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CHAPTER 6

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**The Primacy of *Logos* and Priestly  
Formation in Nigeria: Context and  
Content**

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**Introduction**

A Priest must be convinced of two things. The first is the Faith. Faith in this sense means that his primary orientation must always be towards God. This is very similar to the understanding of Joseph Ratzinger when he avers that faith is “taking up a position, as taking a stand trustfully on the ground of the word of God.”<sup>1</sup> Essentially, Faith will, therefore, mean one “entrusting oneself to that which has not been made by oneself and never could be made and which precisely in this way supports and makes possible all our making.”<sup>2</sup> The second is his vocation. Vocation must also be understood in the sense of its etymology which means “to call, to name, to summon.”<sup>3</sup> At the background, a call is a tensive dynamic. One is always called *from* something or somewhere. One is also especially in the Christian sense of vocation called *for* something. There is, therefore, a call from something and a call for something. Dietrich Bonhoeffer’s statement that when “Christ calls a man; he bids him to come and die” should, therefore, be understood not in the sense of annihilation but a death to something that makes living for something else possible.<sup>4</sup>

The certainty of a Priest’s faith and vocation is not of a static dimension. It is a certainty that abides in a spectrum. It is a tensive certainty. A certainty that is subject to doubt. However, the permanent

character of this doubt is that one's orientation of always towards God. In the words of the anonymous writer of *The Cloud of Unknowing*.

You must also know that this darkness and this cloud will always be between you and your God, whatever you do. They will always keep you from seeing him clearly by the light of understanding in your intellect and will block you from feeling him fully in the sweetness of love in your emotions. So, be sure you make your home in this darkness. Stay there as long as you can, crying out to him over and over again because you love him. It is the closest you can get to God here on earth, by waiting in this darkness and in this cloud.<sup>5</sup>

This jarring subjection of a Priest's certainty to doubt has been captured best in the words of Cyran that "Faith consists of a series of contradictions held together by grace."<sup>6</sup>

This certainty of Faith and Vocation in the life of a Priest was what I saw some twenty years ago when I got to All Saints' Major Seminary, Uhiele-Ekpoma for my Priestly formation. That was where I met Fr Anselm Jimoh. The relationship has been one of respect of a brilliant scholar and of considerable distance since he was my formator and will always be. I do hope that the following pages I write will be a respectable testimony of what I have learned from Fr. Anselm Jimoh.

My aim in this paper is to argue that it is upholding the primacy of the *Logos* in the context and content of Priestly formation guarantees the faith and vocation of the *formandi*. What this paper will not do is to argue that the present priestly formation efforts in Nigeria (of which I am a grateful beneficiary) is outdated or unproductive. My aim is to highlight our present remarkable efforts and argue that we can make them more productive with a better understanding of our context.

### **The Nigerian Context and Content**

The Nigerian context today is that of a schizoid anthropological crisis. The average Nigerian is today locked in two worlds. We live in our own world, but our lives are characterized by continuous contact and interaction with the West. This contact was and has never been of equal partners and yet the inequality of that contact is both the source of repulsion and attraction in this relationship. The most enduring effect of this contact has been a confusing picture of the human person that subsists afterwards.<sup>7</sup> We are neither here nor there. We are neither fully

Nigerian nor Western. With us, “nothing is purely local, nothing is purely foreign, everything is remotely global.”<sup>8</sup> Our orientation is to the West for an idea of humanity, but the Western idea of humanity is also sufficiently diseased. The crucial reality that determines the fate of so many is that we are more than ever submerged by ‘white material,’ but still, have only limited access to its trade secrets.<sup>9</sup> Our bodies live in the land on the Niger yet our souls are all over the world. Our source of pride lies mostly on setting our feet outside our shores. Home is never enough, not just for the young (which is normal) but also for the old. That we have even thrived at all in the midst of this is nothing short of a miracle.

Our desires as Nigerians seem to have an anthropological disorder that is not only painful but crisis-ridden. Unfortunately, it is a problem that ravages the African continent. The human person has never been so poor and yet our understanding of the human person has never been so impoverished. Benedict XVI describes this anthropological crisis by saying that like the rest of the world, Africa is experiencing a culture shock which strikes at the age-old foundations of social life, and sometimes makes it hard to come to terms with modernity.<sup>10</sup> I must note here that though both the West and Africa are facing an anthropological crisis, they are of different kinds. Everywhere the modern person, after all, suffocates in a world that offers everything except answers to the deeper ‘why’ questions.<sup>11</sup> In the West, this crisis is borne out of a large-scale rejection of values that have mainly held the West together. Ratzinger notes that “in this central question of man which still remains of the greatest importance, all the human problems of our time converge.”<sup>12</sup> However, in Africa, the anthropological crisis started as a result of the ‘violent’ disruption of life as it was known before the contact with the West. Since this contact is still ongoing and will be ongoing for a while, it is the most significant background that shapes this anthropological crisis. This does not mean this contact is directly responsible for everything in Nigeria presently, it simply means that our presently anthropological crisis is simply incomprehensible without the context of this contact.

Ela captures the reality of this contact when he states that:

The problem is further complicated by the fact that the current generation does not necessarily look to African cultural traditions for answers to all its questions. Because the young people of today have emerged from

school systems conveying alienating messages and few have experienced initiation rites, the totality of the African universe is not open to them, and they cannot draw on the knowledge transmitted by the great masters of oral tradition.<sup>13</sup>

Every African (Nigeria inclusive) value that has held for centuries can no longer be taken for granted. Our value of family life is so overrated and exaggerated nowadays that we are often ashamed to admit it. How do we explain our respect for life amid the bodies lying in many parts of Africa? Suicides which in the past was a rarity and mostly occurs in the case of honor is now not only common but also has roots in the depression holding sway in many African societies.<sup>14</sup> How do we understand the richness of the Ubuntu philosophy with the xenophobia in South Africa? How about many of our inter-tribal conflicts which now have a dimension that we could never have imagined. The context of the Western contact has also transformed our capacity for conflict. For instance, a conflict between a citizen of Nigeria and South African would have been unimaginable 200 years ago. We also deal today with the crisis of advanced fee fraud in which Nigerian scammers are the role models who even have biblical links.<sup>15</sup> How do we fit our increased level of poverty, human trafficking, kidnapping, prostitution into our understanding of the human person? What has happened to our ideals of Orúkọ rere dára ju wúrà òun fàdákà?<sup>16</sup> One of the saddest realities that mirror the anthropological crises in Nigeria and across Africa is child soldiers. How did we really get so low in our idea of the human person?

A further appreciation of this contact between the West and Nigeria has also introduced some ideas which could not have been imagined without this contact. The value of Western medicine which has helped us understand more some of our common ailments like malaria cannot be overestimated. The fear and killing of twins were also a scourge which came to end with this contact. This contact has also transformed our world in terms of art. Our array of the musical instruments has also been expanded, thanks to this contact. Also, the rise of soccer in the continent especially Nigeria is unimaginable without contact with the West. For the most part, in Nigeria, this game keeps us united. In some cases, this contact has been for good and in some cases, it has left us for the worst. However, the worst outcome of

this contact is the anthropological crisis our country suffers from today. Yet, I am not sure we can resolve this crisis outside the context of this contact.

While the context of Nigeria today is the anthropological crisis, the content of that crisis is Pentecostal. While Pentecostal is immediately thought of a religious phenomenon, my understanding of this phenomenon extends beyond the religious connotations. It is a national phenomenon, especially in Nigeria. However, this non-religious aspect of this phenomenon can be well understood if we put attention to its religious manifestation.

Nigeria has some of the biggest Pentecostal churches in Africa if not in the world. The pentecostal presence in Nigeria is not limited to the religious space. It has spilt into politics, organized crime, and education. A good number of private universities are owned by Pentecostal churches (or more accurately Pastors).<sup>17</sup> Anthonio Spadaro describes Pentecostalism as “the belief that God wants his followers to have a prosperous life, that is, to be rich, healthy and happy. This type of Christianity places the well being of the believer at the center of prayer, and turns God the Creator into someone who makes the thoughts and desires of believers come true.”<sup>18</sup> Spadaro makes an obvious link between the prosperity gospel and the American Dream. This trend is not absent in Nigerian brand of Pentecostalism like John Odeyemi argues that most prominent and at the forefront of Pentecostal evangelism is material wealth, suppression of demonic forces, healings and miracles, and speaking in tongues.<sup>19</sup> In a sense, material prosperity. Hence the main prayers here are for “financial breakthrough, success in business or advancement by promotion at jobs, opening and begetting the “fruit of the womb,” success in exams, securing a life partner, and even the securing of travelling visa documents.”<sup>20</sup>

Many scholars argue that the rise of Pentecostalism can be linked to both factors of indigenous traditions and the social-economic conditions in Africa. Ebenezer Obadare in, *Pentecostal Republic* avers that “not only does the Pentecostal worldview draw directly from indigenous traditions of witchcraft, but Pentecostalism also presents a unique blend of more traditional and modern perspectives.”<sup>21</sup> Odeyemi also thinks that “one of the earliest things that made Pentecostalism appeal to a wide range of people is its experiential African world view of mystical and diabolical causalities. The African mind is always alive and aware of these realities.”<sup>22</sup> He also thinks the socio-economic

realities have a part to play in this case since this form of Christianity thrives because it provides a creative response to many destabilizing aftereffects of failing or failed political systems.<sup>23</sup> The present socio-economic as a result of these failed political systems include a plethora of problems like ethnicism, poverty, illiteracy, irresponsible and corrupt governments.”<sup>24</sup>

The idea that the problems that confront Africans are sociological and a result of our socio-economic realities has led to African theologians arguing that theologizing in Africa must always carry a political character. Emmanuel Katongole for instance argues that “the faith crises in Africa is neither primarily nor predominantly cultural but political.”<sup>25</sup> My concern is that seeing African problems as largely political is playing directly into the hands of the Pentecostal orientation. One way it does that is to see religion as primarily as a message of socio-political redemption and hence lead to an exaggerated concentration on a form of liberation theology on the continent that neither liberative nor touches the question of the human person. This is evident as one scholar noted that “Third world theologians are agreed that theology must be liberative and has to be a critique of “injustice, inequality, corruption, and authoritarianism.”<sup>26</sup> Éla also notes that “at a time when Africans, like other peoples, are facing the shock of technological and cultural modernity, *liberation of oppressed must be the primary condition for any authentic inculturation of the message.*”<sup>27</sup>

While it will be foolhardy to deny the socio-economic realities in Nigeria, I want to argue that the origin of these problems is not sociological but anthropological. In fact, the argument that our challenges are sociological in character is to play directly into the hands of the Pentecostal context of Nigerian life. While I am not against a theology that critiques the power structures in Africa, we must always acknowledge that the fact that politics is related to human salvation, does not mean that human salvation can be realized through politics.<sup>28</sup> This is because a Christianity that defines itself essentially in terms of social ‘involvement’ has contours that are too blurred and ignores a lot about the human person.<sup>29</sup> Such a Christianity has attempted to bring God down to the level of a *Deus ex machina* who becomes superfluous through the advance in man’s own capacity.<sup>30</sup> I also think that more importantly, it is all scratching the problems on the surface. This is because our challenges are deeper than the social and political

dimensions, though, that is the more visible symptoms that we can observe. We are dealing more with a human person that is broken at the level of the understanding of the human self.

A closer look at the *modus operandi* of Pentecostalism in Nigeria abundantly reflects an anthropological crisis. Odeyemi notes that these new-age pastors are a crossbreed between motivational speakers, marriage counsellors, life coaches—even boot camp instructors and preachers.<sup>31</sup> These pastors acting on an idea of how a human being should be and wants to create a new person in the shape of their ideas. Interestingly, they are getting successful. Smith, notes the individualistic mentality of Pentecostalism, as many of these born-again Christians are more individualistic than their parents but less isolated than their counterparts in the west.<sup>32</sup> Odeyemi avers that “while in the older traditions, prayers seek a connection with the Divine in the self, amongst the Pentecostals, it seeks it in an explosion outside of the self.”<sup>33</sup> It shows we are really dealing with a problem of the idea of the human person. Hence, our social under-development should be seen in its naked reality as representing a fundamental aspect of the anthropological pauperization of the African person.<sup>34</sup> It is easy to dismiss rampant kidnappings, persistent corruption, child soldiers, bribery, examination practices and other punishing circumstances as indices of social realities but what does it tell us about the idea of the human person we now hold as a people. Our orientation of the human person seems to be warped for the most part. We have in essence a restless human person whose main yearnings are both disordered, irrational and unfortunately unknown to him/her.

I term this content of this crisis as Pentecostal because the Pentecostal spirit is the most pervasive spirit in Nigeria today. The lure of Pentecostalism for the Nigerian Christian is so much that Pentecostal ideas have filtered into the mainline churches.<sup>35</sup> Politically Odeyemi and Obadare argue correctly in their works that, the Pentecostals churches are rarely against the government because they are really thriving with the status quo. There are even Catholic Priests who are publicly linked to government officials. Interestingly, these Catholic Priests’ *modus operandi* in worship and sermon is overtly laden with Pentecostal themes. That is why I think the pervasiveness of the Pentecostal spirit is more widespread, non-religious and more secular than we imagine. This strengthens my argument that we are dealing with an anthropological crisis. We use language like ‘it is well’

profusely even when it is not well. Some even say, 'it is well even inside the well'. There is an unmitigated yearning for success that has no respect for the other person. Interestingly, the idea of success is largely defined within the context of this continuous encounter (contact) with the West. We deceptively look as if we are oriented towards God but actually, we are not. We are oriented towards the West and its diseased idea of life and the human person.

And how does this relate to the Priestly formation? I think two ways. One is the fact that every seminarian today is a product of this anthropological crisis which has Pentecostalism as its content. It is the world in which we move, live and have our being.<sup>36</sup> Some are even in the seminary and have as role models some of these Pentecostal pastors. We may therefore not agree with the Pentecostal content out there, but we cannot ignore it. Secondly, this is the content they are being called out from and for. It is a very difficult situation when you combine this context and content. If we do not take time to think about this crisis now, there is a great danger ahead. To combat this situation, I propose the primacy of the *Logos*

### **The Primacy of the *Logos*.**

*Logos* as a word has a significant wide range in the ancient world ranging from every day to philosophical usage. The root  $\lambda\epsilon\gamma$  represents a comprehensive and overarching unity of meanings. These include gather, collect, select, report and speak.<sup>37</sup> As a concept, *Logos* was introduced into Greek philosophy by Heraclitus of Ephesus (circa 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE).<sup>38</sup> The fluidity of the interpretation of *logos* is attested by the fact that over time, it acquired a variety of meanings and these include word, speech, language, narrative, statement, pronouncement, question, report, account, sermon, teaching, call, sense.<sup>39</sup> An interesting usage of this term was by the Stoics who saw in *Logos* the universal divine reason inherent in the cosmos.<sup>40</sup> Hence *Logos* moved from a particular understanding to the universal principle of rationality. This means we can now translate this ubiquitous word as wisdom, reason, speech or rationality. While, the Septuagint translates the common Hebrew word *dbr* (word, report, command, thing, matter, affair) especially in the Pentateuch, the connection between wisdom and *logos* was made explicit in the Wisdom of Solomon around first century BCE.<sup>41</sup>



Thomas H. Tobin notes that *Logos* is an important concept in Hellenistic Judaism with a complex and long history starting from second century BCE with the Jewish writer Aristobulus.<sup>42</sup> However, it was in Philo that this concept reached its full flowering in Jewish literature. Philo relying on the Stoic idea of *logos* as the principle of rationality interpreted it to be the intermediate reality between God who was essentially transcendent, and the universe.<sup>43</sup> In some instances, Philo's idea of *logos* has been translated to be a metaphor for God's action in the world.<sup>44</sup> However, Tobin's position on Philo's idea of the *logos* is worth quoting in full.

For Philo, the *logos* served as the intermediate metaphysical reality through which the universe was originally ordered and by which it continues to be sustained in an orderly state. It was not simply a metaphor; it was a real aspect of divine reality through which God was related, although indirectly, to the universe. Although a derivative reality, the *logos* was not created as was the rest of the universe. In much the same way, the *logos* cannot aptly be characterized as either personal or impersonal. Rather it was the source of intelligibility of the universe and so was itself intelligent in a way that transcended the universe and, in that sense also went beyond the categories either of personal or impersonal.<sup>45</sup>

*Logos* made a significant presence in the New Testament, occurring 330 times but it was in the Johannine literature that its presence is most remarkable. *Logos* was understood in the Johannine prologue in the sense of the historical appearance of Jesus, the eternal and divine giver of life on earth.<sup>46</sup> Thus, the *logos* of middle Platonists (including Philo) enters into history. Tobin argues that identification of the *logos* with a particular human being was indicative of the author of the Johannine prologue though keeping with the speculative character of Hellenistic Judaism but moving the conversation in a new and quite different direction.<sup>47</sup> Joseph Ratzinger notes that

John takes up again here a paradigm of theological thought that is extremely widespread in both the Greek and the Jewish intellectual world and naturally adopts a series of connotations that are already developed

within it, so as to apply them to Christ. Perhaps one could maintain, however, that the new element that he imparted the *Logos* concept lies significantly in the fact that was decisive to him was not the idea of an eternal rationality—as the Greeks supposed—or whatever other speculations there might have been previously, but rather the relativity of the existence that is inherence in the concept of the *Logos*.<sup>48</sup>

As a result of this, Ratzinger sees the Christian faith, not as a renunciation of reason, but rather, is the acceptance of the extreme depth of divine reason.<sup>49</sup> Whether in the sense of the word or in the sense of a Person, Christianity must never oversee an amputation of reason.<sup>50</sup> Neither must it entertain within its ranks, a diremption of faith and reason. Faith is not to be placed in opposition to reason since it has always been clear from its very structure that Christian Faith is not to be divorced from reason.<sup>51</sup> Faith is also not the resignation of reason in view of the limits of our knowledge or even circumstances.<sup>52</sup> Faith “grasps reason in its whole breadth and depth and protects it.”<sup>53</sup> When the Christian faith submits to any form of irrationality, not only is religion threatened, reason too is at risk.<sup>54</sup> In its missionary activity in Africa, Western missionaries failed in many aspects but not in the reasonableness of faith. This is evidenced in the fact the investment the missionaries made into education in Africa.

Today, the Pentecostal content of our anthropological crisis attempts to view religious experiences outside the realm and sometimes against the realm of reason as the new way of approaching the Divine. To be against the reasonable is the new definition of religious experience.<sup>55</sup> I take as an example, the approach to human health. Elnathan notes satirically that the Nigerian God cures everything from HIV to high blood pressure.<sup>56</sup> This is not only an attack on reason, but there is also little reason to develop our health sector if a majority of us have that understanding of God and humanity. Our health sector was almost better when the missionaries were among us because they have an understanding of what humanity needs to do in terms of health; that is exactly where the Pentecostal overlords want us. This phenomenon has become a challenge for Priests of the 21<sup>st</sup> century since unfortunately, we have in our midst today Priests who either intentionally or unconsciously oversee this diremption of faith and *logos*. We also live among people who daily do this. This reality

becomes absurd when one finds cases in which either Priests or laypersons who oversee some liturgical events often pass off this diremption as the “new reason” creating an epistemological crisis.<sup>57</sup> At the heart of our Pentecostal content is the separation of faith and reason. This is so much evident in not only in the teachings but in many of the Pentecostal attitudes that subsist in Nigeria. When we separate faith and reason, what we have is this anthropological crisis in which ‘gods’ become a tool in the hands of man. That way not only is religion threatened, reason too is at risk.<sup>58</sup> We have a marriage between faith and any other things ‘out there.’ And God has never stopped calling people from ‘out there’

### **The Way Forward**

My suggestion is that we need to devote a lot of resources in studying the idea of the man that has resulted in Nigeria in the face of this continuous contact with the West. We should risk studying what sort of humanity we now have today. Having this idea of what sort of humanity is prevalent in Nigeria will also help know which ideas we need to hold on in this contact and which one we need to jettison. Our philosophy classes in the Seminary should have a course on the various ideas of the human person that subsists in Nigeria today. As Ratzinger states: “One must know oneself as one really is if one is to know God. The real medium, the primordial experience of all experiences, is that man himself is the place in which and through which he experiences God.”<sup>59</sup>

We can do this most by paying attention to works of fiction that come out of Africa today. Many of these works, aptly express desires or dreams than philosophical sobriety can.<sup>60</sup> Fortunately, we have an abundance of them nowadays, and they also have been gathering international awards (again the continuous contact).<sup>61</sup> We also must pay attention to the music that trends nowadays. Some of these songs not only reveal the influence of the West but also conceals some of the persistent African ideas.<sup>62</sup> I think we need in our seminaries courses on contemporary African literature. Future priests sitting down and analyzing the ideas of the human persons we have in this novel will equip them with a good knowledge of the context that they will work in. It will also give them an idea of themselves and how much of these ideas show up in their own thinking. It is a tremendous epistemological and metaphysical task that is necessary. If it is not done, we are going

nowhere. It is easy to think we can change our structures or politicians but if we still have the same thinking about the human person, every change will be an illusion.

After we have studied the humanity that has emerged out of this contact, we must hold this humanity against the standard of the *Logos* both in terms of rationality and in his Person, Jesus Christ. This is because, “Christ is like a signpost indicating where humanity is tending”<sup>63</sup> This is the only way we can have in the words of Ela “another history, another society, another humanity, another system of production, another style of living together.”<sup>64</sup> What Jesus actually wants is not for us to change our bad water/poor water into a cleaner one which is what the sociological interpretation of our condition will do. What is required by our philosophical and theological investigations into our understanding of man in Africa is to change our water, whether poor, dirty or clean into wine.<sup>65</sup> As Sarah Oakley notes

Theology involves not merely the metaphysical task of adumbrating a vision of God, the world, and humanity, but simultaneously the epistemological task of cleansing, reordering, and redirecting the apparatuses of one’s own thinking, desiring, and seeing.<sup>66</sup>

This may be difficult to even start to think about but as Rumi once wrote “If the nut of the mystery can’t be held, at least let me touch the shell.”<sup>67</sup>

### **Conclusion**

With that, we return to the question of Faith and Vocation as certainties. Our Faith should be rooted in the person of Jesus Christ, the second Adam, from whom alone the Christian picture of man can be correctly developed.”<sup>68</sup> However our vocation is a calling from a Pentecostal reality which has a distorted vision of man to proclaim a vision of man ‘most human of man’<sup>69</sup> We, therefore, need men in our seminaries who have their eyes fixed straight on God, and who learn from him what true humanity is because God returns among men only through men who are touched by God.<sup>70</sup> This reiterates the position that

Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction<sup>71</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger *Introduction to Christianity*, (trans. J.R. Foster. With a New Preface trans. Michael J. Miller, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 69.

<sup>2</sup> Ratzinger *Introduction*, 70.

<sup>3</sup> See *vocare* in John C. Traupman, *The Bantam New College Latin & English Dictionary*, (3d ed., New York: Bantam Dell, 2007), 453.

<sup>4</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1959), 89.

<sup>5</sup> *The Cloud of Unknowing with the Book of Privy Counsel: A New Translation by Carmen Acevedo Butcher*, (Boulder: Shambhala, 2009), 12.

<sup>6</sup> Saint Cyran as quoted by Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 173

<sup>7</sup> While I am of the opinion that Colonialism holds a prime place in the disruption of Life as Africans as we know it (a disruption in which they have little or no say), it is only but the beginning of a contact that continues till date. That is why my focus will be on contact which for me is imperfective in character and not aoristic. Cf. Sandra R. Shimoff, “Banquets: The Limits of Hellenization,” *Journal for the Study of Judaism*, XXVII, 4. (1996): 440-452. Shimoff notes that “When two cultures compete for allegiance of a single people, the politically weaker culture has three options: Assimilation, rejection or accommodation... accommodation to the dominant culture while maintaining cultural identity and integrity may be the only option that allows for survival.”

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Smith, *The Scramble for Europe: Young Africa on its Way to the Old Continent* (Cambridge, Polity, 2019), 33.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Smith, *The Scramble for Europe*, 79

<sup>10</sup> Benedict XVI *Africae Munus* ([http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_exh\\_20111119\\_africae-munus.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20111119_africae-munus.html)) No11.

<sup>11</sup> Lieven Boeve, “Christ, Humanity and Salvation” *The Ratzinger Reader: Mapping a Theological Journey* (ed. Lieven Boeve and Gerard Mannion, (New York: T&T Clark, 2010), 51-79.

<sup>12</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, “The Dignity of the Human Person” in H. Vorgimler (ed.) *Commentary on the Documents of the Documents of Vatican II: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Vol 5, New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), 115-163.

<sup>13</sup> Jean-Marc Éla *My Faith as an African* (trans. John Pairman Brown and Susan Perry, Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock, 2009), xv.

<sup>14</sup> Iku ya ju esin is a Yoruba Proverb which loosely translates “death is better than shame.”

<sup>15</sup> Cf. “Letter from Africa: Why Nigeria’s internet scammers are ‘role models’ “, September 23, 2019 in <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-49759392>

<sup>16</sup> A good name is better than gold and silver. (cf. Proverbs 22.1). Though a Biblical Proverb, it has a home even before the biblical in many languages/ethnic groups with an emphasis on honesty as the best policy.

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<sup>17</sup> John Segun Odeyemi *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nations: West Africa as a Case Study for a Global Phenomenon* (Eugene, Oregon, Wipf & Stock, 2019), 55.

<sup>18</sup> Anthonio Spadaro, "The Prosperity Gospel: Dangerous and Different." (<https://lacivitatattolica.com/free-articles/>) Published Date: 18 July 2018.

<sup>19</sup> John Segun Odeyemi *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nations*, 32.

<sup>20</sup> John Segun Odeyemi *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nations*, 13

<sup>21</sup> Ebenezer Obadare *Pentecostal Republic: Religion and the Struggle for State Power in Nigeria*, (London: Zed Books, 2018), 22.

<sup>22</sup> John Segun Odeyemi *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nation*, 55.

<sup>23</sup> Odeyemi, *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nation*, 51.

<sup>24</sup> Odeyemi, *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nation*, 33

<sup>25</sup> Emmanuel Katongole, "The Gospel as Politics in Africa" *Theological Studies* 77:3 (2016): 704-720.

<sup>26</sup> Mercy Amba Oduyoye "Commonalities: An African Perspective" in *The World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences: Papers and Reflections from the Second General Assembly of the Ecumenical Association of Third World Theologians, December 1986, Oaxtepec, Mexico* (ed. K.C Abraham, Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1990): 100-104.

<sup>27</sup> Jean-Marc Éla *My Faith as an African*, xvi.

<sup>28</sup> Lieven Boeve, "Christian Faith, Church and the World" *The Ratzinger Reader: Mapping a Theological Journey* (ed. Lieven Boeve and Gerard Mannion, (New York: T&T Clark, 2010): 119-138.

<sup>29</sup> Joseph Ratzinger as quoted in *The Ratzinger Reader* 169

<sup>30</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person" 157

<sup>31</sup> Odeyemi, *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nation*, 52.

<sup>32</sup> Stephen Smith, *The Scramble for Europe*, 62

<sup>33</sup> Odeyemi, *Pentecostalism and Catholic Ecumenism in Developing Nation*, 15

<sup>34</sup> *The World Theologies: Commonalities and Divergences*, 35

<sup>35</sup> Obadare *Pentecostal Republic*, 30.

<sup>36</sup> Acts 17:28

<sup>37</sup> Horst Robert Balz and Gerhard Schneider *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, (1990), 2, 357.

<sup>38</sup> Joseph Komonchak, Mary Collins and Dermot A. Lane, *The New Dictionary of Theology* (2000), 601.

<sup>39</sup> Balz and Schneider, 357.

<sup>40</sup> Komonchak, 601.

<sup>41</sup> Thomas H. Tobin, "The Prologue of John and Hellenistic Jewish Speculation" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 52 (1990):252-269.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas H. Tobin, "The Prologue of John" 256

<sup>43</sup> Tobin, "Prologue of John" 257.

<sup>44</sup> Tobin, "Prologue of John" 266

<sup>45</sup> Tobin, “Prologue of John” 266.

<sup>46</sup> Balz and Schnedider, 357.

<sup>47</sup> Tobin, “Prologue of John” 267-268.

<sup>48</sup> Joseph Ratzinger *Dogma and Preaching: Applying Christian Doctrine for Daily Life*, (trans. Michael J. Miller and Matthew J.O. O’Connell, Edited by Michael J. Miller, San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 188.

<sup>49</sup> Elio Guerriero *Benedict XVI: His Life and Thought* (trans William J. Melcher, San Francisco: Ignatius, 2018), 367.

<sup>50</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger *Introduction to Christianity*, 139.

<sup>51</sup> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, (trans Sister Mary Frances McCarthy, S.N.D. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 325. My idea of the primacy of the logos is from here.

<sup>52</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *A Turning Point for Europe? The Church in the Modern World: Assessment and Forecast* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed. trans. Brian McNeil, C.R.V, Foreword. James V. Schall, S.J. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994), 110

<sup>53</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *A Turning Point*, 112.

<sup>54</sup> Elio Guerriero *Benedict XVI*, 432

<sup>55</sup> Interestingly, this is also a trend in the Western World where there is now an established distinction between being religious and spiritual. There is also an increase belief (misguided I think) that Psychedelics can induce religious-like experience. This argument holds that at best Psychedelics can replace religion or at worst become its substitute/alternative. This is the position of Michael Pollan “seems to me the great gift of the psychedelic journey, especially to the dying: its power to imbue everything in our flied of experience one heightened sense of purpose and consequence. Depending on one’s orientation, this can be understood either in humanistic or in spiritual terms—for what is the Sacred but a capitalized version of significance?... Religion has always understood this wager, but why should religion enjoy a monopoly?” *How to Change your Mind: What the New Science of Psychedelics Teaches Us about Consciousness, Dying, Addiction, Depression, and Transcendence* (New York: Penguin, 2018), 355. It is obvious that the notion of religion as argued in Pollan’s work does not capture Christianity as I have argued so far. This is not to say Christianity has not overseen some absurd and irrational events. I am arguing that such moments have been corruption of the Christianity.

<sup>56</sup> Elnathan John, *Be(com) ing Nigerian: A-GUIDE*, (Abuja: Cassava Republic, 2019), 12.

<sup>57</sup> One of the classes I took with Fr Jimoh is Epistemology.

<sup>58</sup> Elio Guerriero *Benedict XVI*, 432

<sup>59</sup> Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 354

<sup>60</sup> Rémi Brague *The Kingdom of Man: Genesis and Failure of the Modern Project*, (trans. Paul Seaton, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2018).

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<sup>61</sup> Chigozie Obioma, *An Orchestra of Minorities* New York: Little Brown and Company, 2019. Ayobami Adebayo *Stay with Me* (New York: Vintage Books,

2018); Akwaeke Emezi, *Freshwater* (New York: Grove Press, 2018). One must also mention a writer like Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie who has published some bestsellers like *Purple Hibiscus*, *Half of a Yellow Sun* and *Americanah*.

<sup>62</sup> I find interesting a Podcast *Jesus and Jollof* by ‘two proudly Nigerian women’ talking about the things they love, their stories and life in general. The interesting part is that while they are first generation immigrants in America, they exhibit in their show persistent Nigerian values.

<sup>63</sup> Joseph Ratzinger *Dogma and Preaching* 194

<sup>64</sup> Jean-Marc Éla *My Faith as an African*, 84

<sup>65</sup> Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 324.

<sup>66</sup> Sarah Oakley as quoted in Lauren F. Winner *The Dangers of Christian Practice: On Wayward Gifts, Characteristic Damage, and Sin*. (New Haven: Yale University Press 2018), 179.

<sup>67</sup> *The Essential Rumi*, (trans. Coleman Barks, New York: HarperOne, 2004), 65.

<sup>68</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, “The Dignity of the Human Person” 120

<sup>69</sup> Aidan Nichols, *The Thought of Benedict XVI: An Introduction to the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger*, (new ed. New York: Burn and Oates, 2007), 87.

<sup>70</sup> Joseph Ratzinger as quoted in *The Ratzinger Reader*, 132-33

<sup>71</sup> Benedict XVI *Deus Caritas Est No 1*