

Fr. Polycarp Opio*

THE CHALLENGES OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE IN UGANDA

Abstract: Christianity is one of the most widely practiced religions in Uganda. Uganda's constitution guarantees freedom of religion for every citizen. The article presents the history of missionary activity in Uganda and the contemporary religious and social situation. Catholics in Uganda remain faithful to the Holy See, while Protestants and Anglicans follow the spirit of Martin Luther. The current cultural, social and political challenges lean both sides towards ecumenical dialogue. It is therefore important to truly understand the essence of ecumenism.

Keywords: Uganda, Christianity, Catholicism, missionary activity, ecumenism, ecumenical dialogue.

Christianity is one of the widely professed religion in Uganda. As it is emblazoned in the 1995 constitution, every citizen has the freedom to worship:

[...] every person shall have the right to: freedom to practice any religion and manifest such practice which shall include the right to belong to and participate in the practices of any religious body or organization in a manner consistent with this constitution¹.

This has seen over time other denominations also finding space of sprouting up.

With the influx of many religions coming at play, there has been historical influence as Catholics stick to the traditional teachings as handed down by Christ following the apostolic lineage, Protestants following suit from the spirit of Martin Luther and followers and in the event of struggle for relevance, superiority, claim for truth..., there has been confusion created among these groups which prompted a call for ecumenical dialogue. This article explores such confusions arising from history and current situation and to understand the concept of ecumenism.

* O. Polikarp Opio – kapłan diecezji Lira w Ugandzie, w Afryce Wschodniej, doktorant Uniwersytetu Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego w Warszawie (teologia moralna).

¹ *The constitution of Uganda*. Uganda: Kampala 1995 no. 29 paragraph 1C, p. 42.

1. THE HISTORY OF CATHOLIC MISSIONS

By way of definition, the word *Catholic* is derived from the Greek adjective, *katholikos*, which means “universal” and from the adverbial phrase, *kath’ holou*, meaning

[...] *on the whole* and St Ignatius of Antioch (d.c 107) is quoted to have first used it to mean, bringing all catholic believers under a shepherd hence his remark, Where the Bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as wherever Jesus Christ is present, we have the Catholic Church².

“Universal” and “on the whole”, as reflected above depicts a church that is all embracing, encompassing of all faith and it is upon this basis that problems spilled out because some people thought the catholic faith was pushing them to be under them.

It is from this lineage that the Catholic Church exuded to Uganda as the desire for faith became pertinent and started growing.

The history of the Catholic Church in Uganda is attributed to the first missionaries which history is much cherished and handed over from one generation to another. This history is part of catechism and it is attributed to two grate missionaries, Father Simon Lourdel and brother Aman, whose arrival brought about the birth of the Catholic Church in Uganda and for a connection and memory of this history, a song was formulated in most local languages including (Lango) to which i ascribe as reflected in the hymnal “Buk Kwac” No F/4,

F/4 - KATOLIKA DINI MEGWA

***Katolika dini megwa:
Opwoo Rwot Obanga,
En ocwalo wode Alar,
Ame olaro dano duc.***

*1. Jo okelo dini i Uganda
obedo padi Lourdel
gin kede brother Amans:
gin orabo diniwa kan.*

*2. Yesu ooro okwena i mar
gin apar wie aryoo,
gin dong oweko ticgi lung
i cing Papa kede Okwat.*

**Catholic our religion
We thank Almighty God
He sent His Son,
Who saved all humanity**

1. Those who brought faith in Uganda
are Father Lourdel.
and Brother Amans
They spread our religion here

2. Jesus sent his apostles with love
twelve of them
they left all they were doing.
In the hand of the pope and pastors

² R.P. McBrien. *Catholicism*. New Edition. New York: HarperCollins Publishers 1994 p. 3.

3. *Pi mano dong omegiwa
olub yoo Obanga,
pi yee ame ogamo
a wan olokkere i dini 'Alar.*

3. For this my brethren
let us follow the ways of God
for the faith that we have received
That we converted in the religion of the
saviour

4. *Wan dong oyee Obanga Acwec
kede Wode Alar,
kede dang Tipu Acil
ame dong mito terowa i lar³.*

4. We now accept God our creator,
and His Son our savior
and the Holy Spirit
that leads us to salvation.

The above song does not only present the history of the Catholic Church in Uganda, but it also presents a narrative history of the entire Church right from the beginning, for thus the song means, we thank Almighty God for our Catholic faith, He sent His Son who saved all humanity. Those who brought religion to Uganda are; Father Lourdel and Brother Amans, they spread our religion here... They are cherished as the first missionaries who sowed the seed of faith in Uganda and if today there are those who call themselves Catholics, recourse is made to the two missionaries mentioned above. The coming of these missionaries to Uganda was a fulfillment of a papal decree of 24th February 1878 entrusting to the White Fathers the evangelization of the area of what today is known as the Lake Victoria area, and they formed part of the five groups of the missionaries that originally were sent to Uganda⁴.

As indicated above, there were a batch of ten pioneer missionaries who dispatched from France in the year 1878, headed for the evangelization of areas around Lake Victoria and among which included Father Simon Lourdel and Brother Aman, and on their arrival in Munyonyo on 17th February 1879, they sought permission from the King of Buganda for settlement and to also help in transporting the other missionaries and properties across Lake Victoria⁵. This in a way-initiated interaction between the Kabaka and the missionaries who the Kabaka admitted in his palace.

The place and permission of settlement for the first missionaries as indicated above portrays that, the system of governance at the time had firsthand influence since permission was sought from the Kabaka. It is also the reason why in Buganda,

³ B.K. Okristo. *Katolika Ka Dini Megwa*. Italy: Giogani Printing Press-Castiglione 2016⁸ p. 237.

⁴ Cf. F. Tusingire. *Evangelization of Uganda; Challenges and Strategies*. Kisubi: Mariianum publishing Company 2003 p. 37.

⁵ Cf. H. Johnston. *A history of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*. London: Cambridge University Press 1913² p. 245-260.

the Roman catholic church remained dominant for a long time without much interference from the rivalry of the protestants⁶.

Today the catholic church remains a dominant religion in Buganda even though the Kabaka is not Catholic. This can be deduced from the fact that they were first received in Buganda, nurtured it, experienced it before it radiated to the rest of Uganda.

The coming of the two missionaries saw a new dawn come to Uganda and a catholic identity started being felt, contrary to the traditional religion which had carried people all along and shaped their way of life. Consequently, they had to find ways of penetrating the life of the people to saw the seed of the catholic faith, cultivate and tender it to grow and to make Catholicism a way of life of the people. They did their best which eventually yielded results and many people embraced Catholicism as a way of life.

As evangelization yielded fruits, demand for more pastoral agents became a necessity and this saw the emergence of two other missionary groups besides the White Fathers whose memories remain unfaded because of the great works of evangelization in Uganda. They were the ones responsible for the first part of the early spread of the catholic faith in the Northern and Eastern part of Uganda: The Mill Hill Missionaries (1895) and the Comboni Missionaries/Verona Fathers (1910). The impact of their work varies because of approaches used, the environment and people to which the message of the gospel was directed and by who⁷.

The arrival of these missionary groups eventually created a geographical organization which saw the fitting of different missionary groups into geographical locations. The Comboni Missionaries for instance explored their missions in the Northern part of Uganda making Gulu being their center and by 1923 there were nineteen Verona Fathers with some three hundred catechists whose missionary event were marked by dedication and eventual growth of faith within the northern part of Uganda. This also saw eventual growth in the number of pastoral agents and between 1923-1934, the number of staff, black and white, almost tripled⁸.

The demand in the mission land eventually grew higher and there was need to be integral and so this later attracted the need to include education and improve on catechism. The first American teaching brothers were then incorporated into the pastoral system and they mostly handled the educational part of the mission and their work was remarkable. Brother Joseph Crazzolaro after doing grate work in Sudan arrived in Uganda in 1910 and he was able to able to publish important books in the languages of Nuer, Luo and Acholi which were the common languages

⁶ Cf. S. Bengt, S. Christopher. *A history of the Church in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2000 p. 848.

⁷ Cf. *ibidem* p. 25.

⁸ Cf. *ibidem* p. 860.

spoken by the people of that area at that time and he even wrote for instance the first catechism in Acholi language⁹.

These missionaries did and continue to do good work in Northern Uganda which are applauded and one thing which became an identity of the Catholic Church was the building of schools to handle the education part of the ministry of the missionaries. The Catholic schools remain a strong training ground for the young people up to now since they do not only train the mind but handle also the spiritual and moral issue. It is worth noting that other groups also pitched camps in other geographical locations like the Mill Hill became responsible for the East and other groups spread to handle the pastoral concerns in the other parts of the country.

The Mill Hill Missionaries responded to the need of evangelization challenge of the time as noted before and their arrival in Uganda in 1895 at the invitation of the White Fathers gave a good pastoral boost with their strong pastoral sense. As a matter of fact, the Mill Hill Missionaries were in line with their way of life as they commit by oath to bind themselves in works of mission in different parts of the world¹⁰. Their coming therefore, did not compliment the works of mission but helped them fulfilled their vows.

It was at this time that the White Fathers faced a lot of challenges, not only from the harsh political environment of the time but also religious war from the protestant. This made the work of mission quite challenging considering the small number of the White Fathers by then and so there was urgent need to boost the pastoral team for the work of mission to take better shape and penetrate the localities outside of Buganda that had been out of bound for the Catholics to evangelize in, considering the fact that the French people did not match with the British and so the White Fathers coming from French descent were confined only within the central part of Uganda. The Mill Hill being missionaries of British origin were thought to offer a remedy to this challenge which stifled evangelization and it also counteracted the uncensored belief that all people coming from England were protestants¹¹. Uganda being s colony of the British, the Mill Hill had an upper hand to penetrate Uganda and they registered grate success in their mission keeping close link with the British protectorate since they had British background.

After the Mill Hill followed suit the Comboni Missionaries (1831-1881). Founded by Daniel Comboni, born at Limone Sul Garda in Northern Italy on March 15, 1831, dedicated his life to missionary service in Africa and died on

⁹ Cf. *ibidem*.

¹⁰ Cf. A. McCormack. *Mill Hill Missionaries*. In: S. Neil [et al.]. *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission*. London: United Society for Christian Literature 1971 p. 383-384.

¹¹ Cf. H.P. Gale. *Uganda and the Mill Hill Fathers*. London: Macmillan Co. Ltd 1959 p. 111.

October 10, 1881, at Khartoum on the edge of the desert, remaining faithful to the promise of his life and motto: “Africa or death” and thus,

Africa, the Cross, the Heart of Jesus are in fact the three keys with which to read his life and work. Above all Africa, his first and only passion, for which he was ready to give a thousand lives if he had them, and for whose salvation he had drawn a «plan for the regeneration of Africa», aimed at involving the whole Church. The cross: his own bride, seal on the works of God which are born and grow at the foot of Calvary. Comboni would often say that the Son of God could not have revealed infinite wisdom to us more luminously than crafting the Cross. And finally, the Heart of Jesus, in the mystery of whose love he discovered the energy for his missionary work; the Heart that transformed him, rendering it capable of making common cause with the poorest and most abandoned, to the point of giving his life for them while nourishing a great confidence in the African, whom he considered to be the actors and artisans of their own future¹².

Comboni was so much passionate about mission in Africa and wanted to revolutionize Africa and make it self-supportive hence as noted above had plan for the regeneration of Africa. As his slogan goes, “Save Africa by Africa” is an indicator that he was after the localization of the church and so inculturation became a means of penetrating the life of the people but above all empowering them to take charge of missions in their own areas and the reason why they did a lot of translations of liturgical books in many different native languages including Lango to which I subscribe.

There is a fundamental principle of Missionary methodology noted as advanced by Daniel Comboni,

In Comboni we encounter more a life than a theory. Faced with a vast new mission field, he sought to draw out all the possible consequences from the basic principle of «save Africa with Africa». Since he did not delude himself about the potential results to be achieved by the one who begins a mission, he put the whole methodological question into a supernatural perspective¹³.

With the above kind of spirit, after approval by Propaganda Fide in 1910, they then established a mission land in Uganda. Although they came to Uganda later, their mission was already ongoing in the Central Africa (South Sudan). In the 1909, they were able to open a mission land in Northern Uganda and consequently Father Federico Vianello, the Superior General sent some Comboni Missionaries with a team leader Albino Colomboroli in the company of Bishop Gayer and on their arrival in Northern Uganda on 2nd February 1910, they established their first

¹² D. Kinnear. *Saint Daniel Comboni. The Man and his message: An Anthropology of his writings*. New and Revised edition. Rome: Comboni Missionaries Generalate 2019 p. 10-11.

¹³ *Ibidem* p. 143.

mission in Omach¹⁴. This history will later play an important role in determining the historical influence on ecumenical dialogue.

2. HISTORY OF PROTESTANT MISSIONS IN UGANDA

The history of protestant mission in Uganda came as a response to Kabaka Mutesa I desire to curb down by then slave trade which had become unbearable and it seemed that Islam was not about to offer any immediate solution to this challenge. This forced, Mutesa I to request Henry Stanley, a British explorer who had told the king about Christianity to write a letter to this effect inviting the missionaries to come to Buganda. It is against this background that the first batch of the Anglican Church Missionaries (CMS) arrived from Britain at the court of Mutesa on June 30th, 1877 having travelled from Zanzibar on the route initially pioneered by the Swahili traders¹⁵.

This brought a lot of relief to the Kabaka as his hopes were revived and he easily identified with the missionaries hence it was a soft ground for them to start the missionary event within the Kabaka's palace and radiate it outside.

The first batch of the four Protestant Missionaries arrived in Uganda and settled at the bank of Lake Victoria in a place called "Nalubale". This location posed a big challenge to them being a breeding ground for mosquitos, they could not survive the wrath of mosquitos resulting into contraction of malaria, a tropical disease which claimed the life of one of them. Later, there was also the challenge of internal wars within and O'Neil and Lieutenant Shergold Smith, met their death resulting from a local dispute and this stagnated the work of missions since Revd. Wilson remained alone moving about with the work of missions until 1878 when another missionary Alexander Mackay joined him. Mackay was a very inspirational preacher and so managed to attract a few converts within a short time. What remains historical was his ability to translate the Bible into the local language which remains in use up to now¹⁶.

However, because of evangelization, many converts started paying allegiance to the Christian leaders with special obedience to Christ whom the missionaries presented to them. This did not go well with King Mutesa and so thought of restricting the work of the missionaries only within the palace, but this did not prevent the converts from paying allegiance to Christ. The Kabaka thought of solving

¹⁴ Cf. F. Tusingire. *The evangelization of Uganda, Challenges and Strategies*. Kisubi: Marianum Publishing Company 2003 p. 34-35.

¹⁵ Cf. *The Arrival of Christian Missionaries*. <<http://www.Traveltoeastfrica.com/see/history/the-arrival-of-christian-missionaries-1877.html>. consulted on> [28 December 2020].

¹⁶ Cf. W. Kisekka. *A Contextual Interpretation of Archbishop Janani Luwum's Model of Non-Violence Resistance and Church-State Relations in Contemporary Uganda*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwazulu-Natal 2008 p. 14.

this problem by inflicting pain and wiping away the Christian image which eventually led to the killing of Bishop James Hannington on the 29th of October 1885 and the subsequent killing of many other Christians the following year. On the 3rd of June 1886, King Mwanga ordered the killing of quite several Christians among which were thirteen (13) Anglicans and twelve (12) Catholics¹⁷.

The above shared history remains something remarkable in the life of both Catholics and Protestants in Uganda until today and each year on the 3rd of June is a public holiday where thousands of pilgrims from and outside Uganda through the shrine to pray to the martyrs whose blood give us ecumenical sense but above all encourage us to be witnesses of faith.

The Anglican missionaries were later joined by the French Catholic Missionaries Father Simon Lourdel and brother Amans. The two missionary groups were a blessing to the people of Uganda since they both had the same point of agenda to present the image of Christ and make Him known to the people. However, this was short lived as both groups associated with historical influence and each one claiming for truth and relevance, they started accusing each other on theological grounds but also because they wanted a favor extended to them by the Kabaka. This friction was a blessing in disguise since he had tried to disintegrate the converts before but failed. So, to him the more the Catholics and Protestants fought among themselves, the better as this would eventually undermine the success that the early missionaries had recorded.

3. UNDERSTANDING ECUMENISM

Ritschl explains Ecumenical in theological terms as the movement which seeks to achieve external unity among the world's denominational divided churches, deriving it from the original *oikeo*: to «dwell», «inhabit», and *oikos*: «house», «household»; *oikoumene*: the «whole inhabited»¹⁸.

This understanding provides an opening for unity, building a family of humanity, housed together and this becomes an ideal hope to venture, which ecumenical dialogue also focuses.

Ritschl brings this into clear perspective by further explaining *ecumenical* as

[...] the entirety of the church, which looking back to its original tradition and looking forward to its hope, seeks a commonality in doctrine and in life of faith¹⁹.

¹⁷ Cf. <<https://churchofuganda.org/about/history>, consulted on> [19 January 2021].

¹⁸ Cf. D. Ritschl. *Dialogue*. In: K. Muller [et al.]. *Dictionary of Missions. Theology, history, perspectives*. Eugene Oregon: Wipf and Stock publishers 1999 p. 120.

¹⁹ *Ibidem*.

Considering the fact that the root of our Christian faith is one, originating from Christ Himself, Christ calls us into oneness hence his cherished prayer that “[...] they may be brought to perfection as one” (Jn 17:21). This makes ecumenism not an option but an urgent need to bring Christian faithful into the family of Christ heading to a common home (heaven), otherwise it would make no sense calling ourselves children of God, with the same Father, redeemed by the same Christ, facing the same heaven and yet cannot sit on the same table to reason together. Ecumenism is an ideal Christian living, accepting that we are one in Christ even when our way of worshipping and praising may be different. This understanding is not only human but Christian in itself.

H. Skolimowski noted:

As we increasingly recognize the frailty and instability of the world, and also the frailty and endangered status of our own life, we no longer think that standing aloof and apart from the world is such a great value. Rather we think that being in the world means standing together in empathy and in mutual help for the times are truly pernicious. Therefore, we look forward to forms of understanding and yes, forms of philosophy which are participatory and compassionate. Being a hair-splitter in your own castle (or cave) is not such admirable image for the time which will depend on cooperation²⁰.

If there is something that the world needs today, then it is a united Christian family because humanity is faced with a human challenge that the hearts of people need more of Christ. The human family is what we need to build more emulating from the triune nature of God.

In Uganda, the witness of such a front came to light when King Mwanga asked the Christians to renounce their faith and get involved in homosexuality and they all refused, and this later culminated into the martyrdom of the massacre of the Uganda martyrs. This common moral identity that led to the martyrdom of these souls have up to date remained a strong bond and pillar of faith for both the Catholics and Protestants were every year on the 3rd of June, the whole country celebrates the bravery of these faithful who gave up their lives for the sake of their faith and they remain the patron saints of Uganda. The blood of the martyrs therefore becomes a shield of unity other than division and this usher us into pursuit of a common moral way of life which becomes more solid if we understand each other hence a call for ecumenical dialogue.

As a matter of fact, when Pope Francis visited Uganda in 2015, he visited the Protestant shrine in Namugongo, the same ground the Catholic Martyrs met their fate, and it is here that the Pope talked of “ecumenism of blood”. In the company of Archbishop Stanley Ntagali, the primate of the Protestant Church by then,

²⁰ H. Skolimowski. *Preamble. Why Must We Change?* “Journal of the International Society for Universal Dialogue, Dialogue and Universalism” 23:2012 No. 4 p. 8-9.

Pope Francis was moved with pain by narration of the story of the martyrs as the primate explained in detail how the martyrs were executed at the orders of Kabaka Mwanga II in the late 19th Century having refused to renounce their faith. The Pope later in his homily at the Catholic shrine made recourse to the sacrifice of the 45 men whom 23 were Protestants and 22 were Catholics and remarked that their witness of love for Christ and the church has gone to the end of the earth²¹. The strength of unity becomes vivid here on moral principles which principles the world needs more today. Can this kind of unity be translated into the daily life of the people other than witness it only in major external celebrations is what is left to be desired.

4. COMPLEXITY OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

The complexity of ecumenical dialogue can be drawn following from development of history over centuries and from the perspective of understanding the meaning and goal of ecumenism which determines the principles and practice of ecumenism. However, this paper makes recourse from the 16th Century, not to disregard and limit history but it is a period were the wave of reformation brought into lime-light a division that remains evident up to this present age. Martin Luther detached himself from the *oikoumene* (whole inhabited) with the envisioned teaching of a new doctrine but also to reduce the authority of the Pope and the Catholic Church to which he knew very well the truth behind it, to a level of a *partikularkirche* diminishing the universal sense, to the Church of a particular community and stressing the Bible as the center of authority with salvation only attained through faith much less than deeds²². Furthermore, he started teaching contrary doctrines undermining the traditional teaching of the catholic church. Among the teachings propagated by Luther accusing the catholic church included.

Sale of indulgence to which effect reduced punishment. He said this contradicted seeking forgiveness and redemption brought by Christ and that his salvation depended on God alone and other things would not count, and he did not believe in penance and mortification²³.

The other reformists like Zwingli and Calvin also followed suit with their reformation agenda. Zwingli for instance brought a lot of liturgical changes and interference on traditional practices like, abolishing fast days, removed images,

²¹ Cf. Francis. *Ugandan Martyrs*, "Continue to Proclaim Jesus Christ and the Power of His Cross". <<https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2015/11/pope-francis-ugandan-martyrs-continue-to-proclaim-jesus-christ-and-the-power-of-his-cross.aspx>> [consulted: 30 December 2020].

²² Cf. S. Leibfried, W. Winter. *Ships of church and state in the sixteenth century reformation and counter reformation. Setting sail for the modern state*. In M. Weber. *Lecture series MWP 5* (2014) p. 5-9.

²³ Cf. R. WILDE. *Indulgences and their Role in the Reformation*. <<https://www.thoughtco.com/indulgences-their-role-in-the-reformation-1221776>> [consulted: 7 January 2021].

banned music, and contradicted the catholic belief on transubstantiation. Meanwhile, Calvin propagated the doctrine on predestination claiming that, we cannot do much about our salvation because God has already predestined our destiny²⁴.

These and many other teachings of the propagandists contradicted the position of the catholic doctrine, tradition and practice which eventually led to the separation of our brothers and yet these remain a guiding principle in the life of our departed brothers the protestants. Uganda is not exceptional of the same.

Whereas there has been witnesses of common ecumenical celebrations like, the ecumenical way of the cross. Many dioceses in the past years organize joint way of the cross with marching in towns and concluding in an agreed church venue. Usually, it is a shared responsibility in terms of organization and giving a reflection of the day. This has been one of the great achievements and identity of ecumenical dialogue in Uganda which has brought many Christians together and presented a true image of Christ in both groups.

Many times, there have also been joint press releases condemning some moral issues among others, defending of human rights, civic roles..., we count such press releases as strengths worth pushing forward with an open heart and the spirit of truth.

Translation of Bibles into the local languages have also been one of the engagements that came about because of ecumenical dialogue and we now have bible translated into several local languages. The churches engaged the bible society to this effect, and this is counted among the greatest achievements brought about because of ecumenical dialogue.

It has also fostered reconciliation among communities which was spoiled resulting from effect of history and struggle for relevance and dominance among each religious grouping which eventually led to accusations, quarrels, and divisions. Such unhealthy relationships have many times been handled during ecumenical dialogue. The above are some of the fruits of ecumenical dialogue that can make one conclude that it is truly important to embrace ecumenical dialogue as means to witnessing the gospel of Christ as a family of Christian believers.

However, there have also been scores of contentions ranging from historical attachments and differences in doctrines to social life like struggle for school foundation body, land disputes, selective employment based on religion, extending court summons to the different registered trustees, religious politics, false accusations, doctrinal differences, blackmails, among others, which does not only undermine the call to ecumenical dialogue but also creates a confusion making it appear more in principle than in practice. Uganda is not short of well laid principles for ecumenical dialogue which have contributed to some achievements, but neither

²⁴ Cf. R.P. McBrien. *Catholicism*. New York: Harper San Francisco Publishers 1994 p. 635.

are they short of such controversies as reflected above and this is the kind of enigma that leaves one with questions to be reflected upon.

Considering such complexity, how meaningful is it to sit together and discuss doctrinal, moral, pastoral, political and social issues? Have things changed or new challenges have emerged on top of the challenges before? These questions are all rather complex in themselves but can best be answered in how we understand the concept «ecumenism». We may describe it using words associated to unity, embracing, accommodating, evangelizing, understanding, solidarity, oneness etcetera. The goal of ecumenical dialogue should be motivated by the fragments as above and to which goal is the unity of the church²⁵.

The question that one may ask is that is it possible to achieve the above description in ecumenical dialogue? To respond to such a question, the point of departure should be driven back to Genesis 1:27, that God created man in His own image. The unifying factor stems from creation time and there are issues that affect generally the human person irrespective of being Catholic or Protestant and this cannot be handled in remoteness but would demand a common front from every human person which calls for unity.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively therefore, with the experience of COVID-19, we have experienced the frailty of the human person and we are a family in suffering. We cannot afford but accept that we are vulnerable in whole not as an individual. We need to restore ourselves in Unity because this is the intention and concern of the church and God only founded one Church and one Church only and the Christ whom every believer claim true inheritance from is not divided²⁶. We need to develop personal will and open our hearts to truth so that the Holy Spirit can guide us to this effect. This truth however may inspire us to change our way of life and approach to many things including some of the doctrinal issues which may not be compromised but even with such strength in face, we remain to be saved by accepting Christ who am sure will never support division.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Francis: *Ugandan Martyrs*, "Continue to Proclaim Jesus Christ and the Power of His Cross". <<https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2015/11/pope-francis-ugandan-martyrs-continue-to-proclaim-jesus-christ-and-the-power-of-his-cross.aspx>>.

²⁵ Cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council. *Decree on Ecumenism Unitatis Redintegratio* (21 November 1964) No. 1. In: *The Documents of Vatican II. With Notes and Index*. Rome: St Paul's 2013 p. 207-222.

²⁶ Cf. *ibidem*.

- Gale H.P.: *Uganda and the Mill Hill Fathers*. London: Macmillan Co. Ltd 1959.
- History of the Church of Uganda*. <<https://churchofuganda.org/about/history>>.
- Johnston H.: *A history of the Colonization of Africa by Alien Races*. London: Cambridge University Press 1913².
- Kinnear G.D.: *Saint Daniel Comboni, The Man and his message: An Anthropology of his writings*. New and Revised edition. Rome: Comboni Missionaries Generalate 2019.
- Kisekka W.: *A Contextual Interpretation of Archbishop Janani Luwum's Model of Non-Violence Resistance and Church-State Relations in Contemporary Uganda*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwazulu-Natal 2008.
- Leibfried S., inter W.: *Ships of church and state in the sixteenth century reformation and counter reformation. Setting sail for the modern state*. In M. Weber, *Lecture series MWP 5* (2014).
- McBrien R.P.: *Catholicism*. New York: Harper San Francisco Publishers 1994.
- Neil S. [et al.]: *Concise Dictionary of the Christian World Mission*. London: United Society for Christian Literature 1971.
- Okristo B.K.: *Katolika Ka Dini Megwa*. Italy: Giogani Printing Press-Castiglione 2016⁸.
- Ritschl D.: *Dialogue*. In Muller K. [et al.], *Dictionary of Missions. Theology, history, perspectives*. Eugene: Wipf and Stock Publishers 1999.
- Second Vatican Ecumenical Council: *Decree on Ecumenism Unitatis Redintegratio* (21 November 1964). In: *The Documents of Vatican II. With Notes and Index* 2013.
- Skolimowski H.: *Preamble. Why Must We Change*. In: *Journal of the International Society for Universal Dialogue*. "Dialogue and Universalism" 23:2013 No 4.
- Sundkler B.: *A history of the Church in Africa*. New York: Cambridge University Press 2000.
- The African Bible, Pauline Publications Africa*. Nairobi Kenya 2005.
- The Arrival of Christian Missionaries*. <<http://www.Traveltoeastfrica.com/see/history/the-arrival-of-christian-missionaries-1877.html>>.
- The Constitution of Uganda*. Uganda: Kampala 1995.
- Tusingire F.: *Evangelization of Uganda; Challenges and Strategies*. Kisubi: Mariianum publishing Company 2003.
- Wild R.: *Indulgences, and their Role in the Reformation*. <<https://www.thoughtco.com/indulgences-their-role-in-the-reformation-1221776>>.

WYZWANIA DIALOGU EKUMENICZNEGO W UGANDZIE

Streszczenie: Chrześcijaństwo jest jedną z powszechnie wyznawanych religii w Ugandzie. Konstytucja Ugandy gwarantuje wolność wyznania dla każdego obywatela. Artykuł przedstawia historię działalności misyjnej w Ugandzie oraz współczesną sytuację religijno-społeczną. Katolicy w Ugandzie wiernie trzymają się Stolicy Apostolskiej, natomiast protestanci i anglikanie podążają za duchem Marcina Lutera. Aktualne wyzwania kulturowo-społeczne i polityczne skłaniają obie strony do dialogu ekumenicznego. Ważne jest zatem prawdziwe zrozumienie istoty ekumenizmu.

Słowa kluczowe: Uganda, chrześcijaństwo, katolicyzm, działalność misyjna, ekumenizm, dialog ekumeniczny.