

Chapter One

THE HISTORY OF AMECEA

AMECEA stands for “Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa” It is a Catholic service organization for the National Episcopal Conferences of the eight countries of Eastern Africa, namely Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. Djibouti and Somalia are affiliate members.

The association enables the Bishops’ Conferences of these countries to do together what they could not do alone and offers them the machinery to work together on a regional basis.

1.1 Quest for collaboration and solidarity in the region

There were winds of change happening in both the Church and society during the 1950s in this region. During that time more and more African (diocesan) priests were being ordained and some were being trained overseas. African Bishops were already emerging namely Bishop Joseph Kiwanuka (Uganda), Bishop Maurice Otunga, later a Cardinal (Kenya), Bishop Cornelius Chitsulo (Nyasaland) and Bishop Laurian Rugambwa, later the first African Cardinal (Tanganyika). The Church was already undergoing a transition from a missionary to a local church.

The questions that bothered Bishops in the region, most of whom were missionaries, included:

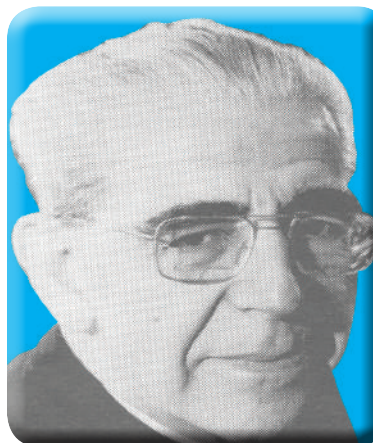
- How can the Church prepare herself for

the inevitable changes Vatican II was ushering in?

- Were the African clergy and religious prepared enough to take over and run the Church successfully and confidently?

There was therefore both a sense of pro-activeness as well as fear and anxiety on the part of the missionaries whose time, they believed, was running out.

Already before the Second Vatican Council the Bishops of Eastern Africa began having informal ways of meeting to discuss issues such as formation of African clergy, pastoral issues, especially Catholic education, which were vital to the mission of the Church during that time of colonial rule. But there was no established formal organizations for the Episcopacy in region.



*Archbishop Guido del Mestri
Apostolic Delegate*

In the year 1960 the Bishops of Tanganyika

met with the Apostolic delegate, His Grace Archbishop Guido del Mestri (in a plenary session) who was by then serving countries namely Kenya, Nyasaland (today's Malawi), Uganda, Sudan, Tanganyika and Northern Rhodesia (today's Zambia). In the meeting the Apostolic delegate proposed the establishment of some organization of English speaking Bishops of Eastern and Central Africa that would bring about many good results. He envisaged that not only ideas and information would be exchanged among the five hierarchies but also that real cooperation would develop and common ground for the establishment of common policies on many important questions in the region.

Tanganyika Bishops expressed their willingness to explore the possibilities. They proposed that the Secretaries General of the Catholic Secretariats in the five countries should meet and prepare the way forward. Meanwhile, the Apostolic Delegate, due to his office promised to make the necessary contacts with other Episcopal Conferences in the region.

In February 1961 del Mestri called a formal meeting of the Secretaries General from the Episcopal Conferences of these five countries.

The representatives suggested a study session of Local Ordinaries to exchange views in an attempt to find uniform policies and actions. The proposed theme was *"The Future of the Church in Africa."* Formal plans for the meeting were left for the steering committee which was held in Nairobi under the chairmanship of Bishop Joseph

Blomjous of Mwanza, Tanzania while having representatives from five countries and the Apostolic delegate. The meeting



Bishop Joseph Blomjous
Bishop of Mwanza Diocese, Tanzania

planned for the first assembly of the five Episcopal Conferences which was set to be in July 1961.

1.2 Interterritorial Episcopal Board of Eastern Africa -ITEBEA

A total of 47 Bishops from Kenya, Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland and Uganda and 1 from Sudan with the observer status gathered for their first Plenary meeting which took place in Dar-es-Salaam from 17th - 26th July 1961.

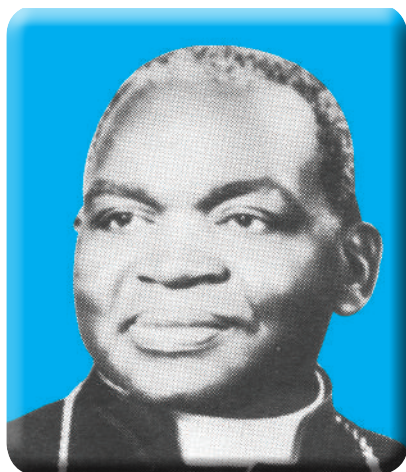
The theme of the plenary was: "The Future of the Church in Africa". Interestingly the agenda items for this first Plenary included:

- The Church and Media: Regional TV, Radio Station and Printing Press.
- Spiritual Formation for the Diocesan Priests.
- A Need for a Centre for Pastoral Renewal and Ongoing Formation.
- A Possibility of a Regional University

- or at least a University College.
- A Comprehensive Self - reliance Programme.
- The Future of Catholic Schools and Catholic Education (need for a Christian Religious Education Syllabus).
- Justice and Peace Issues in the Region.

The agenda tell us that although it was a regional gathering, the Bishops' vision was Panafrican.

The most important decision of the business session of the meeting was to continue with this type of regional cooperation. It was therefore decided to set up the Inter-Regional Episcopal Board of Eastern Africa (ITEBEA) which had Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa, by then the only Cardinal in the region as its honorary member and other Bishop Representatives from the five founding conferences who



***Bishop Joseph Kiwanuka
Uganda***

would meet once a year. The meeting elected as ITEBEA's first Chairman the Most

Reverend Adam Kozlowiecki, the Archbishop (Later Cardinal) of Lusaka.

Initially, ITEBEA was not to be a permanent structure, but rather a study forum where Bishops could meet time and again and



***Fr Killian Flynn
The First Secretary General of AMECEA***

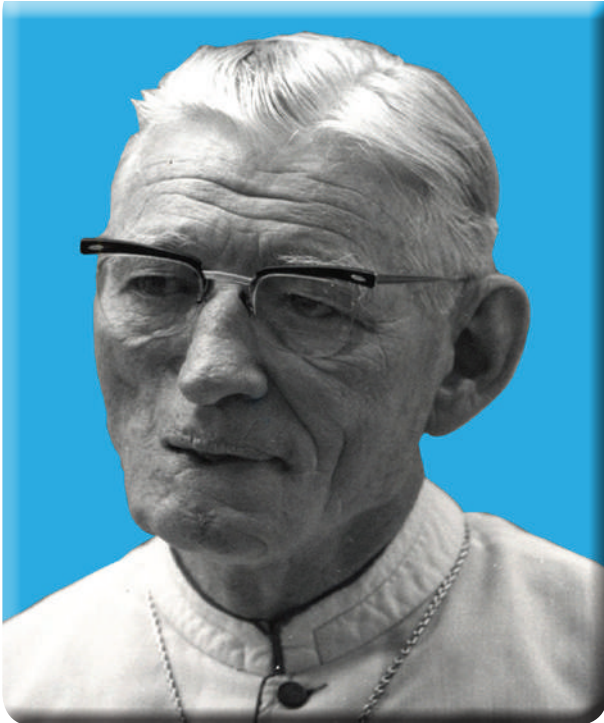
together reflect on pastoral issues of common interest within the region. This was why they elected a part-time Secretary, Father Killian Flynn, OFM Cap from Zambia who by that time was the Secretary General for the Bishops' Conference of Northern Rhodesia. The transformation of ITEBEA was needed and in August 1964 the decision was passed to establish a permanent office in Nairobi, Kenya. Fr Killian Flynn was officially declared to be the full-time Secretary General of ITEBEA.

In a nutshell the beginnings of ITEBEA were characterized by the presence of prophetic and foresighted church leaders. The original intention of ITEBEA was to be a regional forum for collaborative study and reflection on pastoral issues of common regional interest.

1.3 The Beginning of AMECEA

The Second Vatican Council provided the opportunity for members of ITEBEA to have their meeting. This time the meeting was held in Rome at St Anselmo College in November 1964. Its main agenda was to review a draft constitution for their organization which they approved. It was also at this meeting that the name of the organization was changed from ITEBEA to the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA). Bishop Vincent McCauley became the first chairman, a post he held until the year 1973.

Slowly AMECEA began to assert its influence and fulfill its objectives through various projects with only one person (Secretary General) in the office.



***Bishop Vincent McCauley
The First Chairman under AMECEA***

The AMECEA Secretariat used other non-departmental specialists to run some of its programs even in international representation. For example, Dr Schroeder, the Medical Secretary of the Tanzania Episcopal Conference (TEC) represented AMECEA in the medical field.

In the course of time the need for full time departmental specialists came to the fore-front at different times for various fields. Thus, AMECEA resolved to put in place some departments to work with the Secretary General and Chairman to meet the needs of the Church in the region. The first department was Social Communications



***Rev Fr Joseph Healey,
The First Social Communication
Secretary of AMECEA***

which was established after the decision of the Bishops during the plenary session of the year 1967. Fr Joseph Healey, M.M was appointed as the first director of Social Communications department. Fr Joseph Healey coordinated Social Communications activities between the member nations in areas of training, research, production and collaboration with similar organizations in



AMECEA Secretariat offices at Gitanga Road 49, in Nairobi, Kenya

electronic and traditional media.

Fr Killian Flynn OFM cap who served as the first Secretary of the association since its inception made clear his desire to retire

and transfer his position to a qualified African. Inability to find the candidate forced Fr Flynn to continue up to 1972 when his religious superiors asked him to return to Ireland to take a position assisting in the



Apostolic delegate Archbishop Guido del Mestri with the Tanzanian Bishops: From Left: Bishop Carol Msakila, Bishop Gervas Nkalanga, Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa, Bishop James Sangu, Archbishop Guido del Mestri and Bishop Renatus Butibubage

formation of young friars. The circumstances made Fr Joseph Healey to be appointed in August 1972 as Acting Secretary General. Fr Flynn died shortly after his return to Ireland in December 3, 1972. However, he is remembered as the “Father of AMECEA” during its first years.

After Bishop McCauley’s resignation from the Diocese of Fort Portal was accepted then he himself decided temporarily to take the Secretary General’s position. On January 15, 1973 the AMECEA Executive Board confirmed Bishop McCauley appointment as Secretary General of AMECEA.

Bishop McCauley moved to Nairobi serving simultaneously as the Secretary General and Chairman of AMECEA. The first thing in his mind was to plan for new buildings at Gitanga Road 49 premises. Construction began after the approval of the Executive Board. Misereor and Missio were the primary funders of the project. The offices were opened on July 1, 1975 but the

residence was opened in September 1975. This is the current headquarters of the association – AMECEA. The secretariat was meant to be a home for the Bishops while they are in Nairobi as well as a house for the AMECEA staff.

In the year 1973 Bishop James Odongo of Tororo, Uganda was elected as AMECEA chairman during the Plenary Meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya and so replaced Bishop McCauley.

Obviously the Executive Board was looking for someone to replace Bishop McCauley once he retires. The work of looking for the person started in the 1976 Plenary Meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya. In February 1977, Fr Joseph Mukwaya at that time working in the social communications commission in Uganda Episcopal Conference was officially appointed as an assistant Secretary General. In September 1978 the Executive Board appointed Fr Joseph Mukwaya to assume the Secretary General’s position in the place of Bishop McCauley. Fr Joseph Mukwaya

was ratified in the plenary which took place in Zomba, Malawi in August 1979. In October 1982 Bishop McCauley travelled back to his home country USA for treatment. He died in the morning of November 1, 1982 while undergoing surgery.



***Edgar Maranta Hall -Msimbazi Centre -Archdiocese of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania;
The Venue of the First Meeting of AMECEA in July 1961***

Chapter Two

GROWTH AND EXPANSION OF AMECEA

2.1 More Countries join AMECEA

As it was noted AMECEA formally ITEBEA, was founded by five countries: Kenya, Tanganyika, Northern Rhodesia, Nyasaland, and Uganda; while Sudan had only an observer status. During the December 1973 Plenary meeting held at St Thomas Aquinas

in Nairobi, Kenya Sudan was granted full membership. At this Plenary, the Episcopal Conference of Ethiopia (which included Eritrea) submitted a request to initiate contact with the association. Eventually, in the year 1979, Ethiopia was also granted full membership during the plenary assembly held in Zomba, Malawi.

Table 1: Population in the First Member Countries of AMECEA by the year 1972

	Country	Population	Catholics	% of Catholics
1	Kenya	12,091,000	3,397,500	28.1%
2	Malawi	4,693,000	1,173,200	25.0%
3	Tanzania	14,002,000	4,340,600	31.0%
4	Uganda	10,332,000	4,132,800	40.0%
5	Zambia	4,584,000	1,375,200	30.0%
	TOTAL	45,702,000	14,419,300	31.55%

NB: The rest of the populations are Moslems, Protestant Churches and Traditional Religion believers.

Table 2: Church Growth in AMECEA Countries 1961 – 2009

		1961	1993	2005	2009
1.	AMECEA Countries	5	8	8	8
2.	Total Population	31,841,000	170,450,000	234,671,000	261,148,996
3.	Catholics	5,371,073	26,077,000	41,648,000	47,605,304
4.	Dioceses	47	99	113	116
5.	Priests	2,871	5,740	7,767	8,696
6.	Brothers	1,053	1,664	6,977	7,146
7.	Sisters	4,416	14,304	18,406	20,773

2.2 AMECEA Departments

AMECEA expanded its operation by creating departments to work with Secretary General and Chairman to meet the needs of the Church in the region.

i. SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT-1968

The first department to be established

apostolate. The department works in collaboration with National Communications Coordinators in the eight countries: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

The AMECEA Social Communications Department is always dynamic and alive. The changes which occur in the world today call the department to look at the realities, envision it where it want to go be, and move

Executive Secretaries for Social Communication Department in History:

Rev. Fr Joseph Healey, M.M.	(USA)	(1968-1974)
Rev. Fr Joseph Mukwaya	(Became a Bishop -Uganda)	(1974-1979)
Rev. Fr Ladislaus Mosha	(Tanzania)	(1979-1985)
Rev. Fr Fortunatus Lukanima	(Became a Bishop- Tanzania)	(1985-1986)
Rev. Fr Paul Uria	(Tanzania)	(1987-1990)
Rev. Fr Namwera Leonard	(Malawi)	(1990-1990)
Rev. Sr Stella Nduku	(Acting - Kenya)	(1990-1994)
Rev. Sr Florence Anaso	(Acting - Uganda)	(1994-1995)
Rev. Sr Florence Anaso	(Uganda)	(1996-1999)
Rev. Sr Agnes Lucy Lando	(Kenya)	(1999-2000)
Rev. Sr Florence Anaso	(Uganda)	(2000-2001)
Rev. Fr Eugene Ngoma	(Acting -Malawi)	(2001-2002)
Rev. Fr Moses Hamungole	(Zambia)	(2002-2008)
Rev. Fr Chrisantus Ndaga	(Tanzania)	(2008-to date)

at the AMECEA secretariat was Social Communications in 1968. Fr Joseph Healey, MM was the first director of the department. In the year 1970 the department began to make a significant contribution by offering Social Communications workshops in broadcasting and journalism.

AMECEA Social Communications Department is an organ of liaison, coordination and animation among AMECEA countries in the communication

strategically towards its mission. In order to get this done Social Communications department has to clarify and plan carefully by knowing the aims, objectives, the audience, the proper media to reach to and sometimes the obstacles of the communication process. There are strategic issues which must be addressed.

The main objectives of establishing the department in the AMECEA region were:-

- To promote evangelization through the

use of Media in the AMECEA Region. This entails revitalizing and continued emphasis on the role of the Small Christian Communities in Evangelization.

- To promote effective communication within the AMECEA Region and beyond (IMBISA, SECAM, etc.)
- To promote networking and sharing of human and material resources and professional training within the region.
- To enhance internal communication among members of the local Church through better diffusion of information.
- To set up effective systems that will guide the dissemination of information to the public.
- To ensure that Social Communication within the Catholic Church in the AMECEA region is effectively well coordinated and responsive to the growing social, political and cultural challenges.



Rev. Fr Chrisantus Ndaga
Secretary for Social Communications

Preferential option for sustainable development against poverty, oppression

and marginalization of people and persons affected and infected with HIV/AIDS. In addition, fight against injustices and promote reconciliation as a better option for obtaining peace in the region.

- To provide guidance and a common foundation for all people involved in Church communication, in particular, media practitioners and new entrants.
- To emphasize the importance of Social Communication and foster the training and on-going professional formation for all those involved in the Communication Apostolate. The priority is to empower the Church leaders, Religious men and women and the Laity, to play their active role in the Church and society.

ii. AMECEA DOCUMENTATION SERVICE (ADS) -1973

A common concern was that older Churches knew very little about the younger developing Churches. In an effort to solve this problem AMECEA bishops in 1973 approved the initiation of a documentation service which had the following objectives:

- To serve the Church in the five AMECEA countries by sharing pastoral experiences of the Church in one place with all the other jurisdictions of Eastern Africa.
- To offer the universal Church a share in the on-going picture of the developing local Church in Eastern Africa with its initiatives, successes and problems.

Rev Fr Joseph Kelly, CSSp was appointed as the Director of ADS and in June 1973 he

started the office. AMECEA Documentation Service (ADS) was launched in order to facilitate the dissemination of pastoral information and to provoke pastoral reflection and exchange of pastoral views in the region and beyond.

In 2002 AMECEA Documentation Department merged and was fully incorporated into the AMECEA Social Communications Department.

iii. APOSTOLATE TO THE NOMADS OF AMECEA (ANA) 1976

The Bishops agreed in the Plenary Assembly of 1976 to form an apostolate to the nomads to evangelize the pastoralist people of both nomadic and semi-nomadic lifestyles.

This is a particularly demanding task because of their unique way of life, socio-cultural organization and their traditional religion in particular. Thus, it deserves a particular attention from the local Churches. The ANA's office at AMECEA has been an expression of this attention to the church in Eastern Africa. This department is currently under the direction of the AMECEA Pastoral Coordinator. The department was headed by Dr Hans Stoks until 2006.

iv. PASTORAL DEPARTMENT 1994

This department was established in 1994. The first head of Department was Rev Fr Wolfgang Schoenecker who headed the department until 2002. The purpose of establishing the department is:

- To offer inspiration and support to pastoral departments of AMECEA churches or dioceses.

- To facilitate the exchange of ideas, research, efforts, pastoral experiences and initiatives with sister churches.
- To identify pastoral problems and propose relevant pastoral strategies and policies. This is achieved through visits, meetings, seminars and publications.

v. COUNCIL OF THE LAITY FOR EASTERN AFRICA (COLEA) -1997



***Rev. Prof. Joseph Kato**
Secretary for Pastoral Department*

This is a desk under the Pastoral department of AMECEA. It is known as COLEA (Council of the Laity for Eastern Africa). It was re-established in 1997. The objectives of COLEA are:

- To assist and encourage the laity to understand and fulfill their evangelizing mission.
- To promote dialogue between the laity and Bishops, priests and religious in order to build up the church as a family of God.
- To foster human and Christian formation and technical training of the laity.
- To encourage the exchange of information/experiences among the AMECEA laity.
- The day to day activities are taken on

behalf of the Bishop Chairman of the Department by the Secretary of the Department under the direction of the Secretary General.

**vi. AMECEA JUSTICE AND PEACE
DESK -2002**

Historical background of the desk

The Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace was created by Pope Paul VI in 1967 after Vatican II as a need to promote the ideals and the values of social justice and world peace. The particular work of the office can be divided into two phases. The first one started with the creation of the Commission in 1967 to 1976 when "*Motu Proprio Justitium et Pacem*" was published. This period was characterized by a phenomenal growth of national Justice and Peace Commissions especially in Latin America, Western Europe, North America, US and Canada; a bit less in Asia and Africa with an exception of South Africa. Initially these commissions operated in consultation with the Pontifical Commission but over time, national commissions were responding to their local social needs. This trend made the commissions to carry out their activities with little if any reference to the Pontifical Commission.

The second phase was marked by the call to the local commissions by Pope John Paul II to collaborate more with the Pontifical Commission in JP activities. In his Apostolic Constitution of 1988, Pope John Paul II reorganized the Commission by putting it under the Roman Curia. Further, it was to relate to particular Churches through the National Episcopal Conferences. Social Doctrine of the Church was placed at the

heart of Justice and Peace work. The then Undersecretary of the Pontifical Commission Rev. Roger Heckel, S.J wrote to the Episcopal Conferences asking them to deepen their direct relationship with the office for the benefit of local churches. To date, Justice and Peace Commissions at different levels of the Church work in collaboration with Pontifical Commission drawing insights from Gospel message of Jesus Christ and the lived experience of the Church's teaching Magisterium, a 'true expert in humanity.'

Consistent within the above spirit, African Bishops in their message of the 12th SECAM Plenary Assembly (October 2000) committed themselves to work for justice in society and in the Church structures. They also made an appeal to the African and International communities to commit themselves to strive for Justice and Peace, and to stop the exploitation and domination of the African people.

Faithful to this call the AMECEA Justice and Peace Desk was formed to make this commitment a reality in society and in the Church. In February 2002, the AMECEA Justice and Peace Desk was established at the AMECEA Secretariat under the Pastoral Department.

Since its inception, the Desk has had two Coordinators, the first one being Sr. Begona Inara of the Missionaries Sisters of our Lady of Africa. She was in charge of the Desk from its birth in 2002 to 2005. At the completion of her mandate, she was succeeded by Rev. Fr. Jude Waweru who joined AMECEA in July 2004 and worked with Sr. Begona for a year before assuming the full responsibility of heading the Desk. Justice and Peace ministry has made

significant achievements in addressing issues of integral human development that geared to promote human dignity.



***Rev. Fr Jude Waweru
Justice and Peace Coordinator***

The major tasks of the Desk include:-

- Implementing Justice and Peace Resolutions emanating from the Plenary Assemblies of the Bishops, stipulations of the AMECEA Executive Board and lately the Synod Propositions pertaining to Justice and Peace.
- Gathering and sharing information on issues related to Justice and Peace affecting the region.
- Networking with National Justice and Peace Commissions in order to have a

common knowledge on the prevailing situations in our region and how our commissions are responding to them.

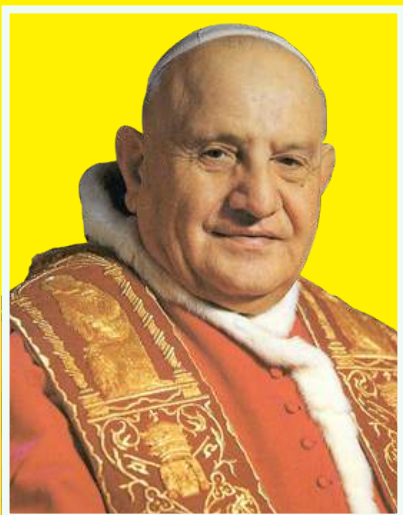
- Capacity building and supporting Justice and Peace Commissions mainly at National level.
- Fostering commitment of the Church and Christians to live the preferential option of the poor.
- Formation programs on Justice and Peace and Social Teachings of the Church, in order to create awareness on these issues and foster a commitment.
- Working towards the resolution of conflicts and building a culture of peace in the region.
- Lobby and advocacy on Socio-Political and Economic justice within AMECEA.

The challenges that face the Desk are many considering the depth of human suffering within this region that needs redress, but rather than despair, we work with the conviction that it is a greater injustice not to act. The work of Justice and Peace is one of the core businesses of Christianity and therefore a duty of every Christian.

Chapter Three

AMECEA HIERARCHICAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

3.1 Popes in the History of AMECEA



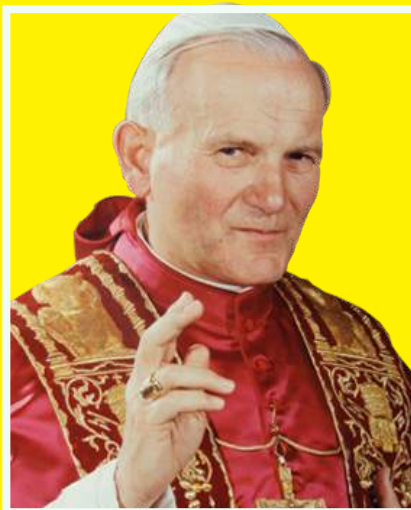
*His Holiness Pope John
XXIII (1958-1963)*



*His Holiness Pope Paul
VI (1963-1978)*



*His Holiness Pope John
Paul I (1978)*



*His Holiness Pope John
Paul II (1978-2005)*



*His Holiness Pope Bene-
dict XVI (2005- To Date)*

3.2 AMECEA Patrons in History

The Cardinals in the region are considered by their virtue of the office as Honorary Patrons. In the history of AMECEA these are:



*Laurian Cardinal
Rugambwa.*

*Appointed by Pope John
XXIII on 28 March 1960*



*Maurice Cardinal
Otunga.*

*Appointed by Pope Paul
VI on 5 March 1973*



*Emmanuel Cardinal
Nsubuga.*

*Appointed by Pope Paul
VI on 24 May 1976*



*Paulos Cardinal
Tzadua.*

*Appointed by Pope John
Paul II on 25 May 1985*



*Emmanuel Cardinal
Wamala.*

*Appointed by Pope John
Paul II on 26 Nov. 1994*



*Adam Cardinal
Kozłowiecki.*

*Appointed by Pope John
Paul II on 21 Feb. 1998*



*Polycarp Cardinal
Pengo.*

*Appointed by Pope John
Paul II on 21 Feb. 1998*



*Gabriel Cardinal Zubeir
Wako.*

*Appointed by Pope John
Paul II on 21 Oct. 2003*



*John Cardinal Njue.
Appointed by Pope
Benedict XVI on 24
Nov. 2007*



*Medardo Cardinal
Mazombwe.
Elected by Pope Benedict
XVI on 20 Nov. 2010*

3.3 The AMECEA Plenary Assembly Authority

The AMECEA Plenary Assembly meeting in business session is the supreme authority within the Association and all office bearers and other bodies of the association are ultimately answerable to this authority.

The Plenary Assembly is composed of the following:

- All members of the Episcopal Conferences that enjoy full membership.
- All members of Associate Episcopal Conferences.
- All Diocesan Bishops of Affiliated Dioceses.
- All Cardinals in or from jurisdictions in AMECEA countries.
- Papal representatives in the countries of the Member Episcopal Conferences as observers.

The Plenary Assembly meets in ordinary session after every three years. However, an extraordinary meeting can be called whenever it is deemed necessary by the Executive Board or by a majority of the full member Conferences of the Association.

3.4 AMECEA Executive Board

The authority over all AMECEA's activities rests with the Plenary Assembly of all the Bishops of the AMECEA countries. Between the Plenary Assemblies, the Executive Board takes the necessary decisions, according to the AMECEA priorities. The Executive Board is composed of the Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Association, one designated representative or his substitute from each full and associate Member Episcopal Conferences, Cardinals in the AMECEA Region, and the Secretary General as secretary. The members of the Executive

Board and their substitutes are elected by their respective Episcopal Conferences to serve for a three year term, from one ordinary Plenary Assembly to the next.

At this time when AMECEA is celebrating 50 years (2011), the Executive Board Members are:



***Most Rev Archbishop Tarcisio Ziyaye
AMECEA Chairman***



***Rev. Dr Pius Rutechura
AMECEA Secretary General***



*Rt Rev Phillip Sulumeti
- (Kenya) -Vice Chairman
AMECEA.*



*Rt Rev Kidane Yebio -
(Eritrea) - Chairman
Pastoral Dept*



*Rt Rev Emmanuel Obbo -
(Uganda) - Chairman
Social Communications*



*Rt Rev Paul Duffy -
(Zambia) - Chairman Justice
and Peace*



*Rt Rev Joseph Zuza -
(Malawi) - Chairman Staffing
Committee*



*Rt Rev Isaac Amani -
(Tanzania) - Vice-Chairman
Staffing Committee*



*Abune Tesfasselassie Medhin
- (Ethiopia)*



*Rt Rev Daniel Adwok
- (Sudan)*

**AMECEA Executive
Board Members
2008 - 2011**



*AMECEA Executive Board
1967-1970. From left:
Bishop Nicholas Agnozzi
(Zambia);
Archbishop Maurice
Otunga (Kenya);
Rev Killian Flynn
(Secretary General);
Bishop Vincent McCauley
(Uganda);
Bishop Jean-Louis Jobidon
(Malawi);
Bishop James Sangu
(Tanzania)*



AMECEA Executive Board 1970-1973: From Left Bishop James Sangu (Tanzania); Archbishop Maurice Otunga (Kenya); Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa (Patron); Bishop Vincent McCauley (Chairman); Archbishop Emmanuel Nsubuga (Uganda); Bishop James Corboy (Zambia); Bishop Jean-Louis Jobidon (Malawi -Not present in the picture)



A group photo of AMECEA Executive Board members 1973-1979. From left: Bishop Medardo Mazombwe, (Zambia); Bishop Raphael Ndingi Mwana 'a Nzeki (Kenya); Bishop James Odongo -CHAIRMAN (Uganda); Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa -Patron (Tanzania); Maurice Cardinal Otunga -Patron (Kenya); Archbishop Emmanuel Nsubuga (Uganda); Bishop James Sangu (Tanzania); Bishop Patrick Katilombe - VICE CHAIRMAN (Malawi) and Bishop Vincent McCauley -Secretary General AMECEA



A group photo of AMECEA Executive Board members in 1982: From Left Rt Rev Mathias Chimole (Malawi); Rev Phillip Sulumeti (Kenya); H.E. Maurice Cardinal Otunga (Patron); Rt Rev Castor Sekwa (Tanzania); Rt Rev Medardo Mazombwe (Chairman); Rt Rev Joseph Willigers (Uganda); H.E.Emmanuel Cardinal Nsubuga (Patron); Rt Rev Gabriel Zubeir Wako (Sudan); Rt Rev James Spaita (Zambia); Rev Fr Joseph Mukwanya (Secretary General)

3.5 AMECEA Chairmen in History

The Chairman of AMECEA is elected by the Plenary Assembly and remains in office until the next ordinary Plenary Assembly. In the history of AMECEA these are:



*Most Rev Adam
Kozłowiecki (Zambia)
(1961-1964)*



*Rt Rev Vincent McCauley
(Uganda)
(1964-1973)*



*Rt Rev James Odongo
(Uganda)
(1973-1979)*



*Rt Rev Medardo
Mazombwe (Zambia)
(1979-1985)*



*Rt Rev Dennis de Jong
(Zambia)
(1986-1989)*



*Most Rev Nicodemus
Kirima (Kenya)
(1989-1995)*



*Most Rev Josephat Lebulu
(Tanzania)
(1995-2002)*



*Most Rev Paul Bakyenga
(Uganda)
(2002-2008)*



*Most Rev Tarcisio Ziyaye
(Malawi)
(2008-to date)*

3.6 AMECEA Secretaries General in History

The Secretary General is appointed by the Plenary Assembly. He works in close collaboration with the Chairman, implementing the mandates of the Plenary Assemblies and the AMECEA Board. He maintains contact with all involved in the work of AMECEA Departments and Institutions which have been established to meet the requirements mandated by the Bishops.

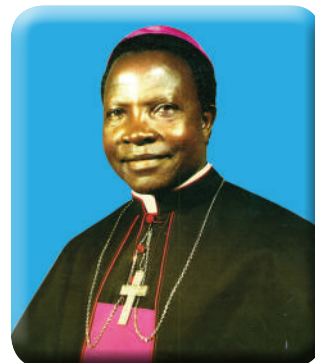
The following are the AMECEA Secretaries General in History:



*Rev. Fr Killian Flynn OFM
(Zambia)-1961-1972*



*Rt Rev Vincent McCauley
(Uganda) -1973-1979*



*Rev Fr Joseph Mukwaya
(later Bishop -Uganda)
1979-1982*



*Rev. Fr John Mbinda
(Kenya)-1982-1986*



*Rev. Fr Fortunatus Lukanima
(Later Bishop Tanzania)
- 1986-1989*



*Rev. Fr Peter Lwaminda
(Zambia)-1989-1999*



*Rev. Fr Peter Mulomole
(Malawi)-1999-2002*



*Msgr Michael Rurwa
(Kenya)-2002-2005*



*Rev. Fr Pius Rutechura
(Tanzania)-2005-to date*

Chapter Four

AMECEA VISION, MISSION, OBJECTIVES AND MANDATE

The original vision and the core values at the founding of AMECEA were to have a common pastoral approach to issues of common regional interests. The mission was to foster collaboration and solidarity among Bishops for advancement of the common good within the region. AMECEA has been adjusting to the vision and mission without losing the sight of the founders.

The current vision, mission and mandate of AMECEA which were refocused during the 14th Plenary Assembly in 2002 are:-

4.1 Vision

AMECEA: A Holy Spirit filled Family of God, Committed to Holistic Evangelization and Integral Development.

4.2 Mission

To Inspire and empower God's family in AMECEA to a credible and prophetic witness to Christ, by promoting unity, justice, peace, and solidarity through:

1. Deeper evangelization, constant conversion and prayer, inculturation, ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue;
2. Relevant formation of all agents of evangelization;
3. Revitalizing and continued empha-

sis on the role of the Small Christian Communities in evangelization;

4. Preferential option for the poor, oppressed and marginalized, particularly refugees, persons affected and infected with HIV/AIDS, and internally displaced people;
5. Empowering the Laity and the Religious men and women to play their active role in the Church and society;
6. Self-reliance in personnel and finances at all levels;
7. Networking, effective communication, and advocacy;
8. Poverty eradication, sustainable development and relevant response to all issues affecting God's family.

4.3 Objectives

The principal objectives of the Association are:

- Practice the spirit of collaboration and sharing among its members.
- Maintain a spirit of liaison and promote mutual relations among its members.
- Promote inter-communication and co-operation among local churches primarily in the countries of Eastern Africa: Eritrea, Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

- Study ways and means of promoting the apostolate in the light of official documents and according to the needs of the Catholic Church in Eastern Africa.
- Help study problems of common interest to the Catholic Church in Eastern Africa and to suggest possible solutions and co-coordinated actions.
- Further the dynamic presence of the Catholic Church in the integral development of the people of God in Eastern Africa.
- Mandate and set terms of reference for projects and institutions agreed upon by the members.

4.4 Mandate

The Mandate of AMECEA is of a pastoral nature and includes the following:

1. To make policies through the Plenary Assembly and entrust the execution of its resolutions to the Executive Board,
2. To inspire and facilitate a common vision;
3. To identify priority challenges in Church and society and finding common strategies and to respond to them at all levels, e.g. HIV/AIDS and poverty;
4. To facilitate exchange of pastoral programs through the AMECEA plenaries, publications, information, and pastoral visits;
5. To undertake research into areas of common interest and analysis of important data for the region;
6. To promote human rights, justice and peace, freedom of religion, advocacy for the oppressed, and good governance;
7. To coordinate and make regular evaluation of its programs, institutions, and activities, and take appropriate action.

Secretary General (AMECEA Secretariat) and National Episcopal Conferences, in accordance with the AMECEA Statutes;

4.5 Chairmen of the Conferences in the AMECEA Countries in 2011



*H.E. Gabriel Cardinal
Zubeir Wako
(Sudan)*



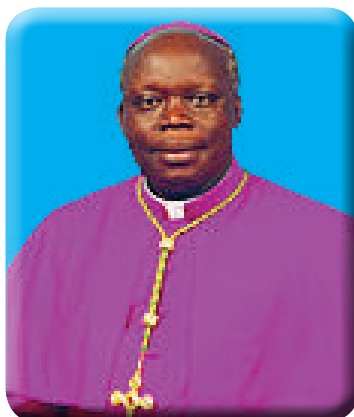
*H.E. John Cardinal Njue
(Kenya)*



*Most Rev Tarcisio Ziyaye
(Malawi)*



*Most Rev BerhaneYesus
Souraphiel
(Ethiopia)*



*Most Rev John Baptist
Odama
(Uganda)*



*Most Rev Thaddeus
Ruwa'ichi
(Tanzania)*



*Rt Rev George Lungu
(Zambia)*



*Rt Rev Menghsteab
Tsfamariam
(Eritrea)*

Chapter Five

DEVELOPMENTS OF AMECEA INSTITUTIONS

5.1 AMECEA Accountancy Course at NSTI

During the 1973 Plenary Assembly the Bishops discussed about the need for a training program for Church personnel in accounting.

The current situation necessitated greater accountability for funds and their disbursement. Thus, in January 1975, a one year certificate program in accounting was initiated by AMECEA at the Nyegezi Social Training Institute, (NSTI) currently the St Augustine University of Tanzania, (SAUT) located in Mwanza, Tanzania. The Episcopal Conference of Tanzania administered the program and 17 students joined that course in that year.



NSTI (Later SAUT) -Mwanza, Tanzania.

pastoral agents in AMECEA to renew themselves for the Church of tomorrow. API is the only Institute of its kind in the AMECEA region, which provides ongoing formation and renewal in a supportive setting enriched by dialogue among lay persons, religious men and women and clergy. This reflects the Church as the Family of God as described by the First African Synod. API is committed to training creative, effective, prophetic and open-minded pastoral leaders and agents of evangelization.

5.2 Ggaba Pastoral Institute

The AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API) is a Catholic Pastoral Institute of AMECEA, which offers a unique opportunity for

The genesis of this institute (API) dates back in 1967 when the AMECEA Executive Board discussed how the association could



Gaba Pastoral Institute which is now a Campus of CUEA in Eldoret, Kenya.

respond to the new catechetical challenges. The Board realized that schools were available for such training in Europe and the USA, but funding in such locales was not an easy thing. There was a need of establishing a catechetical institute which would be a training ground for Priests, Religious and Laity in matters of Catechesis, Pastoral, Liturgy and Applied Theology.

Archbishop Emmanuel Nsubuga (Later Cardinal) by then Ordinary of Kampala, Uganda gave the permission to use Ggaba Seminary building for the proposed institute. The AMECEA Plenary Assembly of 1967 gave the official approval of the project and Fr Ton Simons, WF was appointed as director of the Ggaba Pastoral institute. The AMECEA Ggaba Pastoral Institute was officially opened on 1 February 1968.

Rt Rev James Odongo welcomed fifty two participants for the pastoral program at API. The opening Mass for the institute was celebrated by H.E Maurice Cardinal Otunga on 24 February 1977.

The 16th AMECEA Plenary Assembly held in Lusaka, Zambia decided that API be incorporated into CUEA. Thus, it became CUEA Ggaba Campus. The campus opened its doors to the first group of seven students pursuing the Pre-university programme in September 2008. The population has since grown to 656 students by the 2009/2010 academic year.

5.3 Ggaba Publications

AMECEA Ggaba Publications is a department of AMECEA Pastoral Institute

AMECEA Pastoral Institute/GABADirectors in History

When it was in UGANDA

Rev Fr Tons Simons	W.F	(Netherlands)	(1968-1971)
Rev. Fr John C. Lamey	W.F	(Canada)	(1971-1974)

Since it was shifted to Eldoret -KENYA

Rev. Fr John C. Lamey	W.F	(Canada)	(1975-1986)
Rev Fr Alphonse Ndekimo		(Tanzania)	(1986-1993)
Rev Fr Joseph Gatamu		(Kenya)	(1993-1996)
Rev Dr Herman Kituuma		(Uganda)	(1996-1997)
Rev Prof. Joseph B. Kato		(Uganda)	(1998-2002)
Rev Fr Benjamin Kiriswa		(Kenya)	(2002-2008)
Rev. Dr Pius Sentumbwe		(Uganda)	(2002-to date)

The AMECEA Pastoral Institute (API/Gaba) was forced to move to Eldoret (Kenya) in 1976 due to political insecurity in Uganda during the reign of Idi Amini while retaining the original name "Ggaba". On 23 January 1977 the Chairman of AMECEA

(API/Ggaba) in Eldoret, Kenya. It was founded in December, 1967, at Ggaba - Kampala (Uganda) from where it was forced to move to Eldoret (Kenya) in 1976 due to unfavorable political climate under President Idi Amin.

AMECEA Ggaba Publications Directors in History

Ndugu Nsolo Mijere		(Zambia)	(1975-1979)
Rev. Fr. Roger Tessier	W.F	(Canada)	(1979-1984)
Rev. Fr. Felician N. Rwehikiza		(Tanzania)	(1984-1988)
Rev. Fr. Boniface K. Zabajungu		(Uganda)	(1988-1990)
Rev. Sr. Agatha Radoli		(Kenya)	(1990-2001)
Rev. Fr. Eugene Ngoma Mutinganyanda		(Malawi)	(2001-2003)
Rev. Sr. Justin C. Nabushawo		(Uganda)	(2004-2009)
Rev. Prof. Constance Bansikiza (CUEA Press)		(Uganda)	(2009-to date)

The publications provide material for Church renewal and help reflect and implement pastoral policies and priorities of AMECEA.

Among these priorities, is the development of Small Christian Communities, the need to inculturate Christianity in Africa, the search for Christian unity and dialogue with Islam and with African traditional religions, more meaningful forms of religious education, development, liberation, social justice and modern means of communicating the Word of God.

After the transition from API to becoming CUEA Gaba Campus took place, Ggaba Publications became a wing of CUEA Press while maintaining the original role and mission.

5.4 Blessed Bakanja AMECEA College (BBAC)

Blessed Bakanja AMECEA College was established in August 1998. It is a Regional theology Seminary cum house of formation for seminarians drawn from the eight AMECEA Countries.

All the seminarians study Theology at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa



Blessed Bakanja Buildings

(CUEA) with the intention of becoming Diocesan Priests. The major objective is to form true African and Catholic priests after the model of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is Teacher, Priest and Shepherd. This College was canonically erected as the major Inter-Regional Theological Seminary.

5.5 CHIEA to CUEA

In November 1973 Cardinal Angelo Rossi, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples requested the Apostolic Nuncio in Uganda, Archbishop Luigi Bellotti, to consult all African Episcopal Conferences about the possibility of a center of High Theological studies for the local clergy of the English speaking countries of this continent. AMECEA worked with SECAM on the idea and so formed the committee comprising representatives from each of the SECAM regions.

The committee had the following members: Most Rev Archbishop Francis Arinze (Nigeria) representing English speaking Africa; Most Rev George Daniel (South Africa) representing Southern African countries; Rt Rev Joseph Gasi (Sudan) representing Sudan and Ethiopia and Rt Rev Patrick Kalilombwe representing AMECEA who was also the chairman of the Committee. The meeting of this committee took place in Nairobi, Kenya at St Thomas Aquinas on July 10, 1976. After a thorough research of the possibility of having a Higher Institute in Africa the report proposed having two separate institutes in Africa: one in West Africa and another in East Africa for the English speaking. However the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples was in favor of only one Institute as the first step towards establishing the two institutes.

Eventually, AMECEA assumed the responsibility and put some plans of establishing the Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA). The Kenya Episcopal Conference had earmarked and donated 15 acres of land to AMECEA for the institute. A building committee was set up and which was estimated that the initial construction will cost USD 2 Million. The construction of the institute was completed in early 1984. However, before the construction the academic preparations

were made so that as soon as the construction was finished CHIEA could immediately admit students. Thus in August 1979 Rev Dr Paul Kalanda of Uganda was appointed as Acting Rector of CHIEA. Rev Dr Paul Kalanda did not remain long since he was appointed Bishop of Moroto Diocese, Uganda, thus the CHIEA Executive Committee met in Nairobi in February 1981 and appointed Rev Dr Augustine Ndeukoya from Tanzania as the new acting Rector of the institute.

On September 3, 1984 an inaugural Mass of thanksgiving was celebrated inside the new chapel of the Institute. The Chairman of AMECEA, by then Archbishop Medardo Mazombwe declared the Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA) officially open. A year later, that is August 18, 1985 CHIEA was formally opened by his Holiness Pope John Paul II on the occasion of the 43rd International Eucharistic Congress held in Nairobi, Kenya.

The AMECEA plenary meeting which was held in Moshi, Tanzania in April 1986 endorsed the proposal to make the feasibility study for the establishment of The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, (CUEA). Thus, negotiations with the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya towards the establishment of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) started. In 1989 the institute received from the government a "Letter of Interim Authority" as positive step towards achieving a Chartered Private University Status. On November 3, 1992 the then President of the Republic of Kenya His Excellency Daniel Arap Moi presented a civil Charter to CHIEA thus establishing it to be the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). H.E Maurice Cardinal Otunga became the first Chancellor of the university and Msgr Dr Deogratias Mbiku from Tanzania who replaced Msgr Dr Augustine Ndeukoya became the first Vice Chancellor of the University.



Visit of His Holiness Pope John Paul II to CHIEA on August 18, 1985, on the occasion of the 43rd International Eucharist Congress in Nairobi, Kenya



Formal opening of CHIEA by His Holiness Pope John Paul II on August 18, 1985, on the occasion of the 43rd International Eucharist Congress in Nairobi, Kenya

Chapter Six

AMECEA MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS

6.1 Catholic University of Eastern Africa - CUEA

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) is the regional university owned by the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA).

its establishment as a private university. The climax of the negotiations was the granting of the Civil Charter to CHIEA on 3 November 1992. This marked the birth of the university as a private institution.



CUEA Administration Block

It commenced as a graduate school of theology known as the Catholic Higher Institute of Eastern Africa (CHIEA) in 1984. In 1986, the Graduate School of Theology started negotiations with the Commission for Higher Education in Kenya towards the establishment of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA).

In 1989, the Institute obtained the “Letter of Interim Authority” as the first step towards

i. Mission Statement

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) is a Catholic Institution of Higher Learning, founded by and administered under the auspices of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA). Inspired by the words of Jesus Christ, “Consecrate them in the Truth,” (Jn 17:17) CUEA seeks to promote excellence in scientific research, quality teaching and

community service for the purpose of enhancing human dignity and Christian witness.

Based on the Word of God, the living tradition and teaching of the Church, both universal and local, CUEA provides programmes that prepare qualified personnel for the Church and Society. It also seeks to promote contact

transformation of peoples in their social, cultural, political, economic and religious dimensions. The University is an academic and formative agent for creating and acquiring knowledge and producing graduates who are competent leaders for the Church and Society.

Chancellors of CUEA in History

Most Rev Archbishop Nicodemus Kirima	(1984-1989)
H.E Maurice Cardinal Otunga	(1989-1995)
Most Rev Archbishop Josephat Lebulu	(1995-2002)
Most Rev Archbishop Paul Bakyenga	(2002-2008)
Most Rev Archbishop Tarcisio Ziyaye	(2008-to date)

Pro-Chancellors of CUEA in History

The Archbishop of Nairobi, Kenya under whose jurisdiction CUEA falls is the Pro-Chancellor of the University.



H.E. Maurice Cardinal Otunga (1995-1997)



Most Rev. Raphael Ndingi (1997-2008)



H.E. John Cardinal Njue (2008-to date)

and cooperation with other universities and institutions of higher learning so as to bring about a nobler human society.

ii. Vision

CUEA is an instrument of liberation and

iii. Governance of CUEA

CUEA is under the Ecclesiastical Authority of the Roman Pontiff, and by extension, is also under the Sacred Congregation for the Catholic Education in Rome. However, CUEA has its founding body, The

CUEA Council Conference Representatives (2008-2011)



*Rt Rev Alick Banda
(Zambia)*



*Rt Rev Emmanuel Kanyama
(Malawi)*



*Rt Rev Abraham Desta
(Ethiopia)*



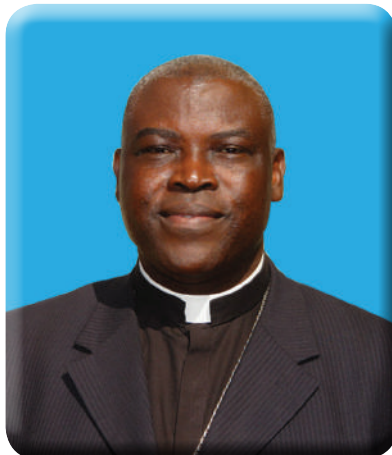
*Rt Rev Phillip Anyolo
(Kenya)*



*Rt Rev Severine Niwemugizi
(Tanzania)*



*Rt Rev Menghsteab
Tesfamariam (Eritrea)*



*Rt Rev Sabino Odoki
(Uganda)*



*Rt Rev Macram Max Gassis
(Sudan)*

CUEA Vice Chancellors/Rectors in History



***Rev. Fr Paul Kalanda
(Uganda-later Bishop)
1981-1982***



***Msgr Augustine Ndeukoya
(Tanzania)
1982-1992***



***Msgr Deogratias Mbiku
(Tanzania)
1992-1996***



***Rev. Prof Caesar Lukudu
(Sudan)
1996-2002***



CUEA Logo



***Rev. Prof John Maviiri
(Uganda)
2002-to date***

Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA), which through the Executive Board and the University Council is fully responsible for its running, expansion and overall development. The University Council consists of Bishops representatives of all the AMECEA member countries, The Rectors/Vice Chancellor, AMECEA Secretary General as well as Senate representatives and the Dean of Theology.

vi. The Chancellor

The Chancellor of CUEA is designated by the AMECEA body and represents the Holy See to the University and vice versa. Since 1995, the AMECEA Chairman has traditionally been the Chancellor of CUEA. However during CUEA'S formative years, two Kenyan Prelates were Chancellors of CUEA.

v. Development of CUEA

The Faculty of Theology hosted three visiting

Cardinals between 2005 and 2008. His Eminence Walter Cardinal Kasper, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, gave a keynote address on the theme “Promoting Christian Unity in Africa”, during an International Symposium on Christian Unity held at CUEA on July 6-9, 2005.

The Archbishop of Khartoum, Sudan, His Eminence Gabriel Cardinal Zubeir Wako, gave another address at the Faculty of Theology’s 10th Interdisciplinary session held at CUEA on March 5-7, 2008.

His Eminence Francis Cardinal Arinze, Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and Discipline of the Sacraments at the Holy See, addressed the Faculty of Theology and the neighboring Church institutions and Religious Congregations on the theme, “Promotion of the Sacred Liturgy in a Catholic University,” on March 13, 2008.

In addition, CUEA’s Chancellor, Most Rev. Paul K. Bakyenga, made a seven-day visit to a number of Pontifical Dicasteries in Rome between April 9 and 16, 2008. The Chancellor was accompanied by CUEA’s Vice Chancellor Rev. Prof. John C. Maviiri, the AMECEA Secretary General, Rev. Dr. Pius Rutechura, Dean of Theology Rev. Prof. Clement Majawa and Head of Department of Sacred Liturgy, Rev. Dr. Joseph Ettori. During these visits the CUEA delegation met and conferred with the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, H.E. Ivan Cardinal Dias, Prefect of the Congregation for Catholic Education, H.E. Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski, as well as the Rectors of Pontifical Gregorian University and Pontifical Urban University.

In a separate but related development, the

AMECEA Bishops in charge of Seminary Commissions on Theological Formation held two successive meetings at CUEA on May 24, 2006 and May 23, 2007, during which they discussed the following issues:

- The need to integrate inculturation in the theological curriculum of major seminaries and theological institutions in AMECEA region.
- The advantages of Major Seminaries and Theological Institutes affiliating to CUEA.
- Barriers to affiliation of Major Seminaries and Theological Institutions to CUEA.
- Ways to overcome the barriers and facilitate collaboration with CUEA.
- Areas of collaboration and the way forward for CUEA’s Community Service and Mission of deeper evangelization with all its demands for inculturation, integral development, promotion of justice and peace, animation of



GABA Campus Eldoret, Kenya

reconciliation, ecumenism and Inter-faith dialogue in the AMECEA region, Africa and beyond.

vi. CUEA’s New Campuses

i. CUEA GABA Campus

This was formally called API. After the



Group photo of the Honorees together with the AMECEA Bishops after the Award of Honorary Degrees on 11th February 2010 at CUEA

AMECEA Board Members, CUEA Council Members and Secretariat Staff together with H.E Zenon Cardinal Grocholewski during his visit at the AMECEA Offices in Nairobi, Kenya on 10 February 2010



decision of the 16th AMECEA plenary held in Lusaka, Zambia API became a campus of CUEA. Apart from theological courses the



CUEA Campus -Kisumu, Kenya

Ggaba campus also conducts other academic programs. These are Faculties of Commerce and Education.

ii. CUEA Kisumu Campus

The Catholic University has always shown commitment to the promotion of education in the AMECEA region. This mission has been carried out since 1984.

One of the objectives of the Strategic Development Plan of 2002-2011 is to make university education accessible to many people through establishment of campuses outside Nairobi. Accordingly, the University commissioned a study to determine appropriate locations for satellite campuses in Kenya and regionally. In 2008 the University bought a property in Kisumu city, Kenya and established a campus. Kisumu campus was officially opened on 13 August 2009.

The following programmes are currently (2011) taught there:

- Bachelor of Education
- Bachelor of Commerce
- Bachelor of Arts and Social Sciences
- Bachelor of Science, Computer science
- University Access Programs (Pre-University program)

6.2 Small Christian Communities

(Timeline in the history of some selected SCCs developments and activities in the AMECEA countries):

1969 (Tanzania): Seminar Study Year (SSY) in Tanzania. During the SSY the concept and praxis of SCCs, then called “local Church communities,” were first articulated as a priority in both rural and later urban parishes. See articles in *Service* published by the now called TAPRI (Tanzanian Pastoral and Research Institute).

1971 (Zambia): Small Christian Communities were started in St. Charles Lwanga Parish in Lusaka Archdiocese, Zambia.

1972 (Malawi): Bishop Patrick Kalilombe (Malawi) held a Diocesan Synod in Lilongwe, Malawi and was the first Bishop in Eastern Africa to start a diocesan pastoral plan of Small Christian Communities on the grassroots level.

1973 (Nairobi, Kenya): AMECEA Study Conference on “Planning for the Church in Eastern Africa in the 1980” had this key statement: “We have to insist on building church life and work on Basic Christian Communities in both rural and urban areas. Church life must be based on the communities in which everyday life and work take place: those basic and manageable social groups whose members can experience real inter-personal relationships and feel a sense of communal belonging, both in living and working.”

Bishop Patrick Kalilombe (Malawi) said during this AMECEA Meeting that every Bishop, Priest, Seminarian, Brother and Sister should participate in a particular SCC – not as a leader but as a regular/ordinary member. This can work easily if the priest, etc. becomes a member of the SCC in his or

her specific neighborhood/geographical area (that is, where he or she is actually living).

1974 (Uganda) Masaka Diocesan Synod decided to start Small Christian Communities all over the diocese.

1974 (Tanzania): Bishop Christopher Mwoleka of Rulenge Diocese (Tanzania) and the Tanzania National Council of the Laity developed a step-by-step plan for starting SCCs throughout Tanzania. Bishop Mwoleka stated that in his diocese “the entire pastoral work will be carried out by means of Small Christian Communities.”

1976 (Nairobi, Kenya): AMECEA Study Conference on “Building Small Christian Communities.” Key statement: “Systematic formation of Small Christian Communities should be the key pastoral priority in the years to come in Eastern Africa.”

During this meeting the word “small” was specifically chosen to avoid certain undertones of the word “basic.” Bishop Raphael Ndingi Mwana’a Nzeki of Nakuru Diocese, Kenya stated that to call our grassroots communities “small” instead of “basic” is another indication that the movement in Africa was growing on its own, quite independent of what was happening along the same lines in other places such as Latin America. See Raphael Ndingi, “Basic Communities: the African Experience” in *A New Missionary Era* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1982), p. 100.

1979 (Zomba, Malawi): AMECEA Study Conference on “The Implementation of the AMECEA Bishops’ Pastoral Priority of Building Small Christian Communities: An Evaluation.” One of its pastoral resolutions stated: “SCCs are an effective way of developing the mission dimension of the church at the most local level, and of making people feel that they are really part of the church’s evangelizing work.”

1992 (Lusaka, Zambia): The AMECEA Plenary Study Conference on “Evangelization with its Central Issues: Inculturation, Small Christian Communities and Priestly, Religious and Christian Formation” reiterated its pastoral commitment by stating: “So we repeat that SCCs are not optional in our churches; they are central to the life of faith and the ministry of evangelization.”

1994 (Rome): First African Synod in Rome in April, 1994. Theme: “The Church in Africa and Her Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000 with five main topics:

“Proclamation of the Good News of Salvation”, “Inculturation,” “Dialogue”, “Justice and Peace” and the “Means of Social Communications.” Of the 211 interventions during the first two weeks of the First African Synod, there were 29 interventions on SCCs (the fourth highest number after the topics of justice, inculturation and laity). Ecclesiology of the Church-as-Family. In the Final Message Section 28 on “The Church-as-Family and Small Christian Communities” states: “The Church, the Family of God, implies the creation of small communities at the human level, living or basic ecclesial communities... These individual Churches-as-Families have the task of working to transform society.”

1995: Publication and promulgation by John Paul II of the Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa/The Church in Africa*. Synod in Yaounde, Cameroon, Johannesburg, South Africa and Nairobi, Kenya between 14 -20 September, 1995.

Some key sections for Eastern Africa:

- Number 23 under The Family of God in the Synodal Process: “If this Synod is prepared well, it will be able to involve all levels of the Christian Community: individuals, small communities, parishes,

Dioceses, and local, national and international bodies.”

- Number 89 under Living (or Vital) Christian Communities : “Right from the beginning, the Synod Fathers recognized that the Church as Family cannot reach her full potential as Church unless she is divided into communities small enough to foster close human relationships. The Assembly described the characteristics of such communities as follows: primarily they should be places engaged in evangelizing themselves, so that subsequently they can bring the Good News to others; they should moreover be communities which pray and listen to God’s Word, encourage the members themselves to take on responsibility, learn to live an ecclesial life, and reflect on different human problems in the light of the Gospel. Above all, these communities are to be committed to living Christ’s love for everybody, a love which transcends the limits of natural solidarity of clans, tribes or other interest groups.”
- Also Number 63 under The Church as God’s Family: “It is earnestly to be hoped that theologians in Africa will work out the theology of the Church as Family with all the riches contained in this concept, showing its complementarity with other images of the Church.”

1998 (Key turning point in Tanzania): “The implementation of the new Constitution of the National Lay Council in 1998 required that the election of lay leaders in parishes throughout Tanzania start at the level of SCCs and move upwards. This insured that the parish council leaders would be chosen from those who were already leaders in their SCCs – thus true representation from below. Such decisions gave full confidence to the faithful and opened new possibilities for the laity in the local church.” (See Chapter 14 in *Small Christian Communities Today: Capturing the New Moment*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis

Books, 2005 and Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa, 2006.)

2002 (Dar es Salaam, Tanzania): AMECEA Study Conference on “Deeper Evangelization in the Third Millennium.” Section 7 of the Pastoral Resolutions was on “Building the Church as a Family of God by Continuing to Foster and/or Revitalize the Small Christian Communities.” No. 43 states: “We recommend that a program on the theological and pastoral value of Small Christian Communities be included in the normal curriculum of the Major Seminaries and houses of formation of both men and women.”

2005: (Mukono, Uganda): AMECEA Study Conference on “Responding to the Challenges of HIV/AIDS within the AMECEA Region” had one pastoral resolution that emphasised: “Active involvement of SCCs in reaching out to people with HIV/AIDS. SCC members as caregivers, counselors, etc.” NOTE: SCC members also reach out to refugees, internally displaced people (IDPs), people traumatized by civil war, violence and tribalism/ethnicity, street children, sick people, bereaved people and other needy people.

2006-2007 (Tanzania): To promote the AMECEA Pastoral Priority of SCCs and to focus on ongoing Spiritual and Pastoral formation a “Year of Small Christian Communities (SCCs)” was celebrated in Dar es Salaam Archdiocese, (Tanzania). Later this was extended to a “National Year of Small Christian Communities (SCCs)” for the whole of Tanzania.

2007-2011 (Kenya): Annual campaigns of the Kenya Episcopal Conference’s Lenten Campaign. The “See, Judge and Act” Process draws on the experience of SCCs on justice and peace-related themes/issues. Many discussion questions relate to SCCs. The proposed action steps directly involve SCCs.

2008: (Lusaka, Zambia): AMECEA Study Conference on “Reconciliation Through

Justice and Peace.” See references to the role and mission of Small Christian Communities. Action Plan : “Revisiting the Small Christian Communities Pastoral Option as a means of responding to the ministry of reconciliation through justice and peace. Theology of the Church Family of God must be further explored in view of enhancing reconciliation and peace building.”

2009 (Rome): Lineamenta (2006) and Instrumentum Laboris (March, 2009). SCCs are called “living ecclesial communities.” The Church as Family of God Model is a new ecclesial option that focuses on building families and building SCCs that are involved in reconciliation, justice and peace in the Catholic Church and in the wider society.” Tracking the shifts in this specific theme with the additional emphasis on “Reconciliation.”

SCCs are mentioned 12 times in the *Instrumentum Laboris* and twice in the footnotes. This is significantly more than in the *Lineamenta* in which “living ecclesial communities” are mentioned three times in the document and twice in the questionnaire. This increase in the importance given to SCCs is clearly due to the many responses from the Episcopal Conferences in Africa and to other answers to the 32 questions of the original questionnaire.

2009 (AMECEA) Statement from AMECEA Bishops who are Delegates to the Synod of Bishops’ Second Special Assembly for Africa in Rome: Our serious Pastoral Concerns and Challenges: “Centrality of Small Christian Community (SCC)” : We have experienced that a properly trained and led SCC adds great value to the promotion of reconciliation. This is because deeper biblical reflection and more regular use of the pastoral circle empower our Christians to engage effectively in the social life around them. Here formation in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) at all levels must be a priority.”

2009 (Rome): Second African Synod in Rome from 4-25 October, 2009. Theme: “The Church in Africa in Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace.” From No 22 of the “Message to the People of God”: “Here we would like to reiterate the recommendation of Ecclesia in Africa about the importance of Small Christian Communities (cf. EIA, 93). Beyond prayer, you must also arm yourself with sufficient knowledge of the Christian faith to be able to “give a proof of the hope that you bear” (1 Peter 3:15) in the market places of ideas... We strongly recommend the basic sources of Catholic faith: the Holy Bible, The Catechism of the Catholic Church, and most relevant to the theme of the Synod, The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.

From the “Final List of [57] Propositions” Proposition 35 on “Small Christian Communities (SCCs)” states:

“The Synod renews its support for the promotion of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) that firmly build up the Church-Family of God in Africa. The SCCs are based on Gospel-sharing, where Christians gather to celebrate the presence of the Lord in their lives and in their midst, through the celebration of the Eucharist, the reading of the Word of God and witnessing to their faith in loving service to each other and their communities. Under the guidance of their pastors and catechists, they seek to deepen their faith and mature in Christian witness, as they live concrete experiences of fatherhood, motherhood, relationships, open fellowship, where each takes care of the other. This Family of God extends beyond the bonds of blood, ethnicity, tribe, culture and race.

In this way SCCs open paths to reconciliation with extended families that have the tendency to impose on Christian nuclear families their syncretistic ways and customs.

Chapter Seven

AMECEA'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE RELIGIOUS CONGREGATIONS, REGIONAL BODIES AND INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

AMECEA since its inception has been in collaboration with the Religious Congregations, Regional bodies and international Partners in carrying out its mission and vision and in realizing many of its projects.

The Fransiscan (OFM Capuchin) were ready to offer personnel to the Association by sending Fr Killian Flynn as the First Secretary of ITEBEA which gave birth to AMECEA. Another Society is the Maryknoll Fathers and Brothers from which Fr Joseph Healey is a member. The Society was ready to give him to work for AMECEA as the First social Communications Coordinator.

AMECEA is grateful to congregations which were ready to offer members of the congregation to help and work for Evangelization in Solidarity. These include Holy Ghost Fathers, (CSSp), Missionary of Africa (W.F); Missionaries of Mill Hill; Brothers of Christian Instruction; and Society of Jesus the Sisters of Mary of Kakamega, Assumption Sisters of Nairobi, Kenya; Assumption Sisters of Eldoret, Kenya; the Sisters of St Joseph, Mombasa, Kenya; Little Sisters of St Francis; Theresian Sisters from Bukoba Diocese, Tanzania; .

Apart from this AMECEA in its 1973 Executive Board meeting took the education and training of African Sisters as a priority for their apostolates. In the plenary

which was held in Nairobi, Kenya (1973) the Bishops recommended that a meeting for African women religious be held to open dialogue and exchange of experiences. The forum was known as "Sisters of the East Africa Study Conference (SEASC) which later changed to be Association of Consecrated Women in Eastern and Central Africa (ACWECA) during their 12th study conference held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2002.

AMECEA was privileged to host the first meeting of Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM). The meeting was planned to coincide with the Pastoral Visit of Pope Paul VI in Uganda in 1969. The meeting took place at Gaba Pastoral Institute in Kampala, Uganda. It was during this meeting the Bishops agreed that SECAM should be a permanent body. The last day of the meeting was also attended by the Holy Father Pope Paul VI.

Already in the year 1961 Monsignor Wilhelm Dossing from Misereor was invited to speak to the ITEBEA Board and explain its mission and possible ways of assistance to Eastern Africa. The Secretary General of Misereor wrote to Bishop McCauley: "I may assure you that our society (Misereor) as well as the German Bishops are interested in preserving and advancing the image of the African Church." At this same meeting Benedict Kominiak, OSB was appointed to represent ITEBEA before



Group photo of Participants of the joint AMECEA/USCCB workshop on Needs Assessment held in Kampala, Uganda in June 2010



Group photo of AMECEA National Social Communications Coordinators with Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya Most Rev Alain Lebeauvin, President of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications and PCCS staff during their visit to AMECEA Secretariat offices in Nairobi, Kenya in April 2009

Misereor.

In the year 1967 Bishop McCauley by then Chairman of AMECEA wrote to the Chairman of the US Episcopal Commission on Missions about the possibility of forming an African Bureau with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The idea was to increase awareness and information and improve the image concerning African missions in the United States and coordinate mission appeals.

When the AMECEA bishops decided to have a permanent structure in Nairobi (AMECEA Secretariat) we read that there was an urgent need of funds to ensure that structures are put in place. Documents read that Missio and Misereor were the primary funders of the project. Some letters written by Bishop McCauley giving thanks to Missio for some significant grants which were received from them to keep the AMECEA going testify to this long collaboration.

The starting of the Gaba Pastoral Institute was only made possible through the donation of Propaganda Fide which gave funds for the renovation of the old buildings that could make it possible for the opening of the Institute in the year 1968.

The establishment of CHIEA to CUEA was facilitated by the donations received from partners like Pontifical Missionary Aid Societies of the Vatican; Misereor, Missio Aachen and Munchen of Germany; Swiss Catholic Lenten Fund; Roncalli Foundation and several other religious organizations both locally and abroad. Indeed with AMECEA Bishops contributions the University was in the position of starting and growing.

CUEA on the other hand has benefitted very

much from the partnership of AMECEA. This has not only made it possible to have the structures but also providing scholarship to needy students. These benefactors include: Missio Aachen of Germany, St Peter Apostle of the Vatican, Rattansi Educational Trust Fund of Kenya, USAID/PEPFAR Scholarship (mainly for orphans) Windle Trust (scholarship for refugees), Kenya Government Ministry of Education (HELB loans) and Italian Episcopal Conference who contributed for the Resource Centre, among others.

As AMECEA was expanding a need to contact many more partners was necessary. AMECEA is very grateful in history for the help it has received and continue to receive from various partners. The following partners have been really behind the progress

AMECEA has made in these fifty years of its existence. These are such as Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (Pro- Afris Fund), Missio Aachen and Munchen, Kirche in Not, Misereor, Missionaries of Africa, AMA (Netherland), Stichting Porticus, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), USCCB Solidarity Fund for Africa, Swiss Catholic Lenten Funds, which funded some Plenary Assemblies, Diocese of Linz (Austria), Diocese of Koln (Germany), Caritas Ambrosiana, DKA (Austria), Raskob Foundation for Catholic Activities, German (KAAD), Sisters of St Peter Claver, Poor Clares of Cleveland Ohio USA, Caritas Norway in various project applications.

In a particular way the AMECEA Social Communication Department has been working very closely with Catholic Media Council (CAMECO) in reviewing applications before they are submitted to donor partners, CAMECO has been a key partner in helping the AMECEA Social



Group photo of Participants of the joint AMECA/IMBISA Communication Workshop held in Harare, Zimbabwe in 2006



Catholic Radio Practitioners from Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda in a session during their workshop held in Arusha, Tanzania october 2010. The workshop was funded by Raskob Foundation for Catholic activities



Group photo of Participants of the joint AMCEA/PCCS Communication Workshop held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in May 2010

*Most Rev Claudio
Maria Celli
President of the
PCCS together with
his PCCS Staff: Msgr
Paul Tighe and Fr
Janvier Yameogo
attending the study
session during
the Youth
Communication
Workshop organized
by AMECEA and
PCCS in Nairobi,
Kenya in May 2009*



*Group photo
of
Participants
of the Cross
Learning
Meeting
between
AMECA and
IMBISA held
in Nairobi,
Kenya in
March 2010*

Communication Department obtain funds from donors, particularly MISSIO, Church in Need and Misereor. Such funds help to run the departmental activities during the year.

Further development is that in recent years Social Communications has been partnering with Pontifical Council for Social Communications in which they were able to conduct workshops for the Youth of AMECEA countries twice. The first one was held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2009 while the second one was held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 2010. Indeed the workshops were a contribution of AMECEA Social Communications Office in collaboration with Pontifical Council for Social Communications in highlighting the existing inequalities by treating others with respect, giving the unequal chances to speak and to be listened to.

The department through SIGNIS (World Catholic Association for Communication- a Roman Catholic lay ecclesial movement for professionals in the communication media, including radio, television, cinema, video, media education, Internet and new technology) has been able to help the national and diocesan offices of communications obtain funds for the media (electronic) activities. A number of Catholic Radio stations in the region have benefitted from this collaboration.

The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has continued to work with AMECEA mainly on issues related with advocacy and Social Justice. The Office of National Collections Staff, the sub-committee on the Church in Africa in its capacity has assisted the Bishops in the US in their relationships building work with the African Church leadership. This initiative

includes the pastoral solidarity fund for the Church in Africa which comes from donations from individual Catholics in the US to be shared with structures of the Church in Africa. To date the USCCB has funded several projects of AMECEA and the recent ones are the Good Governance workshop which was held in Nairobi, 2010; Evaluation of AMECEA Pastoral Mission of Evangelization in Solidarity; the Needs Assessment Workshop which was held in Kampala, Uganda in June 2010 and the 17th Plenary Assembly of 2011 which also includes the Golden Jubilee celebrations.

During the past three years Catholic Relief Service (CRS) have assisted AMECEA Bishop delegates to prepare themselves for the Second Synod for Africa in March 2009; and for making AMECEA delegates able to make a solidarity visit to Sudan in November 2010 through financial assistance; Stichting Porticus together with Missio München have contributed to the realization of Evaluation of AMECEA Pastoral Mission of Evangelization in Solidarity project.

The AMECEA Justice and Peace Desk has been for the last three years in partnership with The Catholic Agency For Overseas Development (CAFOD), a United Kingdom-based Catholic Organization for Action for Better Governance (ABG) program. The program which is meant for five years has enabled the department to conduct workshops, help election monitoring activities around the AMECEA countries among others.

We are grateful to all who supported the Secretariat and various program and activities.

Chapter Eight

AMECEA'S PARTICIPATION IN THE SYNOD ASSEMBLIES FOR AFRICA

8.1 The First Synod Assembly for Africa, Rome: April 10 – May 8, 1994

The First African Synod in 1994 addressed many issues affecting the Church in Africa such as: 1) Proclamation, 2) Inculturation, 3) Dialogue, 4) Justice and Peace, and 5) Social Communications. The topics were under the theme: "The Church in Africa and Her Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000, 'You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:8)'" Participants from AMECEA Region:

Eritrea

1. Bishop Zekarias Yohannes

Ethiopia

1. H.E. Paulos Cardinal Tzadua
2. Rt Rev. Bishop Musie Ghebreghiorghis
3. Rt Rev. Bishop Woldetensae T. Ghebreghiorghis

Kenya

1. H.E Maurice Cardinal Otunga
2. Most Rev. Archbishop Nicodemus Kirima
3. Most Rev. Archbishop Zaccheus Okoth
4. Most Rev. Archbishop John Njenga
5. Rt Rev. Bishop John Njue (Now Cardinal)
6. Rt Rev. Bishop Cornelius Korir
7. Rt Rev. Bishop Raphael Ndingi (Now Archbishop Emeritus)
8. Rt Rev. Bishop Colin Davies

Malawi

1. Most Rev. Archbishop J. Chiona
2. Rt Rev. Bishop Tarcisio Ziyaye (Now Archbishop)
3. Rt Rev. Bishop Felix Mkhori

Sudan

1. Most Rev. Archbishop Gabriel Zubeir Wako (Now Cardinal)
2. Most Rev. Archbishop Paolino Lukudu Loro
3. Rt Rev. Bishop Joseph A. Gasi
4. Rt Rev. Bishop Vincent Mojwok

Tanzania

1. H.E Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa
2. Most Rev. Archbishop Antony Mayala
3. Most Rev. Archbishop Mario Mgulunde
4. Most Rev. Archbishop Norbert Mtega
5. Most Rev. Archbishop Polycarp Pengo (Now Cardinal)
6. Rt Rev. Bishop James Sangu
7. Rt Rev. Bishop Paul Ruzoka (Now Archbishop)
8. Rt Rev. Bishop Josephat Lebulu (Now Archbishop)
9. Rt Rev. Bishop Justin Samba
10. Rt Rev. Bishop Amedeus Msarikie

Uganda

1. Most Rev. Archbishop Emmanuel Wamala (Now Cardinal)
2. Rt Rev. Bishop Joseph Willigers
3. Rt Rev. Bishop Paul Kalandia
4. Rt Rev. Bishop Paul Bakyenga (Now Archbishop)
5. Rt Rev. Bishop Frederick Drandua
6. Rt Rev. Bishop Dennis Kiwanuka



A cross section of delegates from AMECEA Countries who attended the First Synod Assembly for Africa in Rome in 1994



A cross section of Concelebrants during a closing Eucharist Celebration of the First Synod Assembly for Africa in Rome in 1994



A cross section of delegates for the First Synod Assembly for Africa in session in Rome in 1994

7. Rt Rev. Bishop Deogratias Byabazaire
Zambia

1. Rt Rev. Bishop Dennis H. De Jong
2. Rt Rev. Bishop Medardo Mazombwe
(Now Cardinal)
3. Rt Rev. Bishop Telesphor Mpundu
(Now Archbishop)

8.2 Pastoral Visit of Pope John Paul II in Nairobi, Kenya.

(For the closing of the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops 14-20 September 1995).

At Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Nairobi, Kenya on 18 September 1995

His Holiness Pope John Paul II greeted the people and said: "My present journey through Africa is a celebration of the Special Session for Africa of the Synod of Bishops. That important meeting re-affirmed the commitment of the Catholic Church to her spiritual and humanitarian mission on this continent. As the universal Pastor of the Catholic Church, I wished to come to Africa at this time in order to urge my brothers and sisters in the faith to stand steadfast in the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ and to assume with unfailing generosity the challenge which the Synod proposes: a new Evangelization, in a fresh spirit of service to the peoples of this continent. It is my special joy therefore to greet Cardinal Otunga and my brother Bishops of Kenya, as well as the

**AMECEA Countries celebrating the First African Synod
with Pope John Paul II, in Nairobi, Kenya September, 1995**



Holy Father Pope John Paul II and Cardinal Concelebrants vested in Masai Garments during the Eucharistic Celebrations at Uhuru Park in Nairobi, Kenya 19 Sept 1995



The AMECEA Bishops representatives receive The Apostolic Exhortation "The Church in Africa"

representatives of the Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa. I especially look forward to joining the clergy, religious and laity in the most sacred act of our worship, the celebration of the Holy Eucharist.

During the Holy Mass at Uhuru Park on 19 September 1995 His Holiness Pope John Paul said "Last year, the Special Session for Africa of the Synod of Bishops held its working session in Rome, close to the tomb of the Apostle Peter. Now, a year later, the results of the Synod have been gathered in the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa*, and the Successor of Peter commends to the Church in Africa to encourage everyone to heed the Synod's message and put it into practice. I gladly greet my dear brother, Cardinal Otunga, and the members of the Kenya Episcopal Conference, as well as the Bishops of the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa..."

8.3 The Second Synod Assembly for Africa: Rome: 04-27 October 2009.

Preparations for the AMECEA Synod delegates:



Second Synod delegates of preparation workshop opening ceremony, From left Most Rev Tarcisio Ziyaye, (Chairman), Most Rev Alain Lebeaupin (Apostolic Nuncio to Kenya; Mr David Orthmoore (CRS Regional Director)

The Second Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops, took place from 04 to 25 October 2009. More than 200 bishops and advisors from all over Africa met in Rome with a special focus on 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 (Matthew 5: 13-14).'

In preparation for this second Synod for Africa AMECEA organized a workshop which brought together delegates from AMECEA countries in order to shape the prophetic voice of AMECEA in a plan to address key pastoral issues of common interest in the region. The workshop provided a unique chance to examine together different responses on the topic of the working document, (*Lineamenta*) for the Second Synod for Africa: *The Church in Africa in the Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace*. Through that workshop, the Bishops appointed a team of advisors from the region that will accompany them to the Synod. This team was to work on these issues, before, during and after the Synod. These were Rev Dr Pius Rutechura, AMECEA Secretary General; Rev Fr Jude Waweru, AMECEA Justice and Peace Coordinator; Rev Fr Joe Komakoma, Secretary General for Zambia Episcopal Conference and Rev Peter Henriot, the Director of the Jesuit Centre for Theological Reflection (JCTR) in Lusaka, Zambia.

The workshop was made possible through the help from Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the international relief and development agency of the USCCB that offered a helping hand in making this process possible.



Eritrean Delegates in a group discussion during the preparation workshop for the delegates of the Second Synod Assembly for Africa



A cross section of AMECEA 2nd Synod Delegates in group photo during their preparation for shaping the prophetic voice of the region held in Nairobi, Kenya, March 2009



AMECEA delegates to the Second Synod Assembly for Africa during one of their meetings in Rome on October 2009

Chapter Nine

EVENTS AND SUMMARY OF MESSAGES

THE 1st PLENARY ASSEMBLY HELD IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA IN 1961

On the Theme:

“The Future of the Church in Africa”

The Plenary was looking towards an indigenous Church in independent Africa States with a pluralistic society, and considering fields for cooperation between hierarchies, as well as the Church's special interest in Education.

From the very beginning the ordinaries wanted to have a study session for an exchange of views, in their search for guidelines to help the hierarchies in trying to adopt uniform pastoral policies and methods of action in the region. In its search for answers to the problems facing the training; clerical rule of life; finance; liturgy; Church and State; the Church in a pluralistic society and ecumenism.

The assembly also established fields of cooperation between the hierarchies in the region including the setting up of an Inter-Territorial Episcopal Board to carry out projects of common interests and seek solutions to common problems encountered in the implementation of the agreed projects; such as the founding of an inter-territorial catechetical institute and the establishment of a Catholic University.

THE 2nd PLENARY ASSEMBLY HELD IN ROME IN 1964

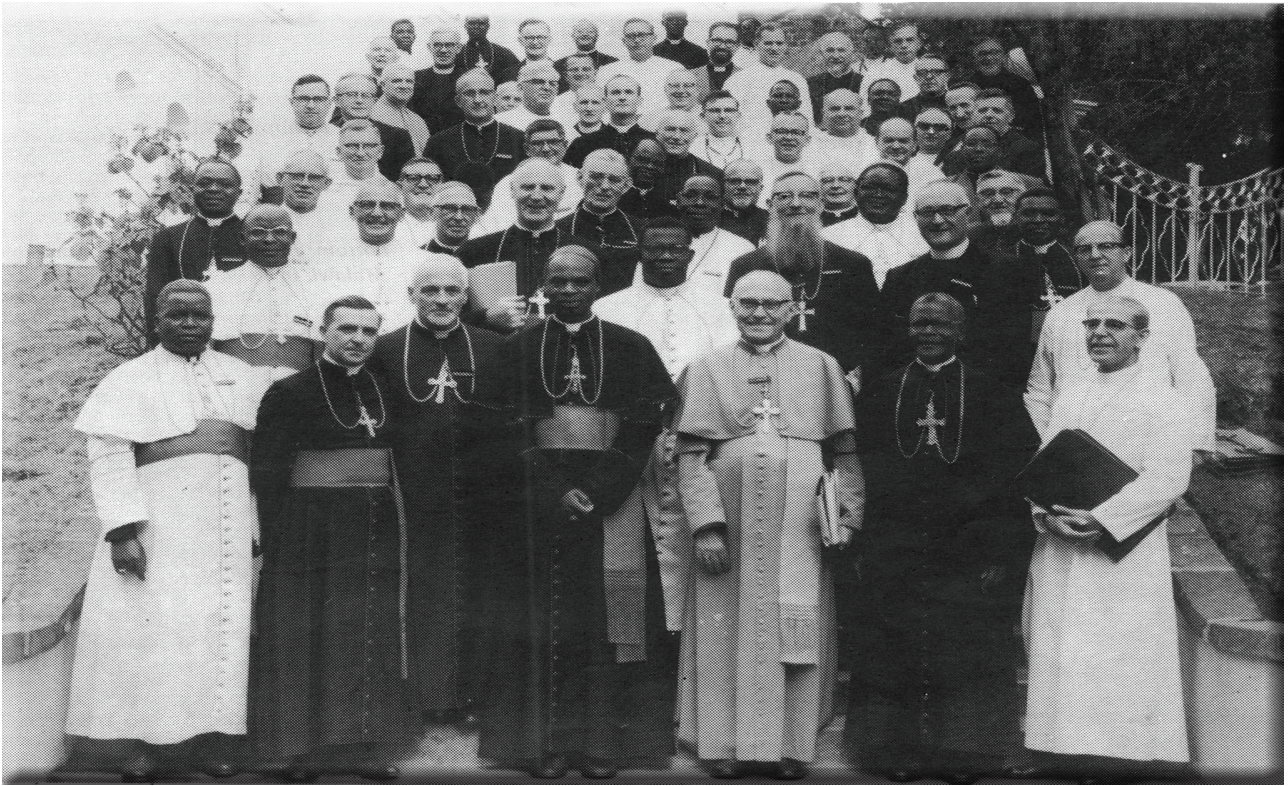
The second ITEBEA Plenary meeting took place in Rome in November 1964 during the Second Vatican Council. In this meeting ITEBEA was transformed into AMECEA; The Bishops thought that ITEBEA could not satisfactorily accomplish the task it was given especially that of sharing of information and experience; inter-consultation and combined action in great spheres. Thus, ITEBEA was transformed into Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in Eastern Africa (AMECEA). In the plenary meeting its constitution was studied and discussed and later on approved. Bishop Vincent McCauley of Fort Portal, Uganda was chosen as first Chairman of AMECEA and Fr Flynn was appointed a full time Secretary General.

The Plenary also described the Association's mandate as follows:

- To promote intercommunication and cooperation between local (diocesan) Churches in Eastern Africa.
- Seek ways and means to support the apostolate in the light of conciliar magisterial documents.
- Study problems of common interest in Eastern Africa and find solutions to them.
- Render services in a collaborative effort to meet the social, economic, spiritual needs of the people in the region.



Group photo: The first ITEBEA Meeting held in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania in 1961



Group photo: AMECEA Plenary Meeting in Nairobi, Kenya in 1967



Pope Paul VI with Presidents from Eastern Africa countries in Kampala during his visit to Uganda in 1969. From Left Presidents: Kenneth Kaunda (Zambia), Julius Nyerere (Tanzania), Pope Paul VI, Milton Obote (Uganda), and Gregoire Kayibanda (Rwanda)

**THE 3rd PLENARY
ASSEMBLY IN NAIROBI,
KENYA IN 1967**

On the Theme:

*“Pastoral Perspectives in Eastern Africa
after Vatican II”*

In this plenary there were some observers from Ghana, Sudan and the Seychelles. The Bishops tried to evaluate the task of the Church and methods of Evangelization in the region in order to find ways of cooperation. They also assessed the situation of priestly formation, ecumenism, marriage customs and the relations between the local ordinary and religious institutes.

The Bishops agreed on the inter regional collaboration on Priestly formation and the starting of the national ecumenical commission. The AMECEA major seminaries were directed to study polygamy issues and begin a process of the integration of studies always with an African context. A special commission for seminaries to take care of the study integration was established to prepare integration proposals and make recommendations to the respective Episcopal Conferences.

The Pastoral Institute which was due to start in 1968 was assigned the task of preparation and circulation of Catechist-school lesson notes and the study of customary rites.

**THE 4th PLENARY
ASSEMBLY IN LUSAKA,
ZAMBIA IN 1970**

On the Theme:

“The Priest in Africa Today”

The Assembly discussed priestly vocations and formation as well as priestly rural and urban ministries.

The Bishops, having discussed the growing crisis of priest shortage in the region, decided to educate and encourage their communities to minister to themselves as much as they can.

The promotion of lay ministries emerged from the Assembly. At the end the Bishops issued a joint Pastoral Letter intended mainly to exhort and encourage their Priests and Seminarians.



A Group photo: AMECEA Plenary meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia in 1970

THE 5th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN NAIROBI, KENYA IN 1973

On the Theme:

“Planning for the Church in Eastern Africa in 1980s”

Among the main trends in contemporary Africa outlined in the study session were the search for identity, relative local autonomy and self-reliance (Institutional, economical and ideological).

This led the AMECEA Bishops to commit themselves not only to establish a local Church but also to a new way of being a Church –A church with a human face concretized in Small Christian Communities. The Bishops were convinced that in these countries of Eastern Africa it is time for the Church to become really “local” that is self-ministering, self-propagating and self –supporting. Their planning aimed at building such local communities for the coming years. They believed that in order to achieve this they had to insist on building Church life and work on Basic Christian Communities, in both rural and urban areas. Church’s life must be based on communities in which everyday life and work takes place: those basic manageable social groupings

whose members can experience real interpersonal relationships and feel a sense of communal belonging, both in living and working.

It was such a conviction that led the Bishops to enter into a deeper study of the Small Christian Communities during the next two Plenaries. The 1973 Assembly covered a wide range of themes related to the future of the Church in the region. The themes included: personnel planning, the Christian family, religious education, integral social development and specialized apostolates. The conclusions of the 1973 assembly were to serve as the agenda for the AMECEA’s work in the 1980s and 1990s.



AMECEA Plenary meeting participants in a group photo with Mr Mwai Kibaki (centre front row) during the Plenary meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya 1973

AMECEA Catechetical Congress in Nairobi, Kenya April, 1973



A Group photo: AMECEA Congress Delegates held in Nairobi , Kenya April 1973

AMECEA Catechetical Congress in Nairobi, Kenya April, 1973



Group photo: AMECEA Congress Delegates from Tanzania



Group photo: AMECEA Congress Delegates from Uganda

AMECEA Catechetical Congress in Nairobi, Kenya April, 1973



Group photo: AMECEA Congress Delegates from Zambia



Group photo: AMECEA Congress Delegates from Malawi

AMECEA Catechetical Congress in Nairobi, Kenya April, 1973



A cross section of Catechetical Congress Delegates



Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa delivers opening Presidential speech at the first all Africa-Madagascar (SE-CAM) Bishops' Symposium at Gaba Pastoral Institute in Kampala, Uganda July 1969.

At the high table from left are Archbishop Sergio Pignedoli, Secretary in the Congregation of Propagation of Faith; Hon Mr Sam Odaka (MP) Foreign Minister in Ugandan Government; H.E.Laurian Cardinal

Rugambwa and H.E.P.Cardinal Zoungwana from Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso

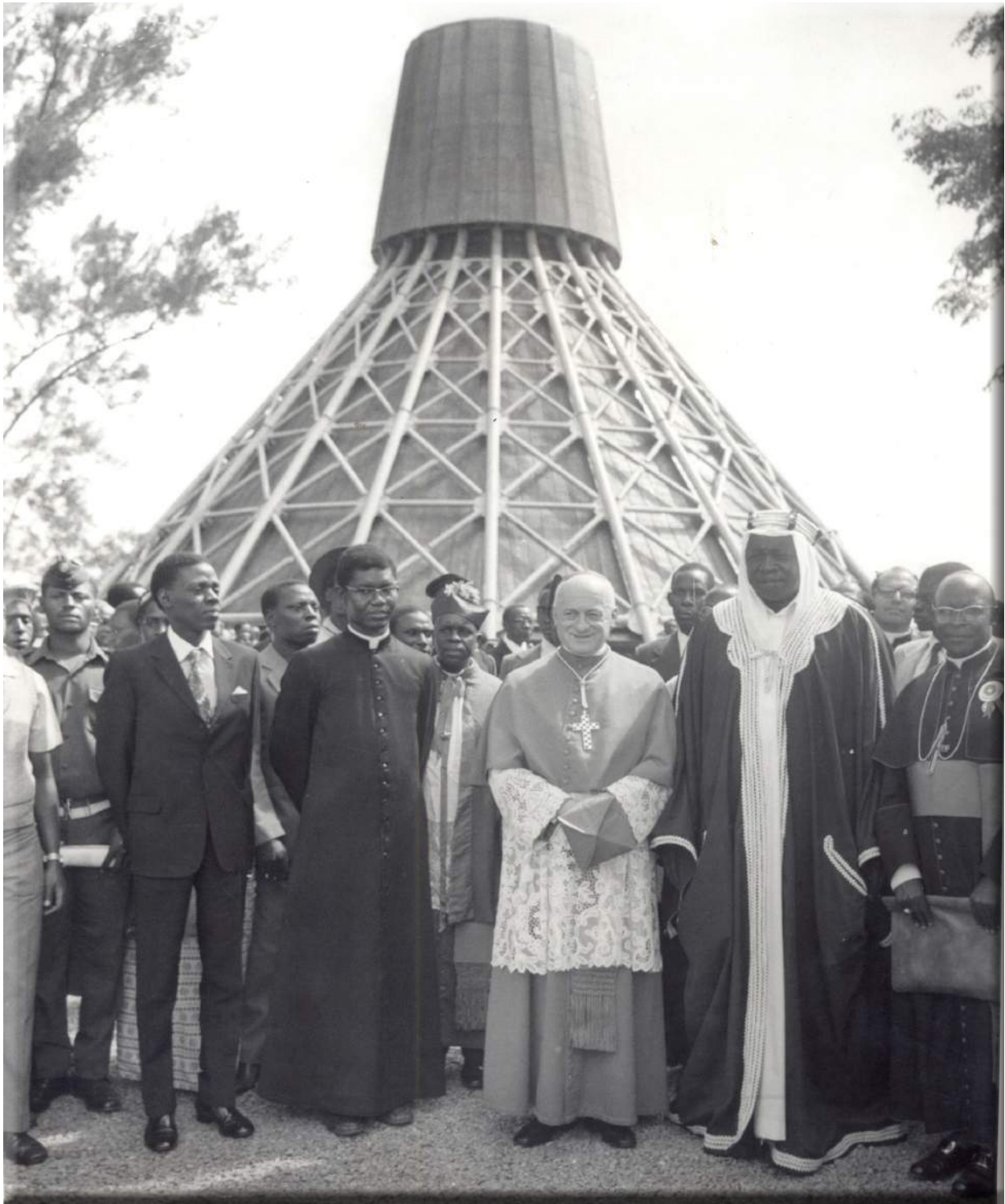


A Group Photo of 7 Cardinals from Africa who attended SECAM first meeting at Ggaba Kampala, Uganda in 1969. From Left are: H.E. Paul Cardinal Zoungwana (West); H.E. Leon-Etienne Cardinal Duval (North); H.E. Owen Cardinal McGann (South); H.E. Laurian Cardinal Rugambwa (Eastern); H.E. Jerome Cardinal Rakotonalala (Madagascar); H.E. Stephanus I Sidarouss (Egypt); H.E. Joseph Albert Malula (Congo)

AMECEA/ SECAM



General Idi Amin Dada, the President of Uganda addresses the participants at the Formal opening of the Third Plenary Assembly of SECAM at Ggaba Pastoral Institute, Kampala, Uganda on August 13, 1973



The Papal Envoy to the opening of the Uganda Martyrs Shrine H.E. Cardinal Pignedoli in a group photo with President Idi Amin and Most Rev Archbishop Emmanuel Nsubuga of Kampala (far right) after the opening ceremony at Namugongo in 1975

THE 6th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN NAIROBI, KENYA IN 1976

On the Theme:

"Building Small Christian Communities in Eastern Africa"

The Bishops started their message by explaining what is a family in its relation with the Church –a community of believers. It is the family that transmits life. It is in the family that we first learn to relate to other human beings, to develop a sense of obedience to authority, a sense of responsibility and a sense of sharing with others. It is in the family that we first discover the real meaning of love, mutual concern, dedicated service to others, shelter, nourishment and refuge.

The family is the child's first school. His teachers are his parents. It is they who have the God-given right to educate their children and they should continue our African tradition of giving proper education within the family. This right over the education of their children remains even when they go to school. No institutional system of education can take that right away from them because parents retain the right to determine the kind of education their children shall receive and parents should speak out if that right is trampled upon.

Families at home should strengthen our African tradition of togetherness. They should never be strangers to one another. They should share their meals, time and concerns with one another in the family. They should pray together, read their Holy Book together, spend most of their

evenings together and enjoy one another's company together.

Parents must be totally committed to one another and never permit a third party to take part of that commitment away. Both parents must be fully committed to the temporal, psychological and spiritual needs of their children. The children, in return, should be committed to one another and to their parents, even when parents grow old.

That is why we maintain that anything that threatens the well-being of the family is a threat to the well-being of the community. The Bishops went further by saying that any legislation that permits a direct attack upon the life of an unborn member of the community oversteps the boundaries of human law and offends God who gave life to that child. And that any foreign country or organization that demands dissemination of unnatural methods of family planning as a condition for financial aid is guilty of exploitation in its worst form.

The Bishops recommended that local communities should take the proper initiatives whenever they see any threat to the family or its members. It should bring parents together to discuss their responsibilities in the family and do all it can to strengthen family life and to insure that all members receive a proper formation within the family. This is because the community can never consider itself something totally different from the family, since it is composed of families. Its well-being depends on the well-being of families because the attitudes and values received within the family become the attitudes and values of the community.



A group photo: AMECEA plenary meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1976



AMECEA Bishops and Cardinals attending the 6th Plenary meeting held in Nairobi Kenya in 1976 in a group photo with the Secretary of the Sacred Congregation for Evangelisation of Peoples Most Rev Archbishop Simon Lourdusamy (4th from left



A group photo: AMECEA Plenary meeting participants held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1976. From left: Rt Rev Bishop Vincent McCauley, AMECEA Secretary General, H.E. Maurice Cardinal Otunga, Honourable Jeremiah Nyaga, Minister of Agriculture; Rt Rev Bishop James Odongo, Chairman of AMECEA and Rt Rev Bishop John Njenga, Bishop of Eldoret Diocese, Kenya

THE 7th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN ZOMBA, MALAWI IN 1979

On the Theme:

*"The Implementation of the AMECEA
Bishops Pastoral Priority of Building Small
Christian Communities: An Evaluation."*

The Bishops of AMECEA identified the task of building Small Christian Communities as the pastoral priority for the Church in Eastern Africa.

The Bishops spoke of the Church as holy, Catholic and Apostolic which is the visible sacrament of God's universal love and grace; it is a world-wide community of believers in the risen Christ, with the Pope as its visible head, the one who holds the primacy in love over the entire Church. But this universal Church must be really present to Christians in their own locality; it must be truly local as well as universal.

Small Christian Communities then are means by which the Church is brought down to the daily life and concerns of people to where they actually live. In them, the Church takes on flesh and blood in the life situations of the people.

Speaking on the size of a Small Christian Community the Bishops said this is variable, depending on local conditions and on the natural community on which it must be built. In some cases, an "out-station" might be of a suitable size to form a small community. What really matters is that the community should have enough members and a sufficient degree of diversity to allow relative self-reliance and a fair variety

of charisms, but that it should not have so many members that they cannot know each other on a person to person basis.

Other communities, such as those in schools, movements, professional and interest groups, etc., are also valuable and necessary, but they should be seen as supplementary to the Small Christian Communities described above. The Small Christian Community should not be understood as a fringe group, nor a group for a few elite people, nor a group formed for a particular purpose, such as a prayer group, a solidarity, a Catholic Action group, a development group, a study group, though these are legitimate and valuable: it is precisely the means by which the one Church is present in each locality, touching the whole life of its members. Geographical proximity, though usually important, is not the defining element of a small Christian community.

The Bishops spoke of specific roles of the ordained ministers, religious men and women, lay people and young people in these Small Christian Communities. They all have specific roles to play for the progress of the Small Christian Community. The small community should exemplify the mystery of the Church in which "there is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male or female, but all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26-29).

Small communities also seem to be the most effective means of making the Gospel message truly relevant to African cultures and traditions. By participating in the life of the Church at this most local level, Christians will foster the gradual and steady maturing of the young Church.



A Group Photo: AMECEA plenary meeting held in Zomba, Malawi 1979

The Bishops recommended diocesan programs for on-going formation which should be taken as an immediate priority after that conference. The resources and staff of the AMECEA Pastoral Institute, as well as of other institutes and seminaries, should be used for this task.

The Bishops promised their prayers so that Christians are to be the salt that gives flavor, the leaven that transforms, and then they must all discover anew the source of their vitality, and draw waters with joy from the fount of the Savior. Nothing is more urgently needed in the countries of AMECEA that time than a living witness to the values of the Gospel, the values that are able to transform society by their spiritual power. It is with this concern that the Bishops have reflected, shared and prayed together about their policy of building Small Christian Communities. These, by enabling every Christian to come to a deeper and more mature faith, and to take an active part in the mission of the Church, can truly become the leaven that has the power to renew the world. It is only communities that live the Gospel with joy and gladness of heart that will be able to "overcome the world".

THE 8th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN NAIROBI, KENYA IN 1982

On the Theme:

"Families: Truly Christian and Truly African."

The Bishops came up with two points:-

Society must respect every person in which the need and importance for every other

person was emphasized. This is because all are children of the same Father in heaven and are called by him to the same eternal destiny. Thus, they are all member of the same human family.

It is God who gave human beings the gift of life. Each person is a unique, irreplaceable human reality from the moment we are conceived beneath the heart of our mother. This gift of life is precious. With life, God has given a human being all he or she needs to preserve and develop this life on earth. He has given these gifts to the human family and it is their duty to ensure that these gifts are equitably shared among all his children. If one respects other persons, he or she cannot steal from them nor use one's high position to defraud them. One cannot demand a bribe from a person one respects, nor deny that person what is rightfully his or hers. Neither could one perform any act of corruption in a society one respects. Instead, he or she should give an opportunity to the poor to better themselves.

Society's foundation: The Bishops said that Africans are a religious people with their own values. Without these values no ideology can offer an adequate and lasting reason for respecting one another. African and religious values are a rock foundation on which their society must be built. These are the values that their society must reflect in its policies, its public morality and in its daily life.

It is only by parents and others passing them on from their generation to the next that society will constantly be strengthened in its worth, cleansed from its ills and enjoy the full development our Creator intended it to have.

This is done with the help of God who sent



A Group photo: AMECEA plenary meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1982



Participants of the 8th AMECEA plenary meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya in a session in 1982

His Son to help human beings. He died in the struggle against evil and rose in victory over sin. He taught people to live together as his brothers and sisters. It is the Holy Spirit who came to strengthen the people, enlighten and unite them in love and respect.

THE 9th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN MOSHI, TANZANIA IN 1986

On the Theme:

"Families: Truly Christian and Truly African."

The Bishops of AMECEA wished to encourage and support families in the region in their efforts to live up to the challenges of the Gospel message. They prayed so that God may pour His blessings on them that they may be increased in number and through their life witness they become pastoral agents in solving the problems of marriage and family life which they studied during the plenary study session.

The Bishops identified and examined some of the major problems which became their pastoral concern of family life. Such problems include polygamy, broken marriages, migrant labor, and cultural differences in cases of transcultural marriages, pre-marriage cohabitation, mixed marriages, drunkenness and marital infidelity. They also examined initiatives made hitherto on behalf of families, such as the promotion of marriage encounter programs, natural family planning, the Christian Family Movement, the Pioneer Movement or Alcoholics Anonymous; the discouragements of these initiatives.

These obstacles include among others, the opposition from governmental and non-governmental agencies which promote unorthodox ways of birth control; the disregard of traditional values; the lack of adequate preparation for marriage and maintenance of stable families; ignorance about Christian marriage; the lack of deep faith; the influence of mass media and the lack of trained personnel for various family programs.

It is in view of the above background that the Bishops came up with new initiatives. They appealed to the whole people of God to be fully involved in making these initiatives as effective as possible. They also produced some guidelines to guide married people, for pre-marriage catechesis and for the many people in our region who live a nomadic life and deserve a special apostolate and catechesis which is adapted to their culture and world-view, a catechesis for Christian families in which suggestions were made for deepening the sacramental life, the Biblical nourishment, the spirituality of the family and the emergence of ministries to deal with family problems according to the needs of our local church.

The Bishops declared that since the Christian family is the Domestic Church and the indispensable school for Christian values, it is also their pastoral priority within the overall priority of Small Christian Communities.



A Group photo: AMECEA plenary assembly held in Moshi, Tanzania in 1986

THE 10th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN KAMPALA, UGANDA IN 1989

On the Theme:

"Youth on the move towards the year 2000."

The Bishops of Eastern Africa (AMECEA) started their message by saying that the hope of the Church and the world is on the Youth and that the present and the future belong to the Youth. But the future belongs to them in a special way for hope is always linked to the future; it is the expectation of future good things.

However, the Bishops were aware of the complexity and extent of the present situation and problems which confront our youth. In the countries of AMECEA region 60% of the entire population is composed of young people under the age of 35 years. Many lack the opportunities for education, the basic necessity of life and of employment. Bishops identified some root causes of the youth problems.

The world on the threshold of the year 2000 is in urgent need of change and transformation. Bishops called on the Youth to keep their eyes fixed on Jesus and to heed His call. He is Lord and Saviour who calls them to "follow Him" and transform the world into a world of love, justice and peace.

The Youth were called to discover their gifts and their call in life; to join hands with us in building genuine community; to grow to maturity in Christ and to share in the Church's mission of bringing the Good News of salvation to all people especially to their fellow youth.

THE 11th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA IN 1992

On the Theme:

"Evangelism with its central issues: Inculturation, Small Christian Communities and Priestly, Religious and Christian Formation."

The Bishops of AMECEA have studied the issues facing their people and the responses to which they are called by the Holy Spirit. They have also met historic moment in their African societies, a critical moment both of opportunity and danger.

Many countries were experiencing the hopes of new democracies as their political systems move toward greater accountability and transparency. But the economic restructuring which is going on within our countries is proving to be very harsh. It is increasing in particular the suffering of the poor among them.

Bishops were concerned of the great suffering of so many people. Drought and famine devastated the land; AIDS wastes most precious resource, wars and oppression cause refugees to flee their homes.

Because of the intense persecution of Christians in the Sudan, Bishops said that they had sent a special appeal for help to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, and the international community. Islamic Fundamentalism posed a serious threat to the political and religious freedoms of the people of the region. Therefore Bishops called upon leaders to promote respect and tolerance of all citizens.

The Bishops also expressed their fraternal solidarity with the church in Malawi at that difficult time of the violation of human rights in that country. While aware of some recent signs of hope, they urged that there should be continuing progress in the promotion of human rights and justice.

The situation in Kenya was a cause of great concern also for the Bishops. They prayed for an end to ethnic conflict and a peaceful transition to democracy. And as they heard in those days of the terrible plight of the people of Somalia, Bishops promised their prayers for God's merciful blessings for this country.

Bishops reflected on ways of strengthening the church's response to meeting the challenges of these times.

First, they explored the meaning and implementation of Inculturation, making Jesus Christ at home in our African setting. They recognized that the work of inculturation must touch not only the liturgy but also catechesis, style of governing, whole way of living as Christians.

Second, the Bishops renewed their commitment, originally made in 1973, to the building of Small Christian Communities (SCCs) as the major pastoral priority of AMECEA. They stressed again that SCCs are not optional in their churches; they are central to the life of faith and the ministry of evangelization.

Third, the tasks of inculturation and building Small Christian Communities require well-trained priests, religious and laity. There must be greater empowerment of the laity to serve in the church and to work

for the transformation of society according to the church's social teaching.

In order to be more effective in their collaboration in the region, they should review in depth the AMECEA institutions. Bishops pledged to strengthen these institutions so that they could embody a vision of the Church in Africa beyond the year 2000: creatively serving God's People in a way that is self-ministering, self-propagating and self-supporting. Greater ecumenical cooperation would be fostered where possible.

The final appeal was made to the Catholic people of the AMECEA region to walk with the Bishops toward the year 2000, trusting in the power of Jesus in establishing here God's Kingdom of justice, peace and love. "He is the one who calls us anew to share the Good News with our sisters and brothers through our word and witness. All that we are about is God's work. We therefore urge you to join with us in the months ahead by praying daily for the success of the Synod."

THE 12th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN MANGOCHI, MALAWI IN 1995

On the Theme:

"The role of the Church in Development in the light of the African Synod."

The Bishops of AMECEA reflected together on the theme of Development and wanted to express their concern for the life of their people; also in its economic and social aspects. The Bishops spoke on the following agenda:

Growing poverty disrupts society: Many people do not have access to the basic necessities of life. Moreover, the burdens of offering education and health services have been ever increasing in recent years rather than becoming lighter. Some of the causes have their root in human greed and lust for power which lead to civil wars, ethnic conflicts, economic exploitation, social evils such as crime, drug abuse and corruption. Democracy needs economic development: Democracy is growing to a greater degree in some of AMECEA countries. But, the growth of democracy will not by itself remove poverty, guarantee security and peace nor create basic social justice. Often we notice that the new political parties seldom offer any alternative ideas on how to alleviate poverty.

People of hope: Bishops believe that we, the people of Eastern Africa, have the power and the capacity within ourselves to face our own problems and seek solutions for them.

Bishops therefore appealed to :

- Everybody: to see how they can help one another.
- All communities: To pull together their efforts and talents together and build cooperatives and other self-help schemes to alleviate and eradicate poverty.
- To local governments: To assist the local communities and not to treat them as objects or ignorant agents.
- To professional people: To see your profession as a service to society.
- To pastoral collaborators: To live in these times of distress in solidarity with our people. To lead them through the example of hard work and dedication. To avoid giving scandal to the people by an extravagant style of life.
- To leaders: To serve the community. Do not use your power for personal

enrichment nor to favor your family or clan. A good leader works for the common good.

- To the international community: To review Bishops' appeal for debt problem. Poverty must be taken as a global problem.
- To the governments and people of Sudan and Somalia: Conflicts and wars make development impossible. Bishops appeal for dialogue among the different parties in order to establish justice, peace and democracy for all.

The Church-as-Family: Together they have a great capacity to solve most difficulties. If the Church is to become the family of God in Africa, then the people of God have to learn to sit together, to look together at their situation, to listen to each other, to plan a common project and feel all responsible for realizing it.

THE 13th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN NAIROBI, KENYA IN 1999

On the Theme:

"Formation of Agents of Evangelization."

The Catholic Bishops of the AMECEA region expressed their commitment to build with their people a vigorous Church, as the African Synod wished - a Church-as-family. However, that required effective programs of formation at every level in the Church, from the faithful to themselves, the bishops.

Implementation of the African Synod: Recognizing that while much has been done to implement the teachings of the African Synod, much still remains to be done. The



Welcoming President Daniel Arap Moi of Kenya at the inauguration ceremony of the AMECEA plenary meeting held in Nairobi, Kenya in 1999



Participants of the 13th AMECEA plenary meeting in a session

Bishops reflected on their efforts on how they could make the Church become more like an African family, in some aspects, especially in the interior relationships between its members.

The necessary renewal and change of attitudes will come about through an appropriate formation, both initial and ongoing, for all members of the Church - a formation that will help them to be conscious that they are partners in the mission of evangelization.

This fluid and turbulent period of history: The Bishops reflected on rapid change that is engulfing the world, sometimes designated by the term 'globalization'. So many changes were taking place in their countries and the falling away of so many of good traditions in face of the global secular and pervasive culture that is propagated everywhere by an ever more powerful communication technology. War, violence and the infringement of human rights are all obstacles to Bishops' mission of evangelization. In these circumstances, the importance of formation for all agents of evangelization is clearer than ever.

The whole community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelization, each according to his or her specific role within the church.

Formation of all agents of evangelization: The bishops examined the formation of all agents of evangelization with a view to meeting the challenges they face and transforming the Church more and more into a community that will be experienced by all its members as a family to which they truly belong, in which they feel at home and willing to commit themselves to exercise

their responsibilities to the full.

They considered the formation of the laity and particularly the youth. They also thought about the formation of catechists, who are the front line evangelizers and to whom the Church in Africa owes a great debt. They also thought of on-going formation for the Bishops, priests and women and men religious, who co-operate so closely with the Bishops in the ministry of evangelization.

The laity should take an active role in various aspects of the life of the Church. Thus, the Bishop should form them to enable them to assume confidently their civic responsibilities and to consider socio-political problems in the light of the Gospel and of faith in God. Bishops also acknowledged the role of women as mothers and sisters in the family and their special duties as the first teachers in life.

They acknowledged the crucial role of the priest as fathers and servants and their loyalty and dedicated service to the community of Christians. As they reflected on the seminary formation the Bishops recognized that while it is basically sound, especially the intellectual and academic preparation, there are other areas that need more attention: such as human, spiritual and pastoral formation - a formation that must be more experiential and spiritual and practical. To the seminary staff: their difficult and highly responsible task is very much appreciated and so they also need a special preparation as formators, to equip them to accompany students in some of the areas of formation we have mentioned. Bishops thanked the missionaries, their first formators, and asked them to continue in their role as formators.

THE 14th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA IN 2002

YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES (Acts 1:8)

On the Theme:

*"Deeper Evangelization in the New
Millennium."*

The Catholic Bishops of the AMECEA Region evaluated the 40 years of AMECEA discovering its strengths, fruits and its impact on the people of God in the Region, as well as the weaknesses which ought to be eliminated. They also stressed the importance of doing Evangelization as members of the family of God guided by love for each other, care, acceptance, dialogue, solidarity, and justice.

The Bishops chose Jesus' preferential option for the poor, the vulnerable, and the oppressed in society, as the guiding principle in their Evangelization. Reference was made to their brothers and sisters in Sudan, Somalia, and Northern Uganda. It is because of wars that there were so many millions of refugees and internally displaced persons on the African continent.

The Bishops condemned strongly the continued practice of slavery, the restriction of the freedom of religion imposed on non-Muslims, and the unequal treatment of non-Muslims in the Sudan. These injustices should be brought to an end. They urged the Government of the Sudan, the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the civil society of that country, to take necessary steps to end the

armed conflict through mediated peaceful means. "We call upon the political leaders in our Region, and indeed all African leaders, to effectively intervene through mediation with the Government of the Sudan, to see that lasting peace is effectively established."

To the people of Somalia the AMECEA Bishops asked the Somali leaders, and the leaders of IGAD, particularly the neighboring countries to overcome their particular interests and work effectively to restore law and order, security and peace, in that country.

They emphasized the need for active and full participation of the Lay Faithful in Evangelization and development and committed themselves to greater promotion of Christian unity and inter-religious dialogue in the regions. The Bishops said, "We committed ourselves and the entire Catholic Church in the Region to be in the forefront in the peacemaking process and pledged to continue speaking out against war and conflict and to do whatever is necessary to bring about lasting peace and harmony based on social justice."

They emphasized the need for collaboration in the work of justice and peace with all organizations, groups and individuals who are committed to the same cause. They also called on the Justice and Peace Commissions and Committees, at all levels of the Church, to conscientize all the people of God, through an appropriate catechesis and spirituality of justice and peace, based on the Social Teaching of the Church. All agents of Evangelization should be formed in these Social Teachings. They also called upon pastoral agents to instill the Kingdom values of justice and peace, particularly



The opening ceremony of the 14th AMECEA plenary meeting held in Dar es salaam, Tanzania in 2002



A Group photo with President Benjamin Mkapa of Tanzania during the AMECEA plenary meeting held in Dar es salaam, Tanzania in 2002

among the teachers, medical personnel, police, armed forces, civil servants, politicians, professionals, and business people. To the Justice and Peace Commissions in the AMECEA Region the Bishops called them to train people, at all levels of society, in the skills of mediation, negotiation, arbitration, and reconciliation, so as to manage conflicts as well as investing in lasting peace.

More importantly, the Bishops were greatly concerned about the magnitude of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the Region. They committed themselves to stand in solidarity with the affected and infected people. They pledged to take the lead and urge all pastoral agents to undertake stronger awareness creation and education of people on this major problem. The Bishops also called upon governments to do all in their power and capacity to transparently and effectively respond to this challenge of HIV/AIDS. To the people of God, the Bishops called for a radical change of their sexual behavior, adhere to marital faithfulness and sexual abstinence outside marriage, as the fully assured means to fight against HIV/AIDS.

The Bishops were also disturbed by increased poverty in the Region, famine and issues of food security, clean and safe water, basic health and education, permanent shelter, accepted human conditions of life, a clean and healthy environment. Extreme poverty leads to conflicts. They listed some of the common causes of poverty and underdevelopment in the region, such as corruption, fraud, embezzlement, and diversion of public resources which the Bishops strongly condemned. They urged the governments and civil society and all people of God to fight the root causes of these problems through hard work, proper

policies, accountability and transparency. They also called upon the world community and humanitarian organizations to do whatever they can to prevent the impending human catastrophe.

They also urged Caritas/Development offices, at all levels of the Church, to empower people for authentic development, as Pope Paul VI reminded them that, "Development is the new name for Peace."

On Globalization the Bishops spoke of globalization of solidarity, urging that marginalized groups of society should be empowered. Globalization is abused; capitalism glorifies profit at the expense of the poor. A call was made to all professionals in the region to assist the people of God to examine globalization critically, so as to utilise its positive aspects, while fully rejecting its negative elements.

On debts of the poor countries, the Bishops said that it was immoral and unethical and indeed a structure of sin for rich countries to continue demanding from poor countries the payment of huge sums of money as debt repayments. The money for servicing the debt could be used for providing basic healthcare, education and other social services to the poor in our countries. The Bishop appealed for debts cancellation.

Good governance was still a challenge to all countries in the region. The Bishops called upon political leaders to respect the values and principles of good governance particularly, tolerance, pluralism, the rule of law, and the full participation of the people in their own governance. The Bishops acknowledged the positive intervention of the Church and the people of Zambia and

Malawi in defending constitutionalism against those who wanted to selfishly undermine it in these countries.

The Bishops commended the efforts to build and strengthen regional economic and political groupings like the Common Market for East and Southern Africa (COMESA) East African Community (EAC) and the Southern African Development Community (SADC). They called upon their political leaders in the region, and elsewhere in Africa, to look for greater political, economic integration and unity, and ensure that the success of these efforts depends on the active participation of their citizens in these processes and these new bodies.

The Bishops condemned oppressive cultural practices and customs such as female genital mutilation, the commercialization of “bride-wealth”, domestic violence against women, and abuse of patriachalism to discriminate against women, the practices of widow inheritance and exclusion of women from property ownership. They also denounced the evils of tribalism and ethnocentrism, which are at the root causes of social conflict in the region.

The Bishops called upon the revitalization of Small Christian Communities (SCCs), which often encouraged people to live as members of the family of God regardless of race or political affiliation. They called upon the people of God to disseminate AMECEA’s new Vision and Mission statements, and Mandate, among all the people of God, in the Region.

To the Lay faithful: women, men, youth, and professionals, the Bishops called upon them as pastoral agents, to evangelize the entire society, wherever they are, with

Gospel values while paying attention to those in the political, economic and cultural sectors. Deeper Evangelization, demanded constant conversion to Christ, and the uncompromising commitment, through prayer and action, based on values of the Kingdom of God.

THE 15th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN MUKONO, UGANDA IN 2005

**CALLED TO BE A GOOD SAMARITAN
(Lk: 10:30-37)**

On the Theme:

***“Responding to the Challenges of HIV/AIDS
in AMECEA Region.”***

The Catholic Bishops of the AMECEA region reflected upon and prayed over the pastoral challenges of HIV and AIDS within the region and wanted to share their concerns and thoughts with the various groups of people of God in the region.

However, before the plenary assembly the Bishops visited and met various institutions and communities dealing with HIV/AIDS in Uganda and in their respective countries, Bishops were very impressed by the efforts made by Episcopal Conferences, Dioceses, Parishes, Congregations and the Faithful in responding generously, often under difficult circumstances, to the challenges of HIV/AIDS in the AMECEA region.

Praise also went to all medical personnel in the region in treating and caring for people living with HIV/AIDS; and all the counselors who were giving hope to the sick, as well as medical researchers in both modern



A Group photo: AMECEA Participants of Capacity Building workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2006

and traditional medicines, who are doing their best in the search for a cure. The Bishops appreciated the involvement of many conscientious parents, teachers, and religious leaders who take to heart the instruction of children, youth and communities, in good moral behavior, which is essential to the prevention of the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Reality and Concerns: Bishops were greatly alarmed by the magnitude of HIV/AIDS, its origin, causes, spread and consequences. They were aware of the many factors that have aggravated the spread of HIV/AIDS throughout Africa. These include; abject poverty, greed and corruption, ignorance and illiteracy, high levels of unemployment, war and the existence of refugees and internally displaced persons, inequality between men and women, immoral behavior, disrespect of children's rights, and negative traditional cultural practices. All these factors have greatly increased the spread of HIV/AIDS, giving rise to prejudice, discrimination and stigma.

Holistic Care for All: The Church, in her evangelizing mission is called to remember the demands of the Gospel and to offer pastoral care to people living with HIV/AIDS. "We see a more holistic care as a great need in the context of immense suffering of our people. Holistic care designates complete and integrated response to the needs of a human person ranging from spiritual, physical, psychological, social and material. This care is to be given both to the sick in our communities and those in hospitals including members of the clergy and religious who are living with HIV/AIDS," the Bishops emphasized.

Solidarity with People Living With HIV/AIDS: Bishops called upon all Christians and

people of good will to respect the full dignity and equal rights of all people living with HIV/AIDS. They called for affirmative action and empowering policies from governments in dealing with people living with HIV/AIDS. They reminded the Catholic Faithful to serve as shining examples in respecting the human dignity of the sick and offering special care to people who are living with HIV/AIDS.

Media: Bishops recognized and acknowledged that public and private media houses are important partners in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The Church, governments and private media houses should take deliberate steps to creatively use the media in this fight. They appealed to Catholic radio stations and media houses to find innovative ways to educate and sensitize people about HIV/AIDS, to promote counseling and good family values, and to enhance the positive appreciation of human sexuality and chastity.

Foods and Fruits: The Bishops observed that God the Creator has given AMECEA region abundant healthy natural foods and fruits. They called upon the Governments in the region to promote sustainable agriculture in order to develop, protect, and preserve indigenous seeds, the soil and the environment. Bishops discouraged the promotion of genetically modified foods and called upon the governments to put in place a policy that protects the natural foods and environment.

Couples with Special Difficulties: As shepherds of the Catholic Church in the AMECEA Region the Bishops listened to the cries of their people living with HIV/AIDS. The Bishops called upon all pastoral agents to be close to the couples with special problems arising from HIV/AIDS conditions.

Integral Sexuality: The Bishops taught that



A Group photo: AMECEA Participants of HIV/AIDS workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya in 2006

sexuality is a precious gift from God, the Creator to every man and woman. Thus, people were to honor it, respect it, and use it according to God's commandment and the teaching of the Church. The Bishops condemned all negative and unethical use of sexuality in this region and worldwide.

Parents, teachers and pastoral agents should do everything in their power and capacity to teach children, youth, and all those preparing for marriage, about their human sexuality so that they acquire sound values and virtues to uphold chastity and shun all pre-marital sex. Pastoral agents should guide married couples in living out their marriage vocation faithfully.

Advocacy: The Bishops were committed as Church leaders to undertake a strong campaign of advocacy for persons infected and affected with HIV/AIDS before their governments, all sectors of society and international community, so that policies of affirmative action are made and greater financial and holistic assistance and support are given.

Sustainability of HIV/AIDS Programs: In view of the challenges of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, especially the needs of our people living with this terrible disease and those affected by its impact, the Bishops recognize and appreciate what the local communities are doing to provide material resources and a Christian witness in accompanying the sick and caring for widows, widowers and the orphans in their midst. They asked the Member Episcopal Conferences to intensify strategic collaboration with governments and international funding agencies. On its part, AMECEA will support these efforts through lobbying and advocacy.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Approach: Bishops realized the need of networking with ecumenical partners and the Interfaith Organizations and communities in the fight against HIV/AIDS. "This networking will help them avoid duplication of efforts and increase the mobilization of the required human resources for a consolidated response to the HIV/AIDS pandemic," the Bishops stated.

New Policies in our Church: Formulating of new policies in our Evangelization was needed so that the challenge of HIV/AIDS is focused-on and mainstreamed in all activities to enhance the holistic approach.

Thus, all AMECEA Institutions of higher learning, formation houses and seminaries should treat the issue of HIV/AIDS thoroughly in their programs of study. AMECEA Bishops mandated all departments and commissions at Episcopal Conference level to integrate the challenge of HIV/AIDS in their programs and activities.

Globalization: Bishops were greatly concerned about the negative effects of globalization. Apart from growing economic inequalities the bishops were deeply concerned about the promotion of pornography in all forms through all types of media, which corrupt children and the youth and contribute to the further spread of HIV/AIDS. They also condemned the liberalisation and commercialisation of sex, which is contrary to human and religious values.

Debt Cancellation and Real Development

Assistance: In order to promote global and human solidarity Bishops appealed to the rich nations of the world to cancel immediately the debt of the poorest countries.

Other important Challenges

Peace in Southern Sudan: Bishops called upon the African Union, all leaders and peoples of Africa, and all countries of the world to generously contribute to the emergency needs, the rehabilitation and full-scale development of the Southern Sudan.

Conflict in Darfur: Bishops urged that the approach for a solution in Darfur be treated separately from the peace agreement on the Southern Sudan, and particularly this should not overshadow nor block the need for humanitarian assistance and development to Southern Sudan.

Northern Uganda: The Bishops called upon the rebels the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to heed the cry of their people and accept dialogue with the government and its peace team in order to end this long lasting conflict.

Eritrea/Ethiopia: The Bishops strongly appealed to the international community to do whatever is possible to resolve their conflict so that the two countries can resume good neighborly cross-border relations.

THE 16th PLENARY ASSEMBLY IN LUSAKA, ZAMBIA IN 2008

On the Theme:

"Reconciliation through Justice and Peace"

The Catholic Bishops of AMECEA region were concerned about the situation in the region, namely, the Darfur Region and Southern Sudan, the conflict in Northern Uganda, the unprecedented crisis following the presidential and parliamentary elections of 2007 in Kenya, the recent tension between Djibouti and Eritrea, the continuous crisis in Somalia, the political impasse in Malawi and the tension existing between Eritrea and Ethiopia. They were also greatly concerned about the crisis in Zimbabwe. Thus, they were in view of all this offering pastoral guidance to God's people whom they are privileged to shepherd.

Evangelisation: Bishops of AMECEA realized the challenges the Church is facing in its Evangelizing Mission, especially in bringing about reconciliation through Justice and Peace. The Church does not have all the means to solve conflicts and tensions. However, the Church should continue to be prophetic, that is, to be an agent of justice, forgiveness and reconciliation. They challenged their theologians to develop a theology of Truth and Reconciliation that will enable the Church to address and foster reconciliation through Justice and Peace.

Reconciliation from the heart: As shepherds, they believed that reconciliation should be at the centre of what the Church does and should start from the heart of each person. As Christians they are all called upon to



Priests in procession and Bishops in preparation for the inauguration Holy Mass of the 16th AMECEA plenary meeting held in Lusaka, Zambia in 2008





Conferences Secretaries General during Eucharistic celebrations in Lusaka, Zambia in July 2008

announce the Good News of Christ and denounce injustice wherever they are.

Mechanisms for Monitoring and Evaluation of Church performance: The Catholic Church in the AMECEA Region acknowledges the ever changing socio-economic and political world. The Bishops called upon the Catholic Institutions in AMECEA Region to develop workable strategies and mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of our pastoral programmes.

Entrenchment of Poverty in Africa: The gap between the rich and poor is ever increasing. There are several factors that lead to high poverty levels in the countries of AMECEA. While we acknowledge the external factors such as unfair trade pacts with Western and emerging Asian economies Bishops also recognized local causes of this phenomenon such as misplaced priorities, inequitable distribution of resources, bad governance, corruption and conflicts and scourge of HIV and AIDS.

Bishops welcomed external investments into the economies of the region but these investments must not disadvantage our people. Justice demands payment of just wages and good working conditions. Similarly, governments in the region must demonstrate transparency and concern for the common good in their contract negotiations with both local and foreign investors.

Advocacy: Having deliberated on the need to accompany their parliamentary representatives in the AMECEA region, Bishops encouraged their National Conferences, where this is not yet done, to

establish Parliamentary Liaison Offices. Bishops also commended efforts being made to seek for an Observer Status at the African Union. AMECEA will seek similar status within the relevant Regional Organizations in order to engage them at policy level and ensure that decisions made do not disadvantage the poor majority.

Communication for Reconciliation through Justice and Peace: The communications media can truly be at the service of understanding among peoples and a means for promoting the unity of the human family. There is, therefore, the need to improve communication in the Church by ensuring that information to people in parishes and the Small Christian Communities is availed to all.

Catholic Media should promote messages of hope. Communicators in the region should collaborate and network, hold regular meetings, training, share information, radio and TV programs. "The Church in AMECEA should ensure that it has communicators who are properly formed in Christian values and ethics and not only professionally trained in communication techniques and technology," the Bishops urged.

Family: The Bishops declared that the Church stands for integral relationships within the marriage and family. In order to achieve meaningful development, the family unit must be protected, strengthened and supported because it is the back bone of any nation. The education of children, especially girls and empowerment of women in the region still remains a great challenge.

New Generation of Leaders transformed by



*Group photo of Participants of the Good Governance workshop held in Nairobi, Kenya
March 2010*



*A visit of Bishop John Ricard Chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on the Church
in Africa to AMECEA Secretariat office in Nairobi, Kenya in June 2009*



AMECEA members of the Executive Board and Secretariat staff in a group photo with the Apostolic Nuncio Most Rev Nicolas Girasoli at his residence in Lusaka, Zambia during the 16th AMECEA Plenary Assembly held in Zambia July 2008



Group photo of AMECEA Executive Board members together with AMECEA Secretariat staff during their first meeting in November, 2008, in Nairobi, Kenya.



A Group photo: AMECEA/SECAM Delegates during a Solidarity visit to Sudan in Rumbek Town on 7 November 2010

Gospel values: Bishops urged the Church Institutions to prioritize the formation of leaders at all levels of society who are transformed by Gospel values and can lead by example in the pursuit of Justice and Peace in our region and in Africa as a whole. The Catholic Universities established in the region should bear a Catholic identity in their activities and they should create a network of collaboration among them.

Sacredness of Creation: Observing that environment is God's gift to humankind and all creation is sacred, the Bishops condemned the degradation of the environment as this brings about adverse weather patterns. The Bishops believed that the local authorities were not doing enough to protect the environment. Thus, they called upon all people in the region to work towards safeguarding the environment.

Ecumenical and Interfaith Approaches: The area of Justice and Peace involves concerted efforts that include inter-religious dialogue. The Bishops appealed to all those who dialogue to always work towards reciprocal and a conducive environment for prospering peace. Links should be there with organizations and individuals who are already making headway in this very important field like the All African Council of Churches (AACC) and various National Ecumenical Bodies and other Religious Bodies.

Positive Efforts: Bishops commended the efforts

of some of the governments that uphold the rule of law and principles of good governance and also those governments that have resolved their conflicts through peaceful reconciliation.

Cooperating Partners: Bishops were grateful to those Christians in the region who continuously support the local Church despite the difficulties they experience. They were also grateful to their cooperating partners for their generosity to the dioceses and institutions over the years.

AMECEA Golden Jubilee: The Bishops officially declared that: AMECEA would be celebrating its Golden Jubilee in 2011. This celebration will coincide with the 17th AMECEA Plenary Assembly to be held at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA) in Nairobi, Kenya from 27th June to 7th July 2011. The Bishops were thankful to God for inspiring the Founding Fathers of AMECEA to create this illustrious Association of solidarity and pastoral collaboration.

CONCLUSION

AMECEA has grown to adulthood if we were to compare it to a human person. We are grateful to the Founding Fathers and all who have personally and collectively given their tireless and dedicated service to the organization. However, as AMECEA is celebrating 50 years since its inception there are a number of issues to be taken into consideration: Catholic population growth; Coming up of new members (New Bishops); Self-reliance issues, Growing National Level Institutes of Higher Learning. These include Universities, Technical Colleges and Long Distance Learning Facilities to mention a few.

The fast growth of the Church in the AMECEA countries brings the urgency of solidifying the quality dimension of evangelization.

The number of dioceses and new Bishops has enormously increased. There is a possibility that new bishops do not share the same original vision and passion of AMECEA and its institutions. There is a need for the Church leadership/bishops to dynamically strengthen ideals of the Association.

To that issue of self-reliance the Church in AMECEA has to revisit strategies of self-reliance and self-sustainability in personnel and financial resources at regional, national, diocesan, parish and down to Small Christian

Communities so that AMECEA countries be a blessing in the region.

By the coming of Catholic Institutes of Higher Learning/universities in the AMECEA Countries what is needed is collaboration, networking and solidarity that will enable these Institutes to work together, learn from each other and if possible share the resources and expertise in addressing issues of common concern in the region.

Praise to those who served AMECEA in the past and present in different capacities. May Almighty God reward them for the untiring efforts in the establishment of AMECEA and promotion of Evangelization in Solidarity.