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PREFACE TO THE PASTORAL GUIDELINES FROM THE GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS’ CONFERENCE IN THE WAKE OF THE 2014 SECOND NATIONAL PASTORAL CONGRESS HELD IN SUNYANI: 5-12 AUGUST 2014

*Beloved in Christ*,

As we stepped into the New Year 2015, Ghanaians flocked in their numbers into their various places of worship to thank the Lord for all the good things they had received in the past year and to ask for blessings upon the new one.

The Catholic Church in Ghana, as she counts her blessings of the past year, cannot overlook the grace of holding a very successful Second National Pastoral Congress in Sunyani in the month of August on the theme: *The New Evangelisation for the Transmission of the Christian Faith in Ghana in the Light of Africae Munus.*

Participants at that Congress will certainly recall the emphasis placed on the need to follow up with the implementation, in all the Archdioceses and Dioceses of Ghana, of the outcome, to be based on the Pastoral Guidelines that would be issued by the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference.

To this end, the National Planning Committee of the Congress submitted to the Bishops at their Annual Plenary Assembly held in Accra in November 2014 the *Acts of the Second National Pastoral Congress*, a full record of the proceedings at the Congress for their attention and action.

I now have the pleasure to present to you the following Pastoral Guidelines from your Bishops to be assiduously followed during a period of three years, that is to say 2015-2017 after which, in fulfilment of the desires expressed at the Congress for a more frequent pastoral exercise of the kind which took place at Sunyani, another gathering of the Church in Ghana should profitably consider how best to proceed.

Furthermore, the Bishops have tasked the aforesaid Planning Committee to serve as the *National Implementation Committee* of these Pastoral Guidelines in order to co-ordinate at the national level, through the Office of the Department of Pastoral Ministry and Evangelization, the efforts of the various ecclesiastical circumscriptions geared at implementing the same Pastoral Guidelines. We urge all and sundry to make themselves available, if and when approached by the National Implementation Committee, to collaborate towards achieving the national goal of bringing the benefits of the Second National Pastoral Congress to the doorsteps of the Christian Lay Faithful.

May the Lord, who has entrusted to us the noble mission of proclaiming the Good News, accompany our every effort to bring the unchanging message of the Gospel to the men and women of today in a language and manner that they can understand.

Given at the National Catholic Secretariat on this 12th day of January, 2015.

**SIGNED:**

**MOST REV. JOSEPH OSEI-BONSU,**

**BISHOP OF KONONGO-MAMPONG AND**

**PRESIDENT OF THE GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS’ CONFERENCE.**

**FOREWORD**

The Church in Africa and Madagascar has been blessed by two very significant events in her recent past, namely, the First Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Africa, held in Rome in the Spring of 1994 under the theme:*“The Church in Africa and her Evangelising Mission towards the Year 2000:You shall be my Witnesses(*Acts 1:8*)”*, and the Second Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Africa held in Rome in October 2009 under the theme, *“The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You are the salt of the earth…you are the light of the world”* (Mt. 5:13-14).

At the close of the First Synod in 1994, Pope St. John Paul II issued the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Ecclesia in Africa* (The Church in Africa). In this document, he presented the fruits of the Assembly to the Church in Africa, Madagascar and the adjacent Islands, and invited the African Church to make a firm commitment to the implementation of the decisions and orientations contained in the document (*EA 141*).

The response of the Church in Ghana to the invitation of the Holy Father was to convoke the First National Catholic Pastoral Congress from the 7th to the 14th of April, 1997 in Cape Coast to study, discuss and formulate guidelines for the fruitful implementation of the decisions and orientations in the Apostolic Exhortation.

Similarly, at the close of the *Second Synod of Africa* in 2009, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI presented the fruits and the outcome of the Synod in the post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *AfricaeMunus* (*Africa’s Commitment*) in Ouidah, Benin, in 2011, inviting the Church in Africa to rise up to the challenge to become the *“spiritual lungs of humanity and daily an ever greater blessing for the noble African continent and for the entire world” (AM 177)*. As happened with the First African Synod, the Church in Ghana decided to organize, once again, a National Pastoral Congress to make the contents of *Africae Munus* her own. Thus, the decision to convoke the Second National Pastoral Congress was taken by the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference at its 2012 Annual Plenary Assembly in Koforidua. This was not only because it was 17 years since the *First National Pastoral Congress* of the Catholic Church in Ghana was held but also and more importantly because it was the desire of the Church to benefit abundantly from the fruits of the Second Synod of Africa and the contents of its document, *Africae Munus*.

The Second National Pastoral Congress, which took place in Sunyani from the 5th to the 11th of August 2014, was held under the theme, *“The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith in Ghana in the Light of Africae Munus”.* A total of 270 delegates drawn from all arch/dioceses of Ghana including arch/bishops, experts, diocesan delegates chosen from priests, religious men and women, the laity and youth, representatives of groups, societies and associations within the Church as well as participant observers took an active part in all the deliberations of the Congress.

The Keynote Address on the main theme *“The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith in Ghana in the Light of Africae Munus”* was delivered by His Eminence Peter Cardinal Appiah Turkson. This was followed by six major presentations, namely, *“The New Evangelization and Good Governance: The Ghanaian Context,” “Strategies for Resource Mobilisation and Self-Reliance”, “The New Evangelization and the Liturgy in the Ghanaian Context”, “The New Evangelization and the Family in the Ghanaian Context”, “The New Evangelization and Social Communication in the Ghanaian Context” and “The New Evangelization and Inter-Religious Dialogue in the Ghanaian Context”.*

Additionally, there were six interventions on the themes*, “Peace-building and National Reconciliation”, “Small Christian Communities, Biblical Apostolate and the New Evangelization”, “The New Evangelization and Ghana’s Religions Population Dynamics”, “The New Evangelization and Role of Pastoral Agents”* and *“The New Evangelization and School Apostolate in Ghana”.*

All the presentations, reports and recommendations made at the Congress have been synthesised into one Report, which have formed the basis for these *Pastoral Guidelines* which are being presented here for implementation in all Dioceses and Archdioceses of the Church in Ghana.

It is my hope and prayer that the application of these *Pastoral Guidelines* will help the Church in Ghana in her quest to pursue the mission of the *New Evangelization* and thereby contribute in helping the Church in Africa to become truly the *“spiritual lungs of the African continent and daily greater blessing of humanity”.*

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Queen of Evangelization and the Mother of the Church, intercede for all of us.

**MOST REV. ANTHONY ADANUTY**

**BISHOP OF KETA-AKATSI & VICE PRESIDENT, GCBC**

**CHAIRMAN, PLANNING COMMITTEE, 2014 PASTORAL CONGRESS**

**PASTORAL GUIDELINES**

**ISSUED BY**

**THE GHANA CATHOLIC BISHOPS’ CONFERENCE**

**IN THE WAKE OF THE 2014 SECOND NATIONAL PASTORAL CONGRESS HELD IN SUNYANI, 5-12 AUGUST 2014**

1. **THE NEW EVANGELISATION**

**Preamble**

1. Recognising the changing cultural, social and ecclesial times, situations and conditions in Ghana, delegates of the Second National Pastoral Congress accordingly took cognisance of the urgent need to pursue a new evangelisation that requires of the Church the need to employ new and dynamic ways of spreading the Gospel message. In its commitment to the new evangelisation, the Congress proposed that the Church in Ghana should strive to engage constantly in an evangelisation that is “new in its ardour/zeal”, “new in its methods”, and “new in its expression”. In this regard, evangelisers of the “new evangelisation” must seek to complement the shepherd’s model of evangelisation which works to maintain the flock within, with the fisherman’s model that launches out consistently into the deep (cf. Lk. 5:4) to bring in others who are not yet in the fold (cf. Jn. 10:16). Accordingly, we recommend the following:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

*The New Evangelisation*

1. As disciples of Jesus Christ, we have his command to go and make diciples of all nations. There is the need to develop the awareness among the people of God that all are called, by virtue of our baptism, to preach the gospel in word and deed (Matt. 28:19-20). In this regard, we urge all Christians to work towards an authentic personal conversion. They should also re-propose the Gospel to those who are experiencing a crisis of faith and reach out to lapsed Catholics without compromise.
2. In the same vein, our catechesis should not be limited to the preparation for the sacraments. It should span the various stages of life and target the different age groups in order to help them to develop an inner conversion to God on their life’s journey. It should also be based on the Scriptures.
3. In consonance with the Church’s option for the poor, the Church in Ghana should develop and create a ministry for the physically and mentally challenged. Concretely, we recommend that we:

* Make our churches and places of worship accessible to the physically and mentally challenged.
* Make available sign language interpreters for the hearing impaired in our liturgical and para-liturgical services.

1. As a Church that opts for the poor, we strongly condemn extravagant celebrations, especially funerals, weddings, etc. In this vein, we recommend that funeral and burial ceremonies should always be performed within a short period after the demise of the person.

1. Recognising the role women played in the evangelising mission of Jesus and the early Church (cf. Jn. 20:16-18; Lk. 8:3) and, taking into account Ghana’s population dynamics, we recommend the setting up or revamping of the office for Gender and Development in our Archdioceses and diocesesto assist women to play active roles in the New Evangelisation.
2. In order to take an informed decision to respond to the problem of people leaving the Catholic Church for other Churches, we direct that a specific research be conducted at the national and local levels by experts to offer proposals for implementation.

***Agents of Evangelisation***

*Formation*

1. In all areas of Church life, formation is of primary importance. People who have never had the chance to learn cannot really know the truths of faith, nor can they perform actions which they have never been taught. For this reason “the whole community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelisation, each according to his or her specific role within the Church”. This includes bishops, priests, members of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, members of Secular Institutes, catechists and all the lay faithful (*Ecclesia in Africa, 75*).

*Clergy and religious*

1. Priests, religious and lay theologians should make available good literature on the Bible and Christian doctrine for Christian formation. Similarly, some of the important Church documents, such as the encyclicals and the social teachings of the Church, should be brought down to the understanding of the lay people. Such documents should be translated into local languages to make them available to the ordinary Christian. In this regard, the Church should bring the entire gospel mesage to the people in the language they understand.
2. Each parish should strive to draw up a pastoral plan that takes into account the archdiocesan or diocesan pastoral vision. This plan must be followed and it should be periodically evaluated. In order to know the pastoral needs of the communities, priests should draw up a situational profile of their new stations as soon as they canonically assume their office. In carrying out their pastoral duties, priests and religious are encouraged to intensify relentlessly their pastoral visits or treks to the outstations and home visitations, spending quality time with people.
3. As agents of evangelisation, clergy and religious should develop an interest in the formation and development of lay associations as a means of fostering evangelisation.
4. As the Holy Father, Pope Francis, puts it,”*The homily is the touchstone for judging a pastor’s closeness and ability to communicate to his people. The homily can actually be an intense and happy experience of the Spirit, a consoling encounter with God’s word, a constant source of renewal and growth”* (*Evangelii Gaudium* 135).

We recommend that, as agents of the Word of God, priests should always spend time to meditate on the readings to prepare effectively and deliver down-to-earth homilies that speak to the faithful.

*Catechists*

1. Given the important role they play in evangelisation, catechists should be adequately trained, well resourced and sufficiently remunerated to enable them to carry out their ministry. Making the work of the catechists attractive in this way will entice more committed and well-informed young people to make themselves available for the ministry.

*Lay faithful*

1. A structured programme of ongoing formation should be developed at the national level for the different sectors of the lay faithful. This is to help them to develop a mature spirituality and equip them for their task of evangelisation. This programme should be coordinated by the catechetical offices in the various archdioceses and dioceses.
2. For the execution of the formation programmes for the laity, the existing institutes for training and formation should be well equipped with the required material resources and well trained persons – lay and clergy. These centres should also be available for the use of the laity for their programmes at a reasonable cost. In this vein, we encourage all God’s people to make available their resources in support of the New Evangelisation.
3. As a Church, we need to be innovative in our apostolate to the different sectors of our Christian communities. We need to have a more formal way of ministering to such groups as market women, hair-dressers, dress-makers, etc. Hence we should develop and strengthen the lay groups such as the Catholic Lawyers’ Guild, Media Practitioners, Nurses’ Guilds, Medical and Dental Association, etc. These different lay groups should be given ongoing formation to enable them to carry out their task of evangelisation in their various areas of apostolate.
4. **FAMILY LIFE**

**Preamble**

1. In the words of *Africae Munus (A.M.)*, the family is the *“sanctuary of life” and a vital cell of society and of the Church. It is here that “the features of a people take shape; it is here that its members acquire basic teachings. They learn to love inasmuch as they are unconditionally loved, they learn respect for others inasmuch as they are respected, they learn to know the face of God inasmuch as they receive a first revelation of it from a father and a mother full of attention in their regard. Whenever these fundamental experiences are lacking, society as a whole suffers violence and becomes in turn the progenitor of more violence* (par. 42).

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. Given the significance of the family in our society, a well structured programme of formation like the “Pre-Cana programme”, which prepares young adults for a life-long commitment should be instituted in all archdioceses and dioceses to help to prepare young people for marriage.
2. We recommend the setting up of Family Life Offices that are well resourced to provide quality post-marriage programmes and counselling sources for couples.
3. In order to promote the sacrament of Holy Matrimony among the youth, we recommend that the collection of exhorbitant bride-prices (or bridewealth) and expensive marriage ceremonies be discouraged. Such practices scare many young men and women away from sacramental marriage.
4. Since the family is the sanctuary of life and a vital cell of society and of the Church, individual families should radiate the communion and love of the Trinity by praying unceasingly and studying the Word of God together (1 Thess. 5:117).
5. A Parish Family Catechesis should enable the various sectors of the family (grandparents, parents, children and grandchildren) to carry out their evangelising mission within the family.
6. Taking cognisance of the Church as family of God, it is recommended that groups of families living in the same vicinity should meet periodically to share the Word of God and pray together. They are further encouraged to engage in peer evangelisation.
7. **YOUTH**

**Preamble**

1. As *Ecclesia in Africa* (*E.A.*) rigthly notes, the Church in Africa knows well that youth are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development: illiteracy, idleness, hunger, drugs, among others. The pastoral care of the youthmust clearly be a part of the overall pastoral plan of dioceses and parishes, so that young people will be enabled to discover, very early, the value of the gift of self, an essential means for the person to reach maturity (93).

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. Acorrdingly, we recommend that young people themselves should be called upon to become the evangelisers of their peers. No one can do this better than they. They should gladly and readily take up leadership roles within their respective groups.
2. Given the fact that the youth form a majority of the Ghanaian population, Particular Churches should take seriously the human and Christian formation of the youth to prepare them for life in the society which is marked by many religious persuasions. In this regard, the New Integrated Catholic Youth Formation Programme (NICYFOP) should be one of the basic tools in this preparation.
3. As much as possible, priests appointed as youth chaplains should be engaged full time in youth activities to make them available to the youth. Similarly, there is the need for full time youth coordinators in our archdioceses and dioceses. These chaplains and youth coordinators should be given some form of orientation on the dynamics and leadership of the youth. Something could already be done in this regard in our seminaries.
4. All archdioceses and dioceses should endeavour to set up Youth Centres that are well resourced with Information and Communication Technology (ICT), recreational and reading facilities, etc. The youth must cultivate the habit of reading the Bible and other documents of the Church.
5. A majority of the youth are left unsupported to battle with the bitter challenges in their lives and thereby seek support elsewhere, which sometimes leads to their abandoning the Church. Counselling opportunities should therefore be provided for the youth who are facing challenges in education, marriage, drugs and other socio-psychological issues.
6. To cater for the special needs of children, it is recommended that a Children’s Ministry be set up at the archdiocesan, diocesan and parish levels, with animators who are well disposed and trained for this important ministry.
7. **LITURGY**

**Preamble**

1. The liturgy of the Catholic Church is the outstanding means by which the people of God express in their lives and manifest to others the mystery of Christ and the nature of the Church. It is the daily living of the people of God that manifests the great mystery of Christ which is the mystery of salvation. It is in this daily living that the nonbeliever may find the love which God has shown to all people, and that makes it necessary that the Church links its liturgy to the daily life of the people of God. In light of this, the following recommendations are made:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. All archdioceses and dioceses should set up and make functional a Diocesan Liturgical Commission. These commissions should ensure that those liturgical practices of other Christian Churches which do not reflect our Catholic faith do not creep into our liturgy.
2. The Catholic Church possesses so much treasure. Priests are encouraged to make use of our sacraments and sacramentals to respond to the needs of our people. This will restrain them from engaging the services of other Churches in their times of crisis.
3. We need to be conscious of the multi-ethnic character of our urban parishes and work towards the social integration of the various ethnic groups in our parishes and dioceses. In this connection, the different ethnic groups should be, as much as possible, allowed to participate fully in the liturgy in their own languages.
4. It should be kept in mind that silence, veneration and meditation within the liturgy are Catholic traditional values that need to be given due recognition and space in our liturgy.
5. All parishes of the archdioceses and dioceses are encouraged to establish a Sunday Children’s Liturgy, in the course of which priests are encouraged to give homilies tailored to the understanding of children.

**Inculturation**

1. Pope John Paul II rightly observed that a faith that does not become culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived (*E.A.* 59). In the light of this, we consider inculturation an urgent priority in the life of the particular Churches, for a firm rooting of the Gospel in Ghana. Indeed, inculturation is a requirement for evangelisation (E.A. 89), a path towards full evangelisation (cf. *AM* 36-38).
2. **SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS**

**Preamble**

1. The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation, *Africae Munus* observes that:

*It is a fact that, development in travel and communication technology are bringing us closer together and making us more connected, even as globalisation makes us increasingly interdependent. Nonetheless, divisions, which are sometimes quite deep, continue to exist within our human family. Everyone knows that the new information technologies are capable of being powerful instruments for unity and peace, but also for destruction and division. From a moral standpoint they can either be a service or a disservice, propagate truth as well as falsehood, propose what is base as well as what is beautiful. The flood of news or non-news, to say nothing of images, can be informative but also powerfully manipulative. Information can readily become disinformation, and formation, deformation. The media can be a force of authentic humanization, but just as easily prove dehumanizing* (143).

In the light of the above, we recommend the use of social communications to enhance the New Evangelisation as follows:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. We need to revive and revitalise the Department of Social Communications in all our archdioceses and dioceses and provide guidelines for a responsible use of technological tools for our ministry.
2. The Church can help in the formation of media personnel to instil in them good ethical practices. In this regard, the Catholic University College of Ghana, Fiapre, should consider the introduction of a course in Journalism to ensure proper training of journalists for effective media work.
3. The Church should work through the Catholic Association of Media Practitioners-Ghana (CAMP-G) to promote unity and national development in their reportage.
4. Pastoral agents are encouraged to make good use of the social networks and media to reach out to the faithful. Qualified personnel should engage themselves in providing faith-based messages designed for the social media as a means of instructing the faithful through such media.
5. We call upon Catholic individuals and associations to give sponsorship to such programmes as the *Catholic Digest*, *Lumen Christi,* etc., to enable them to acquire better and more appropriate time for its programmes, especially for doctrinal and biblical teachings of the Church.
6. The website of the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference (www.cbcgha.org) should be better employed in furtherance of the New Evangelisation.
7. **EDUCATION AND SCHOOL APOSTOLATE**

**Preamble**

1. As it came out clearly in various discussions among participants at the Second National Pastoral Congress, education is seen as the key to the development of Ghana, as indeed of every society, requiring the collaborative effort of both State and Church to ensure a proper and effective education for the youth. In the desire to help to provide a holistic education, we issue the following guidelines:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. We need to intensify our effort to get a charter for the Catholic University College of Ghana, Fiapre (CUCG).
2. The same CUCG should design a course whose content should be the basic tenets of Catholic teaching (*Catholic Studies)* which should be compulsory for all students of the university.
3. We should encourage and intensify our Catholic presence and identity through the establishment of chaplaincies in our schools. The placing of the crucifix in the classrooms and the recitation of the *angelus* should be encouraged. Furthermore, there should be school Masses and catechesis in such schools.
4. The Church should play an advocacy role with the Ghana Education Service (GES) Council to craft a beneficial Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in order to facilitate evangelisation in the school context. The Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference and the Catholic Education Units should do a critical study of the contents of the partnership document with government and ensure that it gives them room to have a Catholic character in their schools before they enter into contract with them regarding education.
5. Granted the observation that the interest of our youth regarding technical and vocational education seems to be waning, we recommend that a thorough study be made on the state of Technical and Vocational education in Ghana. This will enable the Church to chart a way forward in this regard.
6. **BIBLICAL APOSTOLATE AND SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITIES**

**Preamble**

1. Jesus told his disciples: ‘You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8). The execution of this command to be a witness through evangelisation demands familiarity with God’s word, which calls for dioceses, parishes and Catholic Associations to provide a serious, ongoing study of the Bible, while encouraging its prayerful individual and communal reading.

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. We share the view of St. Jerome that *“ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ”*. Therefore, it is absolutely necessary that the Bible be made available in the local languages as soon as practicable.
2. Emphasis must be put on the establishment of Small Christian Communities in order to bring the Church to the doorsteps of the faithful. It is recommended that Church societies be tasked to assist in this regard.
3. We highly recommend that the practice of Bible sharing, which usually takes place in the context of the Small Christian Communities, should feature in some meetings of other groups of the Church, such as societies, confraternities and associations.
4. **INTER RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE**

**Preamble**

1. Speaking about the relationship between evangelisation and dialogue, Pope Francis notes:

*Evangelisation also involves the path of dialogue. For the Church today, three areas of dialogue stand out where she needs to be pres­ent in order to promote full human development and to pursue the common good: dialogue with states, dialogue with society – including dialogue with cultures and the sciences – and dialogue with other believers who are not part of the Catholic Church. In each case, “the Church speaks from the light which faith offers,” contributing her two thousand year experience and keeping ever in mind the life and sufferings of human beings. This light transcends human reason, yet it can also prove meaningful and enriching to those who are not believers and it stimulates reason to broaden its perspectives* (EG 238).

In the light of the above, we recommend as follows:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. The attitude of Christians towards our brethren, especially Muslims and adherents of traditional religions, should be one of mutual understanding, tolerance and peaceful co-existence.
2. Christians should learn more about the other religions and get rid of prejudices and stereotypes. This can be achieved through workshops on dialogue.
3. Christians should collaborate with believers of other religions to engage in communal projects for the development of society.
4. **GOOD GOVERNANCE**

**Preamble**

1. The leadership of the Catholic Church in Ghana intends to continue fulfilling a prophetic role by way of sustaining the Church’s efforts to ensure good governance in our country. As *Africae Munus* rightly notes, ”good governance in its turn, is at the service of the “vocation to the communion of persons”. As such, it must help to build up society with government authorities and public and private institutions that are engaged in building up the common good. Traditional chiefs have a very positive contribution to make to good governance. The Church, for her part, is committed to promoting within her own ranks and within society a culture that respects the rule of law”(81).

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. The Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference (GCBC) should continue its leadership role of acting as the conscience of the society and the voice of the voiceless to ensure that our political leaders carry out their task for the common good. It should continue to play an advocacy role by advising the populace through pastoral letters, communiqués and the media.
2. The GCBC’s ongoing initiatives geared at bringing together Catholic Members of Parliament and Ministers of State in order to attend to their specific pastoral situations is seen as a step in the right direction, to be pursued with determination. Equally positive is the establishment of the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPLO). Indeed, a programme should be developed for regular interaction with Catholic politicians to help to infuse their Christian principles in their political engagements.

1. The Church should ensure good governance by encouraging her members to participate actively in the political life of the country. In this regard, religious leaders should ensure the civic education of their members.
2. Granted the situation that many decision makers, both political and economic, assume that they owe nothing to anyone other than themselves (*AM* 82), the Church should develop a holistic formation programme for our youth to enable those who wish to go into politics to develop a sense of responsible leadership. At all levels the Church should strive to be a model family by eschewing bitter rivalries and ethnic conflicts in our relationships.
3. **JUSTICE AND PEACE**

**Preamble**

1. We share with Pope Francis the view that peace in society cannot be understood as pacification or the mere absence of violence resulting from the domination of one part of society over others. Nor does true peace act as a pretext for justifying a social structure which silences or appeases the poor, so that the more affluent can placidly support their lifestyle, while others have to make do as they can. Demands involving the distribution of wealth, concern for the poor and human rights cannot be suppressed under the guise of creating a consensus on pa­per or a transient peace for a contented minority. The dignity of the human person and the com­mon good rank higher than the comfort of those who refuse to renounce their privileges. When these values are threatened, a prophetic voice must be raised (*EG* 218).

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. The leadership of the Church should use her relational spaces and personal relationships in every level of the Ghanaian society to provide a robust platform for peacebuilding and national reconciliation. In this wise, all archdioceses and dioceses should ensure they have a functioning Justice and Peace Commission.
2. **SELF-RELIANCE**

**Preamble**

1. *Ecclesia in Africa* (104) has the following to say in relation to self reliance with special reference to the Church in Africa:

*Besides qualified personnel, evangelisation requires material and financial means, and Dioceses are often far from possessing them in sufficient measure. It is therefore urgent that the particular Churches in Africa have the objective of providing for their own needs as soon as possible, thereby assuring their self-sufficiency. Consequently, I earnestly invite the Episcopal Conferences, Dioceses and all the Christian communities of the Continent's Churches, insofar as it is within their competence, to see to it that this self-sufficiency becomes increasingly evident (EA 104).*

In working towards self-reliance, our effort in the mobilisation of resources will not bear any fruits if the Church’s work is not well planned. The Synod thus emphasised how necessary it is for each Christian community to be organised so that as far as possible it can provide for its own needs. We wholeheartedly endorse what has been noted and therefore issue the following guidelines:

**Pastoral Guidelines**

1. If we, as a Church, are to realise our goal to be self-reliant, there is the need for a change in attitude and mentality. The clergy and laity need to change our perception that the Church is rich and has to rely on foreign countries. It is therefore incumbent on the Ghanaian Church to find ways of generating funds and other resources locally to take care of her pastoral programmes. We wish to commend, in this regard, the Quality Insurance Company Limited (QIC) and Quality Life Assurance Company Limited (QLAC) for organising the Catholic Business Networking and Stewardship Forum with the sole objective of reminding Catholic professionals of their place and role in society.
2. There is a need for pastoral planning at all levels of our Church life. The mapping out of a vision as the basis of such a plan will enable us to prioritise our needs, manage our resources and harmonise our various collaborative ministries in the Church.
3. It is recommended that all archdioceses, and dioceses and parishes have functional finance committees, with competent people serving on them. These finance committees should ensure the proper handling of the finances and material assets of the parish and render accounts periodically to the parishioners as regards the use of the parish funds.
4. We recommend that where possible an Education Endowment Fund be established to support brilliant but needy students to access good education.

1. We recognise the significance of business enterprises to generate funds for the Church’s ministry. In this connection, there is the need to make an appraisal of our Church run business enterprises to see the reasons of their apparent failure and recommend ways of revamping already existing ventures and the possibility of establishing new ones to generate income for our pastoral ministry.
2. As a partner in development, the Church should engage in intensive negotiations with government to access funding for its educational, health and social services.

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