To serve as to lead: The theological portrait of the diocesan bishop as a servant-leader

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TO SERVE AS TO LEAD

The Theological Portrait of the Diocesan Bishop as a Servant-Leader

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfilment

of the Requirements for the S.T.L. Degree

from the Boston College School of Theology and Ministry (Weston Jesuit)

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INTRODUCTION

How would the life and ministry of the Church be affected if bishops were to faithfully discharge their functions as Servant-Leaders? That the bishop occupies a central place in Catholic ecclesiology is indisputable and that he wields great powers is also unarguably true. This is evident in the very structure of the Church and the role they play in the Church. Though they do not constitute the whole Church and one may even rightly argue that they are in the minority among God’s people,¹ their place, position, ministry and role are such that they are very central to the life of the Church. It is an axiom of our belief that where the bishop is there the Church is,² as they are seen as successors of the apostles in the unbroken line of apostolic succession down through the ages, willed by Christ for the continuation of the Church as his sacrament of salvation in the world. However, experience shows that there is, most times, a misunderstanding regarding the powers of this exalted office and the very reason for which these powers were given, namely for the service of the Church, the People of God. This thesis will examine the implications of the concept of Servant-Leader as an administrative mechanism or model for bishops in the faithful discharge of their sacred duties. It will argue that to the degree to which they do this, to that extent will their entire ministry be beneficial, for the salvation of souls.

Theologically, bishops have three functions or offices (munera), viz munus docendi (teaching office), munus sanctificandi (sanctifying office) and munus regendi (governing office). The first two the bishop performs ipso facto when he carries out his teaching role as a bishop, especially in collaboration with the episcopal college, on doctrinal and catechetical matters or when he presides over liturgical functions with his flock, but the governing office requires much more personal virtues of a good pastor. Experience shows that a bishop does not automatically become a ‘good administrator’ just because he is a bishop, but that this virtue of governance is necessary even to give pastoral credibility to the other two functions. This is at the root of many

¹ Those who are ordained bishops are actually less than 1% of the entire Church population.
problems in the Church ranging from lack of clear-cut pastoral programmes, maladministration of different kinds, lack of competent diocesan structures in many dioceses, failures in the handling of serious pastoral challenges (as evident in the sex scandal cases and the non-systematic approach to resolving pastoral problems) and indeed every other aspect of the Church’s life.

In this thesis, our effort will be geared towards showing how the other two functions of the bishop are related to and given more credibility by the governing office, following the model of the Servant-Leader as opposed to an authoritarian power-conscious leader. This governing model, in imitation of Christ, to a very large extent guarantees the claim of the divine origin of the episcopal ministry and consequently guarantees the effectiveness and fruitfulness of its mission in the world. In the first chapter, we shall take a survey of the development of the theology of the bishops as successors of the Apostles, from the New Testament period to at least the fourth century when it took a form upon which later centuries will build on. We shall rely on the testimonies of the Scriptures, Church Fathers, Councils and magisterial statements. The second chapter will dwell more on the concept of Servant-Leadership, the viewpoint from which this whole work will be focused, to argue that while this model of leadership may not have been essentially practiced the same way within the Church and other social institutions, it is very scriptural, was practiced by Jesus and is in consonance with Christian teachings. The main position of chapter three is that the socio-political and economic situation of a place has a great influence on how power is perceived and exercised, the Church not excluded. We shall look at how this is true in the light of the African colonial experience of the Church vis-a-vis the global Church. Finally, our task in the fourth chapter will be to see how a diocesan bishop, following the Servant-Leader model, can concretely exercise his pastoral ministry as a shepherd.

This work is also inspired by the fact that while the many powers of bishops are often clear to all (including bishops themselves), the ultimate reason for which they were empowered seems to have been lost. Many writings on the bishops tend to focus more on the magisterial and sanctifying powers of the bishop at the risk of minimising the service-orientedness of these
powers. From Church documents and the Code of Canon Law, these powers are reiterated, reflecting indeed how central the ministry of bishops is to the very life of the Church, for ‘where the bishop is, there is the Church.’ As such, I do not intend to dwell on these two functions of bishops but rather on that which appears to be the least emphasised. While not limiting the work to a geographical setting, there will be a focus on the socio-political and economic situations in Africa and how these have affected and are affecting the ministry of bishops, how they understand themselves and how they are perceived. This will serve as a springboard for a brief geographical comparison and a consideration of how socio-cultural environments have over time shaped the ministry of bishops within the global Church, followed by our recommendation for the way forward for a Servant-Leader bishop in a diocese.

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CHAPTER ONE
The Theology of the Episcopate

Bishops are successors of the Apostles chosen by Christ (Mk. 3:4) to continue his mission of preaching about the kingdom of God on earth for the salvation of humanity. This mission is continued in the Church today by unbroken apostolic succession and carried out specifically through those who by episcopal ordination, the laying on of hands and the invocation of the Holy Spirit, have received the divine ministry of bishops as vicars of Christ and shepherds of the people. In this chapter, our task will be to take a survey of the development of this teaching on the bishops, drawing from scripture, the teaching of some of the early fathers on the issue, the insight of Vatican II Council and the Apostolic Exhortation, Pastores Gregis. It is hoped that at the end, a better understanding of how the ministry of bishops is understood in the Church will open up possibilities for a better appreciation of their roles in the Church.

1.1. Evidence from Scripture

Many scholars agree that the present threefold structure of the Church, as evidenced in local churches or dioceses, under one bishop surrounded by his many priests and deacons is a product of later historical development as there is no clear evidence of this in the New Testament, but only in later early Christian centuries. In other words, what we have and understand today as the episcopate developed from the post-New Testament practice of a college of presbyters/elders, sometimes called episkopoi, exercising local leadership over the Christian community. There are many opinions on how the later practice of having a diocese under a single bishop, what has come to be termed a monarchical bishopric, must have developed earlier in some churches and Christian communities than others.4

If the bishops are successors of the Apostles, it is necessary to trace their history to the latter. While the Apostles were known from the New Testament (especially the Acts of the

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Apostles and in the case of Paul from his Letters) to have continued the mission of Christ and even founding new churches with the task of pastoral care over them, there is no clear indication of their exercising this ministry in permanent residence over a particular church as they were mainly itinerary preachers. There is also no doubt that the apostles appointed some helpers or co-workers to assist them in their ministry but it is not always very clear what the leadership functions of these appointees fully entailed, as the apostles were either still present in those communities, visited them from time to time, or wrote letters to them from other churches. Even with this evidence, their roles seem to have been under the watchful supervision of the apostles.

The real meaning of the words/terms used and the ministerial implication of those words coupled with their apparently different usages, depending on places, also add to this complexity. For example, the word *episkopoi* seems to have been used interchangeably with *presbyteroi* for the same persons (Acts 20: 17, 28) in Ephesus while other communities seem to have either bishops (like Philippi) or presbyters (like Jerusalem – Acts 21:17-18) and not both.\(^5\) This is supported by the fact that the presbyters, who govern the flock of Christ (Acts 20:28; 1Tim. 5:17, Tit. 1:5); instruct the faithful (1Tim. 5:17; Tit. 1:9); and administer the sacraments (Jas. 5:14) were also addressed as bishops, with the qualification outlined for one class equally applicable to the other, especially in the Pastoral Epistles (1Tim. 3; Tit. 1:5-7).\(^6\) The plural rendering of the word “bishop” (*episkopos*) as *episkopoi* in Acts 20:28 and Philippians 1:1 suggests that there was a college or group of presbyters being addressed but its singular use in both 1Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7 indicates that the monarchical episcopate was already emerging by the time the Pastoral Letters were written. Avery Dulles will even go further to say that if the ‘angels’ of the seven churches in Asia Minor referred to in the first three chapters of Revelation were the bishops, as many scholars

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believe, then there is evidence that each local church in Asia Minor must have had its own single bishop as its local pastor.  

The very nature of the life of the early Christians and the apostles themselves, who were mainly itinerary preachers or missionaries, seems to support the view that, though they founded churches and participated in continuously exercising pastoral charge over them, they were not likely to have had permanent residence among the churches. From place to place they spread the gospel, sometimes in the midst of persecution, and so they either visited the churches themselves, sent co-workers or companions to them or wrote epistles to encourage them as part of the pastoral care. The cases of Timothy and Titus in Ephesus and Crete respectively show evidence of presiding over a church, but they were not to stay permanently as Paul required them to join him later. Even the ‘fellow elders’ Peter referred to in his epistle (1Pet. 5:1-5) also suggests that he was not likely staying with them or they were fellow elders with him and not one presiding elder. In other instances Paul speaks of the qualities and duties of the/a man who desires to be a bishop (1 Tim. 3:1, 2; Titus 1:5, 7). The only evidence of a single presiding bishop may be the case of James in Jerusalem at the Council of Jerusalem and the reference to the presbyters gathered around him (Acts 15; 21:18; Gal. 2:12).  

The contention again is whether the example of James will not have better described a resident apostle than a bishop considering that Paul does not even mention it in the order of ministry in his instruction to the Ephesians - apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers?  

While David A. Jones argues that the use of the word *episkopos*, in the singular, in the Pastoral Letters, points to the possibility of a mono-episcopacy in the New Testament, Francis Sullivan objects by saying that the phrase *dei ton episkopon* when taken in the singular is best understood in the generic sense and that it was also used in the same sense in Titus 1:7, 5, in addressing

9 Ephesians 4:11.
This further shows the inconclusiveness and lack of consensus over this issue among scholars, but what is clear is that even though there would have been particular elders who presided over churches, they never existed as apostles-bishops as we have it today where an individual bishop has jurisdictional control over a particular diocese and exercises control over a group of presbyters. Also at this point, a local church was seen as apostolic by faithfully following the teaching of the apostles or their co-workers. Joseph Callaghan has argued that the concept of apostolic succession meant that a particular community or ecclesia was founded by one of the apostles (not necessarily one of the Twelve) and continued to teach and preach the same Gospel as its founder, as its understanding of the transfer of leadership from one bishop to another was a latter development.\textsuperscript{11}

1.2. Church Fathers from the early Patristic Period.

Though the Didache (ca. 100 A.D.) mentions the Apostles in the context of missionaries (just like prophets and teachers) or bishops as presiders over the Eucharist,\textsuperscript{12} Clement of Rome (ca. 96 A.D.) seems to be the first to draw a link of continuity (at least in principle) between the ministry of the Apostles and that of bishops. He spoke of Christ who came from God and sent his apostles, who in turn made provisions that when they die other approved men (viri probati) would succeed them by appointing their first fruits, whom they had tested by the Spirit, bishops and deacons for the future believers.\textsuperscript{13} This tends to support apostolic succession in ministry but is not a good basis for asserting that there was single bishop of a church. These men could have been the different individual bishops of the different churches or group of bishops, presbyters or leaders of a local church, in this case Corinth or Rome, from where he wrote. It must also be understood that he was writing in the context of the removal of some presbyters in the Corinthian church.

\textsuperscript{10} Sullivan, From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of the Episcopacy in the Early Church, 219-220
\textsuperscript{11} Joseph F. O’Callaghan, Electing our Bishops: How the Catholic Church should Choose its Leaders (Lanham, Maryland: Sheed & Ward, 2007), 11.
\textsuperscript{12} Didache, 11.4, 6; 15.1,2, in Aaron Milavec, The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis and Commentary (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2003), 27, 35.
\textsuperscript{13} St. Clement of Rome, First Epistle to the Corinthians, 42.2; 42.4. All references to patristic sources, unless otherwise stated, come from Early Christian Fathers.
According to him, the apostles had a foreknowledge of the leadership strife that would ensue in their absence and so provided for an orderly succession by appointing reputable men in their stead with the consent of the whole church, for which he admonished, it would be wrong to depose or remove them without a just cause.\textsuperscript{14}

The position of bishops is clearer in Ignatius of Antioch (35-117 A.D.) - called second bishop of Antioch by the great church historian, Eusebius),\textsuperscript{15} who taught that just as Christ expresses the mind of the Father or is in the mind of the Father, so the bishops, appointed throughout the world, express the mind of Christ or are in the mind of Christ. He maintained that the ministry of bishops comes from God and not men (even associated them to God the Father), for where the bishop is, there the flock should follow since without or outside him there is no validity; even as the bishop teaches with his presbyters around him working in harmony and unanimity.\textsuperscript{16} He admonished the Ephesians to obey their earthly bishop, Onesimus\textsuperscript{17} and in his \textit{Letters} he mentioned the names of the bishops of those churches where they have been appointed all over the world. It is not so clear what he exactly meant by bishops having been appointed throughout the world as one is not sure if this was the case everywhere in the Church.

It could be argued that what is at stake here is that episcopal authority represents directly the authority from God and not necessarily that apostolic succession legitimises ecclesiastical authority as seen in Clement.\textsuperscript{18} But no doubt if one accepts one, it paves the way for the acceptance of the other, for if episcopal authority comes from God and has been maintained in the succession of bishops, it could be argued that it was divinely instituted. It may thus be said that the structure of having a bishop with his priests/presbyters and deacons may have existed, but not in all places, by the second decade of the second century. This may have been the case in the

\textsuperscript{14} St. Clement of Rome, \textit{First Epistle to the Corinthians}, 44.1-6.
\textsuperscript{15} St. Eusebius, \textit{Ecclesiastical History}, 3.36.
\textsuperscript{16} See St. Ignatius of Antioch, \textit{Letter to the Ephesians}, 3:2, 4:1; \textit{Letter to the Philadelphians} 1:1, 2:1, 7:2; \textit{Letter to the Smyrnaeans} 8:1; \textit{Letter to the Trallians} 3:1, 2, 7:2; \textit{Letter to the Magnesians}, 6:1; 7.
\textsuperscript{17} St. Ignatius of Antioch, \textit{Letter to the Ephesians}, 1:3.
churches of Antioch and Ephesus as Ignatius already speaks of bishops “appointed throughout the world”\textsuperscript{19} and that nothing lacking a bishop, presbyters and deacons can be called a church.\textsuperscript{20} On the other hand, Polycarp’s \textit{Letter to the Philippians} (ca. 135 A. D.) mentioned the presbyters and deacons but is very silent on the role of the bishop.\textsuperscript{21} There is also no agreement as to the degree to which the idea of bishops being present everywhere can be said of the church in Rome for example, as \textit{First Clement}, written in the 90s and \textit{Shepherd of Hermas}, written in the first part of the first century are also silent about this. The former referred to the leaders in Corinth using the words \textit{hegoumenoi, episkopoi, presbuteroi} and \textit{archontes}, all in the plural. The latter also used plural words to describe those in leadership like “leaders” (\textit{prohegoumenois}), “presbyters who preside over the church” (\textit{tôn presbuterôn tôn proistamenôn tês ekklesias}), “leaders of the church and occupants of the seats of honour” (\textit{prohegoumenois tês ekklesias kai tois prótokathedraitas}).\textsuperscript{22}

Later in the second century, Irenaeus, while writing against the Gnostics, mentions the role of bishops when he talked of how his teacher, Polycarp of Smyrna, had faithfully handed down the \textit{depositum fidei} or sound doctrine which he learnt from the apostle John, which has reached them through apostolic succession. He attributes to bishops the “sure gift of truth” or “certain charism of truth” (\textit{charisma veritatis certum}), which seems to suggest that they are guarantors of orthodoxy by the gift of the Holy Spirit (\textit{charisma}) as opposed to heretics.\textsuperscript{23} He believed that the tradition handed down by the apostles have been preserved, safeguarded and faithfully transmitted by this succession in the apostolic line, though he uses the words bishops and presbyters sometimes interchangeably as \textit{per successiones presbyterorum} or \textit{episcopi}.\textsuperscript{24} Tertullian (ca. 160-225 A.D.), believing that the early church received her doctrines and first bishops from the apostles or their immediate successors or acquaintances (apostolic men), challenged heretics to prove their own

\textsuperscript{19} St. Ignatius of Antioch, \textit{Letter to the Ephesians} 3:2.
\textsuperscript{20} Ibid., \textit{Letter to the Trallians} 3:1.
\textsuperscript{22} Ibid., 221-222.
\textsuperscript{23} St. Irenaeus, \textit{Adversus haereses} (Against heresies), III.3.4; IV.33.8; IV.26.2.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., III.2; III.3.1.
apostolicity by establishing their link with apostolic succession and the possibility of not having strayed.\textsuperscript{25}

For Hippolytus (ca. 170-235 A.D.), bishops were successors (\textit{diadochoi}) of the apostles and so in the ordination ritual of a bishop in the presence of other bishops, he mentioned the invocation of the Holy Spirit to enable him faithfully feed the flock, pointing to his pastoral ministry of leadership and teaching of sound doctrine.\textsuperscript{26} While Origen (185-254 A.D.) is known to have spoken of the threefold hierarchy of bishop, presbyter and deacon with bishops as of the highest rank, calling them leaders (\textit{hegoumenoi}), princes of the churches (\textit{ecclesiarum principes}), and high priests (\textit{sacerdotes magni}), he also talked of orderly apostolic succession but was very critical of the manner of choosing them.\textsuperscript{27} Cyprian (200-258 A.D.) even identified the bishops with the apostles (\textit{apostolos, id est, episcopos}) with no doubt that bishops were successors of the apostles who were appointed bishops by Christ, a point he had to remind the deacons, whom he said were appointed by the apostles themselves in their office as bishops.\textsuperscript{28} While refuting some schismatic sects he was noted for saying: “By that you ought to realise that the bishop is in the Church and the Church is in the bishop, and whoever is not with the bishop is not in the Church.”\textsuperscript{29} Known for insisting on the unity of bishops (successors of the Apostles) as the basis for the unity of the Church, as each bishop personifies his local church with his clergy and faithful, he taught that the authority of bishops forms a unity, of which each holds his part in its totality (\textit{Episcopatus unus est cuius a singulis in solidum pars tenetur}).\textsuperscript{30}

In all, while the New Testament and some of the early church writings mentioned above offer us some insight into who and who led the church in the first three centuries, they do not say clearly if the apostles themselves appointed bishops to replace them (except in the way mentioned

\textsuperscript{25} Tertullian, \textit{De Praescriptione Haereticorum} (On the Prescriptions against the Heretics), 32.
\textsuperscript{26} Hippolytus, \textit{Philosophumena}. 1, proem. 6; Apostolic Tradition, ii,1-5, iii, iv. There are specific questions regarding both the authorship and dating of this document.
\textsuperscript{27} Sullivan, \textit{From Apostles to Bishops: The Development of the Episcopacy}, 187, 189-190.
\textsuperscript{28} St. Cyprian of Carthage, Epistle/Letter 3:3.1; 45:3.2; 66:4.2.
\textsuperscript{29} Ibid., 66:8; 55:21; 43:5.
by Clement). Even when they indicated a gradual development from a leadership by a college of presbyters to a single bishop, they do not clearly say how the transition took place. Despite this ambivalence and complexity, we cannot deny the information provided by the later writings, especially from Irenaeus and those after him. This evidence implies that the mandate handed on by Christ to the apostles was transmitted or transferred to the presbyters or local church leaders or co-workers who acted in their name and in their absence as the church grew, considering that they were engaged in the missionary apostolate. There are many biblical evidences, especially in the Acts of the Apostles, the Pastoral Letters of Paul and the First Epistle of Peter, that the apostles not only shared their ministry with their co-workers and other presbyters for the continuation, spread and pastoral sustenance of the ministry, but also perpetuated this work by handing over to them, often after the laying on of hands, as in the case of Paul and Timothy or Peter to the group of his ‘fellow elders.’ They created offices in the churches they founded and were very careful in the choice of their successors, with emphasis on fidelity to the apostolic tradition received, in order to safeguard the deposit of faith or sound doctrine from being corrupted. They specified their tasks and even gave the required qualities for taking up these offices.

These men appointed by the apostles, in turn, would have handed this authority over to their own successors for the continuation of the work of the apostolate as part of the mission or mandate handed over to the church by Christ through the apostles, for all times and for the whole world. This will be the basis upon which later theologians will build their teaching that bishops in the church are direct successors of the apostles. By the time of John Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine (4th-5th centuries) and the later Fathers, bishops have come to be accepted as charged with the pastoral care of the church, preaching and worship. While our emphasis here will not be on their view on the theology of the episcopate (they accepted its divine origin and continuity from the apostolic mandate), we shall return to some of them in the next chapter when we shall be dealing with their view on the ministry of the bishop as a shepherd.

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31 Acts 14:23; 20:17-35; 1Cor. 16:15-18; 1Pet. 5:1-6; 1Tim. 3:2; 4: 14; 5:17, 22; 2Tim. 1:6; 2:2; 4:1-8; 5: 22; Tit. 1:5.
1.3. Councils before Vatican II.

The two major councils of interest here are the Council of Trent and Vatican I. Trent touched greatly on the pastoral role and discipline of bishops, and the need for them to act truly like shepherds who care for the flock, by carrying out their duties over not more than one diocese, with residency there. Apart from insisting on the need for residency in their dioceses and exercise of ministry only in one diocese, bishops were to ensure that priests assigned to churches faithfully pastored their flock as opposed to absentee bishops who were more interested in having more territories under their patronage. The bishop’s pastoral solicitude should ensure the primacy of preaching, the proper celebration of the Eucharist and his closeness to his flock through pastoral visits, all for the care of the soul (cura animarum) such that it will never be said that: *the little ones have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them.* In other canons where reference was made to the bishop, more attention was on his role in implementing the reforms promulgated by the Council, discipline in the celebration of sacraments and proper pastoral governance in the diocese.

Vatican Council I (1869-1870), on the other hand, hardly mentioned anything on the bishops before it abruptly ended, succeeding only in defining papal infallibility and primacy. It needs to be stated against popular thinking that there should not be a tension between the authority of the Pope and those of the bishops if well understood in the context of service for the entire Church, each in its proper way. Though Vatican I is often remembered for its doctrine of papal primacy and infallibility, this teaching is not a denial of the authority of bishops. A look at the schema of the Council can lead to the conclusion that were it not for the abrupt end of Vatican I, it would have complemented its teaching on the theological and juridical foundations of ecclesial

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33 Ibid., 26-27, 47-50.
authority (on the Pope) with that on the bishops.\textsuperscript{35} To this end, Vatican II is seen, in a way, as completing the work of the Vatican I on the authority and ministry of bishops in the Church.

1.4. Episcopacy according to Vatican II.

1.4.1. Background to the Vatican II Council Documents on the Bishops.

It is important to state that when Vatican I’s teaching on papal primacy was promulgated, it served to strengthen the power of the Pope against secular incursion but never excluded the possibility of the collegiality of the college of bishops, as is sometimes presumed.\textsuperscript{36} The idea of the supreme and full authority of the college over the whole Church was a common traditional belief among canonists, theologians and the faithful even before the Council. The novelty of Vatican II then is in its saying explicitly what has never been so clearly proposed by the extraordinary magisterium.\textsuperscript{37} It was widely expected that the Council would complete the unfinished work of Vatican I and supplement the definition of papal primacy and infallibility by a theological clarification of the meaning of the episcopal office, a balance position necessary to clarify the obscurity or confusion between monarchical papacy and hierarchic episcopacy.\textsuperscript{38}

In the view of Karl Rahner, which was to have great influence on the Council floor, a good historical and theological answer to this obscurity that tends to create a tension between the powers of the Pope and those of bishops was necessary. He opined that the answer is in the understanding that an individual “church” is not just an administrative organ/district of the whole Church or like the civil service of the Pope but bears a unique relationship to the universal Church, one based on

\textsuperscript{35} See De Fide catholica in New Advent, at http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/15303a.htm (accessed 26 April 2013. The Council’s major documents were Dei Filius and Pastor Aeternus that defined papal infallibility but that on the bishops De episcopo couldn’t be discussed before the abrupt end of the Council.


the nature of the Church and on her differentiation from natural territorial societies. In other words, the real essence of the Church as the historical continuation of the salvific work of Jesus, the incarnate Word of God, most tangibly expressed in its celebration of the Eucharist (the Eucharist forming the Church) is no less realised in the local church gathered around and under its bishop than it is in the universal Church. In the local or individual church the whole Church is made tangible.\textsuperscript{39}

The idea that the episcopate is of divine right with proper authority, not a representation of the Pope and that bishops are pastors in the name of Christ and as successors of the apostles, not created or suppressible by the Pope, had already been declared by the magisterium before Vatican II.\textsuperscript{40} For Rahner, this is the case without undermining the teaching that the Pope is above the individual bishop as an individual, with universal, supreme, direct and ordinary jurisdiction over them; with the power to determine which person should possess the powers of a bishop, to confer such powers/authority or define the limits but not as a part or a delegation of his personal powers.\textsuperscript{41} In fact, relying on Dom Olivier Rousseau and the \textit{Collective Statement of the German Episcopate Concerning the Circular of the German Imperial Chancellor in respect of the Coming Papal Election}\textsuperscript{42} of 1875, endorsed by Pius IX, Joseph Ratzinger highlights the basis for a proper understanding of papal primacy and episcopal collegiality.\textsuperscript{43} Below is a summary of the content.

1. The Pope cannot arrogate to himself the episcopal rights, nor substitute his power for that of the bishops.
2. The episcopal jurisdiction has not been absorbed in the papal jurisdiction.
3. The Pope was not given the entire fullness of the bishops’ powers by the decrees of the Vatican Council.
4. He has not virtually taken the place of each individual bishop.
5. He cannot put himself in the place of a bishop in each single instance, vis-a-vis governments.
6. The bishops have not become instruments of the Pope.
7. They are not officials of a foreign sovereign in their relations with their own governments.

\textsuperscript{39} Ibid., 16-17, 20-21, 23, 28-30.
\textsuperscript{40} See Council of Trent: Dz. 960 and 966; Vatican Council I: Dz. 1821 and 1826; Leo XIII’s \textit{Satis Cognitum}: \textit{Acta Apostolicae Sedis} 28 (1895-1896), 723, Dz. 1962; Pius XII’s \textit{Mystici Corporis}: \textit{Acta Apostolicae Sedis} 35 (1943), 211ff, Dz. 2287 and his allocution \textit{Si Diligis}: \textit{Acta Apostolicae Sedis} 46 (1954), 314.
\textsuperscript{41} Rahner, “The Episcopate and the Primacy,” 17-18.
\textsuperscript{42} This document was a reaction to the claim that Vatican I had undermined the authority of the individual bishop.
\textsuperscript{43} Joseph Ratzinger, “Primacy, Episcopate and Apostolic Succession,” in Rahner and Ratzinger, \textit{The Episcopate and the Primacy}, 40-41.
According to Ratzinger, in the long debate between episcopalism-conciliarism and papalism, Vatican I condemned both, in preference for an ecclesiology of communion, not based on human constitution or discretion, but on the word of God. Thus primacy and the episcopate are both of divine origin and constituent parts of the Church and not a case of one or the other.  

Acknowledging that Vatican I neither intended to undermine or impair the powers of bishops nor to pitch papal authority against it but rather to confirm and vindicate it, both strengthening each other, then the question is not merely that of co-existence but mutual inclusion and correlation. Therefore, there was the need to clarify how this is to be understood without confusion, contradiction, conflict or misunderstanding and to appreciate their internal and vital relationship.

1.4.2. The Contributions of Vatican II.

The Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church Christus Dominus is based on the synthesis of two documents, the schema “On Bishops and Diocesan Government” which was discussed at the second session of the Council in connection with that on the Dogmatic Constitution of the Church (De ecclesia) and the schema “On the Care of Souls” which never came up for debate for lack of time. It is also very instructive and enlightening to note that since this decree deals with a topic so central to the organisation and life of the Church (the bishops), one must understand it in connection with the earlier promulgated Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium), especially Chapter III which deals with collegiality, which also went through many changes from the original schema, De ecclesia, to reflect the communio ecclesiology of the Council.

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44 Ibid., 43-45.
In this light the Second Vatican Council teaches that the apostles, having received their divine mission or mandate from Christ which was meant to last till the end of the world, in order that it may continue after them, carefully entrusted it, by will and testament, to their trusted/proven immediate collaborators (whom they appointed) and willed that other such men, in turn, take over from them at their death. Chief among these are those appointed to the dignity and responsibility of bishop in unbroken succession as transmitters of the apostolic line. Quoting Tertullian and Irenaeus, it is said that through the apostolic succession of bishops down to our time, conferred only by episcopal consecration for the fullness of the sacrament of Orders, the apostolic tradition is manifested and preserved in the world.\footnote{Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church \textit{Lumen Gentium} (21 November 1964), §§20, 21; Decree on the Pastoral Office of Bishops in the Church \textit{Christus Dominus} (28 October 1965), §§2, 3, in \textit{Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents}, ed. Austin Flannery (Boston: St. Paul Books and Media, 1975).} Bishops are thus constituted direct successors of the apostles for the preservation of the true faith, and whoever listens to or rejects them listens to or rejects Christ. In the person of the bishops the Lord is present in the midst of the faithful, having received their mandate from the Apostles to continue the mission of Christ the high priest, by the imposition of hands and the words of consecration during episcopal ordination, through which they receive the fullness of the sacrament of Orders.\footnote{\textit{Lumen Gentium}, §21.} From this they derive their threefold function of teaching, sanctifying and governing and as a college in hierarchical communion with the Pope they enjoy infallibility, guided by the Holy Spirit on matters of faith and morals.\footnote{\textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§ 24, 25.} Part of the duties of bishops as successors of the apostles is the preservation of sound doctrine in Scripture and Tradition, to be perpetuated and transmitted to every generation with the help of the Holy Spirit.\footnote{Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, \textit{Dei Verbum} (18 November 1965), §§7, 8, 10, in \textit{Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents}, ed. Austin Flannery.} Thus bishops can be truly said to be the successors of the apostles since they historically developed to be accepted as authentic custodians of the orthodox faith and teaching against heretics, guided by the Spirit.
The Council teaches that bishops exercise their office in a particular place or church not merely as the Pope’s representative or vicars but as the representative of the universal Church and of the college of bishops, which has the divine right of the governance of the Church. Though each individual bishop represents his own church, all of them together with the Pope represent the entire Church joined in the bond of peace, love and unity. \[52\] The bishops as members of the episcopal college with supreme and full power over the Church have collegiate responsibility and solicitude for all the churches and so assist the Pope in the governance of the Church, especially through ecumenical councils and the synod of Bishops. They are to exercise their ministry for the universal Church, as successors of the apostles, in communion with and under the authority of Pope, the successor of Peter (\textit{cum et sub Petro}). \[53\] The college of the bishops of the world in union/hierarchical communion with and under the Pope, its head and visible sign or principle of unity and never without him, should be seen as the college of the apostles under the authority or headship of Peter, a case not so much of superiority-inferiority model but of first among equals (\textit{primus inter pares}), at least in jurisdiction. \[54\]

Individual bishops by their own right govern their particular churches as vicars and ambassadors of Christ, successors of the apostles and not as vicars or delegates of the Pope, with all the power, \textit{omnis potestas} (ordinary, proper and immediate) necessary for the effective discharge or exercise of their pastoral ministry (\textit{munus pastorale}) in the name of Christ, which comes from their consecration by divine right and not from the Pope. \[55\] This is without prejudice to the reserved rights of the Pope. Though the bishop has his own proper power of jurisdiction (\textit{potestas propria}) ‘substantially and ontologically’ derived from God by virtue of his episcopal consecration, its proper exercise had to be fitted into the social structure of the Church by a further juridical act of the Pope who is the appropriate competent ecclesiastical authority, who appoints

\[52\] \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§20-27, especially 23 and 27; \textit{Christus Dominus}, §4, 6.
\[55\] \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§18, 21, 27.
him to his concrete office and can withdraw the office from him.\textsuperscript{56} This is based on the view that though by consecration, all bishops, including the Pope, join the same episcopal order and form the college of bishops; their various gradations in ministry and office exist on different hierarchical levels for the unity of the whole Church. Therefore, outside the papacy and the episcopal college, which exist by divine institution with supreme and universal authority, all other episcopal offices in the Church have to be given concrete existence by the appropriate ecclesiastical authority, in this case the Pope.\textsuperscript{57}

This significant clarification on the divine origin of the episcopate led Pope Paul VI to grant all faculties to bishops, except those reserved to the Pope. There was a shift from the language of granting/delegating faculties to bishops periodically by concession, as taught by the Council of Trent (\textit{tanquam Sedis Apostolicae delegatus}),\textsuperscript{58} to the language of papal reservation, since they could now ordinarily exercise all episcopal powers except the reserved ones. This means that not every little ecclesiastical matter in a local church (diocese or a country) needs the intervention of Rome (Holy See: the Pope or the dicasteries of the Roman Curia), as the diocesan bishop or episcopal conference concerned could handle it. Bishops, therefore, as full shepherds are in-charge of their dioceses, though not in opposition to Rome, and matters affecting them directly should be communicated to them, keeping them well informed of the measures of the Roman Curia before they are made public.\textsuperscript{59} Since they are not delegates or vicegerents of the Pope or branch managers of a corporate multinational organisation headquartered in Rome, but genuine successors of the apostles, they have all the faculties, due to them as local ordinaries, for the proper exercise of their ordinary and direct authority under the headship of the Pope, except those reserved for the Pope.


It could, therefore, be said in the words of Paul VI, that episcopal authority emerges from the Council vindicated in its divine institution, confirmed in its irreplaceable function, renewed in its pastoral powers of teaching, sanctifying and governing, honoured in its extension to the universal Church by way of collegial communion, more clearly identified in its hierarchical aspect, strengthened in shared and fraternal responsibility with other bishops for the universal and particular needs of the Church, and more strongly associated in a spirit of hierarchical union and joint cooperation with the head of the Church, the constitutive centre of the College of Bishops.60

In this way, bishops are said to exercise their ministry in relation to the universal Church and to their particular churches with the co-operation of other bishops gathered in councils, synods and episcopal conferences. The universal dimension of the episcopal ministry is fully manifested and realised when all the bishops, in hierarchical communion with and under the Roman Pontiff, act as a College for the good of the entire Church (in bonum totius Ecclesiae). Solemnly gathered in ecumenical council or dispersed throughout the world yet always in hierarchical communion with the Roman Pontiff, they are the continuation of the College of the Apostles.61 This collegiality does not weaken episcopal authority, but reinforces it, for the bonds of hierarchical communion linking the bishops to the Apostolic See necessarily demand a coordination of responsibilities on the part of diocesan bishops and the supreme authority, dictated by the nature of the Church herself. Thus, the power of bishops “is not diminished by the supreme and universal power, but on the contrary it is affirmed, strengthened and vindicated by it, since the Holy Spirit unfailingly preserves the form of government established in his Church by Christ the Lord.”62

1.5. Pope John Paul II’s 2003 Apostolic Exhortation on the Bishops, Pastores Gregis.

This document follows Vatican II’s teaching by noting that having proclaimed and inaugurated, in his own person, the kingdom of God during his earthly ministry, Jesus called,

60 Pope Paul VI, Address to the Cardinals, Archbishops and Bishops of Italy (6 December 1965), Acta Apostolicae Sedis 58 (1966): 68.
chose and appointed “the Twelve” as closer companions from among his many men and women followers, “to be with him” as Apostles (Mk 3:14). He further entrusted to them his missionary mandate in the name of the Trinity, to last until the end of time (cf. Mt 28:20), for all people in all ages. Since the Apostles were not to live forever yet their mission was to last till the end of time, they too appointed co-workers and successors after them so that the apostolic mandate might be preserved. From then on, this has been transmitted down the centuries through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 1:5, 8; 2:4; Jn. 20:22-23) and the laying on of hands at episcopal consecration (cf. 1Tim 4:14; 2Tim 1:6-7) upon those, who in apostolic succession, have been chosen as bishops. In fact, the Church teaches that episcopal consecration/ordination confers the fullness of the sacrament of Orders, the high priesthood and the totality of the sacred ministry. Thus, through the bishops and the priests, their co-workers, the Lord Jesus Christ, seated at the right hand of God the Father, remains present in the midst of believers. In every time and place it is he who proclaims the word of God to all peoples, administers the sacraments of faith to believers and guides the people of the New Testament on their pilgrimage to eternal happiness. The Good Shepherd does not abandon his flock but preserves and protects it always through those who, by their ontological share in his life and mission, carry out in an eminent and visible way the role of teacher, shepherd and priest, who act in his name in exercising the functions associated with the pastoral ministry, and who are constituted his vicars and ambassadors.  

Pastores Gregis underlines the Christological-Trinitarian foundation of the episcopal ministry, the link between both of them, and the exposition of the life and ministry of bishops in the light of the Trinitarian ecclesiology of the Second Vatican Council. Christ is the eternal and only-begotten Son of the Father, anointed by the Holy Spirit and sent into the world, who together with the Father pours out the Spirit upon the Church. This Trinitarian dimension, which manifested in every aspect of his life and activity, also shapes the life and activity of the bishop. Based on this Trinitarian understanding, every bishop is called to keep watch over the whole flock with love, for he has been placed in their midst by the Spirit to govern the Church of God: in the name of the Father, whose image he represents; in the name of Jesus Christ his Son, by whom he

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64 Ibid., §7.
has been established as teacher, priest and shepherd; in the name of the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the Church and by his power strengthens us in our human weakness.\footnote{Cf. Roman Pontifical, Rite of Ordination of a Bishop: Homily, in International Committee on English in the Liturgy, \textit{The Rites of the Catholic Church}, Vol. Two (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 1991), 69-70.}

Rooted in tradition, the document talks about the bishop as an image of the Father, the ‘invisible Bishop’ of all, who stands in the place of the Father of Jesus Christ in such a way that, precisely because of this representation, he is to be revered by all; the bishop's chair, occupied only by him, pointing to God's paternal authority also challenges every bishop to lead the holy people of God as a devoted father and guide – together with his priests, his co-workers in the episcopal ministry, and with his deacons – in the way of salvation.\footnote{John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §7.} It emphasised that since Christ is the primordial icon of the Father and the manifestation of his merciful presence among his people, the bishop, who acts in his person and name, becomes in the Church entrusted to him a living sign of the Lord Jesus, Shepherd and Spouse, Teacher and High Priest of the Church.\footnote{Ibid., §7.} This way he is able to pastorally carry out his three functions of teaching, sanctifying and governing the People of God in imitation of Christ, the Good Shepherd: with charity, knowledge of the flock, concern for all, mercy towards the poor, the stranger and the needy, and a willingness to seek out the lost sheep and bring them back to the one sheepfold.\footnote{Cf. Roman Pontifical, Rite of Ordination of a Bishop: Homily, in \textit{The Rites of the Catholic Church}, 69.}

\textit{Pastores Gregis} affirmed the collegial nature of the episcopal ministry, formed after the manner of college or a fixed group, headed by Peter, chosen from among them. Through the personal succession of the Bishop of Rome to Peter and the succession of all the bishops as a group to the Apostles, the Roman Pontiff and the Bishops are united among themselves as a college.\footnote{John Paul II, \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §8; \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§19, 22; \textit{Code of Canon Law}, c. 330.} A bishop attains to the fullness of episcopal ministry as a member of this college by his episcopal ordination and hierarchical communion with the other members of the college, which
always includes its Head.⁷⁰ One sees from this the universal character of the episcopate without prejudice to its unity under one head, which is one of the constitutive elements of the unity of the Church. According to John Paul II:

This constitutes what is called “the spirit of collegiality” (affectus collegialis), or “affective” collegiality, which is the basis of the Bishops’ concern for the other particular Churches and for the universal Church. Consequently, if we must say that a Bishop is never alone, inasmuch as he is always united to the Father through the Son in the Holy Spirit, we must also add that he is also never alone because he is always and continuously united with his brothers in the episcopate and with the one whom the Lord has chosen as the Successor of Peter.⁷¹

Drawing the ecclesiologico-theological implication, John Paul points out that in the light of this universality, “the relationship of mutual interiority existing between the universal Church and each particular Church, whereby the particular Churches are ‘formed in the likeness of the universal Church, and in and from the particular Churches there comes into being the one and only Catholic Church,’ is reproduced in the relationship between the College of Bishops in its entirety and each Bishop as an individual.”⁷² Thus “the power of the College of Bishops over the whole Church is not the result of the sum of the powers of the individual Bishops over their particular Churches; it is a pre-existing reality in which individual Bishops participate. They have no competence to act over the whole Church except collegially.”⁷³ This means that,

each Bishop, always in union with his brothers in the episcopate and with the Roman Pontiff, represents Christ the Head and Shepherd of the Church: he does this not only in a proper and specific manner when he receives the office of pastor of a particular Church, but also when he cooperates with the Diocesan Bishop in the governance of his Church or when he shares in the Roman Pontiff’s office of universal pastor in the governance of the universal Church.⁷⁴

However, bishops, in their local churches, have the triple functions and powers to teach, sanctify and govern, derived from their participation in the prophetic, priestly and kingly roles of

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⁷⁰ Cf. Lumen Gentium, §22; Code of Canon Law, c. 336.
⁷² John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §8.
⁷³ John Paul II, Apostolos Suos, §12.
⁷⁴ John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §8.
Christ, which they received at episcopal consecration to enable them proclaim the truth of the Gospel, administer the sacraments and guide the faithful.\(^75\) These functions are deeply interconnected; they explain, influence and clarify one another such that when the bishop teaches, he also sanctifies and governs the People of God; when he sanctifies, he also teaches and governs; when he governs, he teaches and sanctifies.\(^76\)

1.6. Conclusion.

In this chapter, we have tried to show the theological development of the episcopate right from the time of the Apostles to the Second Vatican Council, as testified by the scriptures, early Church Fathers, the Council itself and the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Gregis*. Though the episcopate had undergone some changes in the way and extent of how it is lived out, its essence and nature as a succession of the apostolic mandate, established by Christ for the continuation of his mission on earth, have remained the position of the Church through the ages. The bishop, by divine institution, is the vicar of Christ called to continue the mission of Christ among his people in his ministry of teaching, sanctifying and governing. He receives this ministry by apostolic succession through the laying on of hands at his ordination and can only exercise it in hierarchical communion with the Supreme Pontiff and the College of Bishops, united in the governance of the universal Church. His relationship with the Pope and his brother bishops in a close bond of unity and cooperation conforms to Christ’s will to unite the Apostles inseparably around Peter. This helps the bishop to realise the need to cooperate with other pastoral agents in the governance of his diocese, in order to make the mission of Christ, the invisible head of the Church, present in the midst of the faithful.\(^77\) A bishop is therefore called to mirror Christ in the exercise of his pastoral office as he is called to serve the people and lead them to salvation. In the next chapter, we shall look at the means through which he can achieve this task as a leader, who also is a servant.

\(^75\) Cf. *Lumen Gentium*, §§ 21, 27.
CHAPTER TWO

The Servant-Leader: His Powers, Strengths and Modus Operandi

In this chapter, our major concern will be to conceptualise servant-leadership, look into its characteristics while anchoring it on the life and teachings of Jesus, the perfect model of servant-leadership. This work shall at some point use the word servant-leadership interchangeably with true leadership, for that is what the former ought to be. Based on this, we shall make some attempt to show that Christian leaders are called to follow the example of Jesus and in so doing apply it to the bishop as a leader in the Church. Thereafter, we shall look into some of the writings of the early church fathers, magisterial documents and the Rite of Episcopal Ordination to see how they help us in understanding the role of the bishop as a shepherd, a Servant-Leader.

2.1. The Concept of Servant-Leadership.

It appears that the idea of Servant-Leadership is more common within the secular society, especially in the business world, than in ecclesiastical circles for more than one reason. This metaphor is truer in business management history not only because it has proven over time to serve their ultimate goal (profit maximisation through customer satisfaction) but also because the Church over time had adopted institutional structures much informed by medieval hierarchical models more than the Gospel. The term was publicised in modern times by Robert K. Greenleaf in his 1969 essay The Servant as Leader, though as an ancient leadership philosophy it could be attributed to both the Chinese Lao-Tzu (570-490 BCE) and Chanakya (4th century BCE).78 However, many Christians believed it was lived, practised and recommended by Jesus Christ, who did not come to be served but to serve and give his life as a ransom for others (Mk. 10:42-45).

While the two component words “servant” and “leader” may appear conflicting to anyone whose idea of leadership is all about power for its own sake, the Christian notion of leadership

connotes service marked by humility. In understanding the source of this conflict, it must be emphasised that the prevalent thought system of a people and their cherished values can affect their use, understanding and applications of words. For example, while it cannot be generalised, a comparison can be drawn between the Hebrew thought system and medieval scholasticism on one hand and the Greek thought system and modern thinking on the other hand. The former, without much difficulty, conceives of reality or realities in unity, even though made up of many parts which are sometimes apparently contrary, while the latter finds it difficult to see reality as a unity, a composition of this/and in preference for either/or. Consequently, the concept of Servant-Leader sounds contradictory in a culture where lines are quickly drawn between one thing and the other, the spiritual and the secular, the idealistic and realistic, personal and professional lives. Even in the business world, where Servant-Leadership has been mostly applied, it has necessitated a new business ethics that has changed and keeps changing over time, aimed at helping a particular business achieve its goal at a given time. It has led to the realisation that business exists to serve the needs of the person by providing meaningful work as well as providing products/services to satisfy customers. 79 Businesses/organisations which follow this model have understood the need to change their attitudes towards leadership, people and relationships as a core operating principle in order to remain ever relevant to the people they serve. 80 As such, they have become serving institutions without losing their leading role to shape and influence the decisions of consumers.

This notion of being both a leader and a servant is not to be confused with merely wanting to satisfy the yearnings of the people, for a true leader goes beyond giving the people what they want, to giving them what they need depending on the goal of the organisation. By implication, a true leader who wants to serve must be able to strike a balance between leading with compassion and discipline, standards and actual performances, set goals and feedback, ideals and reality; making right decisions even against populist views; acting convincingly and listening

79 Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 142.
empathetically, considering how central leadership is to the survival of any organisation. A combination of this by the leader is not merely an option if any organisation is to remain relevant because whatever he/she does sends a message either to the advantage or otherwise of the organisation: “everything rises and falls on leadership.”81 It is the task of the leader to work out the needs or goals of the organisation (though not without the input of others), where it needs to go, point in the right direction, get the followers to agree on the need to get there, and rally them through the inevitable obstacles that have prevented them from actualising that goal.82

This means that true Servant-Leaders must go beyond merely doing things right (as is often the case with managers with the right technical skills) to doing the right things,83 for the ultimate good of those they lead. Though he/she will always have to work with other people and not alone, there is need to have clear sense of purpose and direction for the organisation. Leadership then becomes a process of influencing the thoughts, actions and behaviours of others aimed at attaining or accomplishing a set goal in their lives (personal, professional and spiritual) or those of others. Functionally, the job of a leader is to convert large problems into opportunities, to inspire people to meet difficult challenges, and to brood creatively about purpose.84

Thus, leadership has been defined as “the skills of influencing people to enthusiastically work toward goals identified as being for the common good, with character that inspires confidence.”85 True leadership, unlike management, is not just a set of work description, skills and learned behaviours to be applied but more about the way these skills are used, for the only way to know a character is in action: what a leader does at any point in time depends on who he/she really is.86 It is not just about getting a task done but also about how it is done. This distinction brings out the ethical nature of good leadership in any field of life. It is seen not as an exploitation of those

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81 Ibid., 115, 29.
one is called to serve or work with, but as an opportunity to truly lead, guided by a certain natural and moral value-value ethos that respect human dignity, teamwork, innovation, creativity and interdependency; in a bid to avoid all unethical principles that can lead to the bad image of the organisation.\textsuperscript{87}

The concept of ‘character’ is a very important one, as contrasted with personality (from the Latin word \textit{persona}, used to describe the masks worn by actors in ancient Greek dramas), concerned with one’s public image. It rather points to the visible sign of the leader’s inner nature, what is truly beneath the personality, the moral maturity and habitual willingness to do the right thing no matter the cost since leadership is ‘character in action’ and leaders only seek to do the right thing.\textsuperscript{88} A leader with this mind-set works for results based on principles that combine disciplined character and service-orientedness, foresight and the belief in others, needed to motivate or inspire them to work together in synergy.\textsuperscript{89} Therefore, while management is about the things we do: planning, budgeting, organising, problem-solving, being in control, commanding and strategising, leadership is who we are, making the latter much more concerned about inspiring others to action (to give their best for a set goal) than focusing on the actions themselves.\textsuperscript{90}

Servant-leadership is less about power or controlling people and more about caring for people with love and respect; being present and available as an inspiring character and motivation for authentic team collaboration; creating a conducive environment where people can work together harmoniously, aware that true power comes from the people.\textsuperscript{91} It is about inspiring and influencing others to do things they would never do on their own or challenging them to attempt things they never thought they could, with respect, love and presence.\textsuperscript{92} The extent to which an

\textsuperscript{87} This is similar to what Mahatma Ghandi called the seven deadly sins, viz, wealth without work; pleasure without conscience; science without humanity; knowledge without character; politics without principle; commerce without morality; worship without sacrifice. See Stephen R. Covey, \textit{Principle-Centered Leadership} (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 87-93.

\textsuperscript{88} Hunter, \textit{The World's most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become A Servant Leader}, 142-144.

\textsuperscript{89} Covey, \textit{Principle-Centered Leadership}, 33-39.

\textsuperscript{90} Hunter, \textit{The World's most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become A Servant Leader}, 32-33.

\textsuperscript{91} Autry, \textit{The Servant Leader}, 20-21.

organisation attains its goal greatly depends on its leadership, inspired by the co-operation between the leader and the followers, driven by service. A true leader that is service-oriented understands that without the people and the satisfaction of their needs, the aim of leadership is defeated. To this effect, he/she works to put together a high performance team with great care and attention on how each person’s strengths can be used to the maximum and even how individual weaknesses can be covered by someone else on the team.\textsuperscript{93}

We shall now look at the way the Servant-Leader operates, and the strength and success of such style as opposed to other leadership styles.

2.2. The Powers, Strengths and Modus Operandi of the Servant-Leader.

Any leader with service as the motivating factor is on the way to succeeding. As difficult as it is, this is only possible when there is the alignment of the four leadership domains: heart (motivation or intention), head (vision and belief system), hand (behaviour) and habits (repeated ways of acting), as they create the right conditions that engender easy loyalty and followership.\textsuperscript{94} In order to fully understand the modus operandi, dynamics and character of a Servant-Leader, it will be good also to consider alongside what he/she should not be, a self-serving leader.

One of the greatest fears and difficulties that self-serving leaders have is losing their position (a problem on the heart domain), which adversely affects how they handle feedback.\textsuperscript{95} As such, in a bid to protect their status, they see every feedback as an opposition to their leadership style. On the contrary, a Servant-Leader welcomes feedback as a source of useful information on how to provide better services as the whole orientation of leadership is as an act of service.\textsuperscript{96} However, as important as readiness and openness to ideas from others are, he/she accepts what is offered with approbation, affirmation, satisfaction or acquiescence; empathises with the followers

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\textsuperscript{93} Ken Jennings and John Stahl-Wert, \textit{The Serving Leader} (San Franscisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2003), 75.
\textsuperscript{94} Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, \textit{Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Role Model of all Times} (Nashville: W Publishing Group, 2005), 35.
\textsuperscript{95} Ken Blanchard and Phil Hodges, \textit{The Servant Leader} (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 2003), 17.
\textsuperscript{96} Ibid., 18.
in all their imperfections based on his/her high sense of knowing the unknowable and foreseeing
the unforeseeable as a leader; and never rejects them even though at times he/she may have to
refuse some of their views or efforts, when not good enough.97 As a foresighted leader, he/she has
“the ability to recognise the special abilities and limitations of others, combined with the capacity
to fit each one into the job (situation) he will do his best.”98

Connected to this is the question of pride and fear, for out of the former, a person promotes
the self by being boastful, taking much credit and demanding too much attention, while the latter
leads to over-protection of one’s self/position, feeling unsafe, withdrawing information,
discouraging honest feedback and intimidation of others.99 Contrary to this, the Servant-Leader
believes in others and the good they have to offer in support of his/her leadership – appreciates
good ideas for what they are irrespective of their author. Without bias he/she focuses on how to tap
into and unleash the strengths, talents and passions of those he/she serves.100 This is what arms the
leader with the skills for understanding and confronting the situation at hand with foresight into the
future, beyond the thoughts of his/her followers, while maintaining a balance between discipline
and compassion, the problem and the solution.

Added to this is the power of persuasion which may take different forms, all geared
towards convincingly influencing the led to believe in the leader’s course of action, no matter how
different from their own. A typical example is the story of Jesus and the adulterous woman (cf. Jn.
8:1-11), where while not approving of her act, he did not reject her person – Jesus provided a
solution amidst opposing views, seeing far beyond those who, without compassion and foresight,
wanted her stoned according to the law. This attitude of focused persuasion calls for taking right
decisions and giving right answers or solutions to problems, at the right time. It could be very
challenging but that is what a leader with a servant’s heart is called to do in the midst of

98 The word in bracket is my adaptation from a quote on leadership by Oswald J. Sanders cited in Finzel, The
Top Ten Mistakes Leaders make, 94.
99 Blanchard and Hodges, The Servant Leader, 27.
100 Jennings and Stahl-Wert, The Serving Leader, 14.
conflicting options: to know or identify a problem in good time as to proffer immediate or early possible solutions; to take the right decision at a given time considering all available options with their immediate and unforeseeable consequences, as much as possible.

The failure or refusal of a leader to foresee could be rightly called an ‘ethical failure,’ because a serious ethical compromise today is sometimes the result of a failure to make the effort at an earlier date to foresee today’s events and take the right actions when there was freedom for initiative to act.\(^{101}\) This leaves a leader existent only in name as once the foresight is lost, every other thing begins to crumble and at best he/she could only react to immediate events\(^{102}\) as opposed to the leader with greater foresight, who is proactive yet in touch with reality, or who prioritises and leads with the end in view.\(^{103}\) The Servant-Leader’s intuitive insight is exceptional, more dependable and trusted, and is seen as functionally superior because he/she is closer to reality: hears, sees and knows things,\(^{104}\) beyond the easy grasp of others. He/she has the capacity of seeing things at the moment with the hindsight of the past, appreciating the present and foreseeing into the future, with short, medium and long term results in view.

As difficult as a perfect and a holistic view of reality may be, he/she is able, in consultation with and listening to others, to make better decisions for the good of the generality of the followers, for a longer time. This helps in setting right priorities and making sure more important issues are addressed first before others, and is in line with the need to have a clear vision of leadership, for without it the people perish and are unrestrained in choosing their own way (cf. Hos. 4:6; Prov. 29:18). The fact that no organisation rises above the passion of its leader requires that the Servant-Leader has a clear and compelling vision of the future that excites passion in the leader and commitment in the followers, all guided by core values aimed at achieving the set

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\(^{101}\) Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 26.  
\(^{102}\) Ibid., 26.  
\(^{103}\) For an elaboration beyond the scope of this work, see Stephen R. Covey, The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Restoring the Character Ethic (New York: Free Press, 2004); Covey, Principle-Centered Leadership, 40-47.  
\(^{104}\) Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 42.
goals. This requires knowing the audience he/she is called to serve and their needs, and also creating a passion in himself/herself and in them, for the new commitment.

The purposeful, efficient and purpose-driven leader looks beyond himself/herself towards the followers, such that the institution or machinery of leadership is made less incompetent, corrupt or complex, bureaucratic, overtly powerful or impersonal, and placed at the service of the people; each component responsibly committed to the other: the more able and the less able serving each other. One major argument against bureaucratic and hierarchically structured organisations is that they have been unable to achieve this, in a bid to maintain structural status quo. While we do not intend to argue about that here, it will be worth noting, in line with the position of this work, that the problem is not necessarily with bureaucracy as a system as it is with the way it is understood and implemented by any organisation. Thus, while it may have helped some organisations to function effectively, it may not have been successful in others for some other reasons. The very aim of any bureaucracy is how to get things done efficiently and effectively, which is very clear from its major characteristics: hierarchy, specialisation, discipline, impersonality and career structure with laid down rules on how things ought to work. This being said, it has to be admitted that the hierarchical structure of a bureaucracy could constitute a bottleneck, if not well oriented towards service. This is the case when it is merely understood in terms of top-down relationships, characterised by abusive authority, deplorable delegation, lack of listening and compromise (letting go), dictatorship in decision-making and egocentric manners.

The hierarchical pyramid of most institutions where one person or few persons are at the top tends to weaken genuine and sincere information flow, channels of honest objections, criticisms or feedback and can easily create a false sense of omniscience and power on the part of

\[105\] Blanchard and Hodges, The Servant Leader, 45.
\[106\] Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 49.
\[108\] Finzel, The Top Ten Mistakes Leaders make, 23.
the leader. This leaves him/her lonely, disconnected, overburdened by much work and too formal - cut off from the reality of those in the informal circle, the real people meant to be served. As such, the leader becomes indecisive and ignorant of what everyone else knows informally and since he/she is far from the grapevine, what is known is only what others choose to reveal.\footnote{Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 63-64.} Also when leadership is limited to very few persons, it creates a major problem of continuity when succession becomes inevitable and the excessive burden of official duties often destroys the leader’s creativity long before leaving office (the law of diminishing returns easily sets in). So long as most organisations still retain this hierarchically structured leadership system without a service based orientation, this problem will continue to create a tension between the authority of the leader and delegation of power, between maintenance of order and creativity/initiative.

On the other hand, the hierarchical structure of an organisation can help the Servant-Leader to maintain his true position as one to whom others look up to for direction and vision and so necessarily requires a service-oriented mentality – power and authority are given not for their sakes but for the purpose of service. As such, though the followers are not allowed to do just whatever they want, feel or think nor does the leader forget his primary role of providing a clear vision and direction by delegation, this hierarchical role must move downwards. Moving towards the bottom of the hierarchy, a leader with a service oriented mind-set is concerned about the growth and development of people, i.e. the flock, from a ‘means’ goal to an ‘end’ goal, with equal or greater importance to the product or service of the organisation; maintaining a level of intimacy with their needs and aspirations that goes beyond what ego-driven leaders are willing to sustain.\footnote{Blanchard and Hodges, The Servant Leader, 58.}

The Servant-Leader does not implement his vision alone without the experience of others (the followers) for he/she only exists to serve them in realising the set goals. At this point, there should be an upside down inversion of the pyramid or a reversal in the use of power, moving from...
the top to the bottom, from authoritarianism to service, from vision to implementation.\textsuperscript{111} Though still holding out the goals purposefully for the followers as the leader ought to, in order to motivate them optimally, he/she upends the conventional pyramidal style of leadership by being at the bottom, instead of the top of the pyramid, to unleash their energy for the very best (effectiveness and efficiency). The leader’s personal exemplary life should perpetuate best practices and so enable him/her to raise the bar with high standards of performance manned by highly selected team leaders, each placed where he or she is best at.\textsuperscript{112} This guarantees that the leader becomes the ‘best and first’ by putting others as ‘first and best,’ bringing out the ‘first and best’ in them and giving them a good sense of belonging. Being appreciated as a good team player, compliance comes naturally from the followers, as they will not only give their best but will find it easy to follow his/her examples and directions. A good leader therefore does not need to do everything by himself/herself, or they will never be done because of human limitations, but empowers others by delegating some roles to them, and thus promoting corporate interest.

Power and authority, rightly understood as oriented towards service, empower and liberate the people. This creates opportunities and viable alternatives so that individuals may choose and build autonomy as opposed to being coerced into a pre-determined path without alternatives which, even if good for them, diminishes their autonomy.\textsuperscript{113} Leadership, thus, becomes less about power and control and more about helping people live according to the vision of the organisation, for it is this vision – the purpose, picture of the future and values – that everyone should serve.\textsuperscript{114} Because coercive power only strengthens resistance and lasts only as long as the force is strong,\textsuperscript{115} great leaders interested in truly leading as servants and commanding authentic followership prefer to use persuasion, fair incentives, cordial relations, personal life of example and service, and encouragement to win the holistic voluntary acceptance of the led. Thus, every human person

\textsuperscript{111} Ibid., 54.
\textsuperscript{112} Jennings and Stahl-Wert, \textit{The Serving Leader}, 100-101. Here there is the explanation of his five principles of a serving leader which I have summarised above.
\textsuperscript{113} Greenleaf, \textit{Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness}, 42.
\textsuperscript{114} Blanchard and Hodges, \textit{The Servant Leader}, 56.
\textsuperscript{115} Covey, \textit{Principle-Centered Leadership}, 103.
involved – the leader, the collaborators and the led – is dignified and not seen merely as a tool to be used or exploited. Therefore a good leader earnestly seeks “effectiveness” (the accomplishment of long-term ranged growth and development of those involved in producing the desired end as well as the result itself) and not necessarily “success” (the accomplishment of short-term goals at the long-ranged detriment of those involved in creating the success.)

Since the Servant-Leader is guided by the needs of the people he/she is called to serve and a willingness to serve them, he/she must learn to adjust and, if need be, change his/her programme of action to reflect their reality, and not unnecessarily insist on implementing a counter-productive programme. This calls for flexibility as, despite how difficult it is, it takes a wise people-oriented leader to humbly adjust/stop a worthless programme after due assessment and consultation. Consequently, a true leader, while maintaining his principles and vision must understand the dynamics and inevitability of change, with special focus on its transformational direction and ways of handling them. For the fact that Servant-Leaders are called to facilitate necessary changes, it is imperative that they recognise the four levels of change, which vary in degrees of difficulty and time, required to actualise it.

- Knowledge is the easiest and least time-consuming thing to change in people and so a leader must comfortably invest time and effort, in whatever manner acceptable, to improve the knowledge level of his/her followers without the fear that they will constitute a threat to him afterwards.
- Attitude, positive or negative, is another factor especially as it relates to what is known. As such, changing people’s attitude is more difficult than changing their knowledge because they can/may refuse to change based on what they know already or irrespective of it.
- Much harder and more time-consuming than the two above is behaviour because it truly calls for action, for though one may know a thing is bad and really want an attitudinal change yet find it difficult to change.
- The last and most difficult in the process is the core of the matter, organisational change, especially as it aims at influencing the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours of multiple people in an organisation/institution.

A leader, therefore, must be able to identify which changes are necessary and the appropriate strategies to implement his/her vision in their order of priority and lead the people in

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117 Adapted from Ibid., 64.
that direction depending on their level, knowing that the mechanisms above may constitute some obstacles. Change itself is never easy but understanding how human beings behave towards it and what needs to be done to convince, sell the idea and get them involved, go a long way in making the implementation process easier. This is true because everyone wants to be heard, involved, appreciated, treated as a dignified person, praised, encouraged, accepted, loved, and if on the wrong track, forgiven, supported and redirected courteously and lovingly. A leader is effective and efficient to the extent that he/she is able to understand these different behavioural needs of people, address and integrate them within the set goals of any institution without losing focus. So,

Leaders make themselves and others conformable in a changing world. They eagerly explore new ideas, approaches, and cultures rather than shrink defensively from what lurks around life’s next corner. Anchored by nonnegotiable principles and values, they cultivate the “indifference” that allows them to adapt confidently.\(^{118}\)

Another way to distinguish a self-serving leader from a Servant-Leader is how issues of the succession plan are handled as the former, easily addicted to power and afraid of loss of position, hardly devotes any time, efforts, programmes, opportunities and resources to affirming or training his/her potential successors.\(^{119}\) When this is done at all, which occurs scarcely by chance, he/she ensures that a less qualified person succeeds him/her as not to rival or challenge his/her record or period of leadership, unaware that this says a lot about service and leadership motive. On the other hand, a Servant-Leader prepares others to take over his/her position when the time comes and is well disposed if they exceed his/her records, not seeing them as any threat but an investment (cf. Jn. 14:12-13; 15:15), for a leader without a successor is a failure. This way of leadership requires subjecting one’s selfish interest to those of the followers, being driven by common purpose and not self-attention. It also calls for believing in others and the good they can offer, empowering and making them grow such that, after or without the leader, things do not get grounded. The leader is called to use power responsibly to create opportunities and viable open avenues that lead to


motivation, responsible autonomy, and the development of potentials, competence and expertise in
the followers.

From the foregoing, it is very clear that part of a leader’s success is in keeping in touch
with what is happening to the people being led (their needs and aspirations) but sometimes the
very nature of how power is exercised may make it not always possible to have the leader directly
in touch with them. A true Servant-Leader who has the people always in mind must find a way to
overcome this, sometimes, inevitable situation, either directly or by serving the needs of his/her
close collaborators and so teach them to serve the people, guided by the organisational goal. For
example, even though Jesus was the Master, he washed the disciples’ feet such that through
serving them he was indeed teaching them to do the same for others. In this way, the Servant-
Leader is always focused on serving the people, directly or through agents. This is why great
leaders, knowing that they can never fulfil all the demands of leadership alone, learn to entrust or
delegate some of their functions to others while keeping an eye on them.

Depending on the organisational structure, this leadership style of delegation offers the
leader some relief, assistance, feedback and information on the real state of affairs and no true
leader ever takes this lightly. It could be in the form of a think-tank, collaborators, advisers,
professionals, experts, consultors or even a board of trustees,\textsuperscript{120} selected based on competence,
merit, integrity, track records/pedigree, dedication and commitment to service, motivated by the
common good. They are the real strength of great leaders for they are behind every successful
leadership in history, giving it standard, quality, distinction, the needed determination, direction
and strategy. Though they may function as insiders, they must have the autonomy and objectivity
to speak as outsiders in their relation with the leadership in order to always keep it on track,
demanding excellent service delivery at all times. This external aide is so important because

\textsuperscript{120} A great emphasis on the necessity for Trustees in any organisation and the role they should play is well
treated in Greenleaf, Servant Leadership: A Journey into the Nature of Legitimate Power and Greatness, 55-133
though the leader may have good intentions, these are never enough if the other ingredients that make for competence are lacking.

Added to the above, a leader must endeavour to be objective in assessing the different opinions presented before him/her (sometimes conflicting) as truth; be genuinely diplomatic yet clear in the vision/guiding principles and ways of attaining them; accountable, truthful, sincere and honest with high level of integrity in words and deeds. He/she must be accessible; available; modest in temperament and should be seen to be so; and must dream big but act realistically, - ‘think globally’ but ‘act locally’. He/she must create an atmosphere that engenders trust, collaboration, confidence in others and commitment to the common goal.

2.3. Jesus as a Model of Servant-Leadership.

While we do not propose a wholesale adaptation of a non-theological or business model of leadership as the basis of looking at Jesus, there is no doubt that Jesus exemplified most of the qualities narrated above. To this extent, we shall only focus on the ways that Jesus exemplified the core values of Servant-Leadership, with the view to seeing how they will help us understand the ministry of bishops, called to imitate Christ. During his ministry, Jesus received feedback from the apostles after their mission; adequately prepared them for the future and how to continue his mission even when he must have gone, aided by the Holy Spirit. He spent time, energy and efforts teaching them by example ways of handling difficult situations and even to excel or shine out more than he did, without feeling any threat (Jn. 15:15; 14:12-13; Mt. 3:14-15). He willingly gave up his ego, will, self-interest and life for the flock (Jn. 15:13) whom he lived for, intimately connected with them, in submissive obedience to his Father’s will (Mt. 3:13-17; Lk. 22:24).\footnote{This is one area of difference between the source of power in the life of Jesus and that of the human leader, whose source of power is the people, yet it is no contradiction because the power from the Father that Jesus exercised was used to serve the needs of a humanity in dire need of salvation.} He saw the good in others and did not allow the mentality of ‘who said it’ to blur this (Mt. 8:10; Lk. 7:9). He was humble and never sought self-attention or did anything to promote himself (Mt.
11:29) for he did nothing of his own accord (Jn. 5:30, 19; 12:49), his food being to do the Father’s will (Jn. 4:34).

He had great foresight into the future, but was not oblivious of the realities around him: setting as his first priority the coming kingdom of God (Mt. 6:33) with a clear vision/mission to establish it on earth, aided by his companions whom he called to be fishers of men (Mt. 4:19) and disciples of all nations (Mt. 28:19). As a great leader with vision, conviction and commitment to his goal, he never compromised the truth in the guise of diplomacy, even at the risk of losing his followers (Jn. 6:67), thus showing the balance between hope in the future promise (not utopia) and the present reality which every good leader strives to connect. While Jesus was a promoter of equality and unity, he never misunderstood the place of hierarchy in life but worked to place it at the service of those it was meant to serve. His profound divine relationship with his Father never stood as an obstacle between him and his service of his little flock (disciples), whom he admonished to serve the larger audience. He served them, especially at, but not limited to, the washing of feet, to teach them to serve others (Jn. 13:1-20; Mt. 20:28). So we see that in choosing and training them, Jesus was more interested in the long term effectiveness of his disciples and followers, even after his departure, than in their short term success.

Therefore, any leader who truly wants to be a Servant-Leader must strip himself/herself, as much as possible, of the ego and be ready to become an apprentice of Jesus, the Servant-Leader par excellence, willing to learn at his feet to serve. The spirit and example of Christ should guide and influence our leadership styles, with God at the centre of all activities and not self-attention, for it is about who we are in Christ (people called to serve), how we treat one another and demonstrate the love of Christ in the world, in the course of leading.\(^\text{122}\) For this reason, we shall examine some biblical passages\(^\text{123}\) that clearly point to Jesus as the Master-Servant. Conscious of the opinion of some authors that the Bible does not seem to envision a servant Church, even

\(^{122}\) Blanchard and Hodges, *Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Role Model of all Times*, 12.

\(^{123}\) There is no attempt here at an exegesis as such, but to point out relevant passages that can help us in properly understanding the Servant-Leadership traits of Jesus, and how it applies to the issue under consideration.
though it extols service, and that there may not be a direct biblical or theological foundation for it,\textsuperscript{124} we shall not adopt a wholesale application of the qualities of a Servant-Leader to Jesus, but also we are conscious that Jesus was never against it.

2.4. Examination of Key Biblical Passages (Jn. 10:1-18; 13:1-20; Mt. 20:20-28; Ezek. 34; 1Pet. 5:1-4).

Without fear of contradiction, Jesus could be said to be the greatest leader ever in Christian history, for he not only understood the difference between power and authority but lived it out by example. He led by serving and not by mere display of power and commanded the disciples to do the same. While power is the ability to force or coerce others to do your will, because of your position or might, even if they choose not to, authority is the skill or charism of getting others to willingly do your will or pursue a goal, because of your personal influence.\textsuperscript{125} One may indeed have power without authority and so be unable to influence actions except by coercion, while another with authority, even without power, can easily make others do what he/she wants them to do because they believe in his/her moral authority. In fact, where force is the reason for compliance, authority could be said to have failed and, where fierce arguments are used, authority is left in abeyance.\textsuperscript{126} When Jesus called his disciples to lead by serving, he was certainly not speaking of leading with power but in such a way that by their humble service, they would garner the authority necessary to influence and make others willingly obey or follow their words. They were to be servants who, not lording it over others, would seek the good of those whom they led by acts of love, patience, respect, forgiveness, honesty, humble service and sacrifice, and through this earn their authority: by this shall men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

The entire life and ministry of Jesus typify what servant-leadership is all about. Notwithstanding this, his disciples did not fully understand him, as evident in the story of the

\textsuperscript{124} See Avery Dulles, Models of the Church (New York: Doubleday, 2002), 91-93.
\textsuperscript{125} Hunter, The World's most Powerful Leadership Principle: How to Become A Servant Leader, 53.
\textsuperscript{126} Hannah Arendt, Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought (New York: Viking Press, 1961), 91-141.. This differentiation between power and authority and their influence on obedience have also been made by John L. McKenzie, Authority in the Church (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 6-8, 11.
special request of the two sons of Zebedee (or at their mother’s request) to have a special place in his kingdom and the consequent indignant attitude of the other ten (Mt. 20:20-28; Mk. 10:35-48; Lk. 22:24-30). Using this occasion of their misunderstanding of power, Jesus distinguished between the way power is understood in the world (exploitation, lording over) and his own style of using ‘power’ (serving those he is leading by being with them and by example). In the latter sense, a leader is one “who comes alongside to enable others to achieve what they need to achieve.”

A leader, following Jesus’ model, not only serves the people but also leads them into maturity by going all the way with them, even if it means laying down his/her life just like Jesus, the figure of the Suffering Servant, laid down his life as a ransom for his flock (Mt. 20:28; Is. 53).

Unlike the failed leaders of Israel who had taken to ‘slaughtering and eating the sheep’ under their care and taking care of themselves alone (Ez. 34:3, 5), a good leader was always compared to a shepherd. In the Ancient Near East, kings were often referred to as shepherds such that Hammurabi and his Assyrian and Babylonian successors were spoken of as having a pastoral function: a people without a king is like sheep without a shepherd. Not only were great leaders of Israel referred to as shepherds (Jer. 23:1-6) but some of them were indeed shepherds (Moses and David). Even God himself is referred to as a shepherd (Ps. 23:1-4; 95:7) and this great title will be taken up by Jesus himself, who will even transfer the same title to Peter (Jn. 21:15-17), and by extension the other apostles and Paul (Acts. 20:20-30). During the time of the Old Testament prophets, many shepherd-leaders of Israel failed in their duties of taking care of the sheep and were only interested in what they could make from them: the milk, the wool and the meat. They had forgotten that they were only caretakers on behalf of God, the true shepherd of his people. Out of negligence, high handedness, callous harshness and irresponsibility, many of the sheep strayed, got lost or scattered or became easy prey to their enemies (Ezek. 34:4-6).

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128 Ibid., 972; cf. Zech. 13:7: Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will scatter; Mt. 26:31; Mk. 14:27; Jn. 16:32.
For this, God promised to forsake these self-serving shepherds and take care of his sheep by himself, ‘to search for the sheep and look after them’ (Ezek. 34:11)\textsuperscript{129} out of compassion, to care for them and rescue them from all the places where they were scattered (Ezek. 34:12). As the good and true shepherd, he will search for the lost and bring back the strays, bind up the wounded and strengthen the weak, and gather them from all the countries, where they were scattered, to their own land (Ezek. 14-16, 13). Here there is a combination of the image of YHWH as both a shepherd, who will search out the lost and scattered sheep, and a king, who will restore them to their land,\textsuperscript{130} making it clear that it is possible to be both king and shepherd, the Servant-Leader. God promised to re-establish his covenant relationship with his people: I the Lord will be their God (Ezek. 34:24, 31-32), and bring a Davidic shepherd: I will place over them…my servant David, and he will tend them (Ezek. 34:23), who will restore peace, harmony and safety. This ‘new covenant of peace’ (Ezek. 24:25) foretells the restoration of Israel, the chosen people of God, which will only be perfectly fulfilled in/by Christ the Messiah, Son of David. This is why Jesus described himself as the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:1-21) who is ready to lay down his life for his sheep (Jn. 10:11, 15).

It is important to note that when Jesus addresses himself as the Good Shepherd (Jn. 10:11, 14), the Greek used to express the word good - *kalos* (noble), suggests that he is both effective and gracious,\textsuperscript{131} and shows the beauty of perfect competence and moral goodness.\textsuperscript{132} The use of *kalos* (noble) which belongs to the cultural world of honour and shame and not *agathos* (good), contrasted with evil, has a link with his death,\textsuperscript{133} a noble death of laying down his life for his sheep, courageously living and dying for others, the greatest love (Jn. 10:15; 15:13). Thus as the “Noble” Shepherd, he is the gate for the sheep and its shepherd, who does not come in through the window like a thief or intruder but stays at the door to protect them from thieves, wolves and

\textsuperscript{129} See also Isaiah 40:11; Jer. 31:10.
\textsuperscript{131} Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 1273.
ravaging animals, even at a danger to his life, unlike the hireling who runs for his safety and seeks only his gain (Jn. 10:1-3, 12). He knows each sheep by name and his voice is also known by them unlike the stranger (Jn. 10:3-5, 14); he goes ahead of them by example,\textsuperscript{134} loves, cares and leads them to green pasture and safe shelter (eternal life) despite the weather, nursing and nurturing them because he knows their needs and they unmistakingly see him as their true shepherd.

He does not allow thieves and wolves to hurt, steal or snatch them away from him (Jn. 10:28), and works to bring all, including those outside of the sheepfold, into full unity, one flock under one shepherd (Jn. 10:16). Though there are some who do not yet belong immediately to the sheepfold, he works to unite them so that listening to him, they may freely and obediently respond to his voice: they listen to his voice, he knows them and they follow him (Jn. 10:26-27). On the contrary, a hired man’s primary interest is his self-interest, pursuit of temporal personal advantages, working for profit and seeking honour, and when he takes up the task of a shepherd it is for these reasons instead of compassionate solicitude or humble service of the sheep.\textsuperscript{135} A true shepherd, therefore, takes special interest in all his sheep, especially the sick, the wounded, the strayed and the lost. Like Jesus, he acts out of compassion for the sheep knowing that they need his guidance and direction, otherwise they will wander away like sheep without a shepherd, exposed to the attack of the ravenous wolves (Mk. 6:34; Mt. 9:36; 10:16; 7:15; Lk. 10:3).

Another aspect of the servant-leadership of Jesus is in the fact that he never acted solitarily as one with power, but in union and in consultation with his Father. In fact, the intimate relationship between Jesus and the Father (Jn. 10:30) is the pattern for the relationship between the shepherd and his sheep, characterised by love, knowing the voice of each other, affectionate docility and obedience (Jn. 10:15, 17, 18).\textsuperscript{136} It could, therefore, be said that the “reciprocal knowledge of charity between the shepherd and the sheep is proportionately analogous to that

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\item[136] Adeyemo, \textit{Africa Bible Commentary}, 1274.
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between the Father and the Son.” Though he was One with God and equal with his Father, he did not count it a thing to be grasped but humbly emptied himself, assuming the form of a slave and laying down his life for his sheep (Jn. 10:33; Phil. 2:6-8). Leadership for him is all about humble service, self-giving and self-emptying (kenosis) for the good of others, without counting the cost. This aspect of the life of Jesus is best exemplified by the events before the Passover, leading to his passion and death, when he washed the feet of his disciples (Jn. 13:1-20).

The very act of washing someone’s feet, a sign of hospitality, was a task usually performed by slaves or at least an inferior or subordinate, as menial service (diakonia/os) but here we see the master washing the disciples’ feet, thus humbly assuming the role of a slave. The servant role is even clearer from the fact that masters and banqueters sit or recline while the servants stand to serve them, but Jesus “rises” from the dinner (Jn. 13:4) like a servant to serve his sitting disciples. Also very significant is the fact that typically Jewish men wore an inner tunic, an outer tunic and outer cloak, removing the latter when indoors but keeping the outer tunic. But Jesus went ahead to remove (lay down) even his outer tunic (himatia), leaving only his inner tunic or loincloth, with a towel (lention) tied round his waist to wash and dry the feet of his disciples (Jn. 13:4-5), just as only slaves would have done. Little wonder Peter first refused his master from washing his feet (Jn. 18:8), for it would appear as though he were a slave. But this shows Jesus’ willingness to freely offer his life for them and serve like a slave, even though he was also aware of his divine power: Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God (Jn. 13:3). That he took off (Greek tithesin) his outer robe (himatia) may also be an allusion to the good shepherd who lays down (tithesin) his life for

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139 Ibid., 908.
140 Adeyemo, *Africa Bible Commentary*, 1281.
the sheep (Jn. 10: 11), even as his clothes (including the himatia) would be taken from him at the crucifixion (Jn. 19:23).

The servant role he undertakes is also clear from the fact that he was the one who poured the water into the basin unassisted, before washing the disciples’ feet. The knowledge of his divine power of control or preeminence over all things given by his Father, including the knowledge of who was to betray him, did not make him see it as unfitting, or stop him from, washing the feet of his betrayer, showing the greatness of his humility. Remarkably, this occurs within his last farewell Passover meal and the institution of the Eucharist through which he gave up his life for the salvation of the world – the sacrificial lamb will be replaced by the Lamb of God. He wanted to demonstrate the extent of his love (Jn. 13:3) and set up an example for his followers of what it means to be a true leader: if I your Lord and Master could do this, then you should do the same for one another (Jn. 13:12-15 especially 14). The one who fully knew his origin, dignity, identity, relationship with God, mission from God and destiny (he was from the Father and was returning to him), as both the Teacher (didaskalos) and Lord (kyrios) decided voluntarily to take up the role of a servant (doulos) as a pattern, model and example (hypodeigma) of humble service for his envoys and apostles (apostoloi), as a way of having a share with him.

For Jesus, true greatness and power come from humble and unselfish service (diakonia). Even at his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Jesus never denied his kingship or mastership (cf. Lk.

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142 Barton and Muddiman, *The Oxford Bible Commentary*, 985.

145 While there is a difference in the account of John (before the Passover) as different from the synoptic Last Supper account (during the Passover) – both point to Christ giving up his life. As it is, the celebrations of both the institution of the Eucharist and washing of feet have been brought together by the Holy Thursday liturgy.
146 This word is used generally to refer to models of humility (Heb. 4:11; 8:6; 9:23; Jam. 5:10; 2Pet. 2:6) or martyrs’ deaths (2Macc. 6:28; Sir. 44:16); cf. Brant, *John*, 202.
19:37-40) but showed by his simple lifestyle the kind of King he is: one who rode on a hired donkey and was never surrounded by courtly paraphernalia or recognised symbols of power. He even had to offer his body to be scourged and eventually die in the hands of his creatures, a king that rules from the cross, crowned with thorns and acquainted with suffering. In other words, Jesus makes it clear that to be a leader is to be a servant of others, especially those one is called to lead/serve. That he accepted the title ‘Lord and Master/Teacher’ was not a mistake, for that is who he is, but it has a further meaning: if he could become the slave or servant of all despite this, coming as one who serves at dinner (Lk. 22:25-30), then the disciples had no choice than to acknowledge and take seriously his charge on them, not as a non-obligatory action but an authoritatively binding instruction.\(^ {148} \) The Greek verb \textit{opheilete}, meaning “you are obliged, you must/ought,” used in Jn. 13:14 to command the apostles to do likewise to one another captures this sense better, for a slave is not greater than his Lord nor the apostle (the one sent) greater than the one sending him (Jn. 13:16; Mt. 10:24; Lk. 6:40).

No one person was to wash others’ feet alone or be the one whose feet are washed exclusively, but they owe one another\(^ {149} \) the task in such a way that each is both a master (when his feet are washed by others) and a servant (when he washes others’ feet). This is an important point for those who are in leadership positions who, having others naturally serve them, are to remember that that act itself imposes upon them a greater responsibility to service. To be a true leader is to imitate Jesus who washed the disciples’ feet, and so wash the feet of one’s own disciples or followers in humility,\(^ {150} \) for a good disciple is not above his master but it is enough that he/she be as the teacher (Jn. 10:16; 15:20; Mt. 10:24-25; Lk. 6:40). If Jesus’ mastership and lordship could be expressed by such a startling reversal of the usual convention (only slaves


\(^ {149} \) The Greek \textit{allēlous} (for one another) connotes an unreserved mutuality: a mutual and reciprocal collaboration that excludes the possibility of dominating and being dominated, based and inspired by the love of Jesus Christ. See also Blank, \textit{The Gospel According to John}, 32, 43.

washed the guests’ feet), then the relationship of Christians to each other, especially leaders to their followers, must follow such radical pattern of service.\textsuperscript{151} “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all” (Mk. 9:35), “the greatest among you should be like the least, and the one who rules like the one who serves” (Lk. 22:26). This requires humility, tolerance, forgiveness and love on the followers and imitators of Christ.\textsuperscript{152}

A leader after the model of Jesus understands that he/she is called to service, to lay down his/her time, talents, treasures and indeed life for the sheep, not just for any selfish reasons but as a call to duty, for which he/she is accountable to God. Thus Peter admonished the elders (leaders of Christian communities) to watch over the flock entrusted to their care as shepherds guard their flock from the grasp of the prowling enemy, not for any sordid money or immediate reward, not reluctantly (simply) as a duty or by compulsion but as the way God has called them to humble service; not lording it over but being good examples that the flock can follow (1Pet. 5:2-3, 8). In other words, Christian leadership, as a call to service, must be exercised in a godly and not worldly manner, according to the example of Jesus, who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many (Mk. 10:42-45).

Having looked at the concept of servant-leadership, how it was exemplified by Jesus and recommended for his followers, we shall now move to a consideration of the bishop as a Servant-Leader. We shall look at bishops as shepherds from the lens of what has always been expected of their office, from the writings of some of the Church Fathers and several magisterial documents.

2.5. The Writings of the Fathers.

Generally speaking, the image of a shepherd is very important to the proper Christian understanding of the identity and ministry of the bishop. This image of the shepherd is evident from ancient Christian iconography and patristic heritage based on the scriptures, for which John

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Paul II said: “This is the fundamental reason why ‘the ideal figure of the Bishop, on which the Church continues to count, is that of the pastor who, configured to Christ by his holiness of life, expends himself generously for the Church entrusted to him, while at the same time bearing in his heart a concern for all the Churches throughout the world (cf. 2Cor 11:28).’”

Based on this, we shall now proceed to see how this notion of a shepherd from some patristic and magisterial sources can help us in properly understanding the function of the bishop in the Church.

Though at the early beginnings of the Church, the idea of the bishop as a Servant-Leader may not have appeared very clearly, partly because the concept is a newer one and the development of the episcopate itself has had to undergo different stages, as we saw in the previous chapter, there is some evidence in the earliest sources of the bishop playing a service role to the people of God. The Didache (circa 70-90 A.D.) calls on the early Christians to choose their bishops from people who are gentle, trustworthy, detached from money and tested, for they render to them the ‘unpaid’ sacred/public service like the prophets and teachers.

From Ignatius of Antioch’s (circa 110 A.D.) language of the centrality of obedience to the bishop evident in his many letters, he clearly identifies the bishop as the sign of unity in the Church, the leader and shepherd over all his flock, to whom they owe obedience as unto Christ. Cyprian of Carthage (249-258 A.D.), known for his stress on the authority of the bishop as a basis for the unity of the Church, speaking against the opposition of bishops as unto Christ and the Church, showed their important role by comparing the fall of a bishop, as a shepherd, to that of his followers, upon whom he has great influence. Accordingly, the bishop should live a life worthy of imitation by

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154 Didache 15:1, in Milavec, The Didache: Text, Translation, Analysis and Commentary, 35
156 St. Cyprian of Carthage, On the Unity of the Catholic Church, 5; 17; Epistle III,1; Letter, 9, 1; 66, 8, in Agnes Cunningham, The Bishop in the Church: Patristic Texts on the Role of the Episkopos (Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1985), 28-29, 31, 35.
the brethren, for “the Church does not withdraw from Christ, and the people united to their bishop and the flock clinging to their shepherd are the Church.”\textsuperscript{157}

From this, one can see the gradual development of the idea of the bishop as a shepherd of the flock, bounded to the Church and to Christ and to be imitated by the people, who must be united to him as a sign of their fidelity to Christ and his Church. For St. Ambrose (339-397 A.D.), those in ecclesiastical office, including the bishop, knowing fully the implication of their actions, should act with both wisdom and moderation, neither too harsh and severe nor too easy because the former would seem to suggest the exercise of a despotic power and the latter may mean a negligence of duty.\textsuperscript{158} This really shows how demanding the task of a bishop is for he is called:

To rebuke those who stir up strife, to comfort those of little courage, to take the part of the weak, to refute opponents, to be on guard against traps, to teach the ignorant, to shake the indolent awake, to discourage those who want to buy and sell, to put the presumptuous in their place, to modify the quarrelsome, to help the poor, to liberate the oppressed, to encourage the good, to suffer the evil and to love all men.\textsuperscript{159}

St. Augustine (354-430 A.D.) called the bishop the superintendent, one who takes care of others by watching over them as an overseer, making his work a demanding one rather than one of dignity.\textsuperscript{160} Since the word bishop (Latin \textit{episcopatus}) is derived from the Greek \textit{episkopos}, meaning superintendent or overseer, the bishop is called to “oversee” or “look out for” those placed under him, and anyone who loves the title but not the duty, cannot truly be called a good bishop.\textsuperscript{161} As such, being true to his title and duty, a bishop is called to be a shepherd and watchman or pastor over souls, who ought to provide spiritual pastures for the Lord’s flock with

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  \item \textsuperscript{157} Cyprian of Carthage, \textit{Letter, 66, 8}, in Cunningham, \textit{The Bishop in the Church}, 34.
  \item \textsuperscript{160} St. Augustine, Sermon 94, \textit{The Slothful Servant}, in Cunningham, \textit{The Bishop in the Church: Patristic Texts on the Role of the Episkopos}, 45.
  \item \textsuperscript{161} St Augustine, \textit{The City of God, Bk. XIX}, trans. Marcus Dods (New York: Modern Library, 1950).
\end{itemize}
diligence and humility, always solicitous for the needs of the sheep.\textsuperscript{162} As a bishop himself, he attended to the needs of his flock conscious that he was only called to serve the flock of God entrusted to him, a task he often spoke of as a burden (\textit{sarcina}).\textsuperscript{163} In one of his sermons on the anniversary of his episcopal ordination, he reminded the people that he too was one of them, in need of their prayers: “When I am frightened by what I am to you, then I am consoled by what I am with you. To you I am the bishop, with you I am a Christian. The first is an office, the second a grace; the first a danger, the second salvation.”\textsuperscript{164}

On his part, John Chrysostom (349-407 A.D.) maintained that the bishop must be available to always attend humbly to the many and sometimes differing needs of his flock without discrimination, even when this is very demanding in itself, otherwise he would be criticised or indicted of favouring only a few. In his words,

For it is not possible for the Bishop, and one who is concerned with the whole flock, to have a care for the male portion (\textit{one part}) of it, but to pass over the female (\textit{the other}), which needs more particular forethought, because of its propensity to sins. But the man who is appointed to the administration of a Bishopric must have a care for the moral health of these, if not in a greater, at least in no less a degree than the others. For it is necessary to visit them when they are sick, to comfort them when they are sorrowful, and to reprove them when they are idle, and to help them when they are distressed.\textsuperscript{165}

The bishop, as a leader, is however to judge wisely so that he does not set his heart simply on pleasing people but on what ought to please them, the truth; listening to his subjects, desiring to please them and be loved by them only insofar as these help him, and by a life of example, to lead them to God.\textsuperscript{166} Desiring only to please the people and be loved by them, without seeking the truth

\textsuperscript{162} St. Caesarius of Arles, \textit{Sermon} 1, 19, in Cunningham, \textit{The Bishop in the Church: Patristic Texts on the Role of the Episkopos}, 54.
\textsuperscript{163} \textit{Sarcina} is a Latin word meaning a marching pack carried by the Roman military, denoting a heavy burden.
\textsuperscript{164} St. Augustine, \textit{Sermon} 340, 1, in Jacques-Paul Migne, \textit{Patrologia Latina}, 221vols., Vol. 38, 1438. This is the source of Augustine’s popular statement “For you I am a bishop; with you I am a Christian” (\textit{vobis enim sum episcopus; vobiscum sum christianus}).
or pleasing the true shepherd to whom he is only a servant, will only lead to temporal self-glory, leaving his work undone, for fear that a righteous rebuke of those in error will deprive him of their love. But as someone to be imitated by the flock as their shepherd, the bishop, according to St. Gregory the Great (540-604 A.D.), must live an exemplary life of rectitude, knowing when to act profitably for the good of the flock and being sympathetic to all: a humble companion to those who live good lives and unbending against the vices of evil-doers through zeal for righteousness.  

Gregory was indeed the first, as a Pope, to address himself as the “Servant of the Servants of God.”

Worthy of brief mention here is Thomas Aquinas who, following the scriptures (Jn. 10:11; 21:17; Mk. 10:45), spoke of the spiritual and pastoral nature of the episcopate, not as a honorific title but as one who exercises oversight (superintendens) out of love and service for the good of the Church, in imitation of Christ. In fact, for the bishop “his precedence in rank (praeesse) is an existence at the service of others (prodesse),” especially the poor. This concept of service will be recovered and applied in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, to which we now turn.

2.6. The Second Vatican Council and Post Conciliar Documents.

Though the Second Vatican Council did not use the term Servant-Leader, its adaptation of its principles is very clear especially in the way the bishop is called to mirror the image of Christ as both the shepherd and father of all under his pastoral care. There was an anthropological turn and a cognitive shift of intentionality in the language and understanding of the Church, compared to earlier councils, such that while retaining its description as the Mystical Body of Christ, this was

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168 Gregory adopted this title *Servus Servorum Dei* as a lesson in humility against the Archbishop of Constantinople, John the Faster, who had taken the title “Ecumenical Patriarch,” claiming pre-eminence over the Pope, the Bishop of Rome.
171 *Lumen Gentium*, §27; *Christus Dominus*, §§2, 11.
complemented by its phenomenological identification as the People of God.\textsuperscript{172} Therefore the task of the bishop is presented in the light of serving the People of God. What comes to the fore here is a pragmatic or concrete ecclesial consciousness of how God, in Christ, has revealed himself to the whole Church, the People of God, men and women, in their socio-cultural and historical situations and how this shapes their understanding of their relationship with God and the world. Since the Church is the People of God, the Whole Christ, of which the bishop is a part, he is called to lead the other brethren in their service to God, who is the only true shepherd of all.

The Council clearly teaches that in order to shepherd the People of God and to increase its numbers unceasingly, Christ set up in his Church a variety of offices, chief among whom are those appointed to the office of bishop in an unbroken line of apostolic succession, through the laying on of hands and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{173} As the true and eternal pastor or shepherd, Jesus chose his apostles and entrusted to them his mission and willed that their successors, the bishops, should be the shepherds in the Church till the end of time. Uniquely, episcopal consecration marks the bishop with the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders,\textsuperscript{174} but he still remains a member of the Church, sharing with the rest of the baptised faithful the dignity of the children of God. Relying on the words of St. Augustine on the bishop being a fellow Christian, the Council maintains that as one called to be teacher, sanctifier and shepherd in the name and person of Christ, the bishop should identify with his people: “With respect to the place which we occupy, we are your teachers; with respect to the one Master, we are fellow disciples with you in the same school.”\textsuperscript{175} This helps in our understanding of the bishop as a servant to the flock entrusted under his care, and a steward accountable unto the Master. Thus “the pastoral ministry received in episcopal consecration, which sets the bishop ‘before’ the other faithful, finds expression in his


\textsuperscript{173} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§18, 20.

\textsuperscript{174} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§21, 26.

being for’ the other members of the faithful while not detracting from his ‘being with’ them. This is true with regards both to the bishop's personal sanctification, which must be pursued and realized in the exercise of his ministry, and to the ‘style’ with which he carries out this ministry in all its respective functions.”

The Second Vatican Council, in treating the ministry of bishops as fathers and shepherds of the faithful, who act as vicars and legates of Christ, teaches that they must act or govern as “those who serve,” keeping always before their eyes the example of the Good Shepherd who came not to be served but to serve and to give his life for the sheep (cf. Mt. 20:28; Mk. 10:45; Lk. 22:26-27; Jn. 10:11). This is evident, as we have seen, in the entire life and ministry of Jesus, most significantly in his washing of the disciple’s feet, who assumed the form of a humble servant and out of pure love offered himself sacrificially, as a ransom for the sake of his flock (cf. Jn. 13:1-15; Phil. 2:7). As vicars and ambassadors of Christ with enormous powers especially in their particular churches (proper, ordinary and immediate powers), bishops must see these powers as truly vicarious, in the name of the Good Shepherd himself, and so use them for the real reason for which they were given, viz the pastoral care of the faithful or the spiritual good of the flock entrusted to their care. Like Jesus, they must understand the principle of the greater being the servant of all (Lk 22:26-27; Mk. 10:42-45), conscious that in serving they become true pastors and leaders. They are to be solicitous for the welfare of their flock (seeking out even those not yet in the fold) with compassion on the weak and erring, and paying listening ears to their concerns.

In the exercise of his duties of governance as a father and pastor to his flock (clergy and laity), the bishop should be with them as one who serves, as a good shepherd who knows his sheep and they know him, as a loving father to all who united through his ministry readily submit to his divinely conferred authority. Though the 1992 Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Pastores dabo vobis (I will give you shepherds) was written to address the formation of candidates for the

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176 John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §10.
177 Lumen Gentium, §27; Christus Dominus, §§2, 11, 16.
178 Christus Dominus, §16.
priesthood, it was also addressed to the bishops who are much responsible for the formation of these candidates and through whom they share in the priesthood of Christ. What was said about priests as pastoral agents and leaders in their service to the Church and the world can as well be applied to the bishops, who are called high priests and chief shepherds: they are to be configured to the image of Christ, Head, Shepherd and Spouse of the Church whom they represent and whose presence they are called to prolong, imitating his humility, compassion, obedient service, dedication and pastoral charity as to become models for the flock. As vicar of the ‘great shepherd of the sheep,’ the bishop should manifest through his life and episcopal ministry the fatherhood of God, revealing his goodness, loving care, mercy, gentleness and the authority of Christ, who came to give his life and to gather all people into one family, reconciling them in the love of the Father. Though there are many images that can be applied to the episcopal ministry, that of the shepherd illustrates with particular eloquence the breadth of the episcopal ministry, in that it expresses its meaning, purpose, style and evangelical missionary dynamism. The model of Christ the Good Shepherd suggests to the Bishop daily fidelity to his mission, total and serene dedication to the Church, joy in leading to the Lord the People of God entrusted to his care, and gladness in gathering into the unity of ecclesial communion the scattered children of God (cf. Mt 15:24; 10:6). In contemplating the Gospel icon of the Good Shepherd, the Bishop discovers the meaning of constant self-giving, remembering that the Good Shepherd offered his life for his flock (cf. Jn 10:11) and came not to be served but to serve (cf. Mt 20:28).

Called to conform himself closely to Christ in his thoughts, words and deeds in both his personal life and ministry, the bishop is able, through this, to discover the inspiration for the exercise of his tria munera of teaching, sanctifying and governing, in such a way that there is no contradiction and his ministry is fruitful. This is why this work puts forth the model of the shepherd, the Servant-Leader, as a very helpful one. Governing as a Servant-Leader helps to authenticate the

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181 Ibid., §2.
teaching and sanctifying roles of the bishop as the flock, already enthused by his leadership style, will listen to his voice as their shepherd and will be more readily disposed to obey his teachings.

Having seen this, we shall now briefly look at the very rite of episcopal ordination to see if there is anything that suggests the servant-leadership role of the bishop. This is very importance following the very popular belief in the Church, often attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine (390-455 A.D.), that the law/way of praying informs the law/way of belief (lex orandi, lex credendi), which in practical terms should translate to lex orandi, lex credendi, lex vivendi (as we worship/pray, so we believe, so we live). Since the liturgy is the best ritual expression of Christian belief and worship, we have specifically selected the Rite of Episcopal Ordination.

2.7. Evidence from Liturgy: The Rite of the Ordination of a Bishop.

Our task here is not to analyse the Rite itself but to point out that it justifies our effort to show the link between the idea of being both a shepherd and a servant. One of the first striking things in this ceremony is that the bishop-elect, fully dressed for Mass with his chasuble on, also wears the dalmatic of the deacon under it, reminding him that every priest (the bishop included) is called to serve like the deacon. This is in complete imitation of Christ who though he was the Master, acted like a deacon when he washed his disciples’ feet. Thus at the Presentation of the Bishop-Elect, one of the priests addresses the principal consecrator: Most Reverend Father, the church of N. (our holy mother the Catholic Church) asks you to ordain this priest, N., for service as bishop (as a bishop). Also during the homily, the bishop is reminded that: “The title of Bishop is one of service, not of honour, and therefore a Bishop should strive to benefit others rather than to lord it over them. Such is the precept of the Master: the greater should behave as the least and the ruler as the servant.” As such, the entire ministry of the bishop is one of humble service (diakonia) in imitation of Christ, called to wash the feet of other brethren. He is to love the

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182 *The Rites of the Catholic Church*, 67. The words in bracket are used if the one to be ordained is not to be a resident bishop.

priests and deacons, the poor and weak as a father and brother, encouraging and listening to them and willing to reach out to all, even those outside his fold, mindful of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who knows his sheep and is known by them and who did not hesitate to lay down his life for them.

During the Examination of the Candidate or the Promise of the Elect, the bishop-elect is asked some questions, some of which are very relevant to our discussion. He is asked: Are you resolved as a devoted father to sustain the people of God and to guide them in the way of salvation…? Are you resolved to show kindness and compassion in the name of the Lord to the poor and to strangers and to all who are in need? Are you resolved as a good shepherd to seek out the sheep who stray and to gather them into the fold of the Lord? That the Church sees the bishop as a shepherd is also evident in the conclusion of the Prayer of Consecration. During the solemn prayer of episcopal ordination, the principal ordaining bishop, after the invocation of the Holy Spirit on the ordinand, following the words of the ancient text of the Apostolic Tradition says: “Grant, O Father, knower of all hearts, that this your servant, whom you have chosen for the office of Bishop, may shepherd your holy flock. May he fulfill before you without reproach the ministry of the High Priesthood.” Two other symbols/insignia in the rite of ordination are very important to us, the investiture with ring and the crosier (pastoral/shepherd staff with a curved crook at the top). The accompanying words show the bishop’s bond of unity with his flock and the need to be faithful in pasturing them. For the ring and the pastoral staff respectively, the new bishop is told: “Take this ring, the seal of your fidelity. With faith and love protect the bride of God, his holy Church;” and “Take this staff as a sign of your pastoral office: keep watch over the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has appointed you to shepherd the Church of God.”

All these symbols clearly point to the bishop as a Shepherd-Priest in the line of apostolic succession, according to the will of Christ, the eternal Shepherd and High Priest, who having been

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184 See Rites of the Church, 71.
185 An ancient Christian treatise often attributed to Hippolytus of Rome, but whose real authorship has been contested by recent scholarship.
186 Roman Pontifical, Rite of Ordination of a Bishop: Prayer of Ordination, in cf. Rites of the Church, 73.
187 Ibid., 75.
sent by the Father (Jn. 20:21) sent his Apostles and wishes that their successors, the bishops, serve as shepherds in his Church until the end of time.\textsuperscript{188} The ring which is a symbol of the bishop’s love for the Church and his marriage to the local church reminds him, and all of us, that a bishop is called to love his Church with all his heart in total fidelity, just as Christ loved her and gave his life for her. On the other hand, the crosier is a symbol of authority and jurisdiction to correct errors, administer punishment when necessary and stimulate piety but above all, to do all these with pastoral charity and gentleness, tempering justice with mercy and compassion, like the Good Shepherd. From its very shape or form and significance, it is comparable to the rod of Moses, which was the seal and emblem of his divine commission as well as the instrument of the miracles he wrought. In the same way, the episcopal staff symbolises the doctrinal and disciplinary power of the bishop, guided by charity as the Good Shepherd, in virtue of which he should sustain the weak and faltering, confirm the wavering in faith, and lead back the erring ones into the true fold. Its low end is sharp and pointed, wherewith to prick and goad the slothful; the middle which is straight signifies righteous rule; while the head is bent or crooked, pointing to the bishop’s task to draw in and attract souls to the ways of God.\textsuperscript{189}

2.8. Conclusion.

In this chapter we have tried to look at the concept of the Servant-Leader, its general understanding and modus operandi, how it is founded on the scriptures and centred on the life and ministry of Jesus (from a Christian perspective) and how the model of Jesus presents a challenge to anybody worth bearing the name Christian leader. Considering also the central place of the bishop in the Church as the vicar of Christ, effort was made to see how the concept of servant-leadership and the bishop as a shepherd, with patristic origin, has been taught by the Church in some magisterial, conciliar and post-conciliar documents and indeed the \textit{Rite of Episcopal Ordination}. The bishop, called to be a leader of his people, is called to service rather than honour,

\textsuperscript{188} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §18.
and even though the language of honour is often used in describing the bishop,\textsuperscript{190} this is to be understood in Christian parlance as an empowerment for service and not worldly lordship. He is called to be a Servant-Leader of the flock of Christ, the Good Shepherd, who has entrusted his sheep to him temporarily as a steward and to whom he will render an account of stewardship.

The bishop is therefore called to model his ministry after Christ, conscious that he is only an earthenware vessel in the hand of God, understanding from his own limitations that he has to help his brethren towards maturity, sustained by grace, humility, collaboration and charity. So standing and working in the image of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, his heart should be filled with loving compassion, urged, prompted and impelled by the love of Christ to draw all to him, himself also humbly drawn closer to the real conditions of every suffering man and woman. Thus he, like Christ, will be in a position to share in their joys and pains, soothing and nursing their wounds especially with the hope of drawing all to Christ, who never lost faith in the possible return of even the lost sheep. With compassion he will be charitable, welcoming and merciful to his flock, especially the poor, the sick, the helpless, those going through trying and difficult moments and all those in need of comfort; and, like a good shepherd, restore to the Father’s house all who have gone astray by searching for them.\textsuperscript{191}

The portrait of the bishop presented above invites him to be an ever more luminous sign of Christ, the Shepherd and Spouse of the Church. Acting as a father, brother and friend to all, he will stand beside everyone as the living image of Christ, our hope, in whom all God’s promises are fulfilled and all the expectations of creation are brought to completion.\textsuperscript{192} But these ideals are far from being realised in many parts of our world and Church, especially in third world countries where the idea of power and authority have been misused and abused gravely to serve selfish ends and the influence of servant-leadership has not been well felt. In this scenario, even Christian

\textsuperscript{190} The bishop is often referred to in languages that tend to stress more his power and high position than his call to service, like the High Priest (\textit{Summus/Magnus Sacerdos}) with the fullness of Orders; the word ‘Elevation’ used at his appointment also tends to suggest a high office even as he is addressed as His Lordship or Most Reverend.

\textsuperscript{191} Cf. Roman Pontifical, \textit{Rite of Ordination of a Bishop}: Promise of the Elect, in \textit{The Rites of the Catholic Church}, 71.

leaders seem to have failed or have not done enough to better the conditions of human life towards the realisation of the promise of God: I will give you shepherds. The next chapter will look into the connection between socio-political, economic and cultural realities on one hand and how these affect the way power is understood and exercised on the other hand. The focus will be particularly on Africa and Latin America, in relation to the first world western countries in general, and what the bishop should do in this scenario as a Servant-Leader.

In this chapter, we intend to look at the socio-political situation in Africa right from its colonial days and how this has shaped the understanding and exercise of power today. Our position is that the social context of a place has influence on the Church, not only in Africa but also in other places in the global Church. We reiterate the view of John Kobler that a people’s instinctual drive or repeated experience is a combination of many real factors which, in turn, shapes a constellation of concrete values generally accepted in that society as needs or wants.193 By implication, a society produces the type of leaders it wants/desires as leaders are products of their environment, which affects how authority is exercised in that environment. It also means that while different societies and social environments will produce different kinds of leaders, the preference of one leadership style over the other is based on its ideals. These ideals/spiritual goals must be differentiated from mere instinctual drives peculiar to any society in order that they can be applicable in a variety of circumstances. In this light, we shall look at the African experience (with some examples in the global Church) to see its influence on the exercise of power in the Church.

Up till the 1970s, Africa witnessed colonisation (1885–1970s) and the exploitation of power by the colonial masters in their scramble for Africa, which left many adverse effects on the continent. One of these effects is seen in how many African rulers tend to have little regard for the people they govern or rule, seeking to satisfy themselves, their families and allies at the detriment of the masses. One notices, both in the society and the Church, a wide gap between the lifestyle of leaders and those they govern, for while seeking their self-interest they extravagantly misuse available meagre resources to foster their people-unfriendly policies. In Tokunbo Adeyemo’s view, “the concept of service to all, especially to those who are socially beneath one, is foreign to

193 Kobler, Vatican II, Theophany and the Phenomenon of Man, 306.
Africa. A chief serving his subjects would be unheard of. Yet that is what Jesus is asking us to do here. If our leaders would learn this lesson, it would take away more than half of the pain the African continent experiences from day to day. “

Positions such as this are the motivation and concern of this chapter as we argue that colonialism contributed largely to the situation.

3.2.1. Africa before and after Colonisation.

We shall first attempt to look at the African worldview before colonisation and then what changed after colonisation. Africa as a continent is a little bit difficult to describe because of the diversity of its people and culture, even though some erroneously think of it as if it were a big country or a pocket of small nations. While it is presently constituted of about fifty-four sovereign states with different histories, political arrangements and cultures, there are certain characteristics that could be accepted as common denominators in discussing Africa. Although there are many cardinal African cultural values: sense of community life, good human relations/solidarity, sacredness of life, hospitality, religious sense of sacredness, respect for authority/elders, sense of time and peculiar language style, we shall be interested mainly in how its religious and community based orientations have influenced the way power is constructed and exercised.

Religion and religious beliefs and their effects on the African community have been described as the key to understanding the African world and ideology, which consists of a hierarchical world of inanimate, animate and spiritual beings, conscious of how each affects the other in the universe. This only goes to confirm the popular assertion that in all things the African is religious: “It is religion, more than anything else, which colours their (the African) empirical participation in that universe, making life a profoundly religious phenomenon. To be is to be religious in a religious universe. That is the philosophical understanding behind African myths, customs, traditions, beliefs, morals, actions and social relationships.” Based on this

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194 Adeyemo, Africa Bible Commentary, 1281.
196 Ibid., 3.
religious outlook, there is a belief in the connection between the spiritual and material world such that every action has a spiritual implication, not just on the actor but on the entire community.

The African sense of community is so strong and non-negotiable as it subjects the individual’s right to that of the community: I am because we are. While individual rights are not destroyed, unrecognised or unprotected, there is a great emphasis on personal identification with and within the community/clan without which one is not a citizen, as the community is the custodian of the individual, who must go wherever it goes, either by approval or disapproval. This idea of living together as a community of brothers and sisters, jointly seeking solutions to life’s many problems discourages individualism as an ideology. Contrary to understanding community rights only from the point of view of the obligations it fulfils to the individual or the summation of individual rights, individual rights exist only by virtue of the obligations they fulfil to the community. Thus an African adage says that ‘the prosperity of a single person does not make a town or community rich but the prosperity of a town makes persons rich.’

This approach to life aims at a holistic and integral development of the individuals in the community through, and for, the community, in a way that no one person is too rich or poor, as people readily come to the assistance of the poorer ones, without much stress. This team or communal spirit is what Julius Nyerere proposed as an African social-political ideology in his philosophy of Ujamaa (togetherness, familyhood or solidarity). Thus things like age grade groups and rites of initiation are very prominent in the socialisation process as a way of integrating the individual into the community, which come along with the renunciation of personal rights in favour of the community for the benefit of all, including the individual members. The live-and-let-live philosophy ensures the respect of every individual as a dignified person who has something worth contributing to the community with a sense of mutuality and reciprocity. This philosophical

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198 Onwubiko, African Thought, Religion and Culture, 14.
199 Ibid., 15.
construct cannot be divorced from African religious convictions because morality and ideologies were both inspired by religion.

Consequently, when individuals gave up their rights for the good of the society, they placed them under the custody of certain community leaders who were selected along social, cultural and religious lines. Here we have the chief priests, oracles of the ancestors, shrine priests/priestesses, clan leaders, chiefs and later warrant chiefs. Bearing in mind that the transcendental African cosmo-religious view of reality is highly hierarchical with the Supreme Being at the top, followed by the spirits, divinities, ancestors, human beings, animals and lastly inanimate creatures, these chosen ones were seen as intermediaries and mediators between the seen and unseen world of spirits. They were to be respected, honoured and listened to as they were the mouthpiece of the gods with special insight and wisdom, who infallibly spoke the mind of the deities; otherwise tales of doom may befall the community. With deep respect for the authority of elders already an African value ingrained in the people, it became even more sacrosanct to listen to these “half-human, half-divine” representatives who were expected to be committed to their duty responsibly. Indeed, the legitimate power and respect was in the office one occupied, sanctioned by ancestral norms, and not in the person, such that a person loses his right to obedience once the office had been abused.\textsuperscript{201} It was believed that not acting according to social ethos and mores had some unfavourable spiritual consequences. Just as the elder, respected for his age, has the corresponding responsibility to do what is expected of him/her, based on the community’s construct of the reciprocity between duties and rights, without which the respect is undeserved, this was expected of these special representatives as well.

But the scenario painted above has changed. This was Africa before the advent of colonialism, western civilisation and the introduction of Christianity or in some cases Islam – almost every nation/country in the continent went through this experience. The irony was that while Africans were receptive to foreign ideologies and ready to integrate them into their hitherto

\textsuperscript{201} Onwubiko, \textit{African Thought, Religion and Culture}, 28-29.
held beliefs, the colonialists, with the brand of religion they brought, were biased about African religion and culture, seeing almost everything African as fetish or inferior, and so to be rejected. This created, in many minds, the idea that Africans were inferior beings that needed to throw their culture away in imitation of the white man, leading to what has been described as hybrid personality: wanting to be like the white man in everything and looking down on whatever is not from them. The eventual result was the syndrome of “black skin, white masks,” a term popularised by a book with the same title written in 1952 by Frantz Fanon. With this mental deconstruction achieved, it was possible to introduce many alien practices into the continent, from the way of worship to the way of governance or the economy, the way of dressing and even what was eaten. In fact, this mentality permeated the entire culture and created a major social upheaval as the people had to contend with the new social reality. For many of the people, it seemed ‘everything had really fallen apart and the centre could no longer hold.’

Part of the new reality was the emergence of concepts and challenges alien to the people, for which they had no answers or which their former answers could no longer resolve. Examples include nepotism, tribalism, high crime rate, insecurity, slave trade, alien political structure and economic system, many of which, scholars argue, are not indigenous to the African traditional culture, as they sometimes even lacked words for them. Initially these new realities created further crisis and conflict between the new culture and the old one, due to the resistance of the indigenes, but with their imperialist mentality and superior military power sometimes, the colonial administrators had their way, leaving the people as strangers even in their own land. Considering the fact that colonialism, slavery and the economic scramble for Africa occurred concurrently, there was a dispossession of the African even in his land, with psychological, social, political,

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203 This is the idea behind the popular novel on the clash of Christian/western and traditional culture by Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart* (London: Heinemann, 1958). The original idea comes from William Butler Yeats’ poem *The Second Coming*.
economic, cultural and religious consequences. It is on record that soldiers symbolised the colonial presence in Africa, and that the fear that signalled their arrival partly accounts for the cultural distance that existed between the European administrator and the traditional African adults.\textsuperscript{205}

Politically, the colonial administrator dabbled in local affairs without adequate knowledge of how things operated, only to impose his order as a solution which either worsened issues or temporarily solved them. The appointment of warrant chiefs, against all laid down traditional, cultural or religious procedures, only served colonialist interests as nobody ever saw them as authentic mouthpieces of the gods or paid allegiance to them. Unfortunately, due to lack of understanding on how traditional institutions and local politics worked, the colonial masters foisted a system of governance alien to the people, destroying the African community life and even family ties, with many attendant disastrous results.\textsuperscript{206} This created a pattern of life alien to the people, caused division among hitherto peaceful communities and left leadership structures disorganised, as we shall see in the next section.

3.2.2. The Socio-Political Reality and its influence on the Ministry of Bishops.

With the emergence of the colonialists (with the European brand of Christianity that came with it) and their overpowering of the indigenous African communities, a new system of government and administration was set in place and the people had no option other than to learn it. This meant relinquishing their former way of life in order to catch up with the white man’s system.\textsuperscript{207} With Christian teachings that disregarded the cultural ethos and religious beliefs of the people, the colonialists/missionaries discouraged ancestral worship and thus destroyed the

\textsuperscript{205} Onwubiko, \textit{African Thought, Religion and Culture}, 117-118.
\textsuperscript{206} In Nigeria for example, the British used either Indirect Rule or the process of Assimilation. This led to the forceful amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorates into one country in 1914, without the people’s consent, which a century after has become the bane of a multi-tribal Nigeria. While the Indirect Rule worked in the Northern part of the country, an attempts to reproduce it in the Eastern part, among the Igbos, known for its republican system, was counter-productive. The Igbos selected their leaders along kinship line, among the \textit{umunna}, people from a common ancestor and often prided themselves with the fact that the absolute centralised leadership of one person (autocracy), without ancestral lineage, above every other person was never tolerated (\textit{Igbo enwe eze} –Igbo has no king), but that was what the British imposed on them. See Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, \textit{A Listening Church: Autonomy and Communion in African Churches} (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996), 15.
\textsuperscript{207} This is without prejudice to the many good things that came with colonisation, e.g. western education, Christianity, stopping of the killing of twin babies, abolition of caste systems, etc.
religious connection that united the people. With proselytism and material inducements, like articles of clothing, with which they attracted the people, they created a group accepted as ‘people of the Church’ but cut off from their communal ties. With western education that never regarded African educational values, there was indoctrination and mental colonisation that created a class system and social status symbols among the people, between the educated and uneducated, which was different from the social system that they used to know.208

This scenario caused a rupture in the socialisation process of the people and changed their values forever. There was a shift of ideals and transfer of power symbols, no longer based on the community but on the individual and his/her achievements or chosen way of life, with little or no intervention by the community. It created elite societies in which a person’s worth was determined by personal possessions, making them believe that they were primitive and degraded persons, and but for the presence of the colonialists, they would have been like animals.209 Those appointed into positions of power either in the Churches, schools or civil service among the educated no longer saw themselves as obliged to their communities, as their whole allegiance was to the white man, the white priest or the colonial administrator. With this social class structure, only the highly placed, usually mandated by the colonial masters, had power and even when there was a gradual transfer of power to the people (those chosen by the white man), it was still decided from outside such that leaders saw themselves as upper class aristocrats with no domestic allegiance. While it can be argued that this may not have been the aim, the fact remains that colonialism and its systems destabilised the African continent and disrupted forever the dynamics of social life.

Much can be said about the impact of colonialism on Africa, its aftermath and the way forward, but the reality today is that it has remained a continent bedevilled by many problems. Among these are poverty, erosion of core socio-cultural values, imperialism, political instability, economic under-development, over-centralisation of political power, leadership hegemony crisis, and political instability.208 Onwubiko, *African Thought, Religion and Culture*, 123-130. 209 Chukwudum Barnabas Okolo, *The Liberating Role of the Church in Africa Today* (Eldoret, Kenya: AMECEA Gaba Publications, 1991), 29, quoting Kenneth Kaunda.
ethno-religious conflicts, violence, massive unemployment, tribalism, corruption, marginalisation, human rights violation, the crisis or challenge of urbanisation, illiteracy, the HIV/AIDS epidemic and other endemic diseases, the patriarchal bias about the role of women, ecological disasters, issues of justice, peace and reconciliation, et cetera.\textsuperscript{210}

Despite all these obstacles, the Church in Africa today is called to be a beacon of hope in genuine liberation, a call to make the Gospel relevant to the people, as she was reminded during the two African Synods of 1994 and 2009.\textsuperscript{211} This will take the cooperation of the clergy, upon whom the credibility of the Church’s witness largely depended on by their exemplary life, the laity and other ecclesial bodies, to counter these sources of bad news with love, hope, harmony and peace, in preferential option for the poor, as a prophetic witness on behalf of the poor and voiceless in the world.\textsuperscript{212} Unfortunately, many years after colonisation, traces of the old European civilisation and model of Church are yet to disappear. Not only was the feudalistic model of power handed on to the African Church, but also those placed in authority were schooled not to question the status quo, in prudential compliance to authority and tradition.\textsuperscript{213} On the part of the people, the fact that respect for authority makes the criticism of leaders, much more religious leaders, less likely makes the matter more complicated.\textsuperscript{214} With the common experience of the failure of political leaders, the role of the Church in addressing the people’s problems has been called into question as many Church leaders, by virtue of their education and social status, belong to the upper


\textsuperscript{212} John Paul II, \textit{Ecclesia in Africa}, §§22, 23, 44, 51, 70; Benedict XVI, \textit{Africæ Munus}, §§ 2, 7-9, §§101-104.


\textsuperscript{214} Uzukwu, \textit{A Listening Church: Autonomy and Communion in African Churches}, 18-19.
class and those who do not belong have access to those in that class – as the middle class is technically non-existent.

The debate over the role of the Church, or precisely the bishop, in all of these leads to the consideration of the influence of the socio-political culture on the exercise of power even in the Church. Since the bishop exists in a particular social milieu, his understanding of leadership will surely be shaped by the concrete social conditions in which he lives. However, understanding how authority is exercised in any particular period demands a comprehensive knowledge of the period and the factors which determine how authority operates, the nature, end and constitution of that society.\textsuperscript{215} The Church, for example, had witnessed many civilisations with their different impacts on how power and authority were understood and she had responded variously to these over time. Notable among these are the Graeco-Roman, Constantinian-Theodosian, medieval, Reformation, Enlightenment/Renaissance, post-modernist and democratic concepts of power, all having to compete over which should be most preeminent, notwithstanding their different structural modifications over time.\textsuperscript{216} What is at stake here is how to know what serves a people well, while avoiding the temptation “to fix the Church in a particular, successful form of incarnation; to render a particular style permanent, even when the earlier situation has ceased to exist; or to try to repeat a form exactly in other circumstances.”\textsuperscript{217} As it is, the African Church still follows an inherited feudal and canonical model of Church from Europe or is battling with what to do with it in the context of its present reality, a task many African theologians have had to contend with.\textsuperscript{218}

The problem hinges so much on how this inherited notion of power can help African bishops faithfully serve the local people, while still open to the universal Church. This is the task

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\textsuperscript{215} McKenzie, \textit{Authority in the Church}, 7.
\textsuperscript{217} Kloppenburg, \textit{The Ecclesiology of Vatican II}, 115.
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before African bishop, to integrate what they have received as a model of leadership into the context of their people, and not to uncritically assimilate what has been received. They are also to be mindful of the fact that great leaders are known for having visions beyond and above their cultural milieu, which are adaptable to different situations and universally applicable or at least appreciable in other climes. This is the position of this work, that bishops are called to be great leaders of the people, not limited to cultural visions or socio-political circumscriptions, but in no small measure to make a difference in a world bedevilled by this leadership crisis. We shall now go to show that following the leadership model of Jesus as a servant in the context of the African idea of the Church as the Family of God, bishops are to lead in a way that really ensures that the “Church can serve as the highest testimony of the renewal of the earth.”

3.3. An African Ecclesiology of Communion: Church as Family of God and its Implications for the ministry of Bishops.

In a bid to repair post-colonial social damages in Africa, and also correct post-Reformation ecclesial reality against monarchical hierarchy, many suggestions have been proffered. Even within the African continent, efforts have been made to reinterpret the experiences of the people in the light of the Gospel, but in this work we shall be interested only in the concept/model of the Church as the Family of God. This is based on the centrality of the family in Africa and it will be worth knowing what the role of the father is. While it is acceptable to distinguish ecclesiastical

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219 There is an agreement that most African problems are those of leadership, as the people look up to their leaders. See Chinua Achebe, The Trouble with Nigeria (London: Heinemann Educational Books, 1983).
220 Uzukwu, A Listening Church: Autonomy and Communion in African Churches, 47-65, 72-103.
221 In Africa, to mention the father of a family is to identify the family he leads without neglect of the other members of the household. As such, we shall use the words Church and bishop interchangeably based on the idea that the bishop is a known representative of the Church community, who should act for its common welfare.
222 The Church can be understood as charismatic, a brotherhood, missionary, ecumenical, collegial, participatory, partnership, responsible collaboration according to James Provost, “Ecclesial Community as Communion” in James H. Provost, ed. The Church as Communion (Washington, D.C.: Canon Law Society of America,1984), 5-6.
224 This is in line with the biblical concept of koinonia as participation in the life of God and one another through Christ, following the Trinitarian model (1Cor. 14:12; 12:7); with Vatican II communion ecclesiology; with African socio-cultural reality and ecclesial paradigms. See James Provost, “Ecclesial Community as Communion,” 10-12; John Paul II, Ecclesia in Africa, §63; Dulles, Models of the Church; Orobator, The Church as Family, 11.
authority from any other: either of the natural order (the family/dominative authority, aimed at the human maturity of its members and the State’s political/jurisdictional authority, aimed at the common good) or of human conventional order based on contractual agreement, we propose that this model has the potential to meet both personal and collective good as well as the essence of authority in the Church, i.e., service.

In a typical African family, leadership falls naturally on the father and even though the wife and children are seen as his ‘subjects,’ he knows that the family never attains its end fully without their partnership or collaboration. While there are cases of domination and suppression, these were not expected from responsible fathers and the existing strong communal ties acted as checks and balances against such tendencies. His moral authority does not come from him alone or those under him, but from both, derived from and guided by communal norms and mutual interest.

Applied to the bishop as the father of the Family of God, it means that neither himself nor the subjects/flock is the source of his authority but God manifested in Christ, who reveals himself in time and space in the Church, in the concrete life experience of the People of God (clergy and laity). It is in sharing in the life of Christ that members of the Church derive their authority, according to their role in the Church. This calls for collaboration, a listening to one another especially in the lived faith experience of the people, the sensus fidelium, with the heart of a father who cares for both the earthly and eternal good of his children. It is in fulfilling his duty as the father of the household that the wife and children truly appreciate the role of their father. In the same way, a bishop who truly plays a fatherly role will easily attract obedience, as it will be given as though it were a duty. Therefore the constant emphasis on creative fidelity and obedience to Church teachings should lead the bishop to take into cognisance the need to carry the faithful along and consult them, so that compliance flows from a loving father-children relationship, like the sheep that follow the shepherd because they hear his voice and know him as one who loves

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225 See James Provost, “Ecclesial Community as Communion,” 4-5, 8-12. He argues in page 14 that the genuine test of any form of authority must be the New Testament, the original document on authority in the Church.
them. However, John McKenzie makes it clear by warning that Christian obedience is not identical with familial, civic or contractual obedience, and so should never be thought of in terms of purely secular or democratic patterns by the faithful or in absolute terms by the leader. He argues for a leadership style based, not on any political system but, on the New Testament Christian morality – marked by love and service, sustained by charisms - as capable of restoring the prestige of what he called “commending authority,” not by impersonal coercion but by a responsible personal life of compassion, example and persuasion, in authentic imitation of Christ.

The bishop then must understand that true authority comes from God through Christ, in the Spirit, to the entire Church and not a section of it, a point those in specific offices of authority must never forget because followers become more enthusiastic and easy to lead once they know that they too are trusted and loved as friends, and not servants in a derogatory sense. As such, all manifestations of clericalism should be countered with the spirit of dialogue, collegiality, collaboration, service, patient and compassionate listening, and a ministry “with large ears.” Bishops and pastors should acknowledge humbly that they were not meant by Christ to undertake alone the entire saving mission of the Church to the world, but that it is their noble duty to shepherd the faithful and also recognise their contributions, services and charisms. Thus bishops are called as pastors to lead the people and be in solidarity with them, appreciating their irreplaceable charismatic contributions to the Church, which motivates them to take on those duties the clergy cannot even do, like visiting members in the base communities they animate and helping in other pastoral duties in parishes, on behalf of the Church.

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227 McKenzie, Authority in the Church, 15, 17-18.
228 Ibid., 89-109, 112, 116-117.
229 Uzakwu, A Listening Church, 117-127; Arbuckle, Culture, Inculturation, and Theologians: A Postmodern Critique, 154-161; Orobator, Theology Brewed in an African Pot, 91, 131-136.
230 Lumen Gentium, §30.
This way of leadership by the bishop increases the possibility of giving many members of the Family of God the freedom to utilise their charisms, in the Church, grass root communities and the society at large. Not only is the Church stronger for this approach but also it helps to foster the balanced understanding that strictly speaking, there are not two worlds (secular and sacred) but rather one single history of salvation, where Christians are called to influence the world so that the kingdom of God becomes more present in it.\textsuperscript{231} This is what a continent like Africa needs, as “the church-as-family at the service of society embodies a community of solidarity at the service of life…becomes attentive, sensitive and responsive to the predicament of Africans and contributes concretely to the transformation and renewal of the African society.”\textsuperscript{232} An understanding of the Church as a family, where each member has a role, will also foster the need to be at each other’s service on united terms, enabling her to address prophetically the social context of her members.

It is important to note that no true theology or ecclesiology can neglect the people’s social realities as the Church, led by the bishop, must confront them in the bid to make real the liberating message of Christ in the lives of her members, otherwise the idea of the Church as a family, where concern for one another is always primary, and all are given a sense of belonging and participation, will make no meaning to the people.\textsuperscript{233} The Church must be in touch with the people’s real life situation in order to truly be at the service of society, not just by being a social commentator through beautifully worded pastoral letters or homilies but also by being a prophetic voice with visionary leadership, practically leading the impoverished people to the promised kingdom of abundant life and inviting them to be part of it.\textsuperscript{234} Beyond words, there is the need to

\textsuperscript{231} Tomas G. Bissonnette, “Comunidades Eclesiales de Base: Some Contemporary Attempts to Build Ecclesial Koinonia” in Provost, \textit{The Church as Communion}, 55.

\textsuperscript{232} Orobator, \textit{The Church as Family}, 13. He shows how the different episcopal conferences in Nigeria (West Africa), Kenya (East Africa) and South Africa (Southern Africa) have responded to the need to speak on behalf of the people (pages 76–106). For a good reading of practical suggestions on how the Church should be at the service of society in Africa, see Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, ed. \textit{Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace: The Second African Synod} (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2011).


\textsuperscript{234} George O. Ehusani, \textit{A Prophetic Church} (Ede: Provincial Pastoral Institute, 1996), 59-74 especially 63, 100-101; Orobator, \textit{The Church as Family}, 80-81, 107-136; see also the tone of many letters from different episcopal conferences from earlier periods in the Africa Church in Uzukwu, \textit{A Listening Church}, 62-63.
be more strategic and practical in actions geared towards realising this prophetic role, in all its dimensions.\textsuperscript{235} Thus George Ehusani paints an image of the kind of church we need:

We need a Church that is committed to the interest of the poor, oppressed and marginalised people, and of those who struggle for justice. We need a Church that comes to the aid of those who hunger for bread as well as those who hunger for justice in solidarity with those hungering for bread. We need a Church of service, one that ministers to the profound needs of the people, including their spiritual, moral and material needs. We need a Church that is committed in word and deed to the ideals of the Kingdom which Jesus Christ preached and for which the Church itself was established. We need a Church that shines out as the beacon of light in the midst of the darkness of sin, corruption, oppression and despair. We need a Church that is an embodiment of hope for a people living on the verge of despair.\textsuperscript{236}

The dichotomy between Church leaders and the poor or marginalised should be avoided as the Church as a family should not be separated from the experiences of her “poor members,” but be the Church of the poor and not merely for the poor, without whom the gospel of salvation is not complete.\textsuperscript{237} She must unalteringly stand with the poor, as a living witness of justice, against all unjust or inhuman systems and structures of sin, conscious not just of her power but also her call to the service of the people under any form of inhuman treatment, in imitation of Christ who spoke for the voiceless and fought for the powerless.\textsuperscript{238} As a family following the praxis of servanthood, she must go beyond merely renouncing evil or engaging in “caritative ventures” to a proactive and prophetic commitment to social transformation and renewal, inspired by a vision of the kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{239} This model of Church calls for the active engagement, solidarity, collaboration, co-responsibility and unity of both the clergy and the faithful, the People of God truly living as a family. This unity or collaboration is what is needed to address the parlous socio-economic challenges in Africa as it matches the true African spirit of community, evident in the saying that united we stand, divided we fall, for many spiders working together can tie up a lion.

\textsuperscript{236} Ehusani, \textit{A Prophetic Church}, 26.
\textsuperscript{237} The idea of the poor as a privilege place to encounter God’s saving action is well treated by Jon Sobrino, \textit{No Salvation Outside the Poor: Prophetic-Utopian Essays} (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008).
\textsuperscript{238} Okolo, \textit{The Liberating Role of the Church in Africa Today}, 49-63.
\textsuperscript{239} Orobator, \textit{The Church as Family: African Ecclesiology in its Social Context}, 163.
In a continent where the majority are extremely poor yet make sacrifices to see to the upkeep of the clergy, even at their inconvenience, as a mark of respect for them as God’s emissaries, it is absurd not only to see the clergy live ostentatiously but also to parley with their political oppressors or remain silent in the midst of injustice. There is therefore the need for ecclesiastical leaders, especially the bishop, who should act as the father of the household, to speak out against unjust political structures that impoverish the people, avoid suspicious conspiracy with such governments or the wealthy ruling class (plutocrats) and imbibe a lifestyle of evangelical simplicity consistent with the living conditions of the followers. The grandiose power, pomp, pageantry, mode of dressing and ceremony which surround the clergy (the bearers of authority), led by the bishop, outside their cultic functions should be reconsidered, or they may contradict the gospel values they are called to mirror. African bishops must unwaveringly confront this reality.

3.4. The Episcopacy in the Global Church: Latin America and the Global West.

This brief section is included as a kind of comparison of the effect of different social realities on religion, especially the exercise of power, considering the recent demographic shift in the growth of Christianity from Europe and North America to the global South.240 From the above, as a result of medieval European influence, one sees that the episcopate has been marked by pomp and pageantry, royalty and nobility, high respect and social recognition, which many see today as ‘antiquated trappings’ that contradict the Gospel.241 There have been several efforts from different parts of the world, aimed at making the episcopate more responsive to the demands of the pastoral ministry and the needs of the people, rather than being a mere expression of power. Consequently, these different attempts to allow the message of the Gospel to dictate the way ecclesiastical offices are exercised in the Church have led to the emergence of different theological traditions. In what follows, we shall highlight briefly only the main trends that have influenced the way bishops have

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come to exercise power, as a response to their socio-political environment, in both Latin America (which shares many social experiences with Africa) and first world countries (grouped together).

While many Third World countries share a lot in common, due to the effects of colonialism, Latin America with its peculiar history, closely related to the African experience, has developed its own ecclesiological model. Of all the models that have evolved over time, that of the Church of the poor and with the poor, centred around the basic ecclesial communities (comunidades eclesiales de base) and born from the people’s faith in their struggle for political and religious liberation, has become predominant. It encourages an understanding of faith within daily events of life, a faith that works for and demands positive change in the society, and encourages the People of God, as a Church, to listen together to God’s voice expressed in the experience of the Christian community. This *communio* model of Church invites the bishop to engage in listening, consultation, pastoral accompaniment, solidarity and advocacy in the service of the community.

Thus the Latin American bishops (CELAM) in their 1968 Medellín and 1979 Puebla meetings adopted the principle of a “preferential option for the poor” that enables them to recognise the privileged status of the poor as the new and emerging historical subject which will carry on the Christian project in the world. The bishops acknowledged that it was their duty, as members of the community over which they exercise pastoral ministry, to identify with the plight of the people and work together to address common social problems. Not distancing themselves from the social realities of the poor, they affirmed that the Church’s leaders should minister as its

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242 While there are divergences amidst commonalities in Third World theologies following peculiar cultural and socio-political contexts, the central themes have been presented in Parratt, *An Introduction to Third World Theologies*.

243 Other models include the Church as *City of God*, represented by the clergy, against a world in need of salvation; as *Mater et Magistra*, in alliance with the state on behalf of the poor; as *Sacrament of Salvation*, in the world. See Leonardo Boff, *Church: Charism and Power: Liberation Theology and the Institutional Church* [Iglesia: Carisma e poder], trans. John W. Diercksmeier (New York: Crossroad, 1985), 2-10.

244 This approach, influenced by Liberation Theology, has greatly influenced the ministry of bishops in that part of the world, marked by their commitment to the cause of the poor in solidarity and simplicity. A few examples include Dom Hélder Pessoa Câmara of Brazil; the martyred Oscar Romero of El Salvador; Samuel Ruiz García of Chiapas, Mexico; Óscar Andrés Rodríguez Maradiaga of Honduras and Caritas International and most prominent today Jorge Mario Bergoglio (Pope Francis).

245 Boff, *Church*, 9-10 This is also evident in the language of the Conference’s 2007 *Aparecida Document*. 74
servants and leaders, working together to avoid a reductionist view of either separating themselves from human situations or seeing the Church’s mission as primarily focused on temporal concerns.\textsuperscript{246} Bishops as servant of the people are to denounce all injustices while announcing, promoting and defending human rights and dignity in solidarity with the people, encouraging their creativity and interpreting/presenting their aspirations in the light of the Gospel.\textsuperscript{247}

We admit that the scope of this work does not allow us to go in-depth into the Church in Europe and North America but it suffices to say that in First World western countries, though not without exceptions and different experiences, there are no few tensions around centralisation of ecclesial powers, leadership style, dissatisfaction over the exercise of authority, a distant hierarchy, triumphalism, the influence of secular views of power, the extent of involvement in public debate, the right attitude to government policies, inclusiveness in the decision making process, exercise of different ecclesial ministries and charisma.\textsuperscript{248} While their experience may not be one of total exclusion of the laity in Church administration, as they have done better here than say Africa, there is the clamour for more inclusion, the need for community, the accountability of bishops and a less hierarchical Church where the shepherd is closer to the flock as a true pastor. The situation calls for a conversion, reassessment of the role of church bureaucracy and a more pastorally inclusive approach in the exercise and distribution of power, inspired by compassion, humility and readiness to listen, in order to serve well.

3.5. Conclusion.

In this chapter, though my focus has been on the African context, we have tried to show that despite the different experiences in the global Church, there is a common demand for the involvement of the Church in the life of people. This calls for the inclusion of the people in the very life of the Church, as it is not the exclusive reserve of the hierarchy. This implies that even

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{247} Puebla Document, 518, in Boff, \textit{Church: Charism and Power}, 29.
  \item \textsuperscript{248} Boff, \textit{Church: Charism and Power}, 47-64.
\end{itemize}
when the hierarchy is to intervene in the socio-political arena, it has to speak with the voice of the people, whose servant it is, conscious that the Church remains the whole People of God and not a section of it. What has been said about Africa, the role of the Church and how these should shape the ministry of bishops can be said of any part of the Church, provided the peculiar experience of the people are considered. The full clericalisation of the Church where only the clergy are in positions of power (as though the laity are excluded in Church membership), in order to speak for the faithful, without any input from them, will mean denying the very foundation of the Church built on different charisms, given freely by the Spirit to the entire Church, united in Christ.\textsuperscript{249}

This is the great task before every bishop. He is called to lead the Church (clergy and laity) as a united community, to be actively involved in making the social environment where it finds itself an extension of the kingdom of God, enlivened by the ideals of the Gospel. He is called to lead the faithful in denouncing all unjust social structures, not as a political leader but in imitation of Christ, the Good Shepherd of his flock. For any bishop to lead like Jesus, there is the need for the alignment and transformation of the four leadership domains, mentioned in the last chapter: heart, head, hands and habits as they all work to influence everything one does. Though the internal domains: the motivations of the heart and the leadership perspective of the head are interior; the external domains: the public leadership behaviour, or hands, and the habits experienced by others, will determine their followership.\textsuperscript{250} The bishop must understand that his actions are not merely private acts and that his leadership style has significant influence on the public perception of the role of the Church in the society.

Having stated the many ideals of service for the bishop, and how he should respond in real life contexts, we shall now proceed to look at how he can live these out in concrete terms in the life of his diocese. Our next chapter intends to look at the bishop, irrespective of where he finds himself, as we argue that he should rule his diocese as a loving father/shepherd, a Servant-Leader.

\textsuperscript{249} Küng, The Church, 169-173 gives an in-depth analysis of this view.
\textsuperscript{250} Blanchard and Hodges, Lead Like Jesus: Lessons from the Greatest Role Model of all Times, 31-33.
CHAPTER FOUR

The Local Church as the Heart of the Church: The Diocesan Bishop as a Servant Leader

Though the Church is not a secular organisation and the episcopal office may not function exactly like that of a company’s chief executive, the Church still has its own bureaucracy, with peculiar administrative structures that require high managerial skills. The bishop is not simply like a baroque prince of high nobility, concerned more, like an administrator, with the business of the Church rather than its mission or members. In real life, however, it is difficult to clearly demarcate between the two roles, for the same bishop is both the administrator of the diocese and the pastor of the faithful in the diocese. It is not as though pastoral efficiency implies negligence of the administrative function, but he should ensure that all administrative mechanisms are at his service in fulfilling his pastoral ministry (diakonia) as a servant of God’s people. Therefore, he should detest a bureaucracy that hinders the needed personal relationship with his flock, the core of the pastoral ministry. He must also realise the need to delegate some non-episcopal functions to people with greater competence while he focuses more on his primary duties, exercising a supervisory function over them. His interest should not be restricted to purely administrative offices but he should pay special attention to those engaged in the pastoral ministry, on his behalf, for he is principally called to be a minister of the word, charged with the proclamation of the Gospel and administration of sacraments, like the apostles, and not just the service of tables (cf. Acts 6:2-4).

In this chapter, our effort will be to see in what concrete ways a diocesan bishop can truly exercise his ministry as a Servant-Leader, based on Church teachings. While remaining the head of a diocese, he is called to exercise his ministry of leadership as a shepherd and Servant-Leader.

4.1. The Bishop as a Servant-Leader: Father, Shepherd and Pastor of his local church.

The bishop is called to lead his local church and serve her pastoral needs, conscious that he also represents the Universal Church. As such, the Church of Christ, in her mark of catholicity, is
said to be fully realised in each particular church, which receives all the natural and supernatural means needed to carry out the mission divinely entrusted to her in the world.\textsuperscript{251} This is true especially if a diocese is understood as a communion of communities, a community of local churches (parishes) or a unit of the communion of dioceses which form the universal Church.\textsuperscript{252}

To accomplish this mission, bishops have the ordinary, proper and immediate power required for the exercise of their pastoral ministry, subject to universal laws and cases, established by law or by a decree of the Supreme Pontiff, reserved to the supreme authority or to some other ecclesiastical authority.\textsuperscript{253}

In the words of the Second Vatican Council, the bishop, as a successor of the Apostles, by virtue of episcopal ordination and through hierarchical communion, is the visible principle and guarantee of unity in his particular church, a source of unity within his diocese and the link of communion with other local churches or dioceses throughout the world.\textsuperscript{254} This apostolic succession is “not only in authority and sacred power but also in the form of apostolic life, in apostolic sufferings endured for the proclamation and spread of the Gospel, in their gentle and merciful care of the faithful entrusted to them, in their defence of the weak, and in their unremitting concern for the People of God.”\textsuperscript{255} Except in few instances, bishops are closely linked with dioceses where they exercise their ministry of pastoral care, assisted by their priests, presiding over them with sacred power, as a teacher of doctrine, a priest of sacred worship and a minister of governance.\textsuperscript{256}

Diocesan bishops, assisted by other bishops where they exist (co-adjutor, auxiliary oremeritus bishops with whom they collaborate as co-workers, brothers or sons) must find suitable ways to allow their flock share from their charisms, wisdom, experiences and witness of faith,

\textsuperscript{251} Cf. \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §§ 13, 23.
\textsuperscript{252} James H. Provost, “Structuring the Church as Communion,” in Provost, \textit{The Church as Communion}, 208.
\textsuperscript{254} Cf. \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §23.
\textsuperscript{255} John Paul II, \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §43.
\textsuperscript{256} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §20.
guided by due diligence and sound judgment. Their respect and care for the flock will not only facilitate this but will also encourage the faithful to see themselves, and be seen, as full members of the Church, who are shepherds in their own rank. Not only will this create a true sense of community in the diocese, but it would have answered the call of John Paul II to “make the Church the home and the school of communion.” The bishop, therefore, has the primary duty of promoting and encouraging a spirituality of communion in his diocese, and tirelessly working to make it a basic educational principle wherever human and Christian formation take place: in parishes, Catholic associations, ecclesial movements, Catholic schools, youth groups, seminaries, religious houses of formation, institutes and faculties of theology. He is to encourage personal dialogue and encounter among his presbyterate, deacons, men and women religious and the People of God in their different lay ecclesial and professional groups, as a way of listening to what the Spirit is ‘saying to the churches.’

In the spirit of ecclesial communion, there should be “a type of reciprocal interplay between what a Bishop is called to decide with personal responsibility for the good of the Church entrusted to his care and the contribution that the faithful can offer him through consultative bodies such as the Diocesan Synod, the Presbyteral Council, the Episcopal Council and the Pastoral Council.” This collaboration for the pastoral care of souls should also be extended to any other recognised groups within the Church, since they all share in a proper way with equal dignity in the threefold prophetic, priestly and kingly functions of the entire People of God, each according to his/her state in life and charism. This will also mean that the bishop cherishes his communion with the Roman Pontiff and with his brother bishops, especially within the same Episcopal Conference and Ecclesiastical Province, as a fraternal way of overcoming the risks and dangers of isolation, discouragement amidst the problems confronting him, and the neglect of the gifts of others.

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258 John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis*, §44.
259 Ibid., §22.
Unfortunately, in many parts of the world, especially in Africa, this is far from the reality. The bishop tends to govern the diocese alone, either because these consultative bodies do not exist or, where they exist, they are not allowed to function without undue episcopal interference. Many bishops feel comfortable with the powers given to them, but fail to utilise them for the good of the diocese. It is not an uncommon experience in Africa to see a diocese managed as though it was the private property of a bishop. Our recommendation is that a bishop, following the Servant-Leader model, must be selfless as he tends the flock entrusted to him. He should employ prudence, simplicity, wisdom and affability, which will enable him to act, judge and handle matters more fittingly, appropriately and responsibly as a pastor with both paternal and brotherly love, for the good of souls and the Church, setting aside all purely personal, human and partisan considerations.\textsuperscript{260} He should acknowledge the legitimate competence of others either by granting faculties or delegation, and not discourage healthy initiatives, by taking to himself what others can accomplish well. Without fear of losing his power, the faithful should be encouraged to contribute meaningfully to the growth of the diocese in freedom while he ensures respect for their rights, coordinating the diocese without unnecessary duplication of labour and harmful tensions.\textsuperscript{261}

\textbf{4.2.1. The Bishop’s Pastoral Activities in the Diocese.}

The building up of the flock of Christ in truth and in holiness demands of the Bishop,…, certain characteristics which include an exemplary life, the ability to enter into authentic and constructive relationships with others, an aptitude for encouraging and developing cooperation, an innate goodness and patience, an understanding of and compassion for those suffering in body and spirit, a spirit of tolerance and forgiveness. What is needed is in fact an ability to emulate as well as possible the supreme model, which is Jesus the Good Shepherd.\textsuperscript{262}

In exercising his enormous pastoral duties, the bishop must never forget that he acts in the name of Christ, who he should strive to imitate. Therefore, his proper, ordinary and immediate powers should be regulated by the supreme authority of the Church and according to the most supreme norm, the salvation of souls (\textit{salus animarum}). Every aspect of his ministry should be

\textsuperscript{260} Congregation for Bishops, \textit{Apostolorum Successores}, §41.
\textsuperscript{261} Ibid., §60.
\textsuperscript{262} John Paul II, \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §43.
guided by this, be it catechesis, defence of the unity of faith, support for the poor, suffering or persecuted or every other activity aimed at the increase of faith and the truth in fullness.\textsuperscript{263} His style and approach to his pastoral duty, as one who serves, should make it easy for the flock to identify Christ in him, just as the sheep know and follow their true shepherd. The bishop must understand that the pastoral effectiveness of the exercise of his power of governance rests on a moral authority bestowed by his life of holiness, which easily disposes hearts to accept the Gospel that he proclaims, as well as the rules, which he lays down for the good of the People of God.\textsuperscript{264}

As the vicar of the Good Shepherd, who goes out in search of the weak and strayed, the diocesan bishop has the duty to show special concern for poorer parishes and communities (and those ministers who work there), ensuring that all within his capacity, materially and pastorally, is done to give them a sense of belonging to the one united Body of Christ, the \textit{communio ecclesiae}, and that the work of the mission does not suffer because of their peculiar situation. If necessary, this may necessitate “twining or pairing” parishes/institutions, between those with greater financial or spiritual resources and those with greater needs, or setting apart a portion of diocesan resources for the benefit of these communities. It is very pathetic that many poor and rural communities in Africa are left to fend for themselves while more pastoral attention is paid to urban parishes, as though they are not part of the Church. It becomes clear then that a diocese or its bishop cannot be said to be carrying out its mandate well when its constituent parts, parishes or people, are unevenly catered for since no diocese can truly exist without them. Each parish must be seen as constitutive of what makes up the diocese, and should be supported and assisted, when need be, to attain its fullest potentials as a community of God’s People within a particular church. As the most basic unit of a diocese, the life of the parish must be preeminent in the mind of the diocesan bishop, as every other diocesan organ or community takes its existence from and revolves around it.

\textsuperscript{263} \textit{Lumen Gentium}, §23.  
\textsuperscript{264} John Paul II, \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §43.
4.2.2. The Pastoral Visit as an integral aspect of the Bishop’s Pastoral Ministry.

Due to the centrality of the parish in the life of the diocese and in the spirit of the shepherd who goes in search of his sheep, wherever they are, the bishop must take to heart the need and impact of his pastoral visit to his flock. Against some practices, this should not be selectively done or only upon invitation or a situation where more financially buoyant parishes have more advantaged and privileged access to the bishop. It should never be misconstrued to be a time to appreciate the bishop for his works but as an integral aspect of his ministry as a shepherd reaching out to his flock, to encourage, nourish, nurture, heal, cater and bandage them, and in some cases to search out for the ‘lost’ and bring them back to the fold. As such, it should be a part of the bishop’s pastoral plan annually or periodically to undertake this apostolate of love and duty. Since the bishop has direct powers over all the flock entrusted to his care as its shepherd, yet he does not actually get to meet them all on personal basis, this becomes the opportune moment of closer encounter with his people, and like Jesus, to bring good news to the poor, freedom to those in bondage of any kind, especially sacramentally, and proclaim a jubilee of the Lord for them.

As much as possible, the shepherd should not be in a haste to return to his “Bishop’s Court” except for good reasons, but he is to take time to be with, visit and listen to his flock. Not only does this encourage their faith but also helps the bishop in understanding their concerns, yearnings and faith (sensus fidelium) through which God also speaks to him. This is an authentic time of grace and a special or unique moment for encounter and dialogue between the bishop and the faithful, quasi anima episcopalis regiminis, an extension of the spiritual presence of the bishop among his people; a sign of the presence of the Lord who visits his people in peace.\footnote{Ibid., §46.} According to John Paul II, the bishop should delegate to others the study of administrative questions and give first place to personal meetings with the parish priest, the other priests and the faithful (especially the poor, the elderly and the infirm), just like the Apostles chose deacons to attend to other matters while they served the table of the word (Acts 6:1-6). This is the time when he is closest to his
people in carrying out the ministry of the word, of sanctification and pastoral leadership, and most
directly encounters their anxieties, cares, joys and expectations, and is able to address or give them
hope.266

4.3. The Bishop’s Fraternity with Priests and Religious and their Formation.

The bishop has the responsibility to care for the needs of his flock (spiritual and material)
and especially those of his priests, his collaborators and shepherds of the flock in the diocese on
his behalf, showing them fatherly concern and affection. He is the father of the priestly family and
through him Christ is present among the faithful. Therefore just as Christ manifested his love for
the Apostles, he should show particular love and solicitude for priests and candidates for the
sacred ministry.267 Guided by sincere and unwavering charity, he should conscientiously assist his
priests in every way, so that they come to appreciate the sublime priestly vocation, live it with
serenity and defend it with vigour, radiant with joy as they faithfully carry out their duties so as not
to be lured into doing things unbecoming of them as a means of livelihood and survival.268

Together with his priests the bishop forms a presbyterium in service to the People of God
in his diocese. While he is the chief shepherd of the diocese, he is not the only shepherd, for every
particular church is a community of Christ’s faithful entrusted to the pastoral care of a bishop cum
cooperatione presbyterii. This flows from is a communio sacramentalis that exists between the
bishop and his presbyters by virtue of the ministerial or hierarchical priesthood, which is a
participation in the one priesthood of Christ, though in a different degree, in virtue of the one
ordained ministry and apostolic mission.269 Due to this special relationship between the bishop and
his priests, he should always relate with them as a father, brother and friend, who loves, welcomes,
corrects, supports and listens to them, and seeks their cooperation. As much as possible, he should

266 Ibid., 46.
267 Cf. Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum Successores, §75; Second Vatican Council, Decree on the
Ministry and Life of Priests Presbyterorum Ordinis (7 December 1975), §7; Code of Canon Law, c. 384.
268 Cf. Christus Dominus, §28; Presbyterorum Ordinis, §10; Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum
Successores, §80.
269 Lumen Gentium, §§22, 28; Christus Dominus, §11; John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §47.
be concerned about their human, spiritual, ministerial and financial needs, affectionately accompanying them as a father and brother in the different stages of their ministry, starting with their first pastoral assignment. This is important as many priests, especially those who work in difficult places in Africa, complain over the gap between what they experience and the pastoral solicitude expected from the bishop. We recommend that in entrusting priests with pastoral responsibilities, the bishop should ensure that he is guided by pastoral charity, both for the priests and the flock, and not any kind of vendetta or favouritism. He should prove himself a good father who is ready to accompany his sons in their pastoral life, no matter the situation. He has, therefore, the duty of providing appropriate support to encourage them to be faithful to their vocation, and to carry out their pastoral ministry in the world according to the mind of Christ and the Church.

To this end, nothing should be spared towards the on-going, continuous and permanent formation of priests in the different aspects of their vocation, aimed at helping them live more in imitation of Christ, the ideal high priest. The spiritual wellbeing of priests should be primary in the priorities of the bishop as a spiritually healthy presbyterium, no doubt, puts the diocese on the path of fulfilling the mission of Christ. Though priests are prone to mistakes, they remain sons/brothers to the bishop, to whom they pledged ‘filial respect and obedience’ at ordination by placing their hands into his (or those of his predecessors). He, therefore, has the obligation of looking after them always with filial closeness and correcting with a father’s love. He should relate to his priests not merely as a ruler towards his subjects, but rather as a father and a friend, devoting himself wholeheartedly to creating an atmosphere of affection, trust and generosity so that priests convincingly obey him as collaborators and not slaves. This is a major problem in Africa where respect for elders and those in authority may be easily misunderstood to be one sided, but a bishop, who is a true father and a Servant-Leader, knows that obedience is strengthened, rather than weakened, if he learns to carry his priests along in his decisions and, in times of misunderstanding, gives room for responsible, active and creative opinions, without prejudice to justice and charity.

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A bishop should endeavour to be paternally and personally acquainted with his priests as individuals as to know their characters, needs, interests and even families, especially doing his pastoral visits, in order to help them in their work and encourage trust, openness, unity and respect among them. This is particularly crucial in Africa where community life is centred on family ties, and a bishop that neglects this father-son relationship cannot truly build up a united diocese. He is not only to respect them but should also encourage others to do the same and defend them against unjust criticism, amicably resolving controversies around their pastoral ministry.\textsuperscript{272} In cases of grave lapses and crimes involving priests, the bishop must be firm, decisive, just and impartial. He is bound to intervene in a timely manner, according to the canonical norms (and civil laws), for the correction and spiritual good of the priest, reparation of scandal (where possible) and restoration of justice, and the protection and assistance of victims.\textsuperscript{273} This will create unity of will and purpose between the bishop and his priests, make the priestly ministry more fruitful, and unite priests more closely with Christ, who continues to invisibly lead his Church through the visible hierarchy.\textsuperscript{274}

Furthermore, the bishop should play his fatherly role when priests are in great difficulties due to the nature or place of pastoral assignment, health challenges, disability, age or moments of vocation crisis. Not only should he appreciate them for sharing in the ministry entrusted to him and encourage them to collaborate with him for the task ahead, he needs also to provide a guarantee over some of their fears for the future. Though priests, in fact, labour for the Lord and shouldn’t necessarily expect material reward, the bishop who governs in the name of Christ, has the duty to provide whatever is necessary and possible for the growth of the ministry. While it cannot be generalised because it already exists in some places, the canonical and conciliar recommendations that special funds be established for the social security of priests seem greatly non-existent in many places, especially in countries and regions where there are no civil requirements/provisions for healthcare and social security.

\textsuperscript{272} Cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 396; Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum Successores, §77; John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §46.
\textsuperscript{273} John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §21.
\textsuperscript{274} Cf. Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum Successores, §76; Presbyterorum Ordinis, §§14-15.
A bishop with the heart of the shepherd, who loves the Church, takes special interest in the formation of the candidates for the priesthood, in the seminaries and houses of formation, and in promoting and encouraging vocations in general, knowing that a well formed candidate will make a good priest or religious, lovingly offering himself to Christ and the Church. The formation programme should be adapted to local contexts such that it enables them to respond adequately to the realities of the people.  

This is an area African bishops must pay attention, to see that the people’s experience is integrated into the formation of future priests and that the seminaries are well funded. As a father, the bishop should know and have a personal relationship with his seminarians, support them financially, accompany them with prayers, visit them occasionally in the seminary, and create an enabling environment for the support and increase of vocations. It is not a good sign that many seminarians remain scared of their bishop until ordination, for fear of being expelled. Contrary to this, the bishop should be friendly with his future priests and through direct contacts with them ensure that the seminaries form mature and balanced personalities, with good human and pastoral relationships, theological-spiritual formation, and love for the Church.

To help achieve this, we recommend that those sent to help in seminary formation should be carefully selected and renowned for their expert knowledge of the teachings of the Church, qualifications, unflinching love of the Church and moral integrity, and not those who constitute great problems to the bishop within the diocese. So the bishop is to responsibly ensure, upon careful inquiry, adequate consultations, recommendations and canonical provisions that only suitable candidates are admitted into the presbyterium of his diocese. Just as he has the obligation of promoting vocation to the priesthood, he also must be interested in encouraging other pastoral collaborators as a father, like the permanent deacons and religious/consecrated men and women in his diocese, especially in their training, foundation, welfare and support for their ministry, according to the provisions of canon law, diocesan statutes and/or their Constitutions.

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275 Shorter, The Church in the African City, 145-146.
277 A similar process should be followed if he is to receive into his diocese (incardinate) candidates coming from another diocese, religious institute or society of apostolic life. Cf. Code of Canon Law, c. 1051.
4.4. The Bishop as Servant of the Laity.

Since the lay faithful constitutes a greater majority of the People of God, it is incumbent on the bishop to share in their hopes, joys, fears and aspirations in the midst of their struggles in the society, in relation to their spiritual life and the uniquely secular nature of their vocation. As a father and shepherd, they need his guidance, support, encouragement, help and prayers. Depending on circumstances, different programmes suited to their needs and situations should be put in place to bring them in contact with their chief shepherd (on the diocesan, regional or parochial levels) and as much as possible, they should be encouraged and given opportunities to take part in the diocesan life. From the administrative to the pastoral, catechetical, educational and sacramental life of the diocese, ecclesiastical structures should be patterned in a way that gives them a sense of belonging and responsibility to utilise their God-given charisms, expertise and professional knowledge, as members of Christ’s faithful. Their right of participation and cooperation in diocesan administration comes from their equal baptismal dignity, to join in fulfilling the mission that God gave the Church in the world, exercised in communion according to canonical provisions.\(^{278}\) This requires that they should be adequately educated on the teachings of the Church, and encouraged to allow their faith to manifest also in their secular and public life, especially those in politics and professional careers. There are many instances of members of the Church being involved in questionable conducts in the public space, which raise the question of adequate education and how far the message of the Gospel is affecting the life of the faithful.

If the faithful are encouraged to let their faith influence their work, the Christian message and values will permeate the fabrics of society, from the family, the workplace, the mass media, sports and leisure, and the entire public life, and so help evangelise the society. The bishop should show paternal affection and support in helping them to see their work as part of their Christian vocation, especially those who work in highly controversial circles, more exposed to the conflict between faith and public opinion, civil and moral laws, assuring them of the support and prayers of

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\(^{278}\) Congregation for Bishops, *Apostolorum Successores*, §165.
their fellow Christians. In this regard, he, or his representative, should be interested in different lay apostolat groups and new ecclesial movements with different spiritualties in his diocese, exercising pastoral vigilance over them as a shepherd, to discern how they can positively contribute towards the theological, spiritual and pastoral development of the diocese. From among the laity who live out the Christian life daily in the world, supported and guided by the clergy, the bishop should encourage professionally trained and experienced Christians to help in resolving pastoral issues bordering on family life, marriage, economy, politics, education, church-state relationship, those bordering on special groups like the youth, women, the poor, aged, immigrants, those with special needs and other controversial social issues, by offering their advice.

There is the need to let the experience or history of a people to determine the model of Church lived out, inspired and illuminated by the Gospel values and the teachings of the Church. As such, the bishop needs to be intimately in touch with the needs, aspirations and fears of the people he leads, ready to be led and be the follower for a moment, to listen than to speak, to learn than to teach, so that when he speaks or teaches, he does so for the good of his flock aware of the ‘true smell of the sheep;’ “for bishops ought not only to teach, but also to learn because he who grows daily and profits by learning better things teaches better.”279 He must understand that he is not only the father of the diocese but also a brother in Christ, a member and servant of the Christian faithful, who should observe the same rule applicable to his followers who also want to be heard or carried along. Knowing the diaconal nature of his duty, he should avoid authoritarianism or segregation in the exercise of power and seek the cooperation and counsel of the faithful, through the channels and structures established by canonical discipline.280 This encourages them to play their right role in the ecclesial community (either pastorally or

279 St. Cyprian of Carthage, Letter 74, 10, in Cunningham, The Bishop in the Church, 36.
280 Congregation for Bishops, Apostolorum Successores, §66.
administratively), in the evangelisation of culture, the promotion of a just social order, in politics and responsible citizenship, guided by Catholic principles.\textsuperscript{281}

4.5. The Bishop as the Mouthpiece of the Church: Solidarity with the Poor and Vulnerable.

The bishop, in imitation of Christ who came to gladden the poor and work for their liberation (Lk. 4:18) must identify with the plight of those under his care, bearing in mind that he is called not only to lead them but also to serve them. In order to achieve this creditably, he should strive like a shepherd to identify with his flock, especially the poor, in being their voice in the public space. This is a big challenge to any bishop in Africa, where many people live in very poor situations. As a good shepherd and Servant-Leader, the bishop should lead by example especially in matters of the things of this world, setting himself spiritually free to seek the salvation of his flock with his time, talent and treasures, and not to amass wealth for the sake of status, privilege, addiction, security or attachment. Instead, material possessions should be acquired, possessed, used/administered and alienated to help him serve the people better as a means to an end. It should be clear that the sheep exist not for the benefit or use of the shepherd but vice versa.

He must be poor himself in imitation of the beatitudes as an indispensable condition for authentic evangelical witness and for a fruitful episcopal ministry, like Christ who became poor for the sake of the flock. In a world where the poor suffer rejection, hunger, inequality, oppression and neglect either because of socio-economic conditions in the third world countries, or individualism and consumerism in the first world countries, the bishop’s voice must stand out as the voice of the voiceless, in a preferential option for the poor. In the African continent, where governments have failed to provide for the people’s needs, and have even tried to corrupt religious leaders, a bishop must live by example. Any bishop who wants to truly witness to the Gospel must strip himself of all signs of extravagance, live in simple, generous and fraternal solidarity with the struggles of the poor and trust in God’s providence, knowing that he is called to lead, nourish and build the hope of

\textsuperscript{281} Ibid., §§110, 111.
the people by sharing in their problems. In pastoral charity, simplicity and accountability as a trustworthy procurator or steward, he should administer the goods of the Church like the good head of a household, ensuring that they are used for the Church’s specific ends: divine worship, the support of her ministers, the works of the apostolate and charity towards the poor.282

4.6. The Bishop and Professional Catholic and non-Catholic Bodies.

In today’s globalised world with many challenges, it is becoming clearer that no one can live without the cooperation of others. This is even more the case in the Church where community and collaboration are key concepts, since we are all called as parts of a united body to renew the world. A bishop, acknowledging the limitations of his training and experience, should warmly reach out to those with the required expertise to help him in achieving the mission of the Church. These include politicians, lawyers, doctors/nurses, media practitioners, industrialist, educators, businessmen/women, artists, peace promoters, those who work in the financial sector, et cetera. He should also ensure that their faith influence their work, as it should not be the case that Catholics in different fields of life work as though their faith and work ethics are unconnected, and while claiming to still profess the faith they work against Church teachings. Not only should they be knowledgeable about Catholic social teachings but they should also be consulted in matters where they have expertise, especially when it is required of the Church to take a position.

The bishop should establish a cordial relationship with these and others so that they can contribute meaningfully to the growth of the society guided by their faith. Without waiting for when they are already successful or prominent, efforts should be made to get in touch with them even at the beginning of their career, for in this way it is easier to make known, through them, the message of the gospel. Without limiting himself to Catholics alone, the bishop should also reach

282 What readily come to mind here is the Cathedraticum – a form of tax paid to support the bishop and diocesan finance, and how these are administered. While this may not apply in all places, it is a common practice in Africa where the laity bring material gifts to the bishop, usually around Chrism Mass/Holy Week, as a way of paying allegiance to their bishop to support his ministry, but unfortunately the monetary benefits appear unaccounted for yearly as some bishops see it as their private money. Cf. John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §20.
out to other groups outside the Church, who work towards the common good of the society, promoting justice and peace, human dignity and welfare.

4.7. The Diocesan Curia at the Heart of the Bishop’s Ministry.

To understand the pastoral direction and leadership style of any bishop, one only needs to look at his Curia. Following canonical provisions, the Diocesan Curia could be described as the administrative structure of the bishop in exercising his episcopal ministry with pastoral charity, in its different aspects as it serves to carry out the pastoral directions of the bishop. It “consists of those institutions and persons which assist the bishop in the governance of the whole diocese, especially in guiding pastoral action, in caring for the administration of the diocese and in exercising judicial power.”

Though made up of many organs, great attention must be paid to the need to appoint or entrust the different functions of the Curia to competent, qualified, well trained and honest personnel who have the love of the Church and the care of souls at heart. There should be a clear sense of purpose/direction, a right recruitment or selection process for collaborators who will help drive his vision with the right training, disposition, empowerment, exercise of power and openness to new ideas or criticisms. This is important because the bishop’s leadership style and how it is perceived can affect followership and the level of loyalty, trust and even productivity. While character, financial transparency and accountability in general should be maintained by the bishop, he must also hold his collaborators accountable, making clear their boundaries and expectations and avoiding mediocrity, incompetence and self-serving tendencies.

This is a far cry from what attains in many dioceses where unqualified persons handle curial matters. In Africa, this could be due to lack of professionally trained personnel or the unwillingness of the bishop to do so. We recommend that for those who work in the chanceries, tribunal offices, finance committees or different pastoral-liturgical committees, it must be ensured

283 Code of Canon Law, c. 469.
that the highest ideals are maintained, not only to make clear the mission of the diocesan bishop, but also to set standard examples for every other ecclesiastical institution. In assigning offices, the bishop should act discretely and prudently, so as to avoid even the slightest suspicion of arbitrariness, favouritism or undue pressure. To this end, he should always seek the opinion of prudent persons in determining the suitability of candidates, even by means of an examination, without prejudice to the hierarchical structure and the communion within the Church.²⁸⁵

4.8. The Bishop and his Relationship with his Brother-Bishops, Metropolitan and the Episcopal Conference.

The Second Vatican Council teaches that as successors of the Apostles, diocesan bishops possess all ordinary, proper and immediate power needed for the exercise of their pastoral office, with no prejudice to the power reserved to the Roman Pontiff or some other authority.²⁸⁶ However, they must realise their limitations either due to lack of material or human resources and reach out to others in better situations. This should not be misconstrued as a sign of weakness or incapability but as an expression of collegiality and solicitude, a loving concern of a shepherd, conscious of his personal pastoral responsibility for the good of the flock. Instead of becoming so enmeshed in his ‘personal’ diocesan problems to the detriment of his flock, a bishop should reach out to other bishops and theological experts within the region, province or Episcopal Conference on such matters. It could relate to issues of diocesan governance, pastoral initiatives, doctrinal matters, discipline of sacraments, exchange of pastoral workers/personnel or expertise, challenging socio-political, cultural, economic or environmental issues, and where necessary material support. In this way, a bishop simultaneously fulfils his pastoral responsibility for his particular church, sister churches and the universal Church. It accords with the admonition of the 2001 Synod of Bishops that living in episcopal communion, individual bishops should see as their own the difficulties and sufferings of their brother bishops and to reinforce and strengthen this communion, individual

²⁸⁵ Cf. Code of Canon Law, cc. 149§§1-2, 521§3; John Paul II, Novo Millennio Ineunte, §45.
²⁸⁶ Christus Dominus, §8.
bishops and Episcopal Conferences should carefully consider the means that their own churches have for helping their poorer counterparts, the strong supporting the weak for the good of the one Family of God.\textsuperscript{287}

Without prejudice to the powers of the diocesan bishop, in cases where it is truly evident he is not fulfilling his ministry as it should be, the Metropolitan, an instrument and sign both of fraternity between the bishops of the Province and of their communion with the Roman Pontiff,\textsuperscript{288} must take up his role to strengthen his brother, knowing that any harm done to a part of the Church affects all. Beyond him, the role of the episcopal conference must be seen, not just as an aggregate of bishops with similar interests, a ‘big boys’ kind of club or a gathering of leaders disconnected from the realities of their followers, but as a college of shepherds interested in the general wellbeing of their flock. It should be a rallying point for bishops of a country or territory to exchange views, consult among themselves, cooperate, share wise counsels and experiences for the unity and good of the Church (and the bishops themselves), the spread of the Gospel, the effective governance of the Church, and the coordination of the Church’s position on socio-political issues. Though the Second Vatican Council and Canon Law affirmed the influence and powers of the conference, there are criticisms about excessive Roman Curial control, as John Paul II’s 1988 motu proprio \textit{Apostolos Suos} limited its power over doctrinal matters on only those with unanimous agreement and subsequent approval from Rome.\textsuperscript{289}

However, the conference should never substitute for the role of individual bishops, given by divine law, in the Lord’s name, to shepherd the flock entrusted to them as pastors, but be at their service as auxiliary in carrying out their work. Unlike the collegiality that flows from his membership of the College of Bishops, in the individual bishop’s relations with the conference, his

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  \item \textsuperscript{287} Cf. John Paul II, \textit{Pastores Gregis}, §59. A good example of collaboration among bishops, even with Episcopal Conferences outside their territory, can be seen in the way the US bishops try to relate with other Conferences, supporting their apostolate. See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, \textit{A Call to Solidarity with Africa} (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2001).
  \item \textsuperscript{288} \textit{Code of Canon Law}, c. 437§1.
  \item \textsuperscript{289} See Richard R. Gaillardetz, \textit{Ecclesiology for a Global Church: A People Called and Sent} (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2008), 264.
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acts are strictly personal, not collegial, albeit prompted by a spirit of communion, since he does not jointly exercise his pastoral care through collegial acts comparable to those of the College, which as a theological subject is indivisible. This is because “the bishops of the same Episcopal Conference, assembled at their meetings, exercise jointly, for the good of their faithful and within the limits of the areas of competence granted them by law or by mandate of the Apostolic See, only some of the functions deriving from their pastoral ministry (munus pastorale).”

This raises the question on the proper understanding of the nature, organisation, context, power and limits of Episcopal Conferences and how they should help an individual bishop to fulfil his pastoral ministry effectively. We suggest that its different commissions and offices should be structured to readily be of assistance to individual member-bishops in the discharge of their ministry in their dioceses and promote collegial unity, solidarity and communion among them and their different dioceses, in the pursuit of a greater pastoral good. On the other hand, all kinds of excessively bureaucratic procedures should be minimised since it exists to help individual bishops, and not to substitute for or act as an intermediary between them and the Apostolic See.


While it is true that in order to express fully the catholicity of his office and that of his diocese, the bishop must exercise his proper power of governance (munus regendi) in hierarchical communion with the Roman Pontiff and with the College of Bishops, the Pope as Head of the College, in the exercise of his ministry as the Supreme Pastor of the Church, must also always acts in communion with all the other bishops. As such, each bishop simultaneously has a relationship with his particular church/diocese and with the universal Church, being the visible principle and foundation of unity in his own particular church and also the visible bond of communion between it and the universal Church. In relation to the proper governance of his diocese, he maintains a

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290 John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §63.
291 Cf. Ibid., §65; Code of Canon Law, c. 333§2.
292 Lumen Gentium, §21.
unity in diversity, a kind of ‘perichoresis’ between his particular church and other churches and with the universal Church. While maintaining his church’s particularity, blessing, charism or challenges, they are meant not to harm the unity of the entire Church but to serve and preserve it.²⁹³ This communion/collegiality with other bishops and with the Chair of Peter is best seen in the bishop’s quinquennial (five yearly) report on the state of his diocese during the visit ad Limina Apostolorum (ad limina visit). It usually has three principal events, each with its deep and proper meaning, namely the pilgrimage to the tombs of the Princes of the Apostles and their veneration, the meeting with the Supreme Pontiff, and the meetings with the dicasteries of the Roman Curia.²⁹⁴

Therefore the bishop as such, or through the Episcopal Conferences, should relate with the Holy See (the Pope and the Roman Curia) in the spirit of collaboration as fellow workers in the Church, with proper pastoral representation of the needs of his flock, without prejudice to the needs of other churches. This will not only keep the respective offices of the Roman Curia informed of his particular needs amidst universal needs, but also help him share in the knowledge of how other churches in similar conditions had handled or are handling them. Following Vatican II’s communion ecclesiology, the relationship between the bishop and the Church's supreme authority should be governed by the principles of complementarity, cooperation, mutual help and subsidiarity,²⁹⁵ in which case the competence of individual bishops should be respected. This will engender decentralisation without prejudice to the fact that a constitutive principle for the exercise of episcopal authority is the hierarchical communion of the individual bishops with the Roman Pontiff and the College of Bishops.²⁹⁶ This is specifically noteworthy for African bishops who still relate with Rome out of fear, always as recipients of orders, at the detriment of their dioceses.

²⁹³ John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §56.
²⁹⁴ Ibid., §57.
²⁹⁵ This principle was popularised by Pope Pius XI with reference to civil society in his Encyclical Letter Quadragesimo Anno (15 May 1931). In relation to the theology of the episcopate and the communion ecclesiology of Vatican II, one can talk of collegiality, reciprocity, cooperation and mutual help between the bishop and the Roman Curia, just as that which exists between the many parts of the one body of Christ.
²⁹⁶ John Paul II, Pastores Gregis, §56.
It should be pointed out that collegiality does not weaken papal primacy but shows the universal pastoral responsibility of the Church as *communio ecclesiarum* represented by its bishops fraternally united in a college, since primacy is made powerful not by a weak but strong episcopate.\(^{297}\) Instead of governing the diocese as though vicars or representatives of the Pope – they are vicars of Christ – the diocesan bishop should act as one fully knowledgeable of the ways of independently exercising his canonically guaranteed/protected ‘ordinary, proper and immediate powers’ needed to fully carry out his pastoral ministry as a shepherd. However to fully balance the concept of the bishop independently exercising his powers, it should be noted that in the spirit of the unity of the Church and the episcopate itself, these powers must coexist with the supreme power of the Roman Pontiff, which is itself episcopal, ordinary and immediate over all the individual churches and their groupings, including all the pastors and faithful.\(^{298}\)

### 4.10. Conclusion.

Having seen the development and theology of the episcopate and how the concept of Servant-Leadership, modelled after Jesus Christ and recommended by many Church documents can help bishops live out faithfully their pastoral ministry, it is the opinion of this thesis that bishops are indeed called to serve the Church, in union with their priests as in a college and in consultation with the laity. We affirm the powers of the bishop, divinely given and canonically recognised, for the fruitful exercise of his ministry as the chief pastor of his diocese but insist that power, rightly misunderstood as an evangelical necessity, should be used for humble service to the whole Christ, in the spirit of Christ who came to serve and not be served. It is given only in view of its functional necessity in the Church. In this way, the bishop truly becomes the servant of his flock recognising the need for mutual understanding, respect, collaboration and indeed collegiality among the People of God. This will truly make the Church the People of God, a family, an organic whole, the Body of Christ, where every part is functional, accepted, acknowledged and given the

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\(^{297}\) Buckley, *Papal Primacy and the Episcopate: Towards a Relational Understanding*, 80, 94-95.

\(^{298}\) *Code of Canon Law*, cc. 381§1, 331, 333; *Lumen Gentium*, §22; John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis*, §56.
opportunity to exercise its charism for the good of the whole Church. It could then be said that the fruitfulness and quality of a bishop’s leadership is seen in the aggregate of people in his diocese, clergy and laity alike, for his fulfilment should come from the quality of service to his people.

Considering the peculiar nature of the African experience, the bishop is called to be a true father, in solidarity with his flock in their experiences, and never without them. In a continent with leadership crisis, he is called to be a Servant-Leader, in imitation of Christ, who in service and simplicity proved his leadership. This is what the Church needs today, a bishop who serves as to lead. As a true shepherd, he should make himself readily available to the faithful, removing all unnecessary protocols before they can see him, to reflect that his office is one of service. As much as possible, he should endeavour to know his flock and make himself known by them and in the case of larger dioceses, adopt a structure that brings him closer to the people, directly or through his representatives, without signs of hierarchical triumphalism. In all his dealings, he should give a human face to the way issues are addressed.\textsuperscript{299} He must see himself not only as a leader but also a fellow member of the Church, not above it, for only so can he truly represent them as their shepherd, ready to share in their joys and sorrows and to listen to them in pastoral solicitude. This makes him a Servant-Leader of a humble and compassionate Church, who speaks the language of the poor and journeys with them in their search for salvation, a sign for the world of what true leadership is. While he may not have the answer to all their problems, like Jesus his presence and solidarity are assurances of God’s presence among them and a prophetic witness of his spiritual bond with them, as people are more inclined to listen to those who lead by example than teachers – they listen to teachers if they are witnesses.\textsuperscript{300}

\textsuperscript{299} I have been influenced here by the insight of Edward Schillebeeckx, \textit{The Church with a Human Face: A New and Expanded Theology of Ministry} (New York: Crossroad, 1985).

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