

**THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH'S ACTIVITIES IN REALIZING
PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR IN SCHOOLS IN
UASIN-GISHU COUNTY, KENYA**

BY

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DECLARATION

Declaration by the Student

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear parents and all the people of goodwill who selflessly supported me in all aspects of my research and development of this thesis.

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I glorify God Almighty for giving me a mind to understand and the strength and determination to undertake my PhD studies. To Him be the Glory. I am indebted to my supervisors, Prof. Eunice Kamaara and Rev. Prof. Joseph Kahiga, for their steadfast guidance during the development of this thesis. I thank all my colleagues and friends for their insights and criticisms during the drafting of this work. I also thank most sincerely the members of my family for their moral and material support.

ABSTRACT

The present world is largely characterized by people who live in two opposite extremes, namely, the poor and the rich. More often, the challenge posed by poverty attracts the attention of governments and non-governmental organizations. Faith communities respond to the teaching of Scripture by establishing structures that empower the poor. The Roman Catholic Church's commitment to empowering the poor is found in its social teaching and practice. Social amenities offered by the church range from provision of food, clothing, shelter, medical care and affordable quality education. In spite of such initiatives on the part of the church, poverty is rife. This study sought to: Explain the concept of preferential option for the poor from a Roman Catholic perspective; find out the activities of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in the realization of preferential option for poor students in secondary schools; and identify challenges faced by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in its effort to realize preferential option for the poor. The study adopted descriptive mixed method cross-sectional design comprising qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The study population comprised of students from all Catholic sponsored schools in Uasin Gishu County. From the Diocesan Education Report of 2013, there were thirty-nine (39) Catholic sponsored secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County with a student population of 3,882 at the time of the study. The study also targeted 12 diocesan secretariat staff, 4 county education officials, 4 executive managers of Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Gaba campus and 4 other priests who are experts in Catholic social teachings. A sample of 351 students, 9 head teachers, and 28 teachers were drawn from those schools. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting 24 key informants, 12 from Catholic Diocesan secretariat, 4 priests, 4 officials from the Ministry of Education in the County and 4 members of the management at Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Gaba Campus). Schools were selected using simple random sampling technique while teachers and diocesan education officials were purposively sampled. Kathuri and Pals' formula was employed in sampling student population. Questionnaire and interview schedule guide were the main tools of data collection. The data from the open-ended items in the questionnaire and the semi-structured items in the interviews was transcribed and qualitatively analysed using thematic approach. They were interpreted and presented alongside quantitative data. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistic which involved frequencies and percentages. Analysed data was presented using cumulative frequency tables, percentages and pie charts. On the Catholic understanding of preferential option for the poor, the results indicated that the option was given an impetus in the New Testament through the person of Jesus Christ whose messianic activities fulfilled what the prophets of old had foretold. Based on this understanding, the diocese has served the community through establishing schools, hospitals and other amenities as a way of caring for the poor. On activities in realizing option for the poor in catholic schools, the study found that the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret runs programmes aimed at helping poor children within its institutions. These activities are conducted within the Church and others that are school based. Regarding the challenges faced by the church in implementing preferential option for the poor, most of the respondents noted that inadequate finances affected implementation of catholic-initiated projects. The respondents indicated that the laity need to be involved more in church projects from the onset. It is anticipated that the findings will be useful to policy makers, the Church and all those keen on poverty alleviation. Through the study, a scholarship programme or a revised school fees structure for learners from a

poor background is recommended so that the poor can access quality learning. The study also established that there are several Church-managed projects meant to support needy students. Inadequate funds; against a high number of needy students in schools is one of the major challenges faced by the Church. The study recommends that the Church initiates more income generating projects in schools for sustainable support of needy students.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AFER:	African Ecclesial Review
AMECEA:	Association of Member Episcopal Conference of Eastern Africa
BEC:	Basic Ecclesial Communities
BOM:	Board of Management
CDF:	Constituency Development Fund
CELAM:	Episcopal Conference of Latin America
CJPC:	Catholic Justice and Peace
CUEA:	Catholic University of Eastern Africa
EFL:	Education For Life
GOK:	Government of Kenya
HIV:	Human Immuno-deficiency Virus
IDP(s):	Internally Displaced Persons
KCPE:	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KNFD:	Kenya National Fund for Disabled
PLWA:	People Living With Aids
SCC(s):	Small Christian Communities
SECAM:	Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN:	United Nations
UNESCO:	United Nation Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USAID:	United States Agency for international Development
WCC:	World Council of Churches

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The Bible beginning from Genesis, through the Exodus' experience of Israelites in Egypt and the coming of exilic prophets mirror God fighting for the poor. What does it mean to be poor? The poor are those who cannot afford to buy food, live in dilapidated houses, cannot own property but instead work for others for a living. Some of these are people who are constantly in poor health and cannot afford to educate their children (World Bank, 2008). Recently, one Oxford University research placed the Kenya national poverty index at 45.9% and that of Rift-Valley at 22% an indication that poverty is rife (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, 2015).

The Catholic Church has been in the forefront in articulating the plight of the poor. It does this through social teachings, social development and educational projects, among other initiatives. When Catholic Bishops in Latin America met in the first general assembly in Medellin in 1968, they resolved that the responsibility of the church towards the poor should be enhanced through its social teachings. In the next assembly in Puebla, Mexico in 1979 the idea was re-emphasized as indicated in the final document thus:

with renewed hope in the vivifying power of the spirit, we are going to take up once again... a clear and prophetic option expressing preference for, and solidarity with the poor... We affirm the need for conversion on the part of the whole Church to a preferential option for the poor, an option aimed at their integral liberation (Dorr, 1983).

The statement of the Latin American Conference of Catholic Bishops first used the term 'preferential option for the poor' to produce a pastoral strategy in which all

members of the church were invited henceforth to be witnesses in the world (Dorr, 1983). Through this option for the poor, the church is able to design a way through which it interacts with the world and especially poor people. Through this deliberate strategy, the church finds a way of imitating Christ (Richard, 1988). What came out of this period of intense discussion became initiatives through which the Church identified with the poor (John Paul II, 1988).

James Cone, in his book *A Black Theology of Liberation*, uses the Exodus event in the life of Israel as a paradigm of God's option for the poor. He observes that in Christian moral thought, it is the obligation of the rich to care for those who are poor. The Catholic Church teaches that the poor deserve preferential respect, because if a society is to provide justice for all, the poor and the powerless, the marginalized have the most urgent claim (Wink, 1973, p. 35). The Catholic Church's option for the poor was influenced by Gutierrez's understanding of the religious duty to care for the poor (Gutierrez, 1973, p. 286). This study brings together the understanding of Catholic social teaching drawn from the Scripture and the reflection of three contemporary Popes (St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis) with an aim of contextualizing preferential option for the poor in the African context.

The direction taken by the study was mainly on the relationship between education or lack of it and poverty. It is the researcher's conviction that education can lift people out of poverty. This view is not new. It has been attested by UNESCO (2001). For instance, an international workshop on education and poverty eradication held in July 30th 2001 underscored the need to eradicate poverty (UNESCO, 2001). The workshop, which was held in Kampala Uganda, brought together over 70 participants comprising mainly education stakeholders from different parts of Africa. The position

taken by the conference on poverty eradication is critical because it shows the important role played by education in improving lives of people. It appears from this study that, although the church has embarked on its efforts to lift the poor from their conditions, the efforts are not enough. The study therefore suggests that in order to reach out to the poor especially children in Catholic sponsored schools, a lot requires to be done. The role played particularly by education in alleviating poverty makes this study unique. The kind of education received impacts on poverty reduction and improves quality of life. This is attested by Kenya's poverty reduction strategy paper which emphasizes education as a tool for poverty reduction (Kenya, Government Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper [PRSP] 2000-2003). According to the government, equipping people with skills can help them to find meaningful employment or self-employment to support themselves and their families economically. Therefore, the result of education efforts is improved living standards.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In Kenya, the Ministry of State for Planning, National Development and Vision 2030 estimates the national average poverty level to be at 48% (GoK, 2012). But poverty is not evenly distributed: there are major disparities within the country and within counties. A Kenya Integrated Household Baseline Survey (2005/6) done by USAID on Uasin-Gishu County recorded a 51.3% poverty rate. This indicates a higher figure than the national average one. One of the major ways through which the poverty cycle in families is broken is through education. But often, poor families are unable to access education for their children. Lack of education implies that people cannot qualify for certain well-paying jobs to support themselves and their families economically. Even when such people engage in self-employment, their lack of

skilled training can impair the performance of their work. In this way, lack of education keeps people in the state of poverty.

Kenya struggles to make universal access to education envisioned in Kenya Vision 2030 a reality. However, a recent study shows that high financial costs of schooling make education less affordable to the poor (UNESCO, 2004), thereby creating a scenario in which some prosper as others remain in abject poverty.

Out of 12,476 candidates who sat for KCPE in Uasin-Gishu in the year 2014, only 760 benefited from CDF kitty (Citizen's constituency development fund report card for Uasin-Gishu-CFSP, 2014). The county has benefited from corporate bodies such as Kenya Equity Card and Master Card's 'Wings to Fly' as well as KCB foundation scholarship which cumulatively supported 85 needy children in the county in 2014 (*The People*, 2014, May 30). The need to partner with like-minded organizations in addressing the challenge of poverty through education is highlighted in the County fiscal strategy paper 2014.

The Catholic social teaching highlights poverty as the greatest challenge that the Church in general (and the Catholic Church in particular) should eradicate through education for upward social mobility (Paul VI, 1967). Education improves a poor economic growth of a country and therefore generates economic opportunities and income (World Bank, 2004). In light of what the universal church teaches, the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret runs secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County. Out of the 129 secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County, 73 are Catholic sponsored. There are Catholic sponsored secondary schools with a package for bright students from poor background. The poverty index released the year 2014 places those below

poverty level and hence the need to scale up efforts to empower citizens to invent ways to fix (CFSP, 2014). What this means is that those parents with very low or at times no income may find difficulties in sending children to high cost institutions (presumed to offer quality education). Borrowing from the missionary spirit of the early 1990's the church can do something to assist such poor parents. This study sought to study the activities of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret towards the realization of preferential option for the poor in selected schools within Uasin-Gishu County.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to identify and evaluate the activities of the Catholic Church in realizing God's preferential option for poor students in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County. The specific objectives of this study were:

- i. To analyse the Roman Catholic understanding of preferential option for the poor
- ii. To establish the activities that the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret engages in towards realization of preferential option for the poor in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County
- iii. To identify challenges faced by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in implementing activities related to preferential option for the poor students in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County
- iv. To suggest strategies that the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret should adopt to address the challenges it faces in implementing activities related to preferential option for the poor students in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County

1.4 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- i. What is the Roman Catholic Church's understanding of preferential option for the poor?
- ii. Through which activities does the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret realize preferential option for the poor in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County?
- iii. What challenges does the church face in implementing preferential option for the poor in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County?
- iv. What strategies should the Church adopt to mitigate the challenges it encounters in implementing preferential option for the poor in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study is significant and timely as it sought to look into the social teaching on preferential option for the poor and its application in Catholic schools in Uasin-Gishu County. Christian missionaries that first came to Kenya introduced schools in order to empower people with knowledge. They also built hospitals and attended to the sick within their established institutions. Some of these amenities were availed alongside the preaching of the Gospel in line with the Catholic social teaching.

The findings of this study highlights practical ways that the Catholic Church has embarked on to assist poor children get education. By establishing private schools that generate money for self-sustenance, the church attempts to form its people for future careers. What the study found out was that though most of the schools in Uasin-Gishu are public, the place of the Catholic Church as a sponsor cannot be

underestimated. This study is a reflection on the efforts put in place by the Catholic Church to assist the poor through its schools.

When corporates roll out comprehensive programmes such as Equity's *Wings to Fly*, meant to help bright yet poor children, the church should get boosted to double its effort. The findings of this research will provide additional reading on the strategies put by the church in assisting bright students from poor homes.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

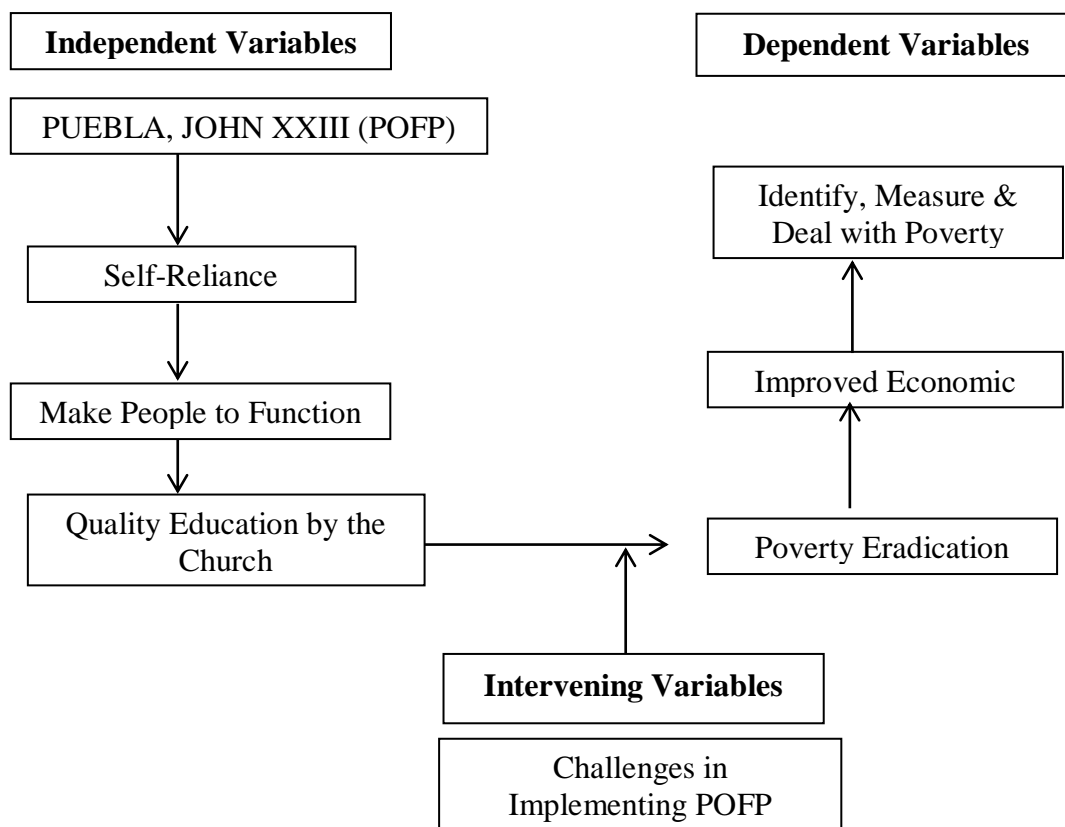


Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: *Capability Cycle* by Amartya Sen (1992)

As conceptualized above, in its bid to realize the aspirations of the preferential option for the poor, the church establishes and implements programmes to promote self-reliance. These programmes provide people with opportunities to take action to eradicate poverty within their families and communities. One of the strategies that the church uses, which was the main independent variable in this study, is to initiate programmes to support access to quality education as a means to alleviating poverty. However, there are challenges that face the implementation of activities to realize the preferential option for the poor. These challenges constituted the intervening variables in this study. It was envisaged that in the absence of these challenges, the church would realize the aspirations of the preferential option, namely poverty eradication,

economic growth and sustainability of existing poverty alleviation programmes (dependent variables).

1.7 Literature Review and Identification of Research Gaps

Scholars have written extensively on the subject of the poor. The focus in most cases is on addressing its causes or attempting at reaching solutions. This section will look at the undertaking of the Catholic Church to educate its members as indicated in its social teaching. When Pope John XXIII took over the leadership of the Catholic Church in 1958; many people thought that his stay was going to be short lived due to age and ill-health. True to their thinking, he succumbed to cancer in 1963. Even when he convened the Vatican Council II Most of the Cardinals knew that the church was headed for major reforms. The final document that came from the Vatican II had a resounding emphasis on the place of the poor in society.

1.7.1 Understanding of the Preferential Option for the Poor

In Latin America, Catholic Bishops understood even more clearly the ravages caused by poverty and poor governance. Vatican II and meeting of Latin American Episcopal Conference (CELAM) in Medellin demanded that the poor should be considered in the programmes set out by the church. For the first time the cardinals attending the meeting recognized poverty as a big challenge and that an option for the poor was necessary. It was at the Puebla meeting opened by Pope John Paul XXIII that the term ‘preferential option for the poor’ was coined. By using this term, the Catholic bishops confirmed that poverty was indeed a concern for the Catholic Church. The Catholic social teaching has principles that enable humanity generate ways of self-improvement. Amartya Sen (1992) described poverty as lack of capability to function

effectively. His was a reflection on inequality in the world in which we live in. In his attempt to work out solutions for reducing poverty, he suggested a capability approach whereby people should be facilitated to function. This idea is similar to what the study calls self-reliance approach whereby the students who benefit from assistance that the Church gives thus members are enabled to function on their own.

His idea of justice for the poor led to a proposal of quality education through which the poor can improve their situation. What this assumption of quality education for the poor means is that those who go through school effectively are likely to get good jobs, become productive and earn more (Amartya, 1992, p. 27). He argues that factors that influence educational outcomes can be traced back to the home. For him, poverty and the economic status of the person are co-related. Though the idea of quality was not developed clearly throughout the discussion, it is not lost on future studies to pursue.

Gutierrez (1973, p. 287) discussed the plight of the poor from the perspective of liberation theology. He understands the poor as marginalized people who should be cared for by the Church. He posits that the poor are the way they are not because of fate, but due to actions of those entrusted to their care. From his perspective, prophets such as Isaiah and Amos warned Israel to free themselves from oppressing the poor because by not doing so, the mandate of the people of God would not be clearly defined. In the spirit of Gutierrez's argument, the church takes up the prophetic task as an advocate of the poor.

The Catholic Social teaching on preferential option for the poor has extensively been influenced by the position of liberation theologians, thanks to Medellin and Puebla discussions. St. Pope John Paul II, though an advocate of the poor, steered clear of

liberation tendencies in order to direct the church in his time to play a clear role in uplifting poor people from inhuman conditions. Thus:

The church in seeking to promote human dignity should show preferential love to the poor, the voiceless and marginalized because the Lord has identified with them in a special way (John Paul, 1987, p. 42).

The Pope aware of dissenting voices during that period argued that the mystery of poverty is that when people share what they have with the poor they get to know how they feel and at that point, love begins. The Encyclical is laced with biblical interpretations that awaken the church wherever it is to adopt a clear sociological and theological teaching for the poor. What this means is that the church should advance the cause of the poor in its lifestyle, programmes and policy. Perhaps in the mind of Pope John Paul II was a radical approach in which the church should listen to the poor and allow them to be part of problem solving initiative.

Perhaps a recent look into the definition of the poor by Pope Francis will shed light into what his predecessor had asked. He states:

The poor are those left out or pushed into poverty by being denied water, food, housing and other necessities of life which are basic human rights (Francis, 2015, p. 16).

Evangelii Gaudium, translated as the *Joy of the Gospel*, is an exhortation that invites the entire church to pursue happiness by way of reaching out to the poor and the broken. As time advanced, the church required a new meaning to the challenge of the poor in the society. Pope Francis understands preferential option for the poor as a pastoral strategy for members of Christ body to be witnesses in the world even if they face opposition. For him, God who is love has given the church the Gospel which has to be used to respond to challenges facing it. Hence, “A true Theology can be

developed only on condition that a Theologian makes an unequivocal option for the poor and for their liberation” (Francis, 2013, p. 7).

Pope Francis has since exemplified this since he ascended to the office in March 2013. He made history during his trip to Mexico by castigating what he called institutionalized indifference to the poor and those displaced by war. In February 2016 he travelled to the migrant Island of Lampedusa off the coast of Sicily – indeed living to the spirit of liberation already propagated by theologians such as Leonardo Boff and Gustavo Gutierrez. In light of these views, the study sought to examine the understanding of the preferential option for the poor by the church in the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret.

1.7.2 Activities for Realizing Preferential Option for the Poor

While the Catholic Church in Latin America opted to form Basic Ecclesial Communities (BEC) as a way of attending to the needs of the poor, most other countries particularly Africa continued to welcome missionaries who brought God’s word and encouraged members to go to school. As such, in the eyes of the missionaries, educational activities constituted a way for realizing the preferential option. To what extent, then, has the Catholic Church established educational activities to lift people out of poverty in the Diocese of Eldoret? This study sought to answer this question.

In the Apostolic letter titled ‘At the Beginning of the New Millennium’ (*Novo Millennio Inuente*), St. John Paul II says: “Love opens out into a service that is universal; it inspires in us a commitment to practical and concrete love for every

human being” (John Paul, 2001, p. 45). St. Paul’s reference to practical and concrete love implies the establishment of relevant programmes to realize the preferential option of the poor. This study sought to examine if the church in the Diocese of Eldoret has heeded this call by establishing appropriate activities to lift people out of poverty.

He demonstrates through his teaching the special presence of Christ in the poor which demands from a preferential option. Coming from the argument and the teaching of the Pope John Paul II, this term received legitimacy in the face of outright challenges from some Catholic conservatives. Perhaps what has been lacking is a practical matrix to identify the essential elements of this ‘option for the poor’. Significantly, this option is a testimony to the nature of God’s love shown when Jesus served those who had both spiritual and material needs. The Apostolic exhortation does not exclude anyone from taking up the role to assist the poor. The result of such an undertaking is that the church cannot afford to sit by the side when poor people continue living in squalid conditions. It required to define specific objectives to help people out of poverty. To this end, this study investigated the activities that have been put in place by the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Eldoret to realize the preferential option for the poor.

Pope Benedict XVI also looks at the poor in relation to God’s love. Thus: “God’s love...raises questions about who God is and who we are” (Benedict, 2005, p. 2). He alludes to what his predecessors pointed out, that the church’s biblical mandate to help the poor cannot be left to a few. On 2nd August 2011, Pope Benedict issued the Apostolic Exhortation *Verbum Domini* (Word of the Lord), adding voice to *Deus Caritas* (God is love) released five years before. These two documents are significant

to this study because they add voice to the role the Catholic Church has in identifying with the poor. When the documents are read in the light of Pope John Paul II's spirit of Puebla, the place of the Church in social and economic progress comes into sharp focus. Though Benedict's reflection does not give the modalities of how this should be done it was evident from the Vatican II council that the stage had already been set for the church to testify that it stood for the poor. This testimony is shown through establishment of appropriate activities meant to help the poor. Has the church in the catholic diocese of Eldoret heeded this call?

Looking at this teaching of Pope Benedict, two ideas critical to the discussion come into perspective. First is the religious vision that the church has for the poor despite the lack of approach in meeting the task. Secondly, this option for the poor requires a structured examination on the part of the whole Christian family. This last perspective elicits several other questions that perhaps escaped many other scholars before him. The Pope attempted giving an answer on whether there was valid option for the poor. Again, of critical reflection is how such an option should be interpreted and implemented pastorally. This study sought to investigate how the Diocese of Eldoret has interpreted and implemented the preferential option of the poor. Specifically, the study sought to examine the church's understanding of the option and the activities it has put in place to implement it in the Diocese of Eldoret.

Boff (1988) argued that suffering is not to be accepted. The statement should be transliterated to mean: poverty should not be accepted. His work affirmed that those who own massive wealth are very few while a majority of the people live in abject poverty (Boff, 1988, p. 140). What activities has the church in the Diocese of Eldoret

used to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor? This is one of the questions that this study attempted to answer.

John Paul II Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa*, reflected on the theme of Evangelization in the light of preferential option for the poor and the vulnerable. This theme came as a reflection of some challenges that still bar people in Africa from experiencing the love of God in their lives. Part of what came from Popes' reflection was 'structures of sin'. The document became an invitation to the church in Africa to rise up and reflect on itself with an effort to avoid occasions in which it has become complacent to wrong systems instead of being an advocate for social justice.

The injustices that characterize society in general are frequently found in various social institutions, such as educational institutions managed by the same Catholic Church. Where such inequalities are evident, corrective efforts towards social justice remains the onus of the church in any vicinity. The Vatican II Council affirmed the role of Catholic institutions in transforming humanity through education. The document emphasized a transformational Christian education. What the Council had envisaged was perhaps a situation in which those who graduate from the system of Christian education would be people with the call to speak for the poor. In theory, it should be possible to ensure that social justice acts as a guiding principle in the provision of educational services, provided that all involved in the provision of such education are in agreement that this is the best way of achieving fairness and equality. One would expect, then, that all children would be treated equally within the educational system regardless of their social standing.

One educationist, who supports the idea of a living system of education that every child can learn and achieve, is Zappone (2012). She recommended a framework that would include a description of the process and overall objective of achieving equality in children's educational provision despite the locality of a person. For her, a process that involves educationists engaging in change process in the lives of people is the priority. Zappone (2012) suggests:

...achieving equality in children's education requires a living system that supports common ways of learning, accommodates diverse capacities, cultures, learning paths and achievement outcomes. One that also enables communal solidarity or 'sticking together'; and reduces inequalities of resources between social groups and geographical communities (p. 82).

The author above acknowledges that the challenge posed by inequalities of resources requires people to stick together. By proposing a social group as an avenue through which the endowed can contribute to the poor, work of peace on earth can be achieved (John XXIII, 1963, p. 434). Inequality of resources according to Zappone makes children from minority groups, such as socially disadvantaged children, children from ethnic minorities and those with learning difficulties to be left out. What this means is that there needs to be a deliberate effort to ensure that their differences do not result in inequitable or discriminatory treatment (Zappone, 2012). Therefore, the present study sought to examine activities put in place by the church in the Diocese of Eldoret to alleviate inequalities in access to quality education.

If poor children are subjected to inequality or discrimination in school, their experience of school can be one of alienation and marginalization. Their experience of education tends to be, therefore, in sharp contrast to Dewey's (1966) view of education as "a fostering, a nurturing, and a cultivating process" (p. 10). Their educational experience also represents a contradiction of McLaren's (1995) belief

that, in order to ensure some level of equality, “the society need to give the poor and the powerless a preferential option” (p. 138). In order to create a level ground where every child will receive education without feeling marginalized, has the church in Eldoret diocese positioned itself as a moderate player? What programmes or activities has it put in place to support children from poor families in accessing quality education? The study sought to answer these questions.

1.7.3 Challenges in Implementing Activities to realize the Preferential Option

The document, *Social dimensions of Development: An Appraisal of Human Centred Development and Alleviation of Poverty* (1995), indicate that poverty in Kenya has been on the rise since 1994. This paints a grim picture on the steps made by all the stakeholders since independence. It revealed that at that time, 3 million people out of a population of 30 million controlled the country’s wealth, leaving the rest to subsist either in poverty or just above the poverty line. It means that government and other stakeholders’ efforts towards reduction of poverty, ignorance and diseases have been facing challenges. The study sought to understand the challenges that the church in the Diocese of Eldoret experiences as it strives to alleviate poverty.

The three key areas were spelt out in the *National Poverty Eradication Plan* (GoK, 1999) and the *Sessional Paper No 10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its Application to Planning in Kenya* (RoK, 1965). The NPEP views poverty eradication as both a moral obligation and an economic imperative for Kenya’s development. From the independence document above, the government of Kenya committed itself to an education process aimed at lifting the standards of the poor. The NPEP lays out plans for the country’s economic growth together with plans on how to tackle rising

cases of poverty. It also provides a framework on ways of reducing the scourge of poverty. As a long-term measure, the government of Kenya, through its Ministry of Planning and Interior, coordinated and worked out a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). This became a roadmap for future developments of the nation towards wealth creation and sustenance. Nevertheless, the government has not defined the role that other stakeholders, such as the church, can play in realising its poverty eradication agenda. In its place, the church also seems to have worked in isolation from the government in its attempt to realize the vision of preferential option. To what extent does this lack of collaboration between the church and state actions challenge efforts to realize the preferential option in Eldoret Diocese?

The County of Uasin-Gishu worked out the first County Fiscal Strategy Paper (CFSP) in 2014 that highlighted several areas of interest including poverty reduction. This document pointed out the grim reality of rising demand for basic services within the country despite economic uncertainty. At present, poverty is rising yet the formal and informal sectors cannot provide adequate and gainful employment opportunities for a rapidly growing labour force (RoK, 2012). Does the rising rates of poverty put too much pressure on church efforts to help the poor rise out of their economic status? What strategies can the church use to ensure that its efforts are at par with the rising rates of poverty in the area? This study sought to answer these questions.

The rising poverty levels is witnessed across Kenya particularly within agro-ecological zones. These statistics justify the need for concerted efforts by all stakeholders to lift the poor. What this implies is that poor children have numerous disadvantages in relation to their counterparts. They are usually less healthy and ill-equipped (socially and physically), to go through school programme. If their

disadvantaged position and their daily challenges are not taken into account, they cannot fully benefit from the school system. The church as the conscience of the society challenges the injustices faced by poor children by creating avenues for assistance. To what extent does the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret accomplish this in its efforts within the catholic-sponsored schools in Uasin-Gishu County?

1.8 Design and Research Methodology

1.8.1 Research Design

Mixed methods cross-sectional and descriptive research designs were used for this study. This involved both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis saying why you used a mixed method design. Schoonenboom and Johnson (2017) state that the main aim of mixed methods research, of integrating qualitative and quantitative research approaches, is to widen and strengthen the research conclusions and, as such, contribute to the existing knowledge. On the other hand, in cross-sectional research the investigator is interested in establishing the state of phenomena in a given target group at a given point in time (Zheng, 2015). Therefore, since this study was interested in establishing the state of affairs with regard to the preferential option for the poor, the mixed methods cross-sectional design was most appropriate. A students' questionnaire, both structured and unstructured interview schedules for key informants and Catholic church-initiated programme managers as well as content analysis were the main instruments of data collection. Once the questionnaires were collected by the researcher, the data was coded and fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data from the open-ended items in the questionnaire and the semi-structured items in the interviews was transcribed and qualitatively analysed

using thematic approach. Qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis was simultaneous.

1.8.2 Research Site

The study was conducted in Uasin-Gishu County, a cosmopolitan area. Uasin-Gishu County is one of the 47 counties of Kenya measuring 3,328 km². It borders Nandi, Kericho, Baringo, Elgeyo/Marakwet, Trans Nzoia, and Kakamega counties. Eldoret is its administrative as well as commercial centre. The county has six sub-counties, namely Soy, Turbo, Moiben, Ainabkoi, Kapseret and Kesses.

It has three administrative districts Eldoret East, Eldoret West and Wareng. It also has three local authorities, namely Municipal Council of Eldoret, County Council of Wareng and the Town Council of Burnt Forest. According to the 2009 census, Uasin-Gishu has a population of 894,179 with 202,291 households and a population density of 269 people per km² (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2010). The age distribution is 0-14 years 41.5 %, 15-64 years 55.7%, and above 65 years 2.9%. A young population signifies a high level of dependence, especially to cater for such needs as education and health (www.uasinggishu.go.ke/county-overview). Estimated 90 percent of the entire land area in the county is arable and can be classified as high potential. There are four major soil types in the area, all of which are suited for agricultural production. These include red loam, red clay, brown clay and brown loam. A total of 29,801.92 hectares is gazetted forest. Out of this, 13,183.54 hectares, 44% is under plantation, while, 16,618.38 hectares, 56% is under indigenous forest cover (www.uasinggishu.go.ke/county-overview).

Through the rural afforestation programme, there are woodlots scattered across the County. Eldoret town is now a major business hub with important institutions such as the Moi University and Eldoret International Airport. The headquarters of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret is based within the town. This county has 39 Catholic sponsored secondary schools distributed in the three administrative districts of Eldoret West (19 Schools), Eldoret East (14 Schools) and Wareng (6 Schools). As the headquarters of the Catholic Diocese in the region, most of the schools inherited the missionary initiatives of concern for the poor. The church has been engaged helping the homeless, the orphaned and the poor in the spirit of what missionaries had started.

1.8.3 Study Population

The study population comprised of students from all Catholic sponsored schools in Uasin-Gishu County. The Diocesan Education Report (2013) indicated that there were thirty-nine (39) Catholic sponsored secondary schools in Uasin Gishu County with a student population of 3,882 at the time of the study. The study also comprised of diocesan secretariat staff, Small Homes co-ordinator and member of the cathedral deanery, Diocesan administrator, head teachers, county education officials, executive managers of Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Gaba campus, being the only Catholic Higher Education Institution in Eldoret, and 4 other priests who are experts in Catholic social teachings.

1.8.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study employed both purposive and probability sampling techniques in selecting respondents. Purposive sampling technique was used to identify 9 out of the 39 schools with preferential option for the poor programmes, the schools' 9 head

teachers, Catholic University of Eastern Africa - Gaba and the diocesan secretariat officials, Small Homes co-ordinator and member of the cathedral deanery, Diocesan administrator, four county education officials, the management of Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA), Gaba campus and four other priests who are experts in Catholic social teaching. Out of this sampling method, 24 respondents were arrived at to provide qualitative data.

Probability sampling technique, specifically proportionate simple random, was used to select participating students from the target population. The sample size of the students was determined using the formula indicated by Kathuri and Pals (1993). The formula is as follows:

$$n = \frac{X^2 NP (1-P)}{d^2 (N-1) + X^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where:

n-Required sample size

N-The given population size (in this case, 3,882)

P-Population proportion of 0.50

d- Degree of accuracy (in this case, amount error of 0.05)

X²- Table value of chi-square for one degree of freedom, which is 3.858

Substituting these values in the equation, estimated sample size (n) was:

$$n = \frac{3.858 \times 3882 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}{0.05^2 (3882-1) + 3.858 \times 0.5 (1-0.5)}$$

$$\mathbf{n = 351}$$

Kathuri and Pals (1993) developed a table based on the above formula detailing the sample size selection for various finite populations (Appendix 1). The sample size for a population of 3,882 is 351. Therefore, a total of 351 students were involved in the study. Students were sampled proportionate to the population of the sampled schools as illustrated in Table 1.1. Only Form Three and Form Four students were selected to participate in the study. This is because they were considered relatively mature and knowledgeable to respond to the research items as compared to students in the lower forms.

Table 1.1: Students' Sample Size

School	Population	Sample	Percentage
A	397	$397/3882 \times 351=36$	10.3
B	567	$567/3882 \times 351=51$	14.5
C	421	$421/3882 \times 351=38$	10.8
D	312	$312/3882 \times 351=28$	7.9
E	298	$298/3882 \times 351=27$	7.7
F	579	$579/3882 \times 351=52$	14.8
G	602	$602/3882 \times 351=54$	15.4
H	311	$311/3882 \times 351=28$	7.9
I	395	$395/3882 \times 351=36$	10.3
Total	3,882	351	100.0

1.8.5 Instruments of Data Collection

A students' questionnaire, both structured and unstructured interview schedules for key informants and Catholic church-initiated programme managers as well as content analysis were the main instruments of data collection. The students' questionnaire was used because it provided the respondents adequate time to provide well thought-out responses. It also provided an opportunity to gather information from a wide area and make it possible for a large sample to be covered within a short period of time.

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. Section A sought to document the background information of the students. Section B sought information on the provision for the poor. Section C gathered data on the activities done by the church for realization of preferential option for the poor. The last Section D examined the challenges the church faces in implementing preferential option for the poor

1.8.6 Piloting

According to Murray (2003), piloting is important because it helps to identify ambiguities of the items and vague questions for improvement. A pilot study was conducted before the main study. For this purpose, four secondary schools in Nandi County with similar characteristics to those under study were identified. Schools that were not included in the sample were selected. Forty students (40), ten from each school were randomly selected.

1.8.7 Validity

This study established content and face validity to assess the accuracy, meaningfulness, appeal and appearance of the instruments for data collection. The study used a combination of questionnaires and interviews to collect data. Expert opinions, literature searches and pre-testing of open-ended questions were used to improve the content and face validity.

On the use of expert advice, the researcher submitted copies of the questionnaire and interview schedule to the university supervisors. The supervisors examined every item in the tools and discussed with the researcher the best ways to ensure the tools

gathered relevant data for the study. Their advice and corrections helped the researcher to refine the items in the instruments to enhance validity.

1.8.8 Reliability

The reliability of the students' questionnaire and interview schedule for key informants and programme managers was determined using test- retest method. This was done through a pilot study where the questionnaires were administered to ten students in each of the four schools twice within an interval of two weeks. The results were subjected to correlation using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and a correlation coefficient (r) of 0.8 was obtained hence, research instrument was deemed reliable.

1.8.9 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher requested for an introductory letter from Moi University. This letter assisted in getting a research permit from the National Council for Science and Technology (NACOSTI) to conduct the research. It was necessary to ask for permission from the school administration through the Diocesan Education Secretary to gain access to the sampled schools and the Catholic Diocesan offices in Eldoret. The researcher identified and trained two research assistants to administer the questionnaires.

1.8.10 Data Management and Analysis

Once the questionnaires were collected by the researcher, the data was coded and fed into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data from the open-ended items in the questionnaire and the semi-structured items in the interviews was

transcribed and qualitatively analysed using thematic approach. They were interpreted and presented alongside quantitative data. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistic which involved frequencies and percentages. The processed data was presented in tables, charts and explanations provided.

1.8.11 Ethical Considerations

The purpose of the study was explained to participants before data collection. This enabled the respondent to make informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not. The information collected from participants was treated as private and confidential. Besides, the study was conducted at the convenience of the respondents. Finally, all references to other author's works were dully acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Apostolic Exhortation:	Communication from the Pope that encourages the community of the people of God.
Catechism:	A text containing fundamental Catholic truths formulated to facilitate understanding of Church members.
Catholic:	Catholic means universal. For the purpose of this study it is used to refer to the Roman Catholic Church.
Charity:	Virtue of love.
Church:	This term has many meanings- a building, or even a group of worshippers believing in Christ. On the other hand, church means individual groups like Roman

Catholic Church. The study is specific to the Roman Catholic leadership comprising bishops, priests and religious. The study too acknowledges that some teachings address all the Christians.

- Encyclical: Letter addressed by the Pope to the church regarding matters of Roman Catholic faith. This is unlike an apostolic exhortation that addresses matters common to humanity.
- Fundamental option: Real and extremely important personal decisions.
- Magisterium: A term used to mean the official teaching authority of the Church.
- Papal: Relating to the office of the Roman Pontiff.
- Seminary: An academy for training boys for future tasks as priests.
- Social Justice: From Church's social teaching, it means society's responsibility in Justice and charity to promote the common good.
- Social Thought: In this context it refers to the official position of the Catholic Church regarding certain elements of faith and practice.
- Synod of Bishops: This is the ordinary general assembly of Catholic Bishops.
- Vatican Councils: Two meetings that were held in the Vatican City in 1869-1870 and 1962-1965, respectively.

CHAPTER TWO

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH'S UNDERSTANDING OF PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

2.1 Introduction

This chapter traces the foundation of the notion of preferential option for the poor from the Old Testament into the New Testament. There is a section on liberation Theology drawn from the prophetic messages of the Old Testament. It also brings out teachings on option for the poor from Catholic social teachings especially Church documents. The last section deals with the work done by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in reaching out to poor students through provision of education in both its sponsored and privately owned schools. Most schools within the Diocese of Eldoret are supported by the government. There are also some that the Catholic Diocese initiated not only to provide basic education but also serve as income generating projects for a particular community or parish. These fall under the category of privately sponsored schools.

2.2 Option for the Poor in the Old Testament

The preferential option for the poor has biblical origins. The Old Testament portrays the people of God as the poor of Yahweh, *the Anawim*. Such poor people who were a neglected lot are understood as the darling of God. Guillermo (1958) observes that God would do everything to protect the poor from any impending danger from the enemy. These for him are people who are economically deprived, with no social status, treated unjustly by foreign rulers or by authorities in their own land (Guillermo, 1958, p. 21). The poor of Yahweh are understood as such because nobody

speaks for them. According to Guillermo, these needy cases lack basic necessities of life because of being orphans. He argues that poverty experienced by such poor people is an injustice that requires eradication through the activity of the church.

2.2.1 The Poor as Priority of the Church

Mockeridge (2003) advances this Old Testament response to the poor by invoking a radical approach to their plight. For him, rich people with excess from their basic needs should give back to the poor what is theirs as a right. From this argument, it can be gathered that the role of the community should be that of letting the poor take part in seeking solutions to their challenges rather than being viewed as a problem. From the perspective of church's social teaching, there has to be a way of opting for the poor however small it may be. The lesson given from the book of Exodus is that the poor should be the priority of the church. It also presupposes that the people themselves take it up as a calling to help the poor. Most of the liberation theologians who emerged in the Latin America found this push to help the poor as a spiritual test of a just society.

The stories of Exodus from Egypt (Ex. 12:2-6) and Babylon (Lev.26:34) are indicators of how God removed Israelites from social bondage. The journey out of Egypt was a Divine act of liberation of the poor and the oppressed people. It was during this period of oppression that the daughter of Pharaoh practiced royal charity towards the little Moses who had been left to float in a river. The study of this nature is enriched by Exodus because Christianity should be tested by the level with which members rise to the invitation to help the poor. The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in its

quest to respond to this noble task meets with challenges but the spirit of the Old Testament focus is the springboard for continuous struggle.

Pixley (1983) opines that Pharaoh's daughter had no option other than to show love for the poor and those understood as outcasts. The Exodus event is an invitation to care for the needy thus: *You shall not oppress the poor or vulnerable. God will hear their cry* (Ex. 22:20).

The book of Exodus presents the gesture of Pharaoh's daughter as a royal duty rather than a call. This study is about the church that comes in to play the same role that Pharaoh's daughter took. She accepted to nurse Moses till he grew to discover that potential he had to lead. The poor children in the community have great potential that the church as an institution can tap by going out of its way to assist. The justification is drawn from the fact that she went ahead to make Moses her son. What was required from Pharaoh's daughter at that time can be traced to what priests taught in Leviticus thus: "...a portion of the harvest is set aside for the poor and the stranger..." (Leviticus 19:9).

The above text was meant to motivate the people of Israel to voluntarily give to the needy. The priests had a duty to teach this truth to the people. When missionaries came to Africa, they managed to attract rich settler farmers who readily offered to sponsor some of the children from poor backgrounds. This gesture is what the study finds motivation because it means that the mission of the church to assist the poor originates from volunteers who first came to teach and to treat in mission hospitals. From the narratives of priests dedicating themselves to educate as well as empower

through education, the church became a power through which those who succeed through the system come back to help the poor.

2.2.2 Moses: God's Representative and Champion of the Poor

The story of Moses cannot be ignored. He grew up to be a liberator by killing a brutal oppressor (Exodus 2:12). Poverty is still a brutal force that requires to be toppled by all means. It needs an effort of members of a community who are bold like Moses. Fox (1972) translation and commentary on Exodus exemplifies many elements of Moses as a hero. The Exodus narrative about the miracle of God saving his people shapes this study in the sense that it is God not Moses who stands for the poor and the stranger. The text indicated above presents Moses as he seeks to intervene and correct a slave who was in the wrong. It prepares the reader to delve into Chapter 3 of Exodus where God acts decisively and interrupts Moses' pastoral existence as a shepherd and family man. The intention was to use Moses as a channel of mercy and justice. This story of God's rescue of the enslaved became an inspiration thousands of years later in Latin America. Poor and enslaved people worked under cruel burdens and cried to God for their freedom.

As a turning point in his life, Moses decided to intervene and saved his fellow Israelites from being molested. Perhaps this action of standing with the poor made the church to think of social justice in its teaching. The focus of liberation theology was essentially to locate the institution of church within the intricate challenges faced by people in the Latin America. The spirit that led people like Moses to want to stand for the downtrodden and poor members of the community of Israel relates to what the church should do to speak whenever there are acts of injustice. The catastrophe

brought about by an inhuman regime (Plastarus, 1966, p. 87) made Israelites cry unceasingly to God. In the middle plagues, Moses discerned that when systems fail to provide solutions to challenges of poor people, they should be overthrown. For instance, Exodus 12:31-32 indicates a calling on the part of God's people to champion for the needy: "Thus says the Lord; let my people go that they may serve me in the wilderness" (Exodus 12:31).

Plastarus (1966) uses this text to argue that the events of Exodus were violent; they entailed destruction of Egyptian army and rescue of Israel. Boff (1979) saw this as a liberating grace from God who had warned the entire nation of Israel of vengeance if they defaulted from the covenant way of life.

2.2.3 Accompaniment of the Poor

Through the Exodus event, God travels with Israel in their challenges of the wilderness. There was a call and invitation to a long journey to change an oppressive regime in preparation for the jubilee. This means that the starting point of their journey was the plight of the poor people. Lohfink (1987) uses the term 'poor' to challenge believers concerning their mission to make a difference in the world. He invokes the Old Testament idea of Jubilee year and Sabbath tradition as a way of restoring property to the poor so as to re-establish equity among all people. Although such an endeavour was not easy, Lohfink (1987) acknowledges that the efforts done in the Old Testament amounted to option for the poor. From the time of the prophets to the period through the desert with Moses, Israel teaches the church today to rise up and remain with the poor. The study finds this argument by Lohfink relevant in re-awakening the spirit of sacrifice that is underneath preferential option for the poor.

Prior to the arrival of prophets, Israelites had adopted a character of fasting and giving sacrifices yet they deliberately neglected the poor. The prophet Isaiah was a strong defender of the poor people inflicted by challenges. Thus he taught: “God is a refuge for the poor” (Is. 25:4). This message of the prophet summarized the teachings of Moses in the Pentateuch. The New Testament would later pick this idea by terming religion that neglects the plight of the poor as perverted (Mathew 25:31-46).

2.3 Option for the Poor in the New Testament

The New Testament is a story of God vindicating the poor through the ministry of Jesus Christ and the Church born after the Pentecost. In this section, some commentators have reflected the option for the poor in the light of the New Testament. Jesus’ public ministry began with a proclamation of Good News thus:

The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed... (Luke 4:18-21).

Lay understanding of the above statement of commission indicates the role that Jesus took as an advocate of the poor. For Jesus, this was a ministry of dedication to the poor and oppressed. His was a call to make preferential option for the poor by creating conditions through which their voices are heard, defended and their status elevated.

2.3.1 Mission of Christ: Liberation of the Poor

When Jesus entered the Synagogue in Jerusalem, he read from the scroll of the prophet Isaiah to show that there existed a link between the Old Testament prophetic ministry and that of His time (Lk. 4:18). What many churches call the great

commission started here with an invitation to lift up the poor and the disadvantaged in a real and concrete way. Luke's Gospel picks this idea of concern for the poor in this chapter in order to draw the readers to the ministry that awaited Jesus. Thus the mission of Christ to bring Good News to the poor and oppressed (Lk. 4:16-17) was passed to believers and more so those who lead them.

Preferential option for the poor means a call to look at the world from the perspective of the poor people in order to work in solidarity with them towards the attainment of social justice. The Gospels particularly deepen this mystery of poverty by tracing Jesus Christ to the village called Nazareth, a despised location. What this means is that the Church has to discern the plight of those who struggle to survive and the needs of vulnerable members of the society ahead of individual selfish interests. This is emphasised in the Gospel of St. Luke thus: "Blessed are the poor, theirs is the Kingdom of God..." (Lk. 6:20).

The synoptic tradition introduced the healing ministry of Jesus as an example of how the early Church interacted with the poor intensely. In challenging abuse of power, Christ was standing in the tradition of Moses and prophets like John the Baptist who invited converts to speak for the powerless (Parker, 145, p. 75). The title of Parker's work '*Standing with the poor*' reflects the example of how Jesus doubled His efforts to defend and promote the dignity of the poor and the vulnerable. As it is, this author brings to the fore the understanding that justice requires an option for the poor.

2.3.2 The *Magnificat*

Kummel Werner (1985) discusses the *Magnificat* of the Blessed Virgin Mary to justify the design of God to stand with the lowly. The emphasis of this author puts into perspective the earlier motif in which authors such as Parker used the title of his work to suggest that the least privileged in the society will be lifted up by God. Werner and Parker knit together the prophetic voice and the mission of Christ both in Galilee and in Jerusalem. By introducing the poor of Yahweh here in the book the *Anawim*, Werner connects the Old Testament theology of salvation to the public display of Jesus' ministry as a lesson to what the Church was set out to do later on.

The work of the Church to help the poor is understood as God who comes down to save His people. Blessed Virgin is referred to this kind of salvation in the Psalms thus: "that those who waited for their salvation patiently were rewarded" (Psalms 25:31).

For the Blessed Virgin Mary, her calling meant that God would finally lift the poor and shame those on the thrones. The Old Testament motif of people of Israel who waited for a long time for a saviour to break into their history means that God travels through the history of people until they succeed. Lohfink (1987) opted to trace this option for the poor in the light of the challenges faced by Moses. It worked for him and therefore the economy that the *Magnificat* brings to the study is that the Church has no option other than to show commitment to the cause of the poor.

2.3.3 The Galilean Ministry

Campell (1966, p. 63) points out Jesus' poverty from the background that He had nowhere to lay His head. This points out to the character of Jesus' total surrender to the Divine will. The argument connects with the beatitudes in the synoptic Gospels. Thus: "...blessed are the poor in the spirit for theirs is the kingdom of God..." (Mt. 5:3).

Campell's exposition of Jesus' character throughout the Galilean ministry contradicts that of the rich young man in the Gospel of Mathew 19:16. This comparison is perhaps desired by the author to generate the thinking of liberation from riches so that the Church should stand out as a pointer to salvation. Jenkins David (1976), in *The Contradiction of Christianity*, points out the idea that all believers should emulate the poverty of Jesus by internalizing the social teaching of the Church and putting it in practice.

This argument is so critical to the study because there are members of the Church who may be comfortable with that which they own and do not find it a priority to help others. The parables used by Jesus in the synoptic Gospels especially that of the poor Lazarus at the mercy of the rich man point to the reality of a Church that hardly cares at times. Schelkle Karl (1971) uses the story of poor Lazarus sitting below the table of the rich man as a metaphor pointing to how some members in the Church have continued feeding from left-overs falling from the table of others with extra. Schelkle awakens the Church to take the front seat in championing the cause of the poor. This is a story of being in a Church capable of responding more forcefully to challenges faced by the poor.

Fitzmyer (1982, p. 87) uses the metaphor of the poor though with a different approach. He carefully links the story of Lazarus and the rich man to what Jesus did on the Thursday before His death when he washed the feet of the twelve disciples. According to him, the church should bend its knee in order to attend to those wounded by poverty instead of behaving indifferently like the rich man. Fitzmyer (1982) generates the Theology of liberation from the story in the Gospel of John 9:1-11 about a blind man healed by Jesus at the pool of Bethesda. In this Gospel narrative, the crowd by the pool thought that somebody in the family had sinned to necessitate the suffering of the blind man.

Fitzmeyer intelligently places this experience in the context in which believers should stop looking outside of the pool and start looking for ways to lift the poor from conditions of poverty (*ibid.*, p. 88). This biblical story finds its place in the Catholic social doctrine relating to caring for the poor. Fitzmeyer has carefully knitted together the experience of Israelites in the person of Moses to this Gospel story of healing by the pool.

The parallelism created in this story is that of Moses journeying with the murmuring Israelites from Egypt amidst serious poverty and calamity. Jesus, like Moses, was able to mingle with others including the paralytic in Mathew 9:1-8. The Gospel message has since then influenced the way people deal with one another. Catholic social teaching is a reflection of how the Church listens to the message and translates it to address the country's situation. It is that which places a greater demand and conviction on the Church to act. The Word of God contains messages of economic and political reality as the Church seeks to bring people into the knowledge of Christ. It translates the message of the Gospel to the people so as to make them to be aware

that one's spiritual development cannot be separated from the society one finds him or herself in.

The impact of the Church is felt depending on how it fulfils the mandate given to it by Jesus Christ. Like the way missionaries did with the early schools, it seeks to empower people intellectually through education in order to make them functional in their society. When Jesus Christ resurrected he sent forth the Holy Spirit which empowered the twelve to continue with the ministry he had begun.

2.3.4 Lessons from the First Church

Howard Clark (1977) portrays the first Church that made a lot of efforts to share whatever they possessed with the poor. From the numerous emphasis made on Acts 2:42-47, 4:34, it appears as though it was an ideal scenario required of all believers. William Barclay in *The Daily Bible Study* discusses marks of a true Church (Barclay, 1976, p. 30). His argument on fellowship has been utilized in the social teaching of the Church. The ideal believers of Acts of the Apostles did not lack the basic items such as food and clothing.

The spirit that characterizes that community was sharing with the needy. This is critical to this research as it lays a background for the option for the poor. Paul admonishes the Corinthian Church to share with others till the point in which economic equality is attained (2 Cor. 8:2-5). PHEME (1977) picks up this theme to justify the reformation debate perhaps to emphasize faith and work. His arguments bordered on radical spirituality exemplified by a clear agenda in which the faithful

should commit themselves to the cause for the poor. This research is about faith that is translated into work for the poor.

The early Church was characterized by efforts to alleviate the suffering of the poor and the ravages inflicted on the human person. In Jerusalem for instance it made efforts to serve everyone including strangers (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32). In spite of the little resources that they had, members joyfully participated in sharing and assisting the poor (2 Cor. 8:9). From the writings of St. Paul to the Corinthians, the Church demonstrated the reality of love for God and neighbour. For the Church, this radical direction was required in order to separate itself from the world. Perhaps this is what it is demanded of now than ever before considering the role it needs to play as a conscience of society. It cannot afford to remain with the rich while the poor people are crying for justice. The Gospel that is preached is an invitation to the Church to courageously denounce all oppressive structures without fear of being victimized. When the people take over the development needs of others without being distinct and indifferent, then that is when true marks of the church can be seen (Barclay, 1976, p. 36).

From the beginning, the Church has a Divine mandate to care for the poor by way of organizing its activities to assist. The Church will fall into temptation of being part of a rotten and corrupt system of the world if it does not work towards alleviating injustice against the poor. In fact, it will be judged by how it handles the society within which members of the Church are part. It has its core responsibilities well defined to change extreme poverty for the better and make a deliberate choice to be in solidarity with the needy. Synoptic Gospels present Jesus Christ clearing the temple of those who had corrupted it by “overturning the table of money-changers, the seats

of those who sold” (Matthew 21:12-15). Where this enthusiasm for the ministry to reach out to the poor seems to be waning away, the Church should make a deliberate move to revive it. The Catholic tradition to stand with the poor and the oppressed has developed over the ages as attested in its social teaching. The elaborate doctrinal teachings are brought out in its catechisms

2.4 Option for the Poor in the Catholic Catechism

In the history of the Catholic faith, members have been assisted to grasp fundamental tenets of use of basic texts known as catechism. These texts have grown through time because of issues that the Church comes out to address within a particular epoch. The teaching regarding option for the poor has also grown through this process of revelation beginning from the first catechism to the latest.

The Baltimore Catechism of 1885 was so basic that it only emphasized corporal works of mercy such as quenching the thirsty, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and housing the homeless. It stressed that a believer is required to provide these simple tasks as instructed by the Gospel of Mathew 25:36.

O’ Brien argues rightly that ‘Much of the world goes to bed hungry and thus calling poverty a worldwide problem’ (O’Brien, 1954). The Catholic Church was confronted with unjust treatment towards poor people especially at the beginning of 1900 AD. It therefore needed to come out with this catechism that outlined its position in the face of difficulties facing the poor. Initially, Pope John XXIII maintained that the world should emulate Jesus by sharing with the poor (John XXIII, 1961). This teaching challenged the Church to make a preferential option by creating conditions for

marginalized voices to be heard. The Church had to be deliberate in defending the defenceless in the society. The period that preceded the Baltimore Catechism was industrial revolution in Europe. It was a period in which human labour was sought after at the expense of life itself. This deliberate action required that the Church had to critically assess its institutions in terms of how they stood with the poor.

The Church came out with its social teaching which informed the establishment of Catholic sponsored schools. The whole of 1950s and 1960s, third world countries were in the process of independence struggle. The catechism required at the time had to address the challenges that came with independence struggle. The period after 1945, most of the nations in the world began the process of independence by signing freedom charters. The United Nations spearheaded campaigns for human rights. The Catholic voice in the catechism was added to this campaign thus:

...the time is at hand when United Nations Organization will be able to protect effectively the rights of man, those rights which are universal, inviolable and inalienable because they are based directly on the dignity of the human person (Hill, 1964).

The time following independence was so crucial for the Church in addressing social justice. Modern catechism addressed the plight of those struggling for freedom while addressing the plight of the poor as a priority. The Church at that time communicated to the world in need of human freedom, liberty, population explosion, global peace and unity in the light of faith (Hill, 1964). The challenge of industrial revolution shifted the Church's outlook on matters of the world during this time. Here the Catholic Church positioned itself to tackle the challenges of the poor in order to work for a just society keeping in mind the struggles of the poor. The history by then helped the Church to rethink and refocus its mission by way of re-adjusting its teaching in relation to the poor.

The modern catechism brought to the Church the realization of a new consciousness arising among the down trodden in the world seen through lenses of political and tribal conflicts reported daily. The Church's teaching during this time was an invitation where members would be part of an initiative to search for their full humanity in the middle of world affairs. This catechism is therefore a re-affirmation to engage pastoral direction characterised by consciousness to the plight of the neighbour. The modern catechism would have been shallow in its teaching if it had ignored poor people who experienced cruel treatment in the face of the rich and powerful. The pastoral nature of the catechism was such that the Church was seen as a beacon of hope to many within the prevailing socio-economic situation.

The Bishops of Netherlands (1969) in their *New Catechism with Supplement* addressed the challenges of labour relations. The focus was on how to act correctly in speaking for the poor while maintaining its special place of holiness. The development of this new catechism was such that the message of Christ would be understood from people's experiences. The simple approach used by this catechism to address intricate matters affecting people was phenomenal. For a long time, it was common place thinking that those with wealth were required to provide for the poor. This was not the case with this new catechism because it opened the avenue for all members of the Church to take responsibility towards the poor. The idea of having a preferential option for the poor meant that at the bottom of every human heart lies that urge to see humanity and think of how to help irrespective of places of origin, colour or race.

Feigner (1964), on *Common Catechism*, further situated the Church as a protector of the marginalized. It did this so well by adopting an ecumenical approach which in its

entirety unearthed the social responsibility aspect of the Church in the face of emerging trends. While this Catechism was in print, the World Council of Churches (WCC) based in Geneva, had generated a report with similar sentiments on how to deal with the poor. During this time, the Pastoral Constitution on the church in modern world, *Gaudium et Spes*, a product of Vatican II Council (1962-5), developed a blue print for the Church on how to deal with the needy. One would say that this was the exact time that the term shifted from what was known initially as an option for the poor into what came to be known as preferential option for the poor.

Most of the sentiments, including concern for the poor, were strengthened as an addition into the items in the Catechism. The emergence of the *Common Catechism* reflected in a new way that faith must be encountered as God's will in history. This argument draws its approach from the phenomenological direction employed by new Catechism of Bishops in the Netherlands discussed before.

It looked at the conditions faced by the poor and made reflection on how to deal with the challenge from that point. During the time, nothing much was discussed concerning a preferential treatment given especially to the poor. It became silent because the target of the common catechism was ecumenical. This departure from what the church taught as a universal approach to the social teaching on the poor shifted in focus because of the intended audience of the catechism. Perhaps it is worth noting that particular social teaching applies only to particular audiences and not to others. In this case, the audience in Netherlands would be quite different from those in Africa.

A close look at the introductory sections of Malloy's *Catechism for Inquirers* indicated that faith is nothing other than an inquiry. This Catechism gave answers to basic questions on matters of faith and morals. With this Catechism for inquirers emerged many vernacular catechisms. The language adopted by the Catechism helped many communities to conceptualize and critically evaluate Church's teaching on the poor. These vernacular catechisms addressed basic faith matters of faith that would help in approaching social justice issues.

Twenty years after *Catechism for inquirers* was published, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1997) was circulated. Basic to this book was the teaching on respect for human life. This may have emerged from the Bill of rights enshrined in the U.N freedom charter. Bill of rights started to occupy a central place in the Church's social teaching. It emphasized thus: "...respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that everyone should look at the neighbour as another self" (Catechism, 1997).

From then onwards, a chapter on social justice started to appear in the catechism. The central place of catechism in forming the Church in matters of faith and morals started to be seen. Preferential option for the poor was strengthened by the emphasis given to rights and responsibilities towards other people. The catechism at this period became a reference material for action in matters of social concern. The social justice agenda in the Catholic catechism was a product of an historical epoch in which human rights issues required to be strongly articulated. This was the period after 1990 and so many international forums focused on United Nations Human Rights Charter. The definition of social justice in this Catechism transformed to include the conditions allows individuals to obtain what is their due... (Catechism, 1997).

The *Revised Edition* (2001) of *The Catechism* highlighted the needs of the poor and invited the Church to be in solidarity with them. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* reflected on the plight of poor people in *The Revised Edition* by suggesting an action plan for Church. It emphasized that Christ identified with ‘the least of these’: the hungry, and the stranger (Catechism, 2001). What this catechism proposed was that through human solidarity, socio-economic problems would be solved or at least minimized. Solidarity is connoted in *The Revised Edition* as a practice of sharing spiritual goods other than material ones (Catechism, 2001). From the time this catechism came into existence, Church strategic plans had been re-worked to reflect the needs of the poor.

The *Compendium of the Catholic Catechism* advanced the teaching on social justice by bringing in the seven corporal works of mercy namely, feeding the hungry, giving a drink to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, visiting those in prison and burying the dead. This catechism strongly emphasized: “...to receive in truth the body and blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest...” (Catechism, 2005).

The emphasis placed on the teaching in this catechism emerged from what God revealed about Himself in Scripture: Preferential option for the poor cannot be separated from how one should look at human life and dignity of persons. The compendium affirms that all people possess inherent dignity and right to life consistent with that dignity. The teachings of the Church are strengthened by other writings of the magisterium comprising bishops and their successors.

2.5 The Poor in Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic social teaching is a body of doctrines developed by the Catholic Church so as to shed light on matters of social justice (Catechism of Catholic Church, 2000, p. 23). These teachings, like indicated before range from issues of poverty, economics and how the society is to be organized. The bishops of the Catholic Church while attending a conference in Medellin, Colombia, in 1968 with the theme 'Poverty in the Church' spoke of the preferential option for the poor as a biblical mandate. The deliberation of the Catholic Bishops meetings above was influenced by Gutierrez's (1973) religious vision in which the Church was to be understood in a new perspective as imitator of Christ (Walsh, 1983). The Medellin conference called upon the Catholic Church in Latin America to become a Church of the poor. The present study sought to identify activities put in place by the church in Eldoret Diocese to realize the option. Thus: "To be the evangelizer of the poor and one with them, a witness to the value of the riches of the Kingdom, and the humble servant of all our people" (Massaro, 2010).

The Puebla meeting of 1979 re-emphasized preferential option for the poor as a precondition for a society where there is justice for all. The Catholic bishops described this term 'option' not to imply exclusion of anyone, but instead to imply a preference for the poor and a drawing closer to them (Feuchtman, 2009). This option for the poor is a perspective that maintains that one can measure the quality of justice in any society by the way the poor are treated. It is an invitation to discern, listen, see and respond to the cry of the poor through word and actions. The Church at that time was responding to the situation affecting people. As indicated in the introductory section of this study, poverty can be defined depending on the conditions of the people at a

particular time. The Catholic bishops took time to look at poverty from the point of those who are genuinely needy and would attract response as indicated in the Gospel of St Matthew thus: “For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was a stranger and you invited me into your home” (Mt. 25:35).

The Bishops cited the above section of the Gospel as a link between what Jesus did in the synagogue after quoting the prophet Isaiah and later sending the apostles to mission work. The work of the Church to proclaim liberty to captives was developed further by Dorr’s *Option for the Poor: A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching* (1983) where he advances the Church’s response to structural injustice in the world (p. 97).

For a long time, the Catholic bishops through their pastoral letters have written to condemn unjust systems in which those who have do not care about those without. Catholic social thought recognized that “the poor and helpless have a claim to special consideration” (Pope Leo XIII, 1891). Pope Leo in his Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (On Capital and Labour) contextualized the definition of the term poor. Whereas the Catholic social teaching addresses the poor as those without employment, drug addicts, a portion of the elderly and low income earners, the Pope transcended this definition to include the poor as those who lag behind in so many areas of life and are marginalized. Every society will always have such kind people but the most tragic among all are the children of the poor. Pope John Paul II (1980) while addressing Catholic bishops in Brazil explained the preferential option for the poor as:

a call to special solidarity with the humble and the weak, with those who are suffering and weeping, who are humiliated and left on the fringes of life and society, in order to have them realize more fully their own dignity as human persons and children of God” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 39).

He clarified that although “the precept to love all men and women admits no exclusion...it does admit a privileged engagement in favour of the poorest” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 40). What the Pope emphasizes is that preferential option for the poor is an undisputed component of the Catholic social teaching. The contribution of the church to the world should be tested by its care for poor people.

The onset of this term to the social teaching of the Church was intended to provide pastoral guidelines for members of the Church to be witnesses in the world. According to Phiri (as cited in Twomey, 2005), if the Church really wishes to commit itself to be on the side of the poor, it must do much more than proclaim this fact (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 34). Cook (1958) calls this in his work, *The Expectation of the Poor, a new way of doing Theology* (p. 1021). At this historical period, Catholic social teaching was greatly influenced by teachers such as Leonardo Boff and Gutierrez. Apparently, preferential option for the poor became a solid and permanent part of the Catholic social teaching. Twomey (2005) provides an explanation on the development of this teaching on the option for the poor. His was an advanced version of what it means to put the Church in the front line in its activities towards the poor. The Church in this context understands responsibility as a calling rather than just a task to be accomplished.

The Church lives within a world with socio-economic and political changes that make people desire for justice and equal participation. Within such experiences, it has to rethink of current pastoral orientations and principles, objectives and ways. The Theology of any church should be situated within a certain social reality that defends human dignity (Cook, 1958, p. 1022). This explains why the theology of liberation underlies Catholic social teaching. Ojaka (1996) emphasizes the fruits of Final Report

of the 1985 Synod of Bishops of Latin America by indicating that they devoted a separate section to the preferential option for the poor. The Bishops on their part expressed Church's awareness of its mission to serve the poor by being prophetic (Ojaka, 1996, p. 24).

The Catholic social teaching encourages that members of the Church should oppose a system that oppresses people. Preferential option for the poor means having a vision, an invitation to look at things from the perspective of a poor person (Kenneth, 2011). In their 1986 pastoral letter, *Economic Justice for All*, the American Catholic Bishops describe the preferential option as an "obligation to evaluate social and economic activity from the viewpoint of the poor and the powerless" (Economic Justice for All, 56). The observation by the bishops touches on all the areas of life but particularly on access to quality education. From a Catholic perspective, education is a basic human right, grounded in the principle of the dignity of the human person (Xavier, 2005). Education is a factor that can enable poor people be elevated in many aspects. In 1986, the United States Catholic bishops delved into this theme of option for the poor by creating institutions to defend the defenceless (Massaro, 2010).

The institutions that were enhanced by the Magisterium included the inclusion of this Christian duty of protecting the poor in its canon law. The intention of the bishops was to have a legal system that addressed the emerging trends not captured in the Church's social teaching. This followed what Saint Pope John Paul II raised in the encyclical *On Reason and Faith* as exercise of Christian charity towards the poor (John Paul II, 1998, p. 6). Saint John Paul II reiterated in his encyclical that while it may look like a simple task to do, the option demands a lot of sacrifice from all members in a society.

Feutchmann (2009) notes equally that preferential option is a way through which the Church can be understood as an advocate of justice. This traditional position of the Church as an arbiter of the society cannot be delegated. Lohfink (1998) points out that justice is easy to discuss but then there are underlying difficulties in making it realistically practical. But even if this ideal is difficult to achieve the Church cannot hide from the fact that it has to be seen to be standing for the poor. The advent of Liberation Theology was an opportune period for the Church to discern, listen, see and respond to the cry of the poor through actions. By doing so, people started to make contributions into that which rightfully belonged to the poor. Rather than looking at governments or those outside the church to care for the vulnerable, Pope Francis addressed all the faithful to be fully and deeply in touch with the poor and in so doing radiate joy into their tribulations (Francis, 2013, p. 47).

2.6 The Divine Mandate of the Church in Poverty Alleviation

The divine role of the Church in human history should be seen in God's act of creation. In the Genesis story of creation, a special place is assigned to the making of humanity, which is presented as the climax of God's creative undertaking.

The first of these stories dignifies Adam (male and female) as the creature made after God's image and likeness (Genesis 1:26-27). The second shows God creating the first human out of earth, breathing life into him, and finally settling him and his companion in the garden to live off bounty. Closely examined, creation stories carry a wealth of meaning at many levels in human life. As God's image, Adam is placed over other creatures and given a calling under God to promote and continue with the

work of creation. Here, the human being is portrayed in a way that signifies all his creative duties such as being a teacher, farmer, doctor, artist, scientist, among others.

In the second story, Adam's fellowship not only with the creatures of other species (animate and inanimate), he is given a companion, a woman, another of his own kind with whom to share life. Humanity is here again portrayed symbolically in its social character; bringing to birth families, nations and cultures. As the image of God and likeness, Adam is created to be with "others", and to be one who communicates, shares, and co-operates. As such, this human being is an "answerable" creature, one that exercises freedom in calling under God and to be accountable to others by reflecting and manifesting the creative power and love of God. The story of creation is, therefore, an affirmation of mankind's social, political, economic and spiritual activities: including giving service to community. Poverty alleviation is thus one of the services which men and women through the Church have the Divine mandate to perform.

2.7 Church's View of Poverty

Poverty in the socio-economic circles is viewed as the inability of individuals to meet basic needs. It is associated with characteristics such as unemployment, inability to provide food for oneself and family, the lack of decent housing, inability to educate one's children; poor health and lack of access to medical care. Poverty is a multidimensional concept that includes inadequacy of income and deprivation of basic needs and rights, such as denied access to productive assets as well as to social infrastructure.

The Church insists that poverty is a complex phenomenon. It is ‘many-faced’, ‘many-layered’ and ‘multi-dimensional’ and cannot be reduced to quantities of goods that are, or rather are not, available (Oyugi *et al.*, 2003). Most theologians among them Gutierrez (1988), Boff (1990), Theuri (1994) argue that people who suffer poverty are affected psychologically, emotionally, spiritually, physically and at the same time it affects their family, community, and social relations. It is, therefore, not possible to consider any single dimension of poverty in isolation as this would drastically reduce our understanding of the phenomenon. In the Bible, poverty has been referred to as a social phenomenon. Biblical Dictionary Index and Concordance define poverty as lack, need and want (Overbeck, 1976). It is a state of desperation which culminates in social suffering of one and family. This sentiment is well captured in the book of Genesis, which proclaims that: “there will still be five years of famine; and I do not want you, your family, and your livestock to starve” (Genesis 45:11). In most cases, poverty as cited in the Bible is a reality that has to be eradicated.

According to Genesis story, involuntary poverty in all its forms and manifestations is a result of the fall of man and its consequences. Jesus Christ himself recognized the fact that the poor will always be there. However, the recognition of Jesus does not imply that the poor should be ignored but be cared for (Acts 6, 7).

There are indications that God the Creator never willed any human being to be poor or to be deprived of any basic needs (Genesis 1:22, 28-30). It is imperative to note that the plight of the poor has both direct and indirect impact on the rich, whether in developing countries or developed ones. More often than not, the poor are always treated with a lot of suspicion in the event of losses and other crimes-related cases. Due to this attitude towards these lowly placed members of society, the poor rank the

lowest in status almost in every society and those in positions of leadership only view them as potential voters and people ready for hire by politicians to commit felony. Beyond this the participation of the poor in national issues is not guaranteed because their role is always seen as that aimed at serving the interest of the rich.

However, the message of Christ to the poor is that good news will be preached to them for theirs is the Kingdom of God (Matthew 5:3). This is all the reason why the Catholic Church should be ready all the times to give service to humanity, particularly to the poor. In the entire Old Testament tradition, poverty is regarded as a scandalous condition that should never exist in the land because it might force one to steal and bring disgrace to God (Proverbs 30:9). The New Testament, however, presents hope and encouragement to the poor despite their tribulations for they will receive blessings of a new heaven and a new earth when Jesus' victory is complete.

Assistance to the poor is therefore not a new phenomenon to the Church. It is as old as the Bible itself. Both the Old and the New Testaments affirm that the prophets' and Christ's intentions were to remind the rich of their natural responsibility towards the needy of society. This is affirmed in the words of Isaiah 9:6 which were affirmed by Jesus in his declaration in Luke 4:18 that He came to bring liberty to the poor. If the war against the oppression of the weak by the powerful was to be met, it had to target all those structures that promote this inhuman treatment.

The Law of Moses, for example, safeguarded the interest of the poor by appealing to other members of the community with means to give them a lending hand. In Pentateuch is quoted:

If any of the towns in the land that the Lord your God is giving you there is a fellow Israelite in need, then do not be selfish and refuse to help him. Instead, be generous and lend him as much as he needs. Do not refuse to lend him something, just because the year when debts are cancelled is near (Deuteronomy 15:7-9).

Furthermore, the considerable debts of the poor were waived in the years of Jubilee (Leviticus 25, 27:14). Jubilee was one of the feasts of the Jews which were to be celebrated once after fifty years. All property would revert back to its original holder. It was to be a year of restoration where the poor who had been bought by the rich were to be released to reunite with their families.

As the people of Israel journeyed to the promised land under the leadership of Joshua, they were taught to do three things: to give the soil a rest and not farm; to free Israelite slaves; and to return the land and houses to the first owners or their children (Leviticus 25). In the Old Testament too, if a poor person was hungry, he was permitted to eat in the field or vineyard of another (Deuteronomy 23:24-25). The prophets denounced the rich because they had neglected or mistreated the poor (Isaiah 1:23; 10:2; Ezekiel 22:29; Amos 5:11-14). In the New Testament, there are similar orders concerning the poor. Jesus witnessed the state of poverty amongst the people and proclaimed the Gospel of liberation against socio-economic injustices and political oppression as implied below.

When Jesus entered the temple in Luke 4:18-19, He quoted the prophecy of Isaiah 61 (Luke 4:18-19) to give the message of hope to those who were materially and spiritually down. The Good News Jesus brought to humanity was not only meant for spiritual nourishment (saving the soul) but it was also to take care of the physical needs of the body by setting man free from all manner of suffering, including social,

economic and political injustices. This declaration by Jesus of his true ministry (to the poor), elicited negative reactions towards him from the people which mysteriously led to his total rejection by his own people of means and who saw him as a rebel against the corrupt and unjust social system (Gutierrez, 1990).

The poor of whom Jesus referred to were those who are materially poor, who die of hunger and disease, who are illiterate, unemployed, the exploited, persons denied the right to be persons. Thus, the poor do not only lack simply material goods but they also miss, on the level of human dignity and full participation in socio-political life. Those found in this category are principally peasants, manual labourers, marginalized urban dwellers, and in particular the children and women of these social groups (Theuri, 1994).

Since the time of Jesus, the Christian Church has considered itself as the Church of the poor. Christ followers have been charged with the responsibility of taking Christ's gospel to the world today. To be a Christian today, the believer must live according to the command and example of Jesus Christ. He/she must manifest to all the purpose for which Christ came into the world and died, in word and in action: in worship and in service (Ibid.). The condition Christ imposed on Christianity when asked, "Why do you call me, Lord, Lord, and yet you don't do what I tell you? (Luke 6:46) explains the Church's social responsibility today, which includes visiting prisoners, clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, or the captives.

Jesus' condition points out clearly the inseparability of Christian faith and concern for social, economic, and political justice. Gutierrez (1990) avers that the gospel commitment of the Church should be like that of Christ who took on full solidarity

with humanity, and therefore, should be a commitment to those most in need. When one draws nearer to the poor in order to accompany them and serve them, they are doing what Christ taught them to do when he became their brother, and clothed himself with poverty like them. The privilege of the poor thus has its theological basis in God. The poor are blessed not just because of the mere fact that they are poor, but because the kingdom of God is expressed in the manifestation of his justice and love in their favour. This central feature of evangelization is stressed in God's action of redemption to humanity; He sent His son specifically, who was born poor and lived among the poor to make us rich with His poverty (2 Corinthians 8:9).

The separation of religion and life is thus a contradiction of the biblical teaching, since both the Old and New Testaments show God's care for the poor in this world. Consequently, and from the foregoing literature review, poverty can be defined as a state of being in shortage of basic elements required for a dignified living. This could be economic, material, moral, intellectual or spiritual, among others. This relative and subtle meaning of poverty raises one important question: who are the poor? The message of Christ to the poor is that the good news will be preached to them for theirs is the Kingdom of God (Luke 4:18).

Kodia (2005) explains three categories of the poor as falling under the following: The first group is the indigent poor. This refers to those who are economically deprived. According to the Biblical references, their poverty could be attributed their own sin whether laziness, extravagance or gluttony; the second group is those who are socially or politically oppressed. In the Old Testament, it was clearly recognized that poverty would not normally just happen. It was usually due to the sins of others- a situation of social injustices, which easily deteriorated because the poor were not in a position to

change it. The Law of Moses, for example, emphasized the need for impartial justice in the courts, in particular for the poor and the powerless; the third category is the humble poor. These are those who are spiritually meek and dependent on God for their survival. Oppressed by men, and helpless to liberate themselves, they turn to God for help. It is this third category that the poor came to be synonymous with the pious and this social condition became a symbol of their spiritual dependence.

Marger (1999) also looks at poverty in three different ways: absolute, relative and official. In this case everybody could be poor or rich depending on the scale that is officially in use. According to Marger, poverty is contextual and is subject to changing standards as situations keep on changing- that is different categories of people have different specific standards. For example, there are those who view a vehicle as a status symbol, and for them anybody who has a vehicle is regarded to be rich. To some a house can be a status symbol. Only the rich are assumed to live in permanent houses.

The Church today must become first and foremost a labour of justice on behalf of the oppressed. They expressed the sentiments in the gospel of John 4:20 which emphasize the fact that one who has no love for the brother he has seen cannot love God who he has not seen. There is no love for God without love for one's brothers and sisters, particularly those in need of help. The Church's involvement in alleviation of human suffering through its social services is therefore a right not a privilege. Christ's inaugural sermon (quoted from Isaiah chapters 9-61) clearly indicates that his gospel was a gospel to the poor and his ministry was the fulfilment of God's time which ought to be realized in the social teaching of the Church. Guiterrez (1984) notes that

the poor should not lose heart; instead they should have faith because God through the Church has an efficacious act of charity, of love for neighbours and the poor.

This is in a way saying that one fundamental function of religion, and therefore, theology is reflection in the light of faith, on the basis of and about practice. Spirituality is located on the terrain of practice, the terrain of Christian experience of proclaiming the good news that they will cease to be poor and to suffer poverty anymore.

Boff (1988) amplifies Gutierrez's argument on the life of the poor and the duty of the Church when he proposes that the entire life of the Church should be impregnated and renewed by the vigour and the spirit of fighting for employment, health, housing and education of the poor in the society. This view is significant to the study because it emphasizes the divine role of the Church in poverty alleviation. It is important to note that the two authors' works emphasize the responsibility of the Church to the poor, which comprises acts of charity based on their spiritual life while living and working in this strident world. However, the plan of action by the Church to provide for the poor is missing in the two works. In this case, how the Church should go about this divine role of providing for the poor is silent, a silence that has been addressed by the present study.

Carothers (1988) details how the poor have remained poor due to sins and wickedness of the rich who want to have cheap labour for their yards, kitchens and industries. He notes that some Christians are involved in this act yet they are supposed to be the keepers of the poor to show their love for Jesus Christ. The author belabours the meaning and spiritual roots of Christians care for the poor. Carothers further posits

that the demand for solidarity with the poor is a demand made of every Christian because it is an apostolic duty. Any denial of the reality of poverty by Christians whether openly or indirectly is an affront to the Gospels and their teachings. Like the aforementioned, this one is also relevant to the present study but too general and fails to state what Christians should actually do to alleviate the problems of the poor. This study is thus different from the cited works in that the focus is on what the Church is doing to assist in poverty alleviation than its causes. It also applies the gospel's spiritual solidarity with the poor to their real social and economic situations.

Dorr (1983) refers to the poor as those members of society who are economically deprived and have no status in their own land. He argues that the only option left for them is the moral intervention from such unjust political and economic systems. An option for the poor is part of a universal call for all Christians to be involved in matters of development that can improve the welfare of the weak members of society. It is a serious attempt to build a just society where the concentration of wealth is greatly reduced or eliminated from the hands of a few people. Although Dorr notes that the Church ought to be involved in addressing the needs of the poor, he fails to state the nature of involvement in his study that examined development activities of the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) in Kisumu County.

In an Encyclical, *Populorum Progressio* (The Development of Peoples), Pope John Paul VI (1976) acknowledges the gravity of poverty in the world and its effects on people. The Pope asserts that aid to the poor members of society is not just a matter of eliminating hunger nor reducing poverty, but rather, it should be a question of building a world where every man no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, free from servitude imposed on him by others or by natural

forces which he has no control. He further notes that the luxury of a few is an insult to the wretched poverty of the vast masses. This is contrary to the plan of God and to the honour that is due to him.

The Pope concludes by noting that in this anxiety and sorrow the Church sees a situation of social sinfulness, which is all the more serious because it exists in countries that consider themselves Christians and they are capable of changing the situation. Similarly, Pope John Paul II (1987) points out that there are millions of people living in poverty and underdevelopment in the world today; those human beings who lack the goods and services needed for better living are much more numerous than those who possess them. The two encyclicals conclude by noting that Christians have a moral obligation according to the degree of their responsibilities, to take into consideration the plight of the poor in society.

Pixley and Boff (1989), in the same vein, look at the Church as a divine institution with a moral obligation to address the issues of poverty since it affects every person, but above all Christians, who are the real treasure of the Church. This is very significant because it reveals that the Church also belongs to the physical world and depends on material progress of its members. The work does not, however, suggest any plan of action.

This study took up some of the challenges made by Pixley and Boff (1989) to the Church to find out whether the Catholic Church has lived to its expectations as a Church in assisting the less fortunate members of society in the study areas. Owazarek *et al.* (2002) aver that God is deeply involved with the life of the people, especially how God, throughout the history of salvation, has shown to be very attentive to the

needs of people, particularly of the poor, the exploited and the less cared about in society. Owazarek *et al.* quote several chapters and verses both in the Old and New Testaments to show how God empowers the people to rid themselves of the conditions of misery they are in, for example, 1 Kings 17:7-24; John 5:1-4; and Mark 6:30-44, they conclude by noting that the Church must be involved in the life of the people, most of all, of the ways through which they are empowered so as to free themselves from the fetters of any type of poverty.

This is a classic example of Christian theology of human development manifesting itself in God's desire to liberate the down trodden of society, particularly the poor. The work has a lot of relevance to the present study and was used to evaluate the extent to which the Church has applied this principle to alleviate poverty. In a similar vein, Pierli and Maria Ratti (2002) posit that a people's development is not derived primarily from money but from the formation of consciences and the gradual maturing of thinking and pattern of behaviour. The human person is the principle agent of development not money or technology. The Church forms the consciences by revealing to people the God whom they seek and do not know. It instils in a person the grandeur of the human person, created in God's image and loved by Him; the equality of all men and women as God's sons and daughters, the mastery of the human person over nature; created by God and placed at the human being's service and the obligation to work for the development of the whole person and of all human kind. The originality of the Christian approach to any particular social issue such as poverty alleviation is that, at the heart of any given question there stands the human person, and not profit, power or technology. This is what informs the Christian

churches social teaching which focuses on the primary role the human person must play in the improvement of their own life and future.

2.8 Catholic Sponsored Schools in Kenya

The preferential option for the poor can be seen as an instrument that informs the poverty eradication efforts of the church. As explained in the foregoing sections of this chapter, instrument is conceptualized from the biblical teachings and the many documents that the church has released over time. One strategy that the church uses to fight poverty is that of education. Therefore, in this study, catholic sponsored schools were regarded as part of the preferential option for the poor agenda.

The Catholic Church's involvement in western education can be traced back to the 16th century although significant work started in the 19th Century. During this period, missionaries used school to evangelize local communities while at the same time preparing them for leadership or artisan jobs. The first half of the 20th century saw these missionaries operate their schools with the aid of their colonial counterparts. The first of these were the Jesuits who visited the coast in the 16th Century. Francis Xavier erected the cross in Malindi in 1542 on his way to the Far East. After their settlement in Bagamoyo, Tanzania in 1890, they soon found their way to St. Austin's in Nairobi in 1899 (Baur, 1994, p. 257). The schools they established were meant to improve lives of those interested in craft and industrial courses (Gutiérrez, 1973). Effort was made to ensure that those who wanted to learn were sponsored (ibid. 26). Later on, the Church in Rome placed two regions of Kenya under missionary sphere of influence. Central Kenya region was under Consolata Missionaries while Mill Hill Missionaries (MHM) evangelized Western Kenya. Schools like Nyabururu Girls were

managed by Mill Hill Missionaries and St. Mary's Yala under Brothers of Christian instruction. Dutch Holy Ghost Missionary Fr. Michael Witte trained teachers and seminarians in what is now Mangu High School (Massaro, 2010).

Baur (1990) records that from the earliest days of Catholic presence in Kenya, about half of Catholic missionaries were engaged in school work. The schools they started as 'Bush schools' in the early 20th Century required funding from mission countries making them to write back home for assistance. The end of the 19th Century and the beginning of the 20th Century witnessed unprecedented generosity on the part of some generous individuals who donated funds for establishment of Catholic schools to provide education for poor young people in these missionary parishes. Prior to independence, education provision involved a partnership between local communities and Mission led Church (Kinuthia, 2009; Bandi, 2011). During the missionary period, educational institutions emerged due to donor generosity (Mabeya & Ndiku, 2010).

Apart from these mission sponsored schools, there were private Catholic schools sponsored fully by the Church and whose survival depended entirely on charging of fees. After independence, the government took over such mission schools, forcing parents to meet financial demands while mission churches remained as sponsors. Charging of school fees naturally excluded poor children. The apparent exclusion of poor children from Catholic sponsored schools appeared to undermine the stated objectives of Catholic social teachings. With little access to education, poor children find it challenging to break the cycle of poverty. To provide these young people with a greater opportunity, the Catholic Church operated mission schools alongside vocational institutes. Don-Bosco Children's home in Nairobi is an example of such

initiative. The Church used funds donated by well-wishers to educate children from poor homes.

Another example is that of Brother Beausang Educational Centre in Embulbul and St. Joseph's vocational training centre in Ofafa-Jericho in Nairobi. Sacred Mercy schools in Nairobi Arch-Diocese provide children with basic education, spiritual formation and nutritional needs at subsidized fees. Burgmann (1990) observes that such sponsorship assisted many children obtain education by subsidizing on their fees. The catholic missionaries based in Uganda found a fertile ground for establishing faith centres in western Kenya. The Mill Hill based in Kisumu went through Kakamega before being invited by White settlers in Uasin-Gishu (Burgmann, 1990, p. 34).

2.9 Catholic Sponsored Schools in Eldoret Catholic Diocese from 1953 to date

The Catholic Faith in Eldoret Diocese came, thanks to St. Patrick Missionary Society and the Mill Hill Missionaries. Comboni Missionaries came all the way from Alsace-France and upon arrival in Kenya from Uganda they settled in Eldoret Diocese and worked in Pokot. Like the rest of the missionaries, Combonis established 'bush schools' and endeavoured to train their teachers. The government had started building schools around that time. This assisted the missionaries especially Father Stam and Kuhn to employ Goans (mostly Catholics) as clerks and guards (Massaro, 2010). In the government schools they would find Catholic teachers or Catholic boys who would be interested in working in the mission as catechists. Burgman (1990) reckons that boys from poor families were assisted to join such government schools with the hope that they would come back to serve as catechists. This brought great improvement to the life of people in the entire region. Apart from using these

government schools as sources for their workforce, the missionaries intended to use them as avenues to get catechumens for baptism.

There were 53 catechumens at Kapsabet government school in March 1934 (Burgmann, 1990, p. 117). Around this period, there was a shift of emphasis on the role of the church in education. This meant that all the churches in the region had the responsibility to oversee the development of its schools. The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret was founded in 1953. Currently it boasts of 2,017,142 members, covering Nandi, Uasin-Gishu and Elgeyo-Marakwet counties. Since the Diocese established departments including that of education, a remarkable growth in its outreach to people has been recorded. The mission of the Diocese in education is broader than simply using school as a means of attracting members to the church. Education is regarded as a tool to enable the church carry out its total programme of evangelization, in the sense that “evangelization means bringing the good news into all the situations in which humanity is found, so as to renew humanity” (*Evangelii Nuntiandi* 1974, no.18).

A great contribution in the establishment of schools in Uasin-Gishu County was through the efforts of Loreto sisters from Dublin (Baur, 1990). Out of 129 schools in Uasin-Gishu County, 73 are Catholic sponsored. The contribution of missionary education to the development of schools in the Diocese of Eldoret cannot be ignored. The pioneer missionaries worked hard to obtain scholarship for the poor children. Such efforts deserve mention especially in cases where some of these schools are established as income generating initiatives. The purpose of establishing these schools from the very beginning should revolve around developing people. The Catholic teaching places a lot of emphasis on this by choosing the option for the poor. Despite

so many efforts done by the Catholic Church to lift the standards of the people from conditions of poverty, many people still find themselves living in conditions of need.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter laid foundation to the overall understanding of preferential option for the poor by tracing it back from the Old Testament through the New Testament into contemporary times. It also considered the root of the social teaching relating to the poor from the treasures of Church documents. Most of the schools established during missionary era are spread throughout Kenya though a detailed emphasis was placed on Uasin-Gishu County whose headquarters is Eldoret. Uasin-Gishu County hosts the headquarters of Catholic Diocese of Eldoret as well. The missionaries who evangelized the entire region knew that through education, they would train locals for jobs in hospitals, schools and farms. There were children from poor families who required assistance from the same missionaries. The next chapter discusses the activities of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in Uasin-Gishu County towards realization of preferential option for the poor.

CHAPTER THREE

ACTIVITIES FOR REALIZING PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN UASIN-GISHU

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter laid a foundation by presenting the preferential option for the poor from the teaching in the Bible in order to understand what the Catholic Church presents in its social teachings. This chapter delves into the activities organized within the Church and its schools as obtained from the responses of those interviewed. Out of a total of 351 questionnaires that were distributed, 300 were filled and returned yielding a response rate of 85.5%. The information below discusses the demographic characteristics of these respondents and the analysis of the responses given.

3.2 Demographic Characteristics

The study sought to determine gender distribution of the respondents in the study. It was important to seek for information on the sex of respondents because it ensures elimination of any gender biases.

3.2.1 Gender of the Respondents

Majority of the respondents were female and the rest were male. These results may be attributed to the fact that Catholic Church sponsors more girls' schools compared to boys' schools in Uasin-Gishu County. The information obtained was as presented in Figure 3.1 below.

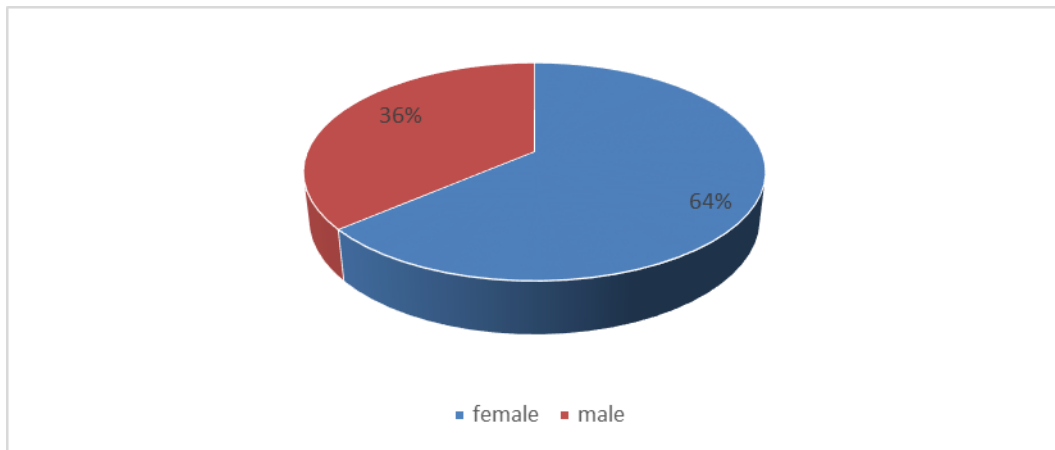


Figure 3.1: Proportion of the respondents by gender

3.2.2 Class of the Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate which class they were in. Majority of them indicated that they were in Form Three. The researcher found it appropriate to ask this question so that the information given could form a basis for determining whether the Diocesan programmes for the poor were sustainable beyond Form Two. These findings were as illustrated in Figures 3.2 and 3.3 below.

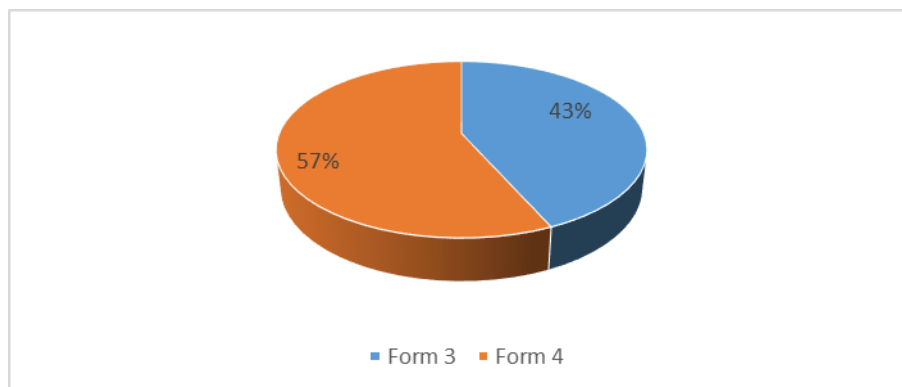


Figure 3.2: Proportion of the respondents by their classes

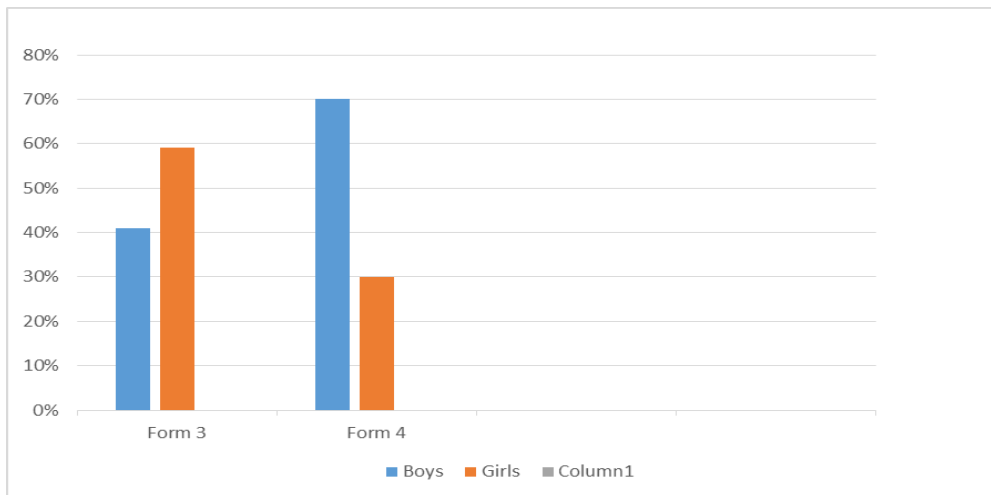


Figure 3.3: Gender of respondents

3.2.3 Parental Status of the Respondents

The study sought to establish whether the parents of the respondents were alive or not. Majority of the respondents (56%) stated that both their parents were alive, with few (28%) having one of their parents alive and minority of them stating that both parents were deceased (16%). This research question was relevant to the study as it informed the researcher of the respondents' level of vulnerability to poverty. These findings were as summarized in Figure 3.4 below.

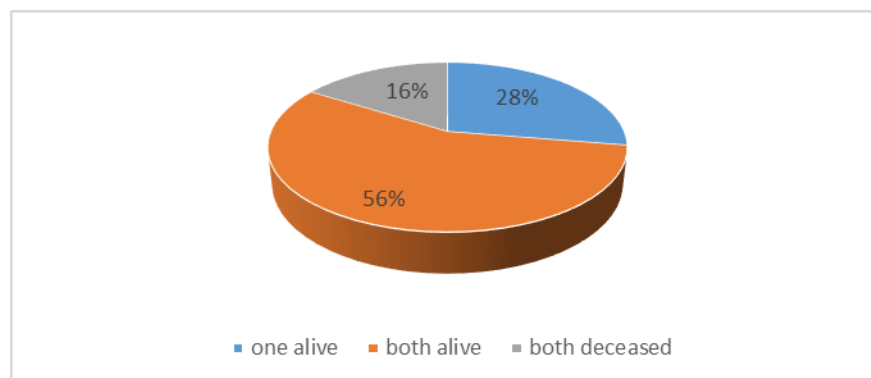


Figure 3.4: Proportion of the respondents' parental status

3.2.4 Occupation of the Respondents' Parents

The respondents whose parents were alive were asked to indicate their parents' occupations. Four in every ten respondents indicated that their parents were salaried, three in every ten reported that their parents were self employed, one in every ten indicated that their parents were casual labourers while two in every ten reported that their parents were unemployed. The researcher found it appropriate to ask this question since it informed on the financial ability of the respondents' parents to support their education rather than relying on the Church for support. These findings are summarized in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Occupation of respondents' parents

Parent's occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Salaried	120	40
Self employed	89	30
Casual labourer	17	6
Unemployed	74	24
Total	300	100.0

From Table 3.1, those parents who are salaried were one hundred and twenty meaning that the rest depended largely on casual labour and do not have regular jobs to sustain their sons or daughters. The occupational status of these parents or guardians influences what the church should do to help them. From the results, the church works out programmes for wealth creation, especially to enable parents take up the responsibility for their children. In this respect, the study gathered that there were three levels through which it organized its activities towards realizing preferential option for the poor.

3.2.5 School Fees Payment

The study sought to establish who pays school fees for the respondents. Slightly more than half (51%) of the respondents stated that their school fees is paid by their parents, some (16%) of them stated that their fees is paid by their guardians while some (22%) of them stated that their school fees is paid by the Catholic Church. Very few (11%) of the respondents stated that their school fees is paid by well wishers. The information collected could be used to determine the proportion of poor students who were sponsored by the Catholic Church. The purpose was to locate preferential option for the poor as a programme in Catholic secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu. Table 3.2 summarizes the findings.

Table 3.2: Those responsible for paying school fees for respondents

Fee payment	Frequency	Percentage
Catholic Church	68	22
Guardians	47	16
Parents	153	51
Other well wishers	32	11
Total	300	100.0

3.2.6 Provision for the Poor by the Church

The study sought to establish the extent of agreement of respondents concerning certain statements relating to provision for the poor students in Catholic schools. The responses to the statements were ranked basing on a Likert scale in which 5=Strongly Agree; 4=Agree; 3=Undecided; 2=Disagree, and 1=Strongly Disagree. A summary of the results is presented in Table 3.3 below.

Table 3.3: Provision for the Poor by the Church

Statement	5	4	3	2	1	Mean
All the educational needs of poor students are provided for by the Catholic Church here in school	20	132	20	87	41	3.01
The Church has enough projects that meets the needs of poor students in its schools	61	168	31	20	20	3.77
The Church helps poor students' families with basic needs (food, clothing, shelter)	67	144	11	47	31	3.56
Poor students are never sent home for fees	16	52	20	103	109	2.21
The school involves my family whenever in fee problems	47	106	41	60	47	3.16
	Aggregate mean					3.142

From Table 3.3, it can be observed that the aggregate mean of the responses stood at 3.142. This suggests that majority of the responses were undecided as far as provision for the poor by the church is concerned. The implication is that either the Church provides for the poor only on a small scale or only attends to the poor who are Catholics. It is possible that respondents may not have had knowledge regarding who pays fees for whom. Notable in the results is the fact that majority of the respondents (mean, 2.21) disagreed that poor students are never sent home for school fees in the schools that were sampled in the study. This suggests that the extent to which the Church attends to the poor students is low. The fact that many respondents disagreed regarding retention of students with challenges of fees suggests that not all poor children were in the programme for assistance by the Diocese.

3.3 Activities within the Church

The study found out that activities within the church were either in form of its programmes or periodic contributions. These two forms are discussed below.

3.3.1 Church Initiated Programmes

It was necessary to find out from key informants some of the programmes managed by the Diocese of Eldoret to support poor children in its schools. The study revealed that all its five programmes covered aspects such as economics, social and political. They included the following programmes: Education for Life (EFL), the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC), Gender and Women Department, Caritas and Small Internal Lending Communities (SILC). The diocesan programmes are as indicated in Table 3.4 below.

Table 3.4: Church Initiated Programmes

Programme	No. of Students supported	Percentage
EFL	45	24%
GENDER	30	16%
SILC	47	25%
CJPC	23	13%
CARITAS	40	22%
Total	185	100%

From this table, the five programmes initiated by the Diocese serve a minimum of one hundred and eighty-five poor children through provision of school fees and stationery items. These programmes were founded on the Gospel mission to seek Justice for all. Most of these donor-supported programmes help the diocese of Eldoret to achieve its mission in the following key areas: poverty eradication through provision of quality and affordable education, material assistance to hunger-stricken areas and civic education programmes. They also help the poor within the universal mandate contained in the Catholic social teaching. Through these programmes, the Church situates the person as the reason for any development agenda (Mensah & Banahene,

2004). Mensah and Banahene (2004) replicate the initial work done by the missionary communities that came to the diocese to develop schools, hospitals and technical institutions. According to F. A. Mensah Banahene, in *Approach to the Church's Development Work in African Rural areas: A Practitioner View*, human progress has since time immemorial been a concern of mankind. In the following sub-sections, the study focuses on each of these programmes.

A. Education For Life (EFL)

This is a programme managed by the Diocese of Eldoret through the assistance of other partners targeting children of People Living with Aids (PLWA). EFL assists children from diverse backgrounds to go through school through payment of school fees and provision of food to their parents. Through the programmes managed in Education For Life centre based in Elgon View, Eldoret, the Diocese trains beneficiaries on basic living skills as well as vocational skills. Behaviour change and counselling programmes are part of the ways EFL uses to improve the life of these children.

From the study, forty-five students were assisted in 2016 by the Diocese through Education for Life (EFL) programme representing twenty-four percent of all students involved in the study. Funds ear-marked for supporting the poor are channelled through the Education Secretary of the Diocese to enable EFL to reach to the intended persons. Most of those who have benefited from this arrangement were children from families of People Living with Aids (PLWA) within Uasin-Gishu County.

It targets children in high school through fee subsidy. They are given life skills during holidays away from school to make them relate well with the society. This initiative has improved quality of life of those in the programme as reported below:

...programmes under EFL inculcate in students such qualities as perseverance and flexibility that help them live with a sense of purpose and wellbeing (Personal Communication, Project Co-ordinator, 43 years, May 16, 2016).

With the establishment of this programme in the Diocese, the study gathered that it has greatly supported many poor children through school. The programme is also concerned with character and social skills development in line with the call by Pope Leo XIII on the Church:

Neither must it be supposed that the ministry of the Church is occupied with the spiritual concern of her children as to neglect their temporal and earthly interests. Her desire is that the poor, for example, should rise above poverty and wretchedness, and better their conditions in life: and for this, she makes a strong endeavour (Pope Leo XIII, 1891, no 11).

Those who manage to get into this arrangement go through a rigorous admission policy where an interview is conducted then a support team notifies the family upon acceptance of the child. New participants are admitted every year depending on availability of funds.

B. Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC)

This is a ministry of service established by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret to cater for all people facing challenges related to social justice. The programmes offered are grounded in the Church's Social teaching. It promotes transformation of individuals, parishes and the community to answer the call of God towards love of God and neighbour.

Events that take place in this programme include peace building and advocacy initiatives for the poor. The Diocese sources for funds to help the poor children in this programme. Pope Benedict XVI called on the Church to play a pivotal role in bringing justice and harmony in lives of the people. He appealed: “The Church cannot and must not remain on the side-lines in the fight for justice” (Benedict XVI, 2009, no. 8).

The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, in partnership with such friends as Konrad Adenauer Foundation-Germany and USAID, has worked towards the attainment of peace in places experiencing tribal conflict in Uasin-Gishu County. Through these forums, leaders from communities living near one another are helped to discuss ways of promoting peaceful co-existence.

CJPC makes follow-up programmes on the beneficiaries so as to become peace ambassadors in their villages. The study gathered that through the CJPC, twenty-three of the respondents benefited from partial scholarships set aside for children of Internally Displace Persons (IDPs) in 2015. These IDPs were as a result of the 2007/2008 protracted election that led to death and internal displacement of people, particularly those who were residing in ‘hotspots’ in the country. Generally, the assistance given by the diocese through its friends was intended to create a peaceful and conducive environment necessary for learning. They do this to draw justice closer to the people irrespective of their gender or religious affiliation.

Though this scholarship does not cater for everything, the effort on the part of the Church to step out and assist is a sign of how it responds to the Gospel in terms of

ministry in action. The Catholic Justice and Peace (CJPC) helps children of from poor families through the school by giving little fee subsidy.

C. Caritas

Caritas was set up as one of the programmes in the diocese to meet the growing material needs of the poor. It draws its structure from Caritas International that works to restore order in the world by assisting in relief efforts, development and social service provision. The Caritas national office in Nairobi coordinates and sources for funding. Occasionally, the office takes up supervisory role of projects under its funding regime to ensure that it is channelled into the right use.

Caritas in the Diocese of Eldoret has been instrumental in co-ordinating food relief for those affected by disasters. According to the co-ordinator of Caritas Eldoret, the programme sponsored forty students who had just completed 2015 KCPE examinations representing twenty-two percent of all students supported by the church through church projects. The beneficiaries of the programme went through a closely knit follow-up initiative in order to encourage them to plough back their efforts to help others. Through its Caritas programme, the Diocese creates a better world for the poor.

Pope Benedict addressed the particular role that the Church plays not just to the Catholic only but to the whole human family-thus: “Besides the good of the individuals, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good” (Benedict XVI, 2009, no 7). One of the diocesan departmental heads said:

With the help of Caritas international, some funds that are set aside from its programme trickle in to help poor children. The programmes that are spread mostly in Catholic sponsored schools in Uasin-Gishu have made

children who would not have finished their school very successful in their future (Personal Communication, Fourth Departmental Head, 50 years Old, May 17, 2016).

The statement above is an indication of the focus this programme has had in the Uasin-Gishu County and its vision for the future in educating poor children. Apart from the partial scholarships that they give, they also make follow up programmes to ensure that families where the poor students come from access clean and safe drinking water (Odipo, 2001).

Regarding the question on whether Caritas had other provisions through which members of the Church were assisted, the study gathered that members were provided with micro finances to set up their own business through which they can get money to pay fees for their children.

The programme also holistic health of poor children in the Diocese. For example, in the year 2016, it gave seventy-five wheel-chairs and clutches to poor children in schools within the diocese. It continues to co-ordinate healthcare and medical assistance for the children in the programme. According to the co-ordinator, Caritas-Eldoret took up psychiatric patients from among school-going children initially in reformatory homes and rehabilitated them. The programme takes up the responsibility of footing bills in case members of the family of any of those in the programme are unable to pay. The study gathered that Caritas had a credit facility and those who receive are required to pay after sometime so that the money becomes a revolving fund to support others in need.

D. Gender and Women Department

The director of Gender and Women department of the Diocese indicated that the department supported close to thirty poor students across the county during the year 2016. In 1983, the Diocese created a department charged with caring for physically challenged persons. Although the department was established to deal with all types of physical challenges, some of the most complicated cases requiring specialized attention could not be accepted due to challenges of funds.

The Diocese began to specifically concentrate on the crippled and visually impaired who form the bulk of the poor in the region. The department established “Small Homes” in almost every region of the Diocese. These include: Tach-Asis, Kobujoi, Matunda, Kipsaina, Kobil, Chebororwa, Nerko, Chesongoch, Mindililwo, Iten School for the deaf, Chesoi and Chepsigot School for the blind. The study gathered that these schools are part of a bigger family of Association of Physically Disabled of Kenya (APDK) and community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) programmes. With support from and good will of friends and partners, ‘Small Homes’ initiative has started and managed its programmes. Caritas director organizes seminars and advocacy sessions in areas where such homes are deemed necessary in order to make people living around be part and parcel of the initiative.

The communities living close to these ‘Small Homes’ collect food items or at times money that is used to subsidize the day- to -day running of the home. Once a home is established, the Diocese employs a trained ‘house mother’ to be in charge of the home and care for the children. A teacher trained in special education by the Diocese is appointed and given the responsibility of caring for children’s educational as well as psychological needs.

The 'Small Homes' in the Diocese offer boarding facilities for many children with physical challenges. Some of them are from extremely poor backgrounds. The study gathered that the students pay between eight thousand five hundred to ten thousand shillings per term. Those parents who cannot raise the amount are assisted through the office of the Bishop.

Sometimes, members of the Church visit schools that they sponsor to deliver items to the poor students. This is done in conjunction with the school administration more so guiding and counselling department. Occasionally, the government of Kenya channels its aid to the 'Small Homes' through Kenya National Fund for the Disabled (KNFD). A senior programmes director within the Diocese noted that the contribution of the Gender and Women department to the mission of the Church in the region has been immense. It has led to improved education of the people in the church and therefore an empowered community. An empowered community is a confirmation that the church is modelled on the kingdom of God in every aspect of life (Mensah, 2004). A departmental head said that parents whose children are beneficiaries of the programme had been helped through micro financing and capacity building to think of coming up with sustainable livelihoods.

A 'Small Homes co-ordinator and member of the cathedral deanery, added her voice concerning the support of the Diocese to 'Small Homes' during events such as 'Happy days'. Parishes within the region around these homes organize visits to the children and give donation both in kind and financially. The study gathered that some children who went through the 'Small Homes' kitty were in colleges pursuing courses of their choice. Some have made an undertaking to return to the small Homes upon completion of their studies in order to inspire and adopt other poor children.

The Director of Gender department in the Diocese noted that the church undertakes to pay school fees for a number of children with difficulties. Parents or relatives of the beneficiaries reciprocate by faithfully supporting Church initiated projects and by bringing their children to parish schools.

A Diocesan administrator observed that the Church needed to educate parents to make use of preferential option for the poor initiatives in its sponsored schools in order to realize the fruits of church's activities. The study gathered that when parents take up their rightful roles of providing for their children whatever is required; - poverty reduction measures undertaken by the Church will be meaningful.

E. Small Internal Lending Communities (SILC)

The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, in partnership with donor communities, has rolled out Small Internal Lending Communities (SILC). The initiative is geared towards boosting economic life of its members. SILC managed to support forty-seven poor children. This study gathered that, compared to any other programme in the Diocese, SILC had played the biggest role in fee payment and welfare support for poor students. Unlike any other micro-financial arrangements available, SILC enabled members to promote their small businesses by creating financial capability. Credit facilities provided at lower interest rate by the Church through SILC has enabled members to start small scale businesses that provide food for them and school fees as well.

Activities towards preferential option have been beneficial to many members of the Church wishing to educate their children. Through SILC, the Church organizes financial management programmes for those in small trading activities. From the

small business enterprises, they sometimes make donations in support of poor children in secondary schools. The study revealed that the Diocese has adopted various strategies in agricultural development, education, health, and youth and women development to help reduce poverty in Uasin-Gishu County. These interventions are mostly long term projects that include infrastructure provision like schools, water and health facilities. Where such infrastructure assistance exists, children from poor families benefit through quality education.

The Diocesan administrator and the Small Homes co-ordinator and member of the cathedral deanery gave two main reasons why they thought these economic activities initiated by the Church were effective in helping poor children. First, the support given by the Diocese in terms small loans, micro- finance facilities and training in business enterprises had helped members to embrace self-reliance. Secondly, SILC had brought people of various churches together to pursue poverty eradication activities thereby affecting their lives positively. In this case, the Diocese had succeeded in inculcating community spirit by making the communities contribute both in cash and in kind in the execution of infrastructural projects in the Diocese.

3.3.2 Church Initiated Contributions

A. Parish Contributions

Catholic Diocese of Eldoret is made up of several parishes. A parish is organized into stations or centres in other regions. Stations on the other hand are divided into small units called Small Christian Communities (SCCs). These Small Communities bring together neighbouring families. Individuals living within these small units make their contribution to support the parish even before getting to the diocese. Sometimes a

parish organizes harvest festivals that enables the members contribute towards the activities planned for the year. The diocese then makes it possible for needy students to be assisted through local appeals that come from these parishes. Through annual or periodic donations parishes assists schools with operating deficits to provide poor children with personal items and learning materials. This has been encouraged as:

Supporting the church's missionary activity is a sign of self-offering first to the Lord and then to others; in this way a material offering can become a means for the evangelization of humanity built on love (Francis, 2013, p. 9).

Pope Francis advocated for a human family considered both as a means and the end, that is to say that they are architects and the beneficiaries of any development effort. Therefore, their perceptions and understanding of any development initiative has a direct link with holistic development. 'Adopt a child' strategy is one of the methods that members of the church take up the responsibilities of upbringing poor children. The study gathered that Church members at times take up the initiative and the burden of the entire Church to care for the poor.

A Father in-Charge of one of the Catholic parishes in Eldoret suggested that the Church through its self-reliance activities should take up the responsibility of adopting needy children as indicated above. He noted that among the members of the Church those who were endowed with wealth deserved to be forthright in supporting initiatives to help the poor. A senior administrator cited the report of 1994 African Synod in Rome whereby the Church in Africa was challenged to adopt a system in which families would help each other in building their future. This self-reliance approach speaks to individual members in the Church not to ignore children from humble backgrounds if they can assist.

A Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes parish pointed out that by educating children from humble backgrounds, the Church opens future opportunities and therefore reduces poverty. From the small contributions that people make, the Church would easily support its poor. The study found out that with support from friends and well-wishers of the parish, efforts had been advanced to train Church members towards self-employment.

The strength of the church is the generosity of its members. By creating strong communities that have economic strength church members can manage to sort out some challenges that would otherwise be left to the diocese. A senior accountant observed that there are congregations of Religious Sisters and Brothers in the Diocese willing to help children with fees challenges. The support given by Religious congregations abroad has given impetus to the Diocese. Some parishes own academies where parishioners bring their children and commit themselves to raise the standards of the schools by all means.

Such schools enable parents who may not manage to pay fees at a particular time perhaps due to a challenge to be given more time. A Priest of Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Eldoret town noted that the Church had a school hinged on generating income for the parish. The proceeds from the venture go into supplementing what Church members raise during annual harvest. The study gathered that such parish academies were designed to provide quality education for children from low cost estates of West Indies, Munyaka and Raiply. In addition, some of these parish schools had programmes for helping the poor.

Some parish academies have a bursary fund through which children from poor backgrounds receive scholarships and educational materials. The study gathered from the respondents that funds such as these were managed by a committee in the parish and guided by the Diocesan Education Secretary. The father in-charge of one of the Catholic parishes in Eldoret town-, reported that the Church had assisted many poor children and would continue doing so. An example is that of Sisters of Our Lady of Assumption in Eldoret whose school sponsors a number of abandoned children. A nun remarked:

...the Church has an eternal duty to lift the poor from their conditions. The congregation has managed to come to the aid of over twenty abandoned children since the kitty was established few years ago (Personal Communication, Sr. Principal, May 15, 2016).

The school also manages a programme for some street children who accept to be rehabilitated. Though some of these initiatives began with the missionaries, the parishes within Uasin-Gishu had taken up the challenge. The study gathered that nuns first initiated an outreach to the street families in Eldoret town to identify their needs. As time went by, the number of these children grew hence the need for partners to support the effort. Respondents cited lack of effectiveness in the provision of support materials for the poor in some parishes. The reason given for this was that most of the income generating initiatives had no place for charities. Some academies are just out for profits.

B. Diocesan Contributions

The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret makes appeals every year for the purpose of supporting most of its projects. This appeal is an important avenue through which every parishioner can contribute to the work of the Diocese. A diocesan programmes director noted that the work done by the Diocese for over four years since 2014 to pay

school fees for some poor children through local contribution was incredible. At times, clothes and food items donated during Easter got to the homes for the physically challenged. The annual Bishop's appeal otherwise known as diocesan harvest festival is the major funding source for the Diocese of Eldoret. Each parish is assigned a goal according to an objective calculation based on parish offertory totals. The study found out too that the annual Bishop's collections have been useful in helping assist several needy cases in terms of fee payment and other requirements in schools.

The plight of the poor throughout the Diocese has become the central focus of pastoral ministry right from the parish level. Because of this, the church has taken up the task of what the disciples did in Acts of the Apostles, in New Testament to help.

This is attested Ana De Santa's comment thus:

In many parts of the world, several groups and movements have heard the cry of the poor. Many of these operate outside the churches. These groups have become sensitive to the situation of the poor today in their demands and hopes. It is as though the wind is blowing at the same time in many places, clarifying the situation of the poor today in their situation and helping the churches to realize that they cannot remain passive once they see the implications of the situation of the underprivileged in our time (Santa, 1983, p. 240).

According to the statement above, the Social teaching of the Church takes into consideration all aspects of human development. The teaching is an invitation for the believers not just to hear the word but to do what it teaches. The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret complements the efforts of other partners which are not faith-based. The missionary activities that began at the dawn of the 18th Century was characterized not only by faith formation but also infrastructural development. By establishing schools and health facilities, Ana De Santa notes that the poor would take up their special role to improve themselves.

When the European missionaries left, indigenous priests took over the work of educating members with the same zeal. St John Paul II in his Post-Synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* noted that evangelization requires material and financial resources. In order to meet this need, Dioceses seek to attain self-sufficiency. Church members have been educated to fulfil moral and divine obligation of living according to the teachings of God's preferential option for the poor. By encouraging individual contribution, parish targets and thus the overall diocesan target become realizable.

According to Marinova and Hossain, resource mobilization should begin from local communities bringing what they have. Thus:

Carrying out a financial resource mobilization at individual level takes the following steps: identifying potential sources of funds, actively soliciting pledges, following up on pledges to obtain funds, depositing the funds, and recording the transactions (Marinova & Hossain, 2006).

The study appreciates that there were parishioners who reciprocated that which they receive from these activities and would readily accept to take up the task of supporting other needy children. They do this as private arrangement though it still takes place within the arrangement of the Church.

Needy cases from parishes find their way to the Diocese for consideration in a structured manner. Before the money is disbursed there is thorough vetting to ascertain the level of need. The Father- in Charge of one of the Catholic parishes in Eldoret town pointed out how the Church finds ways to support members in dire need of school fees for their children as an example. The parish designs a way through which all the members of the Small Christian Community are made to contribute to the mission of the Church.

Its leaders submit membership fee of the Small Christian Community (SCC) to the parish as a sign of commitment. SCC membership roll has helped the parish to identify genuine cases for purposes of assistance, whenever available, of the needy members while eliminating others non-members out to take advantage of the Church. The Church has managed the upsurge of needy cases by having a clear policy on who deserves to be assisted. In addition, it provides a forum through Small Christian Communities (SCCs) for people to know each other. The leaders of these small units then provide the data to the parish team that eventually make their own conclusive assessment of the possibility of assistance. Upon such determination, the leaders of the entire Church can make a communication to the whole Church regarding the nature of assistance required.

An administrator at the Sacred Heart Cathedral, added that though the parish has had its fair share of challenges in managing its own projects, the focus has always been on ensuring that within the annual budget, some money is allocated to assist members with extreme difficulty in managing fees for their children. The intention to continue with the programme for poor children has been sustained by members who commit their monthly tithe to the needy.

A Priest at the St. John XXIII Catholic Church in Eldoret Town also remarked that some money is set aside every financial year to cater for charity at the parish level. The study found out that a high percentage of this money goes into meeting school fees needs for members. In the event that members have extreme difficulties in matters other than fees, the parish or outstation makes special appeals through Sunday collections. Every situation that comes up is considered on its own merit in order to provide appropriate attention.

The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (CJPC) is tasked with the responsibility of planning, making correspondence and reporting to the procurator's office regarding the collections of such appeals. A percentage that remains within the parish goes into assisting the poor within the originating parish. The study found that most of it goes into school fees while the rest is channelled into religious education and youth programmes.

The study sought to find out from the interviewees the source of funding for the diocesan programmes targeting poor children. It gathered that donor partners were either international or local.

i) International donor activities

The study gathered that the Diocese of Eldoret runs its programmes with the help of such partners as Misereor, *Missio*, ILRI, Vincent De Paul, and Daughters of Charity among others. Through the efforts of such international friends and well-wishers, most of the programmes succeed in meeting their objectives. An appeal is made to parishioners abroad to help out through financial gifts and prayers in supporting the cause for the poor. There are times when various faith-based donor partners come together for the purpose of accomplishing a certain request.

The diocese makes an effort to reach out to foreign donors, as a senior diocesan administrator pointed out:

We are encouraged by Pope Francis message during mission Sunday on the need to reach out to the needy. Through the teaching of the church, mission boxes have been introduced in parishes. The bishop also sends priests for foreign mission collection (Personal Communication, Third Departmental Head, May 17, 2016).

The study gathered that donor communities prefer to do their own projects to completion. What usually happens is that proposals made for a particular purpose go through Bishops' office for facilitation and submission to donor communities. Catholic Missions abroad operate through the international structure as part of the international Catholic network such as the *Pontifical Mission Societies*. Catholic Missions respect the principle of assisting people, parish community or a religious congregation.

The *Pontifical Mission Internationalis (PMI)* is tasked with the responsibility of helping the Church in mission lands to attain sustainable development. Out of the 185 beneficiaries of all programmes in the Diocese, 111 (60%) have received their share from donors and well-wishers from abroad. The Catholic Relief Services (USA) has funded projects for children under fifteen years of age for the last ten years (Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, report 2015). These are most commonly in schools, orphanages, rehabilitation centres and health centres within a school set up. The Koch Foundation has been funding catholic schools in remote areas of the diocese.

Apart from its school fees support initiative, it is engaged in supporting publication of Religious literature. They have partnered with the diocese in raising future Church leaders as a means of evangelization. The International Catholic Mission Societies (*missio* in Aachen and *missio* in Munich), a German branch of the Pontifical Mission Societies in partnership with Action Aid assist children listed by the diocese for fee subsidy. For example, in the year 2014, EFL sponsored 29 children from low cost settlements of Langas, West Indies and Kimumu.

The children had initially dropped out after KCPE due to fee challenges (Catholic Diocese of Eldoret, 2014). Occasionally, the students in the programmes find scholarship in mission countries which empowers them to come back and improve the local community. The Diocese has maintained a strong tradition of maintaining donor friends such as those from Immaculate Heart of Mary based in Italy. Immaculate Heart of Jesus schools (IHJ) Provided Aid and Bishop Korir Education Fund are just a few of these.

ii) Local friends' contribution activities (other than Church members)

Additionally, there are parishioners who make their own contribution towards the poor though not necessarily under Bishop Korir Funds. The money obtained from their initiative is used to meet the needs of poor students in school. A priest observed:

There are members of the Church who have embraced scholarship initiatives started by the Diocese by accepting to surrender part of their monthly salary or savings towards assisting poor but bright children in an arrangement akin to Bishop's scholarship (Personal Communication, Priest over 45 yrs, May 15, 2016).

The above statement is an affirmation of how some people have organized themselves to stand out for a worthy cause. It means that it is a possibility for all those endowed with wealth to support the poor. Another level of donor partnership that the Diocese of Eldoret has explored is that of Diocese-to-Diocese partnership. A lot has been achieved when two or more dioceses twin up for the purpose of meeting a certain social agenda.

The study gathered that there are partnership activities between the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret and Diocese of Perth in Australia and St. Cloud in Central Minnesota. The activities cover four main areas which include, though not limited to, exchange

programmes between students and teachers in schools owned by these Dioceses. Delegates from these institutions make visits for purposes of getting first hand experiences in matters of curriculum exchange and educational exposure. The study gathered too that from such exchange, some students from Catholic sponsored schools get an opportunity to go for overseas exchange programme. Secondly, the dioceses establish a sustained pattern of receiving stipends for purpose of a certain desired project. In this case, the Diocese of Perth pays fees for students who pass well and join the university. Most of those in the arrangement are those who were supported through Education For Life EFL initiative. In the year 2016, 12 students benefited from this fee support initiative.

Thirdly, mutual partnership is a model of mission that has a series of activities for assisting poor children. The activities here include assessment that is done to ascertain the capability of the parents of the poor to create wealth if supported through loans. The focus of such an initiative is such that they are given a certain amount of money to start income generating ventures. The study gathered also that the dioceses in partnership carry out fact finding visits to identify the needs of those to be assisted. Once this is done, a durable relationship by way of covenant of partnership is signed towards helping the poor.

Lastly, the diocese-diocese partnership activities target publication and distribution of literature. The stipends that come as a donation from the arrangement cater for writing and reading materials required by the schools. The Diocese of Eldoret does not appeal only to the international donors for support. It has explored a new area that targets locals who are well endowed and wish to be part of the mission to help the poor.

These local donors respond in their own ways during such days as mission Sunday, Membership in Propagation of Faith (MPF) and Peter's Pence. Apart from such contributions that are church-related, some Catholic families accept to adopt some of these poor children and sponsor them through school.

3.4 School-based Activities

The study sought to find out from key informants whether there were school based activities geared towards Church's option for the poor. The study established that there were several activities aimed at supporting poor children in schools in Uasin-Gishu. The activities were as presented in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5: Management Initiated Activities

	Frequency	Percent
B.O.M CONTRIBUTION	114	36
PROJECT SAVINGS	86	27
FUNDRAISING	76	24
SCHOLARSHIPS	38	13
Total	314	100.0

The results suggested that the activities under this section are initiated by the school management through student's leadership. From the activities organised, learners from poor backgrounds were assisted as discussed below.

3.4.1 BOM Initiated Activities

School Boards of Management help a great deal in driving the agenda of the church within particular schools. The Boards of Management assist the principals in financial issues. Catholic sponsored schools under the study had active managers. The study

gathered that some members of these school boards committed themselves to carry on the pastoral mission of the Church to help the poor. Some members of the school board use their time to improve school's ability to assist the poor by way of providing free advice regarding what other institutions do elsewhere. They also volunteer to meet constantly to plan visits aimed at raising scholarship money for the poor. The study too found out that some made regular visits to school to check on the progress of programmes designed towards the poor. The ways that these boards used to finance the poor children were varied as below.

First, members of BOMs ask other friends of the school, more so those with wide entrepreneurial connection in town, to be part of the initiative to assist. The study found out that some would help the school by readily offering grants, sponsoring cleaning services or by making certain donations. For example, some members of the school board of management offered to assist in procuring required items for consumption or construction within the school. Secondly, the management in most of these schools is responsible in terms of recruiting and motivating fundraising teams such from among parents, teachers and students who would go out at a certain period for a walk to help the poor. The leadership play a critical role in providing direction, designing pleasant experiences and prize incentives for these fundraisers.

Able parents are usually encouraged to avail their time and networks so as to effectively and successfully fundraise for the poor. This greatly minimized the time and effort that would ordinarily be used by teachers and students in organizing fundraisings. The school principal together with management invest their time in articulating the needs of the school for purposes of influencing, motivating, coaching and marshalling parents and staff to maximize fundraising efforts.

Thirdly, teachers' welfare kitty provides some amount that is channelled to help the poor. Fourthly, some schools with strong alumni organizations have been able to net some contribution for purposes of helping poor children in the school. It also emerged that head teachers save on tuition money to provide for poor students. This was reported by one school principal thus: "Savings obtained from tuition fee is borrowed for the purpose of helping extremely needy cases meet their school fees" (Personal Communication, Senior Principal, 47 years, May 16, 2016).

In some schools, the boards of management identified some days whereby the entire school community collected items in kind or in cash for the purpose of assisting their colleagues from poor backgrounds. Whatever is realized in such an arrangement is subjected to thorough discussion to benefit most deserving cases.

A. Contribution of out of school project profits

From the study, it emerged that 86 students representing 27% of poor students in Catholic schools had been assisted through savings realised from income generating initiatives such as rearing of pigs, rabbits, dairy, and chicken and vegetables farms.

Most established Catholic secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu had bakeries which supplied the school kitchens with sufficient bakes throughout the year. Any profits made from such projects were ploughed back for the purpose of helping the poor meet their fees. The same was done for the profits that accrued from all other school projects.

B. Fundraising

Fundraising is the most common way through which most of the schools organize funds to support the poor. From fundraising activities, 76 students representing 24% poor students in catholic schools were assisted in 2016. The study through data collected in 2016 gathered that there were three levels through which these fundraisings were made.

First, through institutional fundraising whereby the school invites charitable organizations, friends, churches, corporates and suppliers of the school to give assistance towards payment of fees or during construction. This is done annually in most of the schools. Secondly, major donor fundraising would be organized. Here, the institution identifies friends and partners to raise funds for the poor or fund some projects in the school. Some school suppliers fall into this category. Lastly, it emerged that schools invite the staff members to be part of the initiative to assist the poor through their own contributions. In all the three, the organizers may want to make use of special appeal cards, ticketing for charity walk or organized cultural events. This last approach requires a bigger financial support as well as more time. Therefore:

Schools strive to raise more internally by involving its own staff, parents and students in order to realize the desired objectives of fundraising. In the end, its desired that the contribution of guests should fill in the deficit (Personal Communication, Second male Administrator, May 17, 2016).

Though fundraising is a challenging activity to manage, the school principal would begin by meeting with school staff to identify and articulate the needy cases within a particular period so as to design fundraising activities. A Diocesan administrator reported that the involvement of the Church through the school principal would produce better results than a case in which the church was not committed to the activity.

C. In-school Scholarships

This study suggests that only 38 children representing 13% of poor students in Catholic schools had benefitted from local scholarship programme in the year 2016. From the amount obtained from contributions mentioned above or external through partnerships, a scholarship is given out to substitute to help poor children. Some well-wishers and friends of the Diocese have been helpful in filling the gap created by inadequate financial resources for helping these poor children. One participant expressed it thus:

Local scholarships and tuition assistance programme are available in the Diocese. The scholarship fund is a programme sponsored by the Diocesan education department to assist poor children achieve their goals in school. Those who benefit from this programme get tuition waiver established through relationships between the Diocese and parishes from where these children hail from (Personal Communication, Male Director, May 15, 2016).

Through scholarship, schools receive additional funding from the Diocese in order to offset tuition costs. Where there is deficit on the part of the diocesan contribution, schools use the ways to close the gap. Academically talented students from poor families are given a priority in this financial aid. The study found out that students who excelled in extra-curricular activities got partial scholarship in form of tuition fees. Schools make use of some members of the congregation who are well endowed to adopt a strategy of mentorship.

...the Church requests some members of the congregation and parents to adopt an orphaned child or one from a poor background. This spirit of adoption has enabled bright students who would otherwise have left school to proceed on successfully (Personal Communication, Second Departmental Head, May 17, 16).

The idea of generating scholarship has an origin perhaps from the spirit of the church that grows out to be self-reliant. Most of the scholarships that are functional are from among locals who take up the challenge to do something in the absence of external

donations. From the study, the diocesan strategic plan 2012-2016, indicated that though this is the pastoral vision of AMECEA, noting much had been done to build institutions that are self-reliant, self-ministering and self-propagating (Kalilombe, 2002, p. 11). When asked whether local community have embraced the spirit of sponsoring poor children rather than depending solely on foreign donors a diocesan programmes director stated:

...since the idea was given to the community through special sessions prepared by the development wing of Catholic secretariat, the response has been tremendous though much need to be done to ensure that promises are honoured.... (Personal Communication, Male Director, May 15, 2016).

In order for the church to manage scholarships for its own members, local sponsors and donors should locate themselves in all sectors of development. From the study, members had taken up the task of assisting poor children even to college level as has already been indicated earlier in this chapter. By doing so, the Church had become instrumental in safeguarding the future of its members through partial or full scholarships. Bishop Kalilombe once noted that when people come out to help others, the Church makes it possible to achieve so much since members see themselves as agents and ultimate beneficiaries of the efforts to improve their situation (Kalilombe, 2002, p. 12). In school scholarship is an initiative through which students with fee challenges are identified through the activities that they do such as improvement in class performance. Some schools set aside some money for dormitory units in school for purposes of rewarding good performance. At times schools have ways through which they mobilize funds for such causes. Establishing the deserving candidates for these little grants takes time and diligence. A financial aid assessment is submitted within the school through guiding and counselling department.

The main challenge with this kind of initiative is that of the shrinking grant money and increasing demand for scholarships. Despite the challenge, several efforts have been made by the diocese through the office of the Education Secretary to ensure that such initiatives are supported by parents within the schools it sponsors. The study gathered too that every successful grant demands that the church in collaboration with the schools under its care understand the needs of all its students.

D. Work-study programme

Work study programme that has taken root in most mission schools in Catholic Diocese of Eldoret is an initiative of most school boards. This refers to situations where students with notable difficulties in fee payment remain in school in order to do certain tasks for pay as others go for holidays. According to one principal

A number of students are willing to take up tasks such as farm weeding, tending flowers and fencing during weekends and holidays so as to get their fees (Personal Communication, First Principal, May 16, 2016).

The study found out that whenever such tasks are to be executed within the normal school term, an arrangement is put in place so that the students engaged in the programme do not miss any class activity. There are times whereby a work study activity is tailored to enable students to get some money for upkeep. Otherwise, the earnings from work - study programme credits students' fee account. The work- study model is aimed at eradicating dependency which reduces needy students to perpetual begging.

The model has also made education affordable, as it reduces tuition costs. The work-study arrangement has been exploited by some schools well so that serious students manage projects such as vegetable gardens that deliver kitchen products. The subsidy

created here enables the school pay fees or other requirements for these efforts shown by students.

3.4.2 Student-Initiated Activities

The study gathered that schools organize students either through clubs and movements or subject-based groups such as Young Farmers Club. The leadership of most of these initiatives are within the students themselves but supported by boards of management. Talented students are allowed to organize cultural events and talent shows for money. The activities under this section will be discussed in detail.

A. Societies and movements

A Diocesan youth coordinator reported that occasionally, Young Christian Students (Y.C.S) and Legion of Mary movements organize events to raise funds for the poor. The study found out that for the last four years, these movements have been raising huge sums of money: over one million shillings or items to assist manage their programmes. In many schools, these two movements not only fundraise but also shape the character of the members towards giving. It does this through organizing fundraising events through which poor students are helped to meet school fees. A youth chaplain noted:

Student movements in high school are popular as a way that orients them to learn about what others in their group go through. Through the movements youth are made to be pro-social and forward-looking in behaviour (Personal Communication, Priest, Over 45 yrs old, May 15, 2016).

Since inception of these student movements, many young people have been educated to help others. These two movements have inspired the youth by inculcating in them positive development models hinged on the motto to see, judge and act. The youth office has managed to organize fundraising events which they call ‘Flag days’.

Although much of the funds raised are meant to run the affairs of the Young Christian Society (YCS) movement throughout the year, some percentage go into a Diocesan kitty that supports those in dire need of fees. The young people are able to discern the needs of their fellow members and assist where possible.

Pope Leo XIII's encyclical to Religious and families challenged all Christians and people of good will to pay attention to the situation of poverty. He observed:

Love for others, and in the first place, love for the poor in whom the church sees Christ himself is made concrete in the promotion of justice. Justice will never be fully attained unless people see the poor person who is asking for help in order to survive, not as an annoyance or a burden, but an opportunity for showing kindness and a chance for greater enrichment (Pope Leo XIII, 1891 no.11).

Pope Leo's Encyclical was an invitation then, as it is even to date, to look at other people as Christ would look at them. The Catholic Social Teachings emphasise the aspects of concern for others especially the poor in the society. The teaching finds its place when young people in school take an active role to help the less fortunate within their proximity. Generally, Young Christian Students movement and Legion of Mary have become instruments for youth empowerment and involvement in the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret. During school holiday workshops, members of these movements focus on skill development and character building aimed at helping the poor.

When asked whether there was a structure for identifying poor children within the Young Christian Students (Y.C.S) family, a Y.C.S patron revealed that guiding and counselling departments in some schools were extremely helpful in providing credible data on student vulnerability status for the Diocese to use. The study found out that some well- off parents offer to sponsor an extra poor child after paying fee for their

own. Such good-will initiatives get a mention during special occasions of the school, so as to inculcate the culture of supporting the poor children in the community.

B. Cultural events

Many catholic schools in Uasin-Gishu County utilize participatory sporting events such as running or walking races, songs and dancing competitions to raise money. Such cultural and feast days have been used to raise awareness on the need to respond corporately towards a worthy cause. For example, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes in one Girls' school in Uasin-Gishu provides an opportunity for parents, visitors and friends of the school within the parish to identify a project to better their institutions. Small events such as donation rallies for the needy attract few participants and raise considerably less. Student-managed cultural fetes are meant not only to educate the participants to donate but they also attract new constituents to the cause. An administrator of one of Catholic schools in Eldoret observed that sporting events are gaining popularity across Uasin-Gishu County. She noted:

...apart from running for the purpose of raising money to help the poor, these activities stimulate meditation, produce relaxation, and relieve stress. As running for the poor grew in popularity, the number of sporting events increased. Today, most catholic schools in Uasin-Gishu enrol for marathon participation in order to attract charity monies for the poor (Personal Communication, Female principal, May 17, 2016).

Another fundraising event that usually attracts generous contribution is gala evening. These events are organized annually or occasionally within the school calendar. From the study, some schools have hosted dancing events as fundraisers. It was noted too that these gala meetings have become avenues that combine other fundraising tactics such as fundraising raffles, silent auctions and concession sales. These gala meetings present opportunities for teachers, parents, students and other members of the school community to be engaged towards assisting the poor. In such events, the study found

out that some schools invite friends who make their contribution by corporate giving. Their financial contribution is usually not taken for granted.

Gala evenings have translated into special events which if well-organized, have a potential to fundraise for specific needs of the poor. Last December, a dinner organized in one school to fundraise for school fee raised over two hundred fifty thousand Kenya shillings. The Head of the school observed:

There are people who are willing to step forward to help those in need. The school provides such forum every first week of December. The response towards such a student and alumni initiated project has been encouraging (Personal Communication, Senior Principal, over 50 years old, May 15, 2016).

The study gathered that students engage board members to be actively involved in the events such as these by bringing guests. Through such events, staff members use their influence and skills in preparing students to perfect the event. When asked whether such events added value to the corporate image of the school, one principal indicated that apart from increasing community connection and school, the children who come from the neighbourhood are the highest beneficiaries. Therefore:

Gala events have become so critical in shaping the community image about the school. It has brought on board the sons and daughters of the area together with the alumni who feel challenged to give back. The sense of pride has tremendously raised the pride required for growth (Personal Communication, First Principal, May 16, 2016).

The study gathered that careful planning is the cornerstone of a successful cultural cum-fundraising event. With the support of the school management, most events organised by students succeed in realizing their intended purposes. The Church has played a significant role through the Diocesan Education Secretary who ensures that there is a proper representation whenever there are such arrangements in its schools.

C. Class contributions

The strength of Catholic Social Teaching rests on whether their content has been taught understood and articulated through action. Pope Paul VI's reflection on the 1974 synod led him to write the document '*Evangelization in the modern world*', as a way of encouraging people to relate the action of justice to the everyday mission of the church. His was a pontificate marked by church's self-understanding of mission and commitment to serious action. All along, it appeared that the church's teaching was geared towards social action for the poor in the church or within its institutions. What came to be branded as 'Puebla Conference' raised serious characteristics of a Christianity associated with ideologies that promise heaven on earth yet not practical. When Pope John Paul II went back to Puebla in January 1979 for a synod, he reaffirmed his commitment:

The Church has learned that an indispensable part of evangelizing mission is made up of work on behalf of justice and human promotion...that evangelization and human promotion are linked together by very strong ties of anthropological, theological, and charitable nature (John Paul II, 1987, no. 8)

The final document of the Puebla meeting influenced the Catholic teaching towards the poor throughout its institutions. As an initiative of the Diocese, students who are endowed are invited to contribute towards assisting the poor in class. This gesture helps them to build the culture of social concern for others.

In the spirit of John Paul II's teaching, fundraising effort have been done, for example, for more than three times at a boys' Catholic school in the outskirts of Eldoret town. The principal of the school observed:

The collection started in 2014 when all the students along with their teachers unanimously decided to collect money for poor students whose parents cannot afford to buy uniform or pay school fees. They do this at class level and have produced great results (Personal Communication, Senior Principal, May 16, 2016).

A mother and a beneficiary of a class fundraising initiative admitted that it was difficult for her family to afford money needed for her children to school. When classmates saw that some of their friends had difficulties in fee payment, they took up the task and started mobilizing resources. The principal considered this initiative an important lesson for the students not only in the context of helping the poor, but also in making them put into practice the tenets of Catholic social teaching.

3.5 Conclusion

This study established three different groups of activities carried out by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret towards the realization of preferential option for the poor. First, there are activities that are organised from within the church. The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret manages five key programmes that support poor children in its sponsored schools. Most of them are donor-funded although efforts have been initiated to involve parishes in raising money to sustain them.

Some of the beneficiaries of these diocesan programmes come from parishes that are wealthy. Once in a while these parishes have been invited to make contribution annually. The entire diocese also appeals for support through its annual fundraising event. Secondly, there are out of church activities. The term out of church does not mean that those who are engaged in them are not Christians or Catholics. There are people of good will who may not be Bishops or priests but want to support the initiative through their contribution.

Such initiatives originated from among members themselves or Boards of Management. The purpose of their initiative is to serve the poor within the Catholic

social teaching. These school-based activities are either management or student initiated. Lastly, the diocese works in partnership with other friends and dioceses through partnership arrangement. Diocese-to-Diocese engagement has yielded a considerable support for the poor. Under this category, the study found out that they were mainly two initiatives. The following chapter explores the challenges faced by the Diocese in its effort to support poor children in its schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHALLENGES OF THE CHURCH IN IMPLEMENTING PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of data that was collected in the study. This study set out to identify the challenges faced by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in realizing preferential option for the poor in its schools in Uasin-Gishu County. Findings are presented in form of tables and direct quotations. A discussion is made after each response to aid understanding.

4.2 Challenges facing Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in Implementing Preferential Option for the Poor

To establish the challenges that the Church was facing in its quest to attain preferential option for the poor, interviews were conducted with 24 respondents: 12 diocesan secretariat staff; 4 county education officials; 4 members of the management at Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Gaba Campus) and 4 priests. The challenges enunciated by these respondents are presented in the following sections.

4.2.1 Inadequate Finances

Nearly all the respondents concurred that inadequate finances and inconsistent flow of assistance into the initiated projects was one of the major challenges that the Church faces in its quest to provide for the poor. The respondents argued that the inadequate finances had resulted in inadequate physical facilities, irregular salary packages for

teachers and scanty supply of educational materials in schools sponsored by the Church. As one respondent observed:

...one would expect that our Church-sponsored schools should actually serve as safe havens for students from humble backgrounds...this is not the case because the Church receives inadequate funding from donors and well-wishers...consequently, our church-sponsored schools are forced to charge fees like other schools in order to cater for their educational needs...this presents a challenge to students from poor background (Personal Communication, Diocesan secretariat staff, May 16, 2016).

Church sponsored schools are usually seen as places where the poor can find quality education and compassion in the wider education system. Key in the arguments of the respondents was that inadequate finances make planning of learning activities and other related programmes difficult especially for schools with children under diocesan scholarship list. A respondent from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Gaba Campus) opined:

The cycle of some of the learning initiatives such as EFL was slowed down due to uncertainty created by lack of finances...delays due to uncertainty makes long term planning of learning activities for the poor quite hard. Inadequate finances deter the diocese in accomplishing its full potential in helping the poor. Faced with this challenge, the diocese therefore finds it difficult to push its agenda for the poor (Personal Communication, Administrator CUEA, May 16, 2016).

The above views resonate with those of Omolade (2009) who has found that inadequacy of trained teachers, high cost of schooling in private institutions, and competition from other private schools are among the challenges facing Catholic schools in Nigeria. It was also established in the study that where donors were obligated to track their money, the diocese had no option but to follow the whims of foreigners. A diocesan administrator noted:

Donors are the lifeline of projects initiated by the Diocese. Without donation from friends, preferential option for the poor can never be realized. Though these funds come with strings attached, they have been helpful (Personal Communication, Diocesan Administrator, May 16, 2016).

From the study, it was deduced that the greatest challenge is that as funds continue to reduce, some project proposals have failed to be honoured as noted by a diocesan administrator:

Due to dwindling donor money some proposals posted to friends and partners in Rome have never been honoured at all. With such challenges, good projects that would otherwise help the poor become stagnant or take long to be completed (Personal Communication, Diocesan Administrator, May 16, 2016).

The above findings agree with those of Chigozie, Munene and Gakuo (2017) who note that financial sustainability is critical to church funded projects for stability and enhancement of growth. The trio believe that it is important that the Church develops diverse resource bases so that it can continue its institutional structure and production of benefits for intended community after the cessation of financial support. They, however, lament that church funded projects usually end their operations when funding stops.

From the responses gathered during the interviews, it was apparent that the Church was straining financially in meeting its obligations. Most churches rely on members' contributions, fundraising and donor funding to undertake community projects. These are not sustainable sources of income. Indeed, as Wafula (2012) notes, legal concerns, accountability issues and project sustainability concerns have a major impact on the financing of projects by faith-based organizations. Subsequently, the Church is finding it difficult to attend to the component of preferential option for the poor leaving out the would-be beneficiaries.

As noted by an administrator in CUEA, if poor children experience inequality or discrimination in school, their experience of school can be one of alienation and

marginalization. Their experience of education tends to be, therefore, in sharp contrast to Dewey's (1966) view of education as "a fostering, a nurturing, and a cultivating process" (p. 10). Their educational experience also represents a contradiction of McLaren's (1995) belief that, in order to ensure some level of equality, "the society need to give the poor and the powerless a preferential option" (p. 138).

In order to create a level ground where every child will receive education without feeling marginalized, the Church will have no option but to ensure that finances are actually available for the poor. Today, on the worldwide stage, the growing gap between rich and poor and the increase in globalization make the "preferential option for the poor" more relevant than ever. As Pope Benedict XVI (2005) observed, "this has to be emphasized all the more in today's rapidly changing world, in which our responsibility towards the poor emerges with ever greater clarity and urgency" (p. 69). When Pope Francis took over the leadership of the Church, he came face to face with the terrible challenge of poverty afflicting so much of the world's population, indifference and self-centred isolation in stark contrast to the 'gaze' of Christ (Francis, 2013).

4.2.2 Increase in Poverty

Majority of the respondents cited an increase in poverty levels within Uasin Gishu County as another challenge to the Church in attaining preferential option for the poor.

During the interviews, a county education official did indicate that:

...poverty has literally pushed many families to seek assistance from the Church. The demand for assistance creates a burden that the church cannot manage alone using its initiated programmes... (Personal Communication, County education official, May 16, 2016).

The above comments reiterate those of Ndanyi (2018) who notes that high poverty levels in Uasin Gishu County have pushed many children to the streets. Recently, the government put over 6000 families in the County to cash transfer programme. According to Ndanyi (2018), “The programme is meant to cushion families from effects of poverty and keep children from poor families from going to the streets to beg for survival.”

The study did confirm that majority of the people in Uasin Gishu County rely on rain-fed agriculture for survival. With the ravaging impacts of climate change, crop and livestock production have been adversely affected leaving the conditions of subsistence farmers worse than? Indeed, according to Ouma (2017), in Uasin Gishu County, people living in households mainly engaged in agricultural activities are more likely to be poor, compared to households in manufacturing activities. Ouma also notes that low level of education is the highest contributor to household poverty in the County. A priest interviewed at the diocesan offices did indicate as follows:

...it is true that poverty has taken its toll on majority of the people in this County...this is mainly attributed to the impacts of climate change in the region in which weather patterns are unpredictable and the farmer's calendar disorganized...perhaps the Church needs to rethink, in collaboration with other stakeholders, how to help her people with crop irrigation approach.... (Personal Communication, Parish Priest, May 17, 2016).

Of course, one would argue that this kind of poverty has been meted out on people as a result of human activities that have messed up an otherwise serene environment that God granted man. According to fall of human beings story in Genesis Chapter 3, involuntary poverty in all its forms and manifestations is a result of the fall and its consequences. Jesus Christ himself recognized the fact that the poor will always be

there. However, the recognition of Jesus of this fact does not imply that the poor should be ignored but be cared for (Acts 6, 7).

There are indications that God the Creator never willed any human being to be poor or to be deprived of any basic needs (Genesis 1:22, 28-30). It is imperative to note that the plight of the poor has both direct and indirect impact on the rich, whether in developing countries or developed ones. More often than not, the poor are always treated with a lot of suspicion in the event of losses and other crime-related cases. Due to this attitude towards these lowly placed members of society, the poor rank the lowest in status almost in every society and those in positions of leadership only view them as potential voters and people ready for hire by politicians to commit felony. Beyond this, the participation of the poor in national issues is not guaranteed because their role is always seen as that aimed at serving the interest of the rich. This even compounds the challenge the church faces as far as poverty of the people is concerned, further.

However, the message of Christ to the poor is of the Good News that theirs is the Kingdom of God (Matthew 5:3). According to Pope Francis, to care for the poor is not communism or some other form of political idealism; it is the gospel practice and mandate (O'Connell, 2015). This is all the reason why the Church should be ready all the times to give service to humanity, particularly to the poor. In the entire Old Testament tradition, poverty is regarded as a scandalous condition that should never exist in the land because it might force one to steal and bring disgrace to God (Proverbs 30:9). The New Testament, however, presents hope and encouragement to the poor despite their tribulations for they will receive blessings of a new heaven and a new earth when Jesus' victory is complete.

The willingness of the church to help the poor must be accompanied by resource allocation. Granted, with the increase in poverty, the demand for assistance increases. The church may not have a lot of resources to help everyone; however, for the little resources available, the church uses its wisdom to share. The church can no longer carry out the option for the poor on its own. It must now seek partnerships with the state and other agencies, including other churches, that also seek to alleviate poverty.

4.2.3 Internal Management Challenges

Challenges that were attributed to internal management were also cited by respondents. The study affirmed that indeed, there were internal project management wrangles that threaten collapse of otherwise well intended social justice initiatives. While presenting opinions on this challenge during the in-depth interviews, a project manager at the diocese indicated as follows:

What bedevils this institution is not much about lack of resources but rather internal conflicts due to personal interests...there is inaccurate record keeping and improper reporting of the projects' progress (Personal Communication, Project Manager, May 17, 2016).

The above-mentioned wrangles could stem from an improper understanding of the Christian foundations of the preferential option for the poor. The Church teaches that the pursuit of social justice is not a human project but that of Christ. Therefore, the preferential option for the poor comes from the scripture. In Luke 4:18-19, Jesus Himself explains his mission as to bring good news to the poor, liberty to captives, new sight to the blind and freedom to the downtrodden. Similarly, in the Exodus event, God frees the people from slavery in Egypt, hearing the cry of the poor and oppressed and acting to set them free. The memory of this liberation was to shape the attitude of the Israelites to widows, orphans and strangers, that is, those who were

disadvantaged and vulnerable in their own society (Exod. 22:21-23). Buttressing this response was an opinion presented by a County education officer.

...the Catholic church and particularly the Diocese of Eldoret has always had very useful projects that could sustainably address the issue of poverty among her people. However, disputes among the very people charged with the responsibility of implementing the projects have watered down the objectives of these projects...if only someone could address these issues....(Personal Communication, County Education officer, May 17, 2016).

While providing a solution to the challenge of internal wrangling that subsequently affects project implementation at the diocese, a priest averred as follows:

...it is imperative that wrangles are sorted out as soon as they occur...this way, we protect the project from collapsing...we have had projects collapse and fail to meet the needs of the beneficiaries in this diocese before solely because the concerned authorities did not take upon themselves to harmonize the conflicting parties...the poor whom the projects are meant for suffer innocently...(Personal Communication, Priest, May 18, 2016).

Church leaders must realize that the preferential option for the poor is not meant to portray them as charitable men or benevolents of the poor. There is no need to engage in wrangles if the unified agenda is to help the poor at all cost. The preferential option for the poor is a Christian mandate. It is rooted in God's own character of compassion and love for the weak and downtrodden. This sense of God as being on the side of the poor as their protector and vindicator is also expressed frequently in the prophetic literature and in the psalms, and underpins the Beatitudes. In the parables of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31) and of the rich fool (Lk 12:13-21), the materially poor are at an advantage regarding salvation because they are painfully aware of their need for God whereas wealth can provide a false sense of security. In Matthew's scene of the Great Judgment (25:31-46) there is just one test of whether one is to be saved or not – how one has treated the hungry, thirsty, homeless, naked, sick and imprisoned. Jesus identifies totally with them – what we do to them, we do to him.

This is the mentality with which the church must approach the preferential option for the poor; it is service to God and God's interests, not the humanistic political or social agenda.

4.2.4 Inadequate Resource Mobilization Strategies

This study affirmed that inadequate resource mobilization strategies posed a threat to the quests for the Church to propagate the preferential option for the poor. Stressing the need to have proper resource mobilization strategies in place, an administrator at the diocese argued as follows:

There is a spiritual dimension that must be addressed in our efforts to mobilize resources for our Church. Properly understood, the Biblical concept of Stewardship is God's way of providing resources for the church and church-related institutions. It is critically important for us, more so as children of God to understand that all resources belong to God and we are simply stewards of such resources. It is imperative therefore that we have the right stewards for these resources (Personal Communication, Diocesan administrator, May 17, 2016).

While providing some tips on how well the Church can improve its resource mobilization strategies, an interviewee priest opined:

.... identifying some close friends who have ties with institutions, both locally and overseas, encouraging sale of services and products which meet the needs of the congregations and the local community are some strategies that can be explored.... For strategies to be effectively implemented the availability of resources must be considered. This may be in terms of finances or even human capital. Thus implementation of strategies is strongly influenced by resources (Personal Communication, Priest, Huruma Parish, May 18, 2016).

Sixteen of the respondents affirmed that in order to counter the challenge of inadequate resource mobilization strategies, the church needs to evaluate all the avenues that it can use to generate revenue. They indicated that this could be done in form of establishment of a training/consultancy department whereby these services

can be extended to the community. These respondents also indicated that the church should also engage in income generating projects in such areas as health, education, and real estate among others. This, according to them, will provide a solid financial base that would provide the financial resources required to implement preferential option for the poor strategies in the diocese.

It is important to note that making a preferential option for the poor is a way of following the example of Jesus. It is an *option* in the sense of being a conscious choice to be in solidarity with those who are poor, marginalized or disrespected, and to work for structural change to transform the causes of poverty and marginalization. Our preferential option for the poor is a core commitment – it is not optional. It is *preferential* because through this option we give preference or priority in our love to those who are poor. According to Pope Francis, “every ecological approach needs to incorporate a social perspective which takes into account the fundamental rights of the poor and underprivileged” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, n 93). In other words, every time the church sets aside resources for evangelization, it needs to understand that those resources ought to cater for the physical needs of the poor as well; for such acts as feeding the hungry, housing the destitute and clothing the naked are forms of evangelization as well.

4.2.5 Inadequate Local Involvement

Nearly all respondents decried local involvement of the community in the initiative to help the poor. These respondents indicated that most church initiated projects are not aligned with what the community requires and therefore had no impact at all. What

this means is that these projects would be supported better if they were well thought out from the level of community need as alluded to by one administrator:

The potential that the church has will be raised only when she rises to the level of the community and listens to whatever community members need (Personal Communication, Fourth Administrator, May 16, 2016).

From this remark, it is apparent that church members do not resonate well with some church initiated projects because they feel they were not involved in the original agenda altogether. This alludes to the fact that since the church has her network down to the level of the people by way of Small Christian Communities (SCCs), it needs to do a lot to enhance local involvement if its quest to attend to preferential option for the poor is to be fulfilled. According to Chigozie *et al.* (2017), since ownership by community is not taken into consideration during project inception and implementation stages of church funded projects, community resource mobilization for sustaining such projects becomes adequate thus negatively influencing community participation and their long-term gains from the projects.

As an organization, a Church is first local before it becomes global. Therefore, it sounds unseemly that projects initiated by local churches can lack local acceptance. The only possible explanation for such a scenario would be that the church itself is not tied to the community; it is alienated. Such a church is not an effective evangelizer of the community. One factor that could make church projects unaccepted in local communities is when those projects are driven by forces outside the community, perhaps sponsors from the larger church. Indeed, donor policies have been found to have a high influence in the sustainability of church based projects (Gitonga, 2014). This is typical of many churches in Africa which rely on the churches in Europe and

the west for financial support. This resonates with the arguments of Abraham (2004) that:

Financial assistance from the European and American churches puts the African churches under a tutorship regime which is not only humiliating, but also hinders evangelization in some areas. The funding agencies impose their programmers, their options, and their orientations on the local churches (p. 45).

While Abraham (2004) condemns the patronization of African churches by their counterparts in Europe and America, he does not think that the churches in developed world should not help those in developing countries. Rather, this is a question of attitudes and approaches. To him, there is need “to change the anachronic formulae of assistance by a true evangelical sharing of staff and materials” (Abraham, 2004, p. 45). This implies that church community projects should be driven primarily by the needs of the community; not the conditions of sponsors. A wise church acts as the reconciler of community needs with those of partners. With the need of poor children in the Diocese growing, the believers should be requested to step in so as to support.

4.2.6 Technical language on the Catholic Social Teachings

Some of the respondents noted that Catholic Social Teaching is coded with technical language that is difficult to understand. While this may be true in some instances efforts have been made to simplify it in languages that lay people can comprehend. This makes preferential option for the poor concept readily understood by all. A priest respondent opined thus:

...there is need for the papal messages to be shredded into easily understood components of preferential option for the poor...so that every Christian, with or without theological backgrounds can comprehend what preferential option for the poor is all about and how they can participate in helping the Church attain it.... (Personal Communication, Assistant Parish Priest 3, Holy Ghost Parish, May 17, 2016).

What this means is that preferential option for the poor is a Christian calling for all believers to practise Social Justice. Though the idea may be shrouded in theological or canonical language, it demands that people should be aware of what it means to be fair to all. If this is made in-built in the mind of all believers, it becomes difficult to find excuses that one did not know.

Some of the major church documents that address the preferential option for the poor need to be abridged for the laity. Among these documents are *Octogesima Adveniens* of Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* of Paul VI, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* of John Paul II and *Laudato Si* of Pope Francis. In *Octogesima Adveniens*, Paul VI opines thus: “the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due to the poor and the special situation they have in society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others” (no. 23, 26-29). He nonetheless warns against ideologies that are inconsistent with Christian faith and action.

Similarly, in *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Paul VI presents a holistic vision of salvation embracing both material and transcendent dimensions (n 27, 29). According to him, human liberation and salvation in Jesus Christ are linked but not the same thing: “in order that God’s Kingdom should come it is not enough to establish liberation and to create well-being and development” (*EN* n 35). John Paul II, in his address to CELAM Puebla Conference, equally warned against problematic ways of interpreting and practicing an option for the poor, but he also strongly encouraged the Bishops to actively pursue an authentic Christian approach to the liberation of people from poverty and oppression. He describes an option for the poor as “a special form of

primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the Church bears witness” (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, n 42).

Pope Francis also links the preferential option for the poor with key principles of Catholic Social Teaching. He argues that in the current global context “where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable”, the option represents “a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters... an appreciation of the immense dignity of the poor in the light of our deepest convictions as believers... this option is in fact an ethical imperative essential for effectively attaining the common good” (*Laudato Si*, n 158).

It is important to spend time explaining the above teachings on the preferential option for the poor to the laity. This will help them to live out this option as part of their life of witness.

4.3 Ways of Tackling Challenges facing Diocesan Programmes

In light of the challenges identified that the Church is grappling with in its quest for attaining preferential option for the poor, the researcher sought to identify ways through which such challenges may be addressed. While acknowledging that indeed mechanisms needed to put in place to help the Church in providing solutions to the challenges, an administrator did indicate:

...a Church whose membership does not grow has no future; it will die a natural death. The Church therefore needs dedicated pastoral agents to bring the Good News to people and win disciples for the Church. The Good News preached must aim at transforming the socio-economic and cultural environment of the people to whom it is presented, thus freeing them from all circumstances that impede their own self-actualization and

fulfilment. There is need to invest in growing the human resources needed for consolidating and sustaining a vibrant and self-ministering Church in order to free the congregants from the chains of poverty.... (Personal Communication, Diocesan Administrator 4, May 17, 2016).

The statement affirms that the Church invites its members not to play the part of passive spectators instead be able to look out for opportunities of supporting evangelization through wealth creation. The Gospel of St. Mathew provides examples of how Jesus employed parables to teach the apostles the *Mantra* of good stewardship. This is in line with the recommendations of Katola and Nyabwari (2013) who state thus:

African Christians particularly the church leaders are called upon to become more involved in the welfare and progress of their countries. They are called to point out the evils that leaders allow thriving at the expense of the economy. Only in this way will Africa overcome the problem of poverty which has become synonymous with the continent (p. 1279).

Clearly, Katola and Nyabwiri (2013) regard church involvement in poverty alleviation is the panacea to the rampant poverty in Africa. A priest at the diocese while providing his input on the way forward for the Church averred as follows:

There is a serious need to involve the laity more in how the Church is run. Systematic and on-going formation of the laity will equip them for meaningful participation in the life of the Church. The Church's educational facilities must be geared towards the training and formation of Catholics especially the youth who will in turn support the Church. My heart therefore bleeds when schools being established by the Church are geared towards profit-making and not for evangelization. Evangelization ceases to be the purpose of establishing schools. The Catholic schools do not function as agents for evangelization forming Catholic children; they form children of other faiths because they are the ones who can afford. Are we not shooting ourselves in the foot? I strongly propose the establishment of education endowment fund in every parish and every Diocese to support the needy students in the Church. The various educational institutions belonging to the Church must also use some of the profits to give scholarships to the needy Catholics in these institutions. The fees of the Catholic students should also be reduced. They should not pay the same amount as other students.... (Personal Communication, Priest, Huruma Parish 3, May 17, 2016).

There are various ways through which members of the Church can be part of evangelizing mission. The statement above affirms that the idea of having Catholic managed schools as avenues for formation is welcomed. There are some schools that have supported the parent parish especially at the end of the year through financial contributions. Schools that do very well in some of these parishes continue to attract many children and have helped the church to deal with financial deficiencies whenever approached.

Adding another strategy, another priest opined:

...solidarity amongst parishes is the way to go... In the pursuit of self-reliance, a conscious effort must be made to build and maintain solidarity among parishes to the extent that more endowed parishes will willingly share with less endowed ones. In the same vein endowed Dioceses must support less endowed Dioceses. A lack of solidarity towards the needs of the poor directly affects our relationship with God. Sacred Scripture attests to the example of the Apostles who, in addition to providing for the just distribution of goods to each of the Churches, also organized collections for the poorer communities. Parishes must remain committed to the diocesan cause and support it in whichever way possible. In the same vein Dioceses should remain committed to the course of the Episcopal Conference (Personal Communication, Priest at Majengo Parish, May 17, 2016).

As indicated above the expectation of the Catholic Bishops of Kenya has always been that the church should be self-reliant in all aspects. This may not be the case in some other places where the idea has not taken root. Missionary work in such places meets a lot of challenges. The Diocese at times use little funds send through the office of *Propaganda Fidei* to sort out pressing issues. As indicated too, efforts to find internal loans from neighbouring parishes or institutions are fruitless. On the need to establish a vibrant development fund for the church, an administrator added that:

A development fund in which lay philanthropists and others can contribute into for financing various diocesan programmes needs to be established...fundraising activities like development levies, tithes, Lenten collections, church annual dues etc. are ways of mobilizing funds for

development...this fund can be invested in bonds and other securities and the profits re-invested for a number of years. Monies not immediately needed in parishes can also be so invested until required. Interest accruing should be paid to the respective partners on pro rata basis. This development fund should be allowed to grow and serve as a ready source for financing Church programmes...the funding criteria should be clearly spelt out from the onset.... (Personal Communication, Diocesan Administrator, May 17, 2016).

The comment above takes one to the parables used by Jesus in Mt. 25:14-30 and Lk. 19:11-27. God has given people the responsibility to own and manage property. As long as wealth has not been obtained through dishonesty, theft, monopoly or exploitation (ways that were denounced by prophets) whatever comes out of it is good. The ethic of good stewardship applies not just how productive we deploy God's resources; it also influences what righteous purposes we use them for.

A head of academic department at Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Gaba Campus) was of the opinion that venturing into investment was the sure way of ensuring that the Church remains sustainable in taking care of the poor. She indicated as follows:

...a fund established by the Church can be used for investments such as banking, insurance and estate development. These can take the form of real estate development, income-generating activities like bottled and sachet water production, livestock development, plantations, etc. The Church can undertake these programmes herself or by doing so in partnership with others like-minded institutions...in all cases, investment decisions as well as management of such enterprises have to be done professionally. Where the Church renders services for a fee, it should charge realistic and cost-recovery fees to ensure sustainability.... (Personal Communication, CUEA Manager 1, May 16, 2016).

The statement brings to the fore the Old Testament law that accepts legitimate commerce that is meant to bring profits. The departure of missionaries has left most of the churches not at the 'receiving end' but instead at the 'creativity end'. As

indicated before, there needs to be ways through which the church should finance itself. It can do this through ways enumerated above without necessarily being a bother to members. Acts 18:1-4 presents us with Paul the Apostle who made tents out of his own creativity in order to be self-reliant. St. Paul was very realistic in the way he knew that apart from preaching, he needed to support those who needed him also.

While reinforcing the importance of prudent management of Church's resource as one of the strategies to address the challenges facing the Church, an administrator indicated:

One area that is of relevance to the attainment of self-reliance is the prudent administration or management of the goods of the Church...it is very important that the financial administration of the Church be entrusted to individuals who are competent, honest, firm and trustworthy. Since the administration is founded on a relationship of trust, the Code of Canon Law imposes on administrators the obligation to act with the diligence of a *pater familias* {father of the house, good householder. Failure to put the rightful people to manage the finances of the Church affects negatively the mobilization of resources and, in the long term, the achievement of provision for the poor by the Church...Mismanagement and misappropriation of funds have dire consequences on the finances of the Church. The Diocesan finance officer must therefore possess extensive experience in financial administration. He/she must be knowledgeable in financial affairs, renowned for his honesty and his love for the Church and its apostolate...actually, at least once a year, the accounts of parishes should be audited by the Diocesan finance office and that of the Diocese by competent audit firms...this will help prevent mismanagement of the finance of the Church and any abuse of the trust reposed in the administrators of the goods of the Church (Personal Communication, Cathedral Parish Administrator 3, May 17, 2016).

The statement is an affirmation regarding the need to build up an economically sound church. This kind of church is able to run its affairs without relying on loans. Through the contribution of members can ease the burden engaging in limited projects to help the believers. The hallmark of all these has to be the ability to have competent use of the resources. A staff of the secretariat at the diocese believed that the way to go is embarking on serious entrepreneurship training of the congregants. She asserts that:

...the ability of the parishioners to support the Church largely depends on their income earning capacity...there is the need to build their capacities in business development and management to facilitate the setting up and running of income-generating enterprises they may eventually embark on...collaboration with Government and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) with proper negotiations and lobbying, the Church can obtain more government support for some of its development projects and services...the Church should however avoid duplicating services and programmes merely because it wants to have its own... (Personal Communication, Secretariat staff at the Cathedral offices, May 17, 2016).

There are members of the congregation who are working in different areas. Such can be approached to take part in the mission of the church by bringing in money for projects. “Tent-making “has become a common metaphor for this kind of shared ministry. Money earners are professionals in their own right. They can support professional ministry of preaching through several ways including being leaders in the church. They also feel privileged to be invited as guests whenever there are special collections for church projects.

Wafula (2012) identifies a number of strategies that can help churches, especially in raising funds to successfully undertake community projects to alleviate poverty. One is the formulation of policy guidelines on their faith values, beliefs and principles and communicating the same to their stakeholders. Second is the formation of local forums for sharing information and experiences as the way forward in increasing the churches’ understanding and competence in emergent legal issues. Third, church sponsors should revise their policies on non-eligibility of projects for funding based on faith related factors, including proselytism, since these factors have no direct bearing on project funding. Third, church project overseers or staff must be trained on accountability measures and strategies. Lastly, churches should establish income generating activities to fund community development and poverty alleviation projects.

4.4 Conclusion

For the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret to sustain the implementation of preferential option for the poor, there is the need for it to be self-supporting. For in so doing, it takes a formidable position in the family of the poor. There is the need to mobilize resources especially locally to finance its programmes. The Church has the potential of attaining self-reliance. The effective implementation of the strategy for resource mobilization will require an unremitting effort and cooperation of all relevant stakeholders of the Church-Bishop, priests, religious and the laity. Without their support and commitment, it will be difficult to raise funds that should otherwise make the Diocese self-reliant – what is this conclusion? Here we expect a summary of the issues discussed in the chapter and the conclusion derived from the discussion.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter presents a summary of findings and discussions presented in the previous chapters and on the basis of these make conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research. The purpose of this study was to investigate the activities of the Catholic Church in realizing God's preferential option for poor students in secondary schools in Uasin-Gishu County. Questionnaires and interview schedules were used to collect data from heads of selected institutions, patrons of religious movements in schools, priests, education officers and students. Data was analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively.

5.2 Summary of Findings

This study sought to examine the Roman Catholic Church's activities in realizing the preferential option for the poor in schools in Uasin-Gishu County. Specifically, the study sought to: explain the concept of the preferential option for the poor from a Roman Catholic perspective; find out the activities of the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in the realization of preferential option for poor students in secondary schools; and identify challenges faced by the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret in its effort to realize preferential option for the poor. The study adopted a mixed method cross sectional research design.

The target population comprised pupils in all the 39 Catholic sponsored schools in the Diocese, their head teachers, as well as teachers offering guidance and counselling. A

sample of 351 students, 9 head teachers, and 28 teachers were drawn from those schools. Random sampling was used to select students. Purposive sampling was employed in selecting 24 key informants, 12 from Catholic Diocesan secretariat, 4 priests, 4 officials from the Ministry of Education in the county and 4 members of the management at Catholic University of Eastern Africa (Gaba Campus). The major findings of this study are presented in line with the study objectives.

5.2.1 The Roman Catholic understanding of Preferential Option for the Poor

The study traced the notion of preferential option of the poor to both the Old and New Testaments. This option was given an impetus in the New Testament through the person of Jesus Christ whose messianic activities fulfilled what the prophets of old had foretold. Though the Messiah suffered death on the cross, the teaching of the Catholic Catechism presents this as liberation *per se*.

Chapter two drew an example of how Latin Americans interrogated option for the poor as a character of God. It also brought to the fore an increased urgency of this option by way of making it a reality within the activities of the Church. The Catholic Diocese of Eldoret adopted this from the overall mandate of the Church in the AMECEA region. Biblical notion of God opting to stand on the side of the poor right from the time of the people of Israel influenced Catholic Social teaching a great deal right from the documents that originates from Medellin conference of 1968 to Pope Francis encyclical *Laudato Si* (2013).

The diocese has served the community through establishing schools, hospitals and other amenities as a way of caring for the poor. The study established that the history

of Catholic presence in Uasin-Gishu goes back to early missionary activities of the 18th Century. To date, 73 the Catholic sponsored schools pride itself of various initiatives targeting the poor children who would otherwise abandon studies due to poverty. The second chapter concluded that the Church cannot isolate itself from the community that is required to transform. The next objective looked at the activities carried out towards helping students with difficulties paying school fees. Preferential option for the poor is a teaching that had been received and domesticated as shown not only by the establishment of schools in the diocese but more so the way poor students get support.

5.2.2 Activities in realizing Option for the Poor in Catholic Schools

The study established that the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret runs programmes aimed at helping poor children within its institutions. These activities are divided into two namely; within the Church and others that are school based. The activities taking place within the Church were further split into three; Church-initiated programmes, contributions and periodic appeals by the Bishop either internationally or locally. School activities were twofold namely, management- initiated and student-initiated. This study gathered that some students had a needy kitty put in place for the purpose of assisting poor students. The kitty was utilized for providing fees and other requirements. The study found out that the strength of the Catholic Church to support the poor children has been inspired by the teaching of Church Fathers. Second Vatican Council exhorted that believers should sacrifice in helping these schools to meet their objectives. The study showed that the Church's effort to improve education by sponsoring children from poor backgrounds provides their children with virtue that improves their lives forever.

5.2.3 Challenges faced by the Church in Implementing Preferential Option for the Poor

Though this initiative is noble, it was established that Diocesan programmes continue to experience myriad challenges. Most of the respondents noted that inadequate finances affected implementation of catholic-initiated projects. This led to uncertainty in planning of projects. In places where projects were started without community involvement, plans for expansion encountered outright difficulties. Other challenges that were highlighted by respondents were increase in poverty in the study area, internal management challenges, language on Catholic teachings that may not be easily understood by all despite translation, inadequate resource mobilization strategies and inadequate local involvement.

5.2.4 Possible Ways of Tackling Challenges

Through the study, the respondents pointed out a number of ways that could be instituted to tackle challenges facing the Church in its quest to attain preferential option for the poor. The respondents indicated that the laity need to be involved more in church projects from the onset. Besides, respondents pointed out the need for encouraging solidarity amongst parishes and dioceses. This way, the rich parishes and dioceses will help and uplift the poor ones. Other ways of tackling challenges faced by the Church as suggested by the respondents were: establishing a development fund in which philanthropists can contribute into for financing varied projects in the diocese; venturing into investments; prudent management of the Church's resources and seriously providing entrepreneurial training to the congregants in order to sharpen their business skills.

5.3 Conclusion

The first objective of the study was to gauge the Catholic Church's understanding of the preferential option for the poor. From the study findings, it is evident that the church relies on scriptures, both the Old and New Testament to interpret the meaning of the preferential option. Over the years, the church has regarded the option for the poor as a character of God. Therefore, the Biblical notion of God opting to stand on the side of the poor right from the time of the people of Israel has influenced Catholic Social teaching a great deal.

The second objective of the study sought to identify activities put in place by the church to realize the aspirations of the preferential option for the poor. From the findings, it is evident that the diocese has established several activities in schools and in communities as a way of caring for the poor. There are activities within the Church and others that are school based. Activities within the Church include Church-initiated programmes, contributions and periodic appeals by the Bishop either internationally or locally. School activities include those initiated by management and by students. There is also a needy kitty put in place to assist poor students; the kitty provides mainly fees and educational other requirements.

The third objective of the study was to identify the challenges faced by the church in its bid to realize the aspirations of the preferential option for the poor. From the research results, the main challenge is inadequate finances which impaired the implementation of catholic-initiated projects. As a result, there is uncertainty in planning and rolling out projects. Another challenge has been the implementation of projects without community involvement; here, plans for expansion of projects have

suffered due to lack of local support. Other challenges include the rise in poverty levels, internal management problems, language on Catholic teachings that may not be easily accessible to all despite translation, inadequate resource mobilization strategies and inadequate local involvement.

The last objective sought suggestions on how to deal with the above-mentioned challenges. From the study, some of the solutions proposed are: Greater engagement of the laity in church projects from the onset; the need for solidarity amongst parishes and dioceses so that rich parishes and dioceses can help and uplift the poor ones, and establishment of a development fund to which philanthropists can contribute for financing varied projects in the diocese.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that locally generated resources be used to substitute the need for foreign donors. The study found out that a disconnect exists between the teaching that believers should support the Church and ways through which they should create wealth in their homes. This study recommends a deliberate and clear strategy to excite local donors to support their own people through faith formation and wealth creation. The study too noted that strong governance and accountability mechanism are critical if programmes were to succeed.

It is also recommended that the Diocese should explore ways through which continuity is seen in terms of funding. The study found that some projects that were supported by missionaries experienced great challenges when the same donors leave. The study proposes a sustainable strategy through which new leadership can be able

to sustain Diocesan initiatives whenever they are given an opportunity to serve. An example of such initiatives included support for poor children. This is in line with the Church teaching thus:

Education is, in a very special way, the concern of the Church, not only because the Church must be recognized as a human society capable of imparting education, but especially it has the duty of proclaiming the way of salvation to all, reveal the life of Christ to those who believe, and of assisting them with unremitting care so that they may be able to attain the fullness of that life (*Gravissimum Educationis*, p. 729-730, Vatican II).

The Church plays a great role not only as a teacher but also parents to those who fail to support themselves because of challenges of lack of fees and other basic requirements.

The Catholic Social teaching on preferential option for the poor is structured in a language that appears a bit beyond the scope of the average Christian. Perhaps the Holy See should endeavour to adopt a simpler language that would be more easily comprehensible to every reader. An example of simplicity in writing Church's teaching is that of Pope Francis who used the metaphor of sheep while communicating to shepherds to live with the smell of sheep. This teaching for example brings out the need for more grassroots teachings especially on what all these mean to them as believers. The Catholic Church is for both the sheep and the shepherds. The total commitment of the lay faithful will solidify a common front for the propagation of preferential option for the poor.

The Church has for a very long time struggled to put its teachings into practise rather than just speaking without acting. But it is important to continue stressing that that preferential option for the poor is only partially capable of providing the comprehensive social theory it seeks to develop from theological principles and

natural law. The Catholic Church should dispose Christians from all walks of life to participate actively in its quest to address political and socio-economic problems. Their meaningful suggestions could contribute to the dynamics of preferential option for the poor. The Lay faithful have a lot of resources to bring to the missionary mandate of the Church. This will certainly address the challenge of inadequate finances.

5.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Although this study has examined the concept of preferential option for the poor, it does not clearly distinguish between, various types of poverty. It does not draw nuanced distinctions between, for example, long-term poverty and short-term poverty or between urban poverty and rural poverty; all of which require different approaches and considerations. It also does not fully develop the distinction between the poor in poor countries and the poor in wealthy countries.

As Pope John Paul II noted:

One cannot ignore the fact that the frontiers of wealth and poverty intersect within the societies themselves, whether developed or developing. In fact, just as social inequities down to the level of poverty exist in rich countries, so, in parallel fashion, in the less developed countries one often sees manifestations of selfishness and a flaunting of wealth which is as disconcerting as it is scandalous (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, supra note 34, at 402, No. 14).

Depending on the type of poverty present, the potential approaches to the poor will be different. There is therefore need for a study on preferential option for the poor with a comparative lens between the different types of poverty and between the poor in developing and developed nations. This way, it will be easier to bring the concept of preferential option for the poor into perspective more clearly.

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APPENDICES

Appendix I: Questionnaire for Students

My name is Kimeli Richard, a doctoral student in Moi University. I am undertaking a study entitled, **Catholic Church's Activities in Realizing Preferential Option for the Poor in Selected Catholic Sponsored Schools in Uasin-Gishu? County, Kenya.** You have been identified as one of the respondents for this study. Kindly assist me in filling in this questionnaire. Your responses will be used for purposes of this study only and will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thank you.

SECTION A: Background Information

1. Indicate your gender.
 - Male
 - Female
2. In which form are you?
3. Are your parents alive?
 - One is alive
 - Both are alive
 - Both are deceased
4. What is the occupation of your parent (s)
 - Salaried Self-employed Casual labourer Unemployed
5. Who pays your school fees?
 - The Catholic Church
 - Guardian
 - Parents
 - Well-wishers

SECTION B: Provisions for the Poor

6. Use the following scale to respond to the following statements.

SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; U-Undecided; D-Disagree; SD-Strongly Disagree

Statement	SA	A	U	D	SD
I have never been sent home for lack of school fees					
The Church has activities that supports the poor					
All educational needs are provided for as priority					
The school takes care of guidance / counselling					
Whenever faced with fee problem the school involves my family					
Am well protected and secure while in the school					

7. From your own view, do you think your school has programmes that are meant to help poor students.

Yes No

7a) If yes please explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

7b) If No please explain

.....

.....

.....

.....

8. Indicate how much support you receive from the following:

	So much	Much	Not Much	Nothing
Classmates				
Teacher's contribution				
Home Church				
Other friends				

9.

10. In the last six months, confirm whether people other than parents or guardians have supported you in any way as indicated below:

	School support	Home Church	Classmates	Other friends
Pay fees				
Pocket money				
Purchase stationery				
Other contributions				

11. In your opinion how should the Church support poor children?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Provide scholarships				
Contributions items in kind				
Raise Projects for the needy				
Establish a kitty				

12. Concerning Poor children in your class, do you think the Catholic Church is doing too much, much, little or too little to support them?

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Don't know
Very much				
Much				
Little				
Very little				

SECTION C: Activities done by the Church for Realization of Preferential option for the Poor

13. Are there any activities that the Catholic Church has instituted in this school for helping the poor students?

Yes No

12 a) If yes please list the below

.....

14. Which of the following activities have you been involved as a student in an effort to help the poor?

	Tick where appropriate
Fundraising	
Donating items to the needy	
Contributions in societies/clubs	
Involved in charity walks	

15. Are you satisfied with the adequacy of the activities you have mentioned in 8 above?

Yes ()

No ()

14a) If no, what do you think needs to be done to attend to the poor students sufficiently in this school?

.....

SECTION D: Challenges the Church Faces in Implementing Preferential Option for the Poor

Below are some challenges which you are likely to face when in school. Please tick the one which apply to you using the scale provided.

SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; U-Uncecided; D-Disagree; SD-Strongly Disagree

	SA	A	U	D	SD
Inadequate personal effects					
Limited association with those from rich homes					
Being reminded by others that am poor					
Not joining clubs, associations and societies					
Pity because of my condition					
Fear of being reminded am poor					

16, What do you think needs to be done by the Church to address the challenges that poor students face?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Thank you for your time and effort

Appendix II: Interview Schedule for Key Informants

1. What is your understanding of preferential option for the poor?
2. Besides economic poverty, in what ways can a person be poor?
3. What are some of the indicators of social inequality within your vicinity?
4. Does the school give more preference to the poor than other students? Please provide your answer in details
5. What are some of the activities set aside by the Catholic Church for the purpose of helping poor students in its schools? Please list and explain how they are managed.
6. Catholic Social teachings emphasize charity towards the poor. How does some of the activities identified above help to communicate social justice?
7. Is preferential option for the poor sustainable?
8. How does the Diocese reach out to make preferential option a reality in within its parishes?
9. Are there partners other than members of the Church who offer to support Preferential for the poor? Explain.
10. Detail the challenges that Catholic Diocese of Eldoret face in its quest to assist poor students?
11. In your opinion what should the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret do to sustain preferential option for the poor?

Thank you for your effort

Appendix III: Interview Schedule for Catholic Initiated Programme Managers

1. What is your understanding of preferential option for the poor?
2. What are the challenges encountered in realizing preferential option for the poor in this organisation?
3. What some of the methods used by the Diocese to mobilize resource to run its programmes?
4. Have you received any support from local Christian community so far?
5. What are some of the challenges in accessing funding from both external and internal sources?
6. How do you account for the funding?
7. What can be done to mitigate the shortfall?
8. Is Preferential option for the poor sustainable?
9. How does the Diocese reach out to make preferential option a reality in within its parishes?
10. Are there partners other than members of the Church who offer to support Preferential for the poor? Explain.
11. Detail the challenges that Catholic Diocese of Eldoret face in its quest to assist poor students?
12. In your opinion what should the Catholic Diocese of Eldoret do to sustain preferential option for the poor?

Thank you for your effort

Appendix IV: Consent Form

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this form is to seek your consent to participate in this study. Please read through the provisions beneath in order to make an informed decision on whether you will participate in the study or not.

Thank you.

Proposal Title

Catholic Church's Activities in Realizing Preferential Option for the Poor in Selected Catholic Sponsored Schools in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya

Potential discomforts

The method of data collection for this study involves interviews and filling in questionnaires only. If you are not comfortable responding to research items on any issue, please say so. You are not obliged to respond to any question that you do not want to.

Confidentiality

Please do not provide your name in the questionnaire. The information you provide in this study will be handled with utmost confidentiality and will be used for purposes of this study only.

Compensation

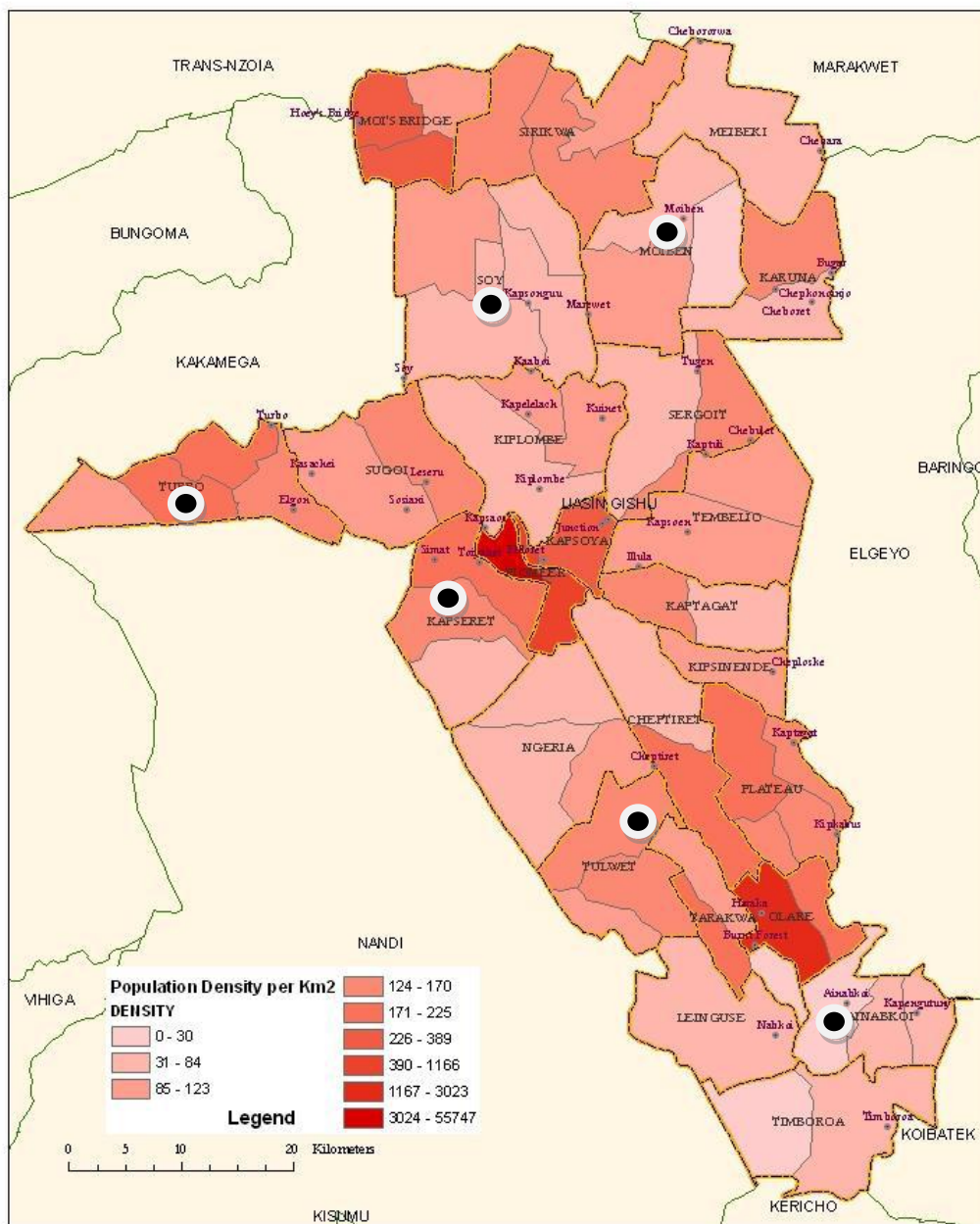
I request you to volunteer your time and expertise. There are no compensation benefits for participating in this study. Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any stage if you so wish.

If you accept to participate in this study, please append your signature below.

Signature of participant..... Date.....

If you have any questions, please contact me on DVC Research and Extension Moi University

Appendix V: Map of Uasin Gishu County

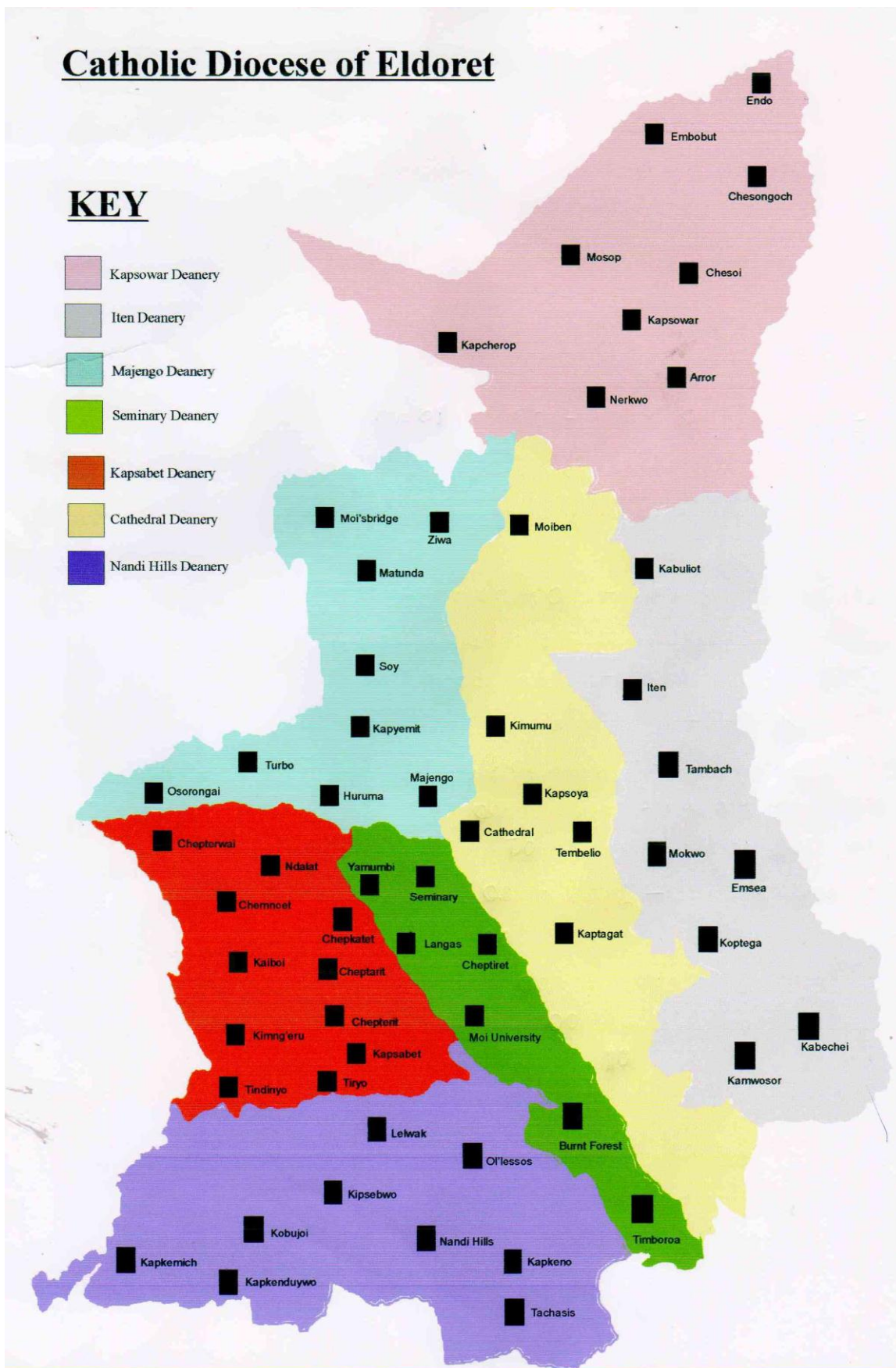


Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) and Society for International Development (SID), 2015

Catholic Diocese of Eldoret

KEY

- Kapsowar Deanery
- Iten Deanery
- Majengo Deanery
- Seminary Deanery
- Kapsabet Deanery
- Cathedral Deanery
- Nandi Hills Deanery



Source: Eldoret Catholic Diocese Media office (2016)

Appendix VI: Research Authorisation



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349, 3310571, 2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245, 318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website: www.nacosti.go.ke
when replying please quote

9th Floor, Utalii House
Uhuru Highway
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No.

Date:

NACOSTI/P/16/46291/12632

26th July, 2016

Richard B. Kimeli
Moi University
P.O. Box 3900-30100
ELDORET.

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Catholic church's activities in realizing preferential option for the poor in roman catholic sponsored schools in Uasin-Gishu County, Kenya,*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Uasin Gishu County** for the period ending **26th July, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Uasin Gishu County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Uasin Gishu County.

The County Director of Education
Uasin Gishu County.

Appendix VII: Research Permit

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MR. RICHARD B KIMELI
of MOI UNIVERSITY, 0-30100
ELDORET, has been permitted to conduct
research in Uasin-Gishu County
on the topic: CATHOLIC CHURCHS
ACTIVITIES IN REALIZING PREFERENTIAL
OPTION FOR THE POOR IN ROMAN
CATHOLIC SPONSORED SCHOOLS IN
UASIN-GISHU COUNTY, KENYA

For the period ending:
26th July, 2017

Richard B Kimeli
Applicant's Signature

Samson B. Mutitu
Director General
National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation

Permit No. : NACOSTI/P/16/46291/12632
Date Of Issue : 26th July, 2016
Fee Received :Ksh 2000

CONDITIONS

- 1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.**
- 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.**
- 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.**
- 5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one(1) soft copy of your final report.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice**


REPUBLIC OF KENYA


NACOSTI
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation

RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT

Serial No. A 10307

CONDITIONS: see back page