Religious Education in Authentic Human Development:
A Theological-Ethical Consideration

Fr. Anozie Onyema

Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt, Nigeria

From a theological ethical moral view, it seems obvious that adequate religious moral education is a sine qua non for authentic human development necessary for a solid nation-building. Although, state and religion are separated from each other, this should not imply a total dichotomy of religious influence on socio-political matters. A pure secularised world that has nothing to do with God, a society devoid of any form of religious affiliation, a society purely human having neither to do with God nor the spirits, such a society seems inconceivable and unrealistic and may not even be human. Experience shows that to be human demands some form of acknowledgment of a superior being, whose influence may inform one's basic choices. The nature of the human person shows that there is nothing of the material that does not take its bearing from the religious-spiritual disposition of the person. Experience also confirms that a good moral life or virtuous life draws faith. St James the apostle implies this, when he says faith without good works or good moral life is dead (James 2:18). This can also be applicable to Abraham who is judged righteous because of his faith in God, i.e., because he obeyed God's command. Without faith, it is impossible to do God's will, i.e. live a good moral life (Hebr 11:6). On the other hand, there are many forms of development, for instance: economic development, agricultural development, scientific, rural or urban development, which narrow into the human development that seems to determine their level. However, to have a solid sustainable development demands an adequate religious-moral education of the people, which functions both in the informal and formal forms of education. In as much as religious moral education gives solid grounding for adequate formation of the human person, the end result, and the development of the human person should at the same time reflect the national development. Development thus understood is holistic embracing the good of the individual as well as the nation. This article argues that authentic human development that may produce a national development worthy of the name draws from adequate religious moral education imparted on the citizens. It shows also that a worthy national development is a fore test of the development of the citizens of that nation, which in turn indicates their commitment to the common good. It is through the application of the common good that individuals reach their desired goals and so be able to contribute to the enrichment of the nation. This article suggests that good moral life is the manifestation of virtue learnt and practiced, which leads to adequate human development that eventually brings about solid national development. This type of development can be compared to what Pope Benedict XVI calls true social development, which respects the dignity of the all human beings.

Fr. Anozie Onyema, (Ph.D) is a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Umuahia. He is a Professor and Head of Ethics/Moral Theology Department at the Catholic Institute of West Africa, Port Harcourt. He is the Liaison Officer/(Deputy Rector) and the current President of The Catholic Association of Moral Theologian Nigeria (CAMTHN). He is member of the Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church and Member of the Global Ethics. He is the author of Morality in the Society – as the Body so the Society, 2011; also, Theological Ethical Moral Study (TEMS) vols 1&2, Hamburg, 2013 and other books and numerous articles in his area of specialisation

The Issue of Religious Moral Education

It seems to be a unanimous consensus that the absence of adequate religious moral education is responsible for the collapse of authentic human development reflected in national retrogression. Commenting on the sad consequence of the government takeover of schools, Adibe notes that the society and the Church are suffering the adverse effect of the government takeover of schools, where the moral life of the youth was pruned. He further says that the education decorum is no more palatable as in the time of the missionaries. Now the youth and their parents receive moral instructions mainly on Sundays, for about 15 to 30 minutes weekly. This is not enough, he observes, since this present method of moral instruction in schools is yet to yield the desired result because more crimes are reported daily in the society (Adibe, 1992). Also, due to the over crowed nature of the churches, particularly in Nigeria and most African countries, and also the lack of any organised moral education in the schools, the required results cannot be attained. Therefore, it could be said that the fall in moral standard can be attributed to the dichotomy between religious moral education and development, which tends to be centred only on the material. It may not be right to hold that people can be good without adequate religious moral education, which develops the mind and body.

Therefore, the renewed consciousness attached to religious moral education in the 3rd millennium could be seen as a call to authentic human development. Here one may suggest that lay people be given grants, so that they can have adequate religious moral education in institutions where the religious atmosphere enables a sound development of the human person. Such people will in future introduce noble structures that are conducive to good moral living. The type of leaders Africa had in the 1950s and 1960s attest to authenticity of character. Their immediate concern was the growth, unity and good of the nation. Those educated and trained in mission schools, such as Nnamdi Azikwe, M. I. Okpara, Awolowo, and also Nkurumah of Ghana and others sought for the development of the nation through their commitment to duty and transparent leadership. What this implies is that in order to build up any nation to the required standard, the religious moral education of the citizens from early childhood is a sine qua non. People cannot care for the national growth or good, if they do not have the right moral rectitude necessary for honest and sincere living. If the citizenry is morally adequately formed about the value of life, they would be in the position to appreciate it. Experience shows that learning is best at childhood, when the mind is still open and eager to know. Psychologists deem the tender age of a child the most important learning-phase in the process of education and for moral education it should be the same.

The introduction of the religious moral instruction in the school system by the early missionaries could be interpreted along this line. Without God human endeavours may likely come to naught. Evidently those places where the missionaries were able to establish schools that the work of evangelisation grew at a very fast rate and at the same time brought some form of material development of the people in return. This happened because what was taught was also put into practical living—morals. Although the missionary activity of evangelisation of the people in Africa took the form of formal education, the informal form of education acted as the basis. Evangelisation which could be seen as religious moral education imparted into the people the respect and love of God and humanity. The Igbo, for instance, could not resist appreciating the commitment with which the missionaries attended to education: "The most striking thing to the natives about the missionaries was leaving their countries, (not for any economic reasons like the other whites at Onitsha) to help

educate and make the people Christians" (Nwosu, 1992, p. 208). To buttress this, Nwosu cites one of the missionaries as having written:

> with regard to our volunteered help, they (the natives) could not get over their astonishment and admiration of the fact that we have come from a distant country not to trade and make money like the generality of the whites living in the place but simply to do good, to instruct and form their children.[1]

Clearly, it is not only in Igboland that the missionaries employed education as a means to form and convert people to God. Drawing attention to the importance of education, Saayman writes that the immense importance of the role played by Christian mission schools in Africa is self-evident. One measure of their influence is the number of African political leaders educated in mission schools. When African heads of state or cabinet ministers in the 1960s and 1970s met, their meetings often resembled meetings of a mission School Old Boys' Club. This reflected the fact that churches and mission societies in Africa controlled most of the schools in Africa well into the 20th century (Saayman, 1991). The title of the article, "Who owns the schools will own Africa", can only be a proof that moral religious education or evangelisation is very central to development, which enables people to be adequately formed, so that they could carry out their duty with devotion. Schools at all levels remain the places where younger generations are formed.

Religious/Moral Education

It seems by religious education is meant the process whereby a child acquires the consciousness of the divine that informs his community, is differentiated from moral education, which is a deliberate activity, carried primarily by professional teachers, for the purpose of fostering moral excellence in the young. Moral education involves not just merely teaching the children the morality of the group but also showing them the respects in which it falls short, and how it may be set aright. In Kurt Baier's view, moral education must aim at teaching morality which allows one to answer the three central questions of ethics. For otherwise, the prevalence of the morality taught will appear to the pupils, not as a necessary condition of good life, but as an unnecessary evil. Furthermore, Lawrence Kohlberg suggests six stages in moral development. The first level contains is the pre-conventional level consisting of: (1) punishment and obedience orientation; (2) instrument relativist orientation. The second level is the conventional level made up of; (3) interpersonal concordance or good boy – nice girl orientation; (4) law and order orientation. The third level contains stages; (5) social-contract legalistic orientation; and (6) universal ethical-principle orientation. He, however, defines moral education as the stimulation of the natural development of the individual child's own moral judgement and capacities, thus allowing him to use his own moral judgement to control his behaviour. He differentiates stimulation from teaching of fixed rules arguing that the former assists the child to develop capacities inherent in him/her, while the latter imposes a pattern that may be alien. What this fossilises into is that religious moral education bothers on being educated, so that one is able to make sound moral judgement. Kohlberg further differentiates but does not separate moral action from moral education. He points out that for Aristotle virtue is of two kinds, intellectual and moral and that learning by doing is the only real method in the moral sphere (Kohlberg, 1971). While intellectual virtue owes its birth and growth to teaching, moral virtue comes about as a result of habit. The moral virtues we get by first exercising them; we become just by doing just acts, temperate by doing temperate acts, brave by doing brave acts.

---

[1] Nwosu (1991), quoted from: *CSE Community Journal*, 29 December 1885, to 10 January, 1886.

The foregoing implies that moral education inculcates the ability to make moral judgement about the rightness or wrongness of an action. For Kohlberg, not all judgements of good and right are moral judgements. Moral judgements tend to be universal, inclusive, consistent and grounded on objective, impersonal, or ideal grounds. He also indicates that sometimes not all value judgements are based on principles, but the fact that there is a distinctively moral form of judgement demands that moral judgements be principled. The distinctive formal features of morality include prescriptivity and universality, which imply autonomy of moral choices or obligation (Kohlberg, 1971). In his view, moral principle is a universal mode of choosing, a rule of choosing which we want all people to adopt in all situations. Principle, according to him, implies something more abstract than rule. Though Kohlberg (1971) held that all thoughtful men hold moral principle to mean a general guide to choose rather than a rule of action, he suggests that moral principles imply that there is no ultimate separation of form and content in moral analysis. Obviously, moral questions are not resolved through logical and clear deductions from concrete conduct of being-human, rather moral solutions are an insight and understanding capable of corresponding to the concrete conduct of being-human in each specific situation (Josef Fuchs, 1980). For this, to hold implies an important moral factor—faith. Those who talk of moral education, do so from almost a purely rational perspective. This is defective because the grounding force seems to be reason alone and not faith built on God. Reason grounds its basis on utilitarian; this is deficient because it is limited to the material gain and not the spiritual. This demands that another element be added to the content of moral education—the religious.

Fundamental Moral Education

The *Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education* (SCCE) teaches that the harmonious development of the human person progressively reveals in each of us the image of a child of God. The *SCCE* draws from her document *Gravissimum Educationis* and restates that true education aims at the formation of the human person with respect to one's ultimate goal. She also indicates that in treating Christian education, Vatican Council II draws attention to the necessity of offering "a positive and prudent sex education" to children and youth (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983). In the past, sex education (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983) did overshadow a holistic religious moral education, just as the secular moral education did not put enough attention on the religious content. However, now the effort in religious moral education is to strike a balance in the moral formation. Moral philosophy as such teaches moral values without reference to an ultimate Source of Goodness that gives it grounding. However, in order that moral education is at the same time religious, it follows that it should be an integral aspect of evangelisation. Concretely, the fact that morals—practical living draw from faith can be buttressed by the teaching of the Apostle James, who teaches that faith should be translated into moral life. In this regard, morality is a product of faith. It could be said that without faith, moral education is inadequate.

Although Aquinas does not talk about religious moral education, but what he says of education surely bears the imprint of religion, with attachment to the sacred. Because of the centrality of God in humanity, Aquinas gives the education of children, which should bring them to worship God in a primary place. For him, the chief good of marriage is not just the offspring but to bring them up to the worship of God. Because of the importance of education, namely; to bring children to the knowledge and worship of God, it is an impediment if parents are *ab initio* so constituted that they cannot bring their children up in one faith in God. Therefore, since education is the work of parents in common, each of them intends to bring up the child to the worship of God

according to their own faith. Consequently, if they are of different beliefs, their intentions will run contrary, and therefore there cannot be a fitting marriage between them.[2] He further opines that nature intends not only the begetting of offspring, but also its education and development until it reaches the perfect state of maturity, which is the state of virtue. In Aristotle's view (Ethica Nicomachea viii, 11, 12), we derive three things from our parents, namely: existence, nourishment, and education.[3]

In his Angelus,[4] John Paul II indicates that in the final "Declaration" of the Assembly, the Synod Fathers explicitly affirmed: "We became more certain just how much the new evangelization ... is the common task of all Christians and how much the credibility of the Church ... will depend on this".[5] Through the practice of virtue articulated in good morals, in this case, the Christian religion would show her credulity. The Holy Father further teaches that the urgent task of the new evangelization, required during this present historical moment, asks all believers to be united in professing faith in the one and triune God, and in the Son of God incarnate, Redeemer of mankind. In doing so, through their constant efforts for mutual respect and understanding, they bear witness to everyone of the hope that is in them (cf. 1 Pt 3:15). With its appeal to be witnesses of Christ who has set us free, the Special Assembly for Europe of the Synod of Bishops draws the attention of all Christians to the impelling need for evangelization, which according to John Paul II necessarily involves being concerned for the material well-being of one's neighbor and seeking to meet his needs. This would be effective if it culminates in the practice of the sacraments.[6]

Furthermore, the Vatican II Council Fathers give the responsibility of teaching religious moral education to the Church. The Fathers feeling very keenly the weighty responsibility of diligently caring for the moral and religious education of all her children, hold that the Church must be present with her own special affection and help for the great number who are being trained in schools that are not Catholic. This is possible by the witness of the lives of those who teach and direct them, by the apostolic action of their fellow-students,[7] but especially by the ministry of priests and laymen who give them the doctrine of salvation in a way suited to their age and circumstances and provide spiritual aid in every way the times and conditions allow. The Church reminds parents of the duty that is theirs to arrange and even demand that their children be able to enjoy these aids and advance in their Christian formation to a degree that is abreast of their development in secular subjects. Therefore, the Church esteems highly those civil authorities and societies which, bearing in mind the pluralism of contemporary society and respecting religious freedom, assist families so that the education of their children can be imparted in all schools according to the individual moral and religious principles of the families.[8] The point is that the Second Vatican Council Fathers consider it an apostolate of great importance when catholic teachers and associates work in the schools with the aim to transmitting Christian faith.[9] Also, the Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education confirms the Church's mission in teaching morals when she says that in

---

[2] Aquinas Thomas, *Summa Excursion:* Commentary on Book IV "Of The Sentences" (Matrimony), Q. 59: @1 Of Disparity Of Worship As An Impediment To Marriage.

[3] Aquinas Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, Q. 41: Of the Sacrament of Matrimony as Directed to an Office of Nature @1: Whether matrimony is of natural law?

[4] See Paul II (1992). Confidently pray for Christian unity.

[5] "Final Declaration", No. 7; see *L'Osservatore Romano*, Eng. Ed., 23-30 December 1992, p. 13.

[6] See Paul II (1988). The new evangelization will promote justice, development and respect for human dignity.

[7] *Schema of the Declaration on Lay Apostolate*, 1965, nos. 12+16.

[8] *Schema on the Declaration on Religion Liberty*, 1965, No.5.

[9] *The Declaration on the Importance of Education, Gravissimum Educationis*, § 7. "Moral and Religious Education in All Schools".

accomplishing her mission, the Church has the duty and the right to take care of the moral education of the baptized. The contribution of the school in all education, and particularly in these matters which are so delicate, must be carried out in agreement with the family. This presupposes in teachers and in others involved whether implicitly or explicitly, a correct criterion about the motive of their contribution, and training in order to be able to treat these matters with delicacy and in a climate of serene trust (Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, 1983). One notices the immediate and mediate end of all this is the adequate development of the human person.

Adequate Development of the Human Person (Anozie, 2003)

Development and liberation are two interchangeable terms that also, in a more technical sense, could refer to emancipation, or to be freed from the powers that dominate. Development according to Laurentin seems to have been rapidly devalued as a result of abuses done in its name. He points out that the word is at the moment hypocritically and falsely used and so does not serve its purpose as originally intended. Development seems to have left its meaning of unfolding, expansion or growth. This can be seen in the fact that countries termed developing, do not get any better. Actually, they seem to be getting down the scale (Laurentin, 1969). This may explain how the social concern of the church is directed towards the authentic human development[10] and respect for the human person because of the intrinsic worth or value (Haris, 1966). The human "person" according to Selling Joseph constitutes a concept, a working hypothesis constructed through the consensus of an interpretative community. As a concept, neither is it reducible to a single individual, person is always person-in-community, nor can it be adequately described without considering the multi-dimensionality of being human (Selling, 1998). It is arguable that development has a biblical origin and root in the creation narrative. God in creating the human person male and female tells them, "increase and multiply and subdue the earth" [Gen 1:28]. To say this does not necessarily imply automatic growth or development, but the human person had still to cultivate the soil, in other words had yet to learn, and be morally formed. So, the words of Genesis at least tacitly imply that development is realisable through articulated relationship with God. In the same vein, moral religious education is not possible without adequate affiliation to God, the source and centre of creation. Religious moral education empowers people to self reliance or liberation which is not possible without adequate development. The point is that only human beings can be evangelised and morally formed. Therefore, development, which results from religious moral education, is important so that the human person can realise one's final end—salvation. Adequate religious moral education ensures that people attend to their duty with honesty and transparency, by acting justly, being accountable, selfless, and considerate, which constitute the hallmark for effective national development, which is the fruit of authentic human development.

Authentic Human Development

From a religio-political stance, development can be given the new name for peace, whose trial should challenge all political leaders clamouring for solidarity and brotherly togetherness. Let him who wants peace give human development a chance. There is no doubt that war and military preparations constitute the major enemies of the integral development of people (Paul II, 1987; Paul VI, 1967). The idea of "having and being", which was underscored in the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* indicates that there are some people—the few who though possess much—do not really succeed in "being" because, through reversal of the hierarchy of values, they are

---

[10] See Paul II (1992). This Encyclical Letter is in the honor of the 20th Anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*, by Paul VI (1967). See AAS 59(1967) 257 - 299.

hindered by the cult of "having"; and there are others—who have little or nothing—do not succeed in realising their basic human vocation because they are deprived of essential goods (Paul II, 1987, No. 28). Development should be integral and not just economic but should include man's vocation (Paul II, 1987). It is also spiritual and physical. St. Athanatius (1974), in his sermon, said the same of salvation, "our salvation is no illusion, nor is it salvation of the body only: the salvation of whole man, body and soul, was really brought about in the Word Himself" (p. 253). It is a mistake to think of a development based on only one aspect of human life.

In order to achieve authentic development of the nation, the government should assist the Church embark on adequate religious moral education of the people. Certainly, development is associated with growth, which is the product of proper education of the person, such that a person is able to order his/her priorities correctly in the scale of preference. For this to be possible, development should be intrinsically linked up with culture, since in the culture children learn informally in the family and the society. Authenticity of cultural roots ensures that the people remain gratefully faithful to their cultural values, which animate their human relationship. This provokes not just a return to the past, but projects into the windows of the future, where God dwells in the hearts of men. Until that is achieved and God becomes an all in all, there can be no true development. This is because a development, which is not grounded in God, may not stand the test of time. Reason is not all that is required in seeking true development, but deep-rooted faith. The type of faith meant here is that, which makes all to be conscious of the fact that this world is made for all the poor and the rich alike. There are people who think, and this is worse when a whole nation thinks that what is good is only meant for them alone. In addition, belief in a just God, who created all equally should prompt people to think of the good of their fellow human beings and see the misery and pains of others as not only inhuman but should make an honest effort to correct them. To think that some people should perpetually be placed as second-class citizens must be equally seen as a crime

Development which compares with liberation cannot be achieved by the mere mention of it. It has to be backed up with the correct frame of mind and mental disposition necessary to effect the necessary structural changes that will lead to the desired effect. Truly to be developed is to be liberated with the end result of concern for the other. Development is the ability to dictate one's rights and duties and be able to pursue goals in a free frame of mind. But so long as one remains in a certain cocoon, the danger is that one may end up not being real to the exigencies of life. Development therefore enables people to act with clear altruistic purpose, with the desire to arrive at cooperation goals. It could be said that truly developed people see the world as a stage where one has certain objectives to achieve, with the desire to leave it better than one met it; this is the main foundation of solid nation building. It is not just a question of struggling to survive, but rather contributing to elevate and improve the standard of the people.

Development From the Christian Perspective (O'Brien & Shannon, 1998)

At the close of the first decade of his pontificate, precisely on the 30th of Dec. 1987, Pope John Paul II addressed one of his monumental encyclicals *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* to the world. The objective of this encyclical was mainly to pay homage to Pope Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* and to re-affirm the value of its teaching. The encyclical spent time on the issue of development of the human person. In dealing with development from the perspective of the Catholic Social Teaching, one cannot avoid being confronted with the problems of the developing nations. A central question among others is what theology has to offer? Laurentin (1969) seemed to address this question when he opines that theology and development cannot meet on the theoretical plane; or, at

least, a purely theoretical encounter is not very meaningful for men concerned with development. The implication is that theological discussions should be able to address the people's aspiration. In this sense, one could also ask if development has any significant role to play with regard to salvation. Above all, to what extent is authentic development necessary for the full realisation of the human person in the society? Surely development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete; integral, able to promote the good of every person. Although neither the economy may be separated from the human, nor development from civilisation in which it exists, the most central is the human person, each person and each group, which includes even the whole of humanity (Paul VI, 1967). It should further be stated that:

> In the design of God, every man is called upon to develop and fulfil himself, for every life is a vocation. At birth, everyone is granted, in germ, a set of aptitudes and qualities for him to bring to fruition. Their coming to maturity, which will be the result of education received from the environment and personal effort, will allow each man to direct himself towards the destiny intended for him by his creator. Endowed with intelligence and freedom, he is responsible for his fulfilment as he is for his salvation. He is aided, or sometimes impeded, by those who educate him and those with whom he lives, but each one remains, whatever be these influences affecting him, the principal agent of his own success or failure. By the unaided effort of his own intelligence and his will, each man can grow in humanity, can enhance his personal worth, (and) can become more a person. (Paul VI, 1967, No. 15)

Concretely, therefore, the development of the human person refers to progress, which depicts an intellectual capacity to have a perspective in life. Though development is often associated with economic progress, it is not strictly economic growth only, but the ability of the individual to overcome his/her fears and suspicion of the unknown. Anyone who is developed thinks good of the others. Development has a lot to do with religious moral education; to be developed, one needs some form of moral rectitude. Development has to do with the state of the mind; it is the readiness to order things correctly such that others might benefit from them. Development helps not only to encourage people to take initiatives in the right direction and enables them to be open to worthy and helpful ideas, but it makes people have a balanced view of life. According to Museveni (1989), the development of people is defined in reference to their ability or capacity to influence their environment. It is the ability to master oneself and one's environment for the good of the other. A developed mind thinks good of the other; cares for the other, promotes the good of the other, above all is sensitive about the good of the other. Development is the opposite of stagnation, it is open mindedness, which allows people to share in things that concern them and make their contribution willingly for the good of the nation. Clearly, the type of development envisaged should lead to self realisation and this should be the goal of any authentic development that leads to solid nation building. People should be formed so that they would be capable of making sound moral choices. Moral choices drawn from conviction are built on principles of justice and common good.

Self-Realisation Process to Morally Mature Human Being

Before we conclude this article, it is necessary to indicate the link between adequate religious education and the development of the person that produces morally a mature human being. Since the human fulfilment constitutes, as it were, a summary of all duties, it demands that people make choices that are morally sound bearing the good of the other in mind. In a world such as ours where the human person is brutally vandalised and incessantly intimidated, there is need to restate the worth and dignity of the human person whom all created good should assist to reach his/her divine goal, namely: salvation. The salvation of the human person according

to St. Athanatius concerns the whole of the human person. Furthermore, the good of the human person embraces not just what helps only materially but equally important is what motivates one's spiritual disposition and urges one to strive in the face of difficulties. Thoughtfulness about the good of the other could be grounded in the principle of the common good. Common good refers to the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily (Cf. GS 26). The Aristotelian definition of man adopted by Aquinas defines man not only as a rational animal, but also as a social animal, whose individual good depends upon the common good (Smith, 1998). Essentially, the inherent morality about common good demands respect for persons, which implies respect for fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person through which each performs his/her obligations in the society. Common good demands that each person be developed, since through it each is able to participate optimally in the affairs of one's community (Siroco, 2000). Generally common good includes all the infrastructures that allow persons or groups of persons either as individuals or as communities optimally and ordinarily to achieve self-fulfillment (GS 74). This implies that structures be erected and maintained that would help people achieve their proposed end. It also requires the habit of making adequate employment of available resources having the good of the other in mind. This implies that each group takes care of the need of its group members, which by simple logic imposes on each the responsibility to care for what affects the others. Children and the youth and the adolescent should learn to be conscious of their duty towards others. The fact of common good also demands that laws and precepts are always established, which must be obeyed by all so that a harmonious and ordered society would be possible (Anozie, 2009).

Another indispensable route to self-realisation draws from the mission of Jesus Christ, who came to serve and not to be served and gave his life as ransom for many. The fact that Christ died for all humanity should teach us to be ready to take decisions that help others. This is in consonance with the principle of common good mentioned above. Pope Paul VI (1967) reiterated that by reason of one's union with Christ, the source of life, one attains to new fulfilment of oneself, to a transcendent humanism which gives one the greatest possible perfection; this is the highest goal of personal development. This implies that, since each person is a member of the society and part of the whole of mankind, the fulfilment of individuals should lead to national solidarity. Certainly, the problem of peace in the world today is caused by a one-sided location of the basic needs. Some have everything and more, while a good majority has practically nothing. The inability to strike a balance is a lack on the part of the government, who should see that basic infrastructures are put in place that would enable people to attain their goals.

Conclusion

From the foregoing to be able to achieve a solid national development, authentic development of the individual person arising from adequate religious moral education is a sine qua non. Adequate religious moral education should aim at inculcating sound standards of moral and values in children, the youth and the aged, which would help them make sound moral judgments. This implies that essential virtues, such as honesty, justice, industry, love of God and humanity, and a host of others should systematically be taught from the early developmental stages to mature adulthood. To achieve this, the involvement of the Church who has a moral obligation to spread the mission of Christ in the world is indispensable (Paul II, 1987). The Church through her missionary activities in the world should strive to establish the reign of love and justice in the world. On the one hand, self-realisation is achieved by adequate development, which is brought about by living virtuously. John

Paul II opines that virtue is not something abstract, detached from life, but, on the contrary, it has deep "roots" in life itself, it springs from life and forms it. Virtue has an impact on a man's life, on his actions and behavior.[11] Accordingly, Aquinas holds that virtue implies some perfection of power, i.e. virtue perfects. It is by constantly and consistently acting rightly that one is virtuous. One who always tries to act correctly is virtuous and such a person generally is said to be a good person.[12] It is in being virtuous that one tries to answer the three basic questions in ethics: Who am I? Who ought I to become? How ought I to get there? According to James Keenan, the answer to each question belongs to virtues. He suggests that applying this to the cardinal virtues, the answer to the first question would be a further question: Am I just, temperate, brave and prudent? The second question could be answered thus: become more just, temperate, brave and prudent; while the third question becomes: In which virtuous practices ought I to engage in order to attain that goal? Borrowing from Paul Wandell, he says that the project of moral life is to become a certain kind of person, a virtuous person (Keenan, 1999). To be virtuous implies constantly and consistently to act such that good is done to the other.

As God's image, the apostle Peter teaches that we should supplement our faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. Whoever lacks these things is blind and shortsighted and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins (cf. 1Peter 1:5-9). Just as Jesus told the young man in the scriptures, if you want to have life keep the commandments (Matt 19). This could be interpreted to mean, if you wish to achieve self realisation practice virtue. In effect, avoid being evil in all your actions. Our world can change if we all practice virtue. On the other hand, neither self-realisation nor nation building is possible, if people take it upon themselves to act unjustly and inconsiderately and inflict pains on the others. To live dishonestly by cheating or the removal of people's properties by force, only breeds anger and bad feeling and hatred. The sure way to self-realisation is honesty and respect for other people and their properties. Children should be taught virtue, so that they may imbibe it and internalise it. In order to imbibe the virtues, organised religious moral education the road to nation and self-fulfillment is obligatory.

References

Adibe, E. M. G. (1992). *The crisis of faith and morality of the Igbo Christians of Nigeria*. Onitsha/Awka: Fides Media Publ

Anozie, O. (2003). The development of the human person as a factor of democracy. *JIT, 5*, 156-175.

Anozie, O. (2009). The morality of the common good in service of the human person. *Koinonia, 4*, 113-128.

Benedict VI, P. (2005). *First messages of his holiness Benedict XVI*. Virginia: Pauline Press.

Haris, E. L. (1966). Respect for Human Persons. In R. T. de George (Ed.), *Ethics and society original essays on contemporary moral problems* (pp. 111-132). New York: Doubleday and Co. Inc., , ,

Josef Fuchs, S. J. (1980). Is there a specifically Christian morality? *Readings in Moral Theology*, (2), 3-19.

Keenan J. F. (1999). Proposing cardinal virtues. In C. E. Curran and S. J. R. A. McCormick (Eds.), *Readings in Moral theology No. 11*: *The historical development of fundamental moral theology in the United States* (pp. 281-306). Virginia: Paulist Press.

Kohlberg, L. (1971). Stages of moral development as a basis for moral education. In C. M. Beck, B. S. Crittenden, and E. V. Sullivan (Eds.), *Moral education interdisciplinary approaches* (pp. 23-93). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Laurentin, R. (1969). *Liberation, development & salvation* (Q. C. Underhill, Trans.). New York: Orbis Books.

Museveni, Y. K. (1989). Relationship between the church and the state. In A. T. Joseph and K. Zabajunga Boniface (Eds.), *Church contribution to integral development* (pp. 108-109). Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications.

---

[11] See Paul II (1978), the virtue of temperance, p. 2.

[12] Aquinas Thomas, *Summa Theologica*, Q. 55: Of the Virtues, As to Their Essence, @ 2: Whether human virtue is an operative habit?

Nwosu, C. (1992). *Evangelization in Igboland Evangelii Nuntiandi Applied to a Nigerian Ecclesiastical Province*. Leuven: S.T.D.

O'Brien D. J., & Shannon, T. A. (1998). *Catholic social thought the documentary heritage*. New York: Orbis Books.

Paul II, J. (1987). *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. Virginia: Pauline Books & Media.

Paul II, J. (1992). Sollicitudo Rei Socialis. In D. J. O'Brien and T. A. Shannon (Eds.), *Catholic social thought the documentary heritage*. New York: Orbis Books Maryknoll.

Paul II, J. (January 19, 1992). To the parish choir of the Parish of Sts Perpetua and Felicity in Rome. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1992/january/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19920119_coro-perpetua-felicita.html

Paul II, J. (May 9, 1988). Homily. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/homilies/1988/documents/hf_jp-ii_hom_19880509_salto.html

Paul II, J. (November 22, 1978). General audience. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1978/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19781122.html

Paul VI, P. (1967). *Populurom Progressio*. London: Catholic Truth Society.

Saayman, W. (1991). Who owns the schools will own Africa, Christian mission, education and culture in Africa. *Journal for the Study of Religion, 4*(2), 29-44.

Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education. (1983). Educational guidance in human love. Retrieved from https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/ccatheduc/documents/rc_con_ccatheduc_doc_19831101_sexual-education_en.html

Selling, J. A. (1998). The human person. In B. Hoose (Ed.), *Christian ethics an introduction* (pp. 95-109). London, New York: Continuum.

Siroco, R. A. (Ed.). (2000). Pontifical council for justice and peace: The social agenda of the Catholic Church, New York Burns & Oates.

Smith, J. E. (1998). Natural law and personalism in Veritatis Splendor. In C. E. Curran and S. J. R. A. McCormick (Eds.), *Readings in moral theology No. 10: John Paul and moral theology* (pp. 67-84). New York: Paulist Press.

St. Athanasius. (1974). Letter to Epictectus 5-9. In *The Divine Office* (Vol. I). London: Collins.