

THE ANITEPAM BULLETIN

*The Newsletter of the African Network of Institutions of
Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry*

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ANITEPAM'S GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETS IN NAIROBI, HOLDS CONVERSATIONS WITH CAPA

ANITEPAM's Governing Council met in Nairobi in mid-September 2009. The gathering included sessions with the General Secretary of the Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA), Canon Grace Kaiso. (CAPA endorsed ANITEPAM at the outset of ANITEPAM's ministry, in 1992.)



At ANITEPAM's Governing Council meeting, from left to right, the Revd Seth Ndayirukiye of Burundi; the Very Revd Victor Atta-Baffoe of Ghana; the Revd Prof. Joseph Galgalo of Kenya; the Revd Grace Kaiso, General Secretary of CAPA; the Revd Martin Mgeni of Malawi, ANITEPAM's Corresponding Secretary; and Dr. Esther Mombo of Kenya.

Canon Kaiso saw the importance of ANITEPAM as a catalyst for helping solving theological problems, a servicing arm of the Anglican Communion. He noted that CAPA has a theological Desk and that he would like ANITEPAM to co-ordinate theological issues within CAPA.

Canon Kaiso advised that there was a working team put in place planning for the upcoming CAPA meeting in August next year, and ANITEPAM was asked to nominate two members who will be part of this working team. ANITEPAM's Council chose Dr. Esther Mombo, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, and the Revd Canon. Prof. Joseph D. Galgalo, both of St. Paul's in Limuru, Kenya. Council, chaired by the

Very Revd Victor Atta-Baffoe, Dean of St. Nicholas' Seminary in Ghana, also addressed a number of key issues during the meeting, including a thorough examination of ANITEPAM's ministry. They established an editorial board for ANITEPAM's *Bulletin* and *Journal*, and planned for a significant review and expansion of its data base.

The need for a second African Anglican Women's Consultation (ANITEPAM hosted the first in Harare in 1998) was also recognized by Council, and they agreed that it be held in Nairobi in 2010, funds permitting.

Council confirmed its present regional membership and elected Prof. Galgalo as a second at-large member. Subsequently Canon William [Bill] Domeris, Rector of the College of the Transfiguration in South Africa, accepted appointment for the southern Africa region. A member for Central Africa will come from Bishop Gaul Theological College in Zimbabwe, pending the Rt. Revd Chad Gandiyya's recommendation.

SPECIAL IN THIS ISSUE:

**A STUDY AND DISCUSSION DOCUMENT
FOR THEOLOGICAL PROGRAMMES IN AFRICA**

CHURCH AND MISSION IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA
BY THE VERY REVD VICTOR ATTA-BAFFOE, PH.D.
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NOTE TO LIBRARIES

We mistakenly numbered our May 2009 issue no. 57. That issue was actually our 58th issue. Please check your holdings before you request a 'missing' no. 58. We apologize for the error.

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ANITEPAM

The African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry (ANITEPAM) seeks to strengthen the ministry of theological education throughout Africa.

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ANITEPAM is committed to fostering communication about theological education throughout the continent. Members are encouraged to enter into correspondence with members of our Governing Council.

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ANITEPAM'S MISSION

The African Network of Institutions of Theological Education Preparing Anglicans for Ministry (ANITEPAM) is a non-profit church-related organisation established to serve the African provinces of the Anglican communion by (a) creating an awareness within each province of what is occurring in theological education in other African provinces in Africa; (b) establishing links among Anglican and other theological education work in Africa through inter-seminary and inter-faculty exchange, exploring the activities of other ecumenical organisations involved in similar work, and undertaking regular communication; (c) identifying institutions in Africa and in the world-wide church which provide resources for helping African educators to improve their skills for service to Africa; (d) affirming links with theological education structures throughout the world...; and (e) mutually supporting and strengthening one another as members.

Membership in ANITEPAM is open to any institution or programme in Africa engaged in theological education through which Anglicans are being prepared or strengthened for ministry, at any academic level, whether those trained are lay or ordinands, whether or not it is residential, and whether it is Anglican, ecumenical, non-denominational or a programme of another denomination. In the case of non-Anglican institutions, membership is limited to those which are directly supported by an Anglican diocese or province or which regularly include Anglican students engaged in study with the approval of the diocesan bishop or other official diocesan or provincial agency.

from the by-laws, adopted 20 May 1993

ANITEPAM's Governing Council meeting

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'The meeting was important and timely,' the Revd Martin Mgeni, Corresponding Secretary, remarked, 'because ANITEPAM's challenges were dealt with in detail and it came up with more positive and promising guidelines for ANITEPAM to deliver to the expectation of all who assist the organisation in various ways.'

**A STUDY AND DISCUSSION DOCUMENT
FOR THEOLOGICAL PROGRAMMES IN AFRICA**

CHURCH AND MISSION IN CONTEMPORARY AFRICA

*By the Very Rev'd Victor Atta-Baffoe, Ph.D.
Dean, St. Nicholas Seminary, Cape Coast, Ghana, and
Chairperson, the Governing Council of ANITEPAM*

ANITEPAM considers it part of its ministry to provide resources and to encourage reflection and discussion by faculty and students at Africa's institutions of theological education. This paper reflects that ongoing commitment. At the end of the article are some suggested questions for discussion. You are free to photocopy this article to assist group discussion. Dr. Atta-Baffoe's paper was first presented at a conference in Malaysia. Used by permission.

I

Discussion of the Africa context must begin with Africa reality – reality which is located in time and space. For analysis of this kind, it is worthy to take a closer look at the aspect of Africa reality so as to assess its theological validity. The underlying concern here is to put the discussion into two categories: the religio-cultural dimension and the socio-political dimension of Africa reality.

The Religio-cultural Dimension

The existence of Africa religio-culture is characterized by *cultural pluralism*. This is based on diversities of three major types of cultural pluralism: religion, ethnicity and language.

Religious Pluralism: As it is expressed in most cultures, religion in Africa is an unquestionable cultural reality. It is an integral expression of the African cultural background, and as such, determines the thoughts and actions of the educated professional in modern cities and towns, as well as, the peasant farmer in the village. It is true to say that religion permeates every aspect of African life and so any dichotomy between the religious and the socio-political concerns is false. It is equally true to note that contemporary Africa is a society of mixed religion with three religious traditions: African traditional religion (ATR), Christianity and Islam. Although Christianity and Islam have thrived at the expense of ATR, nonetheless, the underlying philosophy and worldview of traditional religion have by no means declined.

Religious pluralism in African society presents a triple religious heritage for any authentic conversation about both the human experience of reality and of the Ultimate Reality. Although evidence suggests that Christianity is the majority religion in the African society today, one should not underestimate the influence of Islamic religious culture and ATR in the theological expressions and interpretation of Africa social reality. Consequently, any theology of mission must take into account the people's daily experience of life and the struggle for full humanity. The theologian, like the sociologist, need to seek to analyze the effects of religio-cultural systems on human behaviour, as religious beliefs and ideas have a profound influence on praxis.

In a religiously pluralistic society, there may be many religious persuasions within the same cultural environment. For example, in Europe and North America today, citizens can belong to a wide variety of religions, while the predominant culture is the same for all. In contemporary Africa, we have come to terms with the demands of the modern secular state. Culture of modernity demands plurality of individual persuasions but a unity of purpose – a common cultural identity nurtured by a wide variety of individual convictions. This characteristic of modernity has not been fully appreciated. Its implications are that, as far as religion is concerned, Christians, Muslims and Traditionalists should co-exist and co-operate to build a common humanity without fear or favour. At the practical level of providing essential social amenities, there ought not to be conflict in a religiously pluralistic community. Schools, hospitals, roads, water and electricity – such services do not know religious barriers. But religious conflicts can hinder the provision of such amenities.

Ethnic Pluralism: The issue of ethnicity in Africa is a complex one, which is not all easy to define. Ethnic groups may be organized around a common history, beliefs and tradition. They may share common social, economic and political activities, with common interests and a common destiny. Above all, members of an ethnic unit share cultural symbolisms that express their cohesiveness. It is this symbolism that distinguishes one ethnic group from another. R. H. Bates explains the characteristic features of such a symbolism. He writes:

The symbolism is characterized by one or more of the following: collective myths of origin; the assertion ties of kinship or blood be they real or putative; a mythology expressive of the cultural uniqueness or superiority of the group; and a conscious elaboration of language and heritage. In

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addition, ethnic groups differ from other groups in their composition; they include persons from every stage of life and every socio-economic level.¹

More importantly, the relation between 'ethnic group' and 'tribe' is not altogether clear. It is not precisely clear where one ends and the other begins. For example, some analysts hold the view that ethnic groups should be distinguished from tribal groups, while others seem to use both terms interchangeably.

Ethnicity functions as an umbrella, under which group members strive to mobilize and compete effectively for state-controlled power, economic resources, positions and constitutional protections. It refers to a subjective perception of common origins, historical memories, ties and aspirations of people who are linked by a consciousness of a special identity, who jointly seek to maximize their corporate political, economic and social interests. The people of Africa live in a multi-ethnic society. To bring together all these autonomous states or groups under one umbrella and less than one centralized form of government is one of the greatest challenges that Africa has to face since independence. For example, in the early years of Ghana's independence many politicians exploited ethnic feeling and emotions for political gain. Across the country, politicians formed parties along ethnic loyalties in order to secure votes from the ethnic groups. Dr. Kwame Nkrumah, the first President of Ghana, dealt with the situation by promulgating the Avoidance of Discrimination Act, which made it unlawful to organize political parties on an ethnic, religious and sectional basis. The Act was an attempt to help in uniting different ethnic groups under national issues instead of ethnic preferences.

Regrettably, Nkrumah did not give this arrangement much time to work, when in 1964, he turned Ghana into a One-Party state. However, since the fall of Kwame Nkrumah in February 1966, subsequent civilian regimes have endorsed the importance of the Avoidance of Discrimination Act. Thus, the 1979 and 1992 constitutions endorsed the idea and stated that every political party that would be formed must have a national character, and that the internal organization of any political party should be democratic.

One needs to ask the question: as a multi-ethnic community, what role has the Church to play in situations such as these? Thus the issue of ethnic pluralism as an African reality cannot be overlooked in mission theology in Africa. Correspondingly, the different manifestations of ethnicity – both positive and negative – must be explored in order to promote those aspects that make positive contributions to the development of the people and discourage those that project negative effects. For example, all the positive characteristics of ethnicity that provide a feeling of identification, cultural anchorage and a mould for shaping and nurturing African humanity must

be identified and promoted. Negative characteristics of ethnicity, such as tribalism and all that go with it – nepotism, corruption, divisiveness etc. – must be discouraged.² The point being made here is that mission in Africa must respond to the issue of ethnic diversity in order to promote the richness of diversity as a catalyst for enrichment in a pluralistic society, and not as an impoverishing factor that can generate only conflicts, inter-ethnic violence and divisiveness.

Language Pluralism: As far as the expression of the Africa cultural heritage is concerned, language has certain implications for mission. Language is used in this context, not only in terms of spoken language, but also in terms of poetry, art and literature. It also expresses the anthropological, cosmological and liturgical convictions of the people. Certainly, the riches of African culture lie hidden in Africa languages. The study of the languages, therefore, is an invaluable means of exploring the history of Africa cultural heritage. It also represents a key that offers enormous opportunities for discovering the cultures of the Africans.

The theological implication of language pluralism for mission is that it uncovers the riches of African religiosity and spirituality, which reveal not just African concepts of the Supreme Being, but also the cosmos and humanity's part in it. These concepts provide invaluable opportunities for the theological reflections on mission and the Church in African society.

The Socio-political and Economic Dimension

In the 'Africa Report' presented at the Second General Assembly of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians (EATWOT) in Oaxtepec, Mexico, in 1986, African theologians pointed out that:

Among the Third World continents, Africa appears essentially as a land of domination and exploitation, quartered, torn apart, divided, atomized, trampled under foot. It is the continent where frequently the people have no dignity, no rights, and no hope. These challenges are becoming more intolerable considering that natural catastrophes – which are desperately repeated – are added to evils caused by human mischief and injustice.³

The Church as an institution is challenged by what happens in society. Current changes in Africa have already affected the lives of those who come to Church. People are so much occupied with personal ambitions that they seldom contribute to the well being of the community. People remain indifferent to community life and stability. It needs to be said that current social and political structures in Africa have produced widespread insecurity regarding the future. For instance, rampant violation of human rights, the refugee phenomenon, civil and tribal wars, famines and health care are serious threats to the growth and development of the people of Africa. In view of the plethora of problems facing the people in soc-

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ity, only the superficial observer would separate the theological hermeneutics of the gospel of Jesus Christ from varying situations of socio-political and economic crisis on the Africa culture.

The Political Factor: The concrete political realities in Africa today have been dominated by the ramifications of capitalist imperialism, which in the history of the people has been associated with slavery and the slave trade, colonialism and neo-colonialism. One such case made against neo-colonialism is that it has played rival tribal groups against one another, which in some cases had resulted in coups d'état.

There seems, however, to be an emergence of democratic culture in African politics today. The Church then has a role to play in the promotion and sustenance of democratic culture in society. The expression 'democratic culture' points to the practice of a life which is informed by such democratic principles as: collective decision making, tolerance, freedom of choice, freedom of association, accountability, respect for law and order, respect for individual rights, respect for authority, and equality of all persons. In the light of this reasoning, democratic culture transcends politics. It is something that touches the life of the human as a social being. It touches relationships at home, school, workplaces, Churches and in the community as a whole. It deals with every decision that affects the individual's life, and has its basis in our upbringing as human beings.

The Church can only promote and sustain democratic culture in Africa if she herself practices democracy. By example, precept and discipline, the Church must clearly demonstrate that she is a democratic institution. That is, an institution which, by all standards, is characterized with such democratic values as collective decision-making, tolerance of opposing views and religious persuasions, freedom of choice, accountability, respect for law and order, respect for an individual rights etc. The Church must be a community where individuals, whether rich or poor, educated or uneducated are seen to matter, where every voice is given a hearing, individual concerns are taken into account and where the rich and the poor, the powerful and the weak, the minority and the majority, the clergy and the laity are recognized as having intrinsic worth as human beings and as the children of God.

The Socio-economic Factor: According to Karl Marx:

Not to have is not a mere category, it is a most disconsolate reality; today the one who has nothing is nothing, for one is cut from existence in general and still more from human existence..... Not to have is the most desperate spiritualism, a complete unreality of the human, and a complete reality of the dehumanized. ⁴

Situation and concerns of world events in recent days demonstrate the condemnation of Africa to poverty by the world's powerful and the deprivation of black people of the responsibility of their own destiny. As it stands, most (if not all) nations pay up to ten times as much each year in debt repayments as they receive in aid from the wealthier nations, and up to about 40 per cent of the nation's income is spent in servicing debt instead of basic needs such as food, health and education.⁵ What this means is that in addition to the existing social and economic deprivation, the situation means severe personal hardship for the great majority of the people.

The objective poverty of the African people stares the African Church and its mission of preaching the good news of Christ's gospel to the people in the face. Doing mission in contemporary Africa amid the dehumanizing conditions of socio-economic reality calls to mind what John Calvin called 'nefarious perfidy' in the sense that this not only constitutes a betrayal of the gospel itself but also the freedom of God's own people.⁶ In the situation where Africa society undergoes transitions from rural to urban and from agriculture to industrial, what Marx described as 'reality of the dehumanized' poses tremendous theological challenges. These challenges range from poverty, hunger, diseases, poor housing, child and infant mortality, unemployment, population explosion, inadequate or no health care facilities, illiteracy and family disintegration to difficulties in transportation and inadequate information technology systems.

II

It cannot be disputed that the situation on the ground defined as underdevelopment, instead of growth, is all that is developing in Africa. How can the African survive? An existential question! What role must the Church in its mission play in guiding the people out of their misery? How can theology of mission respond to the paradox of the Africa situation, where the people live in abundant cash and food crops and mineral resources – such as cocoa, coffee, banana, palm oil, maize, timber, gold, diamond, bauxite – and yet face absolute poverty?

Poverty and Displacement

We can hardly dispute the fact that poverty is defined among other things as lack of opportunity to develop our abilities to control our own lives. This is said in the view of the fact that economic deprivation, political injustice and disorientation of our lives due to protracted war are a ubiquitous reality in Africa as a whole, and particularly Sub-Saharan Africa. Famine is a regular feature in Africa. It is a common phenomenon in Africa that many households have members who are chronically or periodically hungry. As such urban and rural poverty is a persistent reality on the continent.

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The question is what are the root causes of poverty and displacement in Africa? This question presupposes that 'poverty is not a state of being; it is the effect of dynamic processes.'⁷ Knowing where poverty is is important but knowing why it exists is critical. This inquiry necessarily raises the question regarding the condition for the possibility of poverty and leads away from inquiring into the nature of the poor as individuals. Poverty and displacement are not just personal phenomena. They are social realities. As such, while we may measure the effects of poverty and displacement at the personal levels, we must consider their sources elsewhere in the social and physical environment. It has been noted that 'at the heart of poverty is the inadequate access of the poor to productive resources. Low incomes tend to reflect inadequate means of production, not incompetent producers. However, poverty is not simply a reflection of private resources. Some broad ranges of 'external' factors impinge on incomes.'⁸

Structural Imbalance and Economic Justice

Resources do not come into a vacuum. They come into a given social framework. The nature of the social framework determines the allocation and the use of these resources. In an unjust social framework, 'the use of more resources will only increase inequality and exploitation of the weak.'⁹ One irony of global development is that while no government wants poverty, many government policies contribute to it – other policies drain away what they give in anti-poverty programmes. The poor are always the losers in the equation.

Clearly, we need a new economic paradigm that would ensure economic justice. I therefore submit a new set of questions regarding the performance of our economy. The fact is that the traditional questions we ask with respect to performance of our economy only skim the surface of what our economic system should be all about. Questions such as: Is inflation, employment and economic growth up or down? Is the deficit harmful or harmless? Where are interest rates headed? We should see these questions as dealing with only the surface layer of the economic system.

According to Robert D. Hamrin, a much broader underlying set of questions that would provide a more comprehensive assessment of whether the economy is doing well or poorly would include: (1) 'Who are the recent and current winners and losers from the economy's performance?' (2) 'What is the impact of our current labour market structure on marriages and family?' (3) 'Do the current income distributions meet basic equity standards?' (4) 'Is growth occurring at the expense of the natural resource and environmental base and how is it distributed?' (5) 'Do the current economic policies promote or hinder economic progress in Third World Nations?'¹⁰

The discussion on the economy so far points to the basic choice regarding what economic approach we take and the type of economy in which we live. The choice comes down to this: Either we continue to operate in unquestioning fashion under the values, rules and resulting policies of the mechanistic economic paradigm or we establish some new holistic, ethical economic paradigms that concretely reflect a deep respect for the dignity of people and nature.¹¹

III

The Challenge of HIV / AIDS to Mission

The fact that the incurable disease called Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) is real cannot be disputed any more. It is also a fact that the AIDS epidemic is growing beyond imaginable proportions. Initially, scientists predicted that of those infected by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) only 1 in 10 persons would die, then 2 in 10 persons, then 3 in 10 persons. Now the reality on the ground seems to suggest that everyone with the infection will die.

Available statistics show clearly that the disease has reached pandemic proportion in Africa. Let me only refer you to the Worldwide HIV/AIDS statistics as at November 2006 by the UNAIDS/WHO. The global estimate of people living with HIV/AIDS is 39.5 million. Out of this figure, the estimate of people living with HIV/AIDS in Sub-Saharan Africa is 24.7 million.

In as far as mission is concerned; I wish to submit that the Church's response to the HIV/AIDS and sexuality problems must be a three-dimensional approach, namely, integrated sex education based on a Bible-based sexual ethics, an organized compassionate action, and active support of the intervention programme to prevent the spread of the infection. This means that we do not have to deal only with the treatment of and caring for suffering persons but also with the personal and social transformation that can prevent the spread of the infection.

Sex Education: Sex education is perhaps the sector of human formation that almost always receives the most attention in Christian education as such and in family education in particular. This is so not only because of the 'dogmatic' position of the Church in sexual matters and marriage morality, but also because sexuality is an essential constitutive part of humanity, which radically and profoundly affects the whole being of the individual as a body-spirit personality. We cannot exist without being sexual. Sexuality stamps our being man or being woman. It is for this reason that a person's life and character can perhaps be said to be affected as much by the state of his/her sexuality as by the state of his/her conscience.

Many traditions in Africa regard sex as something sacred that must be revered and exercised with dignity and respect, and only in the context most appropriate to it – marriage. Yet it must be acknowledged that traditional methods of sexual methods of sexual education alone are not sufficient for educ-

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ation in the modern context. The traditional sex taboos, which seek to enforce respect for the sacredness of sex and sexuality and to protect marriage have lost their legitimating force permanently due to the changed world view, and also where the belief in forces of the supernatural, especially ancestors, have lost much credibility and allegiance. Consequently, traditional values and norms regarding sex could retain their validity in substance in the Christian formation today, but only to the extent that they receive a more open, rational and informed but humane justification and enlightened presentation. Likewise, Christian sexual education cannot hope to succeed with only sexual dos and don'ts. It must happen within the context of firm and transparent Christian moral convictions about and witness to the value of sexuality and sex, and in an atmosphere of loving but caring dialogue with young people. The danger of not having a critical dialogue with young people is that when one considers the incidences of teenage pregnancies, abortions, prostitution, broken marriages etc., surely a 'dogmatic' approach will have little chance of success, because sexuality is one of the areas that modern men and women do not anymore want to hear dogmas.

Compassionate Programme: Besides sex education, the Church must also respond to the problem in question with a compassionate programme. That is to say, there is the need to move away from the judgemental theory which has characterized the response of many Christians to the question of HIV/AIDS infection. It cannot be overstated that we have no moral duty to make AIDS patients feel worse. We can give several reasons for calling for a compassionate programme as a response to the HIV/AIDS infection problem.

Defining the HIV/AIDS problem solely in terms of God's punishment of the sexually promiscuous is wrong. There is no doubt that AIDS 'could be one dramatic method God is using to wake up a sinful society to the realities of sin and judgement.' Nevertheless, the judgement theory leaves so many questions unanswered. For example, what is the sin of the person who gets infected with HIV through the reception of infected blood? What is the sin of a child who gets infected with the virus? Thus the judgement theory raises more questions than it answers. What we need is a compassionate programme that will engender a practical caring response to HIV/AIDS patients. It is not our duty to make dying people feel worse. It is rather our vocation and ministry to give them hope and healing in the name of Jesus Christ. The Church can help the dying face the mystery of death with hope and dignity.

There is hope for the dying in Christ. The Church must, in response to the HIV/AIDS problem, present the love of Christ and not judgement to the infected. Every time a Christian speaks, smiles or takes an AIDS patient's hand the patient comes into touch with some aspect of Christ himself. This means that AIDS offers the Church a unique

opportunity to present the gospel to a sinful and corrupt world. The Church should be the channel of hope to the hopeless AIDS patient. After all God met the evil of the world not with a theological analysis but with the cross. So we should do the same.

Support of the Intervention Programmes: The Church must also critically support the intervention programmes which are in place to control the spread of HIV/AIDS, especially the use of condoms. Whereas one agrees that the promotion of the use of condoms is necessary in the fight against the spread of the infection, one takes issue with the impression that is given that condoms can prevent the HIV/AIDS infection. The numerous advertisements on condoms give the impression that with them one can have 'safe sex.' It must be said that the adverts on condoms presuppose a breakdown of sexual morality. They point to sexual permissiveness and promiscuity. The advert is generally directed toward those who cannot say 'no' to promiscuity. Since I cannot say 'no' to premarital, extramarital intercourse, since I cannot stick to a single partner, I must protect myself with a condom.

The question is, is condom the solution to the HIV/AIDS problem? The answer is no. this is precisely because in spite of the adverts on condoms, the HIV/AIDS pandemic is on the increase. What we need to do is to embark on a campaign urging people to say 'no' to sexual promiscuity and encouraging people to remain faithful to a single partner.

The Church must respond to the HIV/AIDS and sexual issues with comprehensive sex education, a compassionate programme that enhance care initiatives and through the active but critical support of the intervention programmes the governments have drawn to stem the tide of the spread of HIV/AIDS. Christian Churches have long played important roles in providing pastoral care, health, education, and development services to the community. Today, HIV/AIDS demands of us that we acknowledge the realities of people's sexual lives as they actually exist, in order to help our people to fuller and more meaningful lives. The Church is called to the ministry of caring. This means promoting the acceptance of people living with HIV/AIDS, fighting against judgemental attitudes toward the infected and developing programmes to address their needs.

Conclusion

The theological reality of the Africa social and economic life cannot be given any adequate interpretive analysis or be understood apart from the socio-historical context of contemporary African society. Indeed it is a theological fallacy to assume that in mission, the social and economic realities of the society have nothing to do with the spiritual formation of the people.

The issues raised in the foregoing consideration have confirmed characteristics of cultural pluralism based on

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diversities in religion, ethnicity and language, and also in the political and socio-economic analyses. But do these factors have implications for mission? The answer is obvious. The need for a relevant theological hermeneutics is not only necessary to understand the African. It is also a legitimate theological pursuit, which calls for an epistemological break in the way we do mission.

The hermeneutic approach that characterizes the theological thinking, which is contained in this presentation, seeks both to understand the African religio-cultural and socio-political and economic reality and to interpret this reality in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, in order to bring about transformation through the Church and its mission.

Notes

¹ R. H. Bates, 'Modernization, Ethnic Competition and the Rationality of Politics in Contemporary Africa', in Donald Rothchild and Victor A. Olorunsola (eds.) *State Versus Ethnic Claims: African Policy Dilemmas*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1983, p.153.

² See for instance, AACC, *The Struggle Continues*. Nairobi, AACC, 1975, p.54ff. The ecumenical body did not only denounce tribalism, but also gave recommendations as to how to combat this 'unacceptable projection or application of tribalness.'

³ 'The Africa Report', in K.C. Abraham, ed., *Third World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, p.28.

⁴ Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Holy Family of Critique of Critical Critique*, Moscow: Foreign Languages, 1956, p.59.

⁵ Most countries in Africa can only repay their debts at great human cost. The pressure to repay their debts means expenditure on infrastructure and development has to be subordinated to foreign debt repayment. Once governments become deeply indebted, international financial creditors play a much larger part in the determination of government policy. Fragile democratic structures and accountability are undermined.

⁶ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Faith*, ed., John T. McNeill, trans. Ford L. Battles. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960, IV, XX, 31.

⁷ International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). *The State of World Rural Poverty*. An Introductory Summary by Idriss Jazairy, (November, 1992), p.18.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ S. L. Parmar, 'Development: Priorities and Guidelines,' in *The Ecumenical Review*. Vol. XXV II, no 1, (January, 1975), p. 9.

¹⁰ Robert D. Hamrin, 'Ethical Economics: A Paradigm for Justice and Stewardship' (A paper presented to the 1986 Forum held at the Au Sable Institute of Environmental Studies).

¹¹ Ibid.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. *In what ways do you see the three features of cultural pluralism that Dean Atta-Baffoe discusses influencing African Christianity? What are the key issues and challenges to the Church that cultural pluralism raises?*
2. *'The Church can only promote and sustain democratic culture in Africa if she herself practices democracy.' Do you agree or disagree with the Dean's assertion? Why or why not?*
3. *Dean Atta-Baffoe calls for 'new holistic ethical economic paradigms that concretely reflect a deep respect for the people and nature.' Is he right? How might the Church apply itself to that task?*
4. *This paper calls for a non-judgemental approach to those living with HIV/AIDS. How do you respond to the pastoral needs of such persons in our midst?*
5. *In what way is this a missiological paper? If you were to attempt a paper on 'Church and Mission and Contemporary Africa,' what would you emphasize?*

NEWS FROM AROUND THE CONTINENT***CAPA INITIATES HIGH-LEVEL CONSULTATION ON HIV/AIDS***

The Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa (CAPA) held a September consultation in Nairobi that brought together former African heads of state, religious leaders and non-governmental organizations to discuss the effects of and responses to HIV/AIDS in Africa in the context of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Meeting under the theme 'Making Leadership Work,' the participants discussed the development of a Network of African Leaders Against HIV and AIDS, which would be committed to providing necessary leadership and momentum to develop a dedicated long-term advocacy drive to mobilize an effective response to HIV/AIDS at all levels.

The Most Rev. Ian Ernest, CAPA chairman and Archbishop of the Province of the Indian Ocean, said that CAPA was using the forum as a springboard to mobilize partnerships with key players throughout Africa and to stimulate leaders to renew forcefully their commitment to serve the continent as it seeks liberation from bad governance, poverty, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, among other issues.

Ernest also emphasized that the focus on collaborative leadership and innovative approaches by CAPA and its partners 'aims at converting the emerging presence of individual and collective leadership in the area of HIV and AIDS into a powerful, transformative caucus. This will certainly help us to tackle more efficiently the difficulties that we face in our fight against the AIDS pandemic and other related issues that affect the lives of our people.'

The forum aimed to bring a commitment from its participants toward managing the effects of HIV/AIDS by improving access to universal treatment and care to the infected and also prevention and eradication of poverty among the people of Africa.

Among Anglican leaders attending the consultation in addition to Archbishop Ernest were Archbishop Emmanuel Kolini, Rwanda; Archbishop Nicholas Okoh, Nigeria; Archbishop Henri Isingoma, Democratic Republic of Congo; Archbishop Valentino Mokiwa, Tanzania; and a number of bishops. Also attending was the Revd Prof. Joseph Galgalo, who serves on ANITEPAM's Governing Council.

EXCERPTS FROM THE HIV/AIDS COMMUNIQUÉ ...

1. We shall intensify our focus on mobilising our communities to overcome the consequences of stigma, lack of awareness and knowledge, and shall increase care and support for people infected and affected by HIV and AIDS, including vulnerable children.
4. We shall provide space for dialogue between leaders and vulnerable people, including youth and people living with HIV and AIDS, so as to learn from each other and devise new solutions to address the challenges of HIV and AIDS on the continent.
9. We shall facilitate the strengthening of families and social structures to withstand the impact of the HIV pandemic....
11. We shall listen and dialogue with our communities, particularly those vulnerable to HIV and AIDS, and commit ourselves to speaking openly about the pandemic.
12. We resolve not to lose this opportunity to bridge the gap between medical and spiritual approaches to the pandemic.

... AND QUESTIONS FOR US TO DISCUSS

How might our theological education programmes help to prepare our students to...

- *'mobilise our communities to overcome the consequences of stigma [and] lack of awareness and knowledge'?*
- *facilitate 'dialogue between leaders and vulnerable people'?*
- *help to 'strengthen families and social structures'?*
- *promote 'dialogue within our communities'?*
- *'bridge the gap between medical and spiritual approaches to the pandemic'?*

BOOKS**GLOBAL CANTERBURY STUDIES
IN ANGLICANISM SERIES**

A global consortium of scholars, theological schools and publishing partners, spearheaded by Church Publishing Incorporated in the United States and SCM-Canterbury Press in the United Kingdom, is launching a new series capturing the contemporary issues and identity of the Anglican Communion.

The first publication in the new *Canterbury Studies in Anglicanism* series will be available January. The series editors are the Very Revd Ian Markham, PhD, dean and president of Virginia Theological Seminary and the Revd Canon Professor Martyn Percy, PhD, principal at Ripon College, Cuddesdon, in the United Kingdom.

Each volume will focus on a major area of church life and faith, exploring the various perspectives of contributors throughout the world.

Initial titles will capitalize on recent contributions from the Center for Anglican Studies at VTS, Ripon College, and the Society for the Study of Anglicanism within the American Academy of Religion. These will include:

Christ and Culture: Communion After Lambeth (early 2010), with theological reflections on each of the conference themes, including common ground and engagement with a multi-faith world.

Living the Liturgy (late 2010), in which voices from Africa and elsewhere in the Communion will consider the role of the liturgy in Christian formation. It is to be published in partnership with the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation.

Diversity and Discipleship: The Making of Communion, which will offer some of the most recent and cutting-edge reflections on the nature of Anglican identity, as studied by the Society for the Study of Anglicanism, a conference group now in its seventh year and with a global membership of more than 200 Anglican scholars.

Titles in the new series can be ordered by visiting www.churchpublishing.org.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COMMUNION**ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY OFFERS
CHRISTIAN VISION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT**

In an October lecture at Southwark Cathedral, Dr Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury, set out a Christian vision of how people can respond to the looming environmental crisis, the Anglican Communion News Service writes.

Beginning with the story of Noah and the Flood, Dr Williams highlighted the 'burden of responsibility for what confronts us here and now as a serious crisis and challenge.' Our relationship with the rest of creation is intimately bound up with our relationship with God. The Bible offers 'an ethical perspective based on reverence for the whole of life.' 'To act so as to protect the future of the non-human world is both to accept a God-given responsibility and, appropriately, to honour the special dignity given to humanity itself.'

Drawing parallels with the financial crisis, Dr Williams argued that we are in danger of losing touch with what makes us distinctively human. We urgently need to revise some of our assumptions, including those that are incompatible with our duty of care for the whole of life.

Dr Williams warned against looking for a single solution to the complex environmental challenges which face us. 'Instead of a desperate search to find the one great idea that will save us from ecological disaster, we are being invited to a transformation of individual and social goals that will bring us closer to the reality of interdependent life in a variegated world.'

He urged action at the personal and local as well as at the national and international, levels. He acknowledged 'the potential of the crisis to awaken a new confidence in local and civic democracy [and] ... a new sense of what is politically possible for people who thought they were powerless.' 'Our response to the crisis needs to be in the most basic sense, a reality check, a re-acquaintance with the facts of our interdependence within the material world and a rediscovery of our responsibility for it.' 'When we believe in transformation at the local and personal level, we are laying the surest foundations for change at the national and international level.'

Dr Williams underlined the particular role that belief can play in recovering a sense of balance and interdependence. 'What we face today is nothing less than a choice about how genuinely human we want to be; and the role of religious faith in meeting this is first and foremost in setting out a compelling picture of what humanity reconciled with both creator and creation might look like.'

The Archbishop urged leaders to take bold decisions at the Copenhagen summit in December. He encouraged the taking of effective collaborative local action to reduce carbon emissions and to maintain pressure on local governments and businesses to do the same. And he encourages the small actions which mark a break with destructive patterns of consumption and waste and help 'to make us more aware of the diversity of life around us.'

In conclusion, the Archbishop emphasized that 'the Christian story lays out a model of reconnection with an alienated world: it tells us of a material human life inhabited by God and raised transfigured from death; of a sharing of material food which makes us sharers in eternal life; of a community whose life together seeks to express within creation the care of the creator.' Quoting Moses in the book of Deuteronomy, he concluded: 'I am giving you a choice between good and evil, between life and death... choose life.'

PEOPLE**NEW PRIMATE FOR THE
CHURCH OF NIGERIA**

The Church of Nigeria (Anglican Communion) elected **Nicholas Orogodo Okoh** as its fourth Primate in September, the Anglican Communion News Service reports. He is to succeed the Most Revd **Peter Akinola**. The announcement was made after an election at the Cathedral Church of Stephen, Umuahia, Abia State, in which the new Archbishop secured a two-thirds majority in a four candidate contest.

The new primate served as the Archbishop of Bendel Province and the Bishop of Asaba at the time of his election. He studied at Immanuel College of Theology, Ibadan, between 1976 and 1979.

**FORMER ARCHBISHOP OF
THE SUDAN DIES**

On Friday evening, 18th September, the former Archbishop of the Episcopal Church of the Sudan and Bishop of Juba, Dr. **Joseph Marona**, passed away in Khartoum. He had retired at the end of 2007.

His body lay in state at All Saints' Cathedral, Khartoum, then at All Saints' Cathedral, Juba. He was then laid to rest alongside his predecessors behind the Cathedral.

**NEW ANGLICAN LEADER
URGED TO 'HEAL' HARARE DIOCESE**

Ecumenical News International—Zimbabwean Anglicans urged the new Bishop of Harare, the Rt. Rev. **Chad Gandiya**, to reconcile the embattled diocese. It has been locked in a battle with excommunicated former bishop **Nolbert Kunonga**, a close supporter of **Robert Mugabe**, the country's president.

Gandiya was consecrated on July 26 at a gathering of more than 10,000 people. The dean of the Anglican Province of Central Africa, Bishop **Albert Chama**, presided over the ordination. He urged the new bishop to heal and reconcile the Diocese of Harare.

Gandiya succeeds **Sebastian Bakare**, a retired cleric who served as the diocese's interim bishop after Kunonga was deposed in late 2007.

**AFRICAN LECTURER SERVES ON
ANGLICAN-ORTHODOX COMMISSION**

The Rev. **Joseph Wandera**, who serves on the faculty at St. Paul's University in Limuru, Kenya, was the sole African representative at the meetings of the International Commission for Anglican-Orthodox Theological Dialogue, which met in Crete in September. The meeting was the first plenary meeting of the third stage of the dialogue. The main topic for this third stage is theological anthropology, that is, the Christian understanding of the human person as being in the image and likeness of God, and the implications of this for church life and contemporary ethical issues.

SCOM CHAIR ELECTED BISHOP

The Rev. Dr. **Ian T. Douglas**, professor of mission and world Christianity at Episcopal Divinity School in the USA, was elected bishop coadjutor of the Diocese of Connecticut in October. Douglas chaired the Seminary Consultation on Mission, which has had close links to ANITEPAM since the latter's inception. He also serves on the Anglican Consultative Council.

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COMMUNION**POPE ANNOUNCES SPECIAL PROVISIONS
TO ACCEPT FORMER ANGLICANS IN ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Pope Benedict XVI announced plans to allow provisions that would accept groups of former Anglicans who wish to convert to the Roman Catholic Church. (This article is adapted from the Episcopal News Service.) The October press release announced the preparation of an Apostolic Constitution that would allow such converts to enter full communion with the Catholic Church while preserving elements of Anglican spirituality and liturgy. Under the terms of the Apostolic Constitution, the release said, 'pastoral oversight and guidance will be provided for groups of former Anglicans through a Personal Ordinariate, whose Ordinary will usually be appointed from among former Anglican clergy.' The constitution would also make provisions for married former Anglican clergy to be ordained as Catholic priests.

The announcement came as a surprise to many Anglicans, including Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, but he and Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster Vincent Nichols immediately released a joint statement, saying that 'today's announcement... is a response by Pope Benedict XVI to a number of requests over the past few years to the Holy See from groups of Anglicans who... are willing to declare that they share a common Catholic faith and accept the Petrine ministry as willed by Christ for his Church.'

In November the Vatican published the Apostolic Constitution; two weeks later the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury met at the Vatican. In an interview with Vatican Radio following the meeting, Williams said that he expressed to the pope some of his concerns 'about the way the constitution had been handled and received because clearly many Anglicans, myself included, felt that it put us in an awkward position.'

The Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity has been silent on these developments. However, the Anglican Communion, which has been in dialogue with the Roman Catholic Church for many years through the Anglican-Roman Catholic International Consultation (ARCIC), announced at the end of the month that ARCIC is moving forward with preparations for its next phase. This phase will deal with fundamental questions regarding the 'Church as Communion—Local and Universal,' and how in communion the local and universal Church come to discern right ethical teaching.

BOOKS FOR OUR LIBRARIES**FINAL NOTICE: APPLY FOR FREE BOOKS ON AFRICAN CHURCH HISTORY**

ANITEPAM is completing its grant programme of books for African Anglican or ecumenical theological college libraries with an offer of several titles in African church history. **We need to hear from you at once if you are interested.** Here are the titles:

Adrian Hastings, *The Church in Africa, 1450-1950* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

Adrian Hastings, *A History of African Christianity, 1950-1975* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979).

Elizabeth Isichei, *A History of Christianity in Africa: From Antiquity to the Present* (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1995).

Bengt Sundkler, *A History of the Church in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

If you are interested, here is what you need to do:

1. Examine your library holdings to see if you have the titles below. If you do, please do not request a second copy.
2. If you are missing any of these titles, inform the Rev. Martin Mgeni, ANITEPAM's Corresponding Secretary, of your interest at secretaryANITEPAM@Malawi.net, or by mail at the Malawi address on page 2.
3. Provide Fr. Mgeni with the appropriate postal address to which the books are to be sent. Note that the books are to be shipped to a library, not an individual.
4. Provide Fr. Mgeni with any particular notation (e.g., 'Library Donation,' 'Book Gift,' etc.) to be placed on the package if such is needed to minimise or eliminate customs duties.
5. As several of these titles are especially expensive, we may not be able to provide you all of the titles you request. Please therefore indicate your first and second choices.
6. Note that ANITEPAM will cover the cost and postage of the book(s). The theological college will be responsible for any additional charges, including customs duties.

A REMINDER

What is happening at your theological education programme? Have you revised your syllabus, hosted a consultation, or done work in continuing education? Have you or colleagues written a paper about African theological education, or attended a conference? Send *your* theological education news to ANITEPAM at the address on p. 2 or by e-mail (secretaryANITEPAM@malawi.net) for us to share with others around the continent!

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