interreligious expertise to parishes. Therefore, I concluded that there is a gap between Magisterial documents and knowledge and implantation of documents among the laypeople, and a gap between knowledge of the documents and the communication of the documents to the laity by the key informants (who are also the pastoral agents) in order to promote peaceful coexistence between Catholics and Muslims. Consequently, the first theme brings to the fore the necessity of communicating the Magisterial documents, the influence of the Clergy and leaders in communicating the documents, and the link between synodality (which is essential in the ecclesiological understanding of the Church today) and the communication of the documents.

Second, with the second theme, Islam is seen as a fast-growing religion in Lusaka. It is seen as a threat to the Catholic Church by certain informants and key informants and as a positive challenge to the Catholic Church by certain informants. From the data, different aspects emerged that are essential in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Among these aspects or elements, I underline the socioeconomic situation of Lusaka, the link between the growth of Islam and poverty or the economic situation of Lusaka; and as a positive challenge, for some informants, Muslims challenge the Catholic Church to be committed in its mission for the option of the poor. Therefore, poverty is essential in the Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Related to this aspect is the problem of land, as pointed out by both informants and key informants.

The third theme suggested the different ways that would be appropriate to communicate the document of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. The data indicates that SCCs are places for document communication. This must consider the collaborative ministry. Other media, such as the radio station and social media, were also suggested.

The fourth theme, as already mentioned, proposes a way forward for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Due to the particularity of the fourth theme, it will be discussed in chapter eight. Therefore, having presented the data analysis, the next chapter presents the

theological discussions of the first three themes. It gives a theological interpretation of the data. Consequently, the following chapter is key in the conceptualization of a framework that would promote interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka underpinned by the fourth theme.

Chapter Seven

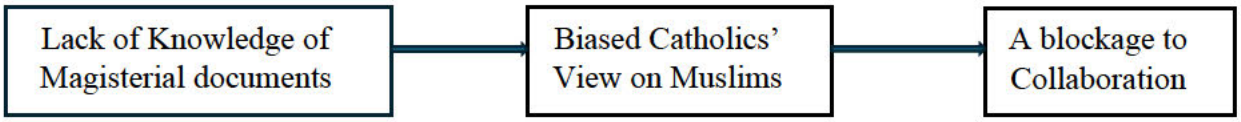
Discussion of the Findings

7.1 Introduction

The lack of knowledge of the Church's stance on the issue of interreligious dialogue has had theological consequences on the laity's understanding of interreligious dialogue and the implementation of the documents[79]. The documents need to be translated into action plans. There is an exception for one parish with a committee for interreligious dialogue, although more needs to be done. Among the clergy or the key informants, there is knowledge of some of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. Still, at the same time, there has been a failure to adequately insert them into their pastoral plan/approach or to communicate them to the laity who make up the majority of the Christian community.

There is a close link between theme one and theme two, which can be understood as a cause-effect relationship. The lack of communication of Magisterial documents to the laity influences the Catholics' view of Muslims and, consequently, their view of Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This can be presented through a simple model as in Fig 7.

Fig 7



As has already been demonstrated in the data analysis, the Magisterial documents were poorly communicated to the laity and there was not a significant effort to undertake Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka to promote peaceful coexistence and friendship. These failures have had some negative consequences on how Catholics view Muslims and the growth of Islam in the

[79] However, it has to be highlighted that already in 1977 at a seminar held in Lusaka on the African Laity, East and Central Africa Laity Seminar, it was concluded that "*there is a lack of adequate knowledge of the contents of the Bible, the Church doctrines and papal encyclicals*" (Ogunu The African Enchiridion: Documents and Texts of the Catholic Church in the African World: Volumes I – IV). It was also recommended that joint seminars for the laity, religious, and clergy be organized at all levels of the Church structures and educational institutions. These recommendations were to allow a bigger participation of everyone in the mission of the Church.

country. Therefore, the Catholics' attitude toward Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese calls for a theological reflection within *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship frameworks.

7.2 The Necessity of Communicating Documents

The poor communication of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue to the laity and the gap between the knowledge of the documents and their implementation by the key informants, mostly the clergy, shows that interreligious dialogue, in this particular context, is limited to classrooms and shelves. However, this perspective can be contentious because it looks at interreligious dialogue from an academic point of view or as understood by elites in academia. Swamy (2016:149), in his evaluation of elite[80] dialogue, demonstrates that the understanding of how religious relationships work in informal contexts is either ignored or undermined by elite dialogists concerned about formalizing and structuring dialogue with all the rules and codes. If there are constant interactions of people in their everyday lives, is there any need to bring dialogue from the classrooms or to communicate interreligious documents of the Magisterium to what Swamy (2016) calls the non-elite people? Two elements seem essential for him: (1) there is a failure of experts in dialogue to learn from how common people manage conflicts and tensions in their daily lives (Swamy 2016:146); and (2) although dialogue can be useful in theological fields to create better models for dealing with different religions, everyday relationships and how people handle problems amid clear tensions contribute more to preserving peace and harmony in society than dialogue activities (Swamy 2016:146). On the contrary, Nweke (2016), looking at interreligious dialogue from an academic perspective, underlines that it provides possibilities for people to know each other's religion better and to have mutual respect and tolerance of the values and beliefs of one another.

In light of the above, I argue that the communication of the different documents of the Church is still necessary. In this sense, it is worth noting the point of view of Hedges (2010:11) that

[80] Swamy defines elites and non-elites. He argues that religious leaders, pastors, and theologians who are educated, and belong to higher socioeconomic strata, and typically hold more sway over society are considered elites. These individuals are primarily men. They promote formal dialogue programs for social harmony and peace because they provide them a chance to demonstrate their superiority over others. Those who belong to certain religious identities and are not highly educated or ordained, are mostly women, live in rural areas, and have not taken part in dialogue programs are considered non-elites (Swamy 2016:146). However, I can understand his definitions from a different angle in the sense that interreligious dialogue elites are those educated in interreligious dialogue, in the Catholic Church, they are mostly the clergy or the religious. The non-elite are not in relationship to any formal education and are people who are not educated in interreligious dialogue formation, mostly the lay faithful. They may be lawyers and medical doctors but may not have been educated in interreligious relationships or dialogue. I will use elite and non-elite in a nuanced way according to the latter, which fits the context of Lusaka.

major churches (Roman Catholics, Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists) have all adopted a more open attitude towards other religions. But many ordinary Christians are exclusivist. "*[T]his is due, partly, to a misunderstanding or lack of awareness as to what their church teaches, combined with the fact that, for many, they have never really considered the issue*" (Hedges 2010:10). In the same sense, but writing in the context of *Nostra Aetate*, Knitter underlines a similar idea. It is worth noting that he identifies that there is an inherent contradiction between practice and theory or "between the '*sensus fidelium*'–what the faithful are doing and feeling, and what the magisterium is insisting on' (Knitter 2017). The contradictions or misunderstandings can be due to a lack of knowledge of the official standpoint of the Church. As pointed out in my *kenosis* framework, the awareness of the documents of the Church can lead to the openness to the religious truth of the other.

According to this research, the lack of awareness in the Archdiocese of Lusaka is due to a lack of communication of the documents to the ordinary Christians. Nonetheless, considering my findings in the light of the ideas of Swamy, Nweke and Hedges, I argue that the most important element is that interreligious dialogue found in the teachings of the Magisterium must be inculturated. What I mean is that the theology of interreligious dialogue communicated through the document must be rooted in the concrete epistemology of the people on otherness for it to lose its foreignness[81] (more so when the local epistemology promotes humility and peaceful coexistence of the people, which I will discuss at a later stage). The documents and positive elements of otherness found in the local people must be in dialogue with the documents of the Church and not be put in tension with it. But, a reality that cannot be rejected in the Catholic Church is the influence of the clergy on different elements of mission, which includes interreligious dialogue. In my data collected, informants accentuated the pastoral responsibility of the clergy vis-à-vis the communication of documents on Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

[81] Mbiti (1971:2), defines African theology as a theology that bears the imprint 'made in Africa', meaning "*to lose its foreignness and become relevant, indigenous and deeply involved in the affairs of our continent, as a participant, not as a spectator*." In this perspective, I would argue that interreligious dialogue in Lusaka must bear the imprint 'made in Lusaka' so that it becomes relevant to the people of Lusaka. It implies it has to be shaped by the concrete realities of the Lusaka. Therefore, I can define interreligious dialogue as theological rationality that embodies the local thought-system of otherness and the local realities that shape religious relationships. What I mean is that theology does not only take the local milieux's expression but also finds its meaning in the local milieux in a way that it will be meaningful to the people.

7.2.1 Influence of the Clergy and Leaders

In a study done in South Africa, Freeman (2017:2 010) underscores, "*Interreligious dialogue must descend form (sic) a level where only experts are involved to where ordinary people – ordinary South Africans who experience suffering and injustice – take part in dialogue*." In Nigeria, Famave (2019:90) underlined, "*In order to achieve renewal in Nigeria, the clergy, the laity, and other ecclesial bodies must be involved to make it a true work of the people and not just the Bishop's mission*." Some scholars have criticized how interreligious dialogue gets stuck at the intellectual level (Swamy 2016:146). It is often the elites who participate in closed circles of interreligious dialogue (Lattu 2023:151). On the other hand, Fitzgerald (2018:37) argues that, although interreligious dialogue meetings are often criticized because they are reserved for the elites and do not reach the ordinary people, we ignore their impact on the local people.

On the contrary, in the Catholic context of Lusaka, it seems that interreligious dialogue, articulated in the documents of the Church, does not descend to the laity, or it is not yet the work of the laity due to the poor communication of the documents or information. The information is stuck with the clergy. Therefore, interreligious dialogue remains, as already mentioned, at the level of theological classrooms or shelves. Consequently, it becomes a challenge to investigate or to see among Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese how the theoretical teachings of the Magisterium influence their relationship or humility toward Muslims. The influence is simply non-existent despite having considerable literature on interreligious dialogue since Vatican II (that promotes openness and coexistence) and the presence of Muslims in the Archdiocese.

Magesa (2007:165) highlights that an inquiry into the teachings of Christianity and Islam is needed to appreciate the religious principles that motivate the attitudes and actions of individuals or communities. My findings have shown that, in some contexts, these teachings have little or no influence on the grassroots; they do not motivate the attitudes or actions of individuals or communities vis-a-vis religious otherness. The understanding of interreligious dialogue by the majority of the faithful is limited to what the clergy or the leaders of the Church communicate to them. Therefore, I would agree with Magesa (2007:166) that many faithful think and behave as they are told by their leaders, whose teachings form their followers' attitudes. An effective communication of Magisterial documents will influence the laity. However, the challenge is that there is a dichotomy between the teaching of the Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue and the concrete realities on the ground or, rather, how the

different documents are communicated to the faithful. This research contends that since the documents have not made a significant impact on the clergy, the consequence is that they have had even less influence on the laity in their perception of and approach to interreligious dialogue[82]. They have had a lesser impact on the *kenotic* attitudes of Catholics toward religious otherness and peaceful coexistence.

Subsequently, poor communication of documents ensures that there is no model or framework in the Archdiocese to provide concrete guidance regarding relationships with those who are religiously different. The people are largely devoid of the content of the documents of either the local or universal Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Allied with the deficiencies in the communication of the documents is the fact that people are being informed by the media today and are exposed to accounts of political and religious intolerance (Nweke 2016), which often influences how they perceive other believers. Secondly, a lack of knowledge of the documents on religious otherness can give the Catholic Church and Christianity some entitlements or a great sense of superiority over and above religiously different communities like Islam. In this research, I showed that the Catholic-Muslim encounter from the beginning was polemic. Islam was seen not as a religion with its rationality or specificity but as a Christian heresy by the Church Fathers like John of Damascus. Some Catholics still share this perception. A participant argued, "*The only collaboration I can see is if they are willing to learn because their religion is completely heresy*." Due to a lack of communication regarding the Magisterial documents and their implementation, some Catholics are unaware of the theological shifts that have operated within the theology of the Magisterium regarding religious otherness, which impacts their humility and openness toward religious experiences of the other. This is underlined by the reality that in this 21st century, Islam is seen by certain Catholics as heresy, which refuses to see the coherence and rationality of Islam as a different religion.

Nweke (2016), discussing interreligious dialogue from a Catholic point of view, has pointed out that humanity's greatest challenge is managing the differences into which we are born. I

[82] This does not exclude the fact that people meet in their everyday lives. Lattu (2023:152), quoting Marc Gopin, posits that "*interreligious encounters could be rich in deeds and symbols through which many people share their feelings and connect with believers of other religions. This alternative includes, 'gestures, symbols, and shared work.*' *Thus, it is a genuine process in which people interact using the cultural language/s that they use in everyday life.*" Although people share gestures and symbols, in the context of Catholic-Muslim dialogue, it cannot avoid the importance of texts or documents. This is because the two religions have important written texts or scriptures that are the foundation of their teachings and shape their way of being. This justifies my position of interreligious dialogue that would be both textual and contextual. There must be a dialogue between the text and the local epistemology.

would say the challenge is managing our religious identities that are in constant encounter with other religious identities. But as Hedges (2010:43) highlights, identities relate us to our communities and those we see as different. Often, religious identities are put in tension. The different documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue can help to appreciate the religious differences. Consequently, they can help manage our religious identities with humility or *kenosis*, leading to a better coexistence with people who differ from us in race, religion, or ideology.

Further, in this post-modern world, religious otherness or diversity is rising (Peace 2017:266) and this is becoming increasingly evident in Lusaka. Peace (2017:266) further argues that those committed to interreligious education should be actively concerned about promoting constructive models for engagement in this increasing diversity. Going further than Peace (2017), these constructive models must bear the local imprints. The information must move from the shelves or the books to the faithful. If it remains in books or shelves, it will never mature and thus not produce the desired outcomes. However, I would again go further than the point of view of Peace (2017); we must go further than desiring or having a concern for interreligious dialogue; it must be an existential reality. For it to be existential, Christians from the grassroots in the Lusaka Archdiocese must be informed about its importance or its *raison d'etre*. They must embrace it within their context and rationality. Ideally, they must learn the theory for engagement in the practice of cooperation, tolerance, and an effort to understand and appreciate otherness and contextualize it.

Finally, although many documents of the Magisterium can be found on the Vatican website, it is still a challenge for many Catholics to access them. In the context of Lusaka, the primary reason is the lack of access to information on interreligious dialogue coupled with the poor reading culture vis-à-vis the documents of the Church, as underlined by the participants. Not everyone is familiar with online searching for documents from the Magisterium. This implies that there must be a local framework for communicating such documents to the grassroots to narrow the gap and promote humility toward religious otherness and peaceful coexistence and friendship. Conversely, considering the local Church's situation, this framework should be practical and contextual, or we need to conceptualize interreligious dialogue according to the context of Lusaka.

7.2.2 The Influence of Socioeconomic Factors

My research findings show that the socioeconomic factors of the different places had little influence on the knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium because participants shared the need for more preparation for interreligious dialogue and the inaccessibility of the documents. Although different parishes are situated in a wide variety of socioeconomic circumstances, and run by different congregations, the majority of the laity needed to learn about the existence of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. This applied equally to people with high levels of formal education and those with less formal education.

It is only in one parish that I found one parishioner with knowledge of a few documents. In the same parish, the parish priest visited some mosques and established a small committee for the promotion of interreligious dialogue. This indicates that the interest in interreligious dialogue by the clergy and their capacity to communicate or not to communicate the Magisterial documents significantly influences Catholic-Muslim dialogue. It has to be noted that this parish priest operates within the framework of his own congregation which emphasizes the importance of interreligious cooperation. This supports my argument that, although the Magisterium gives documents on Catholic-Muslim dialogue that are rich in their theology, there must be local frameworks to communicate, promote, and incorporate these documents.

During my research in Lusaka, the local Magisterium, the Episcopal Conference, released a document reacting to "*Fiducia Supplicans*"[83] on the possibility of blessing same-sex couples. The document was read in all the parishes of Lusaka so that Catholics could be informed about the decision of the Episcopal Conference. It was the talk of the day. However, the documents of the Magisterium that talk about the peaceful coexistence of people are more needed than arguments on the blessing of same-sex couples. Conversely, communication depends on the interests of the Church leaders. For them to communicate the documents, there must be a concern for promoting interreligious dialogue at all levels, not only at the intellectual level. In other words, the Church leaders must see Catholic-Muslim dialogue as an opportunity to extend

[83] *Fiducia Supplicans* is a declaration that was produced by the Catholic dicastery for the doctrine of the faith on the pastoral meaning of blessings. The document allows the possibility of blessing couples in irregular situations and same-sex couples without officially validating their status and changing the teachings of the Church regarding marriage. Since this document was much discussed in the Lusaka Archdiocese, in two focus groups of the same parish, talking about the challenges of interreligious dialogue, participants mentioned that other Churches and religions are mocking Catholics who have allowed same-sex marriages. This clearly showed that people had not read the declaration, and thus, they did not understand its theology. This again shows how the writing of each religion can be influential their relationships with others.

their pastoral work and a way of being a Church today in the context of religious pluralism or as a way of participating in the *kenotic* priesthood of Christ.

O'Collins (2018:76), talking about LG 16, which I have already discussed in chapter four, proposes to reverse the idea of Vatican II of other believers being oriented to the Church (*ordinantur*), to the Church being oriented toward those of other living faiths, which I consider as the *kenotic* posture of the Church. The Church that shares in the high priestly function of Christ should also constitute the mediation of salvation (O'Collins 2018:77). Thus, it must orient itself towards others and become what Pope Francis calls a Church that goes forth (EG 20), a Church that builds bridges through coexistence and friendship with others. In this sense, the Church must communicate its documents that promote interreligious dialogue to all its sons and daughters. Thus, by communicating the documents, they will promote humility, peaceful coexistence and friendship among religions, which is enshrined in the teachings of the Magisterium and a concrete way of mediating salvation. This coexistence is a necessity in all the different socioeconomic setups of Lusaka.

7.2.3 Communication of Documents of Magisterium as a Synodal Endeavour

Recently, Pope Francis has called for a Church that reaches out. In his first Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, he writes, "*Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel*" (EG 1). Interestingly, as it was underlined by the informants, in Lusaka, SCCs have started discussing the question of synodality. However, the Zambian Church needs to go beyond its comfort zone of apostolate and reach the "peripheries". This means reaching out even to those who are religiously different. This is the work of the whole Church, which is the Sacrament of Unity (LG 1). It is not the mission of the few knowledgeable of certain Magisterial documents or for centers such as FENZA. This demands that, in a *kenotic* posture, the Church walk together, which is coherent with the spirit of synodality.

Synodality[84] implies journeying together, praying, listening, and discerning together (Phan 2022:11; Fitzgibbon 2017:533; Resane 2023:2). Synodality, by its very nature, is *kenotic* or

[84] Resane (2023:2), on synodality, highlights that, "*Etymologically, it comes from the common word 'synod' which in Greek is συν [together] and ὁδός [way or journey] which is often used to describe the process of fraternal collaboration for the future direction of the church*." A fraternal communion implies the sharing of information or the communication of information to all the faithful so that they can journey together.

incarnational. The New Testament gives a biblical foundation. Jesus walks together with his disciples, going beyond their comfort zones and breaking religious barriers (Mk 7:24-30; Jn 4:1-27). From this perspective, the Church must imitate Christ in the spirit of synodality. However, there can never be synodality without effective and efficient communication of the documents of the Church to the laity in its endeavors to promote peaceful coexistence and friendship with communities that are religiously different. Synodality is an active participation of all the faithful in the mission of the Church (Resane 2023:2); by their baptismal dignity, the laity have the duty and right to participate in the mission of the Church (RM 71; CL 14) because they participate in the threefold mission of Christ: priest, prophet and king (CL 14). Consequently, we need to think of communication of the documents of the Magisterium to the laity as an important aspect of synodality – journeying together as a Church. It is only through imitating the humility of Christ that the Church can journey together.

According to Francis, synodality is the way God wants and expects the Church to operate; it is the way of being Church, which must be lived at all levels of the Church, local and universal (Fitzgibbon 2017:532; Phan 2022:80). Quoting the International Theological Commission (ITC), Lam (2023:163) underscores that it is "*an essential dimension of the Church*." In this line, I argue that if the Church's documents on interreligious dialogue do not move from classrooms and shelves to reach the grassroots, then there is no walking together of the Church in this type of mission. More importantly, Lam (2023:164) highlights the relationship between synodality and culture. He understands culture as language, psychology, values, and ethics; it is an ecosystem of values and a mode of life. It embraces the totality of a person (EG 115). Culture is an environment of God's revelation or an indispensable element of revelation (Lam 2023:165). Grace supposes culture (EG 115). Lam (2023:165) further argues, "*In this context, parishes are indispensable because they represent primary institutional branches through which the church participates in local cultures and contributes to the planting of God's word from within*." The spirit of synodality invites the Church to communicate its teachings so that they can be discerned within and not without the cultural values of the people, which will effectively contribute to the novel of interreligious dialogue.

Many Catholic theologians, such as Peter Phan, Leonard Swidler, Paul Knitter, and others, have written about the importance of interreligious dialogue. Furthermore, recently, some theologians have praised the spirit of synodality in the theological perspective. However, less

attention is given to the importance of communicating documents on interreligious matters at all levels of the Church and, more significantly, at the local level so that the spirit of walking together becomes a reality of a synodal Church.

Table 6 shows that in one parish discussing the importance of synodality, due to the religious landscape of the place, the laity were asked how they live with people who are religiously different. Their responses were, "*We just respect them; we just accept them,"* which are important responses. However, I would argue that these responses need to be supported by the teachings of the Church on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular since their neighborhood has a large population of Muslims. These teachings must be integrated into the context of the local people. If documents are communicated, they will resonate with people's concrete experiences. Thus, their knowledge will be transformed into lived experiences of interreligious dialogue within the spirit of synodality.

7.2.4 The Church as Sacrament and Communication of Magisterial Document

Looking at the Church as the sacrament of unity (LG 1; RM 20), what is the implication of this in relationship to interreligious dialogue and synodality? As it has been underlined in chapter four, the Church makes visible the presence of Christ, or that she is the visible work of God, or that she perpetuates the presence of Christ in the world as she is the sign of God's grace. From this standpoint, I argue that this missiological dimension of the Church is meaningful if realized in synodality (journey and discernment together) towards others who are religiously different, which requires the self-emptying of the Church – humility. The sacramental nature of the Church goes beyond the clergy. It is the nature of the Church.

Furthermore, if interreligious dialogue and, consequently, Catholic-Muslim dialogue is an element of the mission of the Church because she is a sacrament of unity, it implies that all Catholics should be prepared to participate in this type of mission. Since the whole Church is a sacrament of unity and on a pilgrimage with others towards the total accomplishment of time, the faithful should be given the necessary information on the importance of interreligious dialogue. There is no total humility of the Church or authentic journeying together or discerning together as a Church without communicating certain information or knowledge to the faithful so that they can fully participate in this aspect of the Church as the sacrament of unity. It is not only the work of the clergy or the pastoral agents to peacefully coexist or create friendship relations with differently religious people, but the work of the whole Church as the sacrament of unity. It is a way of perpetuating Christ in the world or being Christ-like, who, through

incarnation, united himself with every human being (GA 22). Being Christ-like in a pluralist society is being interreligious. It is a *kenotic* way of being a Church. A Church that humbles itself to go forth. A Church that operates a *kenotic* way[85].

Therefore, looking at the presence of Muslims in Lusaka, there is a pastoral need for the Archdiocese to communicate the Magisterial documents to the laity. Moreover, communication is theological as it will be underlined later. Communication of documents will promote the journeying together of the Church toward religiously different communities, especially Muslims. In so doing, the Church as the sacrament of unity becomes a lived reality in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. Hence, responding positively to the invitation of *Nostra Aetate* (NA 2). Communication of the documents can influence Catholic hospitality toward religious otherness – the theological humility that can lead to a peaceful coexistence and friendship.

Having discussed this theme on the Magisterial documents and highlighted my findings, regardless of the poor communication of the documents of the Magisterium to the laity and the failure to translate them into an action plan by the key informants, I have also examined how Catholics, do in actual fact, view Muslims in Lusaka Archdiocese. A model or framework for the communication of the Magisterial documents, for it to be meaningful to the people, can only be built on the reality of the actual vantage point and lived experience and perceptions of the people.

7.3 Islam Viewed by Catholics in Lusaka

7.3.1 Socioeconomic Factors

To understand the influence of socioeconomic factors on Catholic-Muslim relationships in Lusaka, we need to look at the economic situation of Lusaka. First, Lusaka is the country's most populated province with a fast-growing population. It is also a province with a high cost of living. Many people live below the poverty line. Table 28 estimates the living costs for a family of five found in the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR)[86] studies.

[85] By *kenotic* way, I refer to a Church that imitates the *kenotic* posture of Christ. It is a Church that goes forth to encounter religiously different communities without the desire to patronize them or dominate them.
[86] The Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection estimates the Basic Needs and Nutrition Basket for every month. Therefore, in this work, we have taken their estimations from August 2023 to March 2024 so as to show the living costs in Lusaka – Zambia.

Table 28

Month	Estimated Cost of Living in Lusaka per month
August 2023	K9, 267.34
September2023	K9, 146.06
October 2023	K9, 294.76
November2023	K9, 060.60
December 2023	K9, 157.
January 2024	K9, 555.53
February 2024	K10, 307.01
March 2024	K10, 603.40

As can be seen, living costs continue to increase exponentially in Lusaka. Many families cannot afford K10, 603 per month due to lack of employment or low salaries. Most of the civil servants' wages do not reach K10, 000. In some private security companies, for example, people are paid as low as K1000. Therefore, they cannot afford even the basics required for a normal standard of living. Moreover, between 2015 and 2022, the percentage of people categorized as living in poverty in Lusaka province increased by 6.8%, according to ZamState Agency[87].

In this context of poverty, Muslim associations have been helping to transform the situation. According to the recommendations of Bwalya (2022:6):

> *The church and faith-based organisations should demonstrate the possibility of a fuller and more abundant life for the broken and suffering society, optimistically working for the realisation of the same through visible social programmes such as the establishment of health and education centres, beyond what missionaries established several years ago.*

These recommendations and invitations have been embraced not only by churches but also by other religions like Islam. Not only in recent years but since Zambia's post-colonial history, the response of the Muslim community has been outstanding due to the dire economic challenges of Zambia (Phiri 2008:176). For many people, this has contributed to the growth of Islam in Lusaka. The Muslim community has made significant efforts in addressing the economic challenges of Lusaka. However, my main concern is to see how Catholics view Catholic-Muslim dialogue in this context of poverty and the seemingly efficient response of

[87] The 2022 ZamState report shows that poverty levels did not just increase in Lusaka but in most provinces of the country. Additionally, I can argue that when poverty levels increase in other parts of the country, it has an impact on Lusaka because people migrate from other provinces to Lusaka looking for greener pastures.

Muslims. Therefore, the reaction of Muslims must be analyzed and understood from the perspective of Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

From the data I collected, there is a link between the religious landscape and the reference to seeing the growth of Islam as linked to the economic situation of Lusaka. Two elements seem fundamental, and they are linked to poverty and religion. Thus, on the one hand, the different socioeconomic activities of Muslim communities were linked to the promotion of missionary conversions to Islam, or as instruments for the expansion of Islam, and on the other hand, some participants looked at it as a failure of the Church to concretely respond to the cry of the poor or its failure in its endeavours for the option of the poor.

In the more economically stable places of Lusaka, it was highlighted that Islam is taking advantage of poverty, buying people through material assistance, and offering jobs. For people to benefit from what Islam can offer them, they are invited to join Islam. This is not only the case in Lusaka. In some countries like Malawi, the contribution of Islam to the economic situation of the countries has been linked to the influence of 'petrol dollars' or money coming from the Middle East (Cheyeka 2021:56; Chakanza 2002:163). According to my findings, the same pattern is discernible in Zambia. This growth in the influence of Muslims is further promoted by the influx of Asians and Arabs arriving in Zambia in recent years and the increase in Muslim Associations in the country.

The contribution of Islam towards the economic situation of Lusaka is seen as a challenge to well-established Churches like the Catholic Church. Thus, basing myself on the collected data, I would argue in the same line of thought as Chakanza (2002:162) that churches seem to lose their influence in some countries to Islam. Quoted by Cheyeka (2012:52), he argues:

> *Since independence, the Christian churches have enjoyed great influence in the affairs of the country for a long time because of the significant role they have played and continue to play in its development. Ironically, the advantages they have enjoyed over the Muslims in such areas as education, health services, mass media, superior funding and organisation, are no longer a monopoly as it is in these very same areas that Muslims have made immense progress, thereby creating visible signs of their presence and influence.*

The contribution of Islam to the economy and poverty alleviation clearly influences the understanding of Catholic-Muslim dialogue and impacts on how Catholics perceive Catholic-Muslim coexistence. The fairly general perception that Islam takes advantage of the economic situation of poverty provides a context for how Catholics perceive the presence of Islam in Lusaka and, consequently, also on their perception of Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Although

Mwale (2022:57) underscores that "*local Muslim associations' acts of social responsibility have been represented positively by the recipients of the alms and in the media as gestures of service to society since the 2010s*", it nonetheless remains a challenge to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. We cannot have authentic Catholic-Muslim dialogue if one religion is seen as taking advantage of poverty to gain members from other religions. Moreover, some argue that by presenting Islam positively through its charitable works, the Zambian government is encouraging its growth. Key informant X argued that "*The Zambian government is encouraging the growth of Islam. They always acknowledge what Muslims do and not what Christians do and have done*."

In addition to the fact that some people are converting to Islam in order to improve their economic situation, there is also a conflict that is nurtured by the missionary zeal of both the Catholic Church and Islam. This tends to fuel competition and tension between the two communities instead of promoting peaceful coexistence and friendship. A Catholic participant pointed out that, while working for a Muslim company, she was requested to become Muslim; she said, "*They even started teaching Islam to my child. When I refused to become a Muslim, I lost my job*." Another participant said, "*They insist that everyone who works for them directly or indirectly must convert. Economically, most Zambians are looking for jobs, and these Muslims offer these jobs.*" Catholic-Muslim dialogue, in this case, is seen as an impossible mission. The writings of the Magisterium, far from influencing the Catholics, are detached from the reality of the ground. They need to be contextualized, meaning they need to be understood, interpreted, and explained with reference to the context of the Archdiocese of Lusaka. What I mean is that the theology of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue that has been explained is essential but each local church must contextualize it so that it does not remain a theoretical or romantic theology.

Some of the theological arguments offered by different authors on Catholic-Muslim dialogue may be applicable only in certain circumstances. For example, the Catholic theologian, Swidler has written extensively on interreligious relations. He is known for coming up with the 'dialogue decalogue' (Swidler, Duran & Firestone 2007:27) which has been widely cited by theologians. The decalogue articulates important elements of interreligious or intercultural dialogue, but unfortunately, they can be detached from certain realities or contexts in which interreligious encounters take place. Dialogue should be brought down to the context of people. Consequently, in the same sense, the Magisterial documents need to be communicated and

contextualized so that they take root in contexts and have an influence on the people of Lusaka. Weisse (2020:135) cogently argues that reference to context plays an important role in dialogue.

Therefore, in the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese, the aspect of poverty that affects Catholic-Muslim dialogue must be taken seriously when understanding Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This is because, according to my data, the situation of poverty is more of a challenge in Catholic-Muslim dialogue than certain classic theological problems of Catholics and Muslims. Different scholars have demonstrated classic theological issues in Catholic-Muslim dialogue, such as worshiping the same One God, the nature of Jesus, the prophethood of Muhammad, the Quran, and the Bible (Tieszen 2028), which have also been discussed by a number of Catholic theologians. In the case of Lusaka, some of these issues were singled out but with less emphasis. However, this does not make the Zambian context less theological because poverty is equally a theological concern and a concrete reference that plays an essential role in the Catholic perception of Muslims and, consequently, in the understanding of Catholic-Muslim dialogue/Catholic-Muslim coexistence and friendship in Lusaka.

7.3.2 The Charity Works of Islam Appreciated, a Challenge to Catholicism

On the other hand, some Catholics appreciated the charity works of Islam. In this sense, Islam is recognized as a helping religion. It was viewed positively as a religion that helps the poor, responding to the concrete realities of the people. Some participants argued that the Catholic Church has lost its sense of mission vis-à-vis the poor. Islam is seen as the good Samaritan that was needed, and that the Church is challenged to imitate. Appreciating the endeavors of Muslims regarding the less privileged can be an important element in promoting Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka and a sign of a *kenotic*/humble Church. Only a Church that empties itself of arrogance can see the positive values in the actions of other religions.

Informants said, "*The Muslims do not choose when it comes to helping people*." "*Muslims are providing alms on Friday, and here at church, we just pray to God that everything will be fine; where will the young people who are suffering go?*" "*Muslims offer free services like health and education*." Some further argued that getting help from Muslims does not require many protocols as compared to those required by some of the parishes. Some say that Christians bring money to the Church, and yet, in Islam, it is the reverse. Is the option of the poor forgotten?

What is the situation of a human person in Lusaka? Those who appreciated the contribution of Islam or Muslims focused on the conditions of people in Lusaka as already discussed. However, the socioeconomic condition of Lusaka is similar to the conditions of many cities in Africa. Already in 1994, looking at the situation in Africa, the Synod Fathers wrote in *Ecclesia in Africa*:

> *After correctly noting that Africa is a vast Continent where very diverse situations are found and that it is necessary to avoid generalisations both in evaluating problems and suggesting solutions, the Synodal Assembly sadly had to say: "One common situation, without any doubt, is that Africa is full of problems. Almost all our nations have abject poverty, tragic mismanagement of available scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation* (EA 40).

They continued, "*Africa is a Continent where countless human beings — men and women, children and young people — are lying, as it were, on the edge of the road, sick, injured, disabled, marginalised and abandoned. They are in dire need of Good Samaritans who will come to their aid.*" (EA 41). Interestingly, in the context of today, some people look at Islam as this good Samaritan helping many women, men, and children in Africa and Zambia in particular.

Most African countries like Zambia still face the challenges that the Synod Fathers pointed out in EA: Political instability, mismanagement of available resources, lousy governance/embezzlement of funds, poverty, poor living conditions, corruption, and lack of employment for the youth. Hence, in this context, Islam becomes the Good News to Zambia through its response to the cry of the poor, which is appreciated by many Catholics, especially those coming from low-income areas.

The socioeconomic problems of Africa militate against human dignity and the values that Christianity tries to uphold. Our experience of the African context, particularly Zambia, should lead us to a critical theological reflection on a Zambian person's need for social-economic and political transformation. We must ask ourselves, in which sense is the Christian message a message of salvation today for a Zambian man/woman from Kanyama or Misisi townships? In this context, some informants want the Church to take concrete measures or actions to respond to the poor conditions of some Zambians. In this regard, religious otherness becomes a positive challenge or an eye-opener regarding the missionary activities of the Church.

Some informants feel that the Church is not imitating Christ vis-à-vis the poor. From a liberation theological perspective, Banzira (2022:10-12) highlights that the ultimate reason for which Christ humbled himself and shared in our human nature, the *kenosis*, was to liberate not

only the poor but also all those who were under captivity and oppression. For Sobrino (1988:167) "*Jesus first of all is God's approach to the world of the poor. Jesus has taken flesh not just in any world but in the world of the poor. And he has taken not just any flesh, but weak, fragile flesh. He has defended not just any cause, but the cause of the poor*." Hence, the *kenotic* Church should also defend the cause of the poor. Furthermore, Pope Francis argues that every Christian and every community is called to serve as God's tool for the advancement and emancipation of the poor and to allow them to fully integrate into society. This necessitates that we be docile and pay attention to the cries of the poor, and assist them (EG 187). It is in this context of the liberation of the poor or the option of the poor that some informants appreciated Islam and challenged the Church to be more proactive. This can be a point of departure toward appreciating the religious experience of Muslims vis-a-vis the poor.

7.3.2.1 Option for the Poor as an Avenue for Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka

The socioeconomic situation of Lusaka, as well as being a challenge, can also provide an opportunity for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. In the first place, an option for the poor is still viewed as an important priority of the Archdiocese. Some Catholics did not know that St. Vincent de Paul was a Catholic organization that helped the less privileged. Second, some participants compared the current parishes with the time they were created by some missionaries who brought financial assistance from their countries. This seems to be a dependency syndrome. Zambia has celebrated 125 years of the existence of Catholicism in the country. Therefore, the Church should be able to sustain itself and engage in activities such as implementing the option for the poor.

As Phiri argues (2008), the Muslim Association provides a link between Muslim activities in Zambia and outside, which includes financial support. The Catholic Church has already gone through the same process with the missionary congregations in Zambia. However, in the current socioeconomic situation of Zambia, I think Catholics and Muslims can work together within a Zambian framework for the liberation of the poor (*ubuntunse*). This possibility offers a roadmap for a productive relationship between interreligious dialogue and African liberation theology. Both religions have a special vocation towards the less privileged, which provides a platform for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in their praxis of the liberation of people. Pope Francis and Imam Al-Tayyeb (2019) underline it better that:

> *Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of*

his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need.

However, in the Catholic-Muslim Zambian context, the framework within which Catholics can operate must be informed by the local situation, local epistemology and the teachings of the Magisterium within *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship frameworks.

Promoting collaboration between Catholics and Muslims in the context of poverty in Lusaka is more fundamental than discussing the question of violence in Islam, but it demands the *kenosis* of the Zambian Catholic Church. It seems that looking at Muslims as violent is mainly influenced by the media and the film industry. There is no evidence that the Muslim community has caused violence in Zambia since its arrival. Therefore, it can be concluded that the negative image in the sense of violence or Islam as a merciless community is an external factor and not a concrete experience of Zambians. Conversely, the socioeconomic challenges are realities faced in Lusaka that the two religions can attend. In this sense, we understand the view of an informant that Christians and Muslims are facing the same or similar social and economic challenges in Kanyama, Misisi compound. A collaboration of the two religions will promote both a peaceful coexistence and friendship between the two religions and hopefully build up mutual trust and a foundation for further cooperation.

7.3.3 Land as a Challenge to Interreligious Dialogue

The question of the socioeconomic situation of Lusaka leads to another important element that is essential in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka: the aspect of land. As shown in my data collection report, Islam is seen as taking the land of people due to its financial advantages in certain areas or locations of Lusaka. This issue is fundamental because land is linked with the people's identity, religion, food security, and culture. In the context of Zambia, the acquisition of land by Muslims is considered an instrument of the expansion of Islam and a way to control the economy of the country. Since interreligious dialogue is existential, the way Catholics may relate to Muslims can be shaped by the issue of land. Soares (2006:2) writes that Christian-Muslim interactions must be understood in their full complexity in Africa. In this context, I discuss land in the context of interreligious dialogue. Many scholars of religions in Africa have underlined different challenges to the possibility of interreligious dialogue, but land as a challenge to interreligious dialogue has yet to be discussed.

Land is the challenge as far as Catholic-Muslim interactions in Lusaka are concerned; in places such as Kamwala, Makeni, and Kabwata, big pieces of land are bought by Indian Muslims or

Muslims of Indian descent or Asian Muslims who may prefer to live in secluded areas. Based on the data that I collected, this problem is not widespread among indigenous Zambian Muslims who, very often, are less rich than others of Indian, Arab, and Pakistani origin. Catholics raised it as a challenge because it is a dispossession of the land of the less privileged, who are obligated to sell land and houses due to their economic conditions. Yet, the less privileged have rights to land. Mpofu (2020) posits that:

> *Theologically, one cannot justly define the rights and privileges of all people without appreciating the fact that a complete person requires territory in which one can reside and flourish in communities. Requiring daily sustenance, housing and a settled existence for cultural flourishing, human persons are thus bound to the land in ways that are non-accidental.*

In this line of thought, the question of land becomes relevant in Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the context of Lusaka. Interreligious dialogue can best happen when the territorial rights and privileges of people are appreciated. It does not occur in a void but in concrete lands or territories of people.

According to Chilombo (2021:192), "*Zambia's land tenure system that was inherited from colonial land administration is bifurcated into customary and statutory land; the former being under traditional leadership, and the latter under state institutions*." The land around cities like Lusaka is under state institutions or under the Zambian government. According to the Zambian National Lands Policy (2021:13), Zambians can access land by directly applying to the Commissioner of Lands or through local authorities in the case of state land and local chiefs in customary land. They can own land or obtain land through Councils, Agriculture Farm Blocks, and customary land conversion (National Lands Policy 2021:15). Furthermore, foreigners can also acquire land. However, non-Zambians "*are mainly obtaining land from the open market due to their capacity to buy land at higher prices than most Zambians can afford*" (National Lands Policy 2021:16). Zambia does not have a good framework that would challenge the buying of land from the less privileged.

Although the land is precious, if not well managed, it can lead to significant conflicts (Resane 2023; Beinart, Delius & Hay 2017: xi) that can be racial, tribal, or religious. For example, the Israel-Palestine conflict is rooted in both political and religious issues that are related to land. Rahen (2021) adds that land is not only a theological issue but also of political relevance. Resane (2023) further underlines that "*Land has become one of the biggest post-colonial dilemmas in many African territories. It is a topic analogous to concepts such as ownership,*

occupation, restitution, restoration, tenure, allocation, and compensation." Additionally, concepts such as identity and religion cannot be ignored regarding ownership and occupation of land. Due to the fast growth of Lusaka, land is an important asset. However, its importance is not only from an economic point of view but also from an inheritance and identity point of view.

Land gives human beings their dignity and their sense of belonging. Resane (2023) underlines that it gives people some honorable dignity and a sense of safety. The sense of belonging goes with the identity of people. Understanding where one comes from gives a particular identity. Just like the disciples of John asked Jesus, "*Rabbi, where do you live?"* (Jn 1:38). This question seeks not only the location of Jesus but also his identity. For St. Aquinas, it means, in a literal sense, looking for the home of Christ, and in the allegorical sense, God's home is in heaven. Thus, the purpose of following Christ leads to heavenly glory (Aquinas 2010:117). This underlines the divine identity of Jesus. Furthermore, Alu (2020:107) suggests that:

> *Besides, by answering Jesus, "where do you live?" they are not shying away from Jesus' question, but they tell him what they are looking for from him. Their question is not only based on curiosity, but rather as the potential disciples who are looking for a new teacher, because many times the Evangelist portrayed Jesus who "stayed" -μένειν- (2:12; 4:40; 10:40; 11:6,54), or "spent time" (διέτριβεν, 3:22), or "sat" -ἐκάθητο- (6:3), or "gathered together" -συνήχθη,- (18:2) with the disciples or potential disciples.*

In this perspective, I argue that "Where do you stay?" gives the divine and human nature of Jesus, his true identity. He is the teacher who leads to heavenly glories because of his divine and human identity. Further, the incarnation of God took place in a particular place. Thus, God's identity is also linked to the land.

The questions: "Where do you stay?" "Where do you come from?" and "Who are you?" seek information about the person. If land is taken from the people, especially the poor, it is not only taking away their livelihoods but also their identity and their dignity. Ramantswana (2021) notes, "*People do not exist in a vacuum, they exist in time and space, and so the land, as the space, is viewed as the primary mode of economic wellbeing and existence*." The existence of a human person cannot be detached from the identity of where they come from. Moreover, recognizing one's identity is recognizing one's dignity, and recognizing where one comes from is recognizing one's identity and existence. In the same line of thought, Nalwamba (2020) posits that land, from an African point of view, "*is the basis for identity, community consciousness, and well-being.*"

However, the relationship between land and religion is often complex. Sometimes, it is that of domination, control, and power. The Holy Scriptures have been used to grab land from the people or to colonize them. Rahen (2021) argues that, for instance, the Bible has been used to rob land and livelihood from the indigenous population. It was utilized to legitimize conquest and colonization. He further argues that "*the Indigenous population was demonized while the colonization was glorified as bringing light and civilization to the savage*" (Rahen 2021). In the famous expression attributed to Jomo Kenyatta, Ramantswana (2021) quotes "*When Europeans came to Africa, they had the Bible and the African had the land. They gave the Bible to the African and told him to hold it in his hand, close his eyes, and pray. When the African opened his eyes, he had the Bible and the European had his land*."[88] In this regard, two perspectives are connected to land: power and religion or politics and the salvation of souls. This justifies why different theologians have tried to understand the question of land through the lens of decolonization (Rahen 2021; Ramantswana 2021; Garcia-Johnson 2021).

From a Christian perspective, Mpofu (2020) highlights that the book of Genesis is dominated by discussions of religion and land. According to the biblical text, God took pleasure in creating humans and providing them with a piece of land to live on and feed on (Gen. 2:7–8). Genesis 2 depicts the relationship between human beings and land (Roper 2020). It is in this context that land takes up a spiritual dimension. The Christian understanding of land aligns with most African cultures' worldviews of land. In different cultures, land is also linked to sacredness. However, land loses its sacredness when politics and religion are mixed for economic gain.

Land is sacred and a common good (Mpofu 2020), which must not be enjoyed by a few people or just by people with money. In this sense the Zambian government should develop a framework capable of protecting the poor in the buying and selling of land. Moreover, there is a need to have guiding policies concerning communities that want to live in secluded areas according to their origin, religion, or race. This may create tensions, especially when the local people or indigenous population feel alienated from their land or excluded from parts of their own country. In the Zambian situation, it can create tension between Christians and Muslims. In fact, in some places in Kabwata and Kamwala, tension and apprehension are already being

[88] This idea attributed to Jomo Kenyatta needs to be critiqued. It is a general statement that needs to be understood objectively. It seems to identify colonialization with the mission. It was not in all situations and circumstances that the two went together. Sometimes missionaries defended the rights of local people, which sometimes caused problems in the relationship between the colonial governments and the missionaries. However, it does not exclude the fact that some missionaries worked hand in hand with colonial governments over territories or land.

created. Dr. Nevers Mumba had already argued that the Muslim religion was invading Zambia at an amazing speed (Cheyeka 2012:54). Subsequently, this can compromise the peaceful coexistence and friendship between Christians and Muslims. How can one understand Catholic-Muslim dialogue in this context? How can one understand the invitation of *Nostra Aetate* and the subsequent documents of the Magisterium to look at Muslims and Islam with respect and esteem?

7.3.3.1 Land and Interreligious Dialogue

Although land is a challenge in Catholic-Muslim dialogue, as it has been highlighted, it can also provide an opportunity for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. I would argue that when politics and economy do not control religions, different religions can play a role in land justice and equality. Nalwamba (2020) invites the Church in Southern Africa to play a prophetic role in pursuing radical land justice. I would say that not only churches but also religions must pursue this radical land justice and equality so that land is not dispossessed from the poor. Consequently, land can become not only a challenge to interreligious dialogue but an issue for interreligious dialogue.

The involvement of Catholics and Muslims in land justice and equality, protecting the less privileged from being dispossessed of their land, will make Catholic-Muslim dialogue relevant and existential and not just theoretical. As much as land is theological in the Christian perspective, it is equally theological in the Islamic perspective (Ridwan 2019:164). It is God's creation. Thus, its ownership belongs to God (Iqbal 2000:649; Ridwan 2019:164). Iqbal (2000:650) underlines that "*land is God's and it has no possessor among human beings because the earth is God's and He has to give it as a Heritage to such of His servants, the vicegerents - the trustees*"[89]. In this perspective, we understand that in Islam, a human person, the vicegerent, has the responsibility of taking care of the land. Consequently, although Islam recognizes the private and public ownership of land, it is not an absolute right but as vicegerency (Iqbal 2000:656). Ultimately, the Holy Qur'an pinpoints land as God's gift (Ridwan 2019:169).

Both Christianity and Islam profess a vocation of uplifting human dignity, which implies a commitment to protect the less privileged or vulnerable populations from losing their land or houses. This commitment is expected to promote land justice and equality and help the less

[89] This is founded on the surah *al-An'am* v.165.

privileged to develop their lands. It is evident that land development helps to raise incomes, enables growth in food production (people mark gardens on their land), and uplifts the general standard of living (Iqbal 2000:656). In a general way, land does not depreciate. Therefore, any selling of land is likely to be a loss. Furthermore, Deneulin and Bano (2023) analyze the love of God and the love of neighbor in both Islam and Christianity. On the one hand, they explore the parable of the Good Samaritan, *Fratelli Tutti* on compassion towards the vulnerable, and *Laudato Si*. On the other hand, they highlight that "*Muslims are expected to be kind, generous, and caring towards their neighbors by sharing food, keeping informed of one another's problems, and offering assistance when someone is in need as in the parable of the Samaritan, where "neighbour" implies a universal obligation*" (Deneulin and Bano 2023:9). Going further, when both religions care about land and housing of the vulnerable, they will show the love of God and the universal love of the neighbor. The love of God will be translated into concrete lived experiences.

Both the Catholic Church and Islam can influence policymakers to protect the selling of land, especially by the less privileged, so that they do not become landless, which would escalate poverty. Conversely, this can only happen through dialogue between the two religions (when friendship is established) and their joint approaches to the government. The involvement of the two religions in this dialogue will promote land justice and equality and also promote peaceful coexistence and growing trust and friendship between the two religions that will resonate with the Magisterial teachings.

There is fear among Christians that Islam will control Lusaka soon due to the acquisition of land, which is an obstacle to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. However, it can be argued that Christianity did the same thing. The large pieces of land that the Church owns were, at a given time, people's land. It is time that the Catholic Church and Muslims focus their dialogue on the issue of land in Lusaka and, thereby reduce tensions among their members or their institutions. Already, in 2020, there was tension between the Archdiocese of Lusaka and Muslims over land. In the Daily Nation, it was reported that **"***THE Archdiocese of Lusaka has applied for leave of the High Court to appeal against the decision of the Minister of Local Government to approve a proposal by the Lusaka Muslim Society to open a cemetery near the Catholic Parish*

House in Ibex Hill (sic), Lusaka" (Lesoetsa 2021)[90]. This reinforces the importance of Catholic-Muslim dialogue focusing on land or land-related issues.

Therefore, although the fear of the rapid growth of Islam and the acquisition of land seems to be the challenge to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Zambia, they can, nonetheless, provide opportunities for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Thus, people must be informed about the importance of interreligious dialogue contained in the teachings of the Church. Without proper information, fear paralyzes the opportunities that Catholic-Muslim dialogue can bring in Lusaka.

Having discussed the first two themes of the communication of documents and how Islam is viewed in Lusaka, in the next section, I will discuss the possible ways of communicating Magisterial documents so that they can reach the grassroots in Lusaka as proposed by the informants and the key informants. Therefore, after realizing that not much information on interreligious dialogue was communicated to the laity, the initial subquestion of my research "Given a steady increase in the number of followers of Islam in Zambia, to what extent has the Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka used the Magisterial documents to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka?" was changed to "Given a steady increase in the number of followers of Islam in Zambia, how can the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue be communicated effectively to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka?" Thus, the third theme highlights the communication of documents in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

7.4 Communicating Magisterial Documents and Living Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka

7.4.1 Small Christian Communities[91]

[90] It has to be corrected that the house of the parish house in question is not situated in Ibex Hill but in Kabulonga, Mary Immaculate Parish. During my data collection, this problem was mentioned. One informant mentioned that this problem between Catholics and Muslims was immediately taken to court; how can we understand Catholic-Muslim dialogue in this context? He further mentioned that what he understood was that if there was a problem between Catholics and Muslims, the court would be the referee.

[91] We need to point out that the idea of starting Small Christian Communities first started in Latin America in the 50s. They started in Brazil and Panama as a creative pastoral effort supported by bishops (Healey 1986:17). However, Healey (1986) compared the Latin American and the Eastern African experience of Small Christian Communities. The Latin African idea of SCCs emerged from Christians or lay people within the context of Liberation or struggle of the oppressed poor. The Eastern African idea of SCCs comes from the bishops (from the top) as a pastoral priority due to the growth of the African Church and as an attempt to put the ecclesiology of Vatican II Council into practice and make the Gospel message relevant to African cultures and traditions (Healey 1986:17).

Njinu, Kyule and Majawa note that "SCCs are the pastoral priority in the AMECEA region."[92] As early as the late 1960s, countries like Tanzania started putting some effort into starting SCCs (Healey 1986). By early 1970, St. Charles Lwanga Parish in Lusaka under the Missionaries of Africa (White Fathers) had also adopted the idea of starting SCCs (Healey 1986; Hinfelaar 2004:303). Thus, the Catholic Church of Zambia has known SCCs since the early 1970s. However, in most of the countries of the AMECEA, it was after the conference of 1973 that SCCs became a priority. Healey quotes the bishops who said:

> *We have to insist on building Church life and work on basic Christian communities in both rural and urban areas. Church life must be based on the communities in which everyday life and work take place; those basic and manageable social groups whose members can experience real inter-personal relationships and feel a sense of communal belonging, both in living and in work* (Healey 1986).

The AMECEA was inspired by Vatican II that promoted local churches. "It was understood that for the church, which is the sacrament of salvation and a sign of communion of believers, to be truly local, it is supposed to be experienced and lived in a particular place, influenced by culture and local conditions" (Pikiti, Healey & Musimba 2015). They wanted SCCs to be places of faith, prayer, fraternal charity, mission, or genuine incarnation of Christianity in local life (Hinfelaar 2004:304).

The Zambian Episcopal Conference, a member of the AMECEA, has been promoting SCCs, and in most dioceses, they are well established. As has been pointed out, the Archdiocese of Lusaka, together with the whole Zambian Catholic Church, is celebrating 50 years of the existence of SCCs. In recent years, they have been fundamental in the evangelization of the people. But what are SCCs or the Ecclesial Basic Communities? John Paul II gives an interesting definition and description. He says:

> *These are groups of Christians who, at the level of the family or in a similarly restricted setting, come together for prayer, Scripture reading, catechesis, and discussion on human and ecclesial problems with a view to a common commitment. These communities are a sign of vitality within the Church, an instrument of formation and evangelization, and a solid starting point for a new society based on a "civilization of love"* (RM 50).

Additionally, for Kunda (2024a), "*SCCs are geographically demarcated groups where individuals gather to share the Word of God and life experiences as well as serve as the focal point where Christian relationships are enriched*." As highlighted by John Paul II and Kunda

[92] AMECEA – Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa. It comprises 9 episcopal conferences: Kenya, Tanzania, South Sudan, Uganda, Eritrea, Zambia, and Ethiopia,

(2024a), SCCs are instruments of formation and evangelization, where Christian relationships grow, to which I would further add, more than being instruments, they are places where Christians participate in the evangelizing mission of the Church or the one mission of God entrusted to the Church. The laity's participation in the Church's salvific mission is emphasized by Vatican II (LG 33).

The Zambian Conference of Catholic Bishops, through its chairperson, Bishop Chama, recognizes that SCCs are a new way of being a Church that has a mission to proclaim the Good News (Kunda 2024). Launching the Golden Jubilee of SCCs, Bishop Chama said:

> *We thank God for 50 years of fruitful experiences of Small Christian Communities as a way of being a Church, and the Founding Bishops who started the Small Christian Communities as a pastoral model that was going to bring the Good News to the people and more into the Church, the family of God. In other words, the prophetically prepared for a synodal Church* (Kunda 2024).

SCCs are a way of being the Church because they participate in the mission of the Church, as already alluded to. Interestingly, theologically, Bishop Chama looks at the SCCs as a new way of being a synodal Church. The synodal pilgrim Church is missionary by its very nature (AG 2). Therefore, it is theologically sound to say that the SCCs draw their mission from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (AG 2). Evangelization is their deepest identity (EN 14). And evangelization is the totality of the mission of the Church (DP 8). Consequently, the SCCs are sent to communicate Christ's love (AG 10; DM 9). Through them, the universal Church is present and communicates this love through her children (AG 11), who are one with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit (LG 4). It is in this perspective that the SCCs communicate or incarnate God's love, hence, they are *kenotic*. They are places of witnessing (EN 24; AM 130), proclamation of the Good News (EN 24), incorporation into Christian communities (EN 24), and incarnating the Good News for the sanctification of the world (LG 31) because "*For he who is sent enters upon the life and mission of Him Who 'emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave*'" (AG 24).

SCCs are seen as a pastoral model in understanding the Church as a family of God[93]. Pikiti, Healey and Musimba (2015), highlighting the AMECEA Plenary of 1976, underline that

[93] Hinfelaar (2004:303), in his book on the history of the Catholic Church in Zambia, writes that, in Lusaka, the idea of starting SCCs was welcomed by Christians as an excellent platform for articulating their pastoral concerns. Christians wanted SCCs to be places where they lived at peace with one another, and they could feel at home as members of one family. However, it has to be underlined that the early Church described in Acts of Apostles consisted of small more or less independent communities. The kind of Church envisaged in the

Bishops understood SCCs as the natural communion of families through which the Church becomes genuinely local and answers to the local needs of the people. Furthermore, Pikiti, Healey and Musimba (2015) note that for the AMECEA:

> *The bishops proposed a shift in the ecclesial model from the Parish-Centered to "Church in the Neighborhood," sharing the same way of life and living the Gospel values in the community. They said, "While the Church of Christ is universal, it is a communion of small local Christian churches, communities of Christians rooted in their society. [Such communities] are meant to grow so that with time they become firmly rooted in the life and culture of the people. It is led by the local people, meets and answers local needs and problems and finds within itself the resources for its life and mission.*

The African Church has been upholding this model of the Church as the family of God, which, according to John Paul II is the guiding idea for evangelization in Africa (EA 63). What makes SCCs more essential as a family is the fact that people live in the same neighborhood or the same cultural, social, and economic setups with similar aspirations[94]. They share life in depth. They understand each other better than at the parish level. Sharing the same life and living the Gospel values, they bring the Good News into all the strata of humanity and, through its influence, transform humanity from within and make it new (EN18). Consequently, they are places in which the different paradigms of evangelization are rooted. For example, in the context of Zambia, SCCs have been involved in the various pastoral areas of the Church, like peace and justice[95].

In the line of the AMECEA, the 1994 African Synod of Bishops emphasized the Church as a family rooted in SCCs. John Paul highlights:

> *Right from the beginning, the Synod Fathers recognized that the Church as Family cannot reach her full potential as Church unless she is divided into communities small enough to foster close human relationships. The Assembly described the characteristics of such communities as follows: primarily they should be places engaged in evangelizing themselves, so that subsequently they*

document on the Sacraments of Initiation document of 1970 is one of Small Christian Communities where all members are involved in the decision making and catechesis. When Small Christian Communities were being encouraged it was with a view to replicating the model of the early Church which was made of small, more or less independent communities where the laity were involved in decision making etc.). Some theologians at the time were saying that the Church needed more Christians that were committed and involved than increased numbers of people who were baptized.

[94] Small Christian Communities are, in Bemba, called *Fitente*. In fact, between 1975-1976, according to Hinfelaar (2004:290), in the Archdiocese of Kasama, some Christians suggested that the name was not appropriate; it was suggested to be changed into *Lukuta* or *Lupwa* (family) like in Chewa-speaking areas where they use *Bungwe* (family grouping). Lusaka is more of a Chewa-speaking area, therefore, the word used for Small Christian Communities is *Bungwe* or family grouping.

[95] Pikiti, Healey and Musimba (2015) point out that "*According to animators in the field the [small] groups in Zambia played 'a considerable role' in that country's peaceful transition from one- party state to multi-party democracy. In Kenya too, during the 1993 elections, some ordinary [small] community members surprised politicians by speaking out on what they felt was for the good of the country*."

> *can bring the Good News to others; they should moreover be communities which pray and listen to God's Word, encourage the members themselves to take on responsibility, learn to live an ecclesial life, and reflect on different human problems in the light of the Gospel. Above all, these communities are to be committed to living Christ's love for everybody. This love transcends the limits of the natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups* (EA 89).

In his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Africae Munus*, Benedict XVI supports the same idea of *Ecclesia in Africa* of the Church as God's Family, inviting Christians to be "domestic churches" that belong to one single Body; he further underlines that this is important not only for Africa but for the universal Church (AM 7). Therefore, the Church as the family of God underpins the theology of SCCs. This module of the Church embodies peaceful coexistence and friendship. Let me now discuss the relationship between Catholic-Muslim dialogue and SCCs.

7.4.1.1 Interreligious Small Christian Communities

My collected data show that SCCs were proposed to communicate the documents of the Church or the Magisterium on interreligious or Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This is due to their importance in the promotion of the evangelizing responsibility of the Zambian Church, in general, and in the Lusaka Archdiocese, in particular. Given that SCCs are also places for discussions concerning the life of the Church, they can play a significant role in providing knowledge of the documents of the Church and Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Catholic theologians have discussed the theological foundation of SCCs and their importance in the life of the Church, but there is a lack of literature on how these communities can promote interreligious cooperation. However, the document ASIPA (Asian Integra Pastoral Approach), almost at its conclusion, mentions that "*SCCs are a good and practical place to enter into interreligious dialogue. People of different faith and culture living in the same neighbourhood can come to appreciate the benefits of engaging in religious and cultural practices that improve the community. They can celebrate certain cultural or religious festivals together and plan activities which are helpful to both*" (ASIPA 8)[96]. The document further underlines a few things that Christians and people of different religions can do together without engaging in theological conflicts.

[96] It has to be noted that the way SCCs are configured or organized in Zambia and Asia may not be the same although they are underpinned by the same theological foundation of 'the Church as the family of God'. In most of the parishes in Lusaka, SCCs meet either every Sunday or every two Sundays in the afternoon. Each SCC appoints its executive or leaders. They are consulted for marriages, burials, baptism and so on.

As the AMECEA Bishops proposed the paradigm shift of the Church from parish-centered to neighborhood-centered, this gives a framework within which the documents of the Church can be communicated. From this perspective, there must be a shift in the formation of interreligious dialogue from parish-centered to small Christian communities-centered dissemination of information and planning. This shift proposes SCCs to be interreligious churches. This is because they are places of formation for the laity. They are places through which documents of the Church can reach the grassroots and be discussed at the grassroots level. Essentially, they are places for *koinonia*, which is translated as communion, fellowship, participation, sharing and association (Gobbo 2016:73). Moreover, since members of SCCs know each other better and are smaller groups, it will enhance everyone's participation, sharing, fellowship and communion. SCCs provide a platform for authentic synodality. The more documents are known to Catholics, the higher the possibility of people appreciating Catholic-Muslim dialogue. They will understand the theological position of the Church that will be translated into action or even better, the position of the Church on religiously different communities will be rooted in their local epistemology/local knowledge with an influence of the Magisterium on the humility (*kenosis*) and openness of SCCs to religious otherness.

According to Benedict XVI, the lay people have an important role in the Church and society. Therefore, biblical, spiritual, liturgical, and pastoral formation must be organized in different dioceses (AM 128). These formations should be taken seriously in SCCs since, as Mahimbali (2022:19) would argue, they are a pastoral priority, to which I would add that they are opportunities and priorities for interreligious pastoral work. In the context of the Archdiocese of Lusaka, SCCs provide opportunities for Catholic-Muslim dialogue. In order to facilitate this, they need to have a solid knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on different pastoral matters like Catholic-Muslim dialogue and guidance on how to shape their Christian life and pastoral priorities. This resonates with a participant's comment that SCCs should not only discuss issues related to money or the Bible but also the documents and doctrines of the Church. In this line, there must be a deliberate choice to bring the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue to SCCs/the grassroots.

Interreligious engagement is part of the evangelizing mission of the Church as highlighted by *Redemptoris Missio*, *Dominus Iesus* and in different documents of the Magisterium. ASIPA 8 (Asian Integra Pastoral Approach) advocates the use of SCCs in order to involve the members in interreligious dialogue. In the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese, Catholics and Muslims

live in the same neighborhood (Matero, Makeni, Kabwata, Misisi), know each other, and face common situations that provide an opportunity for Catholic-Muslim dialogue or the *koinonia* between Catholics and Muslims (sharing, participating, taking part in different activities together). SCCs can be places for both ecclesial and extra ecclesial communion. Against this background, Catholics should be informed that Catholic-Muslim dialogue is part of the evangelizing mission of the Church. Most Catholics in Lusaka may not consider interreligious dialogue an important element of the mission simply because they are not aware of it. Evangelization is limited to proclamation. Since SCCs are places of evangelization, interreligious dialogue becomes an integral part of their mission or a way of participating in the one mission of the Church. Thus, SCC communities must be interreligious-oriented in embracing the synodality of the Church.

7.4.1.2 Small Christian Communities as Places of Love and Self-emptying

As mentioned, the Church as a family model underpins the theology of SCCs. A critical element of the family is love and humility. The first Christian community, Acts 2:42, centered its life on living together as a community through prayer and breaking of bread. They were Christ-centered communities. They lived in love and harmony (Guzmán 2013:47). Jesus provided the principle of unity (Haight 2004:111). Through baptism, a Christian becomes united with Christ (Haight 2004:119). The early Church or Christian community was grounded in the one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God (Eph 4:4-6) (Haight 2004:135). The same unity is a driving force for SCCs. However, the community members' love and unity resonate with the African worldview of family or African cultures. Vatican II defines culture as a fundamental and essential constituent of human beings and nature (GS 53). The theology of the Church as a family is not only Christian; it is also rooted in African cultures. This is why it is more than essential in the Zambian context.

SCCs are a way of being a Church where love is shared among the members in the context of family and community. They are also places of *kenosis* – humility – desiring to promote the well-being of others. Hence, they are Christological communities and in line with John Paul II, I would say they are places where Gospel values of love are incarnated in the people's cultures (RM 52). Their love or their active desire for the well-being of others (Christian selfless attitude – the *kenotic* attitude) cannot be limited to the Christian community or Catholic community. For it to be Christian, at the example of Jesus, who leaves no one out when he discloses the Father (O'Collins 2011:299) it has to extend outside the boundaries of the SCC to extend to

others irrespective of their religious outlook and affiliation. Following Jesus, they need their friendship outside the confinements of Christianity. In fact, the life and ministry of Jesus is understood as a call to the practice of friendship (Bedford 2006:35; Aihiokhai 2019:93). This is Christian love, which implies the attitude of selflessness – the *kenotic* outlook, a selfless regard for others. Therefore, it is Christian to live in solidarity with everyone. John Paul II (EA 42) notes:

> *African cultures have an acute sense of solidarity and community life. In Africa it is unthinkable to celebrate a feast without the participation of the whole village. Indeed, community life in African societies expresses the extended family. It is my ardent hope and prayer that Africa will always preserve this priceless cultural heritage and never succumb to the temptation to individualism, which is so alien to its best traditions*.

Although John Paul II says it is unthinkable to celebrate a feast without the whole village participating, however, it would be more proper to say the whole community because in Zambia the word 'village' connotes an area rather than an inclusive community. Nonetheless, his observation is worth highlighting; he underlines the importance of solidarity and community life that expresses values of the extended families. In this line, SCCs that embody solidarity and community life must have an ardent sense of extended family and an ardent sense of selfless regard for others (*kenotic* attitude). Extended families are rich in differences or diversity. Therefore, people within the same area, regardless of their religion, are part of the community, and as such, they are part of the extended family. The Christian community should and must extend its *Christic* love[97] to the extended families or communities outside its boundaries, which is a sign of the abasement/humility of the Church. Therefore, SCCs are essential places where interreligious dialogue must be discussed and lived as part of their African Christian identity, which, in essence, is *kenotic*.

The essential element of Christian love is humility and living in harmony/friendship within the Christian family and with the extended human family. As we have already highlighted in chapter three, the glory of Christianity is in the manifestation of love/ in the abasement and not in the domination of others. This is supported by the importance of the Eucharist, which, as I have underlined, is the sacrament of communion and unity. SCCs allow the Catholic Church

[97] By *Christic* love, I mean the love of Christ that they have received. The document 'Instruction "The pastoral conversion of the Parish community in the service of the evangelising mission of the Church", issued by the Congregation for the Clergy adds that "*Pastoral conversion is one of the central themes in the "new phase of evangelisation" that the Church is called to foster today, whereby Christian communities be ever more centres conducive to an encounter with Christ*" (PC 3). The encounter with Christ presupposes humility in recognising the presence of Christ even in those who are differently religious, thus mutual sharing of his love.

to be an existential sacrament of unity (LG 1) by living in harmony and friendship with other believers or religiously different communities. Hence, if well-formed and informed, they can promote and be spaces for coexistence and friendship with different communities or religiously different communities or those whom O'Collins (2011:293) calls "God's other peoples" or "others".

7.4.1.3 Small Christian Communities and the Reading Culture

According to Saldanha (2006:197), in its approach to culture, Vatican II is concerned with the question "*of how Christianity can be embodied in non-Western cultures*." It is also important to see how interreligious dialogue can be embodied in non-Western cultures. In this chapter, I have discussed, according to my data, the lack of reading culture as a factor that has contributed to the poor knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Without judging Zambian cultures through the lens of the Western world on reading culture, it is important to underline that there must be a balance between reading culture and oral culture. Trying to develop and encourage the reading culture in Africa with reference to Ghana, Nsiah (2024) argues that "*Currently, the world is characterized by information communication technology where access to information has become a key imperative for success in every endeavour, what one knows is what separates them from others*." How can we understand Nsiah's (2024) idea in the context of a discussion on interreligious dialogue and the reading culture? It can be argued that access to information regarding interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue is imperative for success. This presupposes two things: access to the information and the reading of the information for understanding, interpretation, and explanation (hermeneutics). SCCs can bridge the gap between access to information and the personal appropriation of information on interreligious dialogue or between reading culture and oral culture. This is supported by the fact that SCCs are places for discussions that would require access to information on interreligious dialogue and the oral culture that would transmit its importance. After discussing in SCCs, people continue to discuss in their families and workplaces. Documents can be read, discussed, and understood according to the concrete stories of the local community regarding religious otherness and the local cultures.

Therefore, SCCs can strike a balance between the reading culture and the oral culture. Through them, the Magisterial documents can meet the local epistemology of coexistence and

friendship, and this can be expected to make interreligious dialogue resemble a discussion of local importance. Ultimately, using O'Collins' (2011:304) idea, in the Zambia context, I would say SCCs can "*extend the language of Luke about 'the unknown God' (Acts 17:23) to speak of the unknown Christ who has been and is active everywhere, for everyone, and in the history of all cultures and religions—albeit often in an obscure way*." The writings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue must be put into dialogue with local cultures on dialogue because Christ is never absent from these cultures. This point will be further developed in the next chapter. Nevertheless, how can we take the Magisterial documents to the SCCs so that interreligious dialogue can be embodied in a non-Western worldview?

7.4.2 The Role of Priests and Pastoral Agents

Priestly formation is long, with different studies that include at least five years of philosophical and theological studies, which are required before they are ordained deacons (Canon 1032). In the course of their studies, they encounter a wide range of Magisterial documents on, doctrine, missionary activities, interreligious or Catholic-Muslim dialogue. The basic document of Vatican II on the topic of interreligious dialogue is *Nostra Aetate.* In *Optatam Totius* (OT) the Decree on Priestly Training, the Magisterium emphasizes the need that ecclesiastical studies, philosophical and theological, must open the minds of students to the mystery of Christ (OT 14)[98]. In this research, the mystery of Christ is not limited to Christianity. Further, the document adds that students should be introduced to the knowledge of other religions (OT 16). In the same line, according to the declaration on Christian education, *Gravissimum Educationis* (GE), the faculties of sacred sciences must not only prepare students for the priestly ministry but also for teaching in seats of higher ecclesiastical studies or for undertaking the work of a more rigorous intellectual apostolate. The document further encourages students to be prepared and foster dialogue with religiously different communities[99] (GE 11). *Ad Gentes,* the last document to be voted for by Vatican II fathers, pinpoints that priestly students should be prepared for fraternal dialogue with religiously different communities (AG 16). John Paul II also highlighted the importance of studying Islam and other Non-Christian religions in theology (PDV 54). In the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, Pope Francis, in line with the documents and decrees of Vatican II, underlines that in all the

[98] In the same line of thought, Phan encourages that 'there is an urgent need to sensitize Catholic candidates for ordained ministry to the fact of religious diversity' (2004:78). He goes further by acknowledging that some seminarians might be conservatives, thus, there is more of the focus on pastoral ministry to parishes (2004:78).
[99] This is a Vatican II Council document, therefore, it uses the language 'Non-Christians' to refer to communities that are religiously different.

Faculties of Theology, relationships with other religions must be carefully considered (VG 71 § 2). More fundamentally, in 2023, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue produced the document 'A Guide for Teaching Interreligious Dialogue, African Traditional Religion and Islam' for use in the Catholic major seminaries, Catholic houses of religious formation, and Catholic institutes of higher learning in Sub-Saharan Africa. It develops content for teaching interreligious dialogue, Islam, and African Traditional Religions for both short and long courses.

The priestly formation highlighted in the previous paragraph regarding interreligious dialogue is supported by a number of documents from Vatican II and, more recently, Magisterial documents have focused on interreligious dialogue. Priests are expected to familiarize themselves with these documents and in this way prepare themselves for interreligious dialogue with other religiously different communities.

Furthermore, due to their formation, the different aspects raised by the informants and the key informants align with what is expected of the priests. They are expected to bring the documents or communicate or share the knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium with the laity. In the context of Zambia, this knowledge must be brought to the SCCs where they can be discussed and assimilated in an appropriate manner and, possibly, lead to active engagement with local religiously different communities. Apart from the formation they have received in the seminary, priests need to continuously update themselves with the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue and adjust their pastoral approach so as to embody new thinking and approaches. Annually, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue sends a fraternal message to Muslims for Ramadan wishes, which promotes Christian-Muslim relations. The clergy must be interested in such information and make it available.

7.4.2.1 Pastoral Agents and Collaborative Interreligious Dialogue

I have already highlighted the laypeople's responsibility in the Church's evangelizing mission. However, the role of the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) in the organization of a parish needs to be understood. The PPC members and the clergy exercise overall responsibility for care and responsibility of the parish (Lillis 2020:329). The PPC provides a forum for reflection on and discussion of pastoral concerns (Lillis 2020:329) and for the implementation of the pastoral strategic plans of the parish. Lillis (2020:329) underlines that the PPC "*will establish sub-committees to work on specific aspects of parish life*." These committees may include the Peace

and Justice Commission, Catechetical Commission, and Biblical Commission. The parishes where I collected my data had already established some of these commissions. This promotes a collaborative ministry in mission between the clergy and laity. By its very nature, mission is collaborative. This structure of operation supports the theology of synodality.

Against this background, it is important that parishes of the Lusaka Archdiocese take into account the rapid growth of Islam when they are shaping their pastoral plans. The Congregation for the Clergy writes "*the Parish is called upon to read the signs of the times, while adapting both to the needs of the faithful and to historical changes*" (PC 11). The signs of the times in Lusaka and the changes in the religious landscape challenge the different parishes to a more collaborative ministry vis-à-vis religious otherness or interreligious dialogue. Both the clergy and the laity have the task of being "salt and light of the world" (Mt 5:13-14), a "lamp on a lamp-stand" (Mk 4:21) (PC 13), and going beyond arrogance and creating condescending rules regarding religious otherness. Consequently, they both have the *kenotic* task of opening themselves to religiously different communities. Hence, the lay faithful should be trained (as pastoral agents for interreligious dialogue) to form parish commissions for interreligious dialogue that can help bring documents of the Magisterium to the grassroots in SCCs.

Collaborative interreligious dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese will bring to the fore that, as envisaged by the Congregation for Clergy, this responsibility involves the entire people of God and not just the clergy alone (PC 37). Moreover, collaboration, according to Lam (2023:166), depends on trust, and quoting McLoughlin, he notes that "*an increase of trust amongst collaborators would result in a growth of communication, which consequently may bolster the participation and commitment rate within an institution*" (Lam 2023:166). The collaboration between the clergy and other pastoral agents can be expected to lead to the commitment and participation of many Catholics to the mission of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in promoting peaceful coexistence and friendship in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

7.4.3 Modern Ways of Communicating Documents

As demonstrated in the data analysis chapter, other means of communicating the Magisterial documents were proposed. However, in reality, a lot of documents are communicated through the internet. The Internet is inadequate for communicating the content of Magisterial documents to ordinary lay people in Zambia. Although it is a fast means of communication in Post-modern times, it can be argued that it also presents challenges. Many people in the more

remote parts of Zambia still need to become acquainted with the internet, especially the less privileged. Therefore, although the Magisterial documents are online, many people still cannot access them. This explains why some participants asked who had the documents or confirmed they had no access to them.

On 4 December 1964, Paul VI promulgated *Inter Mirifica*, a decree on the media of social communication. The decree underlines the importance of the media, like radio and television, that can reach and influence the whole human society (IM 1). The media can be of excellent service to humanity (IM 2). In line with Vatican II on media of social communication, the Catholic Pastoral Instruction *Communio Et Progressio* on the means of social communication points out that the media help human beings share their knowledge and information (CP 7). Schmitz (2012:11) adds that through the media, the power of one voice or series of voices can reach and affect many people. They can contribute to human unity (CP 9; Soukup 1993:73). In the last decade, there has been a vast improvement in media with the advent of Facebook, Tweeter, WhatsApp, etc. making the world a small village.

Catholic theologians have found the theological foundation of the media in the Holy Trinity. *Communio Et Progressio* underscores, "*In the Christian faith, the unity and brotherhood of man (sic) are the chief aims of all communication, and these find their source and model in the central mystery of the eternal communion between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit who live a single divine life*" (CP 8). *Kenosis,* or the incarnation, is the highest form of God's communication to humanity (CP 10). "*The Word of God is by nature word, dialogue, and communication*" (EA 71). *Kenosis* underpins the importance of communication and thus, the media that are essential in communication. Consequently, "*All men (sic) of goodwill, then, are impelled to work together to ensure that the media of communication do in fact contribute to the pursuit of truth and the speeding up of progress*" (CP 13).

7.4.3.1 Media and Interreligious Dialogue

Different media can be used to share the knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. Benedict XVI in *Ecclesia in Medio Oriente* notes, "*Modern communications media can prove an excellent means for proclaiming the word of God and promoting reading and meditation on that word… The media can also help to disseminate the teachings of the Church's magisterium*." (EMO 72). This resonates with the proposal of some informants in Lusaka that radio stations could be used to disseminate information about the

Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue or interreligious dialogue, which would diversify the media programs.

Further, for Benedict XVI, the Christian will find an added incentive to communicate his or her faith, spreading the message of the Gospel, which will promote the brotherhood and sisterhood of human beings under the fatherhood of God (EMO 72). Additionally, the Association of Member Episcopal conferences in Eastern Africa, Regional meeting of the communications commissions during their meeting in Kitwe, Zambia, 03-06/09/1973 already underlined that:

> *We believe that all efforts to create and promote communication among men have profound and sacred significance, regardless of whether this communication is primary or through the modern mass media. Such efforts represent man's collaboration in Christ's salvific work of universal reconciliation with God and among men - in order to build mankind into a happy, peaceful, developing and progressive family of God's children* (AMECEA Communications Commissions 1973)

The media can be an instrument to promote universal brotherhood or sisterhood, or unity among human beings. The AMECEA Communication Commissions (1973) noted well that humans could not fully realize their destiny without fraternal communication. The only authentic basis of human relationships and communication is the recognition of their universal brotherhood and sisterhood. From this viewpoint, a link can be established between interreligious dialogue and the media. The more documents of the Magisterium can be discussed and communicated through the contextualized media, the more universal fraternity, peaceful coexistence, and friendship will be promoted among people of different religions. Thus, living the values of the Kingdom of God here and now. The more there will be openness to the religious truth of the other.

Two types of media were favoured in the discussion of the promotion of Magisterial documents in the Lusaka Archdiocese. In the first place, the radio station. The Archdiocese has a radio station called Radio Maria and a high proportion of the people saw the radio as an ideal instrument for the promotion of familiarity with Church documents. If the documents are translated into local languages, simplified, and discussed in this medium, they will reach many people or many Catholics and consequently have an influence or impact on the people. On the one hand, this can solve the problem of the reading culture, so even those who might not be interested in reading Church documents and those who might not know how to read, will be exposed to the knowledge by listening to the radio. On the other hand, it may encourage some

people to do more research on interreligious dialogue. Therefore, interreligious dialogue will not be left to the few or the intellectuals but will become a concern for all members of the Church. The radio can bring the documents of the Magisterium down to the grassroots. They can be discussed within the framework of humility, peaceful coexistence, and friendship.

The Lusaka Archdiocese has different Facebook pages. Going through Facebook, I found pages such as the Archdiocese of Lusaka youth page, Archdiocese of Lusaka Catholic Men's Organisation, Yes Family-Archdiocese of Lusaka, Catholic Women Organisation of the Archdiocese of Lusaka, and others. Brawner (1997:369) argues that "*there is a need to utilize the same media roads that much of society is using every day*." In the same sense, there is a need to bring Catholic-Muslim dialogue to Facebook which is already known and widely used in the Zambian context. There is a great deal that one can find on Facebook about Catholic-Muslim dialogue; however, it has to be discussed within the Zambian or Lusaka context as part of the evangelizing mission of the Archdiocese. Niklas (1990:100) argues that "*each new medium of communication/evangelization provides society with new possibilities, within the limits of which society, over time, has developed*." These possibilities must speak to people in their context and realities. Therefore, interreligious dialogue on media like Facebook must be contextualized so that it does not remain foreign to the people.

This theme has brought to the fore that the SCCs, priests and pastoral agents, and different media can help bring the Magisterium documents on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular to the grassroots. SCCs have contributed to the Church's evangelizing mission by promoting the active participation of lay faithful in the mission of the Church. Against this background, participants in the discussion on the promotion of interreligious dialogue envisage the SCCs as tools for this task. Through SCCs, interreligious dialogue becomes an activity of the whole Church and not only the intellectuals. Through active participation in SCCs in Lusaka, Catholic-Muslim dialogue can become a fundamental priority for every Catholic and a way of creating a genuine fraternal relationship with Muslims. It is a radical way of Christian *kenotic* attitude – participating in God's universal love that does not discriminate.

Finally, since it was pointed out that sometimes the documents of the Church are too abstract and academic or bulky and should be simplified, other media, like the Catholic radio station or Facebook pages can effectively communicate and explain the documents. This will not only bring the different documents to the grassroots but will also show the authentic synodality of

the Church in its mission. And now, after looking at the different ways that can be used to communicate the different documents of the Church in the Lusaka Archdiocese, it is important that I highlight dialogue within the thinking and priorities of the local people. I have been making references to the epistemology of the local people; however, I have yet to explain in detail how dialogue resonates with the epistemology of the people of Lusaka. It will highlight my conceptualization of interreligious dialogue in the context of Lusaka. This will be my endeavor in the next section.

7.5 Conclusion

This discussion has brought into focus the need for improved communication of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue, in general, and Catholic-Muslim dialogue, particularly in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. This challenge, if coupled with a focus on implementing rather than just reading Church documents, will improve the response to important Magisterial priorities and assist in translating them into lived experiences. Therefore, there is a need for an effective, efficient, and practical framework for the communication of documents to the laity and outlining the steps that will lead to implementation. This will reduce, on the one hand, the gap between Magisterial documents (theories and recommendations) and knowledge and the praxis (translation in action in the context of Lusaka) by the laity. On the other hand, it will reduce the gap between knowledge of the documents and the communication of the documents to the laity by the key informants (who are also the pastoral agents). Hence, a Church that walks together going beyond its comfort zone is the sacrament of unity, and a *kenotic* Church, a Church that humbles itself – a Church that embraces a *kenotic* way.

However, the Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Zambia has to be contextualized. It means dialogue has to be brought down to the realities of the people. Poverty and land are more central in the Zambian context than classic theological discussions on the superiority of religions or dogmas. In this sense, we can appreciate the practicality of the theology of interreligious dialogue. What is true is that Islam is growing fast in the country, and it has become Zambian in the sense that there are many Zambians who have converted to Islam. There is a need for Catholics and Muslims to promote interreligious dialogue for mutual respect, peaceful coexistence, and friendship. This aligns with the philosophy of the country's founding father, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, who promoted the country's unity with the motto 'One Zambia, One Nation'. This requires humility or the *kenosis* of the Church to accept that Islam is now Zambian, to appreciate its presence in the country, and be open to being enriched by it.

Finally, having discussed the different themes related to my research sub-questions, in the next chapter, I will highlight how informants and key informants would want to understand interreligious dialogue, from which I conceptualize a framework for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. During my research, after I understood that documents needed to be communicated to the laity, I opted for a framework that would be essential for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Consequently, I also collected data that emphasized the local epistemology of *ubuntunse*. Therefore, in the next chapter, I will present this framework, which takes into account the theological discussion of this current chapter (the three themes), the local epistemology and the theology of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue.

Chapter Eight

The *Ubuntunse* Framework for Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka Archdiocese

8.1 Introduction

This chapter conceptualises interreligious dialogue according to the context of Lusaka. It takes into account the findings discussed in the previous chapter, the findings on how informants picture interreligious dialogue and the link with the perspectives of the Magisterium. Therefore, to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, the teachings of the Magisterium on unity, friendship, coexistence must be rooted on an *ubuntunse* worldview. This is because the teachings of the Magisterium are founded on the Good News which is Good News to every culture and people. According to John Paul II, the Holy Spirit is present and active in each and every culture (RM 28) and, therefore, provides inspiration for every culture. Consequently, the positive values of different cultures are the visible signs of the universal activity of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ.

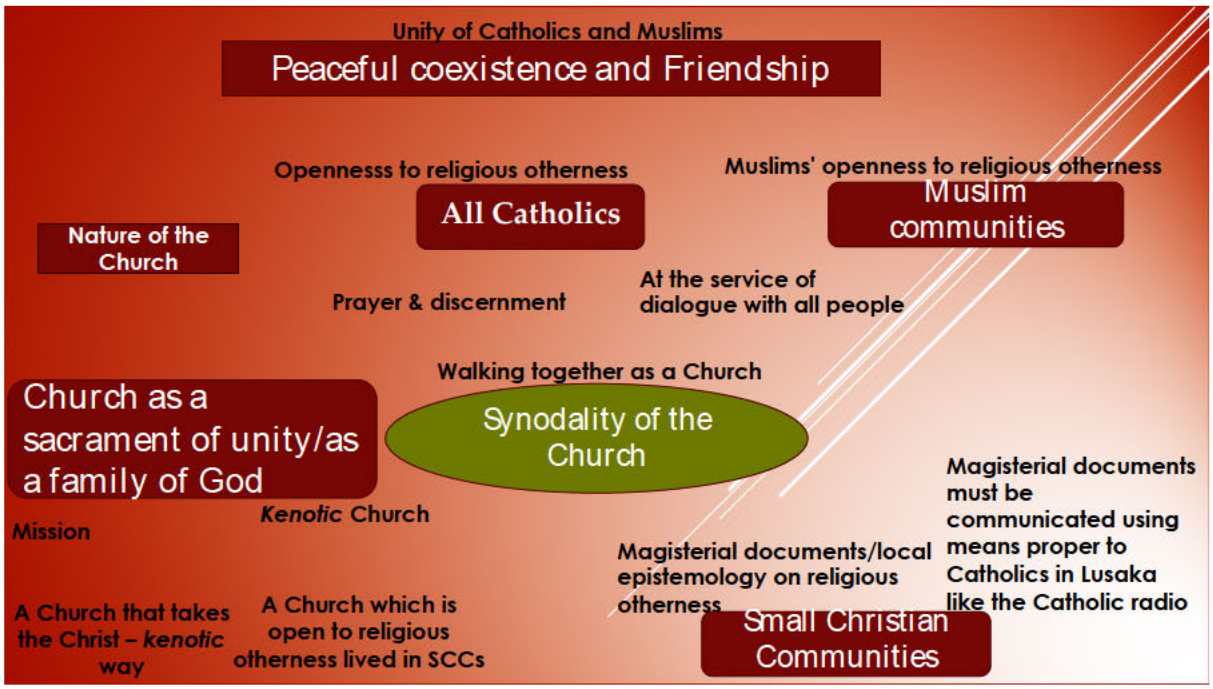
In the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese, I have already highlighted the relationship between interreligious dialogue and synodality, the importance of SCCs, the formation of pastoral agents, the communication of documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue, and the proper means of communicating these documents so that they can effectively resonate with the context. In the course of conducting interviews, one key informant pointed out that Islam is seen as a religion against which the Church needs to react. Against this stance, it could be argued that it equally provides an opportunity for dialogue.

Zambia is known as one of the countries that enjoys peace in Africa. The peaceful coexistence of its people has a long history rooted in the cultural values of its people promoted by its first president through his philosophy of humanism and the national motto, One Zambia, One Nation. The *ubuntunse* culture, which underpins Kaunda's humanism and the national ideal of promoting unity, is an essential element in promoting interreligious dialogue in Zambia. Its values of unity, friendship, and coexistence are in line with the values of interreligious dialogue promoted by the Magisterium. In this chapter, since informants underlined the *ubuntunse* in their understanding of interreligious dialogue, I will conceptualize interreligious dialogue in relationship to *ubuntunse*, the writings of the Magisterium and SCCs.

8.2 Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka

Fig 8 below gives a summary of the Catholic-Muslim dialogue framework in the Lusaka Archdiocese. It encapsulates the theological discussions of the previous chapter and of the current chapter.

Fig 8[100]



8.2.1 Zambian Humanism and Zambian Epistemology of *Ubuntunse*

Despite having 73 different tribal groupings, Zambia has enjoyed peace and unity since its independence in 1964. As already mentioned, its first president, Kaunda, attempted to promote the unity of all Zambians grounded in the cultural values and the traditions of peace and harmony between neighboring peoples. This ideal was encapsulated in his newly-coined national motto, 'One Zambia, One Nation', which was quickly adopted and cherished by the people, perhaps because it enshrined the unity for which the people were already striving. It would appear that participants' insistence on humanity (*ubuntunse*) as a critical element in the Zambian way of understanding interreligious dialogue and how it echoes with the Magisterial

[100] Synodality of the Church implies a collaborative ministry of Christians in the mission of interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue. SCCs can play a fundamental role in it. Since they are ways of being a Church today, they are also ways of being a Synodal Church.

documents comes from the same outlook and values. One Zambia, One Nation grounded in *ubuntunse* is a driving factor in conceptualizing a framework for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. It is not just a motto, but a way of thinking rooted in the worldview of people that recognizes unity in the diversity of Zambians irrespective of whether the diversity be political, tribal or religious.

The UNIP government's objectives were to stop discrimination and segregation based on color, clan, tribe, and religion (creed) and to promote unity and understanding among all the Zambian people (Kaunda 1967:11). Kaunda tried to promote humanism, which had both a positive and negative impact on society. In this work, I want to underline its positive value in promoting unity. Humanism was supposed to be a human-centered society based on the African traditional society (Kaunda 1967; Mbeebelo 1973:559). The value of the person and respect for human dignity are essential ingredients of African tradition (Venter & Olivier 1993:26). Zambian humanism promoted values of care for one's neighbor, generosity, hospitality, mutual aid, and inclusiveness (Kaunda 1967:12; Mbeebelo 1973:560). For Kaunda (1967:12), "the principles of non-tribalism, non-racialism and the avoidance of discrimination based on religion and creed is emphasized in the importance of the Common Man." For Venter and Olivier (1993:27), Kaunda's humanism expresses values of justice and equality. These values are alive in most African societies, particularly Zambian tribes.

In addition, Magasu *et al*. (2021), in their article 'The "One Zambia, One Nation Motto:" Implication on Multiculturalism,' which was written to remember Kenneth Kaunda, brings to the fore the multiculturalism that the Zambian motto has promoted. It concerns not only ethnic tribes and politics but also religion. Thus, we understand that "*in every aspect of the religious sphere, Kaunda's involvement was significant in the realization of the One Zambia, One Nation motto*" (Magasu *et al*. 2021:723). He promoted freedom of worship (Magasu *et al.* 2021:723). They further argue that the motto helped in the integration of diverse cultures (identities) and strongly promoted multiculturalism. Consequently, it has helped to promote peace and unity (Magasu *et al.* 2021:724). Through the motto "*Zambia[n] people had a feeling of belonging anywhere, felt at home anywhere in Zambia, which is a very important aspect of multiculturalism and a basic principle of nation building. It was a way of eliminating ethnic, political and economic isolation*" (Magasu *et al*. 2021:724). It can also be argued that it can be considered as a way of eliminating religious isolation. Applying this philosophy has led to the unity of its people and what Prokopenko (2018:60) considers a successful example of achieving

ethnopolitical consolidation in a multi-ethnic country. This explains the reason Zambia has been successful in uniting people in social and religious spheres. This is the background against which we can understand the openness of Zambians to religious otherness or the embracing of different identities.

Let me note that there is a link between the motto 'One Zambia, One Nation' and the humanism of Kaunda. The Zambian motto and the humanism of Kaunda are centered on a human person, which makes them both anthropological and theological. This resonates with the common values of most Bantu tributes, *ubuntunse* or *ubuntu* (humanity).

8.2.2 *Ubuntu*

To understand *ubuntunse*, it is necessary to analyze the composition of the word itself. Tschaepe (2013:48), quoting Magobe and Ramose, explains that the prefix of *Ubuntu* (Ubu-) specifies a one-ness, and the stem (*Ntu*) specifies a wholeness[101]. Therefore, *Ubu-* is oriented towards *Ntu* as a being in the process of becoming whole. The wholeness is realized only in the action of relating, of being with others. Being a person depends on relationships with others (Shutte 2009:93; Dandala 2009:260). Tschaepe (2013:48) highlights five definitions of *Ubuntu* as outlined in the survey of Gade (in Tschaepe 2013): A) as a human quality; B) as either connected to, or identical to, a philosophy or ethic; C) as African humanism; D) as a worldview; E) as connected to the proverb, '*ubuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*' [people are people through people]. The first is humanness, which is the root of other meanings (Tschaepe 2013:49), but there is an inherent relationship between these five definitions. They must be understood as a unity. In Lusaka, most participants used the term '*ubuntu*' to denote humanity.

Nussbaum (2003:2) states, "*Ubuntu is the capacity in African culture to express compassion, reciprocity, dignity, harmony, and humanity in the interests of building and maintaining community with justice and mutual caring*." I would go further than Nussbaum (2003); *Ubuntu* or when it is said in Bemba, *ubuntunse* (the humanness), personifies human dignity and not a capacity that expresses values. It presupposes equality, respect, reconciliation, fraternity, unity and diversity, and compassion as some of its values. Humility and coexistence are embodied in this Bantu way of being in the world or understanding the world. Lefa (2015:5) notes that "*Ubuntu lies at the heart of the African way of life and impacts every aspect of people's well-being*." In a nutshell, it defines the person in terms of relationships (Haws 2009:482; Williams

[101] For Mfenyana "Ntu is an ancestor who got human society going" (Munyaka & Motlhabi 2009:64).

2013:10; Munyaka & Motlhabi 2009:66)[102]. It is human-centered vis-à-vis relationships. In this sense, it is a core element on which the African traditional society of the Bantu people builds its value systems. However, how does *ubuntunse*, essential to Catholics in Lusaka, to Kaunda's humanism, and to the Zambian National motto, resonate with Catholic Christian theology?

8.2.3 A Trinitarian Understanding of *Ubuntunse*

It can be argued that from a theological point of view, *ubuntunse,* which is human-centered, may ignore the vertical relational dimension of a person, a relationship with God. If participants who have not studied theology or interreligious dialogue base their arguments on it, it becomes an important element in theology because theology is existential and contextual. This argues against the idea of Matolino and Kwindingwi (2013:202) who propose that ubuntu is primarily advanced to fulfill a specific Africanist agenda when it aligns with the interests of the elite. When employed by ordinary individuals, it tends to function merely as a catchphrase with soothing, soap opera-like qualities. I argue that it is more than an agenda for the elites, but cultural rationality, on which new contextual realities such as interreligious dialogue can be founded as proposed by the participants.

To understand *ubuntu* from a theological point of view, my point of departure must be the Holy Trinity, the source of communion. For Phan (2004:38), "*The doctrine of the Trinity must be related to each and every important theme of Christian theology…*" The concept of *ubuntunse* can find its fulfillment, foundation, and total understanding in the Holy Trinity (the immanent and economic Trinity) that underpins all communion and unity. Through creation, each human person is marked by *ubuntunse*. This emphasizes the importance of relationships. It is through others that I attain selfhood – a person is defined with reference to the community (Nussbaum 2003:3). We are created for togetherness in a network of relationships (Tutu 2013:22). Kaunda (1967:5) highlights that in Africa, humans have always enjoyed the fellowship of humans simply because they are humans. Thus, the importance of relationships is the greatest African gift to the world's culture. I would add that it is the invisible work of the Holy Spirit within African cultures. Captivatingly, Freeman (2017:212) highlights that *ubuntu* celebrates the

[102] Haws (2009:482) quotes Tutu, "*We say a person is a person through other persons. We don't come fully formed into the world. We learn how to think, how to walk, how to speak, how to behave, indeed how to be human from other human beings. We need other human beings in order to be human. We are made for togetherness, we are made for family, for fellowship, to exist in a tender network of interdependence*." This sets different human values or how to live with others in a society because ultimately, everything depends on relationships.

diversity of persons. This implies that there is respect for identity or differences. Hence, reflecting the consequential horizontal relationships of the economic Trinity can be reflected within the African categories of *ubuntunse*. Thus, values of *ubuntunse*, unity, care, love, diversity, hospitality, and brotherhood/sisterhood are akin to the values of the Holy Trinity.

The unity and diversity of *ubuntunse*, its human family spirit, is the image of the unity and diversity of the Trinitarian persons (immanent Trinity). For Tutu (2013:23), "*Ubuntu reminds us that we belong in one family – God's family, the human family. In our African worldview, the greatest good is communal harmony. Anything that subverts or undermines this greatest good is ipso facto wrong, evil*." The Holy Trinity is the total perfection of communal harmony. The *ubuntu* sense of harmony/unity is just a participation in trinitarian harmony/unity.

Therefore, my argument is that *ubuntunse* must be understood within Christian anthropology. In other words, all the values of *ubuntunse* are linked to humanity created in the image of God, which is the core of Christian anthropology (Mazzolini 2018:119; GS 22). This, once again, confirms the link between theology and anthropology. The *ubuntunse* concept, in being anthropological, is theological. In a succinct statement, Francis underlines this connection "*The People of God is incarnate in the peoples of the earth, each of which has its own culture. The concept of culture is valuable for grasping the various expressions of the Christian life present in God's people*" (EG 115). The concept of *ubuntunse* is essential for grasping the Christian expression of the Holy Trinity and consequently interreligious dialogue. Fitzgerald (2003) argues that "*It would not be an exaggeration to say that it is belief in the Trinity that urges Christians to engage in dialogue*." Given what has been said, it is worth noting Francis, who acknowledges that "*the Church takes up the values of different cultures and becomes sponsa ornata monilibus suis, "the bride bedecked with her jewels*" (EG 116). Christ is the groom; thus, cultural values can be understood in a relationship with Christ.

8.2.3.1 A Christological Understanding of *Ubuntunse*

The concept of *ubuntunse* is not only theological but also Christological. For Irenaeus of Lyons, the idea of *imago Dei* is Christologically based (Behr 2000:89; Boersma 2006:277). Boersma (2006:277) further argues that God created humanity in view of growing into Christ, the archetype of the image of God, and participating in him. In his analysis of St. Irenaeus' Christological *analogia entis*, Boerma (2006:277) argues that humanity was made in the image of the Son. In this sense, Behr (2000:90) underlines:

> *The Son reveals the true human form through his incarnation, demonstrating at the same time that man is indeed in the image of God. Adam, as 'the type of the One to come' (Rom. 5:14; AH 3.22.3), typifies, in his flesh, the incarnate Son. Thus the fashioning of the human flesh is intimately connected to Christ, the archetype of man, and his revelation of the image of God, the manifestation of both God and man*.

The incarnation of Christ underpins all the positive values of *ubuntunse*. The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* underlines that Christ is the image of the unseen God, the firstborn of every creature (GS 10), the perfect man (Col 1:15). Barth and Brunner, basing their theological arguments on Jn 14:8 "*he who has seen me has seen the Father*", pinpoint the concept of the image of Father in the Son (Erickson 1998:526; Williams 2013:157). Consequently, Mazzolini (2018:131) argues that "*the mystery of the human being can be understood only from the perspective of the Christological mystery*."[103] For Hunt (2005:67), Christ does not just share in our humanity, we share in his humanity and participate by grace through the Holy Spirit in his relationship with the Father. For Aihiokha (2019:156), Christologically, "*at the heart of the kerygmatic witness of the Christian churches is the Christian relational anthropology. One is truly human only when one is relational*." It follows that sharing in Christ's humanity and participating in the trinitarian relationship and image envisages a role for human cultures in the process of God's revelation. *Ubuntunse* is participation in the image of Christ, the firstborn of every creature and the perfect man. Hence, it must be understood from a Christological perspective. Moreover, for Irenaeus, the incarnation of Christ shows us the true image of God (Boersma 2006:279). I would, therefore, argue that the positive values of *ubuntunse* are the expressions of the image of Christ in us, leading us to the total realization of humanity when humanity will fully share in his glory (Col 3:4).

Boersma (2006:280) argues that the theology of Irenaeus teaches us to deal with humanness from a Christological point of view. Thus, the *ubuntunse* must be dealt with from a Christological perspective because there is an intrinsic link between *ubuntunse* and Christology because of the *imago Dei,* which is the *imago Christi*. Based on that, the incarnation is the basis of *ubuntunse* humility, coexistence, and friendship. Hunt (2005:67), appealing to the theology of Schwobel and Zizioulas, shows that to be the *imago Dei* is to be persons in communion with

[103] In his analysis of GS 22, Mazzoline argues that 'the text seems to suggest to us that men and women are more than the result of biological, socio-cultural, historical, and philosophical elements, due to their essential relationship with Christ' (2018:131). However, I argue that the relationship with Christ takes into account the totality of a human person, thus, it includes his socio-cultural context. Being a person is being a socio-cultural being, although not limited to that.

God and others. Williams (2013:157) underlines "*We reflect Christ who in his humanity relates to the rest of humanity in immanence, and to the Father in transcendence*." This is possible because we are created in the image of the Son. *Ubuntunse* that promotes unity and the communion of people is participation in the image of the Son. In him, humanity is restored to its created destiny (Hunt 2005:67).

Furthermore, one of the greatest theologians of the 20th century, recognized by Pope Pius XII as the greatest theologian since St. Thomas Aquinas, Karl Barth argued that the humanity of God is his divinity. Jesus is the highest communion of God with humanity (Barth 1971:46). God's deity in him includes his humanity (Barth 1971:46). He succinctly argued that "*God requires no exclusion of humanity, no non-humanity, not to speak of inhumanity, in order to be truly God. But we may and must, however, look further and recognise the fact that actually His deity encloses humanity in itself*" (Barth 1971:47), which implies that in Jesus Christ, God is fundamentally human. This Christological assumption of Barth underlines the Christological importance of humanity with its consequential theological implications of the importance of humanity. With Barth, I can say that Christ (the incarnation of the Son) is the *ubuntunse* of God. God is fundamentally *muntu* in the sense that, in Jesus Christ, his divinity does not exclude his *ubuntunse*, which justifies our attitudes (humility, friendship, hospitality, justice) towards others regardless of their religion. Therefore, the cultural values of *ubuntunse* can be understood from this Christological perspective.

I can conclude with Francis that "*Grace supposes culture, and God's gift becomes flesh in the culture of those who receive it*" (EG 115). For Rahner (1967:161), the total accomplishment of the auto-communication of God's grace is Jesus Christ[104]. Therefore, human cultural values find their total accomplishment in Jesus Christ. In this respect, through the *ubuntunse* values, God's grace becomes flesh and the *ubuntunse* values find their fulfillment in Jesus Christ. This consideration is essential in understanding the importance of *ubuntunse* in interreligious dialogue from a theological perspective. As argued in chapter three, the framework of *kenosis* underlines two important elements for interreligious dialogue: humility and identity. Essentially, the two elements are embodied in *ubuntuse*.

[104] Rahner (1967:161), 'Le Père se donne à nous lui-même en autocommunication absolue par le Fils dans l'Esprit Saint.'

8.2.4 *Ubuntunse* and Interreligious Dialogue

Most of the informants understood interreligious dialogue from the perspective of *ubuntunse*. I can, thus, understand why some informants argued that dialogue is already happening between Catholics and Muslims. It implies that they understood it in terms of relationships, influenced by their cultural values on one hand, and on the other hand, the Zambian motto of One Zambian, One Nation (the national value of unity in diversity), which is founded on cultural values. Freeman (2017:212), in the concluding sections of his article "Theology of Religions: Models for interreligious dialogue in South Africa" proposes *ubuntu* as a new model for interreligious dialogue. However, he does not develop it, although he demonstrates Tutu's understanding of *ubuntu*.

Ubuntunse, due to its values in promoting human fraternity in diversity (respect for identity), is an essential foundation for interreligious dialogue. This is better expressed in *ukwangala kwachila ulupwa* (friendship is more than family – this encourages fraternal relationships beyond family members). The concept of *ubuntu* brings to the fore the concern for others (Tambulasi & Kayuni 2009:428), which is *kenotic*. It has values that are otherness-centered which contribute to the well-being of others and the community (Munyaka & Motlhabi 2009:65). In this sense, it resonates with the *kenotic* understanding of Phil 2:5-11, the invitation to prefer others. In the context of Zambia, since *ubuntunse* is cherished as a positive value by many cultures, it becomes necessary to develop a theology of dialogue that promotes the values of *ubuntunse* and, indeed of the national values, such as unity, hospitality, fraternity, coexistence, diversity and mutual understanding of different religions resonating with values upheld in the teachings of the Magisterium. In this sense, interreligious dialogue must be Christo-human-centered, promoting the values of *ubuntunse* and multiculturality within the human family of God in the image of Christ.

In 2002, when I arrived to do my two-year experience of pastoral work in Kolongotomo, Mali, among the Bambara people, who have the same welcoming spirit as the Bantu people, I was immediately adopted by a family. I quickly realized that among the Bambara people, you were welcomed not because of your religion or race but because you were human. In my discussion with a wise old man, I asked why religion was not an influential consideration in determining whom to welcome into the family because Christians could welcome Muslims and verse versa. He wisely told me that the village existed before the mosque and the church. I understood that the human family's values existed before Islam and Christianity came into that village. They

were embodied in the culture, which even the two religions could not destroy. In a similar manner, tribes with their cultures existed before the coming of Christianity and Islam into the present day, Zambia. God has always revealed Godself to these cultures, and the spirit of *ubuntunse* is the unwavering example of God's revelation which encourages the unity and respect of the identity of all peoples. Christ's values were embodied in cultures before the arrival of the Church.

In light of the above, I can understand why the concept of *ubuntunse* is essential in understanding interreligious dialogue in Lusaka. It explains why, despite Catholics being afraid of the motivations of Islam/Muslims and not knowing the different documents of the Magisterium on dialogue, they still affirmed the possibility of collaboration between Catholics and Muslims based on *ubuntunse*. Interestingly, in the understanding of participants, *ubuntunse* extends to strangers. They argued that we can dialogue with Muslims regardless of their origins because '*nabena bantu*', because 'they also are human beings.' Thus, *ubuntunse* is an essential element in going beyond controversies among religions in Zambia and thus promotes multiculturality, which echoes both Christian and cultural aspirations. According to Magasu *et al*. (2021:723), multiculturalism is the integration of diverse cultures into society, which promotes inclusion, tolerance, and the eradication of marginalization of groups of people. This resonates with the spirit of the document on human fraternity, which recognizes that the human fraternity embraces all human beings, unites and renders them equal (Francis & Al-Tayeb 2019). In this sense, the *ubuntunse* spirit helps to go beyond the barrier of fear of differences of culture, race, and religion. It supports a positive coexistence and prevents people from remaining in their religious cocoons with dogmas not translated into existential love or human fraternity.

In discussing the different conditions for interreligious dialogue, Cornille (2008:95) underlines interconnection as an important element. Interreligious dialogue presupposes a sense of commonality or solidarity, the meeting point between religions. She notes, "*This meeting point between religions may be located in the past or in the future, in a common origin or goal outside or within religious traditions*" (Cornille 2008:95). The *ubuntunse* provides a sense of commonality or solidarity and, consequently, a meeting point between Christianity and Islam in the context of Lusaka.

8.2.4.1 *Ubuntunse* and the Theology of the Magisterium

In chapter four, I have analyzed the theology of interreligious dialogue of the Magisterium, which strives to integrate the ideals of *kenosis* and friendly coexistence possibilities for people coming from diverse backgrounds. This was done by analyzing selected documents of Vatican II and the subsequent documents of some Popes, Paul VI, John Paul II, and Francis. Different popes have tried to act according to the recommendations of Vatican II on the openness of the Church to religiously different communities like Islam. In this chapter, I have discussed the concept of *ubuntunse* as a value that is cherished by the people of Lusaka and provides a foundation for cherishing otherness. Now, I will link the Magisterium's teachings and the values of *ubuntunse* as underlined by the informants.

The different elements for promoting interreligious dialogue that are found in the different documents of the Magisterium correspond to the values that are embodied in *ubuntunse*. Interestingly, participants understood the possibility of collaboration with other religious communities based on *ubuntunse* that resonate with the theological arguments in the Magisterial documents that encourage interreligious dialogue. To be *muntu* is to be open to others, which entails humility and respect for differences. Table 29 shows some shared common values between the theology of religious otherness of the Magisterium and the values of *ubuntunse* (numbers are not put in parallels – but they show some common values).

Table 29[105]

Magisterium	*Ubuntunse*
Sacrosanctum Concilium 1. The Eucharist as sacrament of love (SC 2). 2. Eucharist – Communion (SC 47) – implying love and unity. 3. Eucharist – communion *ad intra* and *ad extra.*	*Ubuntunse* 1. Oneness – it implies love and unity oriented towards the wholeness (total communion). One prospers with the help of others (*lende kukankhana*).
Lumen Gentium 1. Church as Sacrament of unity (LG 1). 2. The sacramental nature of the Church – going beyond her boundaries – openness to others (humility). 3. The people of God	*Ubuntunse* 1. Oneness – relationships define people or the community. They go beyond a clan or tribe (*ukwangala kwacila ulupwa* – friendship is better than family). 2. Openness is an attitude of humility.
Nostra Aetate 1. Unity of people (NA 1).	*Ubuntunse* 1. Unity (*ali awiri ndi anthu alu ekha chinyama* – those that are more than one are people and

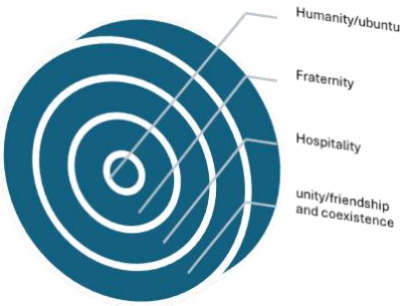
[105] I have included some Bemba and Chewa proverbs that talk about unity. Proverbs carry the logic of the values of a culture. Lusaka is predominantly Nyanja (Chewa) and Bemba-speaking area. Both are Bantu languages.

2. Common origin of humanity as a source of unity. 3. Mutual understanding. 4. Esteem and respect of others. 5. Rays of Truth in other religions and cultures (this concept has no equivalent in ubuntunse).	he or she who is alone is an animal). From the Ubuntu perspective, Shutte (2009:94) notes 'Each individual member of the community sees the community as themselves […]. 2. Using the concept of Mfenyana, the common ancestor NTU – source of unity. 3. *Ubuntuse* is a source of hospitality, respect, mutual understanding. 4. However, the *ubuntunse* has no conception of 'rays of Truth'.
Paul VI 1. Dialogue is an act of love (ES 73). 2. Our approach to others must be inspired by generosity (ES 81). 3. The four circles in ES – relationship at different levels including with other religions.	*Ubuntunse* 1. *Ubuntuse* expresses love for humanity. 2. Source of hospitality – generosity. In Ramose (2009:312), *ubuntu* implies 'mutual care for one another as human beings precedes concern for the accumulation and safeguarding of wealth.' 3. It is relational.
John Paul II 1. The importance of the *Imago Dei* and human destiny – underpins relationships. 2. To look at others with esteem (RH 11). 3. The participation of the laity (RM 57). 4. The Holy Spirit is not limited in space and time (RM 28). His work articulates the importance of the Holy Spirit that inspires the prayers of all people.	*Ubuntunse* 1. Importance of relationships (common ancestor NTU underpins relationships'. 2. *Ubuntuse* promotes the participation of everyone for the common good of the family, the clan or tribe. From an African point of view, Setiloane (1986:14) notes 'The essence of being is "participation" in which humans are always interlocked with one another". 3. It promotes respect and listening to everyone.
Francis 1. Dialogue is about human fraternity (brotherhood/sisterhood) – a very strong aspect of fraternity/friendship in his writings. Meticulously developed, see (FT 198; Lefebure 2018:325) 2. Dialogue is a conversation about human existence (EG 250). 3. Promotion of human dignity. 4. Communion with nature – our mother earth (*Laudato Si*).	*Ubuntunse* 1. Promotes brother/sisterhood or simply the human family (*umunwe umo tausala nda*). 2. It expresses the respect for human dignity. 3. Promotes harmony in the society (order). 4. Promotes justice and mutual caring. 5. It promotes care not only for human beings, but also with nature (*ubuntu* creates relationship between human person, God and creation) (Lefa 2015:5)

Unity is the essential element in the Magisterium and people's cultures. Unity underpins gratuity and hospitality or the ability to receive the other. The goal of the promotion of unity is to break through the barrier of fear and to foster the notion that the other is no longer a stranger or alien. A person is welcomed on the foundation that he/she is a human person (*umuntu*). Some participants were of the opinion that we are obliged to collaborate or welcome Muslims because they are also *abantu*. The documents of the Magisterium also underline the importance of common humanity, which is the source of gratuity and hospitality. Captivatingly, de

Schrijver (2006:80) notes that "*hospitality and gratuity are specified as unconditional in character*." They are not only unconditional in character but humility in essence. They lead to friendship and coexistence. Fig 9 illustrates the relationship between humanity, fraternity, hospitality and friendship/coexistence.

Fig 9



Some Christians were afraid that Muslims were not flexible or that their ultimate aim was to convert some Christians, while others feared that contact with Islam might pollute Christianity. From a Christian point of view, de Béthune (2010:147) posits that "*Christian identity is defined in terms of being both guest and host, we certainly should have no reason whatever to fear that it might be diluted through the practice of hospitality*." From an African point of view, hospitality is extended even to those who are different. *Ubuntu* is otherness-centered (well-being of others and of the community). From the Zambian point of view, the motto, 'One Zambia, One Nation' encourages both acceptance of and hospitality towards each of the other 73 tribes, going beyond the fear of tribalism. The same hospitality must be extended to Muslims or other religions in the country within the Christian understanding of hospitality that can be rooted in the *ubuntunse* epistemology of otherness.

In this research, I have underlined the importance of the Eucharist in interreligious dialogue. It is the source and summit of Christian openness to religious otherness. It can be called the sacrament of dialogue/sacrament of hospitality/sacrament of humility and peaceful coexistence[106]. On the other hand, the concept of *ubuntunse* promotes the aspect of the unity

[106] The early Christian community was the Eucharistic community which was the foundation of its communion. There was no distinction made, or classism, among Christians (Zizioulas 1985:151; Aihiokhai 2019:93).

of people – the oneness – in other words, the communion in diversity because there is no communion without diversity or difference. This is an incentive for Christians who receive the Holy Communion, and at the same time, the value of unity is embodied in their rationality. This complementarity, if well understood, can promote interreligious dialogue and make it seem normal and desirable. The Eucharist and the local rationality promote humility, peaceful coexistence, and friendship.

The theology of interreligious dialogue of Vatican II and subsequent documents (from Paul VI to Francis) promote friendship and coexistence with religiously different communities. Cardinal Tauran (2018:18) considers friendly relationships and collaboration with religiously different communities as significant elements of Vatican II. In fact, these are essential elements of the theology of interreligious dialogue of the Magisterium. Consequently, the *ubuntunse* that promotes relationships and friendship can be aligned with the theological perspective of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue. Effectively, it can be a basis for synodality (the walking together) of the Christians towards religious otherness.

8.2.5 Polymorphism of Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Lusaka at Grassroots

The document of 'Dialogue and Proclamation' identified four forms of interreligious dialogue. All the forms are equally important: dialogue of life, dialogue of action, dialogue of theological exchange and dialogue of religious experience (DP 42). Most Catholic scholars have based their studies of interreligious dialogue on these forms.

Can we separate, at the grassroots level, Catholic-Muslim dialogue into different forms in coherence with the values of the *ubuntunse* and the motto 'One Zambia, One Nation'? All the different forms promoted by the 'Dialogue and Proclamation' are relevant and applicable to the situation that prevails in the Archdiocese of Lusaka. However, separating dialogue of life from dialogue of action or spiritual dialogue from theological dialogue are academic methods and are used to advance and broaden the understanding of interreligious dialogue. Informants, in their understanding of dialogue within the lens of their categories, did not separate Catholic-Muslim dialogue in different forms.

Other scholars have criticized this classification of dialogue from different perspectives. For Melnik (2020:50), the classification devotes attention to diplomatic interreligious dialogue. It does not give a complete description of the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue (Melnik 2020:53). It, however, classifies dialogue into four levels: intellectual (dialogue of head),

spiritual (dialogue of heart), action (dialogue of hands) (Melnik 2020:50). King (2011:102) has classified seven types: official, parliamentary-style, verbal, intervisitation, spiritual, practical and internal. Nevertheless, these classifications do not do justice to interreligious dialogue at the grassroots level, a complex reality that I consider to be polymorphic or the polymorphism of interreligious dialogue. What I mean is that different patterns (or forms) can blend. Although the theologian Knitter (2013:139), in his article 'Inter-Religious Dialogue and Social Action,' prioritizes dialogue of Social Action, in other words, dialogue of action, he nonetheless recognizes that interreligious dialogue is a "*multifaceted endeavor; each facet calls for the other*." Thus, although 'Dialogue and Proclamation' separate dialogue of life from, for example, dialogue of theological exchange, it is difficult to separate in real life and experiences at the grassroots. They are interrelated/interconnected such that one presupposes the other.

As underlined by DP, through the dialogue of life, people strive to live in an open and neighborly spirit. The French theologian and expert in monastic dialogue, de Béthune (2016:7), discussing the four forms of dialogue, argues that dialogue of life presupposes tolerance, but religious issues are not at the forefront. However, I would argue that living this open and neighborly spirit cannot exclude the fact that people from different religious communities ask each other theological questions without knowing that they are theological. They ask in order to try to understand the other. Moreover, for most Africans, religious and theological questions come naturally. In addition, the difference in religious identities leads to questioning our identities (beliefs) and the identities or beliefs of those we encounter perpetually in our neighborhoods. It is not easy to conceptualize a dialogue of life at the grassroots that does not lead to a theological dialogue (even not at the level of experts). This does not only lead to knowing each other in the neighborhood but also, sometimes, leads to polemics. I understand why some participants underlined that the discussion on Jesus is a no-go zone area. Informants noted, "*The problem is Jesus and Muhammad*," and another added, "*On the question of Jesus and Muhammad, we cannot agree*." This is based on their neighborhood experience.

There is also a relationship between the dialogue of life and the dialogue of action. Sometimes, communities of believers in the same neighborhood render services or help people together, which can be considered as the collaboration of different religions for integral development or liberation (dialogue of action). When discussing dialogue of action, although he prioritizes dialogue of religious experience, de Béthune (2016:7) shows that "*joint efforts are directed to the social, cultural, or even moral domain*." In some, if not many, circumstances in many

places in Lusaka where community life is still influential, the dialogue of life is related to the dialogue of action; for example, in the same neighborhoods, during funerals, weddings, etc., people join efforts that are directed at these social and cultural activities. On the other hand, dialogue of actions can also create opportunities for dialogue of theological exchange.

Further, in different neighborhoods, because they live in close proximity, people can share their religious experiences in an informal way and thus spontaneously sharing their religious experiences. This is possible because, as Borrmans (1981:108) notes, "*prayer has the same deep meaning, worship of God and identification with His will, in spite of the differences that they may have in their approaches*." In fact, for de Béthune (2016:8), dialogue of religious experience presupposes the other three forms of dialogue. At the grassroots, it is impossible to separate it from the dialogue of life because it takes place in concrete societies of people with their rationalities. Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka can be understood in this context, which explains why some participants explained that dialogue is already taking place unconsciously in this way.

The *ubuntunse* spirit would propose a different understanding of these forms of dialogue at the grassroots level. It suggests going beyond this academic way of dividing dialogue into four forms, which limits the understanding of the complexity of the phenomenon of dialogue[107] at the grassroots levels in the Zambian context. Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka, at the grassroots, will be meaningful if it embraces and goes beyond the four forms of dialogue because it entails oneness and wholeness that can only be achieved through relations. It corresponds well with our frameworks of *kenosis* and friendly and peaceful co-existence. Thus, it can be aligned with the teachings of the Magisterium in a way that its teachings on interreligious dialogue can be rooted in the understanding of the people.

[107] According to Cornille (2013:xii), "*The term dialogue tends to be used to cover a wide range of engagements between religious traditions, from daily interaction between believers living in the same neighborhoods to organized discussions and debates between expert scholars, and from formal or casual exchanges between spiritual or institutional leaders to interreligious activism around social issues. The goals of particular dialogues may differ, from peaceful coexistence to social change, and from mutual understanding to actual religious growth. But the common denominator in all these forms of inter-religious engagement is mutual respect and openness to the possibility of learning from the other. The category of inter-religious dialogue may then be used to refer to any form or degree of constructive engagement between religious traditions*." This articulates the complexity of interreligious dialogue. It can take different forms that can even blend. More especially, dialogue at the grassroots level or dialogue in the same neighborhood may entail different forms of dialogue in the sense that it can involve theological discussions or social/cultural activities or even the sharing of religious experiences at the same time.

Furthermore, analyzing the theology of *Nostra Aetate*, I pointed out the theological problem of worshiping one and the same God. The tendency of some Christians is to reject that we worship the one and same God as Muslims. However, in the Lusaka Archdiocese, most informants argued in favor of the one and the same God, including those who said that "*Jesus and Muhammad is a no-go area*." They emphasized:

We all pray to one and the same God.
We pray to one God, but we only differ when it comes to the names.
I think we pray to one God; I don't know the Quran that much. They are descendants of Abraham, so we pray to the same God.
It is the same God, it is just the understanding which is different.
It is the one and the same God, we just have different approaches.
I think the issue of God is only the name that is different.

This echoes the teaching of the Magisterium and the *kenotic* dimension of Christians in recognizing that we worship the same and one God. This is an impetus for Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This understanding and the concept of *ubuntunse* provide a theological and a theo-cultural[108] basis for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

8.2.5.1 *Ubuntunse* and Small Christian Communities

My data report has shown that Muslims are open to Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Most of those who participated in the research feel accepted and respected, although, in some places, more has to be done to discourage the misrepresentation and mockery to which they are occasionally subjected. The openness of Zambian Muslims to Catholic-Muslim dialogue presents itself as an opportunity for the Zambian Church to reciprocate, to be Christ-like, and to be a Church in today's world. The openness of Muslims demonstrated by this survey challenges the perception of some Catholics that Muslims are inflexible and closed to any form of dialogue or interconnection.

In the previous chapter, I discussed SCCs as ways of being a Church today, and as places for interreligious dialogue. In this chapter, I can underline that in SCCs, the spirit of *ubuntunse* is concretely lived. Therefore, two elements are required so as to promote interreligious dialogue in SCCs: (1) The Catholic life with its openness to otherness according to the teachings of the Magisterium, which promotes friendship and human fraternity (brought down to the SCCs); and (2) the values of *ubuntunse* that are essential to the people in their SCCs that also upholds the positive values of the nation (like unity and fraternity) and hospitality (the incarnation of

[108] By theo-cultural, I mean, in being anthropological, *ubuntunse* is also theological as argued in this chapter.

God is his hospitality towards humanity. This underpins all human hospitality in different religions, cultures, and races. Consequently, *ubuntu* hospitality has its noble origin in divine hospitality). These values promote unity in SCCs and an openness to others. Hence, the two elements can be lived within SCCs. The theology of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue can be contextualized and understood within the categories of the people. Moreover, the African sense of community or *ubuntu* sense of community extends beyond family, clan and tribe (Setiloane 1986:10; Munyaka & Motlhabi 2009:68). It implies that SCCs must extend their hospitality beyond the Christian family to everyone. It must be as universal as possible, hence promoting harmony and universal friendship. Thus, both the Magisterial documents and *ubuntunse* provide the SCCs with elements for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Fig 10 illustrates this relationship (Magisterial documents – *ubuntunse* – SCCs).

Fig 10

Importantly, this framework demands that the teachings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and Islam be communicated to SCCs within the spirit of synodality. The shifting paradigm in transmitting the Magisterium document from the parish-centered to Small Christian Communities-centered will be essential. The local epistemology of *ubuntunse* and the concept of the unity of Zambians will provide insights into the teaching of the Magisterium on unity and vice-versa. Having said that, I am proposing that in the context of Lusaka, depending on my interpretation of the data collected, interreligious dialogue finds a place in

SCCs where the spirit of *ubuntunse* can inform it. SCCs must be sacraments of dialogue. This will lead to a greater openness to religious otherness, which expresses the *kenotic*/abasement nature of the Church fostering friendship and coexistence. Moreover, with regard to openness to religious otherness, most of the African tribes were far ahead of Vatican II or the Catholic Church. The different proverbs on unity and openness existed long before the arrival of the Church and the mosque in Africa. However, it is essential that, while appreciating the local epistemology, SCCs must be grounded in the Magisterial *kenotic* theology of interreligious dialogue.

Finally, I can conclude that Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka provides an opportunity for Catholics to be coherent with their Christian faith, their culture and their country's motto. The teachings of the Magisterium on human fraternity, unity, friendship, mutual enrichment, and mutual understanding are already enshrined in the people's cultures. They are embodied in the values of *ubuntunse*. Consequently, this demonstrates the *kenotic* aspect of the people's cultures vis-à-vis different religious communities. Moreover, given that only Zambian Muslims were involved in this research, it may justify their openness (Muslims) to collaborate and participate in Catholic-Muslim dialogue. This allows the Catholic Church to live according to its specificity or singularity as a sacrament of unity and reconciliation of all peoples or as already said, SCCs to be sacrament of dialogue or encounter.

If multiculturality has been critical in the country since its independence, the Catholic Church will continue to promote it through dialogue. Christianity is not only a religion of dialogue and multiculturality, it strives to be *imago Dei* and *imago Christi*; it sees openness to otherness as condition of achieving its goals. This is its nature without which it loses its meaning. However, cultures play an important role in the nature of Christianity. This entails the importance of the values of *ubuntunse* in the Christian nature. The *imago Christi* does not exclude cultural values. Moreover, the incarnation underlines the importance of cultures.

8.3 Conclusion

To contextualize Catholic-Muslim dialogue, I propose the SCCs be interreligious-oriented. In SCCs, the teachings of the Magisterium will meet the local context, culture, and epistemology on coexistence and friendship that will help to shape and enhance the active participation of the lay faithful in Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Since SCCs are a way of being a Church that resonates with the African worldview of a family (an ecclesiological model that is not only

underpinned by the ecclesiology of Vatican II but also by an African worldview), interreligious dialogue can become an essential element of their way of being. Relationships in families are extended beyond the boundaries of a nuclear family, and consequently, Catholic relationships must extend beyond the Church to religiously different communities like Muslims. In this sense, the Church will truly be Catholic according to the marks of the Church (the Catholicity of the Church) and it will be *kenotic* at the example of Christ.

Furthermore, due to the growth of Islam in Lusaka and the importance of interreligious dialogue for Catholics/Christians, my theological discussion of the themes underlines that, it must be a collaborative ministry. I prefer to call it collaborative interreligious dialogue or collaborative Catholic-Muslim dialogue. The different pastoral agents must bring dialogue to the grassroots (SCCs) for broader participation in this mission of the Church that will promote friendship and coexistence. Moreover, in most cases, the faithful live in the same areas as Muslims and tend to have more day-to-day contact with them than priests or religious. This makes Catholic-Muslim dialogue a more pressing and immediate concern for them.

Finally, the values of *ubuntunse* or *ubuntu* of relationship or openness to others are the realities of the humility of a culture that are important in conceptualizing interreligious dialogue in Lusaka. It is in this sense that *ubuntunse* must be understood within the framework of humility, and friendship and peaceful coexistence. SCCs provide a platform to live values of *ubuntuse* on which the teachings of the Church on otherness can be rooted. Thus, in the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese, two elements are essential for SCCs: (1) Since they are a way of being a Church, they need to embrace the *kenotic* dimension of the Church in coherence with the Magisterial documents; and (2) they are a place of the incarnation of the local epistemology on openness and unity.

Chapter Nine

General Conclusion

The originality of my research was the analysis of the influence of the document on the Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the context of the Lusaka Archdiocese – Zambia, which led to the conceptualization of interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim framework that resonates with the context of Lusaka.

Chapter one of my research is the introduction. It highlighted the research background and research problem, research questions, and objectives. The exponential growth of Islam in a self-proclaimed Christian country, Zambia, and the large number of documents on interreligious and Catholic-Muslim dialogue produced by the Catholic Magisterium since Vatican II set the background of this research. Consequently, in this chapter, I defined the term 'Magisterium,' the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

Chapter two focused on the literature review. It was divided into three groups: (I) literature on Catholic-Muslim polemics in history; (II) the theology of interreligious dialogue of the Magisterium; and (III) Islam and the Catholic Church in Zambia. There is much literature on interreligious dialogue in general. To understand the Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the writings of the Magisterium, I presented how Catholics understood Islam at its birth in my literature review chapter. This historical aspect shows that the Catholic Church and Islam encounter grew out of religious polemics. John of Damascus gives us an example of how Christians saw or understood Islam. There was no openness to religious otherness. Christianity considered itself to be the only true religion. In the polemics of John of Damascus, it is clear that religious superiority and arrogance were the guiding principles of dialogue. However, in this chapter, I have also demonstrated that from Vatican II, the Church has moved from an exclusive understanding of the Truth to an inclusive knowledge, from mistrusting religious otherness to mutual trust and collaboration within the incarnational theology (*kenosis*). Interreligious dialogue is now understood as part of *Missio ad gentes*, which makes it an element of mission. It is worth noting that this change of paradigm of the Church does not guarantee that all individual Catholics, whether members of the clergy or the faithful, have accepted or understood this new stance. However, *Nostra Aetate*, a Vatican II document, has been discussed by different theologians as an essential document that has given a framework to understand the Catholic perspective of interreligious dialogue. In this literature review chapter,

I have also shown some criticisms against *Nostra Aetate* by some theologians. I have argued that it must be understood in its context and within the Catholic framework of incarnational theology. Although in line with *Nostra Aetate*, the Catholic Magisterium has produced several documents on interreligious dialogue, there is a gap in the literature concerning the analysis of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Zambia in relationship to the writings of the Magisterium and the local context.

In chapter three, I have discussed the research frameworks: *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship. The two frameworks are interconnected. First, I have shown that the Catholic theology of interreligious dialogue must be understood through the lens of incarnation/*kenosis*. This framework brings to the fore two elements: humility and identity. I have looked at the understanding of incarnation–*kenosis* in the writings of the Church Fathers without distinguishing between the Eastern and Western Church Fathers. I have also discussed its biblical foundation with Phil 2:5–11 as the central passage of any *kenotic* thought. Second, the writings of the Magisterium must be understood within a peaceful coexistence and friendship framework. From Vatican II, the Magisterium has been promoting coexistence and fraternity among religions based on our common origin, the *imago De*i. These frameworks shape the current theology of Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

In chapter four, I focused on the writings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue. I examined the current theology of the Catholic Magisterial teaching on interreligious dialogue in general and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in particular. I highlighted that the Magisterium has been promoting Catholic-Muslim dialogue from Vatican II to Pope Francis. The Church has humbly moved from a negative to a positive understanding of religious otherness, which has paved the way for dialogue and cooperation. This change of stance at a theological level has set a tone through which to understand the Catholic faithful's attitude at a local level to religiously different communities.

In chapter five, I have discussed my research methodology. I have used a qualitative research methodology. I have underlined my research methods and the decisions I took. They were aligned with my key research question and objectives. I used in-depth interviews with both key informants and informants (focus groups). My methodology's roadmap helped me examine how the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue were communicated to the laity. It helped me to understand how Catholics view Islam and Muslims in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Finally, I assessed the effective ways of communicating the documents, depending on the

outlooks of the key informants and informants. Therefore, the collected data was analyzed thematically, presented, and discussed theologically in chapters seven and eight. The qualitative methodology (through in-depth interviews) gave rich data essential in conceptualizing interreligious dialogue in Lusaka.

In chapter six, after conducting both focus groups and interviews with key informants in the Lusaka Archdiocese, I presented my data analysis underlying four themes: (I) Archdiocese of Lusaka and Magisterial documents on dialogue; (II) Islam viewed by Catholics in Lusaka; (III) Communicating Magisterial documents and living Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka; and (IV) Opportunities for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Each theme corresponds to one research sub-question except the fourth theme. Theme one concludes that the Magisterial documents are not well communicated to the grassroots. It was concluded that the teachings of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue had negligible influence on the thinking and outlook of lay people, who constitute the most significant population of Catholics. Most of the informants were unaware of the existence of the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue and on Catholic-Muslim dialogue, which implies that most of them were unaware of the theological shifts that had taken place within the Catholic Church regarding religious otherness. Theme two underlines elements that affect Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka: poverty; the buying of land by Muslims; and the violent image of Islam. Islam is understood as a threat by some people (informants and key informants) within the Church who fear that the Muslims are converting Christians (targeting Catholics, as some informants pointed out), trying to control the economy of the country, trying to make Zambia Islamic, and taking the land of the poor or of Zambians (making people landless) because of its financial advantages. The lack of knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium among the lay people and their view of Islam led me to analyze the effective ways of communicating the Magisterium documents proposed by the informants and key informants. Thus, theme three proposes SCCs, priests and pastoral agents and two different media for the diffusion of the Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue and Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese. Finally, theme four proposes the possibility of Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka leading me to propose a framework for Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka.

In chapter seven, I developed a theological discussion of the themes that I presented in chapter six. Therefore, I have underlined that when the documents of the Magisterium are not brought down to the grassroots, it contradicts the theology of synodality that the Church currently

promotes – the walking and discerning together in mission. There is no authentic synodality in this element of mission of interreligious dialogue if people have no information about the *raison d'etre* of this mission. Moreover, looking at the steady increase of Muslims in Lusaka, Catholic-Muslim dialogue is a necessary missionary activity. Its objective is not the conversion of a person from one religion to another but a friendly and peaceful coexistence underpinned by the *kenotic* nature of the church. Consequently, I have proposed a *kenotic* way as the authentic way of being a Church today in a religious pluralistic society of Lusaka. Some Christians have not gone beyond the sense of superiority and arrogance in matters of religion, even in these postmodern times. In my interviews with informants, some still understood Islam as a Christian heresy. This issue, coupled with a lack of knowledge of the documents of the Magisterium and the misconceptions arising from the images of Islam that are occasionally promoted by the media and fundamentalist groups within Islam, tend to stimulate religious polemics between Catholics and Muslims and foster a mutual distrust that discourages collaboration and coexistence between the two religions in Lusaka. Gobbo (2016:75) has highlighted that: "*Human beings are authors and sources of tensions, conflicts, injustices, oppressions, nepotism, dictatorship, etc. Human society is full of events of discrimination and segregation on the basis of race, gender, social status, political ideology, religious beliefs, etc.*" It is in this context that I have argued that Catholic-Muslim dialogue must be addressed to people in their thought patterns and worldviews to promote peaceful coexistence underpinned by their religious and cultural values instead of creating tensions, conflicts, and oppression between Catholics and Muslims.

Collaboration between Catholics and Muslims can lead to discussions on issues like poverty and land in Lusaka. The undertone of this sentence is that collaboration between the two religions can play a role in poverty and land-related issues in Lusaka. Since land is becoming a more urgent issue, Catholics and Muslims can cooperate in challenging the government or policymakers to protect the buying and selling of the land of the less privileged people. Therefore, although this currently seems to be a challenge to Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the opinion of some Catholic informants and key informants, it can become a bonding instrument promoting Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. This research underlines that identity and food security are related to land. Accordingly, this is important because both religions promote human fraternity, which must be aligned with protecting the rights of the less privileged or being the voice of the voiceless so that the poor may not become poorer or landless. The

research proposes the collaboration of the two religions in promoting land justice policies in Lusaka, Zambia.

Furthermore, given the data I collected, first, I have argued that the information on the importance of interreligious dialogue must reach the grassroots, as already alluded to. Since interreligious dialogue requires specialized training, I have considered the importance of priestly training (theological studies), which emphasizes interreligious dialogue or the relationship with other religions. In principle, it must impact or affect overall interreligious Catholic-Muslim dialogue. The second consideration is that some Catholic lay faithful must be trained in interreligious dialogue in the spirit of collaborative mission and synodality. The formation of priests in the Magisterial documents and the lay faithful that can be formed must create an opportunity to disseminate information into SCCs. I have proposed a shift in the focus in disseminating information on Catholic-Muslim dialogue from parish-centered to SCCs. The Lusaka Archdiocese has a well-established system of SCCs that participates in different missionary activities. They allow the participation of many Catholics in the one mission of God entrusted to the Church at the grassroots level. In their ecclesiological model of the Church as a family that resonates with the cultural aspirations of the people, they are places of love, living together (*syn-bio*), walking together (*syn-hodos*), formation, listening, discernment, and discussion. I suggest that SCCs are places to promote interreligious dialogue in the Lusaka Archdiocese.

SCCs will narrow the gap between the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue and knowledge of these documents by the Catholic faithful. Consequently, they will narrow the gap between theories and practices. In this sense, the documents of the Magisterium must move from the presbytery, classrooms, and shelves to SCCs. In SCCs, theology is not only done, it is lived/it takes flesh. It is theology from below. In this assessment, this research proposes SCCs to be interreligious-oriented or to take a *kenotic* way due to the change in the religious landscape of Lusaka. Informants knew Islam was no longer a foreign religion but a well-established religion in Lusaka. Other means that are effective in the context of Lusaka, such as radio stations and social media, can also help disseminate information. Moreover, interreligious dialogue is not for the few or an extra option for Christians because of today's religious pluralism context of Lusaka. As the instrument of reconciliation (LG 1), the Church must be the first to invite others to dialogue. Thus, she must

not only be concerned about maintaining the numbers of Christians but also be at the service of reconciliation and unity of the people of Lusaka.

SCCs also provide a platform where the synodality of the Church can be lived; it becomes a reality regarding the mission of interreligious dialogue. It can be argued that saying that when Christians at the SCC level know about the documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue, they will engage in dialogue with Muslims is just an assumption. However, this is not just an assumption. My findings have established with evidence in the data collected that Christians do not engage in dialogue because they are ignorant about the Church's teaching on interreligious dialogue. The pastoral plan proposed by the clergy or the activities inserted in the pastoral plan of the parish will impact the laity's involvement in the parish's overall pastoral activities. It justifies why informants insisted on the participation of the clergy in information dissemination. The laypeople in SCCs live with Muslims in the same neighborhoods; thus, they can play an essential role in the synodality of the mission of interreligious dialogue or Catholic-Muslim dialogue. The way they view or perceive Muslims is vital. Moreover, in this research, the way Catholics view Muslims in Lusaka provided insights into conceptualizing Catholic-Muslim dialogue that goes beyond the classical theological polemics between Catholics and Muslims but considers the concrete realities of Lusaka. The context informs it. Theology must be contextual. Therefore, SCCs are places for the contextualization of synodality.

Chapter eight presents an opportunity to rethink and conceptualize Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. In this chapter, I have unpacked the phenomenon of dialogue and how people would understand it based on their local epistemology and concrete realities or perceptions/experiences. This is where my contribution to science comes into play. After listening to the voices of people, the research proposes a shift in interreligious dialogue from parish-centered to Small Christian Community-centered (as already mentioned) that considers the writings of the Magisterium and the local epistemology. Thus, proposing SCCs to be interreligious or sacraments of dialogue/encounter that integrate the teachings of the Church and local worldview.

I have highlighted the importance of local knowledge in conceptualizing Catholic-Muslim dialogue in Lusaka. Zambia has maintained its unity through the influence of Kaunda's humanism and its motto, 'One Zambia, One Nation', which personifies the spirit of multiculturality. Also, the country has upheld *ubuntunse* culture, the humanity in humans. The *ubuntunse* values underpin the humanism of Kaunda and the Zambian motto. The informants

understood the possibility of Catholic-Muslim dialogue within this concept of *ubuntunse*. Thus, the phenomenon of interreligious dialogue is understood within a local epistemology. This implies that the participants in the research see interreligious dialogue through the lens of their own categories of thought and worldview. This is because *ubuntunse* embodies the values of relationship (friendship/coexistence), hospitality, interconnection, and respect, which are essential in conceptualizing any understanding of interreligious dialogue today.

In analyzing the informants' understanding of Catholic-Muslim dialogue, I have established a link between *ubuntunse* and the values of interreligious dialogue articulated in the theology of the Magisterium on dialogue. It is noteworthy to underline with Shutte (2009:97) that the most fundamental element of *Ubuntu* is:

> *The attitude towards others that sees them and treats them as "another self". No distinction is made between their good and one's own. Everyone, no matter how foreign, is seen as being "one of us" and therefore as having a claim on one's time and energy. This attitude is the source of a marked patience and tolerance of differences in people*.

This resonates with the theological aspects of unity in diversity (acceptance of difference) that the Magisterium promotes through interreligious dialogue. Therefore, the analysis of interreligious dialogue theology of the Magisterium within the frameworks of humility and peaceful and friendly coexistence underlines the values of the human fraternity or human interconnectivity that are also cardinal in *ubuntunse* or *ubuntu* conception as underlined by Shutte in the above quotation. For Metz (2009:341), from an African perspective – *ubuntu*, has emphasized the importance of a harmonious relationship that exhibits solidarity toward others or demonstrates goodwill or being positively oriented toward others' interests. This echoes the *kenotic* ethical interpretation of Phil 2:5-11 as an invitation to be selfless, an active desire to promote their neighbor's well-being and interest. I can conclude that if the documents of the Magisterium are well-communicated and understood together with the *ubuntunse* values in SCCs, they can promote human fraternity both *ad intra* and *ad extra* of the Church within the frameworks of humility – *kenosis* and peaceful coexistence and friendship or simply embracing the *kenotic* way. There will be a complementarity of interreligious dialogue theology from above (*katabatic*) and below (*anabatic*).

Importantly, I have shown that *ubuntunse* must be understood from a Christological point of view. Being human-centered is Christological because, as Barth (cited by Sumner 2014:123) argues, "*if God is human in time (…) then God is human also in the eternity which comprehends time.' Barth (1971:46) further notes, 'It is when we look at Jesus Christ that we know decisively*

that God's deity does not exclude, but includes His humanity." Christ is the image of God, the firstborn of creation. For Barth (1971:43), in him, there is no isolation of humanity from God or God from humanity. In this perspective, I understand *ubuntunse* from a theological viewpoint as a participation in the image of Christ, who is the image of God and the accomplishment of the *ipsissima intentio Dei* as eternally human. This provides an essential basis for human communion and, consequently, for interreligious and Catholic-Muslim dialogue.

Thus, for interreligious dialogue to lose its foreignness and be effective in the Lusaka Archdiocese, there must be a dialogue between the local epistemology and theology of the Magisterium. Since cultures are places of God's revelation, the theology of religious otherness must be linked to and informed by the positive cultural values of the Zambian people and vice-versa. As underlined in this work, the value of openness to religious otherness in most Zambian tribes is older than that of the official openness of the Church through Vatican II (*Nostra Aetate*). Conversely, the complexity of hospitality is at the heart of the Catholic-Muslim relationship in Zambia. At the core of this relationship is the challenge of welcoming each other – a *kenotic* challenge, especially welcoming Islam or Muslims into a self-proclaimed Christian nation. In this context, both the Christian and the local (based on the cultural values of *ubuntunse* and the national motto) value of hospitality can lead to a better acceptance of religious otherness. Moreover, the national motto of 'One Zambia, One Nation' and the *ubuntunse* underpin the welcoming attitude of most Zambians.

Furthermore, my collected data showed the openness of Muslims to Catholic-Muslim dialogue, which challenges the perception of many Catholics vis-à-vis the Muslim attitude toward religious otherness in Lusaka. This openness is an opportunity for Catholic-Muslim dialogue. Taking this into consideration and since SCCs are places for living the spirit of *ubuntunse* (values that align with the Good News) and Christian values, they can bridge the gap between the teachings of the Magisterium and the cultural values in promoting friendship and peaceful coexistence with Muslims (who have demonstrated an open spirit towards Catholic-Muslim dialogue), going beyond the judgmental barriers of intellectual ignorance of religious otherness. In my study, this intellectual ignorance must be informed by both the knowledge of the Magisterium and the local epistemology on the importance of difference.

The Christian love in SCCs must extend beyond the immediate Christian family and reach their neighbors who belong to other communities. It should also promote universal fraternity per

Vatican II recommendations of *Nostra Aetate*. As Paul VI underscores, "*Our inducement, therefore, to enter into this dialogue must be nothing other than a love which is ardent and sincere*" (ES 73). He adds, "*Hence our dialogue too should be as universal as we can make it. That is to say, it must be catholic, made relevant to everyone …*" (ES 76). I can safely add that this dialogue must not be only universal, but *ubuntu* lived in SCCs that are interreligious oriented. *Ubuntunse* proposes a polymorphism of the different forms of dialogue at the grassroots level, going beyond the Catholic classic structure of the four forms of interreligious dialogue (dialogue of life, action, spiritual experiences, and theological exchange) in the sense that they can blend. However, this demands a *kenotic* (humility) attitude of SCCs to embrace openness to religious otherness and the contextualization of the theology of the Magisterium that promotes coexistence.

Therefore, the teachings of the Magisterium on religious otherness and the *ubuntunse* values provide an opportunity for Catholics to collaborate with Muslims to promote peaceful coexistence and friendship. Together, they can address land-related issues and the situation of poverty in Lusaka. Following the spirit of the theology of the Magisterium and *ubuntunse* values, Catholics must not be self-centered but others-centered. In being self-centered as a religion, Islam will always be considered a threat that the Church needs to fight against. Both the Magisterium and the *ubuntunse* uphold the value of relationships, the Church must define itself in terms of relationships and not against others. Christianity and Islam should not be religions in competition but religions in collaboration. Moreover, to know a religion's authenticity, we must understand how it relates to and collaborates with other religions, especially when it's the majority in a particular country like Christianity in Zambia.

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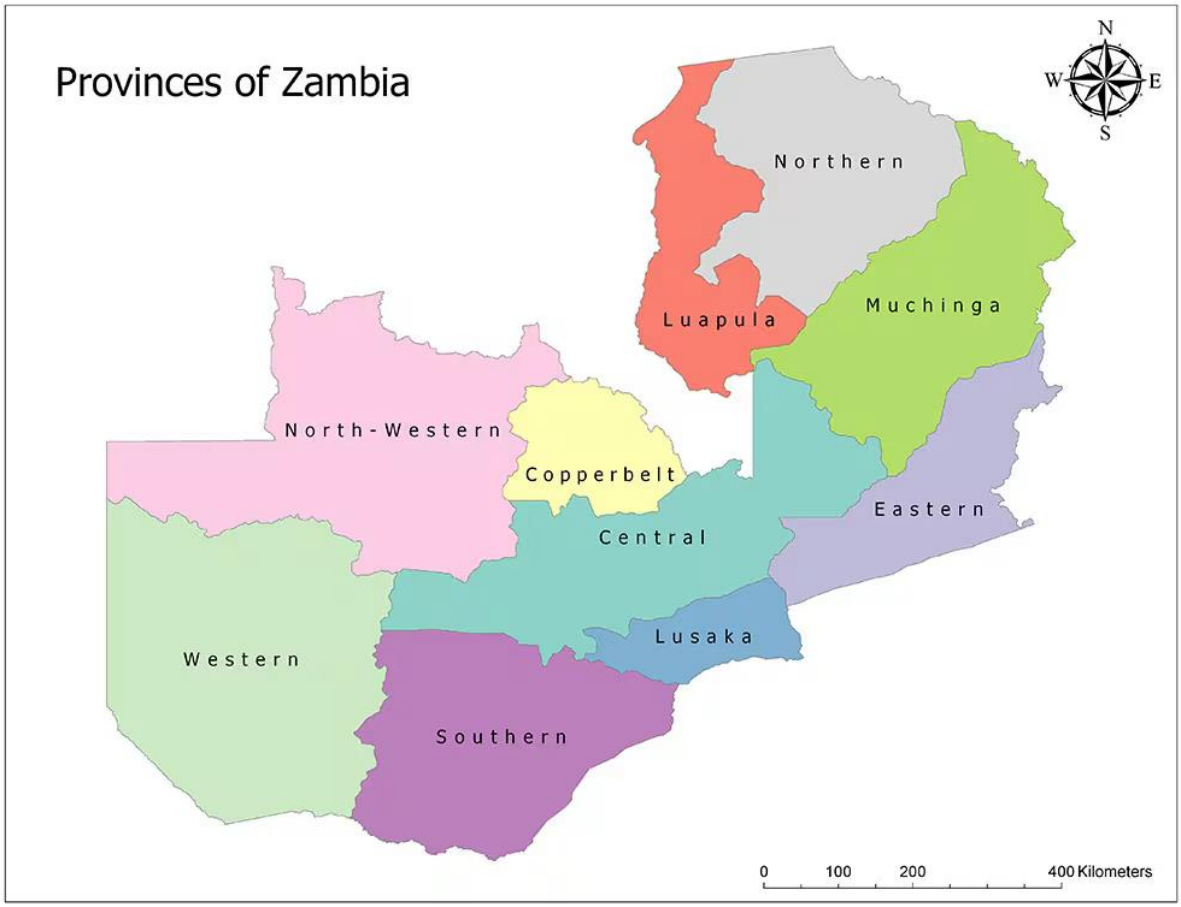
Appendices

Appendix One: Map of Zambia[109]



[109] The map of Zambia was downloaded from https://www.mappr.co/counties/zambia/. It has to be noted that Lusaka province is the smallest province, but it has the largest population.

Appendix Two: Consent Form

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is Jones Kawisha (222103743). I am a PhD candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College / Pietermaritzburg Campus. The title of my research is: **An analysis of the Catholic Magisterium's Theology of Interreligious Dialogue and Its Influence on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in Archdiocese of Lusaka-Zambia Since Vatican II.** The aim of the study is to (examine the influence of the writings of the Catholic Magisterium on Catholic-Muslim dialogue, on the way Catholics see and relate to Muslims in Lusaka where the Muslim population is growing). I am interested in interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

- The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.
- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research. You will not be penalized for taking such an action.
- Your views in this interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The interview will take about (30-60 minutes).
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to myself and my supervisors. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and burning.
- If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus, Scottsville, Pietermaritzburg. Email: 222103743@stu.ukzn.ac.za; jones.kawisha@mafr.org
Cell: +27836177165; +27671149263
My supervisor is Prof. Lilian Siwila who is located at the School of Religion, Philosophy and Classics, Pietermaritzburg Campus, University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: email: siwila@ukzn.ac.za Phone number: +27794580868

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I…… *(full names of participant*) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire. I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT DATE

……

Appendix Three: Ethical Clearance Form

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI YAKWAZULU-NATALI

02 December 2023

Fr Jones Kawisha (222103743)
School of Rel Phil & Classics
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Dear Fr Kawisha,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00006480/2023
Project title: An analysis of the Catholic Magisterium's theology of interreligious dialogue and its influence on Catholic-Muslim dialogue in the Archdiocese of Lusaka–Zambia since Vatican II
Degree: PhD

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 09 November 2023 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

This approval is valid until 02 December 2024.
To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

[redacted]

Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 8350/4557/3587 **Email:** hssrec@ukzn.ac.za **Website:** http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics
Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix Four: Gatekeeper's Letter

MISSIONARIES OF AFRICA

SOUTHERN AFRICA PROVINCE (SAP)

P.O. BOX 320076, LUSAKA, ZAMBIA

Tel: +260 968071315, +260 21 1262237, E-mail: sap.prov@mafr.org / sap.provincial@gmail.com

Prot. SAP 23/0088 – Rev. Fr. Jones Kawisha – Authorization to do his research in Zambia

Lusaka, 26-08-2023

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

REF.: GATEKEEPER'S AUTHORIZATION

This letter serves to confirm that I, **Rev. Fr. Christian MULENGA**, Provincial Superior of the Society of the Missionaries of Africa in Southern Africa Province (Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa and Zambia), residing in Lusaka - Zambia, have authorized **Rev. Fr. Jones KAWISHA** to carry out his PhD research in Lusaka, Zambia.

Any assistance which will be rendered to facilitate **Rev. Fr. Jones Kawisha** in carrying out his research will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

[redacted]

THE PROVINCIAL
Missionaries of Africa
Woodlands
P O Box 320076
LUSAKA - ZAMBIA

Rev. Fr. Christian MULENGA (M.Afr.)
(Provincial Superior - SAP)

Appendix Five: Interview Guide

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS FOR CHRISTIANS

Interview Questions	Interview Sub-Questions
Question 1 To what extent does the current theology of the Catholic Magisterial documents on interreligious dialogue influence Catholics in the Lusaka Archdiocese? Or To what extent does the current theology of the Catholic Magisterial teaching on interreligious dialogue influence Catholics' perception of other religions?	1. How do understand the growth of other religions like Islam in Lusaka? 2. What is your opinion about other religions? 3. In your opinion, are other religions a positive value to Christianity? 4. What is your opinion about the salvation of members of other religions?
Question 2 Given a steady increase in the number of the followers of Islam in Zambia, to what extent has the Catholic Archdiocese of Lusaka used the Magisterial Documents to promote Catholic-Muslim dialogue?	1. What do you understand about Islam and what is your view of Muslims or how do you perceive Muslims? 2. What is your view about the growth of Islam in Lusaka? 3. Why do you think it is necessary to promote coexistence among Christians and Muslims if at all you do? 4. Are you aware of the different documents of the Church on the Catholic-Muslim relationship, and how have they helped you relate to Muslims in Lusaka? 5. What do you think Catholics can learn from Muslims and Islam?
Question 3 How can the Magisterial Documents and teaching on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue be effectively communicated to Catholics in Lusaka Archdiocese?	1. Do you know documents of the Church on interreligious dialogue or on Catholic-Muslim dialogue? 2. Some people have argued that different documents of the Magisterium on interreligious dialogue do not reach the lay people. What is your view on this perspective?

	3. What are your suggestions on how the Church can effectively communicate its writings on the Catholic-Muslim dialogue to the lay people in Lusaka? 4. Do you think it is important to emphasize the relationship between Catholics and Muslims in different lay organizations and catechism? If yes, how? And if no, why?
Question 4 Which form of dialogue would be the most effective between Catholics and Muslims in Lusaka, Zambia?	1. What is your experience of Catholic-Muslim dialogue? 2. What are the factors that limit or facilitate interreligious dialogue between Catholics and Muslims? 3. What do you know about the different forms of interreligious dialogue? 4. Which form seems to be the most important for the relationship between Catholics and Muslims in Lusaka? 5. Taking into account the context of Lusaka, in which areas can Catholics and Muslims corroborate?

Appendix Six: Editing Certificate

k/b

2 December 2024

Editing Certificate

This letter confirms that the following doctoral thesis by Jones Kawisha was language edited: **An Analysis of the Catholic Magisterium's Theology of Interreligious Dialogue and Its Influence on Catholic-Muslim Dialogue in the Archdiocese of Lusaka–Zambia since Vatican II.**

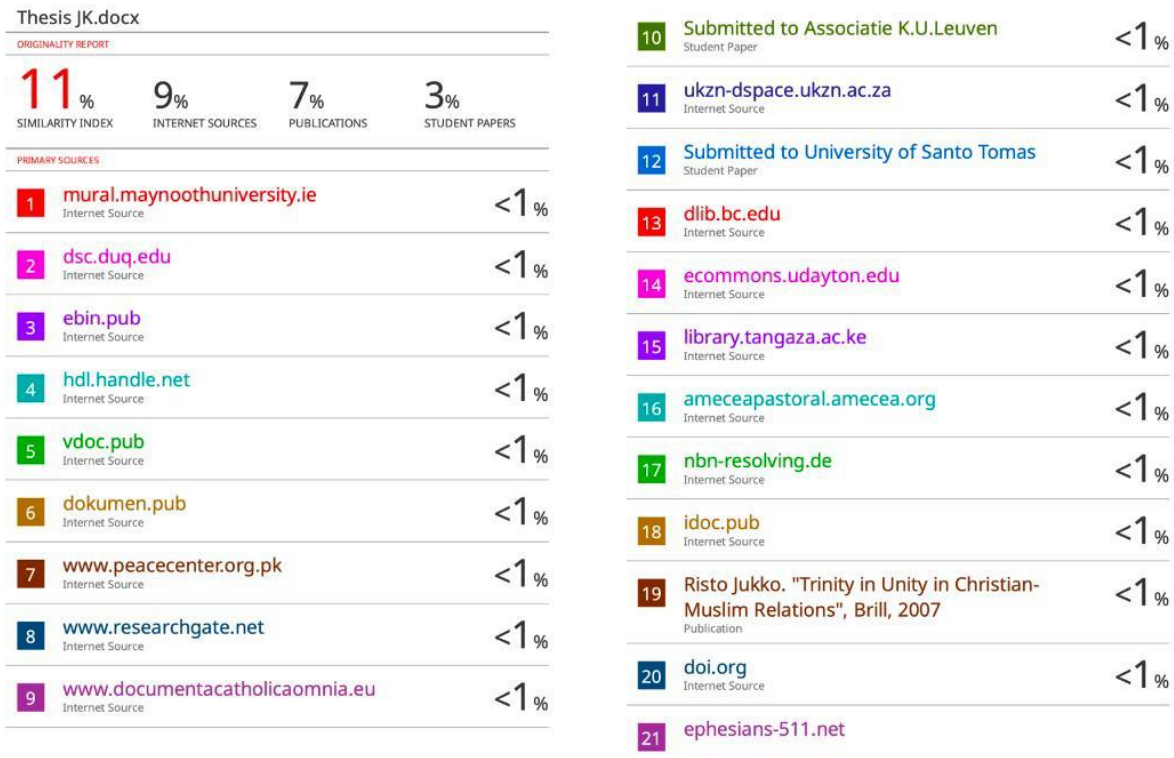
[redacted]

Dr Karen Buckenham, *PhD (KwaZulu-Natal), MA (KwaZulu-Natal), BSc (Toronto), TESL (Toronto).*

kbuckenham@mweb.co.za

DISCLAIMER: The English language editor used track changes for corrections and inserted comments for queries. The responsibility for effecting the changes in the final, submitted document is the responsibility of the student.

Appendix Seven: Turnitin Report



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