

RELIGIOUS STUDIES TEXTBOOK

STUDENT'S BOOK

TTC Year 2

OPTIONS: ECLPE, SME, LE

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FORWARD

Dear Student-teachers,

Rwanda Education Board is honoured to present the Religious Education textbook for Year II for ECLPE, SME and LE option. It was designed based on the revised curriculum to support its implementation. The book will help you not only to acquire basic knowledge concerning beliefs and religions in the world but also to develop of skills and appropriate attitudes and values such as empathy, reflective expression, commitment, fairness, self-control, self-esteem, accountability that help you to take well reasoned and sound decisions in everyday life. Furthermore, this book is important tool for effectively implement the Competence-Based curriculum in Pre-primary and Primary schools. Religious Education textbook equips you with competences to meet teaching profession standards that are: teacher as educator, communicator and connector, guide, organizer and facilitator, innovator, researcher and reflective practitioner.

The textbook is made of five units of various religious beliefs and practices in the world. Each unit starts with a key unit competence which represents abilities you are expecting to have by the end of the unit. This competence will be built progressively throughout the unit. The key unit competence is followed by an introductory activity that you are requested to attempt before any other contact with the content under the unit. The unit is then broken down into different subtopics to help you to go step by step. Each subtopic starts with an activity in which you are requested to engage through research, classroom visit, group discussions, presentations, brainstorming, interpretation of illustrations, etc. The content that follows each subtopic is a summary that gives you clear definitions of concepts, explanations to complement what you have acquired through learning activities. At the end of each unit there are assessment tasks/ activities that give you an opportunity to demonstrate the level of achievement of the key unit competence.

You are therefore encouraged to always work out introductory and learning activities before reading the provided content to develop cooperation, communication, critical thinking, innovation, problem solving, and research skills. You are also advised to do research to enrich information provided under each topic.

Enjoy learning Religious Education using your book!

Dr. NDAYAMBAJE Irénée
Director General of REB

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Joan Murungi,

Head of Curriculum Teaching and Learning Resources Department

TABLE OF CONTENT

FORWORD	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
UNIT 1: HUMAN SALVATION IN GOD'S PLAN	1
1.1. Creation and Fall of Human kind	1
1.1.1. Creation	2
1.1.2. Rebellion and Consequences of Fall.....	6
1.2. The Choice of Israel.....	8
1.2.1. Life of Israel in Egypt.....	9
1.2.2. Vocation of Moses and his Mission	11
1.3. Redemption of Israel from Egyptian captivity	12
1.4. Prophecies on the coming of the Messiah	14
UNIT 2: EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM	22
2.1. Early Christian community	22
2.1.1. Mission of Apostles (Matthew 10: 1-42).....	24
2.1.2. Saint Paul's Conversion and mission (Act 9: 1-19).....	25
2.2. Persecution and Doctrinal issues in Christianity	27
2.2.1. Persecution of Christians	29
2.2.2. Causes of persecution by the Roman Empire	30
2.2.3. Major Christian persecutions under the Roman Empire	31
2.2.4. Christian responses on persecutions	33
2.3. Heresies in the Early Church.....	34
2.4. Christian Pluralism	36
2.5. Birth and expansion of Islam in the World	39
2.6. Evangelization in Rwanda	42

UNIT 3: CARDINAL VIRTUES	45
3.1. Meaning of virtues	45
3.2. Sources of virtues	48
3.2.1. Sources of virtues in Christianity	48
3.2.2. Sources of virtues in Islam	49
3.3. Cardinal virtues	50
3.3.1. Prudence and Justice.....	50
3.3.2. Fortitude and Temperance	51
3.4. Importance of Cardinal virtues	51
UNIT 4: WORSHIP PRACTICES IN ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS	54
4.1. Meaning of Worship	54
4.2. Worship and spiritual activities in Abrahamic Religions	56
4.2.1. Worship in Judaism	56
4.2.2. Worship in Christianity	58
4.3. Important places of worship	61
UNIT 5: PROBLEMS FACED BY RWANDAN FAMILIES	63
5.1. Rwandan cultural values	64
5.2. Rwandan culture versus Modernism	65
5.3. Problems faced by Rwandan families today	67
5.3.1. Causes of family problems	70
5.3.2. Consequences of family problems	70
5.3.3. Solutions and measures to solve and prevent family problems....	71
REFERENCES	74

UNIT 1

HUMAN SALVATION IN GOD'S PLAN

Key Unit competence: Explain God's plan for the salvation of humanity and values related to God's revelation.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 1

Read the following scenario and answer the questions

A ship was about to capsize in Lake Kivu in 2016 after developing a mechanical problem. This happened after it had moved few kilometres from the shore. It needed a fast rescue agent to be contacted to save the lives of the travellers. Fortunately, there was fast communication by the crew to the Rwandan Ports Authority. The concerned authority responded immediately by sending rescue team in two aircrafts who managed to save all the travellers in that ship.

Questions:

1. Suppose you were one of the travellers in that ship, what will be your attitude towards the rescue team?
2. What is the importance of team work in saving those travellers?
3. What moral lessons can you derive from this scenario in connection to God's salvation?

1.1. Creation and Fall of Human kind

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.1

Basing on your understanding and using available resources, discuss the meaning of creation, redemption, the fall and other terms that are used in human salvation history then identify features that show that man is created in God's image.

1.1.1. Creation



The following concepts are used in God's plan of salvation:

Creation

According to the Biblical dictionary, the word creation refers to God's act of bringing into being all that exist; the act of causing to exist; and especially, the act of bringing this world into existence.

Redemption or Salvation

The dictionary defines redemption as: *the action of saving or being saved from sin, error, or evil or the action of regaining or gaining possession of something in exchange for payment, or clearing a debt.*

Redemption is used in both the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, redemption involves deliverance from bondage based on the payment of a price by a redeemer.

In the New Testament, redemption refers to the announcement that Jesus of Nazareth is the fulfillment of Israel's messianic hope and that, in him, the long-awaited redemption has arrived.

- **Sanctification:** it refers to the subject of the working of God in the life of a Christian after salvation, making him more like Christ.
- **Justification** (by faith as taught by Paul): it is the declaration by God that a person who believes in His gift of Christ is released from the guilt and punishment due to his or her sins.

- **Rebellion:** it refers to opposition to one in the authority or going against a given instruction or order. In the Bible, it is demonstrated by Adam and Eve when they ate the forbidden fruit against God's instruction.
- **Exodus:** the deliverance of the 12 tribes of Israel, under the leadership of Moses, from slavery in Egypt, by God, through the miraculous parting of the Red Sea. It is the great salvation event in their history, recorded in the book of Exodus.
- **The fall:** the event of Adam and Eve's self-focused disobedience which broke their relationship with God.

The Bible presents to us two different creation accounts. The accounts are similar in that both describe the creation of animals, plants and human beings. The First account (Genesis 1:1-31) describes how God created the world in an orderly manner from the first to the sixth day as given below:

Day 1 - God created light and separated the light from the darkness, calling light «day» and darkness “night.”

Day 2- God created a wide and open space to separate the waters and called it “sky.”

Day 3 - God created the dry ground and gathered the waters, calling the dry ground «land,» and the gathered waters «seas.» On day three, God also created vegetation (plants and trees).

Day 4 - God created the sun, moon, and the stars to give light to the earth and to govern and separate the day and the night. These would also serve as signs to mark seasons, days, and years.

Day 5 - God created every living creature of the seas and every winged bird, blessing them to multiply and fill the waters and the sky with life.

Day 6 - God created the animals to fill the earth. He also created man and woman (Adam and Eve) in his own image to commune with him. He blessed them and gave them every creature and the whole earth to rule over, care for, and cultivate.

Day 7 - God had finished his work of creation and so he rested on the seventh day, blessing it and making it holy.

The second creation story (Genesis 2:1-25),assumes that the creation of heaven and earth had already taken place. God creates human beings, plants, then animals and later he divides the human into female and male.

In the creation of man and woman, God creates man first then from him he created the woman.

Creation answers fundamental questions on human life, such as, where do we come from? Where are we going? What is our origin? What is our end? Creation is so important for all human life that God in his tenderness wanted to reveal to his people that His is the origin of everything that exists.

Man is the only one created in God's image and likeness among all God's creatures. The Fact that Human beings were created in the image and likeness of God, does not suggest any kind of physical reality. Rather, suggests a deep spiritual reality. It shows that Human being is capable of profound covenant relationship with God. Below are some important dimensions concerning Human beings created in the image and likeness of God.

- God-likeness in man means that, man can begin to understand creation. He is commanded to have dominion over the earth. He understands not only aspects of God's wonderful creation , but also knows how to use that creation to build a better life for himself.
- Human beings are cultural beings. Animals do not create a culture, they operate by instinct but people create cultures. For example, all dogs around the whole world bark the same manner, but human languages have immense diversity. Language is one of the significant aspect of culture; it is a creation of human society. Nature shows us that God also creates enormous variety, for example, every human being is different. Our cultural creativity is a dimension of our God- likeness.
- Human beings know right and wrong. Man is a moral being. The sense of right and wrong is embedded deeply in the conscience. Even if human cultures vary greatly, everywhere there is a deep sense of right and wrong. For example, people everywhere seem to sense that it is not right to kill a fellow human being. This moral consciousness is a very significant aspect of our being created in the image of God.
- Human beings sense that he should grow to become a better person. People in all cultures seem to have an awareness that they are not as good as they should be.

This is the witness of our God- likeness within our conscience. It is a persistent voice in the conscience that we should become better people. Conscience, that voice which calls us to do better, is the stamp of the image of God deep within our spirits.

- Human beings are immortal. We know that when we die, that is not the end of our personal existence. We sense that there is life beyond the grave. This is a significant aspect of our being created in the image of God. God is eternal. In a similar way, God has established that we should not vanish when our bodies die. He also determined that man, whom he has created in his own image and likeness, shall experience eternity and immortality.
- Man has fellowship with other human beings and with God. Communication is very important in the experience of fellowship; it is an evidence that we are personal, and that we long to relate to others in a deep and personal way. God desires likewise to have fellowship with us. Genesis 3:8-9, tells us that God had a blessed fellowship with Adam and Eve. He conversed with them in a cool evening. Animals are not personal, they are not created in God's image. Man is a fellowship creature. He is personal. He is created in the image and likeness of God.
- God created everything for man, but man was in turn created to serve, love God and to offer all creation back to him. This is the central mission of man in this world. Every human life that is conceived in this world has a mission to accomplish in this world. Man is the only creature that God has willed in for its own sake. He is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God's own life.
- Male and female, God created them. Equality and difference are willed by God. When he created man and woman, it is a perfect equality as human persons and a reality which is good. Man and woman are both with one and the same dignity, in the image of God. In their "being man" and "being-woman" they reflect the creator's wisdom and goodness.
- God gave man freedom to choose. God does not impose anything to human beings. He respects our freedom. God gave man and woman all the fruits to eat in the garden of Eden except the the middle of the garden. Man voluntarily chose to disobey God's command.
- Man is a rational being. Man is endowed with mental faculties such as reasoning, memory and because of this, man can make something new. E.g. build a house. Animals on the contrary, cannot make anything new because they have no intellect.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church elaborates that: Creation is the foundation of a saving plan of God.

Creatio is the beginning of the history of salvation that culminates in Christ. It is so important for all human life that God in his tenderness wanted to reveal to his people. Beyond the natural knowledge that every man can have of the Creator, God progressively revealed to Israel the mystery of creation.

Thus creation is inseparable from the Revelation. Creation is revealed as the first step towards the covenant between God and his people.

1.1.2. Rebellion and Consequences of Fall



The Bible narrates how man broke his relationship with God (Genesis 3). Adam and Eve sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit from the tree of knowledge of good and evil. It was Adam and Eve themselves who decided to turn away from God. However, Satan was present in the form of a serpent. Satan tempted them to eat the fruit but was not the central figure in the drama.

They listened to the serpent's temptation and ate the forbidden fruit, thus committing the original sin. It was their personal decision to sin against God.

Sin enters in the world through the misuse of human freedom. All of us participate in the sin of mankind; all of us have misused our freedom. The Bible says, " All like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way..." (Isaiah 53:6) We are personally and collectively responsible.

Below are some of the consequences of the original sin as asserted by Kateregga D. B and Shenk W.D (1980):

- Adam and Eve became ashamed of themselves (Genesis 3:7). Before they turned against God, they were not ashamed in each other's presence. They did not wear clothing. They had a beautiful and shameless relationship with each other. They sewed fig leaves together as aprons to cover themselves.

They also hid behind the bushes in the garden. We also try to cover our true selves with fashionable clothing we wear or smiles we put on our faces. We try to pretend that we are different from what we really are. . Shame, pretence and insincerity are consequences of our sins.

- Adam and Eve were afraid of each other and also of God. Man created in the image of God, man whose greatest joy should be right and joyous fellowship with the Creator, this man is hiding from God His loving heavenly Father.
- Adam and Eve did not accept the blame from what they had done; they made excuses for their sin. God asked Adam, “ Have you eaten of the tree which i commanded you not to eat?” Adam answered, “The woman you gave to be with me gave me fruit of the tree and I ate. Then Eve said, “ The serpent tricked me, and I ate” (Genesis 3:11-13). All of them made excuses for their sin. We are all like that. When we know we have done wrong we blame others and sometimes even blame God for our sins. This common human experience of blaming others for the evil that we do is called psycho-projection.
- The marriage relationship was spoiled. Before Adam and Eve sinned, they had a beautiful relationship, but after sin, they began to hide their true selves from each other. Adam began to dominate his wife, and she submitted to him. (Genesis 3:16) This kind of relationship in marriage is exploitative. The husband rules, and the wife submits. Because of Man’s rebellion, against God, sex became exploitive. Women dress in a way that attract men, on the other hand men are aggressive and try to get women to submit to them in marriage and even outside marriage. Even the experience of childbirth became painful (Genesis 3:16). Children should bring a great blessing in any home, but our sinfulness brings pain into the experience of having children. Children are born through pain; they also cause their parents pain through disobedience and rebellion.
- Work becomes a wearisome labour for mankind (Genesis 3: 17-18). Before man sinned against God, work was a blessing; it was central to the covenant God made with Adam and Eve. They were commanded to work and make the earth better, but after they rebelled against God their relationship to nature became difficult. Man began to exploit nature and the earth groaned under exploitation.

The ground was cursed because of man. Thistles began to grow on the land which man cultivated for his crops.

Man began to struggle and fight for his living.

- Death came into the world. God is the Life-Giver. We experience life when we live in a joyous relationship with God, who is the eternal giver of life. When Adam and Eve turned away from God, they were turning towards death. We die because we live in rebellion against God. The Bible says, ' the wages of sin is death' (Romans 6:23).
- The original sin lead to other serious sins. Cain murdered his brother Abel (Genesis 4: 1-16) because he was jealous of him. History is evidence of the sinfulness of man. History books from every culture and civilization are the stories of wars. History is the story of death: man killing man; destruction of the good things which man has built; the rise and fall of empires; the death of civilization; the death of empires; the death of people through wars and conflict.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.1

1. Read the two creation accounts, in Genesis 1: 1- 31 ; 2: 1-25, then compare and contrast between them.
2. What moral lessons can you learn from creation and rebellion as steps of God's plan of salvation ?

1.2. The Choice of Israel

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2

Read in groups Exodus 1: 8-14; 3: 1-22, then write a short summary on the life of Israelites in Egypt and on the call and mission of Moses.

Abram the son of Terah was told by the Lord to leave his land, his relatives, and his father's house to the land which God was going to show him. The Lord God promised him "a great nation (descendants), blessings, and the land (Canaan), Genesis 12:1-7.

When the famine broke in the land where Abram and his wife Sarai were, they went to Egypt where Sarai was taken over by the King of Egypt because Abram had not declared her as his wife. When Pharaoh came to know that he had taken Abram's wife, he gave her back to Abram and ordered them to leave Egypt with the immediate effect with all their possessions. That is how Abram and his wife left Egypt to the place called Negeb, Genesis 12:10-13:1-11.

Since Sarai was barren and had not given to Abram any child, she advised her husband to take their house-girl called Hagar as the wife and she bore him as son called Ishmael (Genesis 16:1-15) but this was not the promised son from whom the promised great nation would originate (Genesis 17: 19 and Genesis 21:12). God renews His covenant with Abram and He changed Abram's name to "Abraham" and Sarai changed to Sarah, Genesis 17:1-15.

At 100 years, God gave Abraham the promised son and by the names of Isaac, (Genesis). Isaac gave birth to two sons by the names Esau and Jacob from his wife Rebekah, (Genesis 25:25-26).

When Isaac was so old, he lost his sight. When he wanted to bless his older son Esau, his wife Rebekah conspired with her beloved son Jacob and they tricked Isaac who blessed Jacob thinking that he was blessing Esau,(Genesis 27:1-29).

This Jacob became the heir to his father Isaac in place of his elder brother Esau. Jacob fled from his brother to Haran and from there he married Leah and Rachael the daughters of Laban (Genesis 29:1-30). His wives and servants bore twelve sons to Jacob (Genesis 29:31-30:1-25. 35: 16).

Genesis 35: 10-12 shows us how God changes Jacob's name to Israel and the covenant made to Abraham was repeated to Israel. Thus, the descendants of Jacob are known as the descendants of Israel or Israelites, the chosen people of God

It implied a covenant between God and the people of Israel whereby Israel was to be faithful to God and obey his commandments, and God in turn was to protect and bless his faithful people. Being chosen brought to Israel not more privileges but, rather, special obligations to carry out the will of God: "Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you" (Jer. 7:23).

1.2.1. Life of Israel in Egypt



Joseph, one of the twelve sons of Israel, was sold to slave traders by his brothers. Yet with God's help, Joseph rose to power in Egypt. His brothers were driven there by a famine which Joseph had foretold.

Egypt was surviving the famine because of Joseph's wisdom in storing food during the preceding good years.

Joseph, having revealed his identity to his family, forgave his brothers, welcomed them to Egypt, and settled the family in the Egyptian territory of Goshen.

When Jacob's family settled in Egypt, they fared well under Joseph's administration. Joseph's power was immense in Egypt, so the Israelites prospered in that land under his protection, and made it their home.

However, they would be reminded that their people's eventual home was not to be Egypt but rather Canaan, the land God had sworn to give their descendants to possess it.

The introduction to Exodus informs us that the sons of Israel were fruitful and increased greatly and multiplied, and became exceedingly mighty, so that the land was filled with them.

After the death of Joseph, however, the descendants of Jacob were made slaves of the Egyptians as had been foretold (Genesis 15:13-16).

This happened because "a new king arose over Egypt who did not know Joseph" (Exodus 1:8). This Pharaoh not only made Israelites slaves, but also took drastic steps to stem their increase. He decreed that all their male children be slaughtered at birth.

In the midst of harsh treatment, the Israelites remained faithful to God's command to be fruitful and multiply (Genesis 1:28). That entailed bearing children, which in turn depended on the work of midwives. The midwives in this narrative possess a fear of God that led them to disobey the royal order to kill all of the male children born to the Hebrew women (Exodus 1:15-17). The "fear of the Lord" in the Bible refers to a healthy and obedient relationship with the covenant-making God of Israel (Hebrew, *YHWH*). Their "fear of God" was stronger than any fear that Pharaoh of Egypt could put them under.

1.2.2. Vocation of Moses and his Mission



After forty years of shepherd life, Moses speaks with God. This happened at Mount Horeb, when Moses was tending the flock of his father-in-law Jethro. A bush there flaming unburned attracts him, but a miraculous voice forbids his approach and declares the ground so holy that to approach he must remove his shoes.

Mission of Moses

The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob designates Moses to deliver the Hebrews from the Egyptian yoke, and to conduct them into the “land of milk and honey” (Canaan) the region long since promised to the seed of Abraham, the Palestine of later years. Next, God reveals to him His name as “I am who I am”. He then performed two miracles to convince Moses, his staff changed into a snake and his hand got leprosy and was healed immediately. God also appointed Aaron as Moses’ mouthpiece(Exodus 4:16).

Moses then returned back the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, and took his wife and son. He carried in his hand the “rod of God”, a symbol of the fearlessness with which he is to act in performing signs and wonders in the presence of a hardened, threatening Pharaoh.

Aaron was sent by God to go and meet Moses at Mount Horeb Moses shared with him all what God had sent him to do.

When Moses and Aaron asked Pharaoh to allow the Israelites to go for three days to offer sacrifices in the wilderness to their God, the angry Pharaoh not only refused, but he ridiculed their God. Moses divinely uses Aaron’s rod to cause the first plague, but Pharaoh hardened his heart. Moses causes a series of divine manifestations described as ten plagues in number in which he

humiliates the sun and river gods, afflicts man and beast, and displays such unwanted control over the earth and heavens that even the magicians are forced to recognize “the finger of God”. Pharaoh softens at times but never sufficiently to meet the demands of Moses without restrictions. He treasures too highly the Hebrew labour for his public works. A crisis arrives with the last plague. The Israelites, forewarned by Moses, celebrate the first Pasch with their loins girt, their shoes on their feet, and staffs in their hands, ready for rapid escape. Then God carried out his dreadful threat to pass through the land and kill every first-born of man and beast, thereby executing judgment on all the gods of Egypt. Pharaoh resisted no longer. He joins the stricken population in begging the Hebrews to depart.

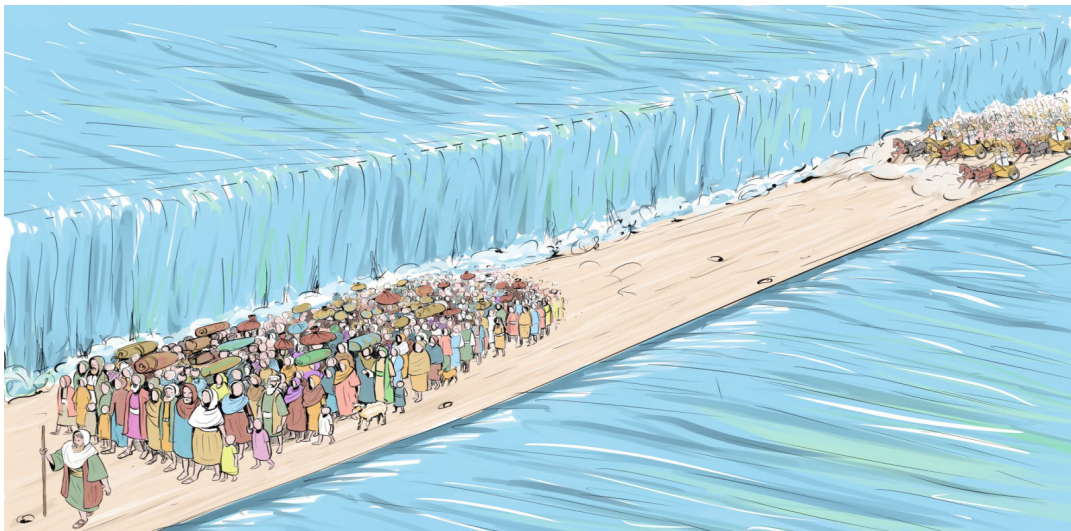
APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.2

Prepare a detailed drama on the vocation and mission of Moses.

1.3. Redemption of Israel from Egyptian captivity

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.3

Using the religious students’ textbook, discuss about the departure of the Israelites from Egypt then share in the class.



The Bible narrates departure of Israelites from Egypt in Exodus 12:31-42. The Israelites had followed the directions given them by God (Exodus 12:21-28); and while the angel of death was passing from house to house among the Egyptians, they were all ready for their journey.

It came to pass, that at midnight the Lord smote all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh that sat on his throne unto the firstborn of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the firstborn of cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he, and all his servants, and all the Egyptians; and there was a great cry in Egypt; for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, "Rise up, from among my people, both you and the children of Israel; and go, serve the Lord, as you have said. Take your flocks and your herds, as you have said."

The people took their dough before it was leavened, their kneading troughs being bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders. And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed from the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: and the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required.

The children of Israel went out of Egypt with their possessions, which did not belong to Pharaoh, for they had never sold them to him. Jacob and his sons took their flocks and cattle with them into Egypt. The children of Israel had become exceedingly numerous, and their flocks and herds had greatly increased.

It came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, but God led the people, through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea. And the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt. And Moses took the bones of Joseph up with him: for he had strictly sworn the children of Israel, saying, "God will surely visit you; and you shall carry up my bones away hence with you."

Liberation of Israel from Egypt was but the foreshadowing in history of the great act of deliverance by which history would be brought to an end. Israelites had an expectation of the Messiah who would be the Redeemer of Israel, and the great Day of the Lord would be the day of redemption.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.3

1. Discuss the personality traits of God, Pharaoh and Moses during the liberation of Israel from Egypt.
2. What moral lessons can you learn from the episode of the redemption of Israel from Egypt?

1.4. Prophecies on the coming of the Messiah

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.4

Using different religious resources like Bibles, textbooks, internet, identify in groups the prophecies in the Old Testament, foretelling the coming of the Messiah.

The Old Testament prophets recognized that the New Covenant would be fulfilled through the Messiah. The first prophecy concerning the coming of the Messiah was made the time when Adam and Eve sinned, God revealed that a child born of a woman would crush the head of evil one (Genesis 3:15). The prophetic development throughout the Old Testament increasingly anticipated that the promises of God to mankind would be fulfilled and completed in the Messiah. He is the one through whom God would create a new and better covenant with mankind (Isaiah 11:1-9). The following are some Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah:

- He would be from King David's family (2 Samuel 7: 12-13);
- He would be born of a Virgin (Isaiah 7:14);
- He would be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5: 2);
- He would be 'God with us' (Isaiah 7:14);
- He would not be accepted by mankind (Isaiah 53:3-9);
- He would suffer and die with the wicked (Psalms 22:16-17);
- He would be buried in a rich man's grave (Isaiah 53: 9);
- He would rise from the dead (Psalms 16: 10);
- He is the anointed one to bring Good News to the afflicted (Isaiah 61: 1-3).

Birth, Mission, death and resurrection of Jesus as the Messiah



Jesus was born around 6 B.C. in Bethlehem. His mother, Mary, was a virgin who was betrothed to Joseph, a carpenter. Christians believe Jesus was born through Immaculate Conception. His lineage can be traced back to the house of David. According to the Gospel of Matthew 2:1, Jesus was born during the reign of Herod the Great, who upon hearing of his birth felt threatened and tried to kill him by ordering all of Bethlehem's male children under age two to be killed. But Joseph was warned by an angel and took Mary and the child to Egypt until Herod's death. After Herod's death, Joseph and his family back and settled in the town of Nazareth, in Galilee.

There is very little written about Jesus' early life. The Gospel of Luke (2:41-52) recounts that at 12years-old, Jesus had accompanied his parents on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and became separated. He was found several days later in a temple, discussing affairs with some of Jerusalem's elders. Throughout the New Testament, there are trace references of Jesus working as a carpenter while a young adult. It is believed that he began his public ministry at age 30 when he was baptized by John the Baptist, who upon seeing Jesus, declared him the Son of God.

After baptism, Jesus went into the Judean desert to fast and meditate for 40 days and nights. The Temptation of Christ is mentioned in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke (known as the Synoptic Gospels). The Devil appeared and tempted Jesus three times. All the three times, Jesus rejected the Devil's temptation and sent him off.

Jesus' Ministry



Jesus returned to Galilee and made trips to neighboring villages. During this time, several people became his disciples and twelve men were chosen as his his Apostles (Luke 6:12-16).

According to the Gospel of John (2:1-11), as Jesus was beginning his ministry, he and his disciples traveled with his mother, Mary, to a wedding at Cana in Galilee. The wedding host had run out of wine and Jesus' mother came to him for help. At first, Jesus refused to intervene, but then he relented and asked a servant to bring him large jars filled with water. He turned the water into a wine of higher quality than any served during the wedding. John's gospel depicts the event as the first sign of Jesus' glory and his disciples' belief in him.

After the wedding, Jesus, his mother Mary and his disciples traveled to Jerusalem for Passover. At the temple, they saw moneychangers and merchants trading. In a rare display of anger, Jesus overturned the tables and, with a whip made of cords, drove them out, declaring that his Father's house is not a house for merchants.

The Synoptic Gospels chronicle Jesus as he traveled through Judea and Galilee, using parables and miracles to explain how the prophecies were being fulfilled and that the kingdom of God was near. As word spread of Jesus' teaching and healing the sick and diseased, more people began to follow him.

As Jesus continued preaching about the kingdom of God, the crowds grew larger and began to proclaim him as the son of David and as the Messiah. The Pharisees heard of this and publicly challenged Jesus, accusing him of having the power of Satan. He defended his actions with a parable, then questioned their logic and told them such thinking denied the power of God, which only further hardened their resolve to work against him.

Near the city of Caesarea Philippi, Jesus talked with his disciples. According to the gospels of Matthew (16:13), Mark (8:27) and Luke (9:18), he asked, "Who do you say that I am?" The question confused them, and only Peter responded, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." Jesus blessed Peter, accepting the titles of "Christ" and the "Son of God," and declared the proclamation was a divine revelation from God. Jesus then proclaimed Peter to be the leader of the church. Jesus then warned his disciples of the Pharisees' conspiracy against him and of his fate to suffer and be killed, only to rise from the dead on the third day.

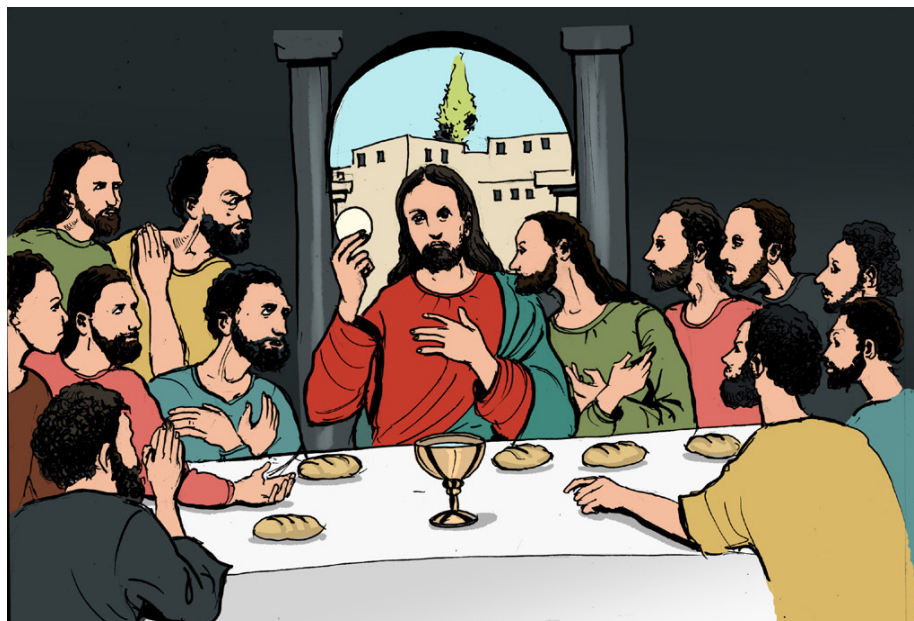
Less than a week later, Jesus took three of his disciples to a high mountain where they could pray alone. According to the Synoptic Gospels, Jesus' face began shining like the sun and his entire body glowed with a white light. Then, the prophets Elijah and Moses appeared, and Jesus talked to them. A bright cloud emerged around them, and a voice said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him."

This event, known as the Transfiguration, is a pivotal moment in Christian theology. It supports the identity of Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, the week before the holiday of Passover, riding on a donkey. Great numbers of people took palm branches and greeted him at the city's entry. They praised him as the Son of David and as the Son of God. The priests and Pharisees, fearful of the growing public excessive praises about Jesus, felt he must be stopped.

All four Gospels describe Jesus' final week in Jerusalem. During this time, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, confronted moneychangers and merchants in the temple, and debated with the high priests who questioned Jesus' authority. He told his disciples about the coming days and that Jerusalem's temple would be destroyed. Meanwhile, the chief priests and elders met with high priest Caiaphas, and set plans in motion to arrest Jesus. One of the disciples, Judas, met with the chief priests and told them how he would deliver Jesus to them

The Last Supper



Jesus and his twelve disciples met for the Passover meal, and he gave them his final words of faith. He also foretold of his betrayal by one of the disciples and privately let Judas know it was he. Jesus told Peter that before a rooster crowed the next morning, he would have denied knowing Jesus three times. At the end of the meal, Jesus instituted the Eucharist, which in the Christian religion, signifies the covenant between God and his people.

After the Last Supper, Jesus and his disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray.

He implored a group of his disciples to pray with him, but they kept falling asleep. Then the time had come. Soldiers and officials appeared, and Judas was with them. He gave Jesus a kiss on the cheek to identify him and the soldiers arrested Jesus. After his arrest, many of the disciples went into hiding. Jesus was taken to the high priest and interrogated. He was hit and spat upon for not responding. Peter denied him three times.

Summary of mission of Jesus

Jesus is the firstborn of God the Father in the spirit and is the only child of God in the flesh. His mortal mother, Mary, carried Him before He was born and raised Him while He was on earth. His mission was decided before the world was created. Jesus's miracles convinced many that He was a prophet, but He was much more than that. When He asked His disciples, "Whom say ye that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matthew 16:15-16).

He was a great teacher

Jesus was the greatest teacher to ever live, and He still teaches us today. At age 12, Jesus was found teaching doctors in the temple (see Luke 2:46). They were astonished at His knowledge. Jesus went on to teach great sermons throughout His life. Jesus taught that all people "might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10). He taught using parables.

Jesus as a Saviour

Jesus lived a perfect life free from sin and provided a perfect example for us to live by. All religious things should be done in His holy name.

Jesus did not need baptism to wash away any sins. But He did to show us that baptism is required by all "to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:15).

Jesus is also the perfect example of love. In His life on earth He cared for the poor, He healed lepers (see Luke 17:12-19), and He never turned away little children (see Matthew 19:13-14). His love is endless and available to all who need it. Jesus taught that we must forgive. Even as He died on the cross, Jesus forgave the people who killed Him

The Hebrew name for Jesus means "Savior." Jesus fulfilled His role as Savior through His death and Resurrection. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" John 3:16

The Crucifixion and death



The next day, Jesus was taken to the high court where he was mocked, beaten and condemned for claiming to be the Son of God. He was brought before Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor of Judea. The priests accused Jesus of claiming to be the king of the Jews and asked that he be condemned to death. At first Pilate tried to pass Jesus off to King Herod, but he was brought back, and Pilate told the Jewish priests he could find no fault with Jesus. The priests reminded him that anyone who claimed to be a king speaks against Caesar. Pilate publicly washed his hands of responsibility, yet ordered the crucifixion in response to the demands of the crowd. The Roman soldiers whipped and beat Jesus, placed a crown of thorns on his head and then led him off to Mount Calvary.

The Gospels describe various events that occurred during the last three hours of his life, including the taunting by the soldiers and the crowd, Jesus' agony and outbursts, and his final words.

While Jesus was on the cross, the sky darkened, and immediately upon his death, an earthquake erupted, tearing the temple's curtain from top to bottom.

A soldier confirmed his death by sticking a spear into his side, which produced only water. He was taken down from the cross and buried in a nearby tomb.

Resurrection of Jesus Christ



Three days after his death, Jesus' tomb was found empty. He had risen from the dead and appeared first to Mary Magdalene. She was sent by Jesus to inform the disciples, who were in hiding, and later, Jesus appeared to them and told them not to be afraid. After 40 days, Jesus led his disciples to Mount Olivet, east of Jerusalem. Jesus spoke his final words to them, saying that they would receive the power of the Holy Spirit, before he was taken upward on a cloud and ascended into heaven.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.4

Discuss the following questions in groups:

1. From the life and teachings of Jesus as discussed above, identify in summary the main events in the life of Jesus as a Messiah.
2. Discuss how Jesus qualifies to be the promised Messiah.
3. Write down the moral lessons you can draw from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

1.5 END UNIT ASSESSMENT 1

1. Define the terms; creation, redemption and the fall as used in God's plan of salvation.
2. Compare and contrast between the two creation accounts in Genesis.
3. Identify the consequences of the original sin.
4. Write a short summary about the vocation and mission of Moses.
5. Analyse how the prophecies about the coming of the Messiah in the Old Testament were fulfilled in the New Testament.
6. What lessons can you draw from the life and teachings of Jesus Christ?

UNIT 2

EXPANSION OF CHRISTIANITY AND ISLAM

Key Unit competence: Describe the growth and expansion of Christianity and Islam teachings, and their contribution to social life.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 2

1. Based on the knowledge acquired from year one Religious Education, write a short summary on the possible answers about the historical background of Christianity and Islam.

2.1. Early Christian community

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.1

Read in Acts of the Apostles, 2: 42-47 and 4: 32-35, identify the characteristics of the first Christian Community.

Characteristics of the Early Christian Church

The first Christian church also called the Early/Primitive/First Community of believers in Christ during the centuries immediately after the resurrection of Christ and Pentecost. The Bible narrates both the spiritual life and the social life of the First Christian community.

The characteristics of the spiritual life (Acts 2: 42-47)

1. They devoted themselves to the apostles teaching

The early church was founded on the testimony of the apostles. They listened as Peter, James and John and others repeated to them the teachings of Jesus. They heard these great leaders expounding upon those teachings and explaining the meaning of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. The apostles also taught the early church the meaning of the Old Testament and how Jesus fulfilled its promises and prophecies.

2. They were devoted to fellowship

The Greek word used in Acts 2:42 for “fellowship” is *Koinonia*. A helpful way to translate this word is, “Christian community”. In other words, these first Christians devoted themselves to *each other*. In fact, this was their way of living out in a practical what Jesus said in John 13:24-25.

3. They were devoted to the “breaking of bread”

This phrase, “the breaking of bread” refers to the Celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Paul uses it in 1 Corinthians to describe Holy Communion, and the language parallels that of the gospels as well. The Lord’s Supper tells this basic message of Christianity every time it is celebrated. Their devotion to the Lord’s Supper was evidence of an ongoing hunger and thirst for more of God in their lives. The central meaning of the Lord’s Supper is the Presence of Jesus. More explicitly the Great love of Jesus who gave his life for those he loved.

4. They were devoted to prayer

Prayer, both together and alone, was central to the experience of the first Christian community. They met every day in the temple for prayer.

Characteristics of the social life of Early/First Christian Church (Acts 4: 32-37)

5. They had all things in common (Acts 4:32)

The first Christians lived in community, and had all things in common. They sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, according to their needs. Their common ownership was not imposed on them by Church leadership, but had its roots in their unity of heart and mind. These Christian brothers and sisters loved each other, and so they supported each other.

They had all grown up in a society where the family was the social unit on which they could rely when they experienced tough times.

6. Great grace was on them all (Acts 4:33)

In the New Testament, *charisma* most often refers to the grace or the undeserved favor of God. That is certainly part of what is meant here. God showered these new Christians with blessings.

However, the word *charisma* can also refer to the loveliness of harmonious relationships, and that is also involved here. These new Christians were living as brothers and sisters, as a family. They are taking care of each other and making personal sacrifices to help each other considering the well-being of Christian brothers and sisters above their own personal welfare in many cases.

7. There was none among them who lacked (Acts 4:34-35)

The miracle that these early Christians experienced is not one of God opening the heavens and filling their purses with money. It is a miracle of community of brotherhood and sisterhood of one minded people sharing both wealth and poverty so that none might be truly poor. It is a miracle of generosity human generosity inspired by divine generosity. It is a miracle of *agape*, love that focuses on the needs of the other person rather than one's own needs.

As noted above, this does not mean that every Christian sold every piece of real estate to contribute to the common good and wellbeing of everyone. Some Christians probably did sell everything but Peter's comments to Ananias and Sapphira make it clear that Christians retain the right to own property. What is celebrated here is not total communal living in the sense that every possession belongs equally to every person, but compassionate living within community.

2.1.1. Mission of Apostles (Matthew 10: 1-42)

The Twelve Apostles

Apostles were the twelve men chosen and sent by Jesus. Disciples are all followers or believers in Jesus Christ. These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, also known as Peter, and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John; Philip and Bartholomew; Thomas and Matthew the tax-collector; James son of Alphaeus, and Thaddeus; Simon the Canaanean, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed him.

The Mission of the Twelve Apostles

Jesus now formally summons and names the twelve disciples and sends them out in mission with authority to preach the good news of the kingdom and to heal every disease and sickness.

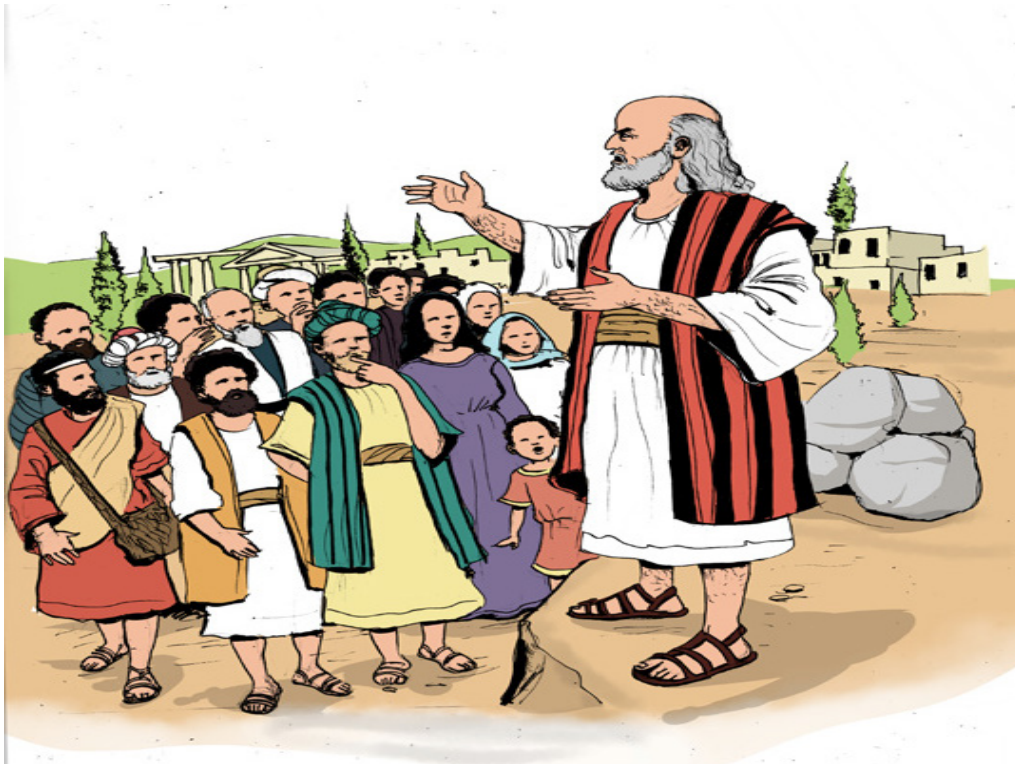
He accompanies their disciples' instruction with warnings about the need for endurance and the promise of reward for those who take up the cross and follow him.

According to the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus summons the twelve disciples and formally hands over to them his same authority to preach the Good News of the kingdom and to heal "every" disease (Matthew 10:1,7-8), but not, telling, the authority to teach! That will come only at the end of the Gospel after the resurrection (Matthew 28:18-20).

In so doing, key themes of discipleship and mission are noted. The call for the decision to acknowledge the Son of Man will bring not peace but a sword (Matthew 10:34). Worthy discipleship will mean to take up the cross and discover what it means that those who lose their lives for Jesus' sake will find

it (Matthew 10:37-39). Finally, disciples are given to realize that whoever welcomes them is actually welcoming the Messiah and, in turn, “the one who sent me.” The Messiah’s identity is constituted in the mission of his disciples. So it is significant that such welcoming is linked here to the theme of righteousness. Three times righteousness is specifically mentioned in connection with the disciple mission (Matthew 10:41) and even a cup of water for these “little ones” in the name of a disciple merits reward (Matthew 10:42).

2.1.2. Saint Paul’s Conversion and mission (Act 9: 1-19)



St. Paul the Apostle, original name Saul of Tarsus, was born 4 BCE (before christian era or before common era), Tarsus in Cilicia (now in Turkey). He was a pharisee who had come to Jerusalem as a student of the famous Rabbi Gamaliel.

Saul was a strong Judaism adherent and persecuted the primitive Church. He was the one who plotted the martyrdom of Saint Stephen, the first martyr (Acts 8:1a). Paul died during the first Church persecution under Roman empire (under Nero 62-64, in Rome).

One day while on his mission to Damascus to persecute Christians, he experienced a more dramatic conversion after meeting with the Risen Christ. He later became one of the leaders of the first generation of Christians, and he is often considered to be the most important person after Jesus in the history of Christianity.

After his conversion, Saul (renamed Paul) became passionate in spreading Christianity as he was persecuting Christians before his conversion. Paul describes his own conversion as a sudden reception of grace in contrast to the gradual transformation over time because as he suddenly was in the midst of sin, his heart was perfectly moved by God.

Paul briefly refers to his own conversion's experience in three places in two of his letters. In first Corinthians 9:1, Paul asks a rhetoric question,

“Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?” In first Corinthians 15:8-9, he relates, “last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unfit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God.” he writes in Galatians 1:11-12 that “The gospel preached by me is not of human origin, for I did not receive it from a human being, nor was I taught it, but it came through a revelation of Jesus Christ.” He adds in Galatians 1:15-16, “When He, who had set me apart before I was born, and had called me through his grace, was pleased to reveal his Son to me, in order that I might preach him among the gentiles.” In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Luke the Evangelist's description of Paul's conversion is the most extensive because he was Paul's companion in his last three missionary journeys. Paul's conversion is first recorded in Acts 9:1-28, secondly to the Jews of Jerusalem in Acts 22:1-21, and finally to King Agrippa at Caesarea (Acts 26:4-23).

In the first encounter between Jesus and Saul, we notice that Jesus identifies himself with his Church! In Damascus, Jesus appeared to Ananias and told him that Saul is His own chosen instrument to carry His Name before gentiles, kings, and Israelites” (Acts 9:15). Here the mission of Paul is clearly defined by Jesus himself that, he called Paul to be an Apostle of the Gentile world.

Ananias then laid his hands on Saul, restored his vision, and baptized him. Saul began proclaiming in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 9:20) and that he is the Christ (Acts 9:22). Saul is called Paul on his first missionary journey to Cyprus (Acts 13:9). However, Paul was disapproved by Christian Jews and remained throughout his career a controversial figure. He gained recognition for the converts of the Gentile mission by the Christian community in Jerusalem. He saw clearly that the coming of the Messiah was to bring salvation to all humanity not only the Jews. He preached the message of repentance that called all humanity to repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds (Acts 26:20). His letters are an eye opener that should move people from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, to receive forgiveness of sins, and thus attain salvation.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.1

1. Identify some aspects in the Early Church that are still practised in the current Church.
2. What lessons can you draw from the conversion of St. Paul?

2.2. Persecution and Doctrinal issues in Christianity

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2

Brainstorm some fundamental beliefs and teachings of Christianity

Christianity is a monotheistic religion, meaning all believing in one God, Generally, Christians believe that there is only one God (Holy Trinity).

The fundamental beliefs and teachings of Christianity are summarized in a creed (Credo, "I believe") which are statements of beliefs. These beliefs originated from the testimonies of the Apostles, i.e. the men who lived with Jesus, directly experienced his resurrection and were associated by him to his revealing and saving mission.

There are two main Christian Creeds used by Christian churches. They include the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed. The Apostles' Creed was an early statement of Christian doctrine and is still in widespread use. The Nicene Creed is more definitive and was first formulated by the First Council of Nicaea (325 AD: Anno Domini) and then subsequently refined by the second Ecumenical Council in 381 AD. The Nicene Creed is the most widely accepted in mainstream churches and is a concise statement of fundamental Christian belief.

Apostles' Creed

This appears to have been formulated in order to refute Gnosticism (the belief that matter is evil and that the revealed knowledge of God rather than faith is a means to attain redemption for the spiritual element in man). It is shorter than the Nicene Creed and it is also the oldest fashion of Creed. The Creed therefore emphasizes the suffering, death and resurrection of Christ for the forgiveness of sin.

Today the Apostles' Creed is used by many Western churches, including the Anglican Communion, Methodists, Congregationalists and some Baptists, but

it is not used by the Eastern Orthodox Church. It is sometimes used during the Sacrament of baptism. It is summarized as follows:

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

Amen.

Nicene Creed

The Nicene Creed is very explicit on three Persons of the Holy Trinity. In particular it uses the statement “God from God” to describe Christ. This countered the Arian controversy that declared that Jesus Christ is not truly divine in the sense that He is created.

The Creed is widely accepted by the Eastern Orthodox Church, Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Calvinists, and almost all branches of Protestantism. Many groups that do not have a tradition of using it in their services nevertheless are committed to the doctrines it teaches. The Nicene creed is summarized as follows:

I believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

I believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father.
Through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven: by the power of the Holy Spirit, he became incarnate from the Virgin Mary, and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son. With the Father and the Son he is worshiped and glorified. He has spoken through the Prophets.

I believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.

Amen.

2.2.1. Persecution of Christians

Persecution refers to the systematic mistreatment of an individual or group by another individual or group, in a cruel and unfair manner. The most common forms of persecution are religious, ethnic and political persecutions.

Persecution of Christians can be traced historically from the time of Jesus in the first century to the present time. The accounts of Christian persecution are found in the New Testament of the Christian Bible. According to the book of Acts, one of the first Christian martyrs was Stephen, a member of the Early Church who was brought before the Sanhedrin, the assembly of Jewish religious leaders, on charges of blasphemy. Stephen was subsequently stoned; touching off a mass persecution of Christians led by Saul of Tarsus. When Paul was converted to Christian faith, he too suffered various imprisonments and beatings, some of which he recounted in New Testament writings.

Early Christians were persecuted for their faith at the hands of both Jews from whose Christianity arose and the Roman Empire which controlled much of the land where Christianity was born. Early in the fourth century, the religion was legalized by the Edict of Milan (313 AD:Anno Domini), and it eventually became the State church of the Roman Empire, through Emperor Constantine.

2.2.2. Causes of persecution by the Roman Empire

- The Roman state considered Christianity in its early stages just another sect of Judaism, and Judaism was a legal religion. Christianity was considered as illegal religion, it became an illegal religion and was considered a threat to the Roman Empire. Christians spoke of Christ as their ruler, and as the king of his kingdom. The Romans held Christians guilty of treason.
- The Roman government acknowledged the emperor as the highest god and demanded that all religions include worship of him. Christians refused to acknowledge any king but Christ, and would not offer any sacrifice to Caesar. Consequently, they were considered disloyal to the state.
- Christians held their meetings early in the morning or late at night, and Roman authorities felt this could only be done for reasons of conspiracy.
- The Roman pagan religions were mechanical and external with altars, idols, priests, processions, rites, and practices that people could see. The Christians had no idols, and their worship was spiritual and internal. Because Christians refused to recognize the pagan gods and idols, they were called atheists.
- The early Christians partook regularly of communion, and spoke of eating and drinking Christ's body and blood in a symbolic sense. But this was misunderstood by Roman authorities to mean that Christians were guilty of cannibalism. The close fellowship of Christians and the holy kiss were misconceived as incest and immorality.
- Christians separated themselves from pagan gatherings at temples, theaters and places of recreation. This nonconformity to accept social patterns brought upon them false accusations against the empire and despite of their virtuous living, Christians were a threat to society and the state.
- Christians were also made the scapegoats for great calamities, such as famine, earthquakes and pestilence, which were sometimes regarded as punishment meted out because people had forsaken the Graeco-Roman gods.

2.2.3. Major Christian persecutions under the Roman Empire



a. Persecution under Nero (54-68 AD:Anno Domini)

This was the first organized Roman persecution of Christians which was ordered by Emperor Nero in 64 A.D. Nero blamed Christians for the Great Fire of Rome, although it is speculated by some historians that Nero was responsible for setting the fire in the first place. It was during this time that the Apostle Peter, according to tradition, was crucified upside down because he felt himself not worthy to die exactly like his Master. Also Paul, as a Roman citizen, was beheaded under Nero's reign. For the burning of Rome, Christians were arrested and terribly persecuted.

Many Christians were crucified. Some were sewn up in the skins of wild beasts; then big dogs were let loose on them, and they were torn to pieces. Women were tied to mad bulls and dragged to death. After nightfall Christians were burned at the stake in Nero's garden. The Roman people who hated the Christians were free to come into the garden, and Nero drove around in his chariot wickedly enjoying the horrible scene.

b. Persecution under Domitian (68-96 AD:Anno Domini)

This persecution appeared because Jews had refused to pay taxes to the state. Rome still considered Christianity which was considered as part of Judaism, so persecutors punished Jews and Christians alike. Some Christians were martyred, some dispossessed of property, and others were banished. It was at this time that the apostle John was exiled to the Isle of Patmos, where he received the vision of the Revelation.

c. Persecution under Trajan (98-117 AD:Anno Domini)

Until this time no official policy was set by the state on the handling of Christians. Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, wrote the Emperor Trajan his policy on state discipline for Christians. Pliny said that when someone informed upon a Christian, he brought the Christian before his tribunal and asked him if he were a Christian. If he still admitted the charge after three such questions, he was sentenced to death. In his answer Trajan assured Pliny that he was following the correct procedure. No Christians were to be sought out, but if someone reported that a certain individual was a Christian, the Christian was to be punished unless he denounced and worshiped the gods of the Romans. This became official procedure, and governors throughout the empire followed the principles Trajan had approved. It was during this time (about A.D. 115) that Ignatius, bishop of Antioch, was thrown to the wild beasts in the Colosseum.

d. Persecutions under Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD:Anno Domini)

Marcus Aurelius had no love in his heart for Christians. He thought all this martyrdom by Christians was silly nonsense. He was the first to introduce a spy system against Christians, and promised that the property of Christians would be given to their accusers. With such rewards for the informers, many Christians were turned over to authorities and persecution became almost universal. This persecution was cruel. What happened to the Church in Lyons and Vienna in southern Gaul (modern France) can give us some idea of the severity of the persecution. By the most horrible tortures, they sought to make the Christians deny their faith. When at last the persecutors became convinced that no amount of torture would make the Christians deny their faith, they beheaded those Christians who were Roman citizens, and the others they threw to the wild beasts. The bodies of the martyrs were burned, and the ashes were thrown into the river Rhone. It was during this time that Justin Martyr (166 AD:Anno Domini) was scourged and beheaded in Rome with six other Christians.

e. Persecution under Decius (249-251 AD:Anno Domini):

Decius took the imperial throne about the time Rome was reaching the end of the first millennium of her history, and at a time when the Empire was facing natural calamities, and internal and external attacks upon its stability. Christianity, because of its rapid growth, was picked out as the major cause of all the Empire's troubles. Decius issued an edict in A.D. 250 that demanded an annual offering of sacrifice on the Roman altars to the gods and the genius of the emperor.

Those who offered the sacrifice were given a certificate. Christians were demanded to give up their faith or suffer loss of property, torture and death. The persecution was very cruel and empire-wide. Multitudes perished. During this time, many also denied the Christian Faith, but many true Christians persevered to the end. Fortunately for the church, the persecution lasted only several years.

f. Persecution under Valerian (253-260 AD:Anno Domini):

Valerian was more sympathetic to Christians at first but later he continued the persecution.

Many saints and important men lost their lives for Christ during this time. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, was beheaded as a Christian martyr (258 AD:Anno Domini).

g. Persecution under Diocletian (303-305 AD:Anno Domini):

Diocletian was a strong military leader who came to the imperial throne at the end of a century that was marked by political disorder in the Roman Empire. He decided that only a strong monarchy could save the Empire and its classical culture. A strong monarchy offered the only alternative to chaos. In such an empire there was no place for the toleration of faith hostile to the state religion. The first edict in A.D. 303 ordered the cessation of meetings of Christians, the destruction of church buildings, the imprisonment of bishops, elders and deacons, the torture of all who persisted in their testimony to Christ, and the destruction of all Scriptures by fire.

The second edict ordered Christians to sacrifice to pagan gods upon pain of death if they refused to do so. As a result, prisons became so crowded with Christian leaders and their congregations that there was not even enough room for criminals. Christians were punished by loss of property, exile, imprisonment, or execution by the sword or wild beasts. Some were sent to the Roman labor camp where they were worked to death in the mines or starved to death. It was the most violent persecution of all persecutions that Christians underwent under Roman Empire.

2.2.4. Christian responses on persecutions

1. In the face of persecution, many Christians chose to die than to renounce their faith in Jesus Christ. Those who did so came to be called martyrs, which means, witnesses of faith in Jesus through the shedding of their own blood. "Tertulian said that the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church." Indeed, it was through persecution that the Christianity spread and faith in Jesus was strengthened.
2. A second response of the church to Roman persecution was that some Bishops and leaders(were called apologist) wrote to write apologies, or defenses, of the Christian faith. This was done in the 2nd century AD. The Apologists' primary goal was to defend Christianity against pagan accusations and misconceptions in an effort to stop the persecution. Though this did not help much to stop the persecution.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.2

1. Identify the challenges that Christians face today.
2. What lessons can you learn from the persecution of the Early Christian Church in the first three centuries?

2.3. Heresies in the Early Church

A heresy is a teaching that deviates from some standard, official belief. It can also be defined as formal denial or doubt of a core doctrine of the Christian faith. The heresies were mainly corrected through Church Councils which were convoked by both the Pope and the Roman emperor ruling at any given time. A Church council refers to a group of bishops, cardinals, theologians and Pope who gather to discuss and make decisions about major issues in the church.

Major Heresies in the Christianity

a. Marcionism (2nd Century)

This heresy was named after Marcion, 85-160 AD:Anno Domini). He explained that the wrathful and war-like God of the Old Testament is a different god from the just and forgiving God of the New Testament, who, on discovering human suffering, appeared as Jesus Christ to bring salvation; the Old Testament is irrelevant; in the New Testament only parts of Luke and parts of the Pauline letters are authentic.

This is partially heresy because; it denied the unity of God, it misunderstands the humanity of Christ and it rejected accepted scriptures. The council of Nicene Creed (325 AD:Anno Domini) officially rejected this heresy.

b. Manichaeism (3rd century)

This was named after Mani, (216-276 AD Anno Domini). Mani explained that the world is caught in a conflict between the forces of good and evil, led by two gods. A conflict which has existed since the beginning of time. This is partially heretical because: it postulates more than one god. In the beginning there was only God and evil therefore could have entered the world only afterward.

Manichaeism was not really a Christian sect, and its doctrines therefore should be classified as paganism rather than heresy. But it was an important force in the third and fourth centuries when it was illegal to apply such a teaching, and competed with Christianity, with which some people tried to combine it.

c. Arianism (4th century)

This was named after Arius, 256-336 AD: Anno Domini). Arius taught that Jesus was different from God and was only a human being. This is heretical because: Christ was truly divine, and truly human, and, being wholly divine, could in no way be only a human being. This heresy was condemned at the Second Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 381)

d. Nestorianism (5th Century)

This is named after Nestorius, (386–451 AD:Anno Domini). He taught that Christ had two natures, human (Jesus) and divine (Christ), quite distinct from each other, but united in the historical Jesus Christ. Thus Mary was the mother of Jesus, his human nature, but was not the “Mother of God,” since God was his divine nature.

This heresy was condemned at the Third Ecumenical Council (Council of Ephesus, 431). This is heretical in part because: Christ was both wholly human and truly divine, and these two natures were united in a single entity: the Christ. To speak of them being distinct implies that he was not wholly either of them. Then the council also clarified that Mary was Mother of God, she is ‘*Theotokos*’ meaning the God’s bearer.

e. Pelagianism (5th century)

This heresy was named after Pelagius, (420 – 440AD: Anno Domini). Pelagius taught that, the sin of Adam affected only Adam, not all humanity. Every individual is born innocent, but is free to choose to perform good or evil deeds. Thus, choosing to behave virtuously will earn one spiritual salvation. This is heretical because: First, people are saved only by God’s grace through their faith in Christ, not by the works they perform, which may have many motivations, including bad ones. Secondly, it is illogical so speak of complete free will, since even free will is a gift of God, and therefore contingent upon God’s agency. Thirdly, it denies the contamination of all humans by original sin and allows for the possibility of sinless humans without the need of salvation through Christ, or of sinful humans able to gain merit on their own without reference to Christ.

f. Monophysitism (5th century)

This heresy taught that ,Christ had a single, divine nature, not separate human and divine natures. This is heretical because: Christ was both wholly human and therefore suffered as we suffer, and also wholly divine, and therefore able to forgive sins and redeem us. To argue that he has only a divine nature is to deny that he had a human nature able to suffer as a human suffers.

It was condemned twice, first time at the Fourth Ecumenical Council (Chalcedon, 451) and second time, at the Third Council of Constantinople (680).

2.4. Christian Pluralism

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.4

1. Brainstorm the major Christian groups that are found in the world.
2. Find out the causes of the rise of the different Christian groups.

Pluralism refers to a social organization in which diversity of religious or racial or cultural groups is tolerated. Christianity is comprised of various religious groups and subgroups within itself. These vary according to differences in beliefs, teachings and practices. However, the history of Christianity allows to distinguish three main Christian branches: The Catholicism, the Orthodoxy and the Protestantism.

- **Catholicism**

The Roman Catholic Church is a community of believers who have been incorporated into Christ through Baptism. It has a twofold dimension: the spiritual one since it has Jesus Christ as its Head and the visible one since it is composed of men and women. The latter consider themselves as the People of God; they share the same faith in Jesus Christ and they are governed by the successors of Peter (Popes) in communion with bishops. The Roman Catholic Church is in communion with the Eastern-rite Catholic churches such as Armenian, Byzantine, Coptic, Ethiopian, etc.

The fundamental catholic beliefs are contained in the Apostle's Creed (See the previous lesson) and the Church councils (e.g.: Nicea, Trent, Vatican II, etc.). These beliefs imply liturgical actions, doctrines, and ethics which constitute together the Catholic Tradition. Catholic Tradition may be defined as the Word of God, given to the Apostles by Christ and the Holy Spirit, and handed down to their successors through the Church. Scripture and Apostolic or Sacred Tradition are the two sources of God's revelation. The Sacred Scripture is the Word of God put down into writing under the breath of the Holy Spirit. The Sacred Tradition is the living transmission of the message of Gospel in the Church.

The Catholic community usually gathers to celebrate sacraments (actions and words of Jesus, through which God sanctify his people). The Roman Catholic Church has seven sacraments: Baptism (John 3:5), Confirmation (Acts 1:8), Eucharist (Matthew 26: 26-28), Penance and Reconciliation (John 20:23), Anointing of the Sick (James 5:14-15), Matrimony (John 2:1-10) and the Holy Orders (Luke 22:19).

- **Eastern or Greek Orthodox Church**

The Eastern orthodox Church resulted from the 1054 schism (separation) that split the Western (Rome) and Eastern (Orthodox) churches.

The Orthodox church is a family of self-governing Churches; it is not headed by a pope. The unity of the Church is manifested in a common faith, communion in liturgical actions and in Jesus, the one and real Head of the Church.

Orthodoxy is the life which strives to be in union with God. This union begins with the faith in the dogmas (e.g.: Holy Trinity, Incarnation, Redemption by Jesus, etc.). This faith is manifested in the life of each believer through liturgy (rituals) which includes the sacraments (the same seven sacraments as the Catholic Roman Church).

The sources of the Orthodox faith are the Church Tradition that includes the Holy Bible, the teachings of the Ecumenical councils (e.g.: Nicea, Constantinople, etc.), the Book of prayers, the lives of the saints and Oral tradition of the Church.

- **Protestantism**

Schism is part of the history of Christianity. In 1054 the Great Schism (or Eastern Schism) divided the Roman Catholic Church of the West from the Orthodox Church of the East. Another separation occurred with the Protestant Reformation in 1540. The great figures of reformation are: Martin Luther and John Calvin. Both believed in the sufficiency of the Scriptures as a rule of faith and practice (Sola Scriptura).

Those who embraced the separation were referred to as “Protestants.” Protestants believed they were professing the pure teachings of the early church, which had been viewed as obscured through the Catholicism of that time. Several “groups were formed from Rformation” including the Lutherans, Calvinists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, etc. In the 17th and 18th centuries, these churches further divided and produced denominations including Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, Disciples of Christ, Congregationalists, etc.

Causes of Pluralism in Christianity

1. Denominations are made up of churches and members who often just do not get along. Like everyone else, Christians struggle with pride, selfishness, stubbornness, the desire to wield power, and hypocrisy. So, they sometimes respond to the disagreements poorly. This has often led to debates and divisions within churches and denominations, which in turn lead to the creation of new churches and denominations.
2. Christians have sometimes legitimate disagreements about beliefs or practices. Eg. what does baptism mean and who should be baptized?

How should believers structure their local churches? Who should fill leadership roles? How often should the faithful practice Holy Communion?

How should Christians interpret certain passages of Scripture?

3. Disparity in personality, passions, and talents. Some people connect with God best through the exercise of their minds or while in nature. Others experience spirituality through creative or artistic expression. Still others feel a sacred or divine connection when they serve others or help those who are hurting.
4. The role of tradition. Some people appreciate the structure and heritage of worshiping God according to traditions passed down over many centuries. Thus they might be more comfortable in Eastern Orthodox, Roman Catholic, Episcopal, or Lutheran churches. Others, however, prefer to explore new and different ways of worshiping God or practicing their faith; they might feel boxed in by rituals or traditions. Therefore a nondenominational church might suit them best.
5. Culture plays a critical role as well; people from different cultures practice their faith in distinctive ways. It should not surprise us if churches in a middle-class English town are extremely different from those in a war-torn, poverty-stricken village in Africa. Consequently, churches and denominations vary greatly depending upon the geographical location and cultural values of the people themselves.
6. Churches may be divided according to people. The group that Mr. John Wesley started eventually became the Methodist Church. It has its independent organization and administration and has branches all over the world. Then there is the Lutheran denomination, which was formed after the death of Martin Luther. Now Lutheran churches appear all over the world also. There are many other organizations that denominate themselves in this way.
7. Emphasis of truths. Those who emphasize justification by faith set up the Lutheran Church. Those who look to Pentecostal experiences started the Pentecostal churches. Some groups emphasize church administration. Those who believe in the independence of jurisdiction formed the Congregational churches.

Those who proposed the order of eldership started the Presbyterian Church. Those who emphasize apostolic succession began the Apostolic Church.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.4

1. Find out the effects of Christian pluralism.
2. Suggest solutions to the negative effects of Christian pluralism.

2.5. Birth and expansion of Islam in the World

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.5

Using various available resources, identify the main Islamic territories today in the world, founded from its beginning.

The beginning of Islam is marked in the year 610 AD: Anno Domini, following the first revelation to the prophet Muhammad. Muhammad and his followers spread the teachings of Islam throughout the Arabian peninsula. Soon after the death of the prophet Muhammad, there were military expeditions, called “futuhat,” or literally “openings,” into what is now Egypt and other parts of North Africa. In other parts of the world, Islam spread through trade and commerce. The following is a brief timeline that highlights some of the major occurrences in Islam’s development, as well as the geographical spread of Islam to some of the countries. The following are important dates in Islamic history.

570 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muhammad is born in Mecca.

610 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) According to Muslim belief, at the age of 40, Muhammad is visited by the angel Gabriel while on retreat in a cave near Mecca. The angel recites to him the first revelations of the Quran and informs him that he is God’s prophet. Later, Muhammad is told to call his people to the worship of the one God, but they react with hostility and begin to persecute him and his followers.

622 C.E(Common Era or Christian Era) After enduring persecution in Mecca, Muhammad and his followers migrate to the nearby town of Yathrib (later to be known as Medina), where the people there accepted Islam. This marks the «Hijrah» or «emigration,» and the beginning of the Islamic calendar.

In Medina, Muhammad establishes an Islamic state based on the laws revealed in the Quran and the inspired guidance coming to him from God. Eventually he begins to invite other tribes and nations to Islam.

630 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muhammad returns to Mecca with a large number of his followers. He enters the city peacefully, and eventually all

its citizens accept Islam. The prophet clears the idols and images out of the Kabah and rededicates it to the worship of God alone.

633 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muhammad dies after a prolonged illness. The Muslim community elects his father-in-law and close associate, Abu Bakr, as caliph, or successor.

638 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muslims enter the area north of Arabia, known as «Sham,» including Syria, Palestine, Lebanon and Iraq.

641 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muslims enter Egypt and defeat the Byzantine army. Muslims consider their conquest as the liberation of dominated people, since in most instances they were under oppressive rule.

655 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Islam begins to spread throughout North Africa.

661 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Imam Ali is killed, bringing to an end the rule of the four «righteous caliphs»: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman, and Ali. This also marks the beginning of the Umayyad rule.

711 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muslims enter Spain in the west and India in the east. Eventually almost the entire Iberian Peninsula is under Islamic control.

732 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muslims are defeated at Potiers in France by Charles Martel.

750 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) The Abbasids take over rule from the Umayyads, shifting the seat of power to Baghdad.

1000 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Islam continues to spread through the continent of Africa, including Nigeria, which served as a trading liaison between the northern and central regions of Africa.

1099 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) European Crusaders take Jerusalem from the Muslims. Eventually Muslims defeat the Crusaders and regain control of the Holy land.

1120 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Islam continues to spread throughout Asia. Malaysian traders interact with Muslims who teach them about Islam.

1299 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era)

The earliest Ottoman state is formed in Anatolia, Turkey.

1453 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Ottomans conquer the Byzantine seat of Constantinople and change its name to Istanbul.

Circa 1800 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Approximately 30 percent of Africans forced into slavery in the United States were Muslims.

1870-1924 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Muslim immigrants from the Arab world voluntarily come to the United States until the Asian Exclusion Act is passed in 1924.

World War I ends with the defeat and dissolution of the Ottoman Empire, which was the last of the Islamic empires. Many regions populated by Muslims in Africa and Asia are colonized by Europeans. Traditional religious ways of life are threatened and, in some cases, destroyed.

1930 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) The Nation of Islam is created in the U.S. by W. D. Fard. It is based on some Islamic ideas, but contains innovations, such as the appointment or declaration of Elijah Muhammad as a prophet.

1948 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) The state of Israel is created. Some Palestinian and Lebanese refugees flee to the United States, among them, Muslims and Christians.

1952 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) The McCarran-Walter Act relaxes the U.S. ban on Asian immigration. Muslim students come to the U.S. from many nations.

1965 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Revisions of immigration law further open the doors for Muslim immigration.

1975 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) Wallace D. Muhammad, the son of Elijah Muhammad, takes over leadership of the Nation of Islam after his father's death and brings most of his followers into mainstream Islam. He later creates the Muslim American Society, which attracts many members, most of whom are African-American.

1979 C.E (Common Era or Christian Era) The Iranian Revolution results in the establishment of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the first attempt at an Islamic state in the modern era.

Islam in Rwanda

Islam was first introduced into Rwanda by Muslim traders from the East Coast of Africa. Since its introduction, Muslims have been a minority in Rwanda in comparison to Catholics and Protestant adherents.

Muslims built their first mosque in 1913. This mosque is known as the al-Fatah mosque. During its history, many efforts were made to impede the spread of

Islam in Rwanda. These efforts generally exploited anti-Arab sentiment, and presented Muslims as foreigners. Muslims were further marginalized by the fact that most Muslims settled in urban areas, whereas 90 percent of the population was rural. Their attempts to further their faith, there was little spirit of preaching amongst Muslims. Only a few conversions took place, mostly amongst the marginalized urban population: women who had married foreigners, illegitimate children and orphans. Even these conversions were sometimes superficial, motivated by desire for social and economic security that Muslims provided, than for religious conviction in the Islamic faith.

Under the Belgian administration, Muslims in Rwanda were to some extent marginalized. Muslims were often excluded from education and important jobs in the government. As a result Muslim employment was largely confined to engaging in petty trade, and taking up jobs as drivers.

In 1960, the Muslim quarter and the mosque in Rwamagana were burned. Following this event, Muslims were terrified and many of them fled to neighboring countries.

The number of Rwandan Muslims increased substantially. The rate of conversions slowed down in 1997. Christianity remains as the country's leading religion.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.5

Find out how Islamic Religion spread in Rwanda.

2.6. Evangelization in Rwanda

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.6

Using the available resources, make a list of main Christian Churches and other religions present in Rwanda today.

Catholic missions

Christianity in Rwanda started in 19th century by the Europeans missionaries especially the Roman Catholic missionaries. Von Gotzen is the first European to enter the Kingdom of Rwanda, thereafter Christian missionaries followed. On **February 2, 1900**, Bishop John Joseph Hirth, Father Alphonse Brard, Father Paul Barthelemy and Brother Anselme, introduced themselves to the Royal

Court of Nyanza and were received by King YUHI V Musinga , who was the king by then.

Their main reason to come to Rwanda was *to save the souls of Rwandan people*. They were misled by people's belief in the power of different ancestors and thought they were a polytheistic kingdom. Imandwa (heroic spirits) like Ryangombe and Nyabingi were dominant in Rwandan rituals. It took a few years to have a few Rwandan theologians who would then explain that Rwandan people believed in one God called Imana and that name could be used to mean the same God missionaries might have thought they brought to Rwanda. As John Mbiti wrote, *"The missionaries who introduced the gospel to Africa in the past 200 years did not bring God to our continent. Instead, God brought them."*

He was a member of the Society of Missionaries of Africa known as Whites Fathers. Missionaries reached first in Algeria from there they went to Uganda, Tanzania (Katoki), Burundi then they entered in Rwanda through Kinyaga (Shangi in West of the country). They were accompanied by Tanzanian and Ugandan Christians. Among them were Tobi KIBATI and Abdon SABAKATI. From Shangi the missionaries went straight to the King Palace in Nyanza and the King gave them permission to go to settle to Save as the first Catholic mission in Rwanda. This is because Save was a populated place. Abdon SABAKATI, a Ugandan Christian entered for the first time into contact with the people of Save by teaching them catechesis.

The missions founded after Save were; in Zaza on 1st November,1900, Nyundo (Bugoyi) on 4th November, 1901, Rwaza (Murera) on 20th November,1903, Mibirizi (Kinyaga) on 23rd December,1903, 1922, Rulindo and Murunda (Rutsiro) on 26th April,1909, and Kansi on 13th Decembere,1910).

Later, they established other missions in different parts of the country such as Rwamagana in 1918, Kabgayi on 12th February Muramba in 1925, Butare in 1925 and, Kiziguro in 1930.

Protestant missions

The protestant Church was introduced in Rwanda by the German missionaries of the Bethel Society. The first Pastor of that society to arrive in Rwanda was Pastor Emmanuel Johanssen and he arrived in Bukoba. He was accompanied by five other pastors, builder and carpenters who were protestant novices. They were received at the King's court in Nyanza on 29th July, 1907. They were allocated to settle in Buganza where they founded their first mission at Zinga, Rwamagana. Then between 1909 and 1912, they established stations in Rubengera and Kirinda (Kibuye), Kitema(Idjwi), Remera (Rukoma).

With the beginning of the First World War, the German Protestant Missionaries

had to quit Rwanda and their evangelization activities stopped. Bethel Lutheran stations resumed their activities later when they were given the Society of Protestant Missions of Congo: Kilinda in 1919, Remera and Zinga in 1922 and Rubengera in 1923.

As for Adventist Church, it should be noted that it was towards 1929 the first three Adventist missions were established in Rwanda: Gitwe, Kabagari (Gitarama), in Buganza and Rwankeri in Buhoma.

Finally the Anglican Church was able to establish its missions in Rwanda by the Church Missionary Society created in England and established their missions in Uganda, then extended to Rwanda Gahini, in 1919.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.6

- Name the first Christian missions in Rwanda.
- Give a summary of protestant evangelization in Rwanda.

2.7 END UNIT ASSESSMENT 2

1. Define the following terms:
 - a. First Christian community:
 - b. Charisma:
 - c. Apostles:
2. Write 5 down the characteristic of the Early Church.
3. Point out the mission of the 12 Apostles according to Matthew 10:1-42
4. Who is St. Paul ? What was his mission?
5. Explain briefly 3 major Christian persecutions under the Roman empire.
6. Identify 3 major heresies in the Early Church.
7. Name the 3 major branches in Christianity.
8. Give 4 causes of pluralism in Christianity.
9. What are the first Christian missions in Rwanda?
10. Explain why Islamic religion remain a minority in Rwanda.

UNIT 3

CARDINAL VIRTUES

Key Unit competence : Examine the importance and practice of cardinal virtues in daily life

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 3

Read the story below and answer the questions that follow:

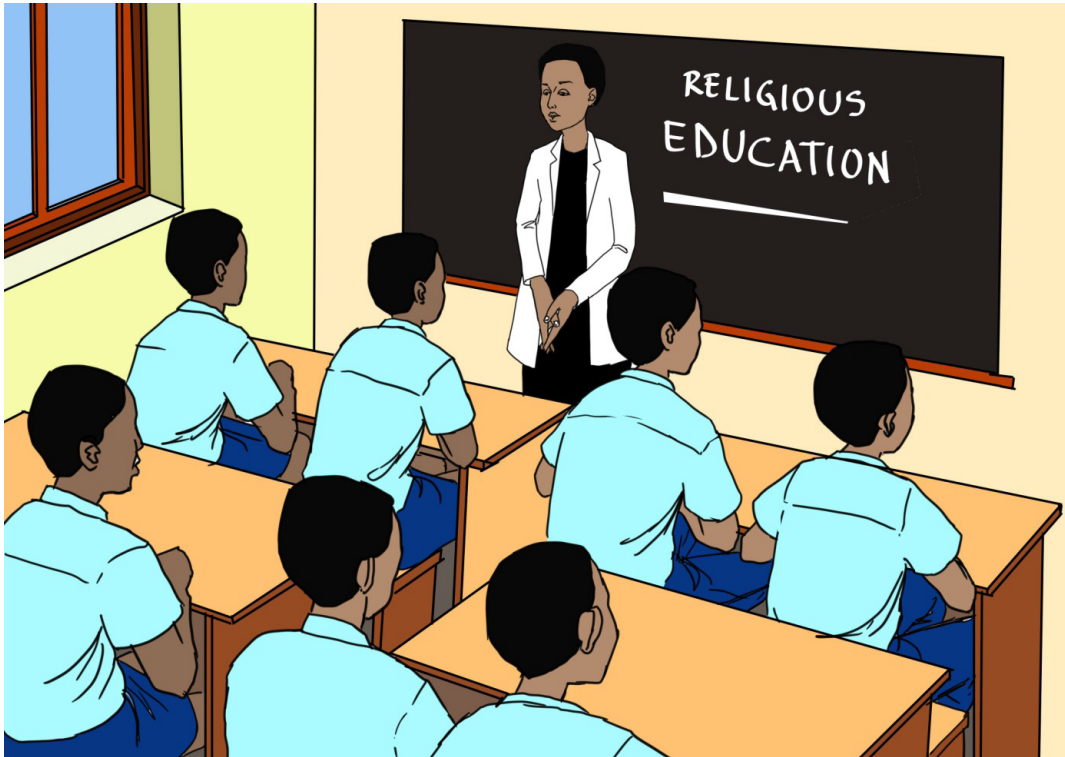
Akeza is Religious Education tutor in one of TTCs in Rwanda. She is aware of her qualities as a Religious Education tutor, that she should be a model of moral life to the learners. Therefore, she displays many values such as justice, prudence, peace, joy, fortitude, punctuality, temperance, love, patience, humility, prayerful, generosity and so on. As a result of her virtuous life, Akeza offers the best of herself in teaching her students. Her students hold her in high regard, perform very well in her subject and always seek guidance and counseling from her.

1. What do you think is the source of Akeza's good moral life?
2. Why do you think virtues are important to the person and to the society?

3.1. Meaning of virtues

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1

Brainstorm some examples of positive qualities of behaviour that are encouraged to be lived in the society.



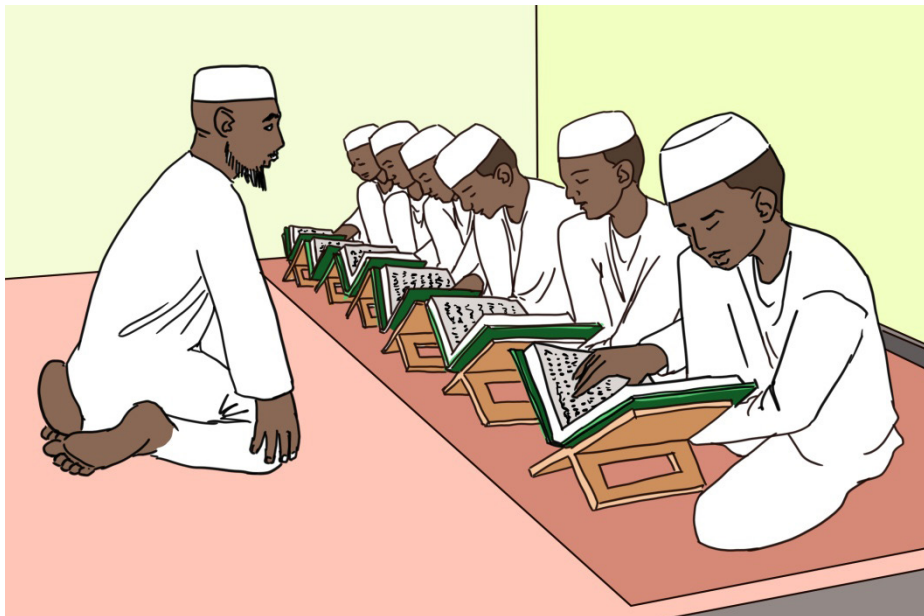
Generally, virtue is defined as a trait or quality that is deemed to be morally good and thus is valued as a foundation of principle and good morals. According to the Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church, the word virtue is defined as a habitual and a firm disposition to do well. It can also be defined as qualities that can be a trait or disposition of character that leads to good. Examples of some virtues include; wisdom, courage, kindness, goodness, courtesy, modesty, generosity, justice, temperance, fortitude, prudence, self-control, and so forth.

Virtues allow the person not only to perform good acts but to give the best of himself or herself. The virtuous person tends towards the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; s/he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions. The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God. A virtuous person treats others fairly, esteems others highly and values the sanctity of life. They treat others better than they are treated.

Someone who has virtue has good, moral ethics and makes biblical choices in life. Paul gives us a good list of what virtues are in (Philippians 4:8) where he wrote "Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy meditate on these things"

so apparently a biblical definition of qualities are things that are true (the truth), noble, just (fair), pure (holy living), lovely (as Christ is), and things of good report where there are reports of people doing good things for God. All Christians are called to virtuous life. Actually not only in Christianity, but all religions in the world teach about moral life and call people to live moral life.

Islamic teaching on living a good moral life/ virtuous life



In Islam, the Quran is believed to be the literal Word of God and the definitive description of virtue while Muhammad is considered an ideal example of virtue in human form. The foundation of Islamic understanding of virtue was the understanding and interpretation of the Quran and the practices of Muhammad. Its meaning has always been in context of active submission to God performed by the community in unison. The motive force is the notion that believers are to «enjoin that which is virtuous and forbid that which is vicious” in all spheres of life (Quran 3:110). The Prophet Muhammad said, “Virtue is good manners, and sin is that which creates doubt and you do not like people to know it.”

Islam is the religion of peace, love, and respect for all mankind. Religion Islam covers all aspects of life in which character formation is the most important aspect of Islamic personality. Prophet Muhammad stated that the foremost purpose of being sent down in this world and his mission in the following words. “I have been sent for the purpose of perfecting good morals.”

Prophet Muhammad was sent down to educate people about good manners and morals so that people can live a happy life being a good Muslim having Islamic personality. Muslims are called to have great moral values and also possess a noble character which attracts people towards them.

Prophet Muhammad set an example of good morals and good character for all mankind. Here is the list of some good morals that should be lived in our daily life so that we can earn great reward in this life and hereafter.

- Treat others with generosity;
- Should helpful and benevolence to others;
- Be patient;
- Sincerity, honesty, humility, justice, patience, straightforwardness;
- Always speaks the truth;
- Avoid Jealousy, backbiting, and falsehood;
- Respect your elders;
- Love the younger ones;
- Always help the needy people;
- Fulfill the obligations to one's self and to society;
- Should be responsible towards God and fellow beings.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.1

Discuss some important virtues (good moral traits) emphasised in the Rwandan culture especially among the young people.

3.2. Sources of virtues

Discuss where and how you acquired the virtues you have today as a student.

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2

Discuss where and how you acquired the virtues you have today as a student.

3.2.1. Sources of virtues in Christianity

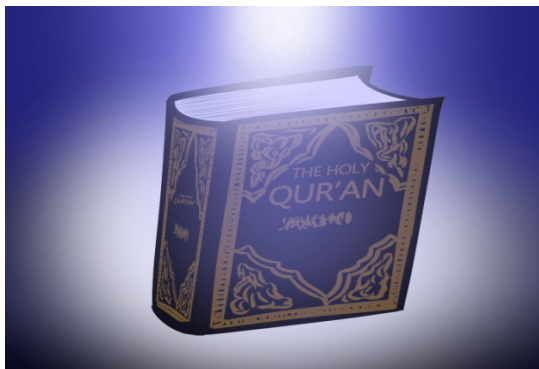
The Apostle Peter gives us a very good look at the source of all virtue as he writes that it is through “His divine power that has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2nd Peter 1:3-4). Only His divine power can enable us to escape “the corruption that is in the world through lust.”

This type of living takes a lot more than human effort; it takes divine power but He has given all who have trusted in Him this power to enable them to live lives of holiness and godliness.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that, virtues can be grouped into two: Theological virtues and cardinal virtues (human virtues). The theological virtues adapt to man's mind for participation in the divine nature. They relate directly to God. They are infused by God into the soul of the faithful and make them capable of acting as his children and meriting eternal life. They include; faith, love and hope. Therefore they are not acquired through human effort but are purely from God himself through revelation. God reveals himself to human beings through four main ways: Creation, Holy Spirit, His Word (Bible) and through His Son Jesus Christ. Through these four ways, we receive faith, love and Hope.

The second group of virtues are the Cardinal or human virtues. Cardinal virtues are rooted in the theological virtues. They are acquired through human effort by education. By deliberate acts and by perseverance ever renewed in repeating efforts are purified and elevated by divine grace. With God's help, a person mould a character and is strengthened in the practice of good. It is not easy for a wounded man by sin to maintain moral balance. Christ's gift of salvation offers us the grace necessary to persevere in the pursuit of the virtues. Everyone should ask for this grace of light and strength, cooperate with the Holy Spirit and follow his calls to love what is good and shun evil.

3.2.2. Sources of virtues in Islam



Quran is oone of the sources of virtues in islam

The Quran, which Muslims believe to be the Word of God, serves as the primary source of virtues / moral teachings in Islam. The Sunnah, which are the teachings, deeds and sayings, silent permissions (or disapprovals) of the Islamic prophet Muhammad, as well as various reports about Muhammad's companions, also serves as an important source for Islamic moral teachings. Besides these, the works of Islamic scholars and philosophers, and the moral examples set by

important Islamic personalities (such as the four rightly guided caliphs: Abu Bakr, Umar, Uthman and Ali) are other sources for Islamic ethical and moral guidance.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.2

Compare and contrast the sources of virtues in Christianity and Islam.

3.3. Cardinal virtues

Cardinal virtues are also called the human virtues. They are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, and habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good.

The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love.

There are four cardinal virtues which are: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and Temperance.

3.3.1. Prudence and Justice

Prudence is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; the prudent person looks where s/he is going. Prudence is “right reason in action,” writes St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle. It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity. It guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of conscience. The prudent person determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid.

Justice is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give God and neighbor their due. Justice toward God is called the “virtue of religion.” Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just person, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of

his conducts toward his her neighbor. “You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor (Leviticus 19: 15). Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.” (Colossians 4: 1).

3.3.2. Fortitude and Temperance

Fortitude is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one even to renounce and sacrifice his/ her life in defense of a just cause. “The Lord is my strength and my song.”(Psalms 118:14). In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”(John 16:33).

Temperance is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will’s mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion: “Do not follow your inclination and strength, walking according to the desires of your heart.” (Sirach 5:2; 37:27-31). Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: “Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites.” (Sirach 18:30). In the New Testament it is called “moderation.” We ought “to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world.” (Titus 2:12).

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.3

Explain briefly the cardinal virtues.

3.4. Importance of Cardinal virtues

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.4

Discuss the importance of cardinal virtues to an individual and to the society as well.

- a. They instil in us the practice of making deliberate acts of right judgment, being fair, having courage and exercising moderation.
- b. They help us combat, selfishness and pride which results in our lack of perfect love for God and our neighbor, and maintain moral balance in our lives, because we are all wounded by the effects of the original sin.
- c. They give us true peace and joy, because we not only perform good acts

but give the best of ourselves. For example, through justice moves us treat others fairly and give them what is their due.

- d. They help us to persevere in pursuit of what is good, through Christ's gift of of salvation that gives is that grace given as a reward of living a virtuous life.

The virtue of fortitude helps us to overcome any dangers, obstacles, and fears; it enables a person to withstand whatever difficulties may block him from attaining his true goal.

- e. They help us to give meaning to true for God and neighbour, which is as the core virtue of all virtues. This love being the virtue is needed to establish a connective between the source of love and the place where love is needed. No person, no matter how loving he claims to be, can be of any help to himself or anyone else on a moral level if he does not possess virtue. A soldier without courage, a doctor without care, a teacher without patience, a parent without prudence, a leader without determination, a magistrate without justice, and a friend without loyalty are all useless partners, not because they lack love, but because they lack the virtue to express it.
- f. They help us develop moral character because in choosing concrete actions because the cornerstone of the moral life is based upon the Cardinal Virtues.
- g. They help us to face life's challenges, temptations and evil desires. Temperance is the virtue which counteracts these temptations. Temperance enables us to keep from doing what is wrong, even when we have strong feelings for it.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.4

Using the knowledge acquired about the cardinal virtues, prepare a comprehensive drama that reflects the importance of living the cardinal virtues in the society.

3.5 END UNIT ASSESSMENT 3

1. Explain the following terms:
 - a. Virtue
 - b. Cardinal virtues
 - c. Prudence
 - d. Justice
 - e. Temperance
 - f. Fortitude
2. Discuss the sources of virtues in:
 - a. Islam
 - b. Christianity
3. Write down the importance of cardinal virtues to an individual and to the society.

UNIT 4

WORSHIP PRACTICES IN ABRAHAMIC RELIGIONS

Key Unit competence: Describe different worship practices in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 4

Basing on your experience as a believer and using various resources, research, discuss and present your findings on the worship practices in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam come up of activities done before and during worship as well as the importance of worship for individual and the community.

4.1. Meaning of Worship

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.1

Read the following passages from the Bible and answer the following questions.

- “Come, let us bow in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our God. Psalm 95:5
- I will praise you Lord among all nations, I will sing of you among all people. Psalm 108:3
- I will give thanks to you, Lord with all my heart, I will tell all your wonderful deeds. Psalm 9:1
- Now, I Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and glorify the king of heaven because what he does is right and all his ways are just. Daniel: 4:37
- Sing to the Lord, Sing and praise his name, Exalt him who rides on the clouds, rejoice before him his name is the Lord. Psalm 68:4-5

Questions

1. According to the above biblical passage what is worship?
2. Analyze the story and discuss activities done during worship that are implied in the above Holy Scripture passages?

Meaning of worship

According to the dictionary, worship is defined as the feeling or expression of reverence and adoration for a deity. Christian worship can then be defined as the feeling of reverence and adoration for God.

The Greek word that is most often translated as worship in the New Testament is known as “proskuneo”. This concept means to “fall down before or bow down before” or “to kiss the hand to (towards) one, in sign or symbol of reverence”. In the ancient time it was used as homage shown to men and beings of superior rank. The Hebrew word for worship in the Bible is “Shaha” which means “to bow low or to prostrate oneself”. Again, the English word “worship” comes from worth ship meaning showing, displaying the worth of something superior.

Worship is something that comes from the spirit. Actually worship is an attitude or state of the heart more than physical expression. Worship involves bowing low before the Lord, not only physically, but in the heart. Hence Real and true worship is insightful and reflective. Sometimes, the practice of worship is an expression of thanksgiving or act of obedience. The worship practices include praying, reading Word of God with an open heart, singing, participating in communion, charity and serving others. While some beliefs identify specific places, such as the temple, synagogue and mosque, others do not restrict the place. Rather they emphasize the appropriate attitude during the worship. The Gospel says “But the hour comes, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeks such to worship him (John 4: 23-24)”.

Worship is a lifestyle of living one’s values and faith, and it is not just limited to when people raise to worship God in church, Synagogue and Mosque but also in demonstrable acts of love in serving others more especially the needy.

Two ways of Worship

The true and authentic worship of God implies him truly and treasure him duly. In this sense, worship means valuing, becoming visible in the world. There are two basic ways/dimensions of worship. One is acts of the mouth/visible: these are **acts of praise and repentance** in worship services or small group religious gatherings which are visible to the community of believers. Another dimension is the acts of love **with the body and the hands and the feet**: acts of love that show the supreme value of God by what the worshipper is willing to sacrifice for the good of others.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.1

1. Discuss the true meaning of Worship and two dimensions required for true and authentic worship.
2. With concrete examples, discuss the two ways/dimensions of worship.

4.2. Worship and spiritual activities in Abrahamic Religions

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.2

Basing on your experience as a believer and using various resources research, discuss and present your findings on the worship practices in Judaism, Christianity and Islam. What are similarities and differences in their worship practices?

The Abrahamic religions are monotheistic religions founded on the patriarch Abraham who is thought to be the father of all believers. The Religions are the following: Judaism, Christianity and Islam. These religions have common spiritual practices or activities which include prayer, meditation, chanting, reading the word of God and ceremonies or rituals.

4.2.1. *Worship in Judaism*

Judaism is the oldest monotheistic religion in the world. The history of Judaism initiated with the covenant between God and Abraham around 1812 BC (Before Christ) during the Bronze Age. Abraham was a prominent personage of the Jewish religion and was known as the Patriarch to the Jewish people.

The main ideas of worship in Judaism show that worship is a core characteristic and activity of the Jewish religion. Jews are required to pray three times. These three times include morning blessings, reading and writings of biblical texts and further Tenah verses of praise. However on special occasions like the Sabbath and Jewish holidays they are specific days for prayers. The particularity was put on Sabbath. Jews had laws regulating activities this day and they reseeded for reflection and prayer. The duration and content of each service entirely depended on the customs of that particular community. There are many rules and customs that apply to those attending the Synagogue.

It is always considered a sign of respect for a male to wear a head covering (Kippa) in attendance to the Synagogue.

Both men and women are to be dressed appropriately (long sleeved shirt, dress and hair coverings). Concentration is essential as many prayers require a fair amount of concentration in order to be able to recite. Specific parts of the services are practised standing and bowing is done at certain times of the services however visitors aren't expected to.

Traditionally, **Judaism** holds that Yhwh, the **God** of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and the national God of the Israelites who delivered them from slavery in Egypt, and gave them the Law of Moses at biblical Mount Sinai as described in the Torah. Worship is important in Judaism because it is considered to be a response to God's love for his people in all events of their lives. It is not about receiving things from God, but giving him thanks and praise.

The basic laws and tenets of Judaism are derived from the Torah, the first five books of the Bible. The most important teaching and tenet of Judaism is that there is one God, incorporeal and eternal, who wants all people to do what is just and merciful

There are several forms of practises incorporated in the Jewish religion mainly done as a more practical form respect.

Worship in Judaism was done in specific days, feasts and celebrations. The following were important feasts and celebrations in Judaism:

- **The Sabbath:** This day is known as the «rest day» (quote from the bible, «in six days the Lord made heaven and earth and on the seventh day he rested» Exodus 31:17). Jewish people are free of study, prayer and focus on enjoyment and leisure. **Rosh HaShanah:** This day is known as 'the birthday of the world' and the anniversary of creation. It starts with remembering and acknowledging the wrong-doings before the Day of Atonement. On this day, apples and honey are eaten to symbolise and hope for the sweetness of the upcoming year.
- **Yom Kippur:** This is a day that allows people to spiritually cleanse which enables one to start a fresh, new year.
- **The passover:** This day is used to commemorate the exodus of Egypt and agriculturally the beginning of a new harvest season in Israel. Children are given unleavened bread and are told about the chain of events of then Exodus.
- **Days of mourning (Tish b'Av):** The day in which is used to commemorate the destruction of the Jewish temples through fasting, reading and singing to describe sections of the persecution.
- Although Jewish people all have a different ideologies of God's appearance, Judaism remains a monotheistic religion and the idea of God as a whole is worshipped.

4.2.2. Worship in Christianity

In Christianity, worship is the act of attributing reverent honor, adoration of God and homage to God. Throughout most of Christianity's history, corporate Christian worship has been liturgical, characterized by prayers and hymns, with texts rooted in, or closely related to, the Scripture, particularly the Psalter; this form of sacramental and ceremonial worship is still practiced by various Christian groups. Thus, unity in Christian worship was understood to be a fulfillment of Jesus' words that the time was at hand when true worshipers would worship "in spirit and in truth" (John 4:23).

Current Christian worship practices are diverse in modern Christianity, with a range of customs and theological views. Some elements of Christian worship are universal, style and content varies greatly due to the history and differing emphases of the various branches of Christianity. In many Christian traditions, regular public worship is complemented by worship in private and small groups, such as meditation, prayer and study. Singing often forms an important part of Christian worship.

Some common elements

While differing considerably in form, the following items characterize the worship of virtually all Christian churches.

- Meeting on Sunday (Some groups of Christians considers Sunday as the worship day for the resurrection of Jesus while Seventh-day adventist churches worship on Saturday (Sabbath day as it is recommended in the Bible);
- Bible readings accompanied by summons and preachings;
- Communion or the Eucharist;
- Music, either choral or congregational, either with or without instrumental accompaniment;
- Prayer: prayers are either formal or informal (spontaneous prayers);
- Teaching in the form of a sermon or homily;
- A collection or offering.

The following are ways of worship that are used in various Christian groups and denominations:

- **To kneel, to bless God, to bow down**

"He will rescue the poor when they cry to him; he will help the oppressed, who have no one to defend them.... Long live the king! May the gold of Sheba be given to him, may the people always pray for him and bless him all day long" (Psalm 72:12-15).

Some Christian practice worship while kneeling and bowing down before the Lord. This is an expression of humility and respect for God.

- **To be clear, to shine, to boast, to show, to rave, to celebrate**

“David appointed the following Levites to lead the people in worship before the Ark of the Lord to invoke his blessings, to give thanks, and to praise the Lord, the God of Israel.” 1 Chronicles 16:4: This way implies making noise and shouting the goodness of God and what he has done for individual or for his people.

- **To shout loudly, to command**

“Come, everyone! Clap your hands! Shout to God with joyful praise!” Psalm 47:1

Shabach means to shout loudly or command. Of course, it isn’t simply about being loud. Its focus is to worship the Lord with one’s whole being.

- **To sing praises, singing out of the spirit spontaneously**

“But you are holy, O You Who dwell in [the holy place where] the praises of Israel” Psalm 22:3. This way of worship implies singing unrehearsed, unplanned praises to the Lord. It can include adding words to an existing song or even singing in the spirit to the Lord.

- **Extending hands, acting out of thanksgiving for what has or will be done**

“But giving thanks is a sacrifice that truly honors me. If you keep to my path, I will reveal to you the salvation of God.” Psalm 50:23. This way of worship implies extending your hands or raising them in thanksgiving for something that has been done or will be done.

- **Extending the hands vigorously**

“After consulting the people, the king appointed singers to walk ahead of the army, singing to the Lord and praising him for his holy splendor. This is what they sang: “Give thanks to the Lord; his faithful love endures forever!” 2 Chronicles 20:21. This way of worship means to extend your hands vigorously as in complete surrender.

- **To touch the strings, to make music with instruments, mostly rejoicing**

“Praise him with a blast of the ram’s horn; praise him with the lyre and harp! Praise him with the tambourine and dancing; praise him with strings and flutes! Praise him with a clash of cymbals; praise him with loud clanging cymbals. Let everything that breathes sing praises to the Lord! Praise the Lord!” (Psalm 150:3-6).

Allow the Holy Spirit to speak to you about the seven ways to worship in spirit and in truth. How can you incorporate them into your personal and corporate worship? Remember, praising God is to be on our lips, or spoken (Isaiah 57:19), and we are to do it continually as a sacrifice (Hebrews 13:15). God promises that when we praise and worship Him, He inhabits those praises (Psalm 22:3), and it gives us strength to defeat our enemy (Psalm 8:2).

For an even deeper study into how you can worship God in spirit and in truth, check out the 7 Types of Worship Bible Study. Enjoy a deeper experience as you discover how to worship God daily, at home and everywhere you go, in spirit and in truth!

4.2.3. Worship in Islam

In Islam, *ibadah* is usually translated as “worship” and means obedience, submission, and devotion to God. *Ibadah* is an **arabic** word meaning service or servitude. Worship of God, in some form or another, is common to all religions of the world. The purpose of worshiping God in Islam is to evoke His help and guidance in leading a purposeful life in this world, and to acquire His attributes. The various ritualistic worships described below are nothing but means of training the soul and disciplining one’s self.

The five fundamental acts of worship in Islam are:

- **Declaration of faith (shahadah)**, expression of absolute Monotheism. There is no god other than Allah. Muhammad is the messenger of Allah.
- **Ritual prayer (salat)**, observed five times every day at prescribed times, with prescribed preparations (ritual cleaning), prescribed movements (standing, bowing, prostrating, sitting) and prescribed verses, phrases;
- **Alms giving (zakah)** this is calculated as 2.5% of a Muslim’s total savings and wealth above a minimum amount which is based on income and the value of all of one’s possessions;
- **Fasting (sawm)** the abstention from eating and drinking during daylight hours especially during the Islamic holy month of Ramadan;
- **Pilgrimage to Mecca (hajj)** the annual Islamic pilgrimage to the most holy city of the Muslims, and a mandatory religious duty for Muslims that must be carried out at least once in their lifetime by all adult Muslims who are physically and financially capable of undertaking the journey, and can support their family during their absence.

In general, worship is understood to mean the observance of certain rituals: prayer, fasting, giving charity, and other ‘good’ works. In Islam, it is one’s entire life. The definition goes something like this: Worship is an all-inclusive term for those internal and external sayings and actions of a person that are pleasing

to Allah. In other words, worship is that which is done in obedience to Allah's will, which obviously includes rituals but goes far beyond to the realms of one's beliefs, social activities, and personal contributions to one's society and fellow human beings. Islam looks at the individual as a whole. He is required to submit completely to Allah, as the Quran instructed Prophet Muhammad sallallaahu 'alayhi wasallam to do; Allah Says (what means): "Say: Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds. No partner has He. And this I have been commanded and I am the first (among you) of the Muslims".

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.2

1. What are the important feasts and celebrations in Judaism?
2. Give the common elements that characterize the worship of virtual all Christian churches.
3. Explain the five fundamental acts of worship in Islam.

4.3. Important places of worship

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.3

One illustration:

Research on the places of worship for various religions and come up with what they contain inside and their major parts.

Places of worship are a specially designed structure or consecrated space where individuals or a group of people such as a congregation come to perform acts of devotion, veneration, or religious study.

A building constructed or used for this purpose is sometimes called a house of worship. Temples, churches, synagogues and mosques are examples of structures created for worship. For some religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, communal worship is important. The faithful gather at particular times on particular days and interact in a faith experience.

Christians worship in churches and cathedrals, where Muslims worship in Mosques. Jews observe the Sabbath and conduct services in Synagogue, or as sometimes referred to, "going to Temple".

The Jewish equivalent of a Priest or Pastor is called a Rabbi. Jews, Muslims and Christians have a lot in common. They worship the same God, but refer to him as God, Yahweh, or Allah depending on the religion. They also believe in the

same prophet, Abraham. All three religions believe in Jesus, but differ on his role. Muslims and Christians both believe he was a prophet, but only Christians believe he is the Son of God.

The synagogue was a place of worship for Jews. It is also a place for community socializing, interacting and charity work is often held. Psalms shape a major section of Jewish worship and are included in all daily services and most festival services. We note that Temples also were used to worship God more especially on the great feasts and celebrations.

The church is the place for worship for Christians derives from the Greek ekklesia, meaning the called out ones. Its original meaning is to refer to the body of believers, or the body of Christ. We note that Christian congregation may also meet in any place, house or an open place and worship God. Churches have a Cross as symbol.

The mosque is a place for worship for Muslims. It comes from the Arabic masjid, which means a place of ritual prostration. A mosque is any place devoted to prayer. It could be a house, a community building, or an open area of ground that was regarded as sacred:

- The star has five points, reminding Muslims of the five obligations of Islam.
- The crescent moon reminds Muslims of Allah the Creator and the lunar calendar that marks Islamic holy days.

Attached to many mosques in Muslim countries is a tower, called a minaret, where the muezzin calls people to prayer. Most mosques also have an ablutions room, a place where the faithful can perform the ritual washing before prayer.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.3

Explain the important places of worship of:

- a. Judaism
- b. Christianity
- c. Islam

4.4 END UNIT ASSESSMENT 4

1. In your words what does worship mean?
2. Compare worship in Abrahamic Religions (Judaism, Christianity and Islam).
3. Explain the five fundamental acts of worship in Islam.

UNIT 5

PROBLEMS FACED BY RWANDAN FAMILIES

Key Unit competence: Analyze and propose solutions to the current problems faced by the Rwandan family.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 5



Questions:

1. Observe and describe the above picture. Does the Rwandan culture accept this family members' behaviour?
2. What are the problems that can be caused by the behaviours described in the picture?

5.1. Rwandan cultural values

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.1

1. Identify and discuss Rwandans cultural values that you find most important.
2. Share how Rwandan values can be acquired and upheld among the young generation.

Despite Rwanda's background and dark history which led to genocide against Tutsi in 1994, her culture has stayed untouched and rich in values and practices and taboos which held Rwandans together as a nation, another fact that Rwandese speak the same language and have the same cultural heritage. Below are some examples of actions or behaviours of the values in practice. Rwandan cultural values are reflected in various activities in everyday life. The following is the summary of Rwanda cultural values that are upheld through Itorero.

- **Unity** : The state of being joined together to form one unit. A genuine vehicle of “the same wisdom, the same vision of the world, and the perception of political life”. This is acquire through a sense of togetherness and through Ndi Umunyarwanda program.
- **Patriotism**: Love and allegiance to the nation and the government of the Republic of Rwanda. This is manifested through commitment and effort to work for the wellbeing of every one in the society. It also goes together with readiness to work for its develoment, to defend it at any cost. In line with this value is the Rwandan proverb “ Wanga kumenera amaraso igihugu, imbwa zikayanywera ubusa”.
- **Selflessness**: the renunciation of one's own interests in favour of the interests of others. The spirit of not putting one's self first but being willing to give one's time and resources for the benefit of others.
- **Integrity** : the act of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations and outcome. This implies possessing many values which are in line with living well in the society such as honesty, trustworthy, kindness,... Integrity in Rwandan culture is expressed in the following terms: “imfura ni iyo musangira ntigucure, mwagendana ntigusige, wapfa ikakurerera”.
- **Responsibility** : The obligation and authority to take the necessary actions to ensure success. The obligation for the proper custody, care, and safekeeping of resources entrusted to the possession or supervision of an individual.

This value goes together with another value of accountability.

- **Volunteerism** : Volunteering is the practice of people working for a particular cause without payment for their time and services. It is the desire to undertake by choice and free will a task or work for the benefit of the wider community beyond the volunteer’s immediate family and friends this implies working for the common good.
- **Humility**: Defined as a disposition to be humble; a lack of false pride. This attribute increases one’s willingness to listen to others, consult and decide with reliable information and all the time. It implies not boosting but acting in the way that brings required success and always willing to learn.

These values go together with other values that are not list there and which help Rwandese to live well with others. These include: transparency, mutual respect, kindness, goodness, trustworthness, honest, love, resilience among others. These values are taught in Itorero program.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.1

1. Discuss the cultural values that are practiced in your home, school and community.
2. Identify the values that are taught during Itorero program at all levels.

5.2. Rwandan culture versus Modernism

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.2

1. Using different resourses, personal information and knowledge, explain the term “modernism”.
2. Discuss similarities and differences between Rwandan culture and Modernism.
3. Show the conflicts that can be caused by modernism in Rwandan family.

A culture is a way of life of a group of people, the behaviors, beliefs, values, and symbols that they accept, generally without thinking about them, and that are passed along by communication and imitation from one generation to the next.

A culture is a strong element that shapes and defines a nation. Rwandan culture is very important and it is transmitted to the youth in family, social gatherings, songs, schools and through Itorero program.

Since Rwanda is open to the world, there are many cultural exchanges that are coming into Rwandan culture which many people define as modernism. These elements include the change of mentality about girls, social roles, gender promotion, education, cultural exchange with the world, clothing, food, etc.

Modernism, in general, includes the activities and creations of those who felt the traditional forms of art, architecture, literature, religious faith, philosophy, social organization, activities of daily life, and sciences were becoming ill fitted to their tasks and outdated in the new economic, social, and political environment of an emerging fully industrialized world.

The following are the elements that are considered to be modern in Rwandan culture:

- The way of wearing more especially girls who do not wear decently and wear very short and tiny cloths;
- Dancing modern songs;
- Speaking foreign languages and pretending not to know Kinyarwanda;
- Change of mentality about social and gender roles in family.

As the world becomes a global village and the advent of modern technologies that connect youth across the world. In the view of maintaining Rwandan cultural heritage, the government of Rwanda put in place an institution in charge of maintaining the Rwandan culture and to teach it to the youth (Rwanda's Academy of Language and Culture), Culture education starts in the family. The parents need to educate their children more about the culture, Kinyarwanda and other patterns of culture. This starts with customs such as greeting, respect for the elders, politeness,... Being exposed to foreign cultures. They will be able to sieve out what is right while keeping the legacy of parents. If they do not agree with their parents, the culture stands to die out yet development cannot exist without cultural values, because then they will lose themselves.

Generally we know that the Culture is our sense of identity and uniqueness,"in the society. People believe that as long as cultural differences exist there will always be meaningful dialogue between generations.Cultural differences will always be there. Both the young and older generation will always think they are right which is a good thing because the elderly will always remind us of our cultural roots while the younger generation will decide what works for them because the elderly also fought with their parents.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.2

1. Give the meaning of the term modernism.
2. How can young people behave in order to respect cultural values and modernism in family and in the Rwandan Society?

5.3. Problems faced by Rwandan families today

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.3

Story: The family of Mugabo and Mukamana has ten children. The father is drunker, some children are addicted by drugs. One of the girls has gotten early and unwanted pregnancy. Other children suffer from malnutrition.

Questions:

1. Do you see this type of family in Rwandan Society? If yes explain deeply the situation by giving tangible facts.
2. Give the causes and consequences of the family problems.
3. Suggest the ways to prevent these family problems and their solutions when they happen.

Traditionally, family and community played a central role in Rwandans' life. Social relationships were based much more on nuclear and extended family, as well as on the neighbourhood, than on interpersonal relationships. Today attitudes on the role of the family and community have changed.

Rwandan family has always been considered as the core of life, cradle of the future and pillar of happiness: it is within family that a child is conceived, born, educated and given to the community for the good of the society. It is also within the family that the first interpersonal relationships are tied, and exchange, comparison and identification opportunities obtained. It is in this regard that an analysis of problems of Rwandan in order to propose solution to strengthen and safeguard family as an Institution, and enhance the quality of family relationships taking into account changes, which occur in desired socio-economic development. Given the progress of the modern world, the roles of family members have changed, especially as regards women, who, not only are subject to a less passive attitude in their traditional roles as wives and mothers, but also exercise a social and professional function, which will undoubtedly increase day to day. Examples are seen the women involvement in politics, in leadership in business from small to large scale, education, sports...

Definition of family problems

Family problems means a kind of troubled relationship between family members which in turn leads to tensions. These problems may result from the misconduct of a family member or the two main parties, and the frequent quarrels and differences between parents, or between children or between children and parents make the family in turmoil, and lose the children's prestige, respect and belonging to the family. Family problems can be classified as follows:

- **Psychological and emotional problems:** It is due to the difference in the cases of family members mood and nervous , and ways of their emotions towards the surrounding circumstances.
- **Cultural problems:** the result of different parents in customs and traditions depending on the different way.
- **Economic problems:** They are caused by the deteriorating financial situation of the family, whether due to internal or external factors. For example when one of the parents does not financially support the family.
- **Health problems:** such as chronic diseases or accidental diseases that face a family member and which may causes other problems such as poverty.
- **Social problems:** the family relationship with parents' relatives and the relationship of parents to some children and so on. E.g: Some families may have problems regarding paying dowary. Another example is the lack of clarity of the role of each individual within the family, and the multiplicity of roles and struggle, which leads to a disagreement within the family.
- **Physical problems:** these are problems that cause physical harm to family members. Example: Gender based violence.
- **Moral problems:** these are misunderstandings among family or community members about values, behaviour and attitudes of some of family members.

The following are some major problems that affect the world in general: divorce, drunkenness, poverty, abortion, human trafficking, children misbehaviours, corruption, drug abuse, adultery, unemployment, prostitution, polygamy, unwanted pregnancy of girls, chronic diseases, mismanagement of resources, sexual abuse, rape, suicide, conflicts, wars, gender issues, financial issues, behavioral issues, among others. These problems affect the world on various levels and scales and need collective effort in finding solutions.

Problems that affect Rwandan Family today

Rwanda is a country that has faced a tragedy and shadows of genocide against Tutsi in 1994, has made remarkable effort in fighting social problems more especially those that are linked with Genocide. After genocide problems were enormous, but the government of Unity has made tremendous progress in addressing issues pertaining to the wellbeing of the citizens.

Despite the effort made: the following problems are still persisting and need strategies to solve them. These include:

- **Poverty**

Poverty is the greatest challenge faced by Rwandan household security. In fact, the economic stress observed at family level reveals or triggers psychological difficulties between husband and wife, but also relationship problems between parents and children. The lack of income and resulting insecurity can also impact parental performance.

It is worth pointing out that the poverty situation currently faced by Rwandan families has various manifestations, especially hunger and malnutrition, poor health, absent or limited access to education and to other basic services, high morbidity and mortality rate due to diseases, social conflicts, violence risks, drug abuse, lack of decent housing, discrimination and social exclusion. Poverty is also among the factors that lead young people to delinquency and prostitution, thus putting their families in trouble. This poverty has also negatively impacted the family structure, and which has resulted in an increase in the number of street children or children separated from their families, being therefore compelled to fend for themselves.

- **Unemployment**

The unemployment is experience in Rwanda. This is seen when there is limited employment offers and a huge number of graduate attend hoping to get jobs.

- **Drug abuse**

There are some cases of young people who involve themselves in drug abuse, again, some family members take acohol and neglect their family responsibilities and consequently the conflict arises in the family.

- **Gender based violences**

Cases of sexual abuse, gender based violence, death (spouses killing one another), family conflicts are still persisting and need adequate attention. This also is seen in the number of preganant young girls increasing (under the age of 18).

- **Conflicts in the family**

The conflicts are results of many consistent problems such as misunderstanding, lack of responsibility, misuse of family resources, unfaithfulness, jealousy, poverty, acoholism, drug abuse, ignorance, behaviours, etc.

- **Loss of traditional Values**

The solidarity between family members, patriotism bravery, integrity and honesty, respect and dignity, tolerance and hospitality, culture of peace, love of labour, habit of respect, good manners and courtesy, inviolable attachment to ancestral traditions, dedication to group leading to abnegation and sacrifice, fraternal affection, effecting blood covenants, etc all these values are currently almost vanishing.

- **Juvenile Delinquency**

This phenomenon also deserves a particular attention and a deep study because it is taking on alarming proportions, especially in the Capital City and in big towns. This is combined with another problem of street children who leave their homes to the city.

5.3.1. Causes of family problems

Causes of social problems are numerous and interlinked. Generally, social disconnection or loss of cultural values affect the family negatively. The following are some of the causes of family problems in Rwanda:

- Difference in opinions, personalities, beliefs, values or goals;
- Financial problems;
- Stress, depression, anxiety and resentment;
- Issues relating to sexuality;
- Alcohol or drug use;
- Gambling problems, gambling addiction which causes financial problems;
- Illness or disability of a family member;
- death of a family member;
- unemployment and financial problems;
- Separation or divorce, parenting issues.

5.3.2. Consequences of family problems

As social problems suggests, the effects of problems on families depend on how problems are expressed ,with some forms having negative effects and others having benign, or even positive effects. Problems or conflicts can be considered harmful if the security of one or all conflicting parties (spouse/child) is threatened; from this perspective, multiple destructive behaviors have been identified, including physical and verbal aggression, withdrawal/avoidance, nonverbal and verbal anger, and the use of insults.

Conversely, constructive conflict behaviors, which support or foster parties' sense of security, have also been described: calm discussion, support, some forms of humor, problem solving and physical and verbal affection.

Today's families experience problems leading to violence and crimes. From those crises, families are experiencing unfaithfulness, violence, child molestation, divorce and separation.

5.3.3. Solutions and measures to solve and prevent family problems

There are several solutions that can help to promote social cohesion in Rwandan families. These range from strengthening existing institutional mechanisms such as abunzi (local mediators) and umugoroba w'ababyeyi (parents evenings), sensitization of people on understanding gender equality and recalling the importance of marriage for couples in the ways of helping parents to educate their children. According to the contribution of the school, it is important to introduce an education curriculum where sex, civic education, cultural values and counselling as well as family matters are taught also to children at an early age, even indirect to their neighbours in the life of the society.

The effort of Rwanda to fight against social problems and other evils can be seen in the achievement so far made through the vision 2020, and in four aspects of the country such as Economic Transformation, Social welfare, Good Governance and Justice. Rwanda has decided to put in place home grown solutions to fight against some social problems. These home grown solutions include Vision Umurenge Program, Akarima k'igikoni, umugoroba w'ababyeyi, Gacaca court, Umuganda, and imihigo (performance contracts).

The following effort and strategies to social problems are outlined in the National strategy for Transformation Phase I and vision 2050.

- **Economic Transformation**

- Create more new jobs decent and productive jobs to mitigate the unemployment and accelerate economy;
- Girinka program to alleviate poverty;
- Accelerate sustainable urbanization and ensure that all Rwandans are living in secure and decent houses and places;
- Establish Rwanda as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy;
- Increase domestic savings and position Rwanda as a hub for financial services to promote investments;
- Modernise and increase the productivity of agriculture and livestock;
- Promote sustainable management of the environment and natural resources to transition Rwanda towards a Green Economy.

- **Social transformation**

- Promote resilience to shocks and enhance graduation from poverty and extreme poverty through improving and scaling up core and complementary social protection programs;
- Elaboration of family policy to protect family and cultural values;

- Creation of centers to train youth people who were victims of alcoholism and drug abuse to acquire technical education;
- Eradicate Malnutrition through enhanced prevention and management of all forms of malnutrition;
- Enhance the Demographic Dividend through ensuring access to quality health for all. Focus will be on improving health care services at all levels, strengthening financial sustainability of the health sector, and enhancing capacity of health workforce.
- Enhance the Demographic Dividend through improved access to quality education. Focus will be on strategic investments in all levels of education (pre-primary, basic and tertiary) , and improved teachers' welfare.
- Move towards a Modern Rwandan Household through ensuring universal access to affordable and adequate infrastructure and services;
- Responsible parenthood which understands roles and responsibilities and bring up good Christian and Citizens.
 - **Leadership/governance transformation**
- Reinforce Rwandan Culture and values as a foundation for peace and unity;
- Ensure Safety and Security of Citizens and Property;
- Strengthen Diplomatic and International Cooperation to Accelerate Rwanda and Africa's Development;
- Strengthen Justice, Law and Order;
- Strengthen Capacity, Service Delivery and Accountability of Public Institutions;
- Increase Citizens' Participation and Engagement in Development;

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.3

1. Explain the classification of family problems.
2. Identify and discuss causes and consequences of family problems
3. Discuss the solutions to Rwandan family.

5.4 END UNIT ASSESSMENT 5

1. With examples, discuss the following concepts:
 - a. family problems
 - b) cultural values
 - c) modernism
2. Identify and discuss the major problems that are affecting the Rwandan families today.
3. Show what Rwandan has done in order to solve family problems.
4. Suggest the solutions in order to prevent the problems in rwandan family.

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