

THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST: LESSONS FOR AFRICAN PASTORS AND LEADERS

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Introduction

The Fathers of the First Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops saw the dire need to apply the gospel message to the concrete life of Africans in their circumstance when they asked: “How could one proclaim Christ on that immense continent while forgetting that it is one of the world’s poorest regions? How could one fail to consider the anguished history of a land where many nations are still in the grip of famine, war, racial and tribal tensions, political instability and the violation of human rights?”¹ Consequently, the concern of this paper is to establish that the efficiency of leaders in whatever sphere can only reach its optimum in Christ. Since the implication of the Kingship of Christ is that he is a governor and the means of interaction between the King and his subject is government, the paper therefore seeks to explain the indispensability of the Kingship of Christ in correcting the errors of governance in all its ramifications.

The Link between the Kingdom of God and Government

The Kingdom of God cannot be defined with precision. It can only be described because it is an aggregate, an *ensemble* of many events. It concerns God and quite inseparable from He who himself cannot be defined. It is rather a union of many things as such. Therefore, “the indefinability of the concept of Kingdom results from the fact that it expresses the experience of the apex of the seven-fold transcendental properties of every reality: *specie, genus, familia, ordo, classis, phylum, regnum*.”² The Kingdom of God is where He reigns, and where He reigns, is wherever He is glorified, and where He is glorified, is wherever his will is done by his creatures especially his people and only through doing his will is man rendered holy. Thus, the Kingdom of God is where these three inseparable realities on the part of the subjects (human beings) of the Kingdom is done (the glorification of God, obedience to

¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* (14 September 1995) 51, in *AAS* 88 (1996), 1-33.

² J. EGBULEFU, La Chiesa è il Regno di Dio nella Missione in Christo Redentore, in: *Catechesi Missionaria: Riviste semestrale di riflessione ed esperienze*, Anno VII, 1, (Gennaio - Giugno 1991, Istituto di Catechesi Missionaria, Pontificia Università Urbaniana, Roma, 19.

his will and being Holy ‘resulting from obedience’). The Kingdom of God is both heavenly and earthly where by, He reigns in heavens, but this reign is already inaugurated by Jesus here on earth, *en route* to the heavenly Kingdom.³

Government can be said to be an act of the King within a Kingdom and as an activity, it presupposes a chain of actions that imply acts, a process through which the governor and the governed interact. It is a movement, which directs the application of the rules and regulations stemming from the will of the legislator (King) and ensures its application in the life of the subjects, who are obliged to obey for the good of the society. Thus, government is that event as an activity (action-interaction) of persons (not as occurrence of things), in which the governing persons (single or collective) and the governed (collective) persons, following the rule of law and order to arrive at the ‘common good as common good,’ for the happiness, gladness, joy and jubilation of all. To govern means to preside over those whom one has authority⁴ and power;⁵ whereas the responsibility of the charge and the vocation to lead and direct them along the right and just way is called law (by giving command that contains the will and intention for the common good. The law is to be enacted by the lawmaker and to be observed by all including himself for the good of all in the human collectiveness-family/community/society/nation) and in the right and just manner called order (arrangement of steps and values deriving from one another till the first/primary, as the origin and leading to one another till unto the last as the ultimate goal), hence to rule over them not only with justice and rectitude (uprightness, straightforwardness, truth and truthfulness, honesty righteousness, sincerity, not deceit, trick, dishonesty), but with legality and orderliness along the way of peace towards happiness. Government is the totality of this activity.

The traditional understanding explains government as “the organization of the movement and progress of the people towards their welfare and fulfilled life by a group of human persons in a small fraction of the universe.”⁶ Such organization usually consists of three indispensable organs namely: (i)The Legislative whose main objective is making laws and ensuring its compliance within the governed

³ Cf. *Ibid.*, 23.

⁴ One cannot have authority over another person whom one has not authored, i.e. of whom one is not the author, the origin, the parent, neither father nor mother.

⁵ A situation whereby one cannot have power over another unless one is empowered, i.e. is given the power to do so, be it by the Creator as the only one authority, only one absolute and all powerful being who does not depend on nor receive from others his powers, be it by fellow creatures since the creatures are interdependent.

⁶ J. EGBULEFU, “We are the Government of Tomorrow but with a Renewed Concept and art of Governing”, in *Wisdom Satelite Magazine*, June 2018/2019, 16.

and the governors, (ii) the Executive has the objective of making sure the will of the legislator contained in the laws of the land is executed and iii) the Judiciary has the objective of working out modalities which establishes a coherence between the legislative law-making body and the actions of the legislator on the one hand, and between the Executive and the governed on the other hand.⁷ As an activity, therefore, government concerns the rapport between the governor and the governed. At times the governor and the governed are those who elect the government and as such would be a mandate given by the electorate to the King, whereby, the rules of engagement must be respected based on the constitution of any given fraction of the universe where a government finds itself. Thus, government is in the context of a Kingdom and in the Kingdom of God, Christ is the King and the governor.

The Kingship of Christ

We cannot talk about Kingship without first referring to a Kingdom, but a Kingdom also presupposes a king. Hence, Kingship can be said to be the relationship between the King and his subjects. It is a state in which ‘the fact’ (his acts and his status) of being King manifests. These two realities (*actus* and *status*) produce *factum* because ‘the fact’ of a King produces his *status* and his *actus*. For example, the King reigns (*actus*) and he is seated on his throne (*status quo*: symbol of his sovereignty). Thus, Kingship is a fact consisting of two dimensions; the vertical as *status* and the horizontal as *actus* i.e. application of the king’s will to perfect the subjects. This interaction between the King and his kingdom, equals his Kingship as the *status* in which he is king, the dignity acquired through his acts of reigning, for which he is revered because of this *status*. He cannot have the *status* without acts, i.e. the aptitude of the King in the application of his kingly duties over his subjects. The quality of his acts determines the quality of his *status*. Therefore, a governor, a pastor or a leader can be said to be good or bad based on how he applies the laws to lead people to their goals and perfection. The consequences of the acts of the king, which he performs for the subjects gives him his *status*. He is reigning, therefore he is a governor. Since there is no Kingdom without a king, there cannot be a King without Kingship (the *status* and the action are necessary). By reigning the King puts himself in a state of majesty, his throne is supreme and he has an overview over his subjects. Thus, that a Kingdom is good depends on whether the King is good or not; he is good is a conclusion which comes from his acts and his *status*.

⁷ Cf. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

Since Kingship is the relationship between a King and his Kingdom, it follows that to have such a *status* one must be a King. Therefore, the Kingship of Jesus stems from the fact that he is a King. That Christ is King comes from the fact of his being the second person of the Trinity, he is the Son of God to whom all authority in heaven and on earth has been given (cf. Mt. 28:18) and as such, commands authority over all creation, for there was nothing created that did not come through him (cf. Jn. 1:3). He is a co-author and since one can have authority only over whom one has authored, it follows that Christ rightly has authority over creation as its author. J. Egbulefu argues that as long as Jesus the incarnate Son of the living God, is the incarnate Word of God in person who is God made flesh without ceasing to be God (cf. Jn. 1:1-3), he is God. As King his reign has no end and it encompasses the universe which is full of his glory (cf. Num. 14:21). He is Holy (cf. Is. 5:16; 6:3; Rev. 4:8), worthy of adoration (cf. Rev. 4:11), worthy to be proclaimed and served (cf. Mk. 11:9-10; Lk. 19:3) and whose Will is worthy to be desired and done (cf. Mt. 5:9-10). Thus, Christ is King and the proper Kingdom in which he reigns is the Kingdom of God.⁸

In the devotional tradition of the Church (*munus orandi*), Christ is revered as a King, especially on the solemnity of Christ the King, instituted in 1925 by Pope Pius XI. Owing to the difficulties and sufferings of people in his days, the Pontiff explained the cause as the rejection of the rule of Christ the King of peace. As a result, he instituted this feast, insisting that “men must look for the peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ ... it seemed to us that peace could not be more effectually restored nor fixed upon a firmer basis than through the restoration of the Empire of our Lord”⁹. In this feast, the Church publicly acknowledges the universal Kingship of Christ, held in high esteem as St. Cyril of Alexandria affirmed: “Christ has dominion over all creatures, a dominion not ceased by violence or usurped, but by essence and by nature. His Kingship is founded upon the ineffable hypostatic union.”¹⁰ And he calls for his adoration when he quickly adds, “not only that Christ is to be adored by angels and humans, but that to him as man, angels and humans are subject and must recognize his empire: by reason of the hypostatic union Christ has power over all creatures.”¹¹ Thus, the Kingdom is given an optimum manifestation and demonstration in a public proclamation in honour of the one Kingdom with

⁸ Cf. *Ibid.*, 16-17.

⁹ PIUS XI, Encyclical Letter *Quas Primas* (11 December 1925) 1.

¹⁰ St. Cyril of Alexandria cited by J. NEUNER, S.J. - J. DUPUIS, S.J. *The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Church*, seventh Revised and Enlarged edition, Alba House, New York 200, 463.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

three qualities corresponding to the Trinitarian logic¹² – one universal and eternal Kingdom (One God), a Kingdom of truth and life (Son), of holiness and grace (Holy Spirit), of justice, love and peace (Father).

Nature and Relevance of the Kingship of Christ

In the incarnation, by way of a functional *regnology*,¹³ God sent his Son to manifest his reign to man. Because all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him (cf. Mt. 28:18), Christ is the governor; besides, the government of the world is on his shoulders (cf. Is. 9:6). The government of God is made visible in him who proclaims the Kingdom and demonstrates leadership in his praxis. Since government is the activity of guarding and guiding, protecting and leading, defending and promoting subjects to their perfection, it follows, that one who is a King must be seen doing so. The symbolism of the good shepherd (cf. Jn. 10:11) with which Christ identifies himself is the highest analogy of a good governor whose main aim is the perfection of his people. As the good shepherd, the light (cf. Jn. 8:12), the door (cf. Jn. 10:9), the way (cf. Jn. 14:6), the truth (cf. Jn. 14:6) and the life (cf. Jn. 14:6), the bread (cf. Jn. 6:35), Christ possesses all it takes, as the ideal governor, to guard and guide, protect and lead, defend and promote, conserve and transform his subjects to their goal. He has given an example to be followed and asked humans to learn from his gentility and humility (cf. Jn. 13:14; Mt. 11:29), made possible in the incarnation, whereby divinity penetrates the human flesh and the human flesh attaches itself to divinity. In his life and mission, Jesus was perfected by the divine and had perfect Kingship and government. That Christ turned water into wine, healed the sick, fed the hungry, expelled demons, defended people from natural disaster, provided for the financial needs of the people and raised the dead are all indicators of the promotion of a better life for the subjects of any Kingdom. Just as the shepherd leads to green pasture, providing the liquid and solid need, Jesus finally gives his body (solid) and blood (liquid) to his people now visible in the eucharistic species of bread and wine at the sacramental level. Such is the Kingship of Christ.

¹² The Preface reads: “For you anointed your only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the oil of gladness as eternal Priest and King of all Creation, so that, by offering himself on the altar of the Cross as a spotless sacrifice to bring us peace, he might accomplish the mysteries of human redemption and, making all created things subject to his rule, he might present to the immensity of your majesty an eternal and universal Kingdom, a Kingdom of truth and life, a Kingdom of holiness and grace, a Kingdom of justice, love and peace” (cf. ROMAN MISSAL, 508).

¹³ This is term referring to the study of the reign of God.

Now, if these symbolisms of shepherd, light, door, way truth and life are ideal for good governance, it follows that African leaders and government have not been faithful to the ideal. The reality of pastors and leaders in Africa do not seem to produce good results as evident in the problems earlier listed. It suggests, their ways and deeds are not straightforward. Our government today is crooked, dishonest, untruthful, nocturnal etc., and do not lead to a perfect destination as there is strife, hunger, death, injustice and lack of peace. Citizens are not led on the wings of the truth, the ways of dishonesty do not lead to an honest destination, nocturnal movements are deceptive and citizens cannot trace their destinations. Infact, they are exposed to dangers of the darkness since leaders are not enlightened, have not accepted the light and thus, cannot lighten the way for its people. The result is that there is no coordination: each taking his path; no basic life's necessities, jungle justice that leads to the survival of the fittest, the weak and the sick are abandoned to die along the way, and the hungry are starved to death etc.

As the ideal governor, however, Jesus combines in his person, the *hypostatization* of the basic elements required to coordinate this journey, by nature, as that true way that leads to life. Since man is good not by nature but by grace, he always needs divine assistance to be better. Jesus is God, as God, he is by nature 'Good' therefore, he alone can assist man to be good. It is through the humanity of the Godman, inseparable from divinity that man participates in the divinity e.g. the Eucharist as sacrament of the humanity of Christ, is inseparable from his divinity and man gets into it and eventually participates in the Trinity. Since it is the Spirit that gives life, the Father's will is done by the divine *Logos*, who links man to divine life. Thus, man needs to take inspiration and bearing from the divine government. The Kingship of Christ therefore results from his status and his act which is this process called government. His government is the ideal government, announced in the Kingdom of God and demonstrated through his teachings, and healing miracles. Since it is only in him that the fulness of man puts on light, his government becomes the model for all leaders.

Government as a Salvific Act

To comprehend governance as an act that is salvific, the Jewish understanding of Yahweh's image in indispensable. J. Fuellfenbach explains three basic conceptions of God's image in the OT. In the first instance, Yahweh was considered as; (i) a liberating God, not limiting his acts to the spiritual but also to the concrete act of liberation from slavery in Egypt, (ii) a God whose main preoccupation was justice, who sought to restore the dignity of the poor, based on the covenantal promises as

evident in the social justice prophets and (iii) a God of mercy and compassion.¹⁴ These attributes of liberation, justice and mercy correspond to the providence, protection and defence, manifested in the acts of the Messiah as indicators of the Kingdom, God's divine government. Therefore, in connection with the role and duties of a King, we can consider government as an activity that is salvific. This is why; the duties of a King as understood in the Ancient Near East was on a par with the role of a saviour, who had a responsibility that was triple in nature: (i) the provision of necessities for the people, (ii) the protection of the people and (iii) the defence of his people from external aggression and internal challenges.

According to the Catholic Social Teaching, the King "is to be the defender of the weak and the guarantor of justice for the people. The denunciations of the prophets focused precisely on the king's failure to fulfil these functions (cf. 1Kg. 21; Is. 10:1-4; Am. 2:6-8, 8:4-8; Mic. 3:1-4)."¹⁵ Thus, on the one hand, citizens have a right to enjoy a fair share of the common good, while on the other hand, it is the duty of political leaders to provide all the necessities for their citizens. In fact, it is the obligation of pastors and religious leaders to ensure that such duty is done. Jesus and the political authorities of his time related in such a fashion that he constructively criticized them and at the same time recognized their authority as the Church affirms: "we must give to God what is God's, implicitly condemning every attempt at making temporal power divine or absolute: God alone can demand everything from man. At the same time, temporal power has the right to its due: Jesus does not consider it unjust to pay taxes to Caesar."¹⁶

Rejecting the despotic and the oppressive powers exercised in his epoch, Jesus insisted on the true nature of leadership rooted in service and thus, scolded his disciples and exhorted them to eschew from this type of leadership. He taught that oppressive and despotic leadership as found in the pagan way of life should not be found among them for in this new dispensation, he who wishes to be great, must be the servant of all and he who wishes to be first, will be the last (cf. Mt. 10:35-40, 20:20-23). Invariably, "Christ reveals to human authority, always tempted by the desire to dominate, its authentic and complete meaning as service. God is the one Father, and Christ is the one Teacher, of all mankind, and all people are brothers and sisters. Sovereignty belongs to God."¹⁷ Thus, in the strict sense of the word, politics is not opposed to the Kingdom

¹⁴ Cf. J. FUELLFENBACH, *The Kingdom of God; The Message of Jesus Today*, Wipf and Stock, Oregon 2006, 125.

¹⁵ COMPENDIUM OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004, 377.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 379.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 383.

of God, rather the abuse of powers that infringe on the rights of citizens is, and it must be opposed and denounced in all its ramifications.

Although the reign of God from the biblical notion cannot be tied to any temporal reign, yet the link between the Kingdom of God, salvation and temporal human experience cannot be neglected for as the Vatican II Council fathers had affirmed: “Hence, while earthly progress must be carefully distinguished from the growth of Christ’s kingdom, to the extent that the former can contribute to the better ordering of human society, it is of vital concern to the Kingdom of God.”¹⁸ Pope Paul VI refers to the Kingdom of God as the new revealed world to which a new way of living is expected from all, in accordance with the ethics therein and exhorts the faithful to adhere to and adopt this new way of life, as “such an adherence, which cannot remain abstract and unincarnated, reveals itself concretely by a visible entry into a community of believers.”¹⁹

It is a historical fact that during the early centuries of the Church, both spiritual and political interpretations of the Kingdom of God took place and the two extremes did not have an acceptable landing, yet, one cannot run away from the dual nature of such reality in the sense that it is two-sided reality (spiritual and political) in respect of a political and a spiritual being (man) as subject of the Kingdom. Perhaps there is a need to make a very clear explanation of what is meant by political here.²⁰ Man is a political being and lives within a society, where a system of government guides his everyday life in the present as he journeys to his eternal destiny. In presenting the Kingdom of God, Jesus did not just emphasize the metaphysical to the detriment of the physical. On the contrary, most of the signs he used were material and concrete as he held time and eternity in a tension evident in his healing which were both psychical and physical. The incarnation already indicates this reality as a *theandric* union with a vertical and a horizontal side. While the vertical denotes a spiritual relationship with God, the horizontal implies a social relationship with fellow humans.

Socio-political Implications of the Kingdom of God

From political and revolutionary lenses, scholars have been able to read Jesus with respect to his *sitz im leben* as the incarnational value is very important for any

¹⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, 39.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 23.

²⁰ According to Merriam Webster dictionary, “the Greek word polis, meaning ‘city’ or ‘community,’ and the related word polītēs, meaning ‘citizen,’ give us the roots polis and polit. Words from Greek polis and polītēs have something to do with cities or communities or the citizens who live in them. A metropolis is the most important city in an area. The police are a group that enforces the law so as to protect citizens. Politics is the science and art of governing citizens” (cf. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/politics>, 21/4/19).

Christological approach to be relevant in any age. Jesus cannot be continuously locked up in a single method but must be interpreted in varied ways by way of discovering his significance in any epoch,²¹ since his temporal mission revolutionized both the religious and the socio-political fabric of his time. Respecting the religious establishment of his days, Christ gave it a new reading, promulgating a unique form of morality instead of religiosity, and demanding a morality of the heart which transcended religious legalisms. Thus, he rejected dead religious ritual practices and replaced them with practical love as the denominator of the testimony of fidelity. All he wanted was an interior relationship demonstrated in the praxis of love. He condemned the 'oppressions' by religious authority in God's name ' which prevented entry into the Kingdom.²² From the socio-political point of view, Jesus' citing of Isaiah 61 to inaugurate his mission of the Kingdom of God (cf. Lk. 4:18-19), presents him not just as a prophet but somewhat, socio-political missionary as would be evident in his praxis which satisfied the material needs of his hearers, consequences of which a new concept of dialectical relationship emerges as I. Ellacuria opines: "New concept of the dialectical interrelationship between wealth and poverty as a factor for shaping the Kingdom emerge and therefore again, of the due relationship of human beings with God."²³ Although Jesus never claimed to be a revolutionary leader as his message contained nothing of a strategy that could be tagged 'political program' but simply preached the Kingdom of God as basically religious and pastoral, yet, his message had implications that are political in the sense that it generated some socio-political effects and changes in his time, today and for the whole of human history.²⁴ Thus S. Galileia remarks: "Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom of God had consequences for politics and for social change, even revolutionary change, in his own time as well as wherever the Christian message can become a leaven in society in the future."²⁵

Thus, the message of the Kingdom of God and his government, although neither revolutionary nor political, yet, provides impetus for concentrations which demand certain attitudinal change in the revelation of the true nature of man and his vocation which undeniably leads to the subsequent questioning of the civil authorities. This is because "the gospel itself inasmuch as it contains the principle of freedom and reveals the true calling of the human being and of the world,

²¹ Cf. I. ELLACURIA, "The Political Nature of Jesus' Mission", in J. M. BONINO (ed.), *Faces of Jesus; Latin American Christologies*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY 1985, 81.

²² Cf. *Ibid.*, 81-84.

²³ *Ibid.*, 90-91.

²⁴ Cf. S. GALILEIA, "Jesus's Attitude Towards Politics", in J. M. BONINO (ed.), *Faces of Jesus*, 96.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 96.

offers values that can question systems, and consequently generate movements and conflicts of political liberation.”²⁶ This is the sense in which the socio-political nature of the Christian message emerges from Christ’s proclamation where the values of justice and freedom take the centre stage, with the social consequences of the possibility of sparking political tensions and indicting evil practices in bad governments. Nevertheless, Galilea maintains that “the proclamation of the Kingdom constitutes the implantation in history, once and for all, of a principle of freedom and social critique, both as promise and as a denunciation. As promise it is the leaven of non-conformism. As denunciation, it demands the removal of everything in the society that assaults the nature and the destiny of the human being as revealed at the heart of the gospel.”²⁷ Thus, every government has the salvation of man as its end and as such must be seen to do everything humanly possible to bring man to his perfection.

Learning from the Kingship of Christ

African leaders must therefore take their cue from Christ and face leadership squarely in its fullness, either as (i) political leaders or (ii) religious leaders. In the first instance, political leaders in governing the African society, need to imitate the trinitarian formula rooted in the traditional tripod on which every government is built, as idealized in the divine government, hypostasizing the three branches of every government, so that they can have as a standard guide, as solution to unlock the mystery of inefficiency, the key of which is found only in God.

Speculatively therefore, the hypostasization of the traditional gubernatorial tripod in the divine government is such that the Father is the *hypostasization* of the Legislative, the Son is the hypostasization of the Executive, and the Holy Spirit is the hypostasization of the Judiciary. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct from one another yet they are equal to one another in majesty and power based on the commonly shared divine essence “for each of them, only together with the one divine essence, is God.”²⁸ This one essence can neither be divided nor can it be split.²⁹ Thus, just as in the divine government, the three persons hypostasizing the three branches of government work together for a common end as the perfection of creation, so in African government, the three branches have to learn to work together. To achieve the end and purpose of leadership, African leaders and pastors, must copy this trinitarian prototype from which the human government is a type.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ J. EGBULEFU, *The Trinity, the Incarnate Word and Mary*, 297-298.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

To counter the inefficiency created by injustice is only possible through Christ, in whom we see the divine government working in harmony with the Father and the Holy Spirit. As an executor of the Father's Will, Christ publicly declared that he sought not his own will but the Will of the Father (cf. Jn. 5:30). He came to do his Fathers' will (cf. Jn. 6:38). He acted in consonance with the directives given by the Father sticking to his commands in obedience (cf. Jn. 12:49). He did exactly what the Father commands (cf. John 14:31). He does nothing of his own (cf. Jn. 8:28). This was done through the power of the Holy Spirit which made the incarnation possible.

A likely critique of this stance is the fact that non-Christians may find it offensive and unacceptable, since it is coming from the Christian view. Well, I cannot but argue as a theologian and as far as the theology of government is concerned, the African government stands in a dire need of evangelization. Since from the depth of his being, man craves and thirsts for justice, it follows that every man naturally desires peace which is a fruit of justice. Peace is possible only by doing the will of God which brings about his Kingdom. Since the merits of the incarnation benefits every human person with the conclusion that in Jesus Christ, the reality of human possibilities are brought to bear and find fulfilment (cf. *GS* 22), it follows that, unless in the remotest depth of the human heart, even an atheist, space is reserved for the practice of justice, peace remains enigmatic, illusive and a dream. I therefore assent to K. Rahner when he says: "No matter how distant a person may be from a revelation of the explicit formulation of Christianity, it is possible for a person to have accepted and embraced Christ in his lived existence."³⁰ Furthermore, despite the diversity of religious creeds, one humanity is a shared common denominator. Since anthropologically, man's identity is relational with respect to the 'other', it follows that to live justly is not just a mere religious injunction but an indispensable ethical and social need that must be practicable without which chaos and disorder continues to ravage the African society.³¹

Conclusion

The relevance of the Kingship of Christ can never be over emphasized because in the face of the many temporal challenges, the Church believes that only in the benign Lord rests the key to unlock the mystery of human situation. Christ is "the

³⁰ Cf. S. BULLER, *The Theology of Karl Rahner*: Kindle Edition 2014, Locations 978-980.

³¹ Based on the shared denominator of humanity, this thesis makes all its proposals and suggestions, rooted in the Christian faith in Christ whom humanity puts on a clearer light (cf. *GS* 22). Although I am arguing from such conviction, yet the gospel values do not in any way infringe on the right and human dignity of anyone irrespective of religious convictions.

focal point and the goal of man, as well as of all human history.”³² As the incarnate *Logos*, he is the point where divinity meets humanity. In him as the incarnate Son, the divine *Logos* penetrates and permeates the human flesh and inheres in it and perfects it, while the human flesh adheres to the divine Word and participates in the divine nature of the *Logos* ³³ and man becomes an instrument of salvation. Only by learning and imitating the Kingship of Christ can the Pastors and Leaders of Africa obtain solution to their problems.

Both pastors and leaders must learn from the Kingship of Christ as follows: (i) Religious leaders on their side must be ready to imitate Jesus in speaking out against every form of evil government and leadership and like the good shepherd, be ready to give their lives for the sheep. Political leaders who are responsible for the people must be charged to deliver their jobs in order to guarantee liberation and development among the people and ensure their human dignity. (ii) On the one hand, the three branches of government must effectively as distinct units carry out their functions independently without fear of intimidation and without crossing their boundaries, while on the other hand, they ought to perform this duty, complementing the other branches, united in their distinctiveness for the same goal; with no particular branch either overlapping, suppressing, controlling, dominating or even buying over another. Thus, the Executive must do their work well, the Legislative must be responsible, the Judiciary must be allowed to carry out their function without fear or favour. Hence, every citizen must be treated equally before the law and only then can we be said to have a just and functional system of leadership in Africa.

³² SECOND VATICAN ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (7 December 1965), 10, *AAS* 58 (1966), 1025-1120.

³³ J. EGBULEFU, *The Trinity, the Incarnate Word and Mary*, 238.