

Preaching the Gospel in a Digitalized World through Proper Communication Skills: Considering Urban Catholic Churches in Nigeria

Evaristus Ifeanacho (PhD)

Department of Religion and Human Relations

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

Email: eo.ifeanacho@unizik.edu.ng

Abstract

Man is a *homo loquens* (speaking being). This special characteristic of man which is founded on his being an *animal rationalis* (rational animal) makes him more so a *homo communicans* (communicating being). His ability to communicate hinges on the fact that he lives in a community and consequently uses language as vehicle for the transmission of thought. However, with the progress in the society, especially in information technology, there came an improvement in social communication. Sequel to that, since communication is the life-wire of every relationship and organization, the upgrade in communication technology resulted in a drastic enhancement in social communication. In the human relationship it is a *sine qua non* because lack of it signals a rupture. In the work of evangelization, the use of digital technology has also continued to aid and facilitate the propagation of the faith in no small measure. The researcher therefore unravelled the effects of the use of digital technology and proper communication skills in preaching the gospel in the Catholic churches located in urban areas. In this research, the descriptive methodology was used to expose the intricacies in the use of digital technology especially in the spreading of the Good News and making it reach to the remotest part in the urban areas in obvious adherence to the fact that faith comes through hearing. Through the analytic approach, the researcher made a critical evaluation of the impact of digital technology on evangelization. The findings helped in making adequate recommendations.

Keywords: Communication, information technology, evangelization, gospel

Introduction

Paul VI (1975) in his classical encapsulation of the importance of the use of the means of social communication in preaching the gospel states that “the Church would feel guilty before the Lord if she did not utilize these powerful means that human skill is daily rendering more perfect. It is through them that she proclaims “from the housetops” the message of which she is the depositary” (Par. 45). It is founded on this encouragement to appreciate the effort of human skill made event in the constant improvement in the means of social communication that one goes even deeper to a more fundamental relationship between God and man. In fact, in man’s relationship with the divine communication is very crucial because the lack of it signals bridge in divine intervention. God is seen as the Father of man. Therefore, He shepherds him through communication of His desire to man and man on the other hand respond by keeping his commands. This communication process is based on the fact that man is both a political and social animal. By dint of this fact, he cannot by his nature live alone. He needs to associate with others. Consequent upon his natural disposition, he lives in a society and *ipso facto* interacts with others in the community. Though Hannah Arendt on her own part implicitly insists that in this interaction there seems to be a relapse into the forgetfulness of politics and what it really stands for. Hence, for Kattago (2012:102) “the substitution of the social for the political highlights a forgetfulness of the very meaning of politics.” In that vein, Arendt (1958:23) maintains that for, “more than any elaborate theory, this unconscious substitution of the social for the political betrays the extent to which the original Greek understanding of politics has been lost.” However, we shall not dabble into this semantic controversy.

Pursuant to his social nature, Aristotle (1985:1988) further distinguished as *zoon logon echon* (an animal that makes use of language) and rational principles. Thanks to this natural endowment, he is able to communicate in his exercise of what the existentialist philosophers describe as being-with-others. Therefore through the use of language guided by rational principles, he is able to transmit sound cultural and moral values. To that effect, reason remains very crucial in the process of communication.

Any communication, therefore, devoid of reasonable reason remains questionable and in fact lacks philosophical foundation.

Man by nature is a communicating animal. This anthropological dimension of communication remains fundamental in distinguishing the personhood of man. This is typified in his dialoguing nature, intersubjectivity (Gabriel Marcel) and I-Thou relationship (Martin Buber) to mention but a few. These communicating dispositions go to underscore his personhood. All these natural elements notwithstanding, the advent of more technologically advanced means of social communication remains a welcomed development geared towards an improvement of what is from the beginning naturally imprinted in man.

Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying the fact that these technologized means of communication is the output of man's application of his rational faculties. These inventions do not come from the vacuum. Consequently, reason has both temporal and epistemological priority in these inventions. It is through the same rationality embedded in man that the media have to be tutored and safeguarded from relapsing into any kind of irrational usage. Reason has to play an outstanding role in educating the media, uplifting enriching cultural values and in the overall shaping of public opinion. In the words of Benedict XVI (2009), "the rationality of a self-centred use of technology proves to be irrational because it implies a decisive rejection of meaning and value" (Par. 74). This rejection creates an undue threat in man that could be his undoing. In fact, John Paul II (1995) affirms that,

The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say from the result of the work of his hands and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will. All too soon, and often in an unforeseeable way, what this manifold activity of man yields is not only subject to 'alienation', in the sense that it is simply taken away from the person who produces it, but rather it turns against man himself, at least in part, through the indirect consequences of its effects returning on himself. It is or can be directed against him. This seems to make up the main chapter of the drama of present-day human existence in its broadest and universal dimension. Man therefore lives increasingly in fear. He is afraid of what he produces—not all of it, of course, or even most of it, but part of it and precisely that part that contains a special share of his genius and initiative—can radically turn against himself (Par.47)

It is important to note that with the advent of digital technology, the Catholic evangelization in Nigeria has embraced this innovation. It is now employed as a means of spreading the gospel and the gains are obvious. However, some churches in the urban areas have not properly tuned in to this improved technology. Some of those that can have warmly embraced it do not take cognizance of the dangers and challenges that go with digital technology. It is against this backdrop that study is going to unravel some relevant facts on how digital technology could be used effectively in preaching the gospel in the Catholic churches located in urban areas in Nigeria. The research will also expose the obstacles that could impede the preaching of the gospel even with the employment of digital technology.

Digital Communication: inner meaning

Communication derives from the Latin verb *communicare* meaning "to share, divide out; communicate. Impart, inform; join, unite, participate in". Since it also has to do with *communis* meaning common, public, shared by many, it literally means "to make common". When idea comes to the common space everybody can share in it.

We can therefore define communication as giving, receiving and exchanging ideas, information, signals or messages through appropriate media, enabling individuals or groups to persuade, to seek information, to give information or to express emotions. Communication has tremendously improved that today the world has become a global village thanks to digital communication. To that effect, effective communication demands skills not only in speaking and writing; but more especially on the use of digital technology that helps in digital communication.

Digital communication therefore is the use of online tools like email, social media messaging and texting to reach other individuals or a specific audience in order to share a message. Even something as

simple as reading the text on a webpage like this can be considered digital communication. (<https://govos.com/blog/what-is-digital-communication/>)

It is obvious that language is the common vehicle of communication. Through the use of language human beings communicate, express themselves, get ideas across, and connect with the person to whom they are speaking. However, for communication to be effective, it demands the use of proper communication skills which in turn has to use proper communication process that begins with the sender, message, encoding of the message, channel, receiver, decoding of the message and ends with feedback. Effective communication skill relies on selecting an appropriate communication channel for your message. Selecting the wrong communication channel can cause obstacles to communication including information overload and inadequate feedback. The dominant channel today that covers a wider range of audience is the digital communication channel. Since evangelization is geared toward bringing the Gospel message to the ends of the earth, there is therefore no gainsaying the fact that the modern mass media in all its digitally technologized form play a crucial role in evangelization.

The choice of Catholic Churches in urban areas in Nigeria

Urban area refers to the very developed area of a city. There is usually a density of human structures and in our own context they have more access to electricity and other facilities. The research is centred on Catholic churches in urban areas in Nigeria in order to help the researcher expose how far the internet facilities is being used in the process of evangelization in Catholic churches especially in those areas that have more internet network. It therefore has the primary intention of limiting the scope of the work. That does not in any way intend to suggest that those in the rural areas are neglected in the process of evangelization through digital technology. More so, the urban areas of Nigeria have more network accessibility more than the rural areas.

The state of the use of social media for evangelization in Catholic Churches

Communication has remained the life-wire for the spreading of the gospel. Christ himself was a great communicator. He communicated using the elements of Jewish culture evident in his parables. He used different media of communication. He communicated at different levels: personal, interpersonal, group as were existent at his own time. The great Fathers of the Church like St. Augustine were groomed in the art of rhetoric. The early missionaries that came to Nigeria not only established schools and hospitals, but also delved into the use of print media. They used newspapers as one of the means of spreading the gospel.

In recent time, many Catholic Church documents encourage pastors of souls on the need to get abreast with the changes in communication. Paul VI (1975) emphasized on the utilization of the mass media thus: “our century is characterized by the mass media or means of social communication. When they are put at the service of the gospel they are capable of increasing almost indefinitely the area in which the Word of God is heard; they enable the good news to reach millions of people” (Par. 45). Further still, John Paul II (1995) affirms that,

mass media constitute not only a world but also a culture and civilization. And it is also to this world that the Church is sent to bring the Good News of salvation. The heralds of the Gospel must therefore enter this world in order to allow themselves to be permeated by this new civilization and culture for the purpose of learning how to make good use of them (Par. 71).

Sequel to that, he insists on the fact of training the preacher of the Gospel not only on the use and mastery of the mass media but also the listener, the reader and the viewer has equally to be trained. More importantly, they must be able to make critical discernment regarding the content of whatever is presented through digital communication.

These encouragements in the use of digital technology notwithstanding, one observes an evident nonchalant attitude in some pastors of souls with regard to the use of digital communication in the process of evangelization. Musa (2018) observed that a digital divide is visible among priests.

Digital divide occurs between priests who are within areas with strong network and those who live where there is poor or no network. This divide is not only between priests who have access

to information and technology, but also between those who are tech-savvy and those who are not. Ordinarily, younger priests who grew up in digital age are likely to be digitally literate than priests who grew up within an analogue culture. Surprisingly, this is not always the case because there are older priests who are more digitally literate than some younger priest. Besides, there is digital divide between those who are willing to learn more about new media and those who have closed up their minds against any new technology. (<http://www.latest.ncpdf.org.ng/2018/06/28/catholic-church-in-nigeria-the-challenges-of-the-use-of-social-media/>)

Interaction with some priests in Awka, Onitsha, Enugu and Orlu dioceses have revealed a very big vacuum in the use of digital communication in preaching of the gospel. Most of them use their Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter for their private communication. Some others are totally uninterested or uninformed about it. More so, some others find escape route on the fact of not being able to shoulder the financial involvement. It is based on this neglect of the urgent necessity of such veritable instrument of spreading the Gospel message that calls for this wakeup call on the Catholic Church in Nigeria. All in all, every communication begins from man and revolves around him.

Human person as the fulcrum of communication skills

Person derives from the Latin noun *persona* which ultimately comes from the infinitive *personare* which is a combination of the preposition *per* meaning “through” and *sonare* meaning “to sound”. So literally it means to sound through. It is further traceable to the Greek *prosopon* (πρόσωπον) which is used to denote the mask worn by an actor and more so to the role assumed by actors. It is in this context that *dramatis personae* is also used to refer to an actor in a play. So by sounding through, the actor communicates the personality and role of the person he is representing. In a similar vein, each medium of communication embodies its own characteristic nature. That is why according to Danesi (2013:36) the effect of each medium of communication on its audience varies depending majorly on its speed and method of dissemination of information. This interconnectedness that the media creates among persons and countries helps to shape and sharpen person-to-person relationship. Consequently, in the long run, the idea of person came to ultimately refer not only to role-playing but also as Danto (1967:107) to “man’s dignity in relation to other men.” Paul VI (1971) maintains that the swift advances created by these means of “social communication tear down the barrier that time and space have created between men. They can make for greater understanding and closer unity. A mass of information is continually on the move to and from all parts of the world and, as a result, men can learn what goes on and how other men live” (Par. 20).

Evidently, communication touches not only on individual persons but also the entire human community. The effectiveness of such communication depends again on one’s communication skills. It demands ability to follow the rudimentary process of communication that starts from the sender, the message, encoding of the message, channel, receiver, decoding of the message, and culminates in feedback. Therefore, for one to achieve proper communication skills especially in preaching of the gospel, none of these steps should be neglected. If a good message is passed through a wrong channel, definitely decoding the message and the eventual feedback would be faulty. Feedback in the final analysis demands listening. It is through listening that the communication skills could be sharpened and the unnecessary barriers to communication are skillfully avoided. This is the communication process that the human person regularly undergoes. To that effect, the Pontifical Council for Social Communication (2000) affirms that “the human person and the human community are the end and measure of the use of the media of social communication; communication should be by persons to persons for the integral development of persons” (Par. 21). Such integral development is nourished and deeply enhanced by man’s rational ability.

All in all, man’s intellectual ability is guided through education. In that vein, basic to communication skills is the fact that whatever is to be communicated has to pass through the crucibles of sound rational process. Such process has to guarantee proper evaluation of whatever information or message that is to be passed across for personal or public consumption. It also demands as Nanni (2007:120) opines that the recipient of the information must not only be of balanced personality, but also be able to critically

evaluate issues, deeply reflect and freely assume participative responsibility in reacting to the information.

Be that as it may, the human person remains conspicuously and unavoidably fundamental in the process of communication be it in the context social media or mass media.

Preaching the gospel through proper communication skills

The missionary mandate of Jesus Christ to his apostles urges them “*Go into the whole world and proclaim the good news to the whole creation*” (Mk.16:15). The effective preaching of the gospel to all creation demands arming oneself with the proper skill for communicating the truth of the Gospel. Fundamental to proper communication is a contemplative listening to the Word of God. We listen to understand our audience in the concreteness of their daily lives; in the feedback they give to the homily. As Francis (2016) has it, communicating means sharing, and sharing demands listening and acceptance, and to listen is much more than simply hearing. It therefore involves a learning process founded on divine grace. In the light of that of constant search for suitable skill, man’s search for knowledge draws him into various learning processes embedded in education. Getting acquainted with proper communication skills demands a disposition to learn and improve oneself. Therefore, Okafor (1992:17) avers that “learning is one of the inevitable concomitants of man’s nature.” However, it has to be an education founded on unmitigated freedom, ardent search for the truth and geared towards an integral development of the whole person. For, Congregation for Catholic Education (2002) holds that “through study and research a person contributes to perfecting himself and his humanity” (Par.39) By so doing, one uses his/her knowledge to subdue the earth” (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, Par.53). John Paul II (1990) extols the unifying force of the means of social communication when he teaches in his encyclical letter *The Mission of Christ the Redeemer* that,

the first Areopagus of the modern age is the world of communications which is unifying humanity and turning it into what is known as a ‘global village’. The means of social communications have become so important as to be for many the chief means of information and education, of guidance and inspiration in their behavior as individuals, families and within society at large (Par. 37)

In these words, he laid bare the importance of the means of social communications in different facets of the human society. However, it remains an incontrovertible fact that most often the arrival of some new technologies meets us surprisingly unprepared. Before we know it, we are already into it and we begin to fiddle with it in an attempt to uncover the inner wonders embedded therein. We begin then to learn as we use. It is important to note that education remains the bedrock of sound and balanced communication on the one hand, and solid opinion-making.

In this regard, John Paul II (1995) upholds that, “the modern mass media are not only instruments of communication, but also a world to be evangelized. In terms of the message they transmit, it is necessary to ensure that they propagate the good, the true and the beautiful” (Par. 124). To that effect, preaching the Good news of salvation can also be done through the social media. In that way, the dissemination of the gospel becomes faster and covers wider range of people. In that vein, Grosso (2018) affirms that, “Social media allow us to communicate with hundreds of thousands of people with one click — so what better place to spread this message of hope and love than Facebook (or Twitter or Instagram)? Using social media to witness to Christ, and hopefully, to evangelize in his name, starts by treating social media as an end in itself, not just a means to an end.”

In the same vein, we must use social media to minister to and feed our Christian communities by offering them content that will help them encounter Jesus in some way. Whether it is an inspiring or comforting quote from Scripture, live streaming Masses, crusades, meetings and other related events or catechetical videos that share the richness of religious tradition. In fact, social media in the context of religious faith is used to offer something of substance to friends and followers.

In fact, there is nothing more authentic, no narrative more powerful and no message more challenging than the Gospel. Let us strive to share it through our example of loving witness on social media.

Use of social media in evangelization

The Catholic Churches in the urban areas in Nigeria make use of the social media in preaching the gospel. Pastors of souls are enjoined to follow proper guidelines in order to ensure their proper use. When these modern means of communication are wisely employed, it enormously facilitates the spreading of the Gospel. In them according Paul VI (1975) the Church finds a modern and effective version of the pulpit. Thanks to them she succeeds in speaking to the multitudes” (Par. 45).

Bearing in mind that the Catholic Church has to respond to the signs of the time, it behooves her to always seek for more improved means of reaching out more with highest speed. In fact, for the effectiveness and efficacy of the new evangelization, John Paul II (2011) states that,

it is essential to have a deep understanding of the culture of our time in which the social communications media are most influential. Therefore, knowledge and use of the media, whether the more traditional forms or those which technology has produced in recent times, is indispensable. Contemporary reality demands a capacity to learn the language, nature and characteristics of mass media (Par. 72).

To that effect, Benedict XVI (2010) affirms that,

discovering new methods of transmitting the Gospel message is part of the continuing evangelizing outreach of those who believe. Communications today take place through a worldwide network, and thus give new meaning to Christ’s words: “What I tell you in the dark, utter in the light; and what you hear whispered, proclaim upon the housetops” (*Mt*10:27) (Par.113).

Undoubtedly, social media have a lot of advantages as far as preaching the gospel with them is concerned. According to Grosso (2018), social media allow us to communicate with hundreds of thousands of people with one click. He went further to insist that it is extremely important to use our social media outlets to invite people to Mass, adoration, confession and Catholic events, but we cannot only use our social media in this way.

In the Catholic churches in urban areas in Nigeria untiring effort has to be made to use the social media to minister to and feed the Christian communities by offering them content that will help them encounter Jesus in some way. Whether it is an inspiring or comforting quote from Scripture, live streaming Masses or events, or catechetical videos that share the richness of our Catholic tradition, we need to offer something of substance to our friends and followers.

Grosso (2018b) maintained that if we share meaningful content, we can use social media to bring people into an encounter with Christ every single day.

The social media outlet like Facebook when properly used plays an important in the propagation of religious faith. It keeps the members of the congregation connected as members of the same body the Church. It equally provides easy access to churches and their spiritual services and events. When Facebook and other related social media platforms are adopted, individuals, religious leaders and congregations will through these networks bolster religious participation. In fact, the use of social media for religious communication has brought growth in many urban Catholic churches in Nigeria and individual worshippers.

Dangers to be avoided in the use of social media

Notwithstanding the obvious advantages of the use of social media in preaching the gospel in the urban Catholic Churches, it is necessary to state that there are also dangers to be avoided. Therefore pastors of souls and the parish social media administrator must take adequate care to educate their followers on the proper use of the social media especially in the ambient of evangelization. Some of the shortcomings include:

1. Publishing of false information: Kgatle (2018) remarked that some churches have been criticized for stage-managed miracles, fake prophecies, etc. At times, the prophetic activities that are reported on social media range from the bizarre to the outrageous and sometimes immoral or even criminal. Some even make claims that are unrealizable in the name of prophecy and miracle.

2. Harmful publicity: It is obvious that the social media help in no small measure in promoting the preaching of the gospel among believers and informing non-believers on the teachings of a particular church, it could also be used to send destructive publicity. Since many do not evaluate the content of

what they send or the truth of what they read, the same users who used it for promoting the faith could also use it to send out poisonous comments that could destroy the integrity of the priest/pastor or the overall image of the church. As Benedict XVI (2011) rightly warned, “Everyone knows that the new information technologies are capable of being powerful instruments for unity and peace, but also for destruction and division” (Par. 143).

3. Manipulation of information: in some cases information is manipulated with the aim deceiving followers. Issues could be exaggerated beyond how it actually happened. One testimony could be manipulated as if it is a very huge testimony in order to attract and confuse the gullible masses.

4. Authenticity of social media users: It is obvious that many users of social media do not use false names. Consequently, it becomes difficult to decipher whether the numerous followers of a priest on Facebook for instance are actually real identifiable followers.

5. Infodemic: This neologism originated in the Health sector. It bespeaks of a contagious disease in communication. The World Health Organization (2020) described it as

too much information including false or misleading information in digital and physical environments during a disease outbreak. It causes confusion and risk-taking behaviors that can harm health.... With growing digitization – an expansion of social media and internet use – information can spread more rapidly. This can help to more quickly fill information voids but can also amplify harmful messages” (WHO 2020).

Such spread of confused mixture of accurate and inaccurate information about something makes it a herculean task deciphering the truth in the bushel of falsehood. Consequently, The Pontifical Council for Social Communications insists that everybody needs some form of continuing personal education which will help in forming standards of good taste and truthful moral judgment, and *ipso facto* culminate in the formation of a balanced conscience (Par. 25).

6. Beware of information overload: Overload of information is technically referred to as infobesity, infoxication and infosaturation. It actually refers to difficulty in understanding an issue and effectively making decisions when one has too much information about that issue, and is generally associated with the excessive quantity of daily information (Wikipedia). Such a situation aids indecision and distractedness and even consumes huge amount of time in ploughing into the heap of information in order to fish out the relevant information.

Recommendations

Based on this obvious neglect of the use of digital communication in the work of evangelization by some Catholic priests in Nigeria, I recommend that:

1. The use of digital technology should form part of the curriculum for those undergoing training for the Catholic priesthood.
2. There should be regular ongoing formation for those that are already ordained in order to get them abreast with the fast changing world of digital technology and how far it helps in evangelization.
3. Relevant parish events, scriptural excerpts, homilies are to be posted regularly for the parishioners and non-parishioners. Messages accompanied with images make more impression.
4. Priests should be ready to invest money and time in their rewarding effort to evangelize through social media.
5. Priests should be ready to install, maintain and regularly upgrade their blog. They should install Wi-fi in their offices and buy data in order to be online regularly. Documents could comfortably be saved in Cloud so that wherever the priest is he can access information regarding the parish or respond to every office demand.

Conclusion

Not minding the gains we enjoy and are still enjoy through the use of the media, not minding the misfortunes of manipulation and enslavement, not minding the shortcomings surrounding the use of digital technology in evangelization, we still hope for a better tomorrow guided strongly by use of reason and attention to the voice of conscience. So guided, the Catholic churches in the urban areas, will surely reap the abundant fruit of digital technology in preaching the gospel. All in all, Kgatle (2018)

affirms that technology can be beneficial to religion when it enhances the communal aspects of religion, and detrimental to religion when it degrades these communal aspects.

References

- Arendt H. (1958). *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Aristotle (1985). Politics. In Barnes J. (ed.), *The complete works of Aristotle*. vol.2, New Jersey: Princeton University Press.
- Barnhart R.K. (2000). *Chambers dictionary of etymology*, New York: The H.W. Wilson Company.
- Benedict XVI. (2011). *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, The commitment of Africa (Africae Munus)*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Benedict XVI. (2010). *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, The Word of the Lord (Verbum Domini)*. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Benedict XVI, *Message for the 2012 World Communications Day*.
- Bryski, B.C. (2013). Accuracy in Media. In Blanchard M.A., (ed.) *History of the media in the United States: An encyclopedia*, New York: Routledge Publishers.
- Congregation for Catholic Education. (2002). *Consecrated persons and their mission in schools*, Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Danesi M. (2013). Audience research. In Danesi M., (ed.,) *Encyclopedia of media and communication*, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Danto C. (1967). Personalism. In Edwards P., (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of philosophy*, vol.6. New York: The Macmillan Company and The Free Press.
- Digital communication: <https://govos.com/blog/what-is-digital-communication/>
- Dominick J. (2009). *Dynamics of mass communication: media in transition*. New York: McGraw-Hill Humanities.
- Flannery A. (ed. 1998). *Vatican II, the conciliar and post conciliar documents*. New York: Costello Publishing Company.
- Francis (2015). *Communicating the family: a privileged place with the gift of love*. Message for the 49th World Communications Day 2015.
- Francis (2016). *Communicating and mercy: A fruitful encounter*. Message for the 50th World Communications Day.
- Francis (2015). *The Encyclical Letter, Praise be to you, my Lord (Laudato sii)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Grosso J. (2018). What role can social media play in evangelization?
<https://catholiccourier.com/articles/what-role-can-social-media-play-in-evangelization/>
accessed 20/6/2023.
- Information overload. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_overload. Accessed 29/6/2023.
- John Paul II (1995). *The Post-Synodal Exhortation, The Church in Africa (Ecclesia in Africa)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (2011). *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, The Church in America (Ecclesia in America)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (2001). *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, The Church in Oceania (Ecclesia in Oceania)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (1998). *The Encyclical letter, Faith and Reason (Fides et Ratio)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (1990). *The Encyclical Letter, The Redeemer of Man (Redemptor Hominis)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (1990). *The Encyclical Letter, The Mission of the Redeemer (Redemptoris Missio)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- John Paul II (1987). *The Encyclical Letter, The Social concern of the Church (Sollicitudo rei socialis)*. Città del Vaticano, Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Kattago S. (2012). How common is our common world? Hannah Arendt and the rise of the social, in *Problemos*, 81, pp.98-107.

- Kgatle M.S. (2018). Social media and religion: Missiological perspective on the link between Facebook and the emergence of prophetic churches in southern Africa. *Verbum et Ecclesia*. vol.39 (1).
- Musa G. M. (2018). Catholic Church in Nigeria: the challenges of the use of social media. <http://www.latest.ncpdf.org.ng/2018/06/28/catholic-church-in-nigeria-the-challenges-of-the-of-social-media/>. Accessed 3/7/2023
- Nanni C. (2007). *Relazionalità e responsabilità in educazione*. Roma: IFRED.
- Ojo, E.O. (2003). The Mass Media and the Challenges of Sustainable Democratic Values in Nigeria: Possibilities and Limitations. *Media, Culture and Society*, London: SAGE Publications. Vol. 25 No. 6.
- Okafor F.C. (1992). *Philosophy of education and third world perspective*, Enugu: Star Publishing Company.
- Paul VI (1975). *Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelization in the Modern World, (Evangelii Nuntiandi)*. Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Paul VI (1971). Pastoral instruction, *Communio et Progressio* (Unity and advancement), Fifth World Communications Day.
- Pontifical Council for Social Communication (2000). *Ethics in communication*. Vatican City, World Communications Day.
- Pontifical Council for Social Communications (1992). *Aetatis Nova*, (on social communications on the twentieth anniversary of *communio et progressio*), Vatican City.
- Pontifical Council for Social Communications (2002). *The Church and Internet*, Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana.
- Rabi M.S. (2010). Functions and dysfunctions of mass communication media, in *Creative Artist: A Journal of Theatre and Media Studies*, Vol. 4, No 1. pp.165-187.
- Simpson D.P. (1968). *Cassell's Latin dictionary*. New York: Wiley Publishing, Inc.
- White D.P. (2016). A missional study of the use of social media (Facebook) by some Ghanaian Pentecostal Pastors'. *Koers* 81(2), pp.1-8.
- World Health Organization. Infodemic. https://www.who.int/health-topics/infodemic#tab=tab_1 accessed 18/6/2023)
- World Health Organization. Novel Coronavirus(2019-nCoV) Situation Report – 13. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200202-sitrep-13-ncov-v3.pdf> accessed 28/6/2023.