

## **The Catholic Church on Path of Advocating for Good Governance in Ghana**

Africanus L. Diedong, University for Development Studies, Ghana

### **ABSTRACT**

The paper documents significant attempts of the Catholic Church towards the process of promoting good governance in Ghana. The main objective of the study is to articulate and put into perspective the Church's intrinsic interest and commitment to promote good governance. The process of democratization across Africa demands commitment from the state and civil society organizations. In Ghana the period preceding the 1992 Fourth Republican Constitution was a turbulent. It was characterized by civil society organizations' criticisms of the military regime's continual stay in power and violations of fundamental human rights such as freedom of expression. Since 1992, the Church has not relented in her efforts at expressing concerns over issues of public interest such as bribery and corruption, accountability and degradation of the environment, which if not adequately addressed could compromise gains made in promoting good governance. The study reviews articles, documents and essays from varied sources on some areas of interest to the research topic. The study concludes that despite challenges involved in good governance advocacy, the Church can make strident efforts at ensuring that Justice and Peace Commissions are functional and dynamic enough to be able to actively collaborate with public and private institutions on issues of good governance.

**Keywords:** Catholic Church, civil society organizations, good governance, corruption, public interest

### **Introduction**

Ghana has come quite a long way in her quest for ensuring good governance in the process of democratization. Despite the challenges involved in the process, unique initiatives embarked by the government and civil society organizations are evidences of a clear departure from the old ways of doing things. In describing this refreshing development, which is part and parcel of similar developments evolving across Africa, Prof. S.K.B Asante has noted: "Since the adoption of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM), a process of transformation in good governance is on the increase in Africa.

There are visible improvements in Africa's governance. Constitutionalism, the rule of law and multi-party elections, though fraught with challenges, are increasingly enjoying wider acceptance than ever before in many African countries, while on the economic front, Africa is experiencing its strongest growth acceleration" (Asante, 2013). The APRM has opened up space for civil society engagement in national dialogue, providing what Asante (2013) described aptly as a niche that progressive Ghanaians could use to create a better understanding of democracy, leading to a society where public opinion cannot be easily disregarded. The Church's dynamism in this space created is evidenced by its active involvement in the Ghana National Peer Review Governing Council (GNAPRM-GC). The Catholic Church membership in GNAPRM-GC has proved useful in the sense that it has been able to add value to some on-going programmes of the Church on good governance in Ghana.

Notably, the terms "governance" and "good governance" are being increasingly used in development literature. Bad governance is being increasingly regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure "good governance" are undertaken (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, 2014).

Since Ghana attained independence in 1957, effective governance of the country has been problematic. Despite promises of democracy and good governance, in many African countries there are manifestations of bad governance ranging from one-party authoritarian governance and dictatorship to military regimes. Rule of law, democracy and respect for human rights were thrown overboard. In Ghana's search for a peaceful,

harmonious and dynamic socio-economic and political environment in which development initiatives can thrive, the Catholic Church has always demonstrated its unflinching commitment to the course for good governance, justice and peace.

The Church sees good governance as a service to the growth and integral development of people. The process of engendering good governance requires effective leadership, guided by moral principles of the social order and in accordance with Divine wisdom and the mandate of the church: “Go into the world and preach the Gospel to the whole creation,” (Mk 16: 15) so that all men and women will be enlightened by the Gospel values and be enabled to interpret today’s reality and seek the appropriate paths of action. The mandate given to the Church is enshrined in the New and Old Testament, the Magisterium of the Church and other well thought out utterances coming from Pontifical Councils, Bishops’ Conferences and writers in the Church.

As regards good governance, it is interesting to note that the Book of Wisdom begins its instructions in this manner: “Love justice, you rulers of the earth, think of the Lord with uprightness and seek him with sincerity of heart” (Wis 1: 1). What this text seems to bring out is that good governance stems from divine wisdom which in turn gives birth to the justice administered by those who govern. From such justice comes concord, which brings about the harmonious cultivation of virtues that produce the mature fruits of good governance. Catholic Church as used in this paper means both the individual believer and the corporate body of all baptized and the institutional entity, all of which are part and partial of the social community. In this sense, the Church is taken to be “a living, dynamic community which is part of society and which shares in all the challenges society experiences” (Waliggo, 1999). The study covers the following areas:

Basis for the Church's Interest in Good Governance, Principles Underscoring the Church's Approach to Governance, Contributions of the Church on Good Governance in Ghana and Church Advocacy for Good Governance: The Challenges Involved.

### **Basis for the Church's Interest in Good Governance**

The teaching and spreading of the Church's social doctrine on the promotion of an integral and social humanism, like good governance, are part of a genuine pastoral priority. The Church cannot, therefore, tire of proclaiming the Gospel that brings salvation and genuine freedom to the temporal realities. She is mindful of the solemn exhortation given by St. Paul to his disciple Timothy: "Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching....." (2 Tim 4:2-5).

Good governance is built on four thematic areas of democracy and political governance, economic governance and management, corporate governance and socio-economic development. One can look at the Church's approach to promoting good governance right from the early days of the Church. In the face of a controversy in the Church between Jews and non-Jews, the Apostles called a meeting to discuss the separation of powers leading to the institution of deacons who were not experts but men with good reputation. Gossip, envy and jealousy never lead to concord, to harmony or peace (Acts 6: 1-7). Ecumenical Councils, especially Lateran Council IV and Vatican Council II provide ample material of the Universal Church's approach to good governance. Papal documents related to the concept of good governance include: Pope Leo XIII (1891), Pope Benedict XVI (2009), Pope John XXIII *Mater et Magistra* (1961),

*Pacem in Terris* (1963), Pope Paul VI *Populorum Progressio* (1967), *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) Pope John Paul II *Redemptoris Hominis* (1979), *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Familiaris Consortio* (1982) *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987), *Veritatis Splendor* (1993), *Evangelium Vitae* (1995), Pope Benedict XVI *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) *Africae Munus* (2011), and Pope Francis *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013).

It is obvious that the motivation of the church to be involved in issues of governance can be traced to the social teachings of the church as found, taught and recommended in the encyclical letters of the Popes of this and the last century. The papal encyclical letters focuses on how to guide all in the formation of a correct conscience in matters of public life – economic, social, political and cultural. Just as Pope John Paul XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) of 1963 offers the world a program for the achievement of social and universal peace, justice, charity and freedom. On the local front in many countries, based on the sanity of the existing social, cultural, economic and political contexts the hierarchy of the Church may issue pastoral letters, statements, a memoranda and communiqués on important issues of national concern to political leadership of the country. The adoption of such a stance of the Catholic Church in Ghana is confirmed by Jallow (2014:11):

.... in Ghana, the Catholic hierarchy and press has remained consistently engaged with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. From 1968 to date, the Church has addressed issues of social justice not only through the editorial pages of *The Standard*, but also through pastoral letters, memoranda and communiqués occasionally issued by the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference.

The thrust of this paper is to articulate and put into perspective the Church's intrinsic interest on issues of good governance.

### **Principles Underscoring the Church's Approach to Governance**

***Church's Approach: Authority and Governance***

The Social Doctrine of the Church points out: “the social nature of man shows that there is an inter-dependence between personal betterment and the improvement of society. In so far as man by his nature stands completely in need of society, he is and ought to be the beginning, the subject and the object of every social organization. Through his dealings with others, through mutual services, and through fraternal dialogue, man develops all his talents and becomes able to rise to his destiny.” (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes* No. 25). From our study of the Social Doctrine of the Church one realizes that among the social ties necessary for man’s development, good governance is needed to achieve the end that without it seems unachievable. The full growth of each member of the body politic calls for a steadfast cooperation of every member with the political authority, provided that the latter exercises authority in a transparent and accountable manner.

Good Governance must aim at the service of authentic human development with due respect for the rights and dignity of every human person. According to Ebelei (2011: 23) critical monitoring and public discussion of governance have long been core elements of civil society activities in Africa. These actors, including the Church are still driving the public discourse about governance.

***The Church's Approach: Principle of Subsidiarity***

Good Governance must also respect the principle of subsidiarity, which alerts those in authority to allow certain decisions to be taken at the lower level. Rather than a

top down approach, a down top one should be preferred. The principle of subsidiarity does not apply simply to the vertical level, it is also valid on the horizontal level with respect to organizations, institutions, community groups and NGOs.

Arguably, it is difficult to see in structural terms how this principle practically operates to benefit those persons at the lower end of the spectrum of governance systems within the church and the state.

### ***The Church's Approach: Common Good***

Another key element of good governance refers to the common good of all people either as groups or individuals. Good governance wishes and intends to remain at the service of the human being at every level in order to attain the good of all people and of the whole person (Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 165). The government of the day has the specific duty to harmonize the different sectoral interests with the requirements of justice by fulfilling the needs of not just the majority but especially the needs of the minority.

Above all, the government has to acknowledge that the common good is a means to an end and that the ultimate end is the relationship with God and the universal common good of the whole of creation. The Social Doctrine of the Church urges that the common good involves all members of a given society; no one is exempted from cooperating, according to one's possibilities, in attaining it through the constant ability and effort to seek the good of others as though it were one's own good (Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 167).

It is daunting to carry through this principle, considering the diverse nature of the Ghanaian society with its complex socio-cultural and religious dimensions. In seeking the good of others, devoid of any form of discrimination the Church in Ghana has an open door policy in education towards admitting Muslim students into Christian educational establishments. However, on February 20, 2015 Muslims in the Western Region of Ghana took to the streets in a peaceful demonstration to protest what they said was manifest discrimination against them on the basis of religion in the various schools. The aggrieved protestors claimed Muslim girls have been prevented from wearing their *hijab* (veils that cover the head and chests of women beyond the age of puberty). In response to such claims, Archbishop Emeritus Peter K. Sarpong in an article in the Catholic Messenger (2015:24-26) has posed the question: Is the Catholic Church Institutionally Unfair? Sarpong underlines the unbiased open door policy of the Church in education and health in the following way:

The truth of the matter is that the Catholic Church never, whether in Ghana or in other African countries or in Europe and America ever discriminates against non-Catholics seeking admission to their institutions. This applies to health institutions as much as educational institutions. The statistics are there for any unbiased observer to see.

Apparently the Church's open door policy in education is being questioned because of alleged abuses against Muslim on the basis of religion in some basic schools, including mission schools. Consequently, currently in the basic educational front the Church is set on a path towards a re-articulation of her decade-long agenda of promotion of the common good through a national dialogue with relevant stakeholders (Daily Graphic, 2015:43). It is important to underline that our peaceful co-existence as a human family should take precedence over any form of religious expediency.



***The Church's Approach: Integral Humanism***

Human beings are creatures of God-given dignity and each person has equal standing to claim that he or she is to be respected. St. John Paul II believes that the human person is a full person only in relation to the mystery of God who knows his/her rightful place in the order of creation (John Paul II, *Centissimus Annus* 1991; nos. 53, 55). Hence the kind of development that the governments pursue must be for the whole person. Pope Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio* says: "Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person". The government should not be just concerned with "how much is a nation producing" as "how are its people faring"? The citizen should be gauged by the indexes of: satisfaction of material needs, reformed social structures that eliminate oppression, opportunities for learning and appreciating culture, cooperating for the common good, and working for peace, acknowledgement of moral values and their transcendent source, the gift of faith and the deepening of unity and love.

***The Church's Approach: Solidarity***

An important building block of Good Governance is solidarity. Human beings are social beings; and living with others in a community is "an expression of the basic unity of humankind" (Himes, 2008: 275). The creation stories inform us that God created human beings for each other. All human beings live under the loving gaze of the God who is the creator of all humankind. Our Christian faith in the Trinity informs us that communion is at the heart of community life and that "human dignity can be realized and

protected only in community. Building bonds between the individuals and groups helps to foster conditions within which human beings can flourish, precisely because we are social beings” (John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* no. 38).

The government of the day needs to ensure that all fellow citizens are interdependent in as much as they are in solidarity. Interdependence is described as “a system determining relationships in contemporary world” and solidarity as the “correlative response as a moral and social attitude, as a virtue” (John Paul II, *Sollicitudo rei Socialis*, no. 38).

Indeed, the affective aspect of solidarity is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortune of others but a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good of all. Further on John Paul II elaborates that solidarity helps us to see the ‘other’ – whether as a person, a nation – not just as an instrument.....but as our neighbor, a helper (Gen 2: 18-20) to be made a sharer on a par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which we are equally invited by God” (Ibid no. 39).

### ***The Church’s Approach: Justice***

An indispensable building block for Good Governance is Justice. Let us recall that the Book of Wisdom which focuses so much on Good Governance begins with this lead verse: “Love justice, you rulers of the earth, think of the Lord with uprightness and seek him with sincerity of heart” (Wis 1: 1). In order to ensure the growth of a truly human community among the citizens of any nation, the government must ensure justice for all. In a nation that subscribes to a free market economy, the teachings of Pope Leo

XIII in *Rerum novarum* calls for natural justice that ensures that the citizens' wages be set at a level that supports "a frugal and well behaved wage-earner" (Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum*, 1891 no. 45).

In justice, the government is duty-bound to honor the set of rights listed out in the Social Teachings of the Church. St. John Paul II in his Encyclical, *Centesimus Annus* enumerated such human rights as:

The right to live in a united family and in a moral environment conducive to the growth of the child's personality; the right to develop one's intelligence and freedom in seeking and knowing the truth; the right to share in the work which makes wise use of the earth's material resources, and to derive from that work the means to support oneself and one's dependents; and the right to freely establish a family, to have to rear children through the responsible exercise of one's sexuality. In a certain sense, the source and synthesis of these rights is religious freedom, understood as the right to live in the truth of one's faith and in conformity with one's transcendent dignity as a person" (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church no 155).

The government is morally bound to honor the human right to religious freedom which is "based on the dignity of the human person and that it must be sanctioned as a civil right in the legal order of society" and "it is a right that concerns not only people as individuals but also the different communities of people" (Vatican II; *Dignitatis Humanae*, no. 2).

The right of religious freedom specifies that "all women and men are to be immune from coercion on the part of the individuals or of social groups and any human power, in such ways that no one is to be forced to act in a manner contrary to his/her own beliefs with due limits (Vatican II; *Dignitatis Humanae* no. 2). Respect of this right is indicative sign of mankind's "authentic progress in any regime, in any society, system or milieu" (John Paul II, *Redemptoris Hominis*, no. 17).

### **The Contribution of the Church to Good Governance in Ghana**

In Ghana the role of the Church as a mediator, civic educator, defender and promoter of human rights, an attentive and impartial listener as well as her partnership role with civil society organisations (CSOs) is documented in the form of Communiqués and Pastoral Letters, which have been collated in two volumes entitled: *Ghana Catholic Bishops Speak*. These communiqués take into consideration all aspects of good governance including, human rights abuses and the care for our environment. Much of what the Church has had the occasion to comment on essentially touch on the major characteristics of good governance: participation, consensus-oriented, rule of law, responsive, equitable and inclusive, effective and efficient, accountable and transparent.

One essential dimension of good governance, which the Church in her advocacy role has never lost sight of, is the need for transparency in conducting business of governance in order to limit if not completely eradicate the incidence of bribery and corruption. The 1997 Advent Pastoral Letter – ‘Message to our nation on bribery and corruption by the Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference stated:

In Ghana today, bribery and corruption may be found in our courts and tribunals leading to the perversion of justice at times, behavior abhorred by God and condemned by the prophets (See Amos 8:6; Ex. 23: 6-8; Dt. 16: 18-19). It is bribery and corruption on our roads, resulting in gross disregard for traffic rules and regulations and consequently causing the loss of precious lives through accidents that could have been averted. (Ghana Bishops Speak, 1999: 299-300).

Media revelations on incidence of bribery and corruption in some public offices such as the Driver Vehicle and Licensing Authority (Nyabor, 2014), highlight the attention GCBC has been drawing to all well-meaning Ghanaians over the years to take concrete steps to stop such negative practices. The Ghana Catholic Bishops’ Conference is relentless in calling for leaders to combine leadership qualities with integrity as well as

showing willingness to place service before reward (Ghana Bishops Speak, 1999: 40-43 & Sarpong, 2015:5). The prophetic witness of the Church is relevant and must be felt across all segments of the society because Church leadership warns people and society at large to do whatever is possible to prevent insecurity and untold hardships to God's people.

In the Tamale Ecclesiastical Province in Ghana, the Church under the auspices of the Tamale Ecclesiastical Province Pastoral Conference (TEPPCON) has through partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung (KAS) organized seminars and workshops on good governance. A committee was charged with the development of a manual on the Social Teaching of the Church with particular reference to "Good Democratic and Political Governance." The workshops were targeted at vulnerable groups like women and even certain men who are marginalized in our political and social affairs. Members of the Church are required to stand for Mission, Justice, Peace and Development.

Therefore, Christians must see themselves not just as citizens but also as persons with a mission to transform this world into a better place for everyone to live a decent human life. This awareness could be created through the kind of civic education programmes espoused in the "Manual for Good Governance and Development at Local Level" (TEPPCON, 2006). A wide range of sensitization was carried out in 2008 in the three Northern Regions of Ghana to let all and sundry realize their rights and obligation to actively participate in political activities.

Furthermore in a bid to promote good governance, in conjunction with the National Catholic Secretariat, the Diocese of Wa has been able to monitor and observe presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana. The key role played by the Catholic Church in Ghana has been tremendous, especially in the 2008 and 2012 national elections. The membership of the Catholic Church in the Civic Forum Initiative (CFI) of Ghana has positively influenced electoral democracy in Ghana (see [www.ideg.org](http://www.ideg.org)). The Catholic Church participated in a campaign CFI launched in 2008 on civic and community actions in support of the cleaning of the voters register for the December 2008 presidential and parliamentary elections. Highlights of the activities included:

- Training Workshops for observers and civic educators (national and regional trainings)
- Convening of the first National Forum of the CFI
- Regional outreach activities and publicity campaigns on cleaning of voters register
- Domestic election observation
- Media engagements (interviews, press statements etc)
- Coordination, documentation and publication

The Most Rev. Paul Bemile, Bishop of Wa Diocese has noted that it is not an exaggeration to state that without the intervention of the Church in negotiation with political parties, Ghana could have been plunged into a civil war following national elections in 2012.

Launched in 2013, it is expected that the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPL0), which is managed by the Directorate of Governance, Justice and Peace when fully accredited would enhance the advocacy role of the Church in Ghana with respect to good governance. According to the Episcopal Chairman for Justice and Peace, Bishop Paul Bemile, the CPL0 would facilitate contact and dialogue between the Catholic

Church in Ghana on the one hand and the country's Legislature and Executive on the other. The CPLO would provide an avenue for the Church as part of civil society to influence public policy for the common good in the areas of politics, economics and social concerns, and shape legislative and policy development. One other function of CPLO would involve the making of formal submissions on legislation before parliament which are supplemented to oral presentation to relevant Parliamentary Committees as well as the making of written responses to policy documents such as government white papers, reports on commissions and inputs into bills. In South Africa, the application of the CPLO approach to governance is quite instructive and productive.

### **Church Advocacy for Good Governance: the Challenges Involved**

The Church in Ghana faces some major challenges in her efforts to champion the course of good governance in Ghana. The Ghana Catholic Bishops Conference's approach to advocacy on issues of good governance, based to a large extent on the preparation and diffusion of communiqués, memoranda and pastoral letters, tend to outshine attempts to devise practical measures in collaboration with other stakeholders to tackle factors inhibiting good governance in Ghana.

The top-down approach<sup>1</sup> the Church applies in voicing out her concerns about problems of good governance in Ghana appears one-sided because arguably the active

---

<sup>1</sup> Srampickal (2009: 55-59) has observed that this approach/model was dominant for far too long, with serious effects on the life and mission of the Church. There was more of 'hierarcheology' than ecclesiology. With the over-emphasis on authority, there was a corresponding lack of laity's involvement. Clearly, such an approach does not prefer communication, understood as sharing, participation, creating meaning together etc, but purely as giving information and clarified concepts. A more people-centred approach – a "Secular-Dialogic model" can prove efficacious in facilitating efforts toward advocating for

participation of the lay people in the process is either limited or virtually absent depending on the circumstances. The newly Apostolic Nuncio to Ghana, Most Rev. Jean Marie Speich, highlighted this fact when he called on the laity in the Catholic Church to also speak up on issues affecting the Ghanaian society and not always depend on the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference to do so (Salia, 2014: 33). Tackling issues of good governance in an effective and efficient manner requires broad consultations and consensus-building first within the Church, and secondly collaboratively with state institutions such as the National Commission for Civic Education (NCCE) and Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice.

Furthermore, offices set up to facilitate and promote the Church's efforts in promoting good governance are often challenged in terms of staff and logistics. There is the need for GCBC to strongly support the start-up operations CPLO in Ghana to enable the Office meet the expectations of the Church and the public at large.

## **Conclusion**

Good governance is a practice much needed in Ghana, especially as the country continues to ride over the waves of a political system dominated by two main parties – the National Democratic Congress and the New Patriotic party. The tendency of polarization in accordance with partisan politics has given rise to a political uncertainty. This is the time to ensure that all citizens are brought on board to stay vigilant and check unguarded political utterances. A healthy competition between the two main parties,

---

good governance in line with Pope John Paul II's concept of the modern *Areopagus*, the Church may be seen as the great roundtable where global exchange of information and co-operation takes place.



observing checks and balances, could result in having the good governance that the country yearns for.

The government of Ghana needs to demonstrate greater commitment to fostering harmony and social cohesion by ensuring that the NCCE is well resourced to mount civic education programs, which can enhance solidarity amongst diverse ethnic and political communities. The Directorate of Governance, Justice and Peace of the Catholic Church should collaborate more with CSO in Ghana and beyond such as the CPLO in South Africa to share its experiences and learn best practices from CPLO to improve on its activities and programmes.

The principles of good governance, which drives the Church towards initiating various projects and programs to complement the state in promoting the welfare of people, could have a wider scope and deeper meaning if all persons, especially the marginalized are empowered to actively participate. Therefore, it is important that the various Justice and Peace Commissions at the diocesan and parish levels are re-vitalized to perform their core functions effectively. Orobator (2015) notes:

Justice, Peace, and Development Commissions or JDPCs have become popular as a means of translating Catholic Social Teaching into the public sphere. The signs are hopeful and, perhaps, such initiative might prove to be successful than previous attempts to make Small Christian Communities the locus of political conscientization and social transformation in the Church in Africa. I am of the opinion that the Church in Africa would achieve greater success if more effort were invested in advocacy, in line the proposition of the second African Synod for Episcopal Conferences at all levels to establish advocacy bodies to lobby members of parliament, governments and international institutions, so that the Church can contribute effectively to formulations of just laws and policies for the people's good (Proposition 24)

Providing avenues for greater participation and consultation in the Church is a positive and a more pro-active response to the proclamations and provisions of the Second Vatican Council of 1965, which have been unambiguous about the role of the laity.

As the Church hierarchy calls on the laity in Ghana to be very active and apply its vast potential to the transformation of our society, it is important that professionals, particularly those working in Church Offices such as the Directorate of Good Governance, Justice and Peace are supported and given a free hand to operate in a transparent and responsible manner in order to effectively deliver on their mandates. It should be possible for the CPLO in Ghana to give quick responses to important events or developments in public policy without resorting to a cumbersome approach of seeking clearance from the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference.

As the encyclical, *Christifideles Laici (No. 15)* states: "*Lay people are called in the Church to seek the plan of God by engaging in temporal affairs and ordering them according to the plan of God.*" (John Paul II, 1998). It means that whenever standards of good governance stand the danger of being compromised or are blatantly compromised, lay people in partnership with the clergy and religious, CSO and government should take appropriate measures in a timely manner to demand social justice in the interest of the common good.

Indeed, the Church emphasizes that the political community exists for the common good: this is its justification and meaning and the source of its specific and basic right to exist. The common good embraces the sum total of all those conditions of social life which enable individuals, families, and organizations to achieve complete and

efficacious fulfillment (Vatican II, 1975: 981). The current dynamics of democracy in Ghana in which concern for the common good seems to be subordinated to parochial and partisan interests requires the Church to devise effective strategies aimed at promoting “multidimensional programs of civic education” and the encouragement of “competent and honest citizens to participate in party politics” (Second African Synod, Proposition No. 25).

Africanus L. Diedong ([langyin45@gmail.com](mailto:langyin45@gmail.com)) is a lecturer and former Head of the Department of African and General Studies at the University for Development Studies, Wa campus in Ghana. He has published several articles in the area of media, culture and religion, media ethics and community radio and development. He is the current editor of the Ghana Journal of Development Studies.

### Works Cited

- Asante, S.K.B (2013). *The African Peer Review Mechanism as Africa's Innovation Thinking on Governance: a Decade of Ghana's Experience*. Accra: Digibooks Ghana Ltd.
- African Synod II (2009). Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops on the theme "The Church in Africa at the Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace."  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/synod/documents/rc\\_synod\\_doc\\_20091023\\_elenco-prop-finali\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20091023_elenco-prop-finali_en.html) Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2015
- Benedict, XVI (2009). *Caritas Veritate*. (To the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women of Religious, Lay Faithful and to All People of Good Will on Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth). Available on  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20090629\\_caritas-in-veritate\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate_en.html)
- Benedict XVI (2011). *Africae Munus*. (To the Bishops, Clergy, Consecrated Persons, and the Lay Faithful of the Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace).  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_exh\\_20111119\\_africae-munus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_ben-xvi_exh_20111119_africae-munus_en.html)
- Catechism of the Catholic Church (2003). Available at  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/archive/ENG0015/_INDEX.HTM)
- CPLO, (2013). Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office Launched in Accra. Accessed on 6/05/2014 from: <http://www.ghananewsagency.org/social/catholic-parliamentary-liaison-office-launched-in-accra--66345>
- CPLO, <http://www.sacbc.org.za/about-us/offices/liason-office/> Accessed on 22/07/2014
- Daily Graphic, (2015). Don't force students to participate in worship: National Peace Council. *Daily, Graphic*, p. 43.
- Eberlei, W. (2011). Democratic Governance in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Ghana Journal of Development Studies*, Vol 8, No. 1, p. 23.
- Francis (2013). *Evangelii Gaudium* (To the Bishops, Clergy and Consecrated Persons and the Lay Faithful on the Proclamation of the Gospel in Today's World). Available  
[http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html)

- Ghana Bishops' Speak (1991). *A Collection of Communiqués, Memoranda and Pastoral Letters of the Ghana Catholic Bishops' Conference*. Accra: National Catholic Secretariat.
- Himes, R. Kenneth (2008). Globalization with a Human Face: Catholic Social Teaching and Globalization. *Theological Studies*, p. 275.
- IDEG (2008). Civic Forum Initiative.  
[http://www.ideg.org/newideg/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=128:the-civic-forum-intitiative-cfi&catid=34:cif&Itemid=47](http://www.ideg.org/newideg/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=128:the-civic-forum-intitiative-cfi&catid=34:cif&Itemid=47) Accessed on 30<sup>th</sup> December 2015
- Jallow, G. Baba (2014). A Sign of the Times: Catholic Advocacy for Social Justice in Nkrumah's Ghana, 1958. *Journal of Religion & Society*, Vol. 16, pp. 1-16.
- John, Paul II (1994). *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. London: Geoffrey Chapman.
- \_\_\_\_\_. (2004). *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. Available at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1991). *Centissimus Annus* (On the Hundreth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_01051991\\_centessimus-annus\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centessimus-annus_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1979). *Redemptoris Hominis* (To His Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, the Priests, the Religious Families, the Sons and Daughters of the Church, and to All Men and Women of Goodwill at the Beginning of His Papal Ministry). [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_04031979\\_redemptor-hominis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_04031979_redemptor-hominis_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1981). *Laborem Exercens* (To His Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate, to the Priests, to the Religious Families, to the Sons and Daughters of the Church to All Men of Good Will on Human Work on the Ninetieth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091981\\_laborem-exercens\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1982). *Familiaris Consortio*. (To Episcopate, the Clergy and Faithful of the Catholic Church on the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World). [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_19811122\\_familiaris-consortio\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_19811122_familiaris-consortio_en.html)
- John Paul II (1987). *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*. (To Episcopate, the Clergy and Religious Families and Sons and Daughters of the Church and to all Men of Good Will on the Twentieth Anniversary of the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*). Available at

- [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_30121987\\_sollicitudo-rei-socialis\\_fr.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_fr.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1993). *Veritatis Splendor*. Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_06081993\\_veritatis-splendor\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_06081993_veritatis-splendor_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1995). *Evangelium Vitae* (To the Bishops, Priests and Deacons, Men and Women of Religious, Lay Faithful and to All People of Good Will on the Value and Inviolability of Human Life). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25031995\\_evangelium-vitae\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25031995_evangelium-vitae_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1998). *Christifideles Laici*. (On the Vocation and Mission of the Faithful in the Church and in the World). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_30121988\\_christifideles-laici\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici_en.html)
- John, XXIII (1960). *Mater et Magistra* (On Christianity and Social Progress). [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_j-xxiii\\_enc\\_15051961\\_mater\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_xxiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1963). *Pacem in Terris* (On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty). Available at [http://gsearch.vatican.va/search?q=Pacem+in+Terris&btnG=Search+on&site=default\\_collection&client=default\\_frontend&output=xml\\_no\\_dtd&proxystylesheet=default\\_frontend&sort=date%3AD%3AL%3Ad1&entsp=a\\_\\_policy\\_documenti&wc=200&wc\\_mc=1&oe=UTF-8&ie=UTF-8&ud=1&exclude\\_apps=1&filter=0](http://gsearch.vatican.va/search?q=Pacem+in+Terris&btnG=Search+on&site=default_collection&client=default_frontend&output=xml_no_dtd&proxystylesheet=default_frontend&sort=date%3AD%3AL%3Ad1&entsp=a__policy_documenti&wc=200&wc_mc=1&oe=UTF-8&ie=UTF-8&ud=1&exclude_apps=1&filter=0)
- Leo XIII (1891). *Rerum Novarum* (On Capital and Labour) Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/leo\\_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html)
- Orobator, Agbonkhanmeghe (2015). "Religion and politics in Africa: The Challenge for the African Church." A paper presented at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cardinal Dery Colloquium at the Saints Peter and Paul Pastoral and Social Institute in Wa, Ghana.
- Paul VI (1967). *Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of People). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_26031967\\_populorum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum_en.html)
- \_\_\_\_\_. (1975). *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Apostolic Exhortation to the Episcopate, Clergy and to All the Faithful of the Entire World). Available at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html)
- Nyabor, John (2013). Watch: Anas Exposes Massive Corruption at DVLA. Accessed on 19<sup>th</sup> June, 2014 <http://233livenews.wordpress.com/2014/04/10/watch-anas-exposes-massive-corruption-at-dvla/>

- Salia, K. Albert (2014). Give visibility to good works of Catholic Church – Apostolic Nuncio. *Daily Graphic*, p. 13.
- Sarpong, K. Peter (2015). True politics is leadership, service, servanthood, and stewardship[12]. *The Catholic Standard*, p. 5.
- \_\_\_\_\_ (2015). Is the Catholic Church institutionally unfair? *Catholic Messenger*, pp. 24-26.
- Srampickal, Jacob (2009). *Communications can renew the Church*. Kerala: Karunikan Books.
- TEPPCON (2006). *Manual for Good Governance and Development at the Local Level*. Takoradi: St. Francis Press Ltd.
- United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific; What is good Governance? Accessed on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014.  
<http://www.unescap.org/sites/default/files/good-governance.pdf>
- Vatican II (1975). *The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. Published by Pillar Books for Costello Publishing Company, Inc.
- Waliggo, J. Mary (1999). "The Church and Politics in Conflict Resolution," A paper presented for discussion at the national workshop on conflict resolution on 12th March 1999, Kampala, Uganda.