



## The Missionary Nature and the Different Forms of Christian Life in the Church

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**Abstract** All different forms of Christian life have received a vocation to share in the mission of Christ. The whole Christian community is involved in God's mission through the nature of their vocation. The call to mission is addressed not only to the hierarchy, and religion, but it is a call addressed to all. All Christians are personally called by the Lord and from Him, they received a mission in favor of the Church and of the world. This research aims to find the initial enthusiasm for involvement in the mission of the Church from all members of the Church, namely the hierarchy, religious, and laity. The method used in this study is the historical method of research. Through this research, the author found that all members of the Church with their respective unique callings received a mandate from God to continue the Church's mission. The results of this study indicate that every form of life in the Church receives a mission from God to proclaim the good news. The results of this study can be used as Implications to find a method of coaching for every form of life vocation, namely as a hierarchy, religious, and lay.

**Keywords:** Church's Mission, Christian Community, Form of Life Vocation

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The Church is missionary by her very nature. The mission is an intrinsic dimension of Christian vocation. The mission is not an optional activity, for the Church exists to evangelize. Our vocation, consecration, lifestyle, and spirituality are for our mission. There is a mission because "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son for the salvation of all humankind." (John 3:16). Therefore mission is to proclaim God's love to the world and Jesus came to proclaim God's love to the world. Jesus and the Holy Spirit are the first missionaries of God the Father.

So the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar Magisterium call for a renewal of missionary spirit. They call all the members of the Church to a New Evangelization which implies a new missionary awareness. Pope Paul VI in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandii* and the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* also called for "a renewal of mission theology and methods." (Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 16)

All the different forms of Christian life have received a vocation to share in the mission of Christ. The whole Christian community, the church, is in a situation of service and mission. The call to mission is addressed not only to the pastors, priests, and religious, but it is a call addressed to all. All Christians are personally called by the Lord and from Him, they received a mission in favor of the Church and of the world.

There is a missionary activity by the priests and the religious according to their programs and charism, their mission collaborate with the lay people to respond to the urgent needs of the Church and society. The laity were only helpers of the priests and religious in their missionary activity they never took the initiative role in the missionary work due to a lack of theological formation and knowledge in the field of pastoral endeavors. There is no proper setup of formation programs for the laity and religion regarding theological study and missionary formation.

The researcher hopes that this revitalizing of the missionary spirit will motivate the ordained ministers, religious and laity. Finally, this research will be significant for the Church to create the missionary formation for future priests to whom he can revitalize their missionary spirit in the seminary formation programs. All these are rooted in understanding the nature of the Church as a missionary Church. The missionary spirit is the energizing force that strengthens all the baptized to participate in the prophetic, kingly, and priestly ministry of Christ. This research endeavors to elaborate on revitalizing the missionary spirit of ordained ministry, consecrated life, and lay leaders (catechists)

The mission is God's activity-"Missio Dei". Jesus is the first missionary of God the Father. The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of mission.(Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 21)

Therefore, revitalizing of missionary spirit in the Church has a Trinitarian origin. "The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature since it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she draws her origin, by the decree of God the Father."(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 2) Mission is "Missio Dei". "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son." (John 3: 16) Mission is the will of God "who wishes all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth". (1 Tim. 2:4-5) (Vatican II, 2006a, no. 7) Jesus seeks to do the will of the one who sent him. (John 6: 38) The Holy Spirit is the principal agent of mission.(Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 21)

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The method used in this study is the historical method of research. This work is confined primarily to library research, and the researcher uses Church documents, books, and periodical articles. After having gathered all the data from different books, documents, articles, and other sources needed to formulate this research to analyze, synthesize, and link them to the theme of this work.

### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### The Trinitarian Source of Missionary Activity: Insight from Vatican II

##### Mission as *Missio Dei*

There has been a decisive shift towards understanding mission as God's mission during the past half a century. During preceding centuries mission was understood in a variety of ways. Often it was perceived in ecclesiastical categories: as the expansion of the church. After the First World War, Karl Barth (1932- 1957) became one of the first theologians to articulate mission as an activity of God himself. The idea (not the exact term) of *Missio Dei* first surfaced clearly.

The mission was understood as being derived from the very nature of God. It was thus put in the context of the doctrine of the Trinity, not of ecclesiology or soteriology. The classical doctrine on the *missio Dei* as God the Father sending the Son, and God the Father and the Son sending the Spirit was expanded to include yet another "movement": Father, Son, and Holy Spirit sending the church into the world. As far as missionary thinking was concerned, this linking with the doctrine of the Trinity constituted an important innovation. (J.Bosch, 1991, p. 390)

The concept of *missio Dei* is this: In the new image, the mission is not primarily an activity of the Church, but an attribute of God. God is a missionary God. It is not the church that has a mission of salvation to fulfill in the world; it is the mission of the Son and the Spirit through the Father that includes the Church. Mission is thereby seen as a movement from God to the world; the church is viewed as an instrument for that mission. There is a church because there is a mission, not vice versa. To participate in a mission is to participate in the movement of God's love toward people since God is a fountain of sending love. (J.Bosch, 1991, p. 390)

The understanding of mission as *missio Dei* was also endorsed in Catholic mission theology, notably in some of the documents of the Second Vatican Council. After having stated that the church is missionary by its very nature, since "it has its origin in the mission of the Son and the Holy Spirit", the Council's *Decree on Mission* defines missionary activity as "nothing else, and nothing less, than the manifestation of God's plan, its epiphany, and realization in the world and history." (Vatican II, 2006a, no. 2 and 7) The mission is here defined in trinitarian, Christological, pneumatological, and ecclesiological terms. (Vatican II, 2006, no. 2 and 9)

Since God's concern is for the entire world, this should also be the scope of the *missio Dei*. It affects all people in all aspects of their existence. The mission is God's turning to the world concerning creation, redemption, and consummation. It takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the church. The *mission Dei* is God's activity, which

embraces both the Church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate.(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 10)

Vatican II through Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* has a wider understanding of mission is expounded pneumatological rather than Christologically.(Konsili Vatikan II, 1993b, no. 25) The history of the world is not only a history of evil but also of love, a history in which the reign of God is being advanced through the work of the Spirit. Thus, in its missionary activity, the church encounters humanity and a world in which God's salvation has already been operative secretly, through the Spirit.

Therefore, the notion of *missio Dei* has helped to articulate the conviction that neither the church nor any human agent can ever be considered the author or bearer of the mission. Mission is, primarily and ultimately, the work of the Triune God, Creator and Redeemer, and Sanctifier, for the sake of the world, a ministry in which the church is privileged to participate. The mission has its origin in the heart of God. God is a fountain of sending love. This is the deepest source of mission: there is a mission because God loves people. (J.Bosch, 1991, p. 392)

### **The Trinitarian Dynamics of History**

By essence, the dynamism of each divine Person is "to go out": the Father "goes out" unto the Son, the Father, and the Son "goes out" unto the Spirit and, *ad extra*, that is, regarding creation, God "outpours Himself" into us his creatures. In salvation history, the Father send his Son for the Church and all members of the Church to be born to be sent. (See. Jn 16:27, 28; 17:8; Mt 28:18-20) When God gives Himself totally as Trinity, the result is not just a divinized person, but a "family" (the Church), or a people made one by the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.(Vatican II, 2006b, no. 4) Being such an image of God, the Church is both communion and mission, but a mission that is carried out in self-emptying, *kenosis*, giving up self in service of others.(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 2)

### **The Love-Source of the Father**

The absolute well-spring of everything is the Father. More concretely, "the salvific will flows from the 'Love-source' or charity of God the Father. From God, who is 'the origin without origin', the Son is begotten and the Spirit proceeds through the Son, freely creating us out of His surpassing and merciful kindness.... The divine dynamism that derives all things towards the ultimate goal of creation, 'incarnates' itself in historical activity. This dynamism is simply the mystery of God's love, which constitutes the background of human history.(Vadakumpadan, 1996, p. 56) By its very nature, love gives itself up, being absolute love, the Father gives Himself totally to the "Son of His Love, and both in their mutual love, give themselves eternally to the Spirit in such a way that the Blessed Trinity is the "Lover, the Beloved one and the Love." (Kroegeer, 1994, p. 70)

If love is the “principle of communication” of the divinity in the Trinity, it must also be the principle of communication of the mission to the Son and to the Spirit, whose created goal is the communication of the same divinity to the human persons. The means (the “sacrament”) to carry out this plan is the Church, “coming forth from the eternal Father’s love” which has as its main obligation “simultaneously to manifest and to work out the mystery of God’s love for man.” (Vanchipurackal, 1981, p. 82)

### **The Mission of the Son**

The first mission the Father entrusts to the Son is to be “sent” as a mediator of creation and then to save the world. (Jn 1:3, Col 1:16; cf. Jn 3:16; Gal 4:4-5) From this flows any salvific mission in history; that is why Vatican II bases all missionary action on this mission. (Grimes, 2017, p. 37) The Fathers of the Church speak of an invisible mission of the Word from the beginning of history, all along “planting the seeds of himself” among us; from the seed sprouts up the “law of conscience,” which is already salvific”, as well as all religious manifestations. In ancient times, Celsius and Porphyry chided Christianity because our so-called unique Savior was born so late and in an insignificant country. (Fitzpatrick, 1933, p. 71) The apologists answered that the Logos had always been with us, dispensing his salvation to any heart willing to accept. (Acts 17:27-28, Rev 3:8; cf. Rom 2:14-15)

This is the doctrine of the New Testament, contained in the teaching on the only mediator of salvation, the “New Adam”, the Redeemer of all, etc. (Mk 10:45; Rom 5:14, I Cor 15:45, I Tim 2:5) This Word of God in Christ has assumed all the dimensions of human reality, psychological, cultural, historical, and so on. His incarnation is the way of the Word that summarizes his entire mission and duties as His Father's messenger as: first, **Mediator of Revelation**. His mission is to make us know God as God wants to be known. Christ does not just bring the good news, he is the good news, and “the God-Missionary of the Father sent as “light of the gentiles to “illumine all who come to this world” so that “they may have life and have it abundantly” because his word is “Spirit and Life.” (cf. Jn 1:9; 6:66; 10:10; Is 49:6) Second, **Mediator of Redemption**. A basic teaching of the New Testament is that Christ liberated the human race with his blood, “acquiring” thus a people for himself. (cf. I Pet 1:18-19; 2:9-10; I Cor 6:20) (Vatican II, 2006b, no. 9) The Church calls to spreading the kingdom of Christ everywhere for the glory of God the Father so that all people share in Christ’s saving redemption.

Third, **Mediator of the New Covenant**. This means a new relationship of God with humankind, founding a new law, new worship, and new people. Therefore, humankind's relationships with God as ethics, worship, and religion pass through Christ. (cf. Heb 8:6, 9; 2 Cor 6:16; Eph 2:19; Rev 18:4) (Vatican II, 2006b, no. 9) Fourth, **Mediator of gathering the**

**New People.** He was sent to “the scattered children of God, to bring them together”, and make them into a people.

This “convocation” is what makes the Church *ekklesia* (which means convocation or assembly) and is a specific missionary task. Christ's salvation is "incarnated," that is visible, and social; "It has pleased God to make men holy and saved them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people, a people which acknowledges Him in truth and serves Him in holiness." (cf. Jn 11:52)(Vatican II, 2006b, no. 9) Through these mediations, the mission of the Son continues throughout the history of salvation. As the physical body of Jesus had to grow after the *fiat* of his mother Mary, so his mystical body has to grow in history after the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

### **The Mission of the Holy Spirit**

Christ accomplished God's mission to spread the gospel until the end of the world. Christ sent the Holy Spirit from the Father, to carry out his saving work inwardly and to impel the Church toward her proper expansion.” The Father “decides” the plan, the Son is sent to “implement” it and the Holy Spirit is sent to “complete” it. This takes place in history and historically through the mission of the Church.(Vatican II, 2006a, nos. 2,3, 4 and 5) Thus, the eternal salvific will of the Father is concretized in the temporal mission of the Church, which is the Body of the Son acting through the Spirit. The Mission of the Church is, therefore, Trinitarian in its origin, its implementation, and its end.

In the work of creation, the Spirit of God (*Creator Spiritus*) puts in human hearts an opening toward the infinite, a capacity to love whose origin is God himself, with a dynamism towards the end of the divine plan. This dynamism is embodied in the missionary activity of the Church. The Spirit was active in the world before Christ and is bringing the plan to completion now, even outside the Church. The same Spirit guarantees the unity of the plan; in the prophets, the Spirit “inspires” their word. ( cf. Zech 7:12; Mic 3:8; Isai 59:21)

On the day of Pentecost, the Spirit came down upon the disciples to remain with them forever. On that day, the Church was publicly revealed to the multitude and the gospel began to spread among the nations using preaching. His outpouring of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was so momentous for the history of salvation. The Spirit gives birth to the missionary Church, and the Spirit "compels the Church to cooperate"(*ad cooperandum compellitur*) in the missionary task. This is the whole Church, not the clergy, or the religious, because the Spirit dwells in the Body, in all its members, so that all faithful are driven by “the same mission spirit “as Jesus himself. (cf. Jn 14:16)(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 4 and 7)

The Spirit transformed the disciples into apostles. The Spirit opens the doors and

sends the community out as a missionary, as Church: Holy because the Holy Spirit animates it from within; One because the Spirit unifies the variety of gifts for the common mission; Catholic because the same Spirit sends it to all nations, all cultures, all kinds of people, reducing all to one family of God's children; Apostolic because the Spirit warrants the fidelity of the Church in the transmission of the message and the structures of the community. The main driving force of the mission is the dynamism of the Spirit who enlivens the Body of Christ. To refuse the mission "*ad gentes*" is to sin against the Spirit.(Vadakumpadan, 1996, p. 45)

### **The Mission of the Church**

Following the mission of the Son and driven by the Holy Spirit, the Church is sent to be "the universal sacrament of salvation." More concretely, each local Church is sent to a particular region, to build the kingdom of God in every people, race, or culture.(Vatican II, 2006b, no. 5) In principle, the Church could fulfill this purpose in two ways: first, by concentrating on itself to become a "light of the nations" in the way of a "city built upon a mountain" which would act as a beacon; second, by going out into the world, preaching the Good News of Jesus and making new disciples, as the Lord told her to do. (cf. Mt 5:14; 28:19-2)(Kroeger, 1994, p. 102) The end of this mission is the glory of God. In human history, this glory consists in helping each person to give "formal glory" to God, as children to their Father, "through our Lord Jesus Christ". This means to know Him, worship, and praise, serve Him, etc., as Jesus taught us.

To assist him and to continue his mission, the Lord Jesus chose the apostles- "missionaries"- who are the seedlings of the Church. By definition, the apostles are to "go out into mission; preaching the Gospel". The deep awareness of this made Saint Paul cry; "woe to me, if I do not preach the Gospel." (1 Cor 9:16). Because it is apostolic, the Church must therefore, be "missionary". "It is plain, then, that missionary activity wells up from the Church's innermost nature and spreads abroad its saving faith; it perfects its catholic unity by expanding it; it is sustained by its apostolicity; it gives expression to the collegial awareness of the hierarchy; it bears witness to her sanctity while spreading and promoting it".(John Paul II, 1992, p. 45) In conclusion: missionary activity is not primarily a duty of the Church, but "a function of the Church's very being."

### **The Christological Source of Missionary Activity**

The Church missionary rooted in Jesus 'life. The Church emphasizes that the birth of Jesus can be accepted as the birth of mission. Christ is the first and the greatest missionary of the Father. Born with the incarnation of the Word missionary activity continues in time through the proclamation and witness of the Church."(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 5 and 6) Jesus Christ is

the source of missionary activity from two points: **the Incarnation** and **the Missionary Mandate**. First, **the Incarnation**, this mystery has a proximate end flowing from its very nature, which is to “recapitulate” that is, together all things under one head, Christ, and an end that we can call ultimate, which is the glory of the Father; that is the way God has chosen to be all in all. (1 Cor 15:28, Eph 1:10) “Even for those who do not explicitly profess faith in him as Savior, salvation comes as a grace from Jesus Christ through the communication with the Holy Spirit.”(John Paul II, 1999, no. 14)

Salvation is always freely given and freely accepted or rejected. Jesus indicated the normal ways, namely through faith and baptism. “And how can they believe if they do not hear? And how will they preach unless they are sent?” (cf. Rom 10:14-15, cf. Mk 16:16; Jn 3:5) These words have always stirred up the Church’s conscience. The incarnation is the wellspring of all graces. Now, the incarnation happens in a concrete human being, localized in time and space. Christ came “to shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death,” because he is “light for revelation to the Gentiles.” (Lk 1:79; 2:32) He must be made present everywhere in an incarnated way. This is the purpose of missionary activity.

Through the resurrection, incarnation reaches its fullness in Jesus who becomes the “universal person”, enabling him to reach each individual in time and space. After the resurrection, Christ became the “New Adam.” The children of this new Adam are born from “water and Spirit” through the ministry of the apostles. Being both God and man, Jesus Christ is naturally the mediator between the Divinity and humanity. (Glover, 2017, p. 112)

Jesus convokes the new people of God and guides them on their pilgrim progress to the real Promised Land. He likens himself to the gate, the only entrance to the sheepfold of the Father. “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (Jn 10:1; 14:6; cf. 1 Tim 2:5-6; Acts 2:38; 1 Cor 15:22, 45-49) The task of the mission is to show this way, to point to this gate, so that people may walk and enter to the Father **as mediator of revelation**. Jesus is the Word. “No one has ever seen God, but the only begotten Son, has made him known.”(Legrand, 1990, p. 70) His presence and action are that "grace upon grace" which John rejoices in, this is the truth that liberates, the abundant life that he shares with his sheep, His word conveys eternal life: “Now, this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”(Kavunkal, 1995, p. 27) The Son is sent to all, because the Word is “the true light that gives light to everyone who is coming into this world” Jesus himself provided for this continuity, sending the “Energizer”, namely the Holy Spirit, who guarantees the sameness of the mission of Christ and the Church. (Jn 20:21-23, cf. Jn 1:1, 9, 16, 18; 8:32; 10:10; 17:3)

**Jesus Christ a mediator of Salvation,** Jesus Christ is the visible source of forgiveness of sins and the purpose of his death. When Jesus is lifted up-which means crucified- he would draw all people to himself to the source of living water flowing from his wounded heart. Simon Peter recognized in Jesus the source of the words of eternal life inspired by the Spirit, he uttered the scandalous word: “Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” The Son who, as incarnated, sends the Spirit to the world; the Spirit is like the rain that makes the seed (the incarnation) blossom into saving fruits. The Spirit bears witness to Christ, as the disciples ought to do. The presence of the Spirit in a place is a call to missionary action by the Church.(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 4)

Second, the Missionary Mandate. **In history, these words have been the most decisive incentive for missionary zeal, especially in times of crisis. The Church has always been convinced that her right to evangelize arises from the almighty sovereignty of the Risen Lord. Jesus as the new Moses, proclaiming the new law to the new Israel...then the missionary mandate appears as a constitutive element of the Church. It is the final command of the Lord, imposing on all Christians the obligation of obedience.(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 1) The purpose of forming the group of the Twelve was “to send them to preach”; the group is the “kernel of the New Israel” (cf. Mk 3:14)(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 5) Jesus makes the missionary command like the Ten Commandments, the law of the New Israel. Jesus breathes the Spirit upon the disciples, and this missionary mandate creates the Church. (cf. Jn 20:22) Now, the Spirit continues creating new humankind through the mission of the Church. So the commission to preach the gospel belongs to the essence of the Church by the will of its founder and by the presence of his Spirit.**

The obedience of the Church to Christ is similar to the obedience of Jesus to his Father: unconditional obedience (which *Ad Gentes* calls “a necessity” and “a sacred duty”). (cf. 1 Cor 9:16)(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 25) Christian obedience consists in following in the steps of Christ, driven only by the often “foolish” dynamism of love. “The obligation of spreading the faith is imposed on every disciple of Christ, according to his ability.”(Vatican II, 2006b, no. 17)

The deep reason is that the whole Church is built upon the apostles and therefore, is “apostolic” in all its members and dimensions; the mission of the apostles touches everybody. As successors of the apostles, the bishops receive from Christ the mission to teach all nations and to preach the Gospel to every creature. (cf. Mk 16:15)(Vatican II, 2006b, nos. 23–24) The first missionary is the pope, in his function as head of the Episcopal body. As for priests, they receive the missionary mandate at their ordination. Since no one can be saved who has not first

believed, priests, as co-workers with their bishops, have as their primary duty, the proclamation of the Gospel of God to all, so that, obeying the command of the Lord, "Go into the whole world and preach the gospel to every creature, they may establish and increase the people of God. (Kaczor, 2008, p. 58) A priest is not ordained to take care of a parish, but of the world Christ has redeemed.

#### The Ecclesiological Roots of Missionary Activity

"The pilgrim Church is missionary by her very nature, for it is from the mission of the Son and the mission of the Holy Spirit that she takes her origin, by the decree of God the Father. (Vatican II, 2006a, no. 2) The very being of the Church is missionary because its purpose her Maker intends to serve as an instrument of God's plan of salvation. The essence of the Church appears then, in its very origin, (the mission of the Son and the Spirit), in its end (realizing the plan of the Father), and in its existential reality (being the sacrament of universal salvation).

It is the People of God, sent to the whole world to be the "instrument for the redemption of all," in other words, "that for each and all it may be the visible sacrament of this saving unity." (Vatican II, 2006b, nos. 9, 48 and 59) The Church has been divinely sent to all nations that it might be the universal sacrament of salvation. The divine plan of salvation is sacramental. It means that God wants to grant his invisible grace visibly.

The sacramental sign is formed by the elements that make the Church visible: the faithful people united with their pastors, the Scriptures, the rites, a Christian way of life, and so on. The sacramentality of the Church is derived from Christ, the primordial sacrament, whose body it is. Mother Church "exhorts its children to purify and renew themselves, so that the sign of Christ may shine more brightly over the face of the Church." (Vatican II, 2006b, no. 15)

The most efficacious element of this sacramentality is unity, for a divided church- or community- is a broken sign. A united Church would be "like a standard lifted high for the nations to see," with a double effect: to irradiate and to attract. (cf. Jn 17:21) Thus, all the members of the Church become "Christ bearers," signs and instruments of Christ's presence in their societies. The Church sacrament is Catholic. "Catholic" means "total", "integral", literally "holistically Christian and universal". (John Paul II, 1989, no. 51)

This characteristic of universality which adorns the People of God is a gift from the Lord himself. Because of it, the Catholic Church strives energetically and constantly "to bring all humanity with all its riches back to Christ its head in the unity of his Spirit." "Catholic" means "all-embracing or holistic also from a cultural point of view, "unity in diversity." "Therefore, all children of the Church should have a lively awareness of their responsibility to

the world, should foster in themselves a truly catholic spirit, and should spend their energies in the work of evangelization.”(Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 85)

## **Missionary Nature of the Different Forms of Christian Vocation in the Church**

### **The Missionary Dimension of the Ordained Ministers**

By nature, every priestly ministry shares in the universality of the mission Christ entrusted to his apostles. This teaching senses that the priest shares the mission Christ entrusted to the apostles; in unity with the bishops he is called to have an authentic concern for all the churches, ready for everything which serves their good.(Iswandir & Riyanto, 2021, p. 24) For this reason, the formation of candidates to the priesthood must aim at giving them "the true Catholic spirit", whereby they will learn to transcend the bounds of their diocese, country, or rite, and come to the aid of the whole Church in readiness to preach the Gospel anywhere.(Pope Paulus, 1965, no. 20)

Therefore, all priests must have a missionary spirit open to the needs of the Church and the world, with concern for those farthest away, and especially for the non-Christian groups in their area. They should have at heart, in their prayers and particularly at the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the concern of the whole Church for all of humanity. (Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 67)

Furthermore, precisely because within the Church's life the priest is a man of communion, in his relation with all people he must be a man of mission and dialogue. Deeply rooted in the truth and charity of Christ, and impelled by the desire and imperative to proclaim Christ's salvation to all, the priest is called to witness in all his relationships to fraternity, service, and a common quest for the truth, as well as a concern for the promotion of justice and peace.(John Paul II, 1992, no. 18)

Today in particular, the pressing pastoral task of the new evangelization calls for the involvement of the entire People of God and requires a new fervor, new methods, and new expressions for the announcing and witnessing of the Gospel. This task demands priests who are deeply and fully immersed in the mystery of Christ and capable of embodying a new style of pastoral life, marked by a profound communion with the Pope, the Bishops, and other priests, and fruitful cooperation with the lay faithful, always respecting and fostering the different roles, charisms and ministries present within the ecclesial community. The life of a missionary priest is manifested in openness and dialogue with non-believers, immersion in the problems of life, and concern for the excluded and especially the poor while remaining united with the Lord in prayer. (Arnel F, 1999, p. 41)

Priests are called to prolong the presence of Christ, embodying his way of life and making him visible amid the flock entrusted to their care. Priests exist and act to proclaim the

Gospel to the world and to build up the Church in the name and person of Christ the head and shepherd.(John Paul II, 1992, no. 15)

Priestly spirituality should be missionary. The priest is ordained not only for a particular diocese but for the salvation of the whole world. His missionary spirit urges him to open his eyes to the needs of the missions and, by prayer and material support, can truly assist in the missionary task. And when a priest feels God calling him to announce the good news in other lands, he will joyfully respond. Home for him is where God calls him. Respecting Christian freedom and fostering the initiative of those he serves, he will not presume merely to demand obedience. He would rather seek consensus through dialogue.(Vatican II, 2006b, no. 37)

### **The Missionary Dimension of Consecrated Life**

The Church acknowledged the vocation of consecrated persons for building the body of the Church. The consecrated life is at the very heart of the Church as a decisive element for her mission.(Paus Yohanes Paulus II, 1996, no. 3) By living with the poor, the religious themselves get evangelized and will obtain the capacity to recognize new faces of Christ in Asia. The vow of poverty demands the religious to love all people, especially the poor and disposed of, to listen to the cries of the poor, to make their goods vehicles of love, sharing, and communion, to live in the dialogue of life with the poor, to live a simple lifestyle and to be always detached from material things. (O'Murchu, 2005, p. 128) Through evangelical poverty, the religious denounced the idolatry of possessions and living always in solidarity with the poor.

Therefore, consecrated persons are asked to bear a renewed and vigorous witness to self-denial and restrain, in a form of fraternal life inspired by principles of simplicity and hospitality, also as an example to those who are indifferent to the needs of their neighbor. This witness will of course be accompanied by a preferential love for the poor and will be shown by sharing the conditions of life of the most neglected. (Paus Yohanes Paulus II, 1996, nos. 89–90)To sum up, the vow of poverty is a militant love for the poor which demands the religious to struggle for justice for the poor.

Chastity demands from the religious vow to love all people, especially those no one loves, to renounce to their own family to build a new family of the Kingdom. The vow of chastity is a militant love that demands to struggle against the divorce of sex and love in society, against the abuse and exploitation of children and women through their universal love and compassion for all.(Vatican II, 1965, no. 67)

Amid the hedonistic culture in the world today, the joyful living of perfect chastity as a witness to the power of God's love manifested in the weakness of the human condition is the

prophetic answer to consecrated life in our contemporary society. These examples of chastity lived by consecrated persons show balance, self-mastery, an enterprising spirit, and psychological and affective maturity.(Vatican II, 1965, no. 12)

Obedience demands from the religious vow to love all people, especially those deprived of freedom, to struggle for the liberation of the weak and oppressed, for their human rights and dignity, to struggle for the will of God to be fulfilled, to build a world in which everyone is free.(Vatican II, 1965, no. 79)

### **The Missionary Dimension of the Laity**

The newness of the Christian life is the foundation and title for equality among all the baptized in Christ, for all the members of the People of God.(John Paul II, 1989, no. 15) The need for all the faithful to share in this responsibility is not merely a matter of making the apostolate more effective; it is a right and duty based on their baptismal dignity, whereby " the faithful participate, for their part, in the threefold mission of Christ as priest, prophet and king". (John Paul II, 1989, no. 14) Because of their secular character, the lay faithful are especially called to seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering these by the will of God. This missionary obligation and right is all the more insistent in circumstances in which only through them are people able to hear the Gospel and to know Christ.(Konsili Vatikan II, 1993a, no. 6 and 13)

Let the lay faithful constantly foster a feeling for their diocese, of which the parish is a kind of cell, and be always ready at their bishops' invitation to participate in diocesan projects. Indeed, lay people should not limit their cooperation to the parochial or diocesan boundaries but strive to extend it to interparochial, inter-diocesan, national, and international fields, the more so because the daily increase in population mobility, the growth of mutual bonds, and the ease of communication no longer allow any sector of society to remain closed in upon itself. Thus they should be concerned about the needs of the People of God scattered throughout the world." (John Paul II, 1989, no. 25)

The arena of their missionary work is the vast and complex worlds of politics, economics, and industry, education, on the local, national, and international levels. Within the local church, there are various types of services, functions, ministries, and ways of promoting the Christian life carried out by the lay faithful. (Collins, 2014, p. 90)

The rapid growth of "ecclesial movements" filled with missionary dynamism occurring in many Churches is a new development in recent times. When these movements humbly seek to become part of the life of the local Churches and are welcomed by Bishops and priests within diocesan and parish structures, they represent a true gift of God both for new evangelization and missionary activity properly so-called. In the missionary activity of the

local Churches, the different forms of the lay apostolate should be held in esteem, with respect for their nature and aims.(Pope John Paul II, 1990, no. 72)

Regarding the missionary dimension of catechists, Vatican II, *Ad Gentes* speaks of them as “that army of catechists, both men and women, worthy of praise, to whom missionary work among the nations owes so much. Imbued with the apostolic spirit, they make a singular and necessary contribution to the spread of the faith and of the Church by their strenuous efforts.”(Vatican II, 2006a, no. 17) Catechists have an important role in missionary work because they received proper formation for the mission and they are outstanding in their living of the Christian life. As missionaries, they are to present the Gospel teaching and engage in liturgical worship and works of charity. (Provost, 1986, Can.785§1)

### **Formation for Mission of the Different Forms of Christian Vocation in the Church**

In this section, the researchers only explain about formation for mission for the laity. Formation for Mission for the Ordained Ministers and Consecrated are not something essential on this topic. The term “laity” refers to all the faithful who by Baptism are incorporated into Christ, and placed in the People of God in their way share the priestly, prophetic, and kingly office of Christ. (Vatican II, 2006b, no. 31) The lay faithful seek the kingdom of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God. Far from being taken away from the world, their baptismal consecration immerses them as Christ’s disciples in the world. It is in the world that they are to grow in holiness. It is there especially- in the family, work, and recreation, in the vast field of economics, politics, and culture- that they are to evangelize others. (H. Richard McCord, n.d., p. 50)

The fundamental images of the Church in the Scriptures and Vatican II as People of God and Body of Christ demand that pastors and lay faithful must collaborate in the diffusion and sanctification of the whole Church. Christ’s redemption is carried out not only by the pastoral activity of the individual priest but by all the members of the Church. (Atkinson, 2014, p. 59) The laity together with the clergy and religious constitutes the Lord’s Community of Disciples. The laity is never meant to have only a passive function.

If the role of the hierarchy is to teach and to interpret authentically the norms of morality to be followed...it belongs to the laymen, without waiting passively for orders and directives, to take the initiative freely and infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws, and structures of the community in which they live.”(Vatican II, 2011, no. 43)

The whole Church is missionary, and the work of evangelization is a basic duty of the People of God. The lay faithful precisely because they are members of the Church, have the vocation and mission to proclaim the Gospel... The entire mission of the Church then is concentrated and manifested in evangelization.... Evangelization is the fundamental apostolate

of the Church.(John Paul II, 1989, no. 33) The laity's involvement in the work of evangelization does not in any way diminish the character of the proclamation of the Gospel as the primary duty and function of the priests and bishops.

The lay faithful do not limit their apostolate and mission to a general witnessing through a good life nor to volunteer work in some liturgical or sacramental activities of the Church. A number of them are called by God to a stable commitment in the form of apostolate exercised either on a full-time or part-time basis for the service of the church. Such, for example, is the work of catechists and personnel in Church offices, Church hospitals, and Catholic schools.(Naibaho, 2023, p. 3917)

The laity's field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complex world of education, politics, society, and economics, as well as the world of culture, sciences and arts, international life, of the mass media. In this vast arena of pastoral engagement, the Church needs the special gifts, individual and collective, of farmers, fishermen, workers, mass media practitioners, educators and lawyers, civil servants, those in the medical and nursing services, and professionals in the various strata of society of all the lay faithful, rich and poor to fulfill the mission of communicating Christ. (Caroline Farey, 2011, p. 67)

Every area of the lay faithful's lives, as different as they are, enters into the plan of God, who desires that these very areas be the "places in time" where the love of Christ is revealed and realized for both the glory of God and the service of others. Every activity, every situation, every precise responsibility for example, skill and solidarity in work, love and dedication in the family and the education of children, service in society and public life, and the promotion of truth in the area of culture-are the occasions ordained by Divine Providence for a continuous exercise of faith, hope and charity.(John Paul II, 1989, p. 59)

The Christian family should be a place where the truth of the Gospel is the rule of life and the gift that the family members bring to the wider community.(John Paul II, 1999, no. 46) Therefore, parents should strive to make the moments when the family naturally comes together an opportunity for prayer, Bible reading, and reflection, for appropriate rituals presided over by the parents, and for healthy recreation. This will help the Christian family to become a heart of evangelization, where each member experiences God's love and communicates it to others. Children also have a role of evangelization, both in their family and in the wider community for the future of the world and the Church passes through the family. (Armstrong, 2018, p. 93)

Vatican II, *Ad Gentes* suggests the formation of a mission for lay missionaries:

All missionaries should be prepared and trained. They need to be formed about a common knowledge of the peoples, cultures, religions, missiology, and so on. They also have

to know the teachings of the Church regarding missionary activity, the present state of the missions, and the methods considered most effective in the present time. This formation needs to be in line with the vision of “a new way of being Church”, and familiar with dialogical models of mission. So they can understand, appreciate, foster, and evangelize the culture of the environment in which they will be sent. (Vatican II, 2006a, no. 26)

#### 4. CONCLUSION

This research illustrates the missionary nature of the Church and all the different forms of Christian vocation in the Church, from Mission as *Missio Dei*, Trinitarian source of missionary activity, and the missionary dimensions of ordained ministry, consecrated life, and the laity according to the documents of the Church. It also provides some theological reflections on the formation of mission for the ordained ministers, consecrated persons, and the laity (lay leaders) according to the Church’s teachings.

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