

Editorial

Take Courage; get up, he is Calling you: *Celebrating our Faith in Contemporary Africa*

Lane Dermot introduces his book, *Foundations for a Social Theology: Praxis, Process and Salvation*, by acknowledging the existence of a changing world. For him cultural, social and political changes were worth citing for the purpose of his book (1). Reverberating Lane's view in our contemporary Africa, one ought to include the economic changes to the list. History has it that changes in these elements have resulted in divisions, conflicts, discriminations, violence and neglect of human rights (1). More so, the changes are experienced equally in both religious and secular circles. This being the case, the adaptations and approaches to be employed ought to be distinct yet constructive to the whole community.

It is unquestionably true that the Christian way of life challenges individuals, families and communities to be exemplary to the volatile world. Each and every day, the Church celebrates liturgy and sacraments in varied forms. The celebration of our faith, in this case, should always become our source of energy and stability, inasmuch as change in culture, politics, society and economy is concerned. This energy is needed because in spite of the hopeless image of life faced by people today they remain united by a common search for healing and wholeness.

Recognising that we are a community separated mainly by the geographical space we ought to share our experiences from every corner of the world. The spirit of sharing the treasures each one of us has received from the Almighty makes the Holy Trinity *Dare* Board continually energised. The articles contributed for this issue by different authors, as per *Dare* tradition, connect together through our sharing of ideas and thoughts. The Holy Trinity College community,

through the *Dare* Journal Publication is always conscious of Dare readers and this 11th issue offers encouragement and stimulation to different people of God, through the sharing of both spiritual and physical experiences.

The previous issue stressed the need for one to think of ways in which one can become an **Authentic Christian to Witness in the Contemporary World**. The present Dare board thought of narrowing down our reflection to the African context in matters to do with achievements, improvements and amendments in matters which concern our faith. The background being that, the Church introduces her members into different liturgical celebrations, to which celebration of sacraments is not an exception. With this in mind, one ought to have the energy emanating from these two elements and be equipped to challenge the daily endeavours encountered in our societies. One can think of engaging the liturgical celebration of sacraments in Africa as a source of emancipation to interacting with our challenges today. Accordingly, the 11th Issue of May 2019, steers a reflection on the riches embedded in the celebration of **Liturgy** and **Sacraments** as essential anchors of our faith. It is through these pillars that God calls us to witness His benevolence among people.

This present Issue is made up of twenty articles from different authors. We take great pride in this issue because more than half of the articles were contributed by the Holy Trinity Students. The Holy Trinity College lecturers and some faithful have also contributed in this issue to share with the rest of the world.

The journal opens with a call to understanding our faith. Alfred Zembe's conviction is that the most difficult thing today is to celebrate faith, especially in our continent where the image of Christ has been repainted and diluted such that if Christ was to return today, He might fail to recognize himself in the sermons and teachings attributed to him in Africa. Amidst the distortion of Christ's message the call '**Take heart, rise. He is calling you**' is always at our disposition to lead the

way to our authentic living of our faith. In his article, Alfred explores the meaning of the words ‘Take heart, arise, he is calling you’ ‘Θάρσει, ἔγειρε, φωνεῖ σε’ as they can be applied to the Church in the present Africa.

Christian life is not a journey in the dark because of the models available for all the believers. Patrick Mullins brings into picture **Blessed Isidore Bakanja**, a man who lived his faith and presented himself as a proto example of our Christian witness in Africa. He outlines the circumstances in which the martyr ‘lived and died in order to draw attention to the generosity with which he responded to the light of Christ when it first reached him. His story challenges each one of us, ‘in our diversity, to reflect on the implications of having only one common Father in heaven’.

Accordingly, Vitalis Chiromba reflected on the issues to do with our faith in Zimbabwe given the present understanding of signs. His article touches the **contemporary Zimbabwean understanding of miracles exhibited in Prophetic Ministries, viewed in the light of Jesus’ signs in John’s gospel**. It is in this gospel that we encounter Jesus, performing signs yet pointing to what is necessary in the life of a human person. Athanase Dushirimana reflected on **the ethics of Jesus**. His point is that our faith has to embrace all that Jesus exhibited. He is convinced that our contemporary society is in the dire need of moral values more than it needs material things. Thus, we ought to obey the ethics of Jesus by placing our faith in Him.

If we are to follow radically the ethics of Jesus, it becomes crystal clear that we all have a moral obligation to take care of one another. This is our Christian call and an expression of our faith. With this background Rodwick Chigumete discusses in his article our **expectations and actions towards the needy**. He expressed that sickness is not only physical but also a spiritual battle. Both circumstances require help from our communities of faith and God. The Church as a community of believers reaches to the world through her members. **She cannot pretend to be unaware of the contemporary propensities**. This is

what Brian Kanyai noted in his reflection on the call from, *Gaudium Et Spes* **Number 4**. For him the Church has to respond to the call of the day if she is to remain relevant. This, she achieves through the authentic Christian living of her members.

The faithful are engaged in different fields in their day to day endeavours. One of the areas that can be pointed to is entrepreneurship. There is a certain way in which those doing business contact themselves. The question that arises is whether a Christian entrepreneur can differ from a non-Christian. **The business environment we perceive in Africa** today exhibits problems. Michael Kyalo is puzzled with the consequences that arise by our failing to practice our Christian values and faith in every situation we find ourselves in. In his article the guiding principle should be ‘I tell you, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me’ (Matthew 25: 40).

Our faith becomes authentic and meaningful if we are guided and led by the wisdom from God. Rodney Tom battles with the question of **the place of wisdom and its relevance to the societies in Africa**. The author sorts to explore the concept of wisdom as it is identified and discussed by different sages. He is convinced that the concept of wisdom is not only peculiar to Israel but also to the reality we have to face in Africa because it is a universal reality, a creation of God or object of faith, and also as secular or human experiential reality.

Lovemore Makore reminds us that, our Christian call teaches that, man is **created in the image and likeness of God** (Genesis 1:27). This image is preserved through our authentic reception of the sacraments made available by the Church. If we neglect our Christian path we easily fall into sin thereby misrepresenting the beauty of God in us. With this in mind, Makore assesses the **nature of sin and its consequences considering the Old and New Testaments as well as Irenaeus’ theology of sin**. This ushers us into an **analysis of the sacrament of Penance and sacrament of the Sick**. A scriptural

defence is employed to confirm that the two sacraments are sacraments of healing. Victor Orwa uses John 20:22-23 for the institution of the sacrament of penance. He considered Mark 6:13 for the anointing of the sick, because that is where the elders of the Church were mandated, to pray over and anoint with oil in the name of the Lord.

The celebration of faith evident in most parts of Africa is a result of the mission works from those parts of the world that received the gospel first. Benjamin Yavoo argues that all **Christians are missionaries**. This is because when one embarks on the Christian journey, one is sent to spread the good news. Noting that, some people dedicate themselves for special missionary activities the author appreciates the work done by the missionaries in Africa. He noted that though the road to doing missionary work was not smooth they endured and succeeded. In his appreciation of the challenges of first **missionary work in Ivory Coast**, he notes that there is a lot to be learnt. He reflects on the point that they were then the missionaries, what are we doing as contemporary missionaries?

Givemore Mazhanje dealt with the **liturgical developments in the church focusing on the Roman Rite during the medieval period**. The article helps us to appreciate the origins of the rituals we encounter in our today's liturgical celebrations. Mazhanje gave an examination of the various liturgical books amassed and used during these medieval centuries, books used for Mass, for the Divine Office, and for other liturgical rites.

Accordingly, Shelton Zimondi's article highlights how **Christian liturgy as understood by the Catholic Church is related to Jewish cult**. However, he acknowledged that the discussion will not exhaust the liturgical facets that justify the grafting of the Catholic Christian liturgy on the Jewish cult. He justified, for instance, the Jewish origin of the Liturgy of Hours and Christian initiation. The article by Underson Musina seeks to compare and contrast, the **Christian initiation presented in the Gospel of John and Acts of the Apostles**.

From it we note that as Christians we have the same birth which makes us one people through the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and the Eucharist.

More so, Mark Chikuni gives us **a critical analysis of the genre and the message of the prophet Isaiah**. He reflects on the controversial passage, Isaiah 5:1-7. The article is a battle to establishing whether canvassers have complicated or rather simplified matter. Our faith is strengthened or weakened, as well, if we consider our conviction on the matters or what we claim to know. By unpacking the opinions surrounding the prophet Isaiah, our faith is strengthened because of our better understanding of the Word of God conveyed by Isaiah. As such, in his persuasion of his faith William Guri shares with us his findings in the areas of **Religion, Spirituality and Mental Health: Current Trends in Research and Practice**. He presented this at the Holy Trinity College affiliated to the Catholic University in Zimbabwe on the 6th February 2019. His article brings to awareness the complexity of the human person. Thus, what one experiences in faith is in a way related to the physical and mental dispositions.

Christopher Dyczek, unpacks the ways in which **Christian stories** can be told for the benefit of Christian faith. He identified that in all of the settings of Christian teaching, it will be desirable, that the participants should communicate well and creatively with one another. According to him, it is unfortunate that those who turn up may have had little experience of faith sharing at a well-educated level. He used examples from his own experience, most of which has been English, European or North American, but what he experienced in Africa as well. Accordingly, Machada happily shares her experience of faith. In her article she puts forward every **Christian to challenge what the world demands** of us with what we receive at the very beginning of our Christian journey. The Christian life has to equip us to be teachers in the world and not to be swallowed by the world. We assume different positions and responsibilities in different degrees but these ought not to drown our Christian identity and celebration of our faith. The

journal closes with Tsitsi Ngwenya's article on **fear**. She, again, shares her experience, highlighting that our faith can be disturbed by fear. As a result we may not strongly stand with our faith due to fear.

A special word of thanks goes to those who spared their precious time to putting together what has become now the Holy Trinity College Dare Journal 11th Issue. May God reward you abundantly for being generous with your time and energy. To my fellow students, the Dare board is grateful because we understand the pressure of assignments, yet you always squeeze yourselves to contribute to our journal. We do not forget those outside our college who are always there to share their ideas with the world through our publication.

We would also like to acknowledge the support we receive from the college. The lecturers support us in every way towards this project. The dean, who happens to be our academic advisor, is always with us, unsparingly sharing his experience, ideas and guidance. The college supports our work financially as well. Without finances, publishing will be a night mare. Regardless of the economic situation, the college managed to sponsor the running of the project.

The process of compiling and editing the articles, went smooth due to the self-giving of each editorial team and this requires a special recognition. Ultimately, we would like to joyfully thank the Almighty, for the blessings, we receive each and every day of our lives. To come up with this Issue, it was through His providence of time, space and well-being.

We wish you a happy reading, and thank you for supporting us.

Munyaradzi Murungu. O.Carm
Chief Editor