

**PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN
CHEPTAIS, MT ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA COUNTY DURING SLDF CONFLICT
2006-2008 USING CHRISTIAN LIBERATION APPROACH**

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STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original Study and has not been submitted to any College or University for academic award. All Information from other sources and my main respondents has been duly acknowledged.

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This Study has been submitted for examination with our approval as University Supervisors.

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DEDICATION

The work is dedicated to my parents, Mr. Gerry and Mrs. Gerry Chenomor, and to my brothers Kennedy Kwemoi and Michael Micha, who have always supported me and encouraged me to pursue my dreams. You have inspired and motivated me to be the best that I can be.

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ACRONYMS

KDF	-	Kenya Defence Force
KNCHR	-	Kenya National Commission of Human Rights
MOH	-	Ministry Of Health
RCC	-	Roman Catholic Church
SDA	-	Seventh Day Adventist
SLDF	-	Sabaot Land Defence Force
PCEA	-	Presbyterian Church of East Africa
PPI	-	Pastoral Programme Instruction

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the challenges encountered by the RCC during the SLDF war in Cheptais division Mount Elgon region in Bungoma county using Christian liberation Approach. It aimed at investigating the problems and impacts faced by the Church. It therefore focused on empowering the Church to handle these challenges effectively as it strives to restore peace and reconciliation among the victims of war and the offenders who are the Ex- SLDF militias. The study was based on both the anthropological and theological as it examines the Church doctrines and theologian's reflection on liberation.

The main goal of the study was to investigate challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region during the SLDF war using Christian liberation approach. It was achieved through the following specific objectives: To investigate the challenges facing the Church as a result of SLDF war in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma county; To evaluate the impact of the SLDF war on the Church in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma county; To examine ecclesial teachings and theological reflections on liberation in view of fruitful Church ministry in Mount Elgon region; To draw summary, implications of the study, emerging recommendations and conclusion, and point out area for further research. The main hypothesis of the study was that there are significant Church teachings and theological reflections that can be applied in addressing the challenges of the Church, through proper Christian liberation approach in Mount Elgon. The study was guided by the following specific hypotheses: The Church faces challenges as a result of the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County that need to be addressed; There was a significant impact of SLDF war in the above locality; Theological reflections on liberation are necessary in helping the RCC address the challenges they encountered from SLDF war. Deducing from the hypothesis stated the Church and the families in Mount Elgon region are empowered to effectively handle the challenges they encounter with the view of maintaining peace and reconciliation as the "Family of God" within the Church. The challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region that need to be addressed through Christian liberation approach are very crucial in the current study.

There are invaluable implications and emerging recommendations from the study that may be benevolently used to empower the Church and people in Mount Elgon Region. It will effectively embrace the challenges they are confronted with so as to be influential in their ministry of Jesus in advocating for peace and reconciliation. For instance, the Church as well as the government should put up structures that will enhance amicable unity, peace and reconciliation; it should put more initiative to support the small Christian communities in the Mount Elgon region.

The study was guided in its methodology and implementation of the above objectives and hypotheses by three inter-related theories namely: Mediation theory expounded by Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff, Redaction criticism theory expounded by exponents such as Kasemann, Bornkamm, and Conzelmann among others and Choice theory a new psychology of personal freedom expounded by Glasser. Mediation theory guides the study in procedural way of data collection, analysis and way forward, through the three mediations namely: socio-analytical mediation; hermeneutical mediation and practical mediation. Redaction criticism theory complements the first theory as a critical tool of sourcing scientifically and in a scholarly manner from the Christian main sources i.e., Scriptures and Tradition. Choice theory focuses on human

environment where they are prone to make and have options on how to behave of which the expression of their action are reflected from a personal preference. Those choices are imbued with an intrinsic drive which is associated with certain basic needs that are set up in the inborn structures of humanity. The theory helps to explain how the Church efforts in promoting peace, reconciliation and harmony in Mount Elgon region. The Church has to make a mindful choice in order to establish structures that will necessitate for a long enduring solutions in regard to making a practical outcome of solidarity, love and unity among the members of the Church viewed as the “Family of God.”

The data was collected using both primary and secondary sources and sampling of the respondents was done through a Non-Probability purposive technique. From the study findings and analysis, awareness was created that the Church has the role of enhancing peace and reconciliation and as a custodian of social conscience. In that regard, the study therefore, calls upon the Church to effectively use her pastoral agents to collectively participate in enhancing love peace and reconciliation as a fundamental ministry encouraging people by providing proper significant pastoral care that would empower the members of the ‘Family of God’ to be in better position to handle the effects of the compelling existential problems.

In addition, the study pointed out some of the challenges the Church encountered during the SLDF war as well as the impacts of the war. Furthermore, the study explicated that the role of maintaining peace and justice is not only confined to the Church but to every individual and the community at large as the core principles to help in curbing the challenges encountered in their daily situation – each being enabled to play one’s role towards the welfare and genuine realization of the “Family of God.”

Moreover, through the use of Christian liberation approach, the study view Jesus Christ as a model of liberation that should be emulated by His disciples and followers in the contemporary society. Liberation was exemplified by Jesus who chose to be the poor though rich working with the poor and through His fundamental teachings and ministry through His exemplary life, death and resurrection thus having a good number of followers as the community of believers.

DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS

African Christian Theology: It is integrating African cultures with the Good News. In the study it is operationalized to mean: A systematic and scientific understanding, presentation and concrete authentic interpretation of the Christian faith/Gospel/Good News in accordance with the needs, aspirations, thought forms and mentality of the Africans i.e., an ongoing evangelization process of confronting Christianity with the African cultures (Wachege, 2012).

Church: Is the community of those who have committed themselves to the person and of Jesus Christ and who bear witness to it as hope of all men and women. Substantially linked with the redeemer and savior, the Church is not isolated, self-satisfied religious association, but a community which forms a comprehensive community with others (Kung, 1995).

Conscientization: The ensemble of meanings and significations, values and models, underlying or incorporated into the activity and communication of a human group into the activity and regard by it as a proper and distinctive expression of its human reality (Asevedo, 1994). Conscientization: It is helping to learn to perceive social, political and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality (Freire, 1998).

Liberation Theology: It is a theological moment of the experience of Christian faith when it undertakes to consciously transform a world in a situation of dependence on the basis of the Gospel (Boff, 1982).

Sabaot Land Defence Force: An armed guerrilla militia operating in the Mount Elgon region in Kenya. Sabaot is a Nilotic ethnic group of Kalenjin community, which lives in Mt Elgon region in Kenya. The other Kalenjin sub-communities are: Kipsigis, Marakwet, Tugen, Pokot, Elgeyo, Nandi, Sebei, and Terik.

Single mother: A lady or a girl or a woman who has a baby or babies, a child or children, outside marriage or within wedlock when the husband walks out on her or she is out or is unusually confined/distant or die (Wachege, 2003)

Single parenting: family mode which embraces both the single fathers and mothers (Cherono, 2004).

World-view: Respective people's philosophy of life. In this study the term will be employed to mean "how an individual, a society, a community, a nation or a historical epoch views, sees, conceives or understands the world, and the reaction which follows there from" (Wanjohi, 1997).

CHAPTER ONE

STUDY'S OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

The chapter will focus on the Background to the study, and outline the statement of the research problem which will enable us to understand the Goal and objective of the study. Furthermore the Scope and limitation will provide an in-depth view of focusing on the selected research area. The Literature review will provide an important dialogue of secondary data that is related to the study. Finally the study will also discuss theories related to the work, the research hypotheses and thereafter describe the methodological approach used in the study and have the concluding remarks.

1.2 Background to the Study

After Kenya gained her independence in 1963, she inherited from the colonialists a distorted land policy system, and the individualism of land ownership that contributed to creation of animosity among the Kenyan citizens. The issue of land dispute be it communal or individual land ownership in Kenya is very critical, sensitive as well as an emotive one which requires due attention. This is attributed mainly to Kenya and Africa at large which is highly dependent on land as a source of livelihood and economic growth. Therefore, it is every individual's interest to own property in form of land for survival. The land question in Kenya can be traced from the colonial period to post and neo-colonial era.¹ The issue on land ownership is increasingly becoming a source of conflict in Kenya at large e.g. Land conflicts can lead to individual loss and fray fabric of communities; others can cause large-scale displacements of people or war. Furthermore, the issue of land conflicts in a country results to deterioration of a country's religious, social and economic factors that depletes its development.

Land disputes can arise between land holders and their neighbours, relatives or landlords. It can also occur after war when displaced people eventually decide to go back to their ancestral land and may find their land occupied by other people. However, all land conflicts, no matter

¹ L. Adam, *'Land Reform and Socio-economic Change in Kenya,'* Essays on Land Laws: The Reform Debate in Kenya (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2000), p. 192.

how pacifist or turbulent they are, they produce negative consequences for individuals, families, society as well as the entire country². For instance Kenya experienced and continues to experience land conflicts as a result of 2007 post election violence that rocked the country. Many people fled from their homes and land where they had lived and owned land.

Biblically, the scripture asserts that God promises land to the people of Israelites. However, the dispute over land is depicted when the Jews were at war with their neighbors over land issues. The land known as the Promised Land or Israel, named after Abraham's Grandson, whose descendants are the Jewish people, is described repeatedly in the Torah as a good land and a land flowing with milk and honey (Ex 3:8). However, the land was repeatedly abused by conquerors that were determined to make the land uninhabitable for the Jews. It is an indication that land related violence is as old as the history of humanity (Gen 12:7,13:15,15:18,17:8 ; Num 33:53).

The study focuses on the challenges encountered by the Church triggered by Sabaot Land Defence force (SLDF) war between 2006 and 2008. The SLDF militia emerged in 2005 in an attempt to resist government plan to evict squatters in the Chebyuk area of Mount Elgon region. Since 2005, the SLDF militia activities expanded and became more violent. Immediately before and after the 2007 general election the SLDF became unbearably chaotic. During that particular period the security pioneered by the Kenya police failed to control the swift evolving armed militia as it wrecked havoc in Mt Elgon that led to displacement of thousands of people, rape, mutilation, death and torture³ just to mention a few impacts. The number of people displaced by the violence is approximately estimated to range between 66,000 and 200,000.⁴

In regard to the aforementioned, it is important to bear in mind that: "the Social values within the family create relationships of trust and promote dialogue within the society, it also promotes attention to one another, unity, warmth and safeguarding the common good."⁵ Where such values are nurtured and cultivated in the Church to enhance unity and love amongst the people. When said values fail within the society it creates a challenge to the Church to restore the same values

² M. Getui, *From Violence to Peace, a challenge for African* (Nairobi: Acton Publisher, 2003), p. 61.

³ Human Rights Watch "All the Men have Gone "War Crimes in Mount Elgon Conflict", 2008, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵ A.R.Ndianye, "Church as Family or Family as Church" in A.E Orobator (Ed). *The Church we Want: Foundations, Theology and Mission of the Church in Africa* (Nairobi: Pauline's Publication Africa, 2015), p. 158.

keeping in mind that the Church is identified as the “Family of God.”⁶ When the families are triggered off with challenges especially as a result of war, the Church cannot be exempted. It stimulates us to wonder and reflect on the challenges facing the Church in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County as a result of war. The Church as the family of God played an impressive role of refuge during the war. However, there are challenges encountered by the Church of which the study sought to investigate.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The war in Mount Elgon was triggered by several factors and key among them is ownership of land. Deducing from the militia name, Sabaot Land Defence Force (SLDF) is a key indicator of the contentious factor. It is within the prerogative of the government under the Constitution of Kenya 2010, chapter five article 60 accords to protect the property of her citizen’s.⁷ The government brought sanity in the area after so much damage had been done. The Church was not left behind either coming in to assist those who were affected directly or indirectly. The Church and in particular Roman Catholic Church (henceforth RCC) have been in existence in the affected area with the goal of preaching a holistic Gospel. The duty of the Church has been characterized by preaching the Gospel for spiritual nourishment, provision of education, building hospital, and mediation during community or family conflicts and social transformation of the society. The authority of the Church as a non-partisan institution and peace makers (Mt 5:9) cannot be overstated. The RCC with her huge hierarchical systems, vast presence, great scholars and organized structures could not prevent the war despite a spirited and concerted effort. Thus it became a responsibility of the Church to deal with the challenges during and after the SLDF war.

Land dispute has been a problem in the region and the country at large since colonial period. There have been persistent challenges which have triggered war and displacement among the members of the region. It is prudent to mention that these challenges, did not only affect the government but the Church as well. The families are the immediate members of the Church in the region, who as the result of war were displaced from their original home environment. Nyamiti notes that communality, as one of the five aspects in African worldview, influences the

⁶ Pope John Paul II, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 14th September, 1995, no. 63.

⁷ The Constitution of Kenya, 2010 (Nairobi: The National Council for Law Reporting), Art. 60 (1) (b).

fullness of life.⁸ The SLDF war contributed to enmity and blame in families and thus the Cheptais RCC and other Church was put in a position of ensuring there was unity by enhancing peace, reconciliation, acting as a consoler to victims of war bearing in mind that the Church is the “Family of God.”⁹ It is needless to mention that the Cheptais RCC faced an uphill task in walking this tight- roped path considering that the Churches are open to everyone regardless of enmities that existed between their members. In view of these imminent challenges, the study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. What challenges did the Church face as a result of SLDF war in Mount Elgon region?
2. What is the impact of SLDF war in the growth of the Church in Mount Elgon Region?
3. How can the Church teachings and theological reflections on liberation necessitate a fruitful Church ministry?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main goal of the study is to investigate the challenges encountered by Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County during the SLDF war using Christian liberation approach. It was achieved through the following specific objectives;

1. To investigate the challenges facing Cheptais RCC as a result of SLDF war in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma County.
2. To evaluate the impact of the SLDF war on Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma county.
3. To discuss the suitability of Christian liberation theology as a means of investigating the SLDF war challenges to the Church for a fruitful/meaningful ministry in Mount Elgon and elsewhere.

1.5 Justification of the Study

The RCC is one of mainstreams Churches in the region which include the Seventh Day Adventist Church (SDA) and Presbyterian Church of East Africa (henceforth PCEA). A

⁸ C.Nyamiti, *Studies in African Christian Theology Vol. 1- Jesus Christ the Ancestor of Humankind: Methodological and Trinitarian Foundation*, (Nairobi: CUEA, 2005), pp. 9ff.

⁹ Pope John Paul 11, *Ecclesia in Africa*, 14th september1995, no. 63.

disinterested observer would expect the Church to play a significant role in ministering to the people in the region in their diverse situations of life such as challenges caused by the SLDF war to complement the reconciliation efforts by the community. The Churches are universal in task of evangelization and embracing the society with the challenges they face by enhancing peace, reconciliation and humanitarian aid/community service in consort's ecclesial fellowship. In addition to these tasks, the RCC in particular has been in existence in the affected area working towards the goal of mediation during community or family conflicts and social transformation of the society. Such panoramic view of ecclesia communities affirms the image of the 'Family of God' as discussed by Synod of African bishops.¹⁰ The image was recommended to enhance unity and love among the members in the society.

Cheptais RCC remains to be one of the significant Churches particularly in Mount Elgon region, where many residents ran to seek refuge during the SLDF war. Cheptais RCC and its surroundings were chosen as the area of study because they bore the blunt of intensified fighting that led to much loss of lives. The military forces commenced the operation in various divisions in the region in a bid to flush out the SLDF militia in order to restore peace in area. The security forces sought to repossess peace in the area by finding out the hiding areas of the SLDF suspects. Residents fled to hiding in Cheptais division, which is the main trading center in the region while many others were converged with their relatives in the area.¹¹ As a result, the military forces directed its operations towards Cheptais where the government intelligence ascertained that the SLDF were hiding. Therefore, during that confrontation between the SLDF and the security forces, the Church in Cheptais region was severely affected as a result of SLDF war.

Mount Elgon region is referred as "Mountain of Terror."¹² Hence the common assumption is that the Church was not excluded from the violence that occurred in the region and thus experienced real challenges to worry about. The SLDF war in the region was very intense and beyond a militia. It was perceived as more military- like in comparison with other kind of conflicts such as the cattle wrestling, sporadic violence and outlawed groups among others. The SLDF was accused of terrorizing the local community through physical insult, threats and

¹⁰ Pope John Paul 11, *Ecclesia in Africa (The Church in Africa)*, 14th September 1995. no. 63.

¹¹Kenya National Commission of Human Rights "*The Mountain of terror*," May 2008. p. 31.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 31.

committing a variety of atrocities including murder, rape, theft, torture and destruction of property¹³ that led to diverse challenges that affected the Church and the community at large.

Moreover, SLDF in Mount Elgon region is a militia that emerged from within the community clans. It was one of the most rampaging wars that took toll of the community's interpersonal co-existence. It was a war that left others with permanent marks as a result of torture, repression and displacement of people triggered by the intense conflict that arose because of land disputes.¹⁴ It was also a prolonged war compared to other cases of war for instance Al-Shabaab terrorist attacks that attack occasionally. In the period between 2006- 2008, the humiliation by the SLDF was very intense that it created havoc in the region. During the same period is when the government chipped in to ensure ceasefire by the use of Kenya Defence Forces (KDF) military.¹⁵

However, these disputes entirely affected the community at large in all aspects that united them. The Church as well was affected both directly and indirectly; it lost a good number of its members through displacement while some lost hope to attend Church services. The Church, for instance, was expected to create harmony amongst the society members by ensuring the victims of the war who sought rescue in the Church are protected from the SLDF warriors. Notwithstanding the above, some evictees felt unsafe in the Church due to betrayal. The study therefore sought to investigate such among other challenges encountered by the Cheptais RCC and its environs during the SLDF war that took place between 2006 -2008.

1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

The study is limited to investigating the challenges encountered by Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region, during the SLDF war using Christian liberation approach. With the awareness that there are different kinds of wars, for instance, the Al-Shabaab terrorism, cattle wrestling, outlawed groups among others. The study limited itself to this kind of war because it emerged from within the community of Mount Elgon, was intense and created animosity within Mount Elgon region and the entire country. Moreover, the study limits itself to Cheptais RCC as the

¹³ Human Rights Watch, *All the Men have Gone "War Crimes in Kenya's Mt Elgon Conflict," Mt Elgon District, July, 2008, p. 31.*

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 19ff

¹⁵ Kenya National Commission on Human Rights *"The Mountain of Terror" May 2008, p. 4.*

area of study due to the fact that Cheptais RCC and its environs was a hot spot of the fighting and the Church was also the key rescue center for the victims. Cheptais area is also the economic hub of Mount Elgon region.

Yet there is another rationale for opting for this locality; Mount Elgon region is considered a “mountain of terror.”¹⁶ The common assumption is that there is a serious problem in the Church triggered by the war. The family-hood as far as the society in the region is concerned was as well not spared at all. The study therefore sought to explore the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war in the region. The study sought to use a case of Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region for more comprehensive understanding of challenges facing the Church.

1.7 Literature Review

Cone in his book titled *God of the Oppressed*,¹⁷ enriches the study by pointing to God as the sole liberator of the oppressed. The authentic liberation of an individual is achieved only in the terrain of an oppressed community in the fight for freedom. Knowing that God’s freedom for humanity is the divine liberation of the oppressed from bondage, human freedom as response to Gods gracious liberation is an act of goodwill for our sisters and brothers who are oppressed. He goes on to point out that freedom cannot be realized unless those who are hungry are fed, the sick are healed and justice is given to the poor. However, Cone did not mention any particular oppression within a given community. The study therefore, filled the gap by focusing on those oppressed as a result of SLDF war in Cheptais, among the Sabaot community in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County.

Bujo in his book titled, *The Ethical Dimension of Community*¹⁸ discusses on the importance of the community for the benefit of ethical action, taking an example of HIV/AIDS. Bujo states that for African community the aspect of concern is depicted in African thought as well as action which are fully determined by the community. Noting that an individual’s ethical behavior has a repercussion for the entire community, the good action promotes life while evil destroys life. He mentions that the community takes a deep sense of concern especially when misfortunes and sicknesses are realized in the community life. This indicates that, safe health is integrated into

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 1.

¹⁷ J. H. Cone, *God of the oppressed* (Mary knoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1997), pp. 134-135.

¹⁸ B. Bujo, *The Ethical Dimension of Community* (Nairobi: Paulines Publication Africa, 1998), p. 182.

the community as the environment where vitality grows.¹⁹ He precisely points out AIDS as a disease that has to trigger individuals to focus on their relationships in society and that integration of communitarian thoughts, action and conscience can help curb the AIDS epidemic.

However, the Church as the community of believers, communitarian thoughts and action are part of her.²⁰ Therefore, the Church cannot be left out because it has a duty to ensure its members live a life of dignity. It is also responsible for bringing forth constructive criticisms for effective ethical reforms. Nevertheless, Bujo does not mention the challenge of AIDS in a particular Church within a particular community. The study has filled this gap by concretizing Bujo's good ideas in a particular case of Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region.

Magesa's book titled *The Post-Conciliar Church in Africa, No Turning Back The Clock* clearly talks of violence, justice and reconciliation in a whole environment saturated with war. He mentions 'that a community or a nation may have experienced conflict at hand, faced the consequences brought about by the war to the human life and the entire creation.'²¹ He talks of having reconciliation as a proper way of resolving conflict through dialogue or sincere communication.²² According to him, in the process of reconciliation, the "word" is very vital in addressing justice, peace and reconciliation. It does not primarily mean uttered speech since it goes beyond it²³ as the words reflects ones personality and attitudes which posses the power to heal or kill.

Magesa becomes significant to the study by pointing out how reconciliation process is important. However, he does not talk of what nature of conflict, and some of the challenges realized as a result of that conflict. A lacuna the study sought to fill by focusing investigating the challenges brought about by SLDF war. It opened ways for the researcher to carry out in-depth interviews in understanding and handling the reconciliation process. Hence, a reflection on how the Cheptais RCC in particular can be instrumental to enhance peace in Mount Elgon region.

Getui's et al book titled *From Peace To Violence Profoundly* enriches the study by discussing the issues of land violence in Kenya since the colonial era. He clearly mentions the causes of the

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 187.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 188.

²¹ L. Magesa, *The Post-Conciliar Church in Africa: No Turning Back the Clock*, (Nairobi: CUEA, 2016), pp. 158ff.

²² Ibid., p. 166.

²³ Ibid., p. 167.

land violence as well as its effects to the society and the economic development of the country.²⁴ Nevertheless, a shortcoming is identified where the author does not mention the disputes of land in a particular place. In addition he does not focus on the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of land disputes. A gap the study sought to fill by directing the focus on challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County as a result of SLDF war.

Kinoti and Waruta in the book titled *Pastoral Care in African Christianity* becomes of importance in the study. They mention a good number of challenges facing the Church in Africa. They define the Church as the ‘people of God’, where the Church in light of Vatican II and Post-Conciliar documents, describe the hierarchical nature of the Church which include the clergy and the laity. It points them as vital agents for the priesthood involvement to the call and witness of Christ as the savior. They discuss some of the challenges encountered by the Church since the second half of 19th century to the present day which has made the great impact on religious, culture, economic and social sectors. Some of the challenges named are, population explosion, famine, poverty, wars, and political oppression corruption among others²⁵. However since the time of Kinoti and Waruta’s study, society has continued to change and so have various problems. This study compliments their work by investigating the challenges the Church has encountered in recent times through a case study of Cheptais RCC in Mount Elgon region.

Leonardo Boff and his brother Clodovis Boff assist the study with mediation theory in their co-authored book titled, *Introducing Liberation Theology*.²⁶ It shows us how to go about sourcing the primary and secondary data together with drawing out the consequence of the research. The two renowned scholars become instrumental in the study by pointing out practical ways that are vital. They do that by identifying and explicating three methodological aspects which are: socio-analytical mediation²⁷ which assists the researcher to be on the ground, i.e. Cheptais RCC, Mount Elgon region Bungoma county; “hermeneutical mediation”²⁸ which helps the researcher to relate data gathered to the will of God to differentiate it from disciplines like anthropology or

²⁴ M. Getui, *From Violence to Peace: A Challenge for African Christianity* (Nairobi: Acton publishers, 2003), pp. 57-66.

²⁵ W. Waruta, H. Kinoti, *Pastoral Care in African Christianity* (Nairobi: Acton publishers, 2000), pp. 73-77.

²⁶ L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 3ff.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 24-32.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 32-39.

sociology; the third one is praxis i.e. “practical mediation”²⁹ that enables the researcher to draw the arising solutions as a way forward. Among the drawbacks though is that the theory does not show how to source from the Bible in a scientific manner to establish the will of God.

The gap is filled by redaction criticism theory propagated by exponents like Bornkamm, Fuchs and Kasemann as recorded by Collins³⁰ in the book titled *Introduction to the New Testament*; it benefits the study with Redaction criticism method of biblical study discussed by the author. It enriches the study with a critical tool for authentic sourcing from the Bible taking each Gospel as a literally composition considering each author. It enriches the study in making a scientific and scholarly sourcing from the Bible authentically and critically. Therefore, it enables the study in drawing relevant biblical inspirations in light of the subject to empower the Church at large.

Theology of Hope by Moltmann³¹ is another book which enriches our study by outlining that, hope maintains and upholds faith and keeps it moving on. It is hope which draws the believer to live a life of love; it is also the mobilizing and driving force of faith’s thinking, knowledge of and reflections on human nature, history and society. It enriches the study by pointing out that hope, faith and love work together. In regard to a particular case of the challenges encountered by the Church and its members of Cheptais RCC, Mount Elgon region, triggered by SLDF war. A shortcoming, however, is that Moltmann does not mention where our faith is to be directed to. A gap that the study fills through Moltmann’s other scholarly book entitled *The Crucified God*.

*The Crucified God*³² points out that the Christian faith is not based on one’s own faith; within ones experience in faith and ones decisions. But one has to believe in someone else who is more than one’s own faith, that faith can be understood only as identification with the crucified Christ. Although he does not mention the crucified Christ as the liberator, Sobrino³³ comes comprehensively to fill the lacuna by describing Jesus as the credibility of God’s love. He notes that Jesus cross is the expression of God’s love and that human beings did not love God but it is God who loved them and sent his son to be the atoning sacrifice for their sins(1 John 4:10). Due to our sinful nature Christ died for human being, an indication of a very important way of

²⁹ Ibid., pp. 39-41.

³⁰ R. F. Collins, *Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd Edition (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 192-220.

³¹ J. Moltmann, *Theology of Hope* (Bloomsbury street London: SCM, 1967), p. 33.

³² J. Moltmann, *The crucified God* (Bloomsbury street London: SCM, 1974), pp. 18-19.

³³ J. Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis books, 1993), pp. 230-231.

showing the Credibility of God's love and the relevance of Jesus as a liberator who loves and gives direction to inspire believers to be his active agents.³⁴ However, Sobrino does not mention other elements of love that should be emulated by the Church in Mount Elgon region.

Pope Francis' Apostolic *Exhortation: Amoris Laetitia (The Joy of Love)* comes in to fill the gap about life of love, by highlighting what love entails. For instance he notes that love is patient, love rejoices with others, love bears all things, love hopes all things, love endures, love is generous, love is not rude, love is not boastful, love is not jealous and love is forgiveness.³⁵ Such elements are critical in the study on focusing especially on causes and challenges of the Church in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County. Although, the element of love, faith and hope as discussed by Holy Father Francis does not focus on any particular ethnic community and their immediate situation. The study fills the gap by examining challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County, through Christian liberation approach, to handle their challenges effectively by practicing the spirit of love, hope and faith towards the realization of a better community.

Dulles' book titled *Models of the Church* enriches the study with models of the Church. He outlines the Church image as, "Church as the sacrament," "Church as an institution," "Church as herald," "Church as mystical communion," and "Church as servant."³⁶ Dulles' work which is vital in the study, does not mention the model of the Church as the "Family of God". The gap is filled by John Paul 11 Post-Synodal *Apostolic Exhortation: Ecclesia in Africa*³⁷, where the synod acknowledges all the images of the Church mentioned by Dulles. In addition to that, the synod recognizes the Church as, the "Family of God" that points the element of warmth in human relationship, unity and acceptance, dialogue and trust. The synod calls for integrals relationship of other images of the Church with the Church as the family of God so as to try to encourage reconciliation and true communion between the families in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County. Additionally, it strives to propagate effective ways of embracing the challenges the Church face by solving them amicably.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 12.

³⁵ Pope Francis, *Apostolic Exhortation Amoris Laetitia (Joy of Love)*, nos. 89-121.

³⁶ A .Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York: Double Day, 1987), pp. 34-102.

³⁷ John Paul 11, *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: Ecclesia in Africa*, no. 63.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by three theories namely, Mediation Theory, Redaction Criticism Theory and Choice theory a new psychology of personal freedom. Mediation Theory is propagated by the two Latin American brothers who are famous for Christian Liberation Approach to theology. These are Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff. They do it in their book titled *Introducing Liberation Theology*.³⁸ The theory gives three major aspects for a worthwhile involvement in a Christian liberation theology which are: Socio-analytical aspect; Hermeneutical aspect; and the Practical aspect also called Praxis. The Social-analytical mediation helped the researcher to insert oneself into the situation of the Church in Mount Elgon region get first-hand information with regard to their existence, their lifestyle, and the challenges they face and thereafter make a critical social analysis as to why they are what they are. In this useful social setting, the researcher was equipped with relevant related data in socio-religio-cultural economic areas.

Hermeneutical mediation was an engagement relating the data acquired to the will of God as found in the Bible. It was an exercise that was utilized in interpreting the findings in the above stage that provided the actual socio-religio-cultural economic conditions of the Church members who are in need of being liberated. It also assisted the Study to have a theological reflection thus distinguishing it from sociology and other disciplines since the Study is intended to be mainly theological. The Praxis mediation inspired the Study to come up with a viable way-forward as the contribution of the work. The concluding stage of liberation theology, the practical outcome of the Study for the welfare of the challenges of the Church in Mount Elgon region will be drawn to give an intended transformation for better. The praxis stage will also be significant in providing practical solutions to help transform the Church ministry for better.

The other theory that guided the Study is the Redaction Criticism Theory. It was propagated by Biblical scholars like Bornkamm, Käsemann, Marxsen, and Conzelmann as documented and explained by Collins in his book titled *Introduction to New Testament*.³⁹ The theory was employed to help the Study source from the Bible in a scholarly way. It has to be appreciated

³⁸ L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 24-39.

³⁹ R.F Collins, *Introduction to New Testament 2nd Edition* (London: SCM Press, 1992), pp. 196ff.

that we get the will of God – for instance, in finding out that it is not the will of God to have the Church facing challenges in Mount Elgon region and elsewhere - from this major Source of Christianity giving the Study a comprehensive Christian guidance. The theory, which is within historical critical method of Biblical Study, will help the researcher to draw inspirations from the Scriptures at an academic level for the good of the Church in Mount Elgon region and elsewhere.

The study was also guided by choice theory propagated by Glasser as documented in his book titled *Choice Theory a New Psychology of Personal Freedom*.⁴⁰ Choice theory suggests that an individual within the human environment he is prone to make and have choices on how to behave of which the expression of his/her action are reflected from a personal preference .The choices are imbued with an intrinsic drive which are linked to certain basic needs that are set up in the inherited structures of humanity. These basic needs for instance are expressed through personal power, freedom, love, having a joy and fun environment and the ability to survive. Furthermore, Glasser notes that prior to the satisfaction of the named basic needs, an individual has to make an attempt to conduct himself, take action, reason and feel. The component in regard, provides a platform to get what one wants in the society and in life. A divergence between what person wants depending on his needs and interest and what one has that belongs to him/her motivates the commencement of a growing internal behavior system.

The theory was instrumental in the study because it attempted to explain how the Church efforts in promoting peace, reconciliation and harmony in Mount Elgon region. It has to be based on a mindful choice in order to establish structures that will necessitate for long enduring solutions in regard to making a practical outcome of solidarity, love and unity within the members of the Church as the “Family of God” in Mount Elgon region. It is therefore important to note that the responsibility of the Church in promoting peace has to be contextualized by first involving the individuals in making rational choices. Reasons being that the Church encompasses individuals who are required to attend on their daily needs, hence encouraging them to become rational in order to satisfy their needs. At times, there are conflicts within an individual which results from a disagreement in internal feelings and what one is forced to do. In

⁴⁰ W. Glasser, *Choice Theory: A New Psychology of Personal Freedom* (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999), pp. 1ff.

such situations, it is important to initiate harmony which results to making rational choices for own and communal satisfaction.

1.9 Research hypotheses

The overall hypothesis of the study is that there are significant Church teachings and theological reflections that can be applied in addressing the challenges of the Church, through proper Christian liberation approach in Mount Elgon.

The following are the specific hypotheses for the Study:

1. The Church experienced challenges as a result of the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County that need to be addressed.
2. There was extreme impact of SLDF war on the Church in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma County.
3. Theological reflections on Christian Liberation are necessary in helping the Church address the challenges they encountered from SLDF war.

1.10 Methodology

The section discusses the methodology that the study engaged in the following manner; research design, target population, sample selection, data collection techniques and data analysis techniques. Although it opted for mainly qualitative approach, nevertheless, quantitative one was not be completely ignored. The two approaches were blended though with inclination towards the qualitative one.

1.10.1 Research Design

The study adopted a case study research design to investigate the challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County. This mode of research was selected because the study intended to gather in-depth primary data. Kombo and Tromp in their co-authored book titled *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction*,⁴¹ explains

⁴¹ D. K. Kombo and L. A. Tromp, *Proposal and Thesis Writing: an Introduction*, (Nairobi: Pauline's Publications, 2006), p. 72.

that a case study research design aims at describing a phenomenon in a holistic, detailed and contextual manner. The study aimed at investigating the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County hence the case study research design was the most applicable. The challenges encountered by the Cheptais RCC in the locality was used as examples since challenges that are experienced in the in other ecclesia community in the region cuts across.

Detailed Primary and secondary sources were used to collect first hand information and works related to the topic of study. Primary data was acquired by administering questionnaires to the informants, interviewing the informants face to face. Observation and focus group discussions were also used in collecting information in the area of study. Secondary data was obtained from scholarly books, Exhortations from Little Eden Library, Hekima Library and JKML. It enabled the researcher to examine, analyze and explain the challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region.

1.10.2 Target Population

The study was conducted in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County. Although the area is occupied by different mainstream Churches, the study targeted the RCC as one of the mainstream Church in the region. It enabled the researcher to conduct an in depth research so as to come out with deeper information. It enabled the researcher to portray the challenges of other religious affiliations in the region and thus useful to the study. The study population comprised members of the ecclesia community i.e. the parents, the youth, the priests and the local administrators in Mount Elgon region.

1.10.3 Sample Selection

First, the study used purposive sampling technique where fifteen respondents are drawn from Cheptais RCC, in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County. The sample involved the use of respondents that had the required information about the conflict and the challenges encountered by the Church at that particular time. The Informants worked closely with the researcher so as to effectively realize the aim of the study. Moreover, the researcher was able to acquire broader and deeper data which will be useful in providing helpful information to the readers. The RCC

leaders namely: Church priests, Church members and local administrators (chiefs and village elders). Among other crucial groups that were interviewed, were the victims of the war.

Secondly, the snow ball sampling technique was used. It enabled the researcher to reach other informants that are difficult to sample when using other sampling methods. It also required little planning and fewer workforces compared to other sampling techniques. Here, the researcher identified subjects with the said qualities. These subjects in turn mentioned others with the required characteristics, and more in-depth data. It particularly ensured that data gathered were relevant as it was from credible sources.

1.10.4 Data Collection Techniques

The study used structured interviews, together with the questionnaire method in gathering data on the Study topic. The primary data were captured from the respondents by way of questionnaires, interviews and personal interactions. In the undertaking Boff's Mediation Theory consisting of insertion cum social-analytical aspect, hermeneutical aspect and praxis were of great practical use. The researcher also engaged the Redaction Criticism Theory of historical critical method of Biblical Study as propagated by Kasemann, Bornkamm et.al. This assisted the Study in doing proper exegesis with reference to the relevant Biblical scriptures that concerns the Study. The Study benefitted by using insights from these Bible scholars useful for a lawful sourcing from the Gospel. Secondary data were collected from JKML, Wachege's Little Eden library, Hekima College library and Church Doctrines and Encyclicals.

1.10.4.1 Questionnaires

Questionnaires were used to obtain data from the parents and the youth. The study used both closed-ended and open-ended questions. From the closed-ended questions, the respondents were required to choose their responses from the choices given by the researcher. On the other hand, the open-ended questions gave the respondents the freedom to express their opinions and to respond in greater depth and write useful information that may not have been discovered. It also ensured that those individuals who were not involved in oral interviews could still participate in

the research. In his book titled *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques*,⁴² Kothari, asserts that the questionnaire has fewer biases in data presentation and can also be used over a large sample. A questionnaire was also easy to administer, cheaper and relatively confidential and bias in giving the data is minimal.⁴³ Three kinds of questionnaires were administered, to the Church leaders, Parents, and youth so that the researcher can gather diverse views from respondents who were able to give information on challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war.

1.10.4.2 Interview

The guided interview technique was used in gathering data on the research topic. It was helpful in gathering data from parents, especially those who were not able to fill the Questionnaires and those who were illiterate. Kothari⁴⁴ observes that in-depth interviews are useful when one is intensively investigating a particular matter. This enabled the researcher to gather detailed and in-depth information. Although interviews are more expensive, they allow flexibility for probing questions and clarification by either the researcher or the interviewee. The interviews were administered by the researcher herself. This device aimed at giving detailed and comprehensive understanding of the topic.

1.10.4.3 Observation

In order to achieve first hand information a visit to the sampled parents through insertion were made by the researcher. Interacting with the respondents enabled the researcher to examine the way and their living standards, their social interaction with one another and to experience the challenges the families go through, hence the Church as the 'Family of God' in Mount Elgon region. Kombo and Tromp in their book entitled *Proposal and Thesis Writing*,⁴⁵ indicate that structured observations are significant in focusing on specific patterns of behavior of the target population. Such behavioral patterns ought to be pre-defined in observation.

⁴² C. R. Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (New Delhi: Eastern Limited, 1985), p. 52.

⁴³ D. K. Kombo and L. A. Tromp, *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2006), p. 89.

⁴⁴ C.R Kothari, *Research Methodology: Methods and Techniques* (New Delhi: Eastern Limited, 1985), p. 110.

⁴⁵ D. K. Kombo and L. A. Tromp, *Proposal and Thesis Writing: An Introduction* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 2006), p. 95.

1.10.4.4 Focus Group Discussion

Focus group discussion was used by the researcher to collect data from the respondents. The technique was useful while gathering data on ones ideas, beliefs and opinions of a particular issue arising. It was fundamental in assessing needs, intervention; testing new ideas or programmes. In focusing the challenges encountered by the Church and the entire community at large. It was also important in collecting data on the opinions of parents, youth and priests in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County.

1.10.4.5 Data Analysis Technique

Since the study targeted qualitative data, descriptive methods were used to analyze the data collected. The responses to the questions in the questionnaire were reported by the descriptive narrative. The results of the study were compared with literature review to examine challenges of the Church in line with research objective. As Kombo and Tromp⁴⁶ noted, qualitative research enables systematic collection analysis and interpretation of data in order to provide descriptive accounts of social events and objects in a natural setting. The questionnaires were cross checked for completeness and any clarification were made with the respondents before the researcher picked it from the respondents. Data were be sorted to minimize errors, coded and analyzed thematically. The study also ensured to maintain the integrity of the report and the safety of the respondents; no informants were named in the study.

1.10.4.6 Ethical Considerations

In conducting the study the researcher was very careful in seeking appropriate and informed consent from the participants. The research aspects which comprise: the goal of the research, the intended use of the data, the time required for participation and the researcher's obligation to use cautious choice of words when addressing matters related to participants were carefully observed. The researcher ensured that the study adhered to human right, national policies and principles common in the area of the study. Additionally the researcher also paid rational

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 97.

consideration to regulations all through the course preparation of conducting research in the field and reporting of the data.

1.10.4.7 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

The chapter has focused on the Background of the study, and outlined the statement of the research problem which has enabled us to understand the Goal and objective of the study. In addition the Scope and limitation has provided an in-depth view of focusing on the selected research area. The Literature review has contributed to the work by explicating the dialogue of secondary material that is related to the study. In conclusion, the study has also discussed the theories related to the work and described the methodological approach used in the study. The chapter provides the basic understanding of the study which it gives a better position in handling the next chapter that focuses on the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war.

CHAPTER TWO

PROBLEMS FACING THE RCC IN MOUNT ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA COUNTY AS A RESULT OF SLDF CONFLICT

2.1 Introduction

The chapter will emphasize on various challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war in Mount Elgon as discussed below. These challenges led to huge negative consequences that disrupted the community peaceful coexistence without the exemption of the Church at large. With this reflection, the chapter turns to focus on the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war.

2.2 Death

Death is a reality in human life that affects the social relationship heavily. However, it becomes more painful saturated with grief especially in which way a person loses his/her life. As a result of the SLDF war that captured Mount Elgon region, it was a painful moment for the Church to participate in continuous involvement of burial ceremonies of its members. Majority of the members who died included the parents as well as the children who were not spared at all. It was a hectic challenge for the Church to console its members in such a difficult moment that they were facing. The role of the Church at that particular moment was expected to enhance unity, love and give strength to the bereaved. However the cases of death were highly reported in the Mount Elgon region as a result of the SLDF war. Death struck mainly through the following avenues:

2.2.1 Shootings by Bullet, Torture

During the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region people were killed by bullets, as well as torture by the militia, while others were hacked to death using machetes. Most of the victims who died this way were men, because they were on the frontline and actively participated in the war either

by fighting against the militia or being member of the militia.⁴⁷ The SLDF militia frightened the inhabitants in the Mount Elgon region, raped and stole possessions at will and admitted their version of justice and as a result, a number of people were killed through wound cuts and burns. It as well agonized and maimed the residents of Mount Elgon region. Some were killed because of land disputes while others were killed because they refused to fasten together and support the militia activities in the region.⁴⁸ A good number of youth and young men were mutilated leading to death because of their reluctance to unite with the SLDF militia.

2.2.2 HIV/AIDS

The spread of HIV/AIDS disease is also one of the challenges that contributed to death of a good number of Church members, hence a challenge the Church encountered. Wachege⁴⁹ notes that HIV/AIDS is not only a scourge in Kenya but a disaster, which has entirely affected a good number of families, which has sowed death and suffering in the community. A good number of the population in the Mount Elgon region is affected with the disease as a result of SLDF war. This was contributed by low male to female ratio in the region, because men were on the frontline and actively participated in the war. Therefore majority of women lost their husbands in the course of the war; they thus ended up sharing the few men in the area to satisfy their sexual pleasures, thus the spread of HIV/AIDS. The disease is also transmitted to the young school boys and girls some of them have died due to lack of medication and high poverty levels hence they cannot afford to buy the drugs. According to one of the respondents she admits that, “the SLDF war really caused havoc in the region, which is highly detrimental to the family and society. I have lost one of my young son due to the infection and at the moment I am nursing another one who has also been infected with the disease. This has contributed to high level of poverty in the family. We don’t know who to blame, is it the Church, SLDF militia the youth or the women who are infecting our children to satisfy their sexual desires because their husbands died. It is a challenge to us but we leave everything to God.”

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in turn endangers their academic endeavors’ as well as potentiality to be future leaders of the Church. It triggers the Church into a lot of shortcomings hence to find

⁴⁷ Human Rights Watch, *All the Men have Gone “War Crimes in Kenya’s Mount Elgon,”* Mount Elgon District, July, 2008, p. 20.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁴⁹ P. N. Wachege, *Living to Die, Dying to Live: African Christian Insights* (Nairobi: Media Options, 2002) p. 186.

ways of guidance to the society so as to minimize the death rates especially of the young future generation. Furthermore the synod of bishops clearly depicts the war against HIV/AIDS to be everyone's battle.⁵⁰ Therefore, the Church as well as the community has to participate heavily to be of assistance to the brother and sisters who are affected by the disease. The Church has the role to focus on providing mechanism for its members to know their status by seeking blood test and chip in to provide drugs to those affected by providing necessary help and guidance and counseling in order to see them live their life effectively.

2.3 Betrayal

Betrayal aspect was experienced within families and the community at large in Mount Elgon region. It was not easy to identify who the SLDF militias were; some of the militia were the immediate members of the Church, family members and others were close neighbors and were actively involved in Church activities. The members entirely participated in ruthless killing of their fellow Ecclesia members. The Church which played a role of a refugee camp was not entirely secure for the escapees since the Church was also not spared by the SLDF militia, hence the spirit of mistrust and doubt among the Church congregation. One of the informants narrates that he was betrayed by his close neighbor who they participated on various activities within the Church and even at the community level. He says his neighbor had joined the SLDF militia secretly and was recruiting other members to the militia. When was approached he refused to acknowledge his shortcoming and was forced to run for his life. He could not believe that his fellow Church mate could do that, but that was the reality. For him it sounds difficult to forgive such a person who betrayed him” This calls upon the Church to work more effectively to preach the unity peace and reconciliation, in order to cultivate that harmony within the family of God.

To date, the Church has been working effortlessly to nature the spirit of forgiveness and acceptance amongst the members of the Church and society at large. Although it is not an easy task for the Church to convince them, because majority of the informants say they are not in position to forgive those who betrayed them and led to the death of their fellow family members. Some say they will forgive and not forget, as well as not trusting those in the Church because they may betray them once more in case such war erupts again. The Church finds itself in a

⁵⁰ John Paul 11, *Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation: Ecclesia in Africa* (The Church in Africa), no. 63.

position to play its role more intensively and extensively in order to create harmony among its members. The Church is expected to bind, guide, support, educate, encourage⁵¹ and challenge its members to grow, love one another and be holistic as a family of a God. Dulles affirms that the Church has the “responsibility of spreading the Gospel of healing and consolidating the humanity.”⁵² Here, the Church is noted to be an instrument of salvation. This kind of harmonious unification should be done in Mount Elgon region in order to reconcile the members of the Church.

2.4 Land Challenges

The Church cannot be exempted from the issues of land particularly in Mount Elgon region. The Church was not involved at all to assist in land allocation so as to ensure fair distribution to the warring parties of the Sabaot community, as the land was the causal factor that led to war in the region. The cause of conflict in Mount Elgon can be traced back to the state schemes which regulated access to land ownership that were perpetuated by political favoritisms and the unfair methods of land distribution.⁵³ The main conflict was as a result of repeated allocations of land and evictions which highly contributed to displacement, hatred, fight, frustrations and dissatisfaction. In order to solve people’s demand for farming land, since the population had increased in the region has more land resources to meet their demands. A committee of elders co-opted by the Government authorities organized land distribution operation but rivalries arose between the two clans; the soy and Ndorobo as to who is the real owner of the expansive land. It prompted the Government to make a second outlook on reorganizing the land distribution. The Church did not play any role in such distribution of land as the government was the main epicenter in allocation. However the result of such rivalries’ affected the Church entirely. According to one of the informant, “the Church could have made a necessary contribution in ensuring neutral land distribution if given a chance and by doing so, people could have avoided the kind of challenges they face as the community.”

⁵¹P. N. Wachege, *Salvation and Being Saved: An African Socio-Religio-Philosophical Touch* (Nairobi: Media Options, 2000), p. 59.

⁵²A .Dulles, *Models of the Church* (New York: Double Day, 1987), p. 204.

⁵³ Kenya National Commission of Human Rights “*The Mountain of Terror,*” May 2008, p. 7.

2.5 Emerging Ethical Challenges to the Church

The whole Church community, the Christians, priests and respective leaders in Mount Elgon region where SLDF took toll, face numerous challenges as far as Ethical issues are concerned. The Church should present a serious focus in order to assist the members of the Church who undergo various challenges to overcome them. The challenges however have not been solved amicably as they should, because they are more complex and critical that cannot be solved without concrete deliberate discussion by the religious leaders. The Church has to make a recommendable progress in addressing such shortcomings for the good of the spiritual and salvation of the community in Mount Elgon region. Failure of the Church to tackle such challenges may be detrimental to the society hence undermining the growth and comprise the ministry of the Gospel by the Church.

These ethical Church issues may at certain points lead to difference and dilemma among the priests as well as the Church members. It puts them in a situation that they cannot decide what to do. The Church is expected to give hope and model the members by imparting desirable values in them in order to restore ethical values that had been abused during the war. Thus the Church should be well prepared on how it should carry out its task to address such ethical challenges and give possible way forward. Some of these ethical issues that face the Church in Mount Elgon include:

2.5.1 Forgiveness

A good number of families lost their loved ones through the war which was initiated by their fellow Church members who joined the SLDF. According to one of the respondent a mother of five saw how the husband was butchered in front of them during the war. It is quite disturbing for such women to attend fellowship and worship in the same Church with the Ex- SLDF who interfered with their normal life, persecuted their families and mistreated them. The Church as a community of believers has to accommodate all of them, but the question is, how? The task of the Church is to preach peace and reconciliation to both the victims of the war and the Ex-SLDF militia to forgive one another and stay with love as commanded by God. But this sounds impossible especially to the victims in such an environment. However, one may try to forgive if

the distance between them is far, unlike being close in the same Church as the case of Cheptais RCC Mount Elgon region, thus a challenge to the Church.

One can easily recall the kind of oppression and humiliation they underwent whenever they see an Ex-SLDF militia. Such challenges are difficult to be solved in the sense that should the Church get rid of the Ex-SLDF militia and accommodate the victims? Or should it accommodate all of them and be concerned with those who will remain? And thus to make forgiveness practical becomes a challenge to the victims of the war. The Church should, therefore, have proper ways on how to bring about harmony among its congregation in the Church as the family of Christ.

2.5.2 Rape Cases

Rape is one of the most open violations of the human body particularly to the victim's dignity and self determination, which result to number of effects in human daily co-existence. For instance rape causes, physical effects i.e. trauma to the victim, it may as well lead to unplanned pregnancy which may lead one to make unnecessary decisions like procuring abortion. It may also well to infection of sexually transmitted diseases.⁵⁴ Additionally, rape affects an individual emotionally thus destroying the self esteem of the victim. They end up living in an environment of guilt, shame, anger, powerlessness, anxiety and fear. Finally, the social environment of the rape victims is affected because they end up being blamed hence, forcing them to endure injustices. Their social interaction with family members as well as the entire society is deemed low and their dignity is undermined.

Rape was also used by the SLDF militia. Quite a number of women and young girls were raped in Mount Elgon region during the war. As a factor to consider in ethical concern, the rape issue is a challenge to both the victims and the entire Church in Mount Elgon region. For instance those who were raped live in fear of the potential suppression from the family, especially from their husbands for those who were married. Some husbands even decide to divorce their wives and marry second wives because they consider themselves unhelpful to them. The researcher recalls of the information made by one of the respondents; "I divorced my wife because I felt inferior and unhelpful to her. I did not defend my wife as the head of the family

⁵⁴S. W. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Wordalive Publisher, 2008), p. 275.

when the SLDF militia attacked us one of the nights and commanded me to sit down as I watch them rape my own wife one at a time. Seeing my wife being raped in my presence was a very painful situation for me. From that time, I regarded myself inferior and useless for not standing to defend her. Sometimes I recall what the SLDF did to my wife and when I engage with her in sexual intercourse I feel that am hurting her, just as the so called SLDF militia who were inhuman did to her. For that reason I made a decision to divorce her because I could not continue seeing myself hurting my wife.”⁵⁵

However, Kunhiyop notes that divorce is undesirable, psychologically traumatic and socially disruptive. It entails disunity and the separation of two parties who were formerly united.⁵⁶ Divorce also damages and breaks down the marital unity hence contradicting Gods purpose for marriage bringing about disillusion, recrimination insecurity and guilt.⁵⁷ Some young girls who were also raped, were infected with the HIV diseases, others embraced single parenting at a tender age. The girls are in a challenge especially those who got their first child through rape since they are feared by men who refuse to marry them because they are aware of what happened to them. They also fear that sometime in the future, the militia who was responsible may come to claim the child. The situation may automatically lead to conflict in the family.

The priests find themselves in a dilemma as to how they should assist the victims and the perpetrators of the war. They are in a tight spot as to whether the offended and the offenders should be given positions in Church fellowship or not. The same priests have a duty to reconcile both the afflicted and the inflicted but it is not an easy task for them due to the animosity between the two. Similarly, they are concerned of how they should handle husbands who have divorced their wives and also those who have been divorced. The Church therefore has to make a necessary attachment to these victims by encouraging them and accommodating them as the family of God.

2.5.3 Church Leaders/Members in Support of SLDF

Some of the members were part and parcel of the SLDF militia either by force or willingly. They played diverse roles to cause havoc in the region. It raised a number of ethical concerns as

⁵⁵ An interview conducted on 14th September 2016.

⁵⁶ S. W. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Wordalive Publisher, 2008), p. 255.

⁵⁷ J. Stott, *New Issues Facing Christians Today* (Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 1999), p. 320.

far as the Church is concerned. For instance, should the priest who was involved in SLDF activities, be recognized as a priest of the Church? Should those members who joined militia participate in the Church activities? Should such members be baptized and accepted back to the Church as part of the family of God? According to the respondents, some pastors were captured by the SLDF and were commanded to do what was evil for instance; they were involved in rape cases, killing the innocent and were forced to practice sodomy. Those who refused to do such evil acts were killed. However, those who feared death committed to do everything under the command of the SLDF out of their will. How can the Church handle such involvement of the pastors and other members of the Church who were forced to participate in such evil conditions? Should they be ex-communicated from the Church? Or should they hate the sin and love the sinner?

A good number of the respondents who were entirely mistreated by the SLDF members had different views, on how such members should be handled. It clearly indicates that the Church has to pull up to ensure peace and reconciliation. The Church leaders have to come clear in interpretation of Bible verses to the members of the Church. For example where, Jesus Christ the liberator says, “You have heard that it was said, love your neighbor and hate your enemy; But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mt 5:43). Therefore, the Church should encourage its members especially the victims of the war to forgive and pray for their enemies to be liberated from their evil deeds.

2.5.4 SLDF Militia Participation in the Church

Some of the SLDF militia gave in and confessed the evil deeds they were engaged in. They went to the extent of urging the community to accept them back and even to engage them in various Church activities. In that environment of mistrust and suspicion the members of the Church interact in doubt to the point that some fail to attend Church services. The Church leaders are in difficult point to make decision on whether to allow such members of the militia to participate in the programs of the Church activities or not. One respondent a single mother, who lost his husband and a son, during the SLDF war, admitted that “I will not attend the Church while those who killed my husband and child are in the same Church. I really hate them and I will only attend the Church when I will be able to forget and forgive those who broke my heart.” Some members are not attending Church because of such shortcomings they encountered in their

lives. What then should the Church leadership do to accommodate both the victims and the accused as the people of God?

If the Church leadership allows the Ex-SLDF militia to participate in the Church activities, it may lead to suspicion by the government and the community at large to that particular Church. However, if they do not accept them, will the Church be accountable of withholding them from salvation? How will they feel? Neglected and demoralized? The Church therefore has to face such challenges in order to bring harmony in the region to create proper ways of integrating its members with the love of God. Wachege points out that the Church should be reminded of its “tremendous power and obligation of duty to identify and transform salvific woes into salvation.”⁵⁸ The Church has to encourage all people with hope from the Gospel of Christ, about the love, grace and generosity, despite their sinful nature. They should realize that salvation is designed not for the chosen few but for all humanity.

2.6 Displacement

It is one of the inevitable effects that are directed towards humanity within the locality where the war erupts. In that process of moving to a more secure place, families encounter a lot of challenges, some lose their properties, some even lose their children in that scenario. Hence it is a problem that entirely destroys the once united family either socially or ecclesial family. It is one of the challenges that was encountered by the Church since the Ecclesia was expected to accommodate the escapees that even made it becomes more of a refugee camp. The Church had to provide shelter, food, clothing as well as guidance and counseling to these families. The Church as community of communities was regarded as a secure place by the displaced; hence it was challenge to handle such a great multitude by providing the basic needs for the upkeep.

As a result of the SLDF war, majority of the family run for their safety outside Mount Elgon region. Leaving behind their properties and never to turn back again, it costed the Church heavily in the sense that it lost majority of its members including the Church leaders who did escape that turmoil. For that reason the Church had to restructure itself to be in position to progress with the ministry of the Gospel, by nurturing other members to take the position of those who were

⁵⁸ P.N. Wachege, *Salvation and Being Saved: An African Socio-religio-philosophical Touch* (Nairobi: Media Options, 2000), p. 73.

displaced. It should also be committed to find out where the other members run to for refuge, but never turned back. As per the respondents, some are still in fear and they conceded that they will never come back to Mount Elgon region.

Atrocities, damage, hatred and inhuman acts displayed by the SLDF militia, affected a good number of parents especially those with young children at that particularly time. As a result, they swore never to expose their children to such an environment again. Such effects of displacement, calls for the Church to be more aggressive in its task of evangelization ministry. The Church will then have an opportunity to win more members to take the position of those who were displaced. It will also make an effort to reach them and unite with them in the Church as the 'Family of God.' Such a process involves a lot of sacrifice in order to encourage others to enhance peace and forgiveness to those who did evil to them.

2.7 Harmony and Reunion

During and after war, it is difficult to ensure people unite and live in harmony. It is quite a challenge to provide help to those who lost their loved ones during the war and affected by numerous challenges that led to their traumatization as well as the grievous situation. The challenge of reuniting the family and the society becomes at stake that require the revelation, whereby the Church is the focal point. The Church had a difficult time to ensure the presence of peace, acceptance among the children, parents as well the Church family at large. There was a challenge of uniting the pupils at school especially those who were affected in one way or the other. The children kept on shifting blame to one another as a result of the death of their parents. They pointed fingers at their fellow colleagues for being accountable of their parent's death, some of the parents particularly the men were members of the SLDF and they heavily participated on death of their immediate neighbors, Church members and even their close friends.

One of the informant said "my child came home from school and told me that when they were playing at school, his friend told him that, he will kill him just the way his father killed the friend's father". It happened that they were neighbors at home and his father had joined the SLDF militia and later came to kill the neighbor (friend's father) who had refused to join the militia. The grudge was thus inwardly nurtured by the young children who sought to revenge

among themselves in school. It led to difficulties in the process of harmony and resolution among the children. The school being a learning institution is expected to nurture and integrate moral values to the children, turned out to be a place of revenge among the children who lost their parents as a result of war. The Church therefore has to take a step ahead to go beyond its boundaries and actively involve itself in assisting teachers in school to preach peace and reconciliation, in order to curb the extent of growing revenge among the young generation. This poses a challenge to the Church since it has to be involved heavily in making the Church ministry more fruitful and involving.

2.8 Disruption of Communal Aspects

Nyamiti critically identifies and gives a good explanation of key inter-related factors in the African world-view. These factors include life, dynamism, sacrality, communality and anthropocentrism.⁵⁹ Clinging to the inclination of these aspects enhances communal solidarity. The application of these elements characterizes a community full of life and harmonious interactions for the well-being of the society. The absence of such elements, leads to weakening of the community. Mount Elgon region gives a good example of how such elements were interfered with. The aspects of communal living were totally disrupted by SLDF war. There was absence of warm relationships, concern, unity and love among the members of the society in Mount Elgon region. Such challenges affected the Church heavily since it also played an important role in uniting the Church and sharing that experience as the community of believers.

A good number of families were displaced to different areas in the region and the social interaction with the new environment was a challenge. The Church was expected to restore such uniting values which had been triggered of by the SLDF war. That contributed to negative impacts to the family and the community, as well as the Church at large. The Church's involvement and the total expression of concern were merely rendered absent, because people were still living in fear that they may be followed up by the SLDF militias. There was minimal social interaction due to doubt and mistrust among the people. Efforts to bring back the fullness of life basing on Nyamiti's African values, was a challenge that took a long time to cultivate within the community.

⁵⁹ C. Nyamiti, *Studies in African Christian Theology Vol. 1- Jesus Christ, the Ancestor of Humankind: Methodological and Trinitarian Foundation* (Nairobi: CUEA Press, 2010), pp. 9ff.

2.9 Doubt and Mistrust

In the course of the SLDF war and even up to now, the love and trust that was there before was replaced with environment of suspicion and mistrust among the families and even in the Church. It was felt that the SLDF were still in existence, and had deployed their spies in every part of Mount Elgon region. This made the occupants of Mount Elgon region to fear airing out their views freely, although the SLDF had been defeated. Such mistrust and suspicion still exist to date and it's evident in how the informants requested to have individual interview with the researcher rather than group interview. Such kind of suspicions and mistrust contributes heavily in tearing down the vital cohesion that is expected to be inherent in the families, Church and society at large.

Such challenges rob the Church's effort to ensure the community lives in peace. It also deprives people the interest of living together as a family. It as well undermines the unity of Church members as a family. It is superfluous to mention that this kind of challenge corrodes with the livelihood of the Church and the society at large. It therefore, keeps the Church on toes to focus on restoring trust among the neighbors. Moreover, the Church is mandated to put up structures that will focus on promoting peace and reconciliation in Cheptais, Mount Elgon region.

2.10 Impasse Education

Since a good number of the schools in the region are Church sponsored, most of them were entirely affected by the SLDF war. And to that effect there was deemed progress in education sector. As a result there was high school dropout, the boys were forcefully recruited to join the SLDF militia while the girls were sexually abused and majority of them got pregnant and ended up delivering a child and thus embraced their single motherhood. Moreover there was total destruction of the school property in the region at the time of the war, which called upon the Church to make necessary effort to ensure their sponsored schools are in place but it dragged the Church and society back. However, there is rampant increase of uneducated youth, which is very risky to the Church and society, in the sense that there is prone insecurity which automatically weakens it and deprives its effort to have learned youths who are able to be nurtured to promote peace in the region.

Such high rate of drop outs affected the Church negatively in the point that, these students were the active members in the Church and even in school PPI programs. They participated in various Church activities for instance youth missions among other tasks. Out of love, the Church had to take the role of nursing the young girls who dropped out of school due rape cases. The ones who were displaced also secured places for themselves in the Church premises which were rendered almost a refugee camp. It cannot be assumed that the challenge affected the Church because it heavily participated to see the young generation in the region acquire education. It is also responsible for instilling good values to the children to be in position to create a harmonious and wonderful environment to the Church and the community at large.

A good example of effects of war on education is during the end of the First World War, where a good number of mission schools offering education found themselves at a standstill. It was a result of military campaigns which fought in many areas ending to closure of the schools.⁶⁰ In addition, it contributed to displacement of teachers and students leading to poor attendance. The school facilities were also damaged thus leading to paralysis of education. Similarly, the same challenges were encountered as a result of war in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County.

Armed conflict is one of the greatest enemies of education in any given society. According to United Nation Report (2011), conflict destroys or damage schools and thus confines educational opportunities in war torn areas. As a result, teachers were being killed, and therefore they were forced to flee for their safety or join the fight. It entirely caused the children and their families as well to flee from their homes hence living with little educational opportunities. The war furthermore caused the separation of families and destruction of sources of income for the family forcing children to work instead of going to school. Therefore, their performance was affected and it prevented them from progressing with their studies in primary, secondary and higher levels of learning. Their situation led them to be forcefully recruited into rebel armies for the boys and the young girls were abducted and made sex slaves for rebel commanders.⁶¹

⁶⁰ A. Gottneid, *Church and Education in Tanzania* (Nairobi: E.A Publishers, 1976), p. 27.

⁶¹ UNESCO, (2011) *Armed Conflict the Biggest Barrier to Education*.www.un.org

2.11 Diminished Hopes

As per the respondents, majority of them had hopes of having beautiful families and are in a position to educate their children. Some youths also hoped to take up responsibilities in the society for instance some wanted to be doctors, teachers, and priests among others just to mention a few. The SLDF war deprived them their ambitions in life and their small dreams and hopes were shattered due to poverty and the situation they experienced. Some were mutilated hence incapable of involving themselves in muscular activities. Such challenges curtailed their hopes and dreams for a better society. Majority of the youth who were expected to be the leaders of the Church and the society were inflicted with diverse atrocities hindering them to be the sole of the tomorrow's society.

When the youths' hopes and dreams are destroyed, then the Church and the society is jeopardized because the youths are denied the opportunity to develop and realize their effective potentialities. On such basis, the Church and society would have failed to provide positive values and encouragement to see the tremendous development of the Church and the community at large hence better progress. The Church therefore was heavily involved in ensuring that such individuals in the society were to be reshaped and given a sense of hope in their life. Despite the challenges they encounter, the Church mission was to begin with those who lost hope and even given up attending the Church services. They often ask questions like where God was when all these challenges happened. It is a tough challenge that the Church has to encounter lest the society fails.

2.12 Increase of Orphans

In the contemporary Africa, the huge increase in the number of orphans is caused by quite a variety of challenges. It is not only lack of parenting but also other basic needs such as food, clothing, home, discipline as well as education.⁶² A good number of orphans are abused by their own family members and go to the point of abandoning them hence, lacking a family to associate with. The situation has entirely contributed to increase of street children and child headed homes.⁶³ It contradicts the traditional African community where the children were regarded to

⁶² S. W. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Wordalive Publishers, 2008), p. 263.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, pp. 259ff.

belong to the entire community. Children who were born out of wedlock and those whose parents died belonged to the entire community. An orphan would then have been adopted by the family members and integrated into the community. For the Africans, it was considered evil to neglect a child just because he or she lacked both parents.

The Church was to heavily participate in taking care of the orphans which was as a result of the war. There was high rate of family breakup due to death of parents that influenced the community at large. In some cases, children were abandoned by their parents during displacement as an aftermath of the war. Quite a number of parents were killed by the SLDF and for that reason, children were left behind as orphans and having no one to care for them. Some SLDF militias who were also parents and headed their families were killed by the KDF soldiers during the war confrontation. Some parents escaped leaving their children behind with hopes that SLDF militia would not punish their children. The above circumstances contributed to immense increase of orphans in the region.

The children who dropped out of school at their tender ages to join the SLDF, found it hard to reunite with their families in their normal relations. Thus, they opted to join other street urchins in nearby towns like Kimilili, Bungoma and Kitale. The challenge is highly felt by the families and the society at large. One of the respondents said that his brother decided to settle in the street because life was hard at home after losing both parents during the SLDF war. Due to the poverty levels and painful situation at home, he decided to escape. He ran away from home to survive in the streets rather than experiencing the challenges encountered at home. Some orphans also decide to drop out of school to engage in taking alcoholic drinks and involving themselves in criminal activities within the community.

For the rescue of orphans, the Church had to involve itself profoundly to console and embrace these young children. It also engaged in providing them with their basic needs such as food, clothing and shelter. Moreover, the Church is in charge of nurturing them and cultivating hope and dreams in their lives. Although it was a challenge to accommodate the big number of such children, it was a mandate for the Church to accept them in their level of oppression. The Church as well catered for their education by ensuring that they obtained sponsorship from the Church members and scholarships from other institutions together with other well wishers.

2.13 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

In an elaborate manner the chapter has emphasized on various challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war in Mount Elgon. It has also delved into how the problems brought about by the war affected the state of the families and community as a whole. The current chapter therefore, has provided a base for the next chapter which precisely addresses the impact of SLDF war to the RCC in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPACT OF THE SLDF WAR ON THE RCC IN MT ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA COUNTY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed the challenges encountered by the RCC which is vital in providing foundation in understanding how the various effects brought about by the war were felt in Mount Elgon region. The current chapter is endeavored to have a focal point on the impact of SLDF war to the Church in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County.

3.2 Sexual violence

The SLDF conflict left a big impact on its people and the Church at large. It resulted into a myriad number of challenges especially to the women. A good number of women were raped leading to unwanted pregnancies, miscarriages and abortion. Women were raped thus getting unplanned for or unwanted pregnancies. With the desire to secure their status in their families, some who were raped and got pregnant opted to risk their lives with ‘misfortunes’ by procuring abortions. To get rid of stigmatization as rape victims as well as single mothers, as discussed profoundly by Wachege,⁶⁴ they settled on ‘flushing’ out the innocent zygote. Apart from rape, women were not exempted from beatings by the SLDF and thus it resulted to miscarriages. Those that were beaten and raped while pregnant lost their babies which brought a lot of complications in their bodies.

In both the Ecclesia and community level, the practice of abortion is not allowed because it is unethical and not considered to be an option in the Church and the state at large. However, due to such instances as that of SLDF wars, it becomes a plausible solution to the victims. It erodes the Ecclesial and communal values as well as ethics in the society meant to protect life which is deemed to be sacred. The life of innocent unborn child is terminated out of its will and regarded as being ‘unwanted’. Sexual violence was detrimental to the life of women

⁶⁴ P. N. Wachege, *Third Millennium African Single Mothers and Mother Widows: Ethno-Religio-Philosophical Touch* (Nairobi: Media Options, 2003), pp. 71ff.

in the society. Where some ended up joining the ancestors due to pain during abortions, in the hostile environment and also as a result of beatings from the SLDF militia. The Church did not escape this as a good number of its members perished as result of the rape, abortion and miscarriages. Thus, it had to restore its ethical values to its members about life which is sacred and accept her members back to the Church so as to offer guidance and counseling to them.

3.3 Single Parenting

Wachege discusses profoundly different categories of single mothers without the exception of single fathers. He precisely focuses on the causes of their status and the challenges attached to each type.⁶⁵ However, he does not discuss the single mothers who acquired their status of single motherhood as a result of war. His contribution is significant to the study because it points out the categories of single mothers in the society. Mount Elgon region cannot escape the increase in the number of single parents as a result of the SLDF war. The increase in the number of single parents, particularly single mothers has got its impacts on the Church. The single parents are challenged to bring up their children singly, calling upon the Church to assist them especially by instilling moral values to these young teenagers especially at their adolescent stage. Some of the single parents are unable to attend and participate in the Church activities due to numerous challenges they face at home particularly that of parenting.

These single parents are left lonely as their immediate counterparts were killed. They require attention not from anybody else but the Church thereby calling upon the Ecclesia to have an effective concern to their cry. Some of the single parents neglected to attend the Church service for some time due to painful situation they encountered during the SLDF war, which left them hopeless. Moreover, the membership of the Church is saturated with women with a minimal number of men because majority of the men died during the war. Hence, the Church leadership positions held by men as the heads of family and Church are merely vacant. It is therefore prudent for the Church to chip in and actively participate in assisting

⁶⁵P. N. Wachege, *Third Millennium African Single Mothers and Mother widows: Ethno-Religio-philosophical Touch*, pp. 130ff.

the single parents to cope up with their life and accept them as part and parcel of the family of God.⁶⁶

3.4 Psychological Trauma

A good number of Church members in Mount Elgon region were victims of psychological challenges. The SLDF adopted various forms of torture. For instance they used threats, intimidations and harassments. As per the respondents these forms of violence were to make the residents admit and submit the SLDF will. A vast number of Christians submitted to the SLDF will, which is contrary to ecclesia values. The residents who were handled by SLDF were forced to rape, kill, punish and to inflict pain on the families and the entire society. Such kinds of brutal acts realized and done by staunch Christians made them regret in their life. Their will to oppose such acts were overpowered by the SLDF command, unheard and non-existent cry. This made their hope for salvation to be crushed down. To date a good number of them are guilty of what they were forced to do, they live in fear and wonder if actually God can forgive them. Others have decided to retrench themselves from participating in Church activities.

Depending on the type of trauma, different people will be affected more than others. There are times when people undergo the same experience, yet one is more affected than the other. A number of the respondents were affected with trauma in different ways, some had constant fear and anxiety, stress, fear to express their feelings,⁶⁷ engaging in risky behavior like drinking alcohol. The challenge of trauma produce both physical, emotional, social problems and if the problems are not handled keenly they may lead to posttraumatic disorder. Furthermore, children's were also traumatized with the challenges they encountered, losing their parents through brutal death, displacement among others that contributed to a chain of challenges. For instance a good number failed to attend school, Church services and opted up to be street urchins. The Church cannot sit down and see this happen to its members and especially the future leaders of the Church. This impacted on the Church such that it has to tackle such challenges by offering guidance and counseling session to the congregation and society at large.

⁶⁶ John Paul 11, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, 1995, no. 63.

⁶⁷ E. Gichinga, *Marriage Counseling* (Nairobi: Gem Counseling Services, 2005), p. 62.

3.5 HIV/AIDSs

The epidemic is also another challenge that impacted on the Church heavily. A good number of the Church members were infected with the HIV /AIDS pandemic. Wachege, in his book titled, *Living to die and dying to live*, mentions HIV/AIDS as not only a scourge, but a disaster that has claimed the lives to a big number of families and posing a challenge to the a nation at large.⁶⁸ AIDS was a silent tool used by the SLDF in the region; women who were infected with HIV/AIDS eventually spread it to the families and the rest of the community. The Church had to assist its members by providing the possible assistance for instant Anti retroviral (ARV) drugs for medication purposes, to the infected and also to offer guidance and counseling to them. Since the number of those affected was large, the Church could not entirely provide medication to all of them for quite a long period of time, hence a challenge. The SLDF annihilated the families in Mount Elgon region in the most humiliating way possible which heavily demoralized their role in the society and in the Church.

The pandemic's spread was heavily contributed by low ratio of men to women thus for the women to satisfy their sexual pleasure they ended up sharing men in the area. The young teenagers did not escape the challenge, since they were also infected and in turn spreading it to their boyfriends and girlfriends. The disease therefore, weakened them and as a result depriving them the opportunity to play their roles in the community and society at large as the future leaders of the Church. According to one of the informant, "the HIV disease has led to death of a good number of young children and the family, which has contributed to increased poverty levels within the families. Some children do not attend school in order to nurse their parents who are affected with the disease as a result of war."⁶⁹

The disease impacted on the Church negatively as clearly seen that a good number of those infected are not in position to play strenuous activities in the Church and even at their homes. Moreover, some of them died due to psychological trauma leaving behind a burden to the Church to care for the orphans. As a result, many deaths destroyed the family as a unit. Women were left to head households where their husbands had died of the disease or decided to abandon them. To such families, disillusionment and loss of hope became the order of the day. The families which

⁶⁸ P. N. Wachege, *Living to Die, Dying to Live: African Christian Insights* (Nairobi: Media Options, 2005), p. 186.

⁶⁹ An interview conducted on, 9th December, 2016.

were united by a harmonious life and togetherness were now disintegrated by HIV/AIDs as a result of war.

3.6 Divorce

The Church discourages consorts from divorce because of ethical concerns and instructions from the Scripture. God's plan for marriage was to enhance a basic unity between the man and his wife in order to experience a happy married life. They are to be bound together by the trust and love amongst themselves (Gen 2:24). For Christians, marriage is expected to be a lifetime union between the spouses. Additionally, married and family life is intended to be enjoyable, accommodating and fruitful (Gen 2:24; Mt 19:5-6; Rom7:2-3). Instead of considering divorce, couples should resort to settling the issues that tend to weaken their union. With that kind of maturity in handling their marital challenges, they will be able to keep their families intact and avoid unnecessary break ups which will not only affect them but also their children.

The Sabaoth community as well, does not allow such cases of divorce. Husbands and wives are expected to unite together for the good of the family and the community at large. However, as a result of SLDF war, husbands opted to leave their beloved wives and chose to remarry. According to one of the respondents, a SLDF militia raped her wife, as he observed, he could not protect her from the act thus he felt ashamed and inferior. His duty to protect his wife was snatched from him by an armed soldier and he felt belittled and handicapped. To avoid the stigmatization he was undergoing, he decided to divorce his wife. A good number of men were also divorced by their wives, particularly those who had families and joined the SLDF leaving behind their responsibilities as the heads of the family to their wives.

On their return, they were feared by the family members with fresh wounds of the evil deeds of rape, murder among others that the SLDF militia soldiers inflicted on the residents of Mount Elgon region. The wives also for fear of their husbands who had become military men opted to divorce them because they depicted them as murderers and inhuman. Such cases have contributed to increase in the number of single parents therefore disintegrating the unity and social fabric experienced in the families. The Church at large is saturated with single parents where some even fail to attend Church services because they have lost confidence in the Church that used to bring hope in their lives. The question remains how should the Church treat such

single parents who decide to divorce? Cherono has extensively focused on single parents, the challenges that they face and the accompanying way forward at an erudition level. She based her study on *Agĩkũyũ Single Fathers and Mothers in Kĩambaa Village, Kĩambu County through Christian Inculturation – Liberation approach*.⁷⁰

3.7 Stigmatization

The SLDF war robbed the society its moral code. The Ex-SLDF militia who were engaged in mistreatment and torture to the community through such acts as raping and killing the innocent, were not accepted back to the community whole heartedly due to the terrible stigma they imposed on the families. The society could not control their anger to them for leaving their families for nothing but to join the militia in inflicting evil acts to people. Despite the Church's efforts to rehabilitate the Ex-SLDF militia, they were not easily accepted back to the society. They were therefore stigmatized and regretted their actions. The victims of war were also stigmatized, taking an example of those whose family members were killed in cold blood as they observed, those who were raped as well as those whose property was destroyed just to mention a few. Such mistreatment was a sacrilege to the society which left gaps in their hearts and completely destroyed their purpose of life.

The victims are stigmatized and they ask themselves where God was when all these evils were happening to them. They are demoralized and thus doubt their faith in God and also in the Church that is meant to give them hope. Some of them are seen not participating in Church activities, hence a challenge to the Church. The Church has been called to a ministry of healing, consoling, counseling and assisting the afflicted. It is precise therefore, for the Church to demonstrate the caring attitude employed by Jesus by having concern to those who are stigmatized by the events that captured their life during the SLDF war.

3.8 Poverty

Poverty is pervasive and it manifests itself in different ways. Some of the most common is prostitution, street life, unemployment, war and violence among others.⁷¹ These factors exploit

⁷⁰ C. Fancy, *A Study of Agĩkũyũ Widowed Single Fathers and Mothers in Kĩambaa Village, Kĩambu County Through Christian Inculturation – Liberation Approach*, Unpublished M.A. (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2014).

⁷¹ S. W. Kunhiyop, *African Christian Ethics* (Nairobi: Wordalive Publishers, 2008, p. 138).

people, discriminate them and increase the number of people seeking to understand the meaning of life depending on the situation they are involved in. Poverty denies people freedom to access education, food, better healthcare and shatters down the development of the society. This is one of the long term impacts in Mount Elgon region that cracked the society back to square one. Due to poverty, the social, economic and religious activities in the society were disrupted and hence the intended fabrics were torn down. The SLDF conflict which contributed to massive migration and displacement of people led to the rise of poverty levels as the end result.

High levels of poverty have contributed to various challenges as far as the basic needs of the people are concerned. Morality of the society has also disintegrated which is clearly depicted in cases of rampant robbery, prostitution as well as selling of *busaa* (illicit drinks) for the purpose of survival as a result of extreme poverty. The Church cannot avoid the impact of poverty in the sense that it is a challenge for the Church to request for tithes and offering to propagate its ministerial tasks. The Church cannot do so because it is aware of the financial strain its members undergo as a result of poverty resulting from SLDF war. Thus, some of the Church activities have to fail hence impacting negatively to its progress of reconciliation.

One of the informants narrates how he was affected by the war that dragged him to poverty. He explained that “when the violence started, I had a huge potato farm. The violence started during the harvest season. When I tried to harvest the potatoes, my neighbor’s son who was one of the SLDF soldiers came and warned me about the war. He told me not to harvest the potatoes and asked me to leave the farm straightaway otherwise the SLDF would kill me. Therefore, I did not get a chance to harvest my potatoes which were taken away from me by the SLDF militia. I had planted the potatoes to cater for the needs of my family including school fees for the children. But all my effort was in vain since the militia had snatched from me the only means of earning an income and that pulled me and the family back to poverty”⁷²

3.9 Huge Increase in the of Orphans

The Church had to turn its focus to the victim’s children bearing in mind that there was a huge increase in the number of orphans resulting from the death of parents or displacement. Some were orphaned due to broken families especially where one of the partners realized that she/he

⁷² An oral interview conducted on 9th December, 2016.

had been infected with HIV. A good number of Parents were most likely killed by the SLDF and some died of Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDS) which resulted from rape cases. A number of parents deserted their children for the sake of escaping from the SLDF war, believing that the children would not be hurt. It contributed to high increase of orphans in the Mount Elgon region. Some parents went to the extent of taking care of their grandchildren and great grand children, after their parents were both raped and killed by the SLDF militia. As per the respondents, they acknowledge that it is a heavy burden to take care of these children, yet they are jobless and that their properties were destroyed during the war.

With such poverty levels, some children run for their survival to the neighboring towns for instance, Bungoma, Kitale and Kimilili, thus becoming street urchins. The Church had a challenge to accommodate such high rate of orphans and they were forced to take them to children's home where they can be taken care and to give them hope to continue their lives. A grandmother narrates how she has the responsibility of taking care of her grandchildren after the death of the parents in a painful situation. She says "the SLDF militia went to my daughter's house and found her with her husband. They seized him and forced him to join militia but he refused. Those SLDF got angry and told them that they would severely punish them. They then on his refusal slaughtered him to death. My daughter was raped by the SLDF militia and later on, she discovered that she was infected with HIV. She fell very sick, filled with pain and depression and she eventually died. Today, I am left with extra mouths to feed, cloth, educate and take care of. As an old widow with no job, I have to utilize the little strength I have to care for my grandchildren."⁷³

3.10 Chapter's Concluding Remarks

The current chapter has discussed the challenges encountered by the Church which is vital in providing a foundation in understanding how diverse impacts of the war affected the people of Mount Elgon region. It has also endeavored to have a focal point on the impact of SLDF war to the RCC in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County. Therefore, the chapter has provided a platform for the next chapter which deals with the Church teachings and theological reflection on liberation in view of realizing a fruitful Church ministry in Mount Elgon region.

⁷³ An oral interview conducted on 9th December, 2016.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHURCH TEACHINGS AND THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON LIBERATION IN VIEW OF FRUITFUL RCC MINISTRY IN MOUNT ELGON REGION BUNGOMA COUNTY

4.1 Introduction

With basic background from the previous chapters which have focused on the impacts of SLDF war on the Church. The following, chapter is crucial in the study with the aim of describing how the Church teaching and theological reflection on liberation can be of importance to the ministry of the RCC and other Churches in Mount Elgon region. The current chapter will give a hint on liberation, and the theological reflection on the Church ministry.

4.2 Liberation Theology

It is very important to begin with understanding that liberation theology has its roots from Latin America, in the late 1960s. In its dynamic links as an ecclesial and contextual theology that focuses on both social and historical setting. Liberation is understood as the response to the concrete moments in history of the Latin America and the entire global. We therefore have to specifically focus on liberation as a crucial concept in the study. It will thus enable us to understand the Church teachings and theological reflections in relation to the study.

4.2.1 Insights on Liberation

Liberation theology is more of showing compassion, suffering and meeting the poor Christ in the poor people, leading to salvation hence liberation. Clodovis Boff and Leonardo Boff, points out that the poor are all those involved in the mass of social and historical oppression. They insist that it is precise to struggle with the poor, where such effort enables them to liberate themselves. In such experience one struggle with the unjust oppression that has been bestowed to them.⁷⁴

⁷⁴ L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987), p. 4.

The Boffs ideally give three levels of liberation theology. They emphasize on;

1. Popular Liberation Theology

The level focuses on understanding and embracing the common poor person. It focuses various oppression surrounding an individual who have accepted it as part of their life. And by the effort of understanding them one understands the social life of the poor Jesus yet rich. It thus motivated them to be self driven in achieving their best despite their oppression in the society.

2. Pastoral Liberation Theology

At the second level the priest plays an important task of understanding the poor. It calls for the priest to insert in their environment in an attempt to deliberate on extent of their oppression and exploitation. Moreover, it involves taking a fruitful approach in delivering the Good News for the great and apparent spiritual harmony and hope. It will therefore aim to emancipate them from the challenges they encounter in their daily living situations.

3. Practice Level in Liberation Theology

The third level focuses on a productive action that is felt and seen in the process of liberation. At this level the crucified Christ gives a perfect example that depicts clearly the action He took out of love to liberate humanity. It is all about making a home with the oppressed by living with them in their situations. Thus, a crucial view that should be emulated by the Church, congregation and the priests in the ecclesia community for effective liberation process becomes real.

In addition, the two brothers' further outline three important aspects referred to as mediation⁷⁵ in which liberation theology is implemented;

1. Socio-Analytical Mediation

At this level a theologian has to be well acquitted with the types of oppression that the individuals undergo. It is achieved through insertion to that particular situation so as to understand the kind of oppression the people encounter. It therefore, leads in finding the possible way forward for the process of emancipating them. Through insertion the theologian is best fit to

⁷⁵ L. Boff and C. Boff, *Introducing Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 24-39.

feel experience and get acquainted with the challenges they encounter. It therefore put them in a position to carry out proper investigation in reliance to the first hand information and experience they get from the ground of oppression.

2. Hermeneutical Mediation

At the second stage, the theologian has to relate their findings from the socio-analytical mediation with the will of God. He should ask himself, is it the will of God for the orphans to suffer? Is it the will of God for the poor to suffer? Is it the will of God for the war to be realized in the society? By having such question in mind the theologian is able to retrieve from the scriptures' bearing in mind, the total challenges and sorrows of the victims. Hence enables them in seeking light and inspiration from the divine word.⁷⁶ It will enable the oppressed to seek life, "to the fullest" (Jn 10:10).

3. Practical Mediation

The final level is very important in exploring practical ways the theologian has to take in order to liberate the poor. It seeks to show how the actions can be implemented in an atmosphere of faith, hence the practical outcomes. "Liberation leads to action for instance action for justice, the work of love, conversion, renewal of the Church, and transformations of the society."⁷⁷ Therefore, the Church will be able carry out its mission of liberation effectively. The Church should put in place structures that will assist in liberation process, by involving the oppressed and the exploited.

The mediation stages discussed above is of benefit to the study. It guides the study on how to collect the primary data and have a reflective analysis in making a comprehensive interpretation for presentation. As a result, it will provide the way forward for the purposes of curbing various challenges encountered by the Church as a 'family of God' in Mount Elgon region.

⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 32.

⁷⁷ Ibid., pp. 39.

4.2.2 The Theological Method in Papal Teaching on Liberation

The process reflects on the official theology and the social lessons of the Catholic Church. It goes on to give the major differences in liberation Theology and the current Church teaching. It outlines the following concerns on liberation:

1. That praxis is not merely “practice.”⁷⁸ It involves the labors of those who are subjugated to great effort for their liberation, that theology is significant indication in the charisma of assurance which leads to the new accomplishment to guide in praxis. Thus obligation and deeds of the poor is a vital prerequisite for liberation.
2. The effort and commitment of those oppressed and exploited involves the resistance to eliminate poverty in the world and “adopting the poverty perspective.”⁷⁹
3. Finally the papal teachings, outlines that striving to eliminate poverty in the world is not enough ⁸⁰ it therefore calls for effective perspective of the poor by liking the liberation theologians to “poverty perspective”, speaking and adopting the poverty perspective. By such process then liberation will be fruitful and practical.

This teaching is instrumental in our study in the way it points to the members of the Church both the RCC and other denominations in Mount Elgon who are oppressed and exploited as a result of war to be part of the liberating channel by involving themselves actively in the process of liberation in their urge to eliminate “poverty” among its members and giving them hope to overcome their shortcomings in life as the result of SLDF war.

4.2.3 Spirituality and Liberation

Spirituality and liberation are one of the key items in the mission of the Gospels in the society and the entire universe. The practical part of liberation counts for effective and felt mission of the Christians as a family of God in the universe. The Bible is considered to contain aspects of spirituality, which has manifestations of spirituality to humanity. Hence it’s quite important to

⁷⁸ C. E. Gurdorf, *Catholic Social Teaching on Liberation Themes* (United States of America: University Press of America, 1981), p. 59.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 60.

understand how spirituality is imbued with liberation. Some of these elements that depict liberation and spirituality⁸¹ as one are;

1. Scripture or the Bible is a book that has a great influence to the life of human being. It touches all parts of existence and has its mandate to shape humanity. It contains that heavily touch the situations that surround human beings within their social environments. Hence it is a book of life and not only holy aspirations, sacred words among others. The Bible is “down to earth” and the same time “up to heaven”⁸² thus an important tool that links the humanity with the Supreme Being who is aware of what human beings encounter. Moreover, it plays an important part in liberation of humanity from all kinds of oppression.

2. The connection between God and human being is directly realized on the revelation of God to humanity. Where God intervenes on human affairs and calls upon them to maintain their relationship with him in order to alleviate them from their suffering and oppression. Priests and Christians should therefore operate out of Gods principle. It thus entails values and attitudes inspiration and work to the extent of sacrificing for the sake of the Family of God. The above automatically shows the commitment of spirituality and liberation.

3. God reveals Himself in life situations of the poor in the society. He is concerned with those whose life is not complete, the oppressed and the marginalized. God is found on the difficult situations of His people in order to be revealed and being known to be part of them in their suffering. Therefore, it indicates God’s purpose of liberating humanity from their various problems and oppression they face.

4. The task of liberation is given a proper example by Christ himself. “God has taken in the past the side of the poor and the oppressed. Therefore the priest and all people of faith have the mandate to take the same side, and emulate Him.”⁸³ Spirituality links the relationship between the people and God through prayer, sacrifice, and respect. It thus plays an important role in the task of liberation. However, God is more concerned with both aspects of liberation and spirituality working out together at the same time. Hence the Church has to involve both aspects for the purpose of realizing Gods plan of salvation and concern to the poor in the community.

⁸¹ A. Shorter, J.M.Waligo et al, *Towards African Christian Liberation* (Nairobi: St Paul publication, 1990), p. 251.

⁸² Ibid., p. 251.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 252.

Such relationship between liberation and spirituality is very significant in the study by describing out how the Church as a family of God can put into practice spirituality and liberation in Mount Elgon region in order to maintain the greatest glory of God.

Gibelline indicates that “the ecclesiology liberation has developed the image of the poor, to be understood not only as to be a poor Church in order to fulfill its mission, or a Church preoccupied with the poor. But rather a Church” that understands its role and act for the good of the poor and the ecclesia community.⁸⁴ The Church should therefore be that which grows out to reach people in their situations. It is very monumental in the study by not only pointing the Church as to play its role to liberate the oppressed but to have it as, “preferential option with the poor.” It is thus an important structure that contributes in Conscientizing them on how to liberate themselves from their situations and level of oppression.

Gutierrez also is very instrumental in the study by highlighting what liberation means in particular. For him liberation has three levels of meaning;

1. Liberation that focus on life situation of people and tries to free them from either the political, economic, social, economic oppressive environment.
2. Liberation is that which influence people to empower themselves and strive to be responsible of their future for the good of the society and generations to come.
3. Liberation from sin and to begin a new life in to Christ who is the greatest liberator hence the full meaning of liberation.

For Gutierrez although these meanings are distinctive, they are interrelated as far as liberation is concerned. All these aspects are crucial in the study particularly when using Christian liberation approach. It is important for the purpose of assisting the Church to understand its environment in Mount Elgon region. It moreover, empowers the community and the congregation at large as a “family of God” through enhancing unity, peace and reconciliation. It as well involves the Church to be part of liberation as they strive towards a better life for the good of the Church and the community.

⁸⁴ R. Gibelline, *The Liberation Theology Debate* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1987), pp. 30-31.

4.2.4 Jesus Christ as the Model of Liberation

Jesus Christ is clearly displayed as the model of liberation, through His teaching and acts particularly when He is against all kind of exploitation and oppression that befall human history. His intention is to emancipate humanity from the challenges hence setting them free from bondage of oppression. In His teachings Jesus identified Himself with, the oppressed, the poor and the needy. He made a decision to put his life in risk in order to save humanity. His life and teaching portrayed him as a true liberator who has humanity in his heart. He is precisely described in the New Testament as the as Jesus of Nazareth sent with the sole aim “to bring good news to the poor and to proclaim release to the captives” (Lk 4:18). He is described to use “his power to liberate humanity from various types of slavery that afflict the poor, and then give direction to liberation and to inspire believers to be active agents of liberation.”⁸⁵ Thus, the following elements therefore describe Jesus as the model of liberation.

4.2.4.1 Jesus Relationship with Poor

Jesus being poor, from a poor family, worked as a manual laborer and was totally not recognized to be associated with any wealthy family. He was not educated, but just a “mere son of Joseph the carpenter.” His life was compared to that of the poor. He identified Himself with the poor who grew from a poor background. Jesus taught the poor in their situation there was no wall that divided Him with them, He was so humble to understand the challenges of the poor because He spend a lot of time with them. He understood the oppression, suffering and exploitation of the poor, and spoke boldly to defend the poor from harsh rulers, and exploitative systems, yet He was so rich to avoid the poor but he showed his love for them in order to complete His mission.⁸⁶ Jesus knew that it is love that save humanity, the disinterested acceptance of others and that complete opening of self to God. Furthermore, Jesus outlines the existence of brothers and sisters and no more enemies and strangers.

He talks of generosity and openness to those who are oppressed and exploited. Jesus urges humanity that golden rule⁸⁷ is: to treat others as you like them to treat you (Mt 7:12) He Himself

⁸⁵ J. Sobrino, *Jesus the Liberator: A Historical Theological view* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999), p. 12.

⁸⁶ L. Boff, *Jesus Christ Liberator: A Critical Christology of our Time* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis books 1978), pp. 75ff.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 76.

was low at their live to walk with them to the path of liberation and salvation. Jesus Christ though divine in nature, did not maintain His equality with his Father, God, but rather, “made Himself nothing, bearing human likeness, humble, obedient and accepted even to die for the sake of humanity” (Phil 2:6-8). He obeyed His Father’s will of salvation for liberation of humanity. He undermined his position and volunteered to be a role model to his followers by making a very close interaction with them and conditioned them to have an individual liberation in order to liberate others. Jesus teaching and way life is a perfect example to be employed by the Church in our contemporary society.

In the society today it is quite challenging for people to declass themselves for the sake of others. A good number of Christians, Church organization are in position to struggle for those exploited and oppressed from an angle of social and economic privileged but find it difficult to journey with the poor. This is because people have maintained the comfort zone of their life assuming the kind of challenges facing the oppressed. It calls the Church to learn from the lessons and life of Jesus Christ, to be with the poor in their struggle which entails a lot of suffering. The Church should use their wealth and resources to come into rescue of those who are underprivileged in the society. They should realize that it is a sacrifice that one makes for those who wish to be the disciple of Christ.

In such an environment the life and teachings of Jesus calls upon all disciples to deeply understand the poor and journey with them. They should endeavor to emancipate them, from their social, political, cultural and economic oppression and in that process they will realize their prosperity in liberation. The Church as well ought to be embracive to the poor and needy and remind the Christian that the call of Jesus for liberation is every person role to play. Hence our ecclesia life should be reflected to the life and ministry of Jesus, for the good of the society. Jesus gives a perfect example to the Church in Mount Elgon to be of help with those who were exploited, oppressed and undermined during the war. The interaction of Jesus becomes instrumental in the study by pointing out the idea of journeying with the poor for the good of the community and growth of the Church in the region. The Church should activate the hopes of those affected by the entire war, and the numerous challenges they face by making them realize

that God is aware of their shortcomings and therefore they should dream of the kingdom of God which is their home to come.

4.2.4.2 Jesus the Teacher

Jesus taught with authority and was regarded as a great teacher ever found on earth. In the history of human existence His word and teachings are still fresh up-to-date, and have impacted generation and generations yet he lived a short time on earth. Because of His teaching delivered in diverse mode of delivery Jesus had a good number of followers who were created a new community of Christ. Jesus taught about the real life situation which he also encountered, He did not stop there but went on to teach in the synagogue without fear. He strongly faced the reality and encouraged benevolent and condemned the malevolent in the society, his teaching were simple but educative which attracted followers to join His mission. His teachings were full of wisdom which made the people to realize their freedom by being strong, courageous and sincere in the works.

Jesus was very articulate and clear in his teachings, he meant what he said and became popular, outspoken as well as a credible leader, which made the Jewish high priests and Pharisees to be upset with him because he was challenging their privileges and scripture interpretation. They thus plotted to trap Jesus in his words and also convict Him of disloyalty to Caesar but all was in vain. Jesus utilized His opportunities to clarify His teachings to them without fear or favor. He was also a leader who had large multitude of people following him. They spend time with him during the day and even during the night in order to listen to His teachings, to feel his presence, to receive His virtues and to see Him performing miracles. People could go hungry in order to be with Jesus, they even went to the extent of identifying Him as their king and liberator. They had hopes with Jesus that He will set them free from their yoke of oppression imposed on them by the political rulers, lawyers, priests and the society at large. However, Jesus was very wise, He did not intend to be a political leader because his mission was totally different and thus escaped from the crowds when they tried to make Him their leader.

Jesus' stand was uncompromised; He was accused of many things by the Roman rulers as an imposter from Nazareth and His life was in danger but that did not threaten Him. He proceeded with His teaching of condemnation on what was evil. He accomplished His mission by not

making any attempt to negotiate with the Roman authorities but by being honest to His Father. Similarly, the Church has to take the responsibility of being a sure teacher and caring mother to its adherents by accompanying them with mercy and help them to understand the divine teachings of grace in their whole life and offering those instances to reach the utmost fullness of Gods plan for them in their entire life. By reaching them the grace of God which is sufficient will work in their lives by giving them the platform to do what is good and be responsible with concern towards their fellow neighbors by being of service towards their Church and community at large.⁸⁸

In the study, the teachings of Jesus are very important in the sense that the Church is supposed to emulate Jesus' teachings by pointing out how its teachings are instrumental to the society. In addition, it should also show how it tackles the daily lives of the people in the community. The Church should as well explain the credibility and deep reflection of its teaching in making people realize their unjust situation of exploitation. Furthermore, the Church ought to be able to see the achievement and impact of its teaching in the Christian mission of liberation. The above enable the Church in Mount Elgon in its mission to liberate itself from the challenges they face as a result of SLDF war.

4.2.4.3 Jesus' Death

Jesus was very much aware of His death, he knew he had enemies yet he proceeded with His mission on earth. He thus impacted greatly on the life and social relationship of the people in the world. Because His mission was to liberate humankind, He strived to fight till the end to ensure that He accomplished his tasks. He demonstrated love that no one else would do, by showing his self sacrifice to die for the sake of human beings. He died at a young age and at the prime of His life, at 33 years.

Death is one of the ways that reflects the process of struggle for liberation and justice. It does not matter the kind of death one encounters but the idea is that Jesus wants humankind to emulate him for the purpose of making liberation practical. Liberation entails suffering either slowly or faster until the targeted objective is achieved. Jesus teaches that liberation involves a

⁸⁸Synod of Bishops, *Lineamenta (The Vocation and Mission of the Family: In the Church and Contemporary World)*, 2014, no. 23.

lot of risk that God took to give his only Son, “For the son of man came not to be served but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” Jesus risked his life because it was a condition for Him to do that as the only option to serve humanity.

Jesus also foretold His own resurrection and he had prepared His disciples to send the Holy Spirit who will guide them and make them strong to go beyond His death. This is an indication that Jesus was full of faith even when he was crucified and humiliated. In the aspect of liberation Jesus therefore advocates for confidence and conviction to sacrifice our own life by taking risks just as He himself did. His death was as a result of His stand, His values, His teachings, commitment and the risk that he settled on. He plainly told his followers that the “world” has hated Him and for that reason they should be prepared to be hated by the “world”.

It is in this context that during holy week of Easter celebration Christians meditate on the physical suffering of Christ and His life and teaching as a way to salvation. It is important to note that through His suffering and humiliation Christian should be committed in getting concerned in building the community of those saved to enter the kingdom of God. Despite His death Jesus resurrected which is an indication of divine approval of that He is alive. Motivating His followers to know that with Christ life is beyond death. Therefore, as Christians and the Church in Mount Elgon region should realize that for them to realize full liberation, they should accept death as much as possible in the process of achieving their Goal. They should base themselves on the faith, courage, and undying hope as well as have a concrete believe in Christ who give them strength as a perfect example.

4.2.4.4 Following Christ

Jesus commanded His followers to follow Him, meaning to do what Christ did in the process of liberating human being. He commanded them “love one another, just as I loved you, you must also love one another” (Jn 13:34).since love is universal Jesus expects His followers to bring on board people to Christ, and liberate them from shackles of their oppression .He reminded them that since the world hated and persecuted Him, they should prepare to face the same consequences too (Jn 15:18-20). His commitment was based on showing love for humanity and making an impact on their life and environment. Without love, one cannot be a follower of Christ. Although following Christ is a quite challenging task, Jesus invites His followers to

contemplate the vision of a new heaven and a new earth full of justice, peace and love that man is expected to live.

Jesus in particular asks His followers to have a commitment to change themselves and the society by embracing values of love, justice, freedom and peace in order to achieve their goals of being a follower of Christ. He Himself showed love by participating heavily on showing concern to His followers and humanity when He died on the cross. The love of Christ was more binding than any other love, and it was beyond the love attachment of biological father and biological mother. Becoming a liberator therefore entails loving one another in the modern society with an attempt of showing faithfulness in Christ. Moreover one should have concern to take a personal initiative of what all Christians share and live in a communal manner.

The exemplary of Jesus as a model of liberation plays an important role in the study, particularly in Mount Elgon region. It reminds the Church to emulate the life style of Jesus in their struggle towards Liberation for the common good of the community healing. It should focus on journeying and showing compassion to the poor. It takes the mandate of being a teacher just like Jesus, teaching them on the death and resurrection of Jesus and making them the follower of Christ despite the challenges they face. It will enable them to understand that they are the children of God and thus they should love one another just as Christ did.

4.2.4.5 Jesus the Reconciler

It is important to note Jesus is a perfect example of reconciliation of humanity and divine. He fully associates Himself with the poor in critical situations. He is Jesus who loves all people without isolation.⁸⁹ Jesus concern is directed towards healing and hearing the cry of the poor, Jesus boldly call upon those who oppress the poor to convert from their evil acts and focus upon extending their hand to those in need. Jesus speaks of peace and harmony by restoring that which was lost. Jesus therefore provides a platform for the Church to follow His example by reconciling the people with Christ and also making efforts to reconcile the people by putting forward the peaceful structures in order to restore harmony and reconciliation particularly within Mount Elgon region where war destructed the peaceful coexistence.

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 15.

4.3 Church Teachings and Theological Reflections on Fruitful Church Ministry

The section will examine Church teachings and theological reflection on fruitful Church ministry, it is of significant in our study to give clear picture of the role of the Church in solving war related issues that claim life of its members hence a challenge its evangelization mission.

4.3.1 The Roles of the Church

The Church has been given a responsibility to play various roles in the life of humanities and its mission to spread the Gospel to accomplish the God given task for salvation process. The Church is placed at the service of building the kingdom of God and uniting the Church. Some of the ecclesial tasks include:

4.3.2.1 The Role of the Church in Enhancing Justice and Reconciliation

It precise to note that the power of the good news is meant to transform and regenerates the life of humanity .As part of the growth of the Church, as corporate body, it had to face challenges for it to progress. The process of struggle cannot come to an end but continue to evolve⁹⁰ in order to transform the society. Hence the Church should be well prepared to solve challenges facing the society over and over again. The Church therefore has to take its stand without relying on either side while solving issues within the community or else if the contrary happens then its mission is compromised.

The image of the Church should be on the foundation of justice to the poor and being truthful, this will heavily determine its position in solving challenges of the society. The Church should practice its efforts and mandates on defending justice and reflect itself through its action and in what it proclaims as the Gospel of God. It should be on the service of its people despite their situation but to strive and extend the love of God to them. It should deeply condemn evil and affirm love-justice without fear or favor⁹¹ as it proclaims the Gospel of justice. The Church should put into account that all aspects of injustice done in the society are driven towards change so as to restore peace and reconciliation.

⁹⁰ L. Magesa, *The Post- Conciliar Church in Africa: No Turning Back the Clock* (Nairobi: CUEA Press2016), p. 97.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 110.

The Church has also to play its role of spreading the Gospel keeping its members at heart and guide them towards salvation. It should bear in mind that it is a stewards of Gods family hence should not be manipulated in any way to side with any part of conflict for the sake of embracing justice. By having a different approach in solving challenges in regards to the liberating power of Jesus Christ. The Church has an important role in building and uniting the spirit of the people for the purpose of ensuring peaceful existence where there is conflict to ensure that it maintains its image as the community of believers who seek peace and reconciliation. It should be quick to listen and have dialogue with other parties in the essence of participating to have tolerance and coexistence, which produces peace, “blessed are the peace makers,” (Mt.5:9) those who put effort in spreading peace are the true children of God, the society should strive to practice peace and reconciliation because those are the attitudes of Christ to humanity. The Church is the sacrament her service for instance through as the custodian and “interpreter of the scripture”⁹² that plays an important role by providing the good news of reconciliation, hence a reconciled community of Christ.

4.3.2.2 The Church as the People of God

The Church is a very important family of God; it is a community of believers that has to show concern their individual members. The Church is the mystery of communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit which I realized under the condition of people.⁹³ The Church was born as people and has grown as people, where there is a community of faith imbued with values and attitudes that promote harmony within the people of God. The Church at large also focus on embracing its members as brothers and sisters and emulate the love of Christ that he had for the Church, by showing compassion to one another and respect one other. That communality is expected to bond its members together and pulls the members to a unity to initiate action for the benefit of everyone and for the good of the people of God. Since the people create a community then the Church is as well the community of people. It is the Church where people realize their destiny; the Church should therefore be with the people, interested with the people by suffering with them and defending them in their challenges because they are the people of God.

⁹² Pope John Paul 11, A Reader, 2007, p. 109.

⁹³ J. Comblin, *The People of God* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002), pp. 66ff.

Pope Francis ambition for the Church is to have the Church of the poor and for the poor which is cultivated with the full of mercy and love. According to Pope Francis love and mercy makes the Church credible in its mission and the task bestowed to it. He reflects on “the Church which that is close to the people, a Church that hears the plea of the poor crying for justice. The Church has to engage in mission and Church which is motherly and with open heart”⁹⁴ Such kind of the Church will be able to tackle the challenges in their environment and pave way for the Gospel of God. The pope encourages the Church to say no to what is evil and yes to what is good and benevolent, to tackle the inequality that spawns violence.⁹⁵ A Church that is interactive in ensuring that it takes the first step, to be involved and supportive to bear fruit and progress in its mission of evangelization in order to restore peace, forgiveness and reconciliation among the people of God.

The Church is seen as the center for dealing with mystery of faith, God one and three, therefore the Church is viewed as an element in the unfolding of the love of the father son and Holy Spirit as it’s extended to embrace humanity.⁹⁶ It is from this perspective that Church as the family of Christ is realized through God sending his own son who showed love and concern, to his followers, a people of God, a Church. Therefore the Church is an instrument ordained by Christ so that it may reach out to people through evangelization.⁹⁷ Its mission is to proclaim to all that the meaning of human existence is intimate communion with God here on earth and in heaven. It will enable the Church to realize that the only way to “witness the kingdom of God, communion, peace and justice is by leading a life of communion and reaching out to all humankind in love”⁹⁸ hence there will be a realization evangelization is the task which involves both the Church leaders and the members. Therefore, the Church as the people of God will enable others to walk that path of salvation with hope of a promising future. In that manner, the Church role is to be conscious of the need to offer a word of truth, hope and great values⁹⁹ that will motivate people to reconcile with one another and thus be able to cop up with others in their concrete situations

⁹⁴ E. Orobator, *The Church we want: African Catholics Look to Vatican 111* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), p. 51.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 51.

⁹⁶ C .Mcgarry, et.al, *Inculturating the Church in Africa* (Nairobi: Pauline publication, 2001), p. 8.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 207.

⁹⁸ Ibid., p.207.

⁹⁹ Synod of Bishops, *The Vocation and Mission of the Family in the Church and Contemporary world*, 2014, no. 10.

and circumstances in life. The Church should make possible ways to ensure that all its members are encouraged and accepted to feel fully as part and parcel of the Church.

4.3.2.3 The Church as a Servant

The Church as servant¹⁰⁰ as discussed by Dulles, depicts the position of the Church in humanity to play the role of service in all aspects of social and realities in their life. The Church has to portray humanity as one family, and thus on the basis of all shortcomings and challenges that encounter humanity, the Church is expected to provide solution. Jesus Christ played an exemplary role of a servant by tackling the challenges that humanity encountered, in the same way the Church has the responsibility to ensure the fullness of revelation and the goal for humanity in its mission of transforming the work of Christ on the earth, because the Church is an important agent through which humanity are natured in environment of justice peace and reconciliation.

The Church as a family is a representation of living image in the society that strives to see Gods will is done at its best.¹⁰¹ The Church is regarded as a mother that gives birth to, provides education and unites the Christian families by putting into effect saving mission on the forefront. Hence in a wider perspective the Church is seen by virtue of Christian families in it, to love, share and encourage the Christian family in its own special way, to follow the exemplary from Jesus Christ. In this way the Church will be rendering service to the community at and the entire people.

It is therefore prudent enough for the Church to stick on its role in Mount Elgon region by showing its concerns as servant hood to the people in the community at their points of needs. The Church should serve its members, by healing reconciling and to bind up the wounds they encountered during the SLDF war. The Church should extend its hand in order to make necessary contributions for the good of the expansion of its mission as well and by such efforts it will describe the Church role as a servant more effectively by reaching the people within the region, particularly those who had given up in life as a result of the war.

¹⁰⁰ A . Dulles, *Models of The Church* (New York: Double Day, 1987), p. 89-102.

¹⁰¹ Pope John Paul 11, Encyclical Letter *Familiaris Consortio*, 22 November, 1981, no. 49.

4.3.2.4 The Church as an Evangelizing Agent

The Church is entitled to do evangelization by the power to teach, preach and reconcile sinners with God the father.¹⁰² However, evangelization begins from the Church itself, because it is the role model which should show hope that is experienced within the community of believers and to encourage its members to enhance a brotherly love. As an agent the Church is called to proclaim good news to its people towards the acceptable process of salvation. Furthermore, the Church has to nurture its members and prepares them for evangelization task, it has to model them and let them pass out with courage and complete fidelity. This will lead to a shared faith and gathering together and build each other to live well in Christ.

The Church in Mount Elgon region should play a major role of uniting its members by focusing on the family as the ‘domestic Church’ to begin its evangelization. A family is a very important and conscious in evangelization mission of the Church. It is from the family where people are evangelized and later they too evangelize to their fellow relatives and the community at large. The Church as the community believers brings harmony to the families by putting on structures that involves them participate actively together. Hence it contributes to enhance reconciliation process in the community hence the safety of the Church as ‘the family of God’.

A good number of the youth were misused in participating in SLDF war. The Church thus has to make a special attention to the youth in the region and encourage them to join the ‘family of Christ. It should also have an initiative for proper training that will instigate them to be the peace keepers in the community. It will therefore unite Mount Elgon region and promote peace, the Church as well has to invest its strength and confidence in them. With such efforts the Church will be able to evangelize to all families hence assisting the Church to tackle its challenges effectively.

4.4 Small Christian Communities as a Tool for Peace and Reconciliation

The small Christian community (SCC) is the smallest component in the Church, which is defined by an aspect of sharing of the love of Christ in a recognizable circle which is different from the larger ecclesia community. A community refers to an involving, strong, interactive and

¹⁰² Pope Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 2012, no. 15.

effective form of environment. In SCC the members meet frequently at least once in a week to unite together in praying, reading scripture, reflecting and sharing on it. Alongside that the SCC also share on the social issues upsetting the people within the community and the larger society. It moreover, contributes to that fullness of communality and concern to help others live a better life in the world.

The SCC also strengthens and portrays a more African tradition, by clearly being closer to people and showing the aspect of communality. It thus plays a major role of evangelization because it gives a priority to the communal way of African living. The SCC is thus a central organ to convey about reconciliation, spiritual growth, and mercy in the lives of individuals and the community and in the case of our study the community in Mount Elgon region. It therefore, calls upon the Church as the people of God through the SCC to play a major role in pastoral work. “The main agenda of pastoral task is to necessitate a Christian environment where the Gospel is fully expressed and accepted in realm of having concern to the Christian family.”¹⁰³ As a result, it will be highly of importance especially to the locality of study by contributing to social cohesion and healing within the Church and also create a harmonious environment that assists in living a strong Christian life.

The goal of the Church should focus on accommodating both the victims and the offenders in the small Christian community. It will thus be an indication of the Church to be a full Christian community that is vibrant and the one which hates sin but love the sinner. It is in the community where people are in position to reconcile and stand for what is truth and justice and thus the image of the Church will be portrayed to other people within the region. It should be the habit of every Christian because it is a communion with Christ and extents through the Church.¹⁰⁴ Prayer as an important aspect should take control of the small Christian community; prayer plays an important role in the living relationship between man and God.

4.5 Jesus as a Model of Peace and Reconciliation

Peace was one of the concern and attitude of Jesus and his disciples. It was the desire of Jesus to see his followers stay in peace referred to them as the blessed one (Mt 5:9). Jesus himself is a

¹⁰³ S. Clark, *Building the Christian Communities: Strategy for Renewing the Church* (USA: Ave Maria Press, 1972), p. 40.

¹⁰⁴ The Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2565.

man of peace, this is noted by St Paul because Jesus did not only open the way for humanity. But broke the difference between the Jews and non Jews (Eph 2:14), the oppressed and the oppressors. In the old testament the messiah is referred to as prince of peace (Is 9:1-7), who restored peace to humanity under the guidance of Holy Spirit (Is 11:9). The kind of peace the Christian seek should be that of faith and that we are Gods children with to exist¹⁰⁵ and share with others as the Gospel commands.

Jesus as the role model of peace gave the disciple peace, it is un-compared to that which world gives (Jn 14:27). The world peace is enforced through military violence and it's destructive to humanity. The peace of Jesus is rooted much deeper, it touches and reforms the person heart to better and reconcile with rebuilding the original harmony.¹⁰⁶ The way of peace is made complete during the coming of Jesus and reigns over His kingdom (Rev 21:1-8). Thus, the Christian as the disciple of Jesus should embrace peace to foster the coming of Christ kingdom of justice, peace and love.

Following the perfect of Christ example, the SCC, the Church and the community at large have to work for the common good to build up peace within their environment. They should struggle to oppose any form of violence and strive to foster harmony in the community. Jesus gives a good example when Himself and his fellow Jews did not live as free people but were controlled, humiliated and oppressed by the military of the Roman Empire. The context in which Jesus established a way of life which is concerned with promise on the meek and merciful, those in hunger for justice and seek to be peacemakers (Mt 5:4-9). Jesus challenged His followers to love their enemies and pray for their persecutors (Mt 5:43-44) he condemned seeking revenge (Mt 5:38-39). Jesus ensured that He put his teaching on practice with passion, for instance when he challenged the soldier struck Him unjustly and told him to testify what was wrong when he spoke the truth(Jn 18:23). Jesus did not defend himself using military for He knew 'those who take up the sword, will perish by the sword' (Mt. 22:52).

The Church should encourage its members to shun revenge and work toward building the peaceful community by opposing evil and injustice. It should promote the dignity of Christian

¹⁰⁵ Diocese of Rumbek, *The Church in Sudan Journeying Towards Justice and Peace*, (Nairobi: Pauline Publication, 2001), p. 232.

¹⁰⁶ Diocese of Rumbek Catholic Bishops Regional Eucharist congress: *Jesus our Bread of Life: On our Journey towards Peace and Reconciliation in Sudan*, November 24-26, 2000), p. 19.

family for the good of the community. The efforts of small Christian communities' peace initiatives will make an extension to the larger community around them. That will finally extend their concerns towards others which will enable to build a new and reconciled society. Through Jesus Christ people are reconciled to the Father (2 Cor. 5:18-19), and thus given the mandate to cooperate and unite in making his reconciliation more practical and to the fullest.

Reconciliation involves important steps of forgiveness which is the root beginning. Forgiveness's within the power of the one who has been offended, even if the offender does enter into the goal of that relationship. Jesus Christ our model gave a perfect example of forgiveness, he taught his disciples to forgive and seek for God's forgiveness (Mt. 6:12). He also gave an example of his mistreatment on the cross by praying for his enemies and asking God to forgive them (Lk. 23:34). Jesus prayer of forgiveness were continuous despite of him being opposed.¹⁰⁷

True forgiveness involves letting the memory of the challenges we have encountered cripple us with hatred, or revenge. We should strive to work with those who mistreated us and pray to God for peace and let him continue to work for his plan of our salvation. Christian forgiveness involves seeking justice with mercy and willingness, refusal to hate and have readiness to build a better community based on truth and justice. Reconciliation becomes a reality when the conversation between the victims and the offenders reaches a new level of commitment.¹⁰⁸ It is therefore, important for reconciliation process to be imbued with shared hope and embark on building a new future. The Church therefore should be instrumental in preaching peace and reconciliation by using a perfect model of Jesus the prince of peace and the reconciliatory. With that influence the community in Mount Elgon will be in position to settle in peace and embrace love amongst the families for the good of the Church and the society.

4.6 The Catechism of the Catholic Church on Safeguarding Peace and War

Peace is the role of every individual within a given community either as individual or communal. Everyone should therefore strive to foster peace at their level best for the good of the families and the society at large. The earthly peace is a reflection of the image peace of Christ

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁰⁸ J. Gruchy, *Reconciliation Restoring Justice* (South Africa: David Philip publishers, 2002), p. 154.

the messianic “prince of peace”. Christ reconciled men with God and made the Church a family of union with God, who declares to all humanity that “blessed are the peace makers “hence He himself is our peace.”¹⁰⁹ It is precise to understand that God instituted peace therefore Christian have the responsibility of embracing peace and practices it as commissioned by God. The documents further notes that for effective development in human life peace is a necessity. It is the “serenity of order” which can be obtained among people without safeguarding the goods persons, free communication and respect for the dignity of people.¹¹⁰ It further enumerates that those who renounce violence and bloodshed to safe guard humanity they bear witness to the gravity of the physical and moral risk of violence and destruction.¹¹¹ The document is very clear on war, it points out that all citizens and the state are mandated to avoid war.¹¹² It also discourage the production and sell of arms that affect the common good of the community. It is therefore very instrumental in our study in discouraging how the SLDF militia bought arms and used them to dislocate the families and the community at large as well as the Church. It thus calls upon the public authorities to regulate them in order to promote peace.¹¹³ The documents embolden the Church to urge its members to be prayerful so that divine goodness may free humanity from servitude of war.

4.7 Chapter’s Concluding Remarks

The chapter has described how the RCC teaching and theological reflection on liberation is significant to the ministry of the RCC and other Churches in Mount Elgon region, it has discussed on liberation, providing a foundation to focus on the next chapter which addresses the summary of the whole work as well as the implication and recommendation.

¹⁰⁹ The Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2305.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, no. 2304.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, no. 2306.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, no. 2308.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, no. 2316.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY, EMERGING RECCOMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided insights on liberation, RCC teachings and theologian's reflection which initiates this chapter to handle the summary of the study, draw implications and make recommendations.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study examined the challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war 2006-2008 using Christian Liberation approach basing itself on Cheptais RCC Mount Elgon region. The main goal of the study was to investigate the challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region during the SLDF war using Christian Liberation approach. It was achieved through the following objectives: to investigate the challenges facing the Church as a result of SLDF war in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma county; to evaluate the impact of the SLDF war on the Church in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma county and to examine Church teachings and theological reflections on liberation in view of fruitful Church ministry in Mount Elgon region.

The overall hypothesis of the study is that there are significant Church teachings and theological reflections that can be applied in addressing the challenges encountered by the Church through proper Christian liberation approach in Mount Elgon. The specific hypotheses of the Study included: The Church faces challenges as a result of the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region Bungoma County that need to be addressed; there was extreme impact of SLDF war on the Church in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma County and that there are theological reflections on Liberation necessary in helping the Church address the challenges it encountered from SLDF war.

The study was also guided by two theories, mediation theory expounded by Leonardo Boff and Clodovis Boff and Redaction criticism theory expounded by Kasenman, Bornkmann, Conzelmann, and Fuchs et al. These theories enabled the study to achieve its goal and objectives. The study points out the challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war in Mount

Elgon region. The study therefore, sought to inspire research studies focusing on diverse challenges that the Church faces particularly during the war. The study embarked in this task with the purpose of establishing possible way forward for the improvement of the Church in its ministry and society in Mount Elgon region.

The study has also identified contemporary challenges facing the Church particularly in Mount Elgon Region in Bungoma. For instance, some of the challenges include; displacement, suspicion and mistrust, land challenges, betrayal, death, increase of orphans among others. The study therefore calls on Church, the community and the Government to focus on making necessary contribution to such challenges that faces Mount Elgon region and elsewhere in the country. The Church should be accommodated, encouraged and assisted to play their role of spreading the Gospel and to contributing towards the achievement of peace and reconciliation for the benefit of the Church and the society as a whole. In addition, the study also noted some of critical implication that the Church has been a uniting factor in the society for so long and thus, it should be counted as part and parcel the community. The Church in turn should effectively play its roles for the benefit of the society.

The Church as a 'Family of God' is meant to promote the spirit of solidarity, openness, hospitality and honesty to all its members as well as focusing on the values in African societies including *Sabaot* community. The Christian community should therefore be the domestic sanctuary of the Church because in a home where a family lives, various values of the Church are also found. Such values include mutual love, attentiveness to God's word and common or shared prayer, thanksgiving and active charity.¹¹⁴ The Church is considered as Gods Family in the World which is characterized by diverse roles for instance, preaching the Gospel, enhancing love, peace and reconciliation. In this family, no one ought to go without the necessities of life so as to ensure their survival. The challenges encountered by the families in Mount Elgon region are the same challenges the Church faces. It is so because families and the Church are one body of Christ. Hence, the family in Mount Elgon region should not suffer any kind of challenges be it physical, spiritual, social, emotional or economical. As a community, they belong to the Church which is a 'Family of God' with all the positive values inherent in a God's family.

¹¹⁴John Paul 11, *Ecclesia in Africa* ,1995, no. 92.

Through Christian liberation approach the Church is in position to confront the challenges they face by becoming influential in its task of Gospel ministry to the community within the realm of the 'family of God'. And by that authentic Christian living will be realized. With the summary obtained from the previous chapter, the following implications can be drawn from the study with an aim of empowering the Church to confront their challenges and be influential in its ministry within the "Family of God."

5.3 Implications of the Study

Drawing from the study findings and the relevant literature reviewed, the following implications are drawn which can be grouped into spiritual, pastoral and catechetical. They are very weighty in guiding the Church on the principle of a fruitful Gospel ministry and evangelization.

5.3.1 Spiritual Implications

From the study the families in Mount Elgon region can fully understand their presence as part and parcel of the family of Christ especially by learning from the concept of the Church as a "family of God". This will strengthen them with joy, love, peace, solidarity, warmth, fellowship, dialogue, trust, acceptance and care towards one another with the effort of building up the Church as the family. This entirely has to involve the willingness, joy and love that fill the heart and lives of others that will motivate them to have the spirit of acceptance and thus accommodating everyone in the society regardless of their sin. They will understand that the love of God endures forever that through His son Jesus Christ He made an acceptable role model to humanity, that have to employ in their life situation.

The Church should encourage its members to show their concern towards one another in the community. Additionally, the people should be challenged to carry out their responsibilities without failure so as to enhance peace that God has bestowed on them. The Church has to instill moral values amongst its members and teach them the decrees and commands of God in order to create a future generation that is full of love and forgiveness. The Church priests, pastors and clergy have a major role to play in uniting the community in Mount Elgon region. It will achieve this by focusing on the broken, stigmatized, hopeless families and assisting them to perform better the call of parenting within the realm of the family.

From the study, the Church will be equipped and prepared to play its role as per the will of God. It has to appreciate its proper role and to realize that it is obliged to unite the community at large and therefore showing its acceptance of a God-given vocation. The Church leaders also have a duty to educate their members to obey, love, forgive and live in harmony and peace. With all these in place, they will be in position to correct their failures and direct the Christians towards the proper way to attain salvation. The clergymen are also expected to be the people's role models and thus ensuring the Christian virtues are developed within society.

The study also appeals to the Church leaders to play a major role in uniting the families in Mount Elgon region by preaching peace and acceptance to all victims of war in their situation as part of the family of God. The Church should ensure that in as much as the spiritual needs are provided; they should own the challenges of its members and focus on providing material support to them, guidance and counseling. They should also focus on paying its members a visit and to ensure that they are given duties as well as other obligations in the Church for the good of the family of God and the society at large. Spiritually the action of the Church is expected to move from words to deeds from ecclesial claims to ecclesial witnessing.¹¹⁵ That has to ensure that there is that spiritual transformation within the Church through its action and deeds which should be reflected on the hearts of people. It therefore, contributes in coming up with useful efforts in spreading peace and reconciliation to the community in Mount Elgon region.

5.3.2 Pastoral Implications

Pastoral concern is one the greatest tasks of the priests and pastors. For them to do an effective work of shepherding their congregations, they have to take an example of Jesus who was referred to as a "good shepherd." Hence, the pastoral implications should focus on instructing and helping the people to lead a fully Christian life so as to attain salvation. The following pastoral implications were drawn from the study:

¹¹⁵ E. Orobatar, *The Church we Want: African Catholics Look to Vatican 111* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), p. 69.

5.3.2.1 Reconciliation as a Pastoral Concern

In the context of our study, reconciliation is an important process through which the Church in Mount Elgon can establish for the purpose of instilling and preaching harmony among the people and the wider community. So that life can be realized fully and for the people to learn to forgive each other and live together peacefully. Biblically, an image of reconciliation is portrayed in (Is 2:1-4, 11:6-9) which emphasizes on a warm relationship between humanity. The second passage also incorporates harmony in nature where human beings and nature relate peacefully. It is therefore precise for the community in Mount Elgon to realize that there is no room for exploitation, hatred, enmity, and oppression. They should as Christians have hope and faith by affirming that God proposes harmony and peace for humanity. They should nature reconciliation within themselves for the good of the Church and the society at large. “Human relations which generate violence can be changed by the spirit of Christ which will create a world which is renewed and transformed.”¹¹⁶

God promises to send the helper, the Holy Spirit who, ‘will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you’ (Jn 14:24). It is prudent therefore to explore how the action of spirit can bring about reconciliation in Mount Elgon region. The Church and its members in Mount Elgon should focus on the power to endure the challenges they face as a result of war in order to realize the wellbeing of others in their course of struggle. “The power to endure this suffering comes out of love and seeks to realize the objective that lies beyond suffering and that is liberation.”¹¹⁷ The Church then should focus on liberation of the society from all forms of challenges they encounter despite the shortcomings. They should strive to endure these problems to save others and liken it to the kind of suffering Jesus encountered and at the end they will emerge the winners.

¹¹⁶ D. Waruta, H. Kinoti, *Pastoral Care in African Christianity: Challenging Essay in Pastoral Theology* (Nairobi: Acton Publishers, 2000), pp. 84-87.

¹¹⁷ A. Boesak, *Black Power Theology* (London and Oxford: Mow brays, 1979), p. 95.

5.3.2.2 Healing as a Pastoral Concern

The Church should focus on holistic approach to attend on all forms of challenges its members face. One of the characteristics of the Church is to cater for physical, moral and spiritual needs to the Christians. The Christian faith should be well acquainted with the challenges encountered by the Church in Mount Elgon region as a result of SLDF war. The Church has to ensure that there is total healing and acceptance by those who were victimized and the offenders. For it is God's mission for humanity to live in a harmonious society for the common good of all. This is made effective where there is a good spiritual environment full of good health, material benefit as well as peace and salvation.

It is important for the Church to also focus on issues that create instability in the society and have an amicable solution to prevent future challenges. It should keep in mind that the instability of the individuals who faces economic hardship, poverty and social suffering among others contributes to the instability of the Church. Therefore, the Church as the as the 'shepherd' of Gods' flock, must participate in helping the members of the Church in Mount Elgon by inserting itself in their situation and enable them to realize the kingdom of God. In (Lk 4:16), Jesus points out that, his mission is to 'preach Good News to the poor, proclaim release to the captives, recovering the sight of the blind and to set at liberty those who are oppressed.' The Church then should ensure that there is healing, guidance and counseling and reconciling the people in Mount Elgon region. As per the New Testament, Jesus in his work proclaims healing by restoring what is broken, healing what is fragmented through the healing community which is the Church.

5.3.3 Catechetical Implications

Spiritual, pastoral and catechetical implication is very vital in the growth of the Church and therefore one cannot be eliminated. They are very instrumental in our study by pointing out how the Church can be influenced in the evangelization, proclamation of the Gospel and Ecclesia community. In order to bring harmony and peace within the Church and its environment in mount Elgon region. From the study, the Church is encouraged not only to participate in enhancing peace and reconciliation but to teach its members to live as a family of God. They will hence understand better the Catechism of Catholic Church that "if catechesis is done well, Christians will be eager to bear witness to their faith, to hand it on to their children and make it

known to others”¹¹⁸ for the purpose of serving the human community in every way. Furthermore, the Church will appreciate better its role when an individual decides to give “adherence to Jesus Christ by faith and his endeavor to consolidate faith by catechesis and thus they will be forced to live together in ecclesial community with those who already took the same step.”¹¹⁹

With the above, the Church will be able to train its members effectively and welcome them in ‘Family of God’ where they can live life to the fullest. The study also encourages the Church to implement catechism as a very important stage in evangelization of the community in Mount Elgon. The step will help in integrating both the catechesis and evangelization with the aim of disseminating the Good News to the people in the society. It will also be appreciated as a way of calling people to salvation and promoting the healing process in the region. It will as well be of importance in providing teachings on faith in particular. Moreover, it arouses openness by making people to open their hearts to forgiveness. By converting them to adhere to Jesus Christ, the Church promotes love and concern within the realm of the ‘family of God’.

5.3.3.1 Proclamation of the Gospel

The Church has to play an important role in proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to the community. It should be concerned with not only the faith but also to focus on arousing the faith with grace, converting and submission to Christ. Because people live in a world that is saturated with temptations, pain and mistrust, they need the Church to strengthen their faith. The Church should therefore, aim at teaching the community of believers on living a life full of spirituality to restore their faith in God as they hope for a better life that would be attained through salvation.

5.4 Emerging Recommendations Drawn from the Study Findings

1. The Church should aim at strengthen her members particularly those who are bereaved as result of SLDF war, for instance those who died in nursing the wounds and those affected with HIV/AIDs from the SLDF militia among other causes of death during the war. Additionally, the Church should encourage the bereaved and offer guidance and counseling sessions to them and give necessary support required.

¹¹⁸ Pope John Paul 11, *Catechist*, 1978, no. 89.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, no. 88.

2. The Church should not only play the role of prayer and worship but work extra ordinarily to embrace its members at large especially for the fear of betrayal amongst themselves for those who supported the SLDF to attack their fellow congregation. Moreover, the Church is required to ensure that such cases of betrayal are handled effectively to avoid future challenges and impacts of war to the Church. The congregation should be encouraged to be their brother's keepers in order restore peace in the region.
3. The Government of Kenya and the Church should be involved in settling those who are landless in the region keeping in mind that the population has increased and requires more land for sustainable accommodation of the people. It will help in reducing the conflicts brought about by land issues. The Government with assistance from the Church should as well focus on the previous allocation of land and identify the biasness that contribute to war and therefore provide necessary solutions to such land challenges.
4. On the ethical challenges, the Church should develop a department to focus on providing proper training to the Church leaders on how to handle ethical challenges. With such kind of department, the Church will be in position to handle different ethical challenges facing the victims more effectively. The priest and pastors should as well not be left behind but undergo the same training for proper preparedness to such challenges resulting from war.
5. The Government should also take its responsibility to provide security to the citizens in Mount Elgon region. It will be able to achieve the mission by handling those who break the Law through spreading hatred to the community and disrupting their peaceful co-existence. On the other side, the Church should also ensure that it plays its role in promoting moral principles to its members and the society at large. It should also be proactive reminding the Government to play its role effectively.
6. The Church and the community should preach peace and reconciliation by working together to educate the victims of war through guidance and counseling. It should also preach the importance of leaving in a good way as brothers and sisters for peaceful co-

existence. The Church ought to ensure that it puts in place the structures that promote peace initiatives.

7. The Government and the Church should participate to ensure support to the victims of war especially the orphans who live in economic hardships. They should be identified in order to support them to acquire education by providing school fees through the County director of education and scholarships. For that, they will be able to realize their dreams and be of importance to the community, the Church and the nation.
8. The Church should also work close with its members so as to try and understand their problems and advise them effectively on how to cope up with the challenges they are facing. In addition, it has a duty to also encourage them to heavily participate in Church activities to make them have hope and forget their shortcomings in life as a result of SLDF war.
9. The community should be encouraged to try their level best to solve and concentrate on improving their relationship with both the victims and the Ex-SLDF militia for the purpose of enhancing peaceful co-existence.
10. The Church should be heavily involved in solving war related challenges for instance the case of the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region. The Church has to use the Gospel to trigger moral and Ecclesia values to see the need and the lesson taught by Christ on how to live with another in love and peace.
11. The Church need to ensure that her members especially the single parents are given attention and motivated to join the family of Christ. It also has to ensure that they are trained to be faithful participants in the Church, their family and the society. The Church as the community of believers should ensure that the single parents are given opportunity to hold various tasks in the Church as any other member by treating them equally irrespective of their marital status. In this regard, the family of Christ would have been put to practice.

12. The Church should organize forums to encourage the spirit of love and acceptance among the family members in Mount Elgon region. It should be reminded of its need to proclaim the Gospel of God to every individual for peace and love.
13. The Church should encourage the families as unifying agents to enhance a peaceful generation for the future family in Mount Elgon region. There should be partnership between the society and the Government institutions to assist the single parents to inherit the properties left by their dead spouses, instead of family members undermining and oppressing them. The Government and the society should take action to those undermining them and fully support them to play their rights as most of the respondents recommend.
14. Those who are infected with HIV/AIDS should ensure they have a positive minded attitude towards themselves. The Church ought to encourage them as part of family of God but not to give up on them. It is also responsible for ensuring that they seek medication to give them a chance to stay with their family joyfully as they take the drugs. The Church would then help the fellow members of the society who are also infected with the disease and have the mentality of revenge by spreading it to innocent individuals. It has to challenge them to accept their situation and live positively hence attaining a fulfilling life free from anger and vengeance.
15. The Church, the Government and the community could as well partner in providing feeding programmes to the needy children some of whom are from needy families. Some of the parents may not be in position to address the challenges of their children. Some of the respondents requested the Church, the Government and the NGOs to assist them as far as education and other factors are concerned.
16. The Church with help of the Government and Faith Based Organizations (FBOs) should come up with need to have a children's home that will assist the orphans who resulted from the SLDF war in Mount Elgon region. The initiative will enable the children to be taught on moral Christian values that will enable them to be important members of the

Church society and the country at large. It will give them a sense of belonging and acceptance by the community hence not discouraged.

17. The schools and the Ministry of Education should play an important role as an agent of ensuring the children are taught on how to enhance peace and live in brotherly love despite the challenges they encountered during the war. They should be encouraged to attend and participate in Church activities together in order to promote healing process in the region.
18. The Church ought to be on the forefront to ensure that the single parents in Mount Elgon region are accepted, embraced and guided by the pastoral ministers. It would attain the goal by sharing with them the message of love, solidarity and reminding them that they belong to the family of God. Thus, they should enrich them with forgiveness towards their parenting responsibility. Those who were involved in sexual violence resulting to divorce should also be well accommodated by the Church.
19. The Church using the mediation theory, should find proper ways to attract the attention of its members and lead them back to the right path by ensuring a healing process is achieved. Hence, those who abandoned the Church are received to experience the warmth and fellowship as the “Family of God.”
20. The Government as well as the Church should provide ways of accommodating the single parents’ children to pursue their education. It will be useful in ensuring that they Conscietize them on the benefit of enhancing a peaceful environment with one another in school and even at home regardless of the war that triggered their families to be apart. The children should accept their situation and find ways of creating a more just society by being careful not to jeopardize their future by hatred and blame game to one another.
21. The NGOs, the Church and the Government should come with a mechanism that will promote the livelihood of the victims of war. For instance, they should organize for self help projects that they should all participate in like agricultural projects, youth

development projects. These projects will unite them and keep them busy to focus for the future.

22. According to the single parents themselves they advocated for anti hatred campaigns that will unite their children at school to live harmoniously. Altogether, the single parents who commenced their singleness as a result of SLDF war also have to unite so as to forget their differences and work towards their parenting responsibilities. Regardless of the genesis of their cause, they are encouraged to strive towards creating a friendly community for the better of future generations in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma County.
23. The Church should also organize seminars where both the families are in position to be encouraged, offered guidance and counseling especially those who were traumatized. Similarly, they should assisted in their daily hardships and thus equipping them with energy to progress in their life for the good of the society and the Church as the “family of God”.
24. The Church should remind her members that their body is the temple of God and thus they should not engage in fornication. Instead, if one wishes to remarry they should do so and use their bodies for the Glory of God since the Scripture is very clear, “Don’t you know your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and who has given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself but to God, he bought you for a price. So use your bodies for God’s glory.” Despite the shortcomings in life as a result of war, people should not engage in prostitution to earn a living but to be helped under the pastoral care as the family of God.

From the study findings and recommendation the study could not be more diverse in addressing the issue of land challenges in Mount Elgon region because of the scope and limitation. To provide amicable solutions to the challenges affecting the society in Mount Elgon region, the study recommends the following areas for further research;

1. To make an assessment of the Government support to those who were displaced during the war as well as handling the land challenges in the region that brought about the land conflicts.
2. To investigate the effects of the military personnel to the families in Mount Elgon region during the SLDF war.

5.5 Conclusion of the study

As the study comes to an end, it is of immense importance to remember the following:

Chapter one focused on the background of the study. It also outlined the statement of the research problem which has enabled us to understand the goal and objective of the study. In addition the scope and limitation the Chapter provided an in-depth view of focusing on the selected research area, the literature review that contributed to the work by explicating the dialogue of secondary material that is related to the study. It has also discussed the theories related to the work and described the methodological approach used in the study thus providing the overview of the study on the problems encountered by the RCC as a result of SLDF conflict.

In an elaborate manner the Chapter Two emphasized on various problems encountered by the RCC during the SLDF conflict in Mount Elgon. It delved into how the problems brought about by the conflict affected the state of the families and community as a whole.

The Chapter Three discussed the challenges encountered by the RCC which is vital in providing a foundation in understanding how diverse impacts of the war affected the people of Mount Elgon region. It endeavored to have a focal point on the impact of SLDF war to the RCC in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County thus providing a platform for the theological section of the study.

We then had Chapter Four which described how the RCC teaching and theologians' reflections on liberation is significant to the ministry of the RCC and other Churches in Mount Elgon region. It also discussed on liberation, thereby providing a foundation to focus on the current chapter which addresses the summary of the whole work as well as the implication and recommendations

The study has focused on challenges encountered by the RCC during the SLDF war 2006-2008 in Mount Elgon region using Christian liberation approach in Mount Elgon region Bungoma

County. The research study the aimed at investigating the challenges the people of Mount Elgon region face and equipping them with effective tools to handle their challenges boldly. Therefore, the Church has to improve its ministry of the Gospel to the families and the society at large. The study limited itself to the challenges encountered by the Church as a result of SLDF war with experiential knowledge of other different kinds of war. The study thus sought to focus on challenges and impacts of SLDF war to the Church in Mount Elgon Region, Bungoma County. The study findings are anticipated to empower the families hence the Church in Mount Elgon region, Bungoma County. It enabled them to be fruitful in the Gospel ministry for a better strategy to handle the challenges effectively and to seek God's wisdom in their responsibilities through the theologians' reflections.

Moreover, the study is expected to challenge the Church in Mount Elgon region to focus on uniting the "Family of God." It also informs the Church to fully instill the Gospel of hope, love and solidarity among the people of Mount Elgon Region. The study has also concluded by focusing on effective implications and recommendation of the study that enables the Church play its role to unite individuals in the community. The Church is also obligated to work responsibly towards attaining effective means to confront the challenges it faces within the realm of the "Family of God."

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APPENDIX I: RESEARCH PERMIT

CONDITIONS

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



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Serial No.A 13023

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of THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI,

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conduct research in Bungoma County**

**on the topic: CHALLENGES OF SINGLE
PARENTING USING CHRISTIAN
INCULTURATION APPROACH: A CASE OF
MOUNT ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA
COUNTY**

**for the period ending:
6th March,2018**

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/17/45505/16037

Date Of Issue : 7th March,2017

Fee Received :Ksh 1000



**Applicant's
Signature**

**Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology and Innovation**

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PARENTS

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) Do not write your name anywhere in this document.
- b) These questions are meant for the Study purposes only and your cooperation will be highly appreciated.
- c) Participation in the Study is voluntary.
- d) The information gathered shall be held with ultimate confidentiality.
- f) Tick in the provided box, to indicate the appropriate answer or fill your response on the space provided.

- 1. Gender: Male () Female ()
- 2. Age: Below 30yrs () 30 to 40 yrs () 41 to 50 yrs () Above 50 yrs ()
- 3. Marital status: Married () Single () Widowed () Divorced ()
- 4. What is your level of education?
 - Certificate ()
 - Diploma ()
 - Degree ()
 - Other (Specify).....
- 5. What is your occupation?
- 6. How many children do you have?
- 7. Which Church do you attend?
- 8. Does your family attend Church?
 - Yes ()
 - No ()
 - Please give reasons for your answer above
 -
 -

9. In your own view, what are some of the challenges encountered by the Church during the SLDF war?

.....
.....

10. How did the SLDF war affect the Church? /What are some of the impact encountered by the Church during the SLDF war?

11. a) Did the Church participate to assist in curbing the SLDF war?

YES

No

b) Give reasons for your answer above.

.....
.....

12. Do you participate in Church's activities

YES

NO

b) How would you rate your participation?

Very Good

Good

Average

Poor

Very Poor

b) Give reasons for your participation?

.....
.....

13. As a Christian what challenges did the families encounter during the war?

.....
.....
.....
.....

14. How did the family overcome some of these challenges?

.....
.....
.....

15. Has the Church, families/relatives and the society addressed the challenges the families encountered?

Yes ()

No ()

Please indicate reasons to support your response above

.....
.....
.....

16. Has the community played a role in restoring peace and reconciliation?

Yes ()

No ()

Give reasons for your answer above

.....
.....

17. What role has the Church played in addressing the challenges they face?

.....
.....
.....

18. What is your suggestions would you recommend to the community, youth, parents and the Church in view of fruitful peace and restoration in Mount Elgon region?

a) parents

.....
.....

b) youth

.....
.....

c) Church

.....
.....

d) Community

.....
.....

APPENDIX III: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE YOUTHS

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) Do not write your name anywhere in this document.
- b) These questions are meant for the Study purposes only and your cooperation will be highly appreciated.
- c) Participation in the Study is voluntary.
- d) The information gathered shall be held with ultimate confidentiality.
- e) Tick in the provided box, to indicate the appropriate answer or fill your response on the space provided.

1. How old are you?

2. Gender Female ()

 Male ()

3. Marital status

4. What is the level of your Education?

Certificate ()

Diploma ()

Degree ()

Other (specify) ()

5. What is your Occupation?

6. Which Church do you attend?

7. How long have you been a member of your Church?

8. Do your parents also attend Church?

Yes ()

No ()

Explain your answer above

.....
.....

9. What challenges did your family face during SLDF war?

.....
.....

10. What challenges were encountered by the Church during this war?

.....
.....

11. How did the Church and community tackle these challenges?

.....
.....

12. Do you participate in your Church's activities?

Indicate reasons for your participation above

.....
.....

12. What are some of the impact the Church encountered during the SLDF war?

.....
.....

13. What are the challenges encountered by the victims of the SLDF war Mount Elgon region?

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.....
.....

14. How has the community and the Church address these challenges?

.....
.....
.....

15. How have these challenges affected you as the youth in the Church?

.....
.....

16. How have the youth in the Church handled some of these challenges the Church faces ?

.....
.....

17. In cases where you encounter some family life problems, whom do you turn to for guidance?

.....
.....

18. What would you recommend to youth, Church and community as a whole in view of realizing a fulfilling ministry in the Church Gospel?

Youth

.....
.....
.....

Church

.....
.....
.....

Community

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX IV: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE CHURCH LEADERS

INSTRUCTIONS

- a) Do not write your name anywhere in this document.
- b) These questions are meant for the Study purposes only and your cooperation will be highly appreciated.
- c) Participation in the Study is voluntary.
- d) The information gathered shall be held with ultimate confidentiality.
- e) Tick in the provided box, to indicate the appropriate answer or fill your response on the space provided.

1. Gender: Male () Female ()

2. Age: Below 30yrs () 30 to 40 yrs ()
41 to 50 yrs () Above 50 yrs ()

3. Marital status: Married () Single ()
Widowed () Divorced ()

4. What is your level of education?

Certificate () Diploma () Degree ()

Other, Specify.....

5. What is your position of leadership?

6. How long have you served in that capacity?

7. What are some of your responsibilities?

.....
.....
.....

8. What are some of the challenges the Church encountered during the SLDF war?

Mention,

.....
.....

9. How has the Church handled these challenges?

.....
.....

10. What are some of the challenges reported to you by the Church members?

.....
.....
.....

11. How have you as the Church leader handled such challenges?

.....
.....
.....

12. How else does your Church solve these challenges especially to the victims?

.....
.....

13. What are the programs in the Church assist to address the challenges encountered by the victims:

a) Single parents

.....
.....

b) Ex-SLDF militia

.....
.....
.....

c) Orphans

.....
.....
.....

14. What response do the members of the Church give on such programmes?

.....
.....
.....

15. What recommendations would you make to the Church and its members for effective tackling of their challenges?

a) Church

.....
.....
.....

b) Members

.....
.....
.....

APPENDIX V: PLAGIARISM TEST REPORT

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<p>CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY THE CHURCH DURING SLDF WAR 2006-2008 USING CHRISTIAN LIBERATION APPROACH: A CASE OF CHEPTAIS ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH, MT ELGON REGION, BUNGOMA COUNTY KIBET LABAN NYONGESA C50/85319/2016 A RESEARCH STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIERMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES OF THE UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI JUNE, 2017 CHAPTER ONE STUDY'S OVERVIEW 1.1 Introduction The chapter will focus on the Background to the study, and outline the statement of the research problem which will enable us to understand the <u>Goal and objective of the study</u>. Furthermore <u>the Scope and limitation</u> will provide an in-depth view of focusing on the selected research area. The Literature review will provide an important dialogue of secondary data that is related to the study. Finally the study will also discuss theories related to the work and thereafter describe the methodological approach used in the study and have a Concluding remarks. 1.2 Background to the Study After Kenya gained her independence in 1963, she inherited from the colonialists a distorted land policy system, and the individualism of land ownership that contributed to create animosity among the Kenyan citizens. The issue of land dispute be it communal or individual land ownership in Kenya is very critical, sensitive as well as an emotive one which requires due attention. This is attributed mainly to Kenya and Africa at large which is highly dependent on land as a source of livelihood and economic growth. Therefore it is every individual's interest to own property in form of land for survival. The land question in Kenya can be traced from the colonial period to post and neo-colonial era.1 The issue on land ownership is increasingly becoming a source of conflict in Kenya at large e.g. Land conflicts can lead to <u>individual loss and fray fabric of communities; others can cause large -scale displacements of people, or war</u>, furthermore, the issue of land conflicts in a country results to undermine a countries religious, social and economic development thus depleting a countries development. Land <u>disputes can arise between land holders and their neighbours, relatives or landlords</u>. It can also occur after war when displaced people eventually decide to go back to their ancestral land and may find their land occupied by other people. However, all land conflicts, no matter how pacifist or turbulent they are, they produce negative consequences for individuals, families, 1 L. Adam, 'Land Reform and Socio-economic Change in Kenya,' <u>Essays on Land Laws: The Reform Debate in Kenya</u> (Nairobi: University of Nairobi, 2000), p. 192. society as well as the entire country2. For instance Kenya experienced and continues to experience land conflicts as a result of 2007 post election violence that rocked the country. Many people fled from their homes and land where they had lived and owned land. Biblically the scripture asserts that God promises land to the people of Israelites. However, the dispute over land is depicted when the Jews were at war with their neighbors over land issues.</p>	