THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S RESPONSE TO POST DEATH RITUALS IN MUSAMI, 1980 – 2008: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has addressed indigenous post-death rites to varying depth and scope. This study examined the extent to which the Catholic Church in Musami, Zimbabwe has succeeded in implementing inculturation. It interrogates the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals in Musami. The study established that Musami Christians have been generally dissatisfied with some inherited ways of doing theology. As a response, Musami Catholics used contemporary contextualized, culturally-based approaches to post-death rituals, which started where people were. To put the Musami inculturation debate into its proper context, the study traced the debate on inculturation among the Catholics in Zimbabwe. It also explored the historical context within which the Musami Mission developed. A detailed description of the St. Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Shrine is provided in this study. The study noted difficulties bedeviling efforts to analyse the growth of adaptation of traditional culture by making indigenous after-death rituals more meaningful to African Catholics, by analysing the tension between the Catholic traditional faith and Shona post-death rituals. In order to find out the extent of inculturation implemented in Musami, questionnaires were sent to the Catholic and to non-Catholic population. Structured one-on-one interviews and focus group discussions were conducted. An analysis of the data showed the need for the Catholic Church to identify theological imperatives, non-essentials, as well as to be creative in its approach to inculturation. In order to have a more contextualized understanding of inculturation in Musami, the study provided an overview of approaches to inculturation in other denominations. Given women's greater vulnerability to post-death rituals in indigenous cultures, the study addresses the question of the status of women in the debate on inculturation. The debate recommends effective catechism, upgrading of theological training, the establishment of a Theological Commission and a serious commitment to address inculturation. The study concludes that there is need for doctrinal re-orientation to bring about religious behavioural change and transformation of indigenous Christians through the teaching of Christian doctrine in an organic and systematic way involving pragmatic inculturation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AACC	All Africa Conference of Churches
AFM	Apostolic Faith Mission
AAFM	African Apostolic Faith Mission
ACPZ	Anglican Communion of the Province of Zimbabwe
AFER	African Ecclesial Review
AIC	African Instituted/Indigenous/Independent/International Churches
AIDS	Acquired Immuno Deficiency Syndrome
AR	African Religion
ATISCA	Association of Theological Institutions in Southern and Central Africa
ATR	African Traditional Religion
BAT	British American Tobacco
Bro.	Brother (Religious order male, not a priest)
BSAP	British South African Pioneer Column
CA	Catholic Association
CCAP	Central Church of Africa Presbyterian
CCC	Catechism of the Catholic Church
CCFW	Commission of Christian Formation and Worship

CCN	Catholic Church News
CIA	Christianity in Independent Africa
CMC	Christian Marching Church
ECAMC	East Central African Missionary Conference
FGDs	Focus Group Discussions
FIF	Forward in Faith
FIG	Faith in God
FOG	Family of God
Fr.	Father (as referring to the title of a priest)
GRJ	*Guta RaJehovah*
HACR	Holy Apostolic Church of Rome
HIV	Human Immune Virus
IMBISA	Inter-Regional Meeting of Bishops of Southern Africa
IMC	Interdenominational Missionary Conference
KG	*Kurova Guva*
KGC	*Kurova Guva* Commission
LCBL	Little Children of the Blessed Lady
LG	*Lumen Gentium* (Dogmatic Constitution of the Church 1964)
LMS	London Missionary Society
Macc	Maccabees
MCZ	Methodist Church in Zimbabwe

MTR	Musami Traditional Religion
NADC	National Association of the Diocesan Clergy
NRM	New Religious Movements
Numb	Numbers
OP	Order of Preachers (Dominicans)
PDR	Post Death Rituals
RCBC	Rhodesian Catholic Bishops' Conference
RCZ	Reformed Church of Zimbabwe
Rev	Reverend
Revd	Reverend
Rt	Right
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SC	*SacrosanctumConcilium*
SCC	Small Christian Communities
SECAM	Symposium of Episcopal Conference of Africa and Madagascar
SJ	Society of Jesus (Jesuits)
Sr	Sister (nun)
STR	Shona Traditional Religion
UCCZ	United Congregational Church of Zimbabwe
UFIC	United Family International Church
UMC	United Methodist Church

WCC	World Council of Churches
ZAOGA	Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa
ZCBC	Zimbabwe Catholic Bishops Conference
ZCC	Zion Christian Church
ZMR	Zambezi Mission Record
ZTR	*Zezuru* Traditional Religion

GLOSSARY

Ad experimentum	-	as an experiment
Ad gentes	-	to the nations
Amaivemunhu	-	mother of the deceased
Bonde	-	reed mat
Chawawanabatisisa		
Mudzimu haupikaviri	-	what you got guard it jealously
Chenura	-	to purify
Chibhanduru	-	traditional dance
Chibuku	-	commercialised traditional beer
Chidhoma	-	goblin
Chikuva	-	ritual area
Chinyu	-	traditional oil container
Chisi	-	rest day
Chita	-	guild
Chita chaMaria		
Hosiyedenga	-	guild of Mary Queen of Heaven
Chita chaMaria Munyaradzi		
Wavatamburi	-	guild of Mary consoler of the sorrowful
Chita chaMbuya Anna	-	guild of St Annes

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Chitukwane	-	goblin
Chivanhu	-	indigenous traditions
Communion sacrorum	-	communion of holy things
Doro rehonye	-	beer of the maggots
Doro rekugezamafoshoro	-	beer to wash shovels
Doro remasadza	-	beer of thick porridge
Doro remasodzi	-	beer of the tears
Doro repfukudzatsoka	-	beer to rub footsteps
Douleia	-	a form of great respect and reverence
Dunzvi	-	niece
Epoche	-	bracketing out
Evangelii Nuntiandi	-	Announcing the Gospel
Extra ecclesiam nulla salus	-	No Salvation outside the Church
Fadzamoyo	-	make the heart happy
Gata	-	visiting a diviner
Gate	-	clay-pot
Gaudiumetspes	-	Joy and Hope
Homo absconditus	-	Hidden human being
Hosho	-	rattles
Hunda	-	neck meat
Huva	-	ritual area

In toto	-	totally
Instrumentum laboris	-	Working Document
Intra economiam		
Incarnationis	-	in keeping with the Economy of Incarnation
Jiti	-	indigenous dance
Koinonia	-	fellowship
Kuchenuramufi	-	to purify the deceased
Kudzoramunhumumusha	-	to bring back the spirit of the deceased
Kudzurura	-	to smear cow-dung
Kuenda kumashope-shope	-	to visit the diviner
Kuitamusande	-	to canonize
Kukombaguva	-	to surround the grave
Kumusha	-	home
Kumutsamudzimu	-	to wake up the spirit of the deceased
Kunobvunzira	-	to consult the diviner
Kuparadzanhumbidzemufi	-	to dispose the clothes of the deceased
Kupira	-	to sacrifice
Kupisira guva	-	to burn the grave
Kurovaguva	-	to beat the grave
Kushava	-	to search
Kushopera	-	to consult the diviner

Kusuma/ kuteura	-	to sacrifice
Kusungahembedzemufi	-	to gather and tie the clothes of the deceased
Kusungazviyo	-	to tie rapoko
Kususukidza	-	to uplift the spirit to the ancestors
Kusvetukatsvimbo	-	to jump the knobkerrie
Kutambaguva	-	to dance the grave
Kutamba Jerusalem	-	traditional dance
Kuteura	-	to sacrifice
Kutoramudzimu	-	to take the spirit of the deceased
Kuzunza	-	to shake
Latreia	-	honour given to God alone
Lineamenta	-	document (outline document)
Logos	-	the word
Lumen Gentium	-	light to the nations
Madzibaba	-	men
Madzimai	-	women
Madzitateguru	-	ancestors
Magadziro	-	purification
Magna Carta	-	the Great Charter
Mahwisiri	-	Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (Wesleyan)
Maitiroekuvigamufi	-	ways to bury the dead

Makate	-	clay pots
Manyaradzo	-	memorial service
Mbudziyeshungu	-	goat of anger
Metanoia	-	conversion (change of heart/ mind)
Mhandara	-	virgins
Mharadzamusasa	-	destroying temporal shelter
Mhende	-	Zezuru traditional dance
Mhombwe	-	adulterer
Mhondoro	-	spirit medium
Midzimu	-	ancestors
Mimvuri	-	shades
Missa cantata	-	sung mass
Missasolemnis	-	solemn mass
Mombe	-	cow
Mudzimu	-	ancestor
Musikavanhu	-	creator of humankind
Muteurowemisa	-	mass
Mutorwa	-	stranger
Muzukuru	-	nephew/ niece
Mwari	-	God
Ngozi	-	evil spirit

Nhaka	-	inheritance
Nhokodzembudzi	-	goat dung
Nhonga mabwe	-	arrangement of stones
Njuzu	-	mermaid
Nuncio	-	Papal representative
Nyaradzo	-	memorial service
Nyikadzimu	-	world of the dead/ancestors
N'anga	-	traditional healer
Portafidei	-	gateway of faith
Sabhuku	-	village head
SacrosanctumConcillium	-	Sacred Council
Sadza	-	thick porridge
Sahwira	-	ritual friend
Sangoma	-	traditional healer
Sarapavana	-	legal guardian
Satispassio	-	pains of satisfaction
Seminaverbi	-	seeds of the word
Shavidzviti	-	fighting spirit
Shavirechipfambi/ hure	-	spirit of prostitution
Shavi rechisena	-	foreign spirit from Mozambique
Shavireudzimba	-	hunting spirit

Reatus poenae	-	liability to punishment
Rukukwe	-	reed mat
Rupasa	-	reed mat
Ruwadzano	-	women's guild
Theologia	-	theology
Theologia Africana	-	African Theology
Theos	-	God
Traditio	-	tradition
Tsikombi	-	unmarried old woman
Tsvimborume	-	unmarried old man
Umanyano	-	collaboration
Umbuyiso	-	bringing the spirit of the dead home
Vabvuwi	-	fishers of men
Vakaguma	-	those who have reached menopause
Varidzivake	-	his/ her relatives
Varoora	-	daughters in-law
Vasisateveri	-	those who have reached menopause
Zvidzidzozvevashanyi-		Catechumen lessons
Zviyo	-	rapoko

CHAPTER ONE

THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

1.1 Introduction

The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has experienced a lot concerning after-death rituals, since the advent of Vatican II (1962-1965). Several post-death liturgical experiments have taken centre stage, with no satisfactory solution. Thus,some local Catholics are not committed to the post-death Eucharistic celebration. Some local Christians secretly mix the Christian faith with some traditional elements in the context of death experience and communion with the living. As a result, indigenous Christians feel emptiness in the Christian actions that mark and celebrate the reality of post-death rituals, that is, a spiritual vaccum has been created in the lives of some local Christians, which indeed poses a great spiritual challenge to them. For local Christians, the spirit of the deceased cannot do anything for itself. It has to rely on the benevolence of its living family members to perform a ceremony, which brings peace and rest to the deceased. Thus,

> In Africa,we have to face the problem of either building a liturgy almost from the ground up or transplanting a European liturgical structure and then start chopping off and adding and patching up until we end up with something neither African nor European (Kumbirai 1966: 218).

In Kumbirai`s opinion, the only way forward was to produce a new rite,one which was ''typically African''. By this he meant a rite which was to be "in a Shona cast,based on customs, and traditions of the Shona''. He also insisted on the need for *kususukidza* (prayer for invocation), where the dead ancestors were asked by the living to take their child to God (Drienfontein Mission Archives 1966). This study seeks to examine the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals with special reference to the experiment in Musami.

The present chapter is divided into major sections which deal with area of investigation, aim and objectives of the study, justification, methodology and literature review.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Much has been proposed regarding post-death rituals. Some local Catholics have failed to integrate after-death celebrations into Christian worship. A number of questions have been raised by some African Catholics, which have received inadequate responses. These questions include: Can there be a systematic and practical implementation of a post-death liturgy with an African face? Can there be a more equitable model of theology that does not privilege Christianityin its interaction with African traditional religion? To what extent has the Catholic Church addressed the existential realities and concerns of the African? Whydothe local Christians continue to covertly resort to their indigenous religious ways? Is it possible to replace *kurova guva* with tombstone unveiling? Does Christianity have an adequate after-death liturgy? This study has these questions as a backdrop and analyses the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals in Musami with these questions in mind.

The study is in theology, and in particular African Christian theology. The main focus of the study is to find out about the Catholic Church's response to traditional post-death rituals in Musami, in the Mashonaland East Province of Zimbabwe. African Christians have suffered from "a split personality syndrome," which is a tendency that makes them live their lives on two parallel lines, divided between their fidelity to Christian faith and to African religion. Former Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda(1973:17), for example, confessed that he found within himself a "tension created by collision of two world views, which I have never completely reconciled". Desmond Tutu(1975:366) also complained that the African "suffered from a form of religious schizophrenia" because of the struggle between his Christianity and his Africaness, which Tutu felt was "violated" by the new religion. There was a widespread feeling of alienation from Western theology, a conviction that the

Christian faith, as it had been presented, lacked immediacy and relevance to the African situation, and had failed to take African traditions seriously, as observed by John Parratt (1995:14). Consequently, the need to integrate the traditional worldview into Christian Theology became an emerging theme.

This ambivalence has become a confusing and disturbing factor in the African Christian camp. It has created a painful tension for the local Christian conscience. Thus, Harry Sawyerr (1968: 8) pleaded for Christianity`s "interpretation in terms of the African soil", which would provide a view of Christianity that would enable the African "to feel at home in his/her new faith". This study seeks to fill the gap in the scholarly literature on Zimbabwean Catholic faith and post-death rituals. The ritual integration of the deceased's spirit as an ancestor to the family (*kurova guva)* is viewed as one of the biggest doctrinal problems that the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has ever faced, as observed by Paul H. Gundani (1998:198). Article 40 of the Constitution of Sacred Liturgy, of Vatican II addressed the relationship between the Gospel and local cultures. The Council recommended a radical adaptation of the liturgy if necessary (Vatican II Council 1962 - 1965).

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to establish the Catholic Church's response to post-death ritual and liturgy in Musami. The study seeks to achieve the following related goals:

- To analyse the Shona/Musami traditional beliefs relating to post-death rituals

- To trace the debate on inculturation within the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe

- To explore the Catholic Church's response towards post-death rituals in Musami, Zimbabwe

- To examine the St Paul's Musami Mission memorial shrine liturgy

- To find a contextual model consistent with Catholics' response to post-death rituals.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study is justifiable on academic (scholarly), practical and pastoral grounds. In this section, I outline why a study of this nature had to be undertaken. First, the study is important on academic grounds. Empirical data relating to, for instance, rituals undertaken as part of the process of inculturation will make a methodological contribution by examining the process of implementing inculturation. The Musami story has never received academic recognition, although it contributed to contextualized African Catholic theology.

Although, there is some debate, in this study the terms "inculturation" and "contextualization" shall be used interchangeably in places. Most of the available material on inculturation tends to be theoretical so this study is justifiable for it offers raw material to fashion or develop a contextual (pragmatic inculturation) model, by giving a practical intervention in the inculturation debate not just talk shows.

The subject of evangelisation and local cultures has been at the forefront of discussion for some time now. Most Church documents of Vatican II, from the first to the last, from the Constitution on the Liturgy to the Declaration on Religious Freedom, have propounded very open-minded principles about cultural pluriformity in the Church. According to W. Buhlmann (1977: 46), the 1974 Synod of African Bishops emphasised the right and duty of the Church in Africa to be authentically African. Africa burial rituals were administered to white missionaries, for it generated a national interest towards the Catholic post-death rituals.

Current Christianised post-death liturgies have not touched deeply, totally and entirely the lives of African Catholics. People continue to worship following inherited practices, but,

more often than not, the faith reflected in these acts of worship has not taken root, and the worship often appears divorced from the indigenous Christian's daily experiences. The divorce of worship from local Catholics' daily experiences reflects the need for another theological model or upgrading of the current model, which this study seeks to provide. The Catholic Church has used several contextualization models, from adaptation, accommodation, and enculturation up to inculturation. It should be acknowledged and appreciated that the Catholic Church has done a lot in terms of inculturation. However, the pace has changed and inculturation has not completed the business of post-death liturgy. Inculturation has been accused of not being gender sensitive. This study amplifies African Women's theologies in a practical case study of inculturation in Zimbabwe. Local Catholics considered a contextual theology in relation to post-death rituals which has not been considered in the light of conversion; therefore any contextual model should be aligned with an appropriate conversion model. The study offers a unique model of practical inculturation showcasing Musami Catholics' experiences.

Inculturation has become a catchword in African theology, and it has received gradual reflection in the official teaching of the Church. In most cases, implementation has been haphazard owing to several reasons. These include lack of interest at all levels, and limited awareness of culture, traditional theological concepts and liturgy. For meaningful inculturation to take place, it must be dynamic, embracing and thorough. Failure to take this aspect into cognisance has the repercussion of promoting "hide and seek" Christians (Christians who hide when they are doing what the Church does not allow). Emefie Ikenga-Metuh(1981:67) confirms African Traditional Religion's (ATR) co-existence for years with other religions, notably Christianity and Islam, but its future has never been as bleak as it is today. He suggests that a proper understanding of traditional forms of religious ritual and custom is vital to the study of inculturation. Benezet Bujo (1992:28) proposes an African theology that is plain, contextual and takes into full account the actual African situation. So far, however, there have been more words than actions; one cannot help wondering about the commitment of the bishops of Africa to a truly effective incarnation of Christianity in Africa.Kwesi Dickson (1983:46) sees the real problem as that of the theological method

adopted in theological training in Africa. On this view, categories that have been employed reflect a Western approach to theology, as observed by Okot p'Bitek (1971: 16), "to do theology in terms of Western dictates". This methodological strait jacket, while not freely imparting all the findings of Western scholarship, compels Africans to think along Western lines and thus as observed by E. B. Idowu (1965) and John S. Mbiti (1971), hampers originality of thought. This research is worth undertaking for it speaks in terms of liturgical response and pastoral contextualization, and assist in the African model of theological training.

The urgency of the principle of inculturation has been understood within the Church's effort to communicate the message of Jesus Christ, by incarnating in the lives and cultures of each people, thereby enabling them to bring their own living traditions to the original expressions of Christian life, celebration and thought (Ryan 2000:6). Laurenti Magesa, in his work *Anatomy of Inculturation: Transforming the Church in Africa,* perceives how the Christian faith and church have themselves in different social cultural situations. For Magesa(2004: 2), Christianity demands an immediate change in both perception and action, as people are "converted", as they receive the "gospel" preached in their world. However, this change occurs in its own way and at its own pace, not necessarily in the way or pace desired by the evangeliser. Magesa(2004: 3) has attempted to correlate critically the religiosity original to the African peoples with the Christian forms of spirituality they have received for centuries and he considers the future process of inculturation in Africa. Some African Christian theologians such as Mercy Oduyoye (1986:73) and Gundani (1998) have called upon the church in Africa to take ATRs and African cultures seriously. Some scholars of ATR have sought to remove both the blatant and latent theological bias in missionary reports that have been preserved in missionary archives (McKenzie 1997:16). The fact that many indigenous Christians still revert to their traditional practices is not the result of any lack of intellectual conviction, but their emotions are stirred by anxieties which seek security from the spirits. This study was worth pursuing in the light of the above observations, by updating discussion on inculturation offering a 'new' model which is informed by field data.

The Shona people, like everyone else, will only accept deep down what corresponds to their own needs, in terms of theological reflection on the significance of African beliefs and rituals of their own experience. There is need for reformulation, reconstruction and renovation of traditional values, which have an indigenous flavour. It is becoming increasingly clear; however, unpalatable it may appear to Western theologians that the focus of the Christian faith is moving steadily away from Eurocentric influences to new centres in the Third World (Hillman 1993:1). Thus, the researcher wants to establish a relevant and effective model of inculturation, which speaks to the lived realities of contemporary Catholics.

According to the teaching of Vatican II(Pope Paul VI, 1969) the Church is supposed to become present amongst all people in the same way that Christ by his incarnation committed himself to the particular social and cultural circumstances of people among whom he lived. In other words, through a "wonderful exchange," and in keeping with the economy of the incarnation (*intra economiam incarnationis*), the Christian community is supposed to transform and assimilate into itself, all the cultural "riches of the nations." (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 1975)

At least in theory, observes Karl Rahner(1970: 718), "the inculturation of Christianity into different cultures is everywhere admitted as a duty of the church." This "duty of the Church," because it raises hard questions, and involves unprecedented challenges, such as after-death ceremonies, is both difficult and urgent. "It is difficult," suggests W. Brueggemann(1997: 95), "because we have become so accustomed to our Euro-American domination that alternative expressions of Christian faith are discomforting and odd". Nevertheless, some positive action in this regard is urgently needed, "because our cultural domination is now ending, and we dare not any longer confuse our cultural domination with powers and claims of the gospel, which may indeed be embedded in many cultural

forms". This study will equip the Catholic Church and its theologians to respond to the felt needs of its members-to-be and current members.

Kofi Appiah-Kubi(1979: 118) has observed the need for a conscious attempt to revive or perpetuate selected aspects of culture with Christianity. Bujo(1992: 52) suggests the necessity of bringing African culture into categories of Christianity. Mbiti's(1972: 51-63) special effort was to try and compare African concepts with the biblical message. The parallels he draws between the biblical and African worldviews are important for further theological research. Bujo(1992: 62) however, deplores the lack of a theological synthesis and indicates the need to proceed contextually in trying to construct a new liberation theology for Africa, rather than remain stuck in the position of the outdated negritude movement. It is no longer a question merely of enabling the values of culture to take root inside the church, but of giving a "Christian" interpretation to the whole reality constituted by humanity, even to those parts of reality which are "outside" the Church.

Thus, this study is justifiable as it assists in the reformulation and reconstruction of an indigenous theological scope of post-death rituals in Musami, where the majority of the local Catholic community is practising dual allegiance, thus living in two worlds, namely that of Christianity, which they put on as it were, from outside, and the inner African world, where they are more at home and live their inner life.

This study is important for it will imply various degrees of transformation for Shona culture and Christianity, since the Christian faith has been perceived as an aggressively proselytizing movement. This study seeks pastoral relevance rather than a traditional approach to theology, which may be filled with assumptions and distortions, regarding the notion of post-death liturgy.

This study will help African Christians rediscover their forgotten identity and reconstruct it by taking all fundamentals, necessary modalities and inadequacies into account as far as after-death rituals are concerned. It will assist in promoting a feeling of ownership and forming a strong foundation for a contextual Church, a Church which deals with the situation here and now, a Church which dialogue with all, with a listening ear, a Church prompted by real-life experiences, which will be forthcoming only if there is participation, comprehension and compassion on the part of the laity. Solmon Zwana (2000:27)calls this contextual theology. He further states that one`s approach in contextualization depends on one`s point of emphasis, citing two orders or types of contextual theology. In the first order is the African theological approach, whose point of departure is the Bible leading on to the search for relevant themes in the African context. Within the second order is the thematic approach which looks at themes from people`s experiences and then relates them to the biblical truth (Zwana, 2000:28).

The present study is critical as local Christians will be better placed to appreciate the special characteristics of African cultural attributes, and also acknowledge diversities that occur in certain over-generalised local rituals, particularly in Musami (Murewa), where the majority of indigenous Christians are practicing "limbo dancing" theology, that is dual allegiance whereby the locals are Sunday Christians and practice ATRs during the week. This still leaves local Catholics playing the "disappear-and-resurface game" between these two religions. African Christians certainly have no problem with being Christians who are well rooted in their ATRs. Their problem arises when they are expected to strictly practice one of these religions, when they know very well that they can benefit from both. Thus, the research will help all the sides concerned to see that the relationship between the gospel and culture has been fairly assessed. With the problems above, the study is worthwhile as a resource material for the Catholic theological and pastoral training curriculum.

The study of the Catholic Church's response to after death rituals in Musami is also justifiable on the grounds that several theological approaches will enable African Christians

to understand the Christian faith from their own perspectives and language, not succumbing to fatalistic theology such as that of "*Hatina musha panyika, hatifari kuva pano*" (we have no home on earth and we are not happy to be here), which gives the impression of an attitude that one does not need to worry about earthly life, but is destined for a better life in heaven.

Christian doctrine should properly be communicated, not only through the linguistic symbolic systems of each people in their respective times and places, but also through their own "ritual narratives, titles, parables, metaphors modes of praise and blame, of command and prohibition of promise and threat," as indicated by Hillman (1993:5). Without those culturally invented symbols and systems, there cannot be adequate communication of Christian doctrine. Given such a context, this research is worth pursuing, since it adds new knowledge on the degree of inculturation (contextualization) by Musami Christians.

The study is also worth pursuing because the missionary endeavour beyond Africa is confronted with the task of collaborating in the "localisation" of the gospel among peoples to whose culture missionaries are "outsiders". The "outsiders" take cognisance of the values and application of the African's deep sense of religiosity, communalism, and friendship, holistic outlook on all life issues, perpetual awareness of spirits, joy at worship, musicality, love and sense of pride to Christianity in Africa. The word of God must feel at home in all cultures. The gospel should not destroy good cultural traits, but challenge negative cultural traits.

This thesis is therefore academic, practical and pastoral. Academically, it wrestles with discourses on inculturation within the Catholic Church. It provides fresh material on post-death rituals in Musami. Practically and pastorally, it seeks to equip the Musami community with a model that will enable them to harmonise Christian and traditional spirituality in the context of post-death rituals. This study is also a resource material for Catholic theological

and pastoral training curriculum. This came about as a result of ecclesiological, liturgical and political changes in global as well as local Catholicism as observed by Gundani (1997:81).

1.5 Methodology

Methodology is two pronged, that is, concerned with approach and the methods of data collection. This study was conducted within the qualitative paradigm, with the phenomenological approach as the primary qualitative methodology. Qualitative research methodology, establishes people's attitudes, belief system, perspectives and experiences, which are not easily measured quantitatively. Believers have a lot experience in terms of aspirations in this life, and in the lives of departed relatives. It also flags the most important ethical issues that the researcher will encounter (consent and confidentiality). Phenomenology, in particular, is on the descriptive, leading to its openness to the point of the believer, its descriptive accuracy and non-judgementalism. Phenomenology will not only act as a method, but as a philosophical underpinning for the whole study, because I sought to give the voice of the ordinary believers, who are part of policy making. Flexible phenomenology helps at philosophical level, whose thinking of ideas help in data collection of a particular attitude. Phenomelogical approach will be used to analyse data as privilledge of the believer. Phenomenology was critical for the data gathering process.

The general methodological framework in this research study is the theological approach, which is combined with historical and phenomenological approaches. The research addresses and critically examines the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals by identifying and analysing the contents of beliefs by means of reason, enlightened by faith, and promotion of its deeper understanding.

1.5.1 The Contextual Theological Approach

As noted above, this thesis is informed by the theological approach. In this section, I will highlight some key tenets of the theological approach, which will focus on the systematic theological model in general, in order to situate contextual theology in its proper background. It is not possible to exhaust the theological approach, although I will draw attention to its central features. According to *Collier`s Encyclopedia*, the word theology comes from two Greek words; *theos* meaning God, and *logos* meaning word, reason discourse. Therefore, theology is a rational discussion about God's relationship with humankind. Literally, this means theology is an attempt to speak about God, and to explain what one means by saying God. Some scholars define theology as

> the science which deals, according to scientific method, with the facts and phenomenon of religion, and culminates in a comprehensive synthesis of philosophy of religion which seeks to set forth in a systematic way what can be known regarding the objective grounds of religious belief (Farley 1985:1).

For Aristotle, *theologia* meant stories about gods, and for St Augustine it meant "faith seeking understanding" (Fiedler 1997: 8).Other scholars argue that the subject matter of theology is God, and God's relationship with God's creatures both living and non-living (Amanze 1998:81). One can see that defining theology is a difficult exercise. A lot of definitions have come up. It may mean the systematic study or presentation of a religion; hence one can talk of African Theology, Islamic Theology, Political Theology, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, Hindu Theology or Catholic Theology.

At first, the term was not a prerogative of any particular community. Paul Tillich (1964: 11) understood theology, as "the statements of the truths of Christian message, and the interpretations of those truths for every generation." Tillich (1967: 60) also pointed out that, theology needs to be done as a correlation of human's "existential questions and theological answers in mutual interdependence".

John Macquarrie (1966:1) says theology may be defined as the study which through participation in and reflection upon a religious faith seeks to express the content of this faith in the clearest and, most coherent language available. For Macquarrie(1966:3), theology seeks to express the content of faith. Walter Kaufman (1975: 9) sees theology as "God-talk", or words or speech about God. Christian theology is fully reflective understanding of the Christian weakness of faith as decisive for human existence. It should be also mentioned that theology deals with formative factors which Alister McGrath (1994) calls sources of theology namely, scripture, revelation, experience, philosophy, reason, tradition and culture. The researcher will examine the Catholic response to traditional post-death rituals by investigating the contents of belief, by means of reason enlightened by faith and promotion of its deeper understanding.

For Gustavo Gutierrez (1973) theology responds to conditions in which human beings live. It begins with persons and their historical situation of oppression and poverty. Theology begins with grassroots communities with their response to their own oppressive situations; thus theology aims at changing the world rather than understanding it. According to Gustavo, too often the Church has by design or by default aligned herself with the social status quo, thereby condemning other religions. Juan L.Segundo (1976) views theology as reflective of the real-life experiences of the ordinary believers. For Segundo, theology should help Christians to sort a way of interpreting not only scripture but also the human conditions in their own cultural and religious settings, thus contextual theology.

A great deal has happened on the African continent theologically, with most African states achieving majority rule, and some states having moved from the one party-system towards more open and democratic forms of governement. New issues have come to the forefront in Christian theology in Africa and some older issues have been rethought and defined, as observed by Parratt (1995: vii). Theological traffic has congested Africa, with Christian

theology in Africa deeply concerned to seek a Christian response to the contemporary social and political issues that affect the African continent. This is seen in Zimbabwe, with the emergence of inculturation theology, bringing to light other new dimensions of the gospel, especially in the area of post-death ceremonies which have to be critically analysed in the hope that this may lead to a refinement that will benefit the Church world-wide.

Some definitions of theology that have been put forward by some African theologians have tended to be Eurocentric. For instance, Harry Sawyer(1968: 2), defined *theologia Africana* as based on "sound philosophical discussion". What he had in mind was European philosophy. Augustine Musopole (1997: 9) proposes a relational definition which takes into account both objective and subjective knowing. For him, theology has to do with a lived understanding of the with-us-ness of God in the Cosmos. This is so, because Africa has a communal view of reality. Nothing is in isolation, says Musopole. For Musopole (1997), theology is culturally bound. There is no theology which is culture-free, and this how things should be.

Bujo (1986: 65),envisages a theology that is contextual, taking into full account the actual African situation, where there is more action than words. B. S. Chuba (1997: 49) concurs with Bujo, for theology should be relevant and conducive to a particular context, fully nurtured and keenly participated in by indigenous people without excluding the participation of peoples from other contexts. For Charles Nyamiti (1973: 5), theology is an activity of faith as well as intellect, with three distinct approaches, which he calls the pastoral, the apologetical and the pedagogical. According to Nyamiti, pastoral motivation should permeate and determine all theological efforts, while apologetic approach negatively exposes the insufficiency and deficiency of non-Christian religions. The pedagogical approach involves the systematic exposition of Christian doctrine with the aid of philosophy including a critical "African philosophy", and other sciences (1973: 19). However, Nyamiti's definition has its roots firmly in the traditional bases of Catholicism. For Fashole-Luke (1975: 77), the essence of theology is to translate the one faith of Jesus Christ

to suit the tongue, style, genius, character and culture of the African people. Dickson (1973: 17) takes culture very seriously indeed as a source for theology seeking a fuller understanding of its internal rationale as well as of its rituals, urging that theology can only be done in a particular cultural context, and from its inception the gospel has been culturally coloured.

Bujo's theological view has strength, for it accommodates the incoming voices of many local Christian communities, dissatisfied with inherited ways of doing theology. He advocated finding theological expressions more attuned to changing realities. He attempted to create theologies critically attuned to the culture. Bujo also challenged the gridlocked discussion about what was the proper way to do theology. He proposed that local students not be taught Western theology, but a theology which made sense at a certain place and in a certain time as Bevans (1992: 3) quoting Henri Bouillard, who said that theology which is not up to date (*actuelle*) was a false theology.

J. W. Z. Kurewa (1975: 36) regards theology as "the study that seeks to reflect upon and express the Christian faith, in African thought forms and idioms as it is experienced in African Christian communities". Kurewa challenged some of the predominantly Western and Northern liturgical and theological images which were meaningless in other cultural contexts.

An observable weakness in some uses of the theological approach is that it lacks awareness of what constitutes the African culture. Perhaps one needs to heed Ngugi wa Thiongo's warning not to confuse culture with irrelevant traditionalism (1980: 43). The theological approach has been applied in this study for it has been noted that theology has to be relevant and meet different cultural situations. The Musami post-death ritual studies were culturally bound and did not exclude participation of other people from other denominations. The Musami church re-thought and re-expressed the original Christian

message in an African cultural milieu. Thus, there was an integration of faith and culture, and from it was born a new theological reflection.

In the foregoing section, a number of theological approaches have been outlined. It is difficult to settle on one understanding of theology given theological definitions from different authorities. However, Bujo's theological view has strengths for it accommodates the incoming voices of many local Christian communities who may not follow the status quo. He advocates finding theological expressions more attuned to changing realities and attempts to create a theology critically attuned to culture. Consequently, this study adopts his insights in relation to the need for contextual theology, which will be dealt with in the following chapter.

1.5.2   The Historical Approach

The "theological approach" on its own would be inadequate for a study of this nature. Consequently, I also utilised the historical approach.   The historical approach is a systematic process of describing, analysing and interpreting the past, based on information from selected sources as they relate to the topic (Maree 2007: 72). It attempts to construct a map of the past of developmental trajectory of a concept, as observed by Maree(2007: 72). He further states that the historical approach involves locating events in time and place, and requires sensitivity towards understanding the context within which an event took place or developed overtime (Maree 2007:73).

The researcher used historical evidence such as primary sources, which are original source texts which also include archival data; secondary sources, including running records such as documents maintained by organisations (minutes of meetings, records of events, commentaries about events, recollections) autobiographies, memoirs and oral history (Maree 2007:73).

The researcher looked at the pre-colonial era, the coming of the missionaries, and how Christianity was first imposed on the locals by the colonial masters. Thus, missionaries working with the colonialists, as agents of colonization as alleged by Niozipho Majeke (1952) in her work, *The Role of the Missionaries in Conqust.* As part of their project, early Christian missionaries ventured to destroy African beliefs, so as to convert them to Christianity, which they thought was the only true religion, as observed by Pobee (1979:6). The researcher looked at the pre-independence and post-independence-era approaches to post-death rituals. There is need to appreciate that human identity is contingent and not inevitable. In other words, identity is constructed. Thus, K.A Appiah (1992:48) would say:

> Every human identity is constructed historically; everyone has his/her share of false presuppositions, of errors and inaccuracies that courtesy calls "myth", religion "heresy" and science "magic."

According to Scobie (1975: 14),the historical method involves detailed investigation of source material, and checking its validity and reliability, in the light of the biases of the historian (and thus the personal prejudices of the historians themselves). This study attended to at least three basic aspects of this subject as observed by Scobie (1975: 15):

 i. Source material-documents, writings of contemporaries, public records, eye witness accounts
 ii. Actual events, such as revolutionary liberation wars. Historians have to shift contributory factors and rate their relative importance.
iii. Subjective and academic bias in the interpretation of events. Each approach contains its own set of pre-suppositions, pre-dispositions and biases.

The weight and significance given to an incident will depend on the overall view of the author has of his/her subject matter. The nature of the written historical accounts may not be deliberately framed to conceal unpalatable truth, but this is how it often appears to "the other side" (Scobie 1975: 15). The historical approach also looks at oral tradition as a

source of information, and analyses religious dimensions in it, and not documented information and archaeology only. Quite often, incidents or details of accounts which are detrimental to one side will only be fleetingly referred to in its historical records Scobie (1975: 15). A historical approach should consider certain historical events or ideas that are highlighted and emphasised for they are significant to the study, such as the history of the Musami community, and historical debates regarding contextual theology.

According to Isaak (1987: 90), historical facts by themselves are not enough. They have to be interpreted and their importance has to appropriate comprehensively the context of the totality of human experience. Historians inevitably bring their set of subjective biases to the situation, and this must be allowed or before they can hope to produce an account offering a better understanding of circumstances and events. Events may be underplayed and not given the significance they deserve in the original situation. Carr (1975: 90) maintains that historical facts become meaningful only when they become historic. For example, the killing of the seven missionaries is "historic" because of the significancy it became for the Musami Catholics.

One has to appreciate not only the meaning and interpretation of the Musami missionaries' death and subsequent events in a synchronic fashion, but also in diachronic order. The events and the people involved were given meaning and significance by the larger public over a period of time, and those meanings were preserved and perpetuated by people through time. Therefore, the question is not only whether historians can be free from the prevailing meanings and interpretations given to events and people, but also whether they should be free from such interpretations. In other words, history takes place in the arena of memorials, such as that of St Paul's Musami Mission, festivals, rites and religious celebrations. But from a Shona perspective, death is the end of the human being as a physical entity, and the beginning of a permanent existence as a living-dead person. Thus, as observed by Carr (1975: 90), it is a process of death and after-life. The death of a person

does not gradually slide him or her into oblivion, a vague region or a hell; instead, such a living being creates an occasion for history.

A number of historical accounts of the implementation of Christianity in Zimbabwe already exist, including implementation of the spirit of reform spurred by Vatican II (Dachs and Rea 1979: 223). Catholic and Protestant missionaries saw themselves as doing battle or fighting with the devil in his own backyard. Shona and Ndebele cultural mores, being perceived as outward manifestations of internal decay, were subjected to a vicious onslaught. History calls for a meeting between African Traditional Religion (ATR) and Christianity through dialogue with other religions. The researcher utilised historical perspectives informed by their context and interest, be it personal or national, and also focussed on the chronological demarcations and periodisation that the historical approach avails. There was a clash of cultures, as local cultural practices were sharply criticised by missionaries, as observed by Ezra Chitando (2002:5). Polygamy and ancestral beliefs were mutilated strongly (Zvobgo 1986: 251). Local Christians were advised to abandon all African cultural ideas (Bhebe 1973:45).

Missionaries in Zimbabwe also noted the extent to which those established in age were attached to ancestral traditions. They pinned their hopes on a nascent generation (Chitando 2002:6), one that would turn its back on "all pernicious influences of life" (Isichei 1970:212). Ngwabi Bhebe (1973:46) confirms the enforcement of missionaries' regulations on missions, farms and other "Christianised" communities, such as Musami against post-death ceremonies.

It should be acknowledged that it is impossible for one single historian to be completely up to date with all developments in the implementation of Christianity in Zimbabwe, let alone in Musami. Since missiology is concerned with historical origin, expansion and church growth, it needs to pay attention to historical origins, expansion and factors that

contributed to the origin of Churches (Daneel 1986: 26).Marthinus Daneel looked at how local Christians have moved away from Western Christianity by contextualising the gospel into indigenous customs, like what the Musami Catholics did by adapting and rendering intelligible without forfeiting crucial scriptural truths. The historical approach has been used for it will trace the critical rite of passage in ATRs through which the deceased is transformed into an ancestor (Gundani 1994: 119).

The historical approach enabled the writer to examine various trends and developments in the history of post-death rituals. A lot of activities happened in the history of Zimbabwe from 1980 to 2008, with independence being gained in 1980. A new wave of honouring heroes and heroines took centre stage. Heroes' Acre was built with first heroes; Comrades Josiah Magama Tongogara and Jason Ziyapapa Moyo reburied at the National Shrine, later followed by numerous heroes and heroines. Concurrently, the Catholic Church had started the process of transforming and developing local liturgies. Caught up in the web of political, social and pastoral challenges operating in the new Zimbabwe, the Catholic Church was influenced to embark on a programme of liturgical transformation. The Catholic Church was faced either with integration of local culture and the Christian faith or substitution of the traditional rite with a Christian rite.

1.5.3   The Phenomenological Approach

Having looked at the historical method in the section above, in this section I focus on the phenomenological method. Douglas Allen (1978:5)defines phenomenology of religion as investigation of religious phenomena such as myth, rituals, sacred places, objects, and other things. Some scholars argue that it is a comparative study of religion, which focuses on classifying different types of religious phenomena. In other words, it has been seen as a discipline of the history of religion. It has been also understood as a discipline influenced by philosophical phenomenology, which is associated with Edmund Husserl (1978).

"Phenomenology," Merleau-Ponty (1969:5) writes, "can be identified as a manner or style of thinking in which the phenomenologist goes about his work of attempting to understand and describe his environment". W.B. Kristensen (1969:9) is of the view that the purpose of phenomenological study is not to show the superiority or inferiority of one religion over others. Neither is to show that all religions are basically similar; rather it confirms the application of general phenomenological methods to the whole spectrum of religious ideas activities, institutions, customs and symbols (1969:15).

J. S. Pobee(1979:6) has argued that the phenomenological approach is helpful for collecting the basic data of African Traditional Religions, and that it constitutes analytical description. E. Ikenga–Metuh (1981:9) also maintains that insights from phenomenology will minimize the problem of portraying African traditional religions negatively. James L .Cox (1992:24 elucidates the phenomenology of religion as:

> … a method adapting the procedures of *epoche* and eidetic institution to the study of the varied symbolic expressions of that which people appropriately respond to as being of unrestricted value of them…

This means that the primary aim of phenomenology is to investigate and become directly aware of the phenomena that appear in immediate experience, thereby allowing the researcher to describe the essential structure of these phenomena (that which appears in itself). In doing so, phenomenology attempts to free itself from unexamined pre-suppositions, to avoid casual and other explanation, and to utilise a method that allows itself to describe that which appears and to intuit or decipher essential meanings (Smart 1973:56).

Kristensen (1969: 19)argues that people must accept the faith of the believer as the sole religious reality. One must avoid imposing one's own value judgment on the experience of the believer. According to Kristensen (1969: 19), absolute preference should be given to

the testimony of the believer. The investigator needs to employ empathy, to cultivate a feeling for the religious life of the community that they are seeking to understand. This requires one to identify the attitude, thought and activities of the believers without becoming a believer oneself. Bleeker (1963:3) asserted that phenomenology "maintains" its position of impartiality by refusing to pass judgement on the beliefs of any religion. Thus, Musami community beliefs were taken as a serious testimony of how the Musami people would like their post-death rituals to be incorporated into the Catholic rite.

According to C. J. Bleeker (1963: 3), eidetic intuition searches for the *eidos* (the essentials of the religious phenomena). The approach attempts to describe the very nature of the phenomena, the way appearances manifest themselves, and the essential structures at the foundation of human experience. A descriptive phenomenology helps the researcher to avoid reductionism and insist on phenomenological *epoche*, which in turn helps the researcher to describe diversity, complexity, and richness of experiences.   Anti-reductionism has been concerned with freeing the researcher from becoming aware of the specificity and diversity of the phenomena, thus allowing the researcher to broaden and deepen their immediate experience, and provide more accurate description of his/her experience (1963:9).

Although a number of Western theorists have accused the phenomenological method of not going beyond descriptive accuracy, it remains a useful model in this study. However, the researcher is aware that there are of course limitations to personal participation, since the other always remains to some extent "the other". Robert Segal (1983: 97) has observed that the phenomenologist may neglect to practice *epoche* and maintains that to prescribe the suspension of biases is one thing and to achieve it is quite another thing. Therefore, *epoche* remains a forlorn idea. It is questioned whether it is purely descriptive, as it claims to be, since people have gone far beyond description of data, offering comparisons and evaluation. Moreover, the phenomenologist's dependence upon the believers has been heavily criticised. Chitando (2002: 19) has questioned the educational value of accepting

the dictum that the believer is always right, and argues that while it enables one to perfect the art of listening and to respect each other's point of view, the long term effects are detrimental; not all believers have a critical knowledge of their religion. In addition, the method of empathy is also problematic, in that the observer cultivates the feelings or experience of the believer, but can never experience precisely what the believer experiences. A person can only approximate what it may feel to be a believer; hence the result of misinterpretation of certain phenomena can be observed.

There are also barriers of interpretation of terms, cultures and sometimes unexplained symbols that may make the experience tasks extremely difficult. Some of the phenomena in this study were not fully explained, for the adherents were not sure of their reasons; they could only say that something was handed on by their forefathers, and they did not ask why it was done.

Despite some of these limitations, the phenomenology of religion remains useful. It needs to be complemented by other approaches. Douglas Allen (1985:259) argues that although phenomenology is autonomous, it is not self-sufficient; it depends heavily on the historical research and data supplied by sociology, psychology, anthropology and evolutionary and other approaches. A religious phenomenon cannot be understood outside its historical or cultural socio-economic context. Phenomenology of religion should integrate the contributions of other approaches within its own unique phenomenological perspective. Allen (1985: 260) argues that various approaches are interconnected parts of a wider whole. The researcher is quite aware the above disciplines are all elements within a wider study, and that apparent clashes among different methods are more provisional than final.

This model will ensure a better understanding with limited pre-suppositions thus phenomenological principles such as *epoche*, empathy, evocative description of phenomena

and eidetic intuition will be used in this research study, to minimize possible bias and influence.

Phenomenology includes more than descriptions and classifications of various religious activities, and also involves interpretations based on the historical and theological contexts out of which a broad understanding both of specific history and of theology in general may be attained. The phenomenological objection is not against theology, but against theological interpretations of religion in the light of certain truth claims. There is a danger that theological approach may not describe or appreciate the religious expressions of those who are not believers in orthodox religion, so that it blocks understanding(Cox, 1992: 56-57); thus there is need for interdisciplinary approach to this study.

In conclusion, phenomenology does not defend belief in God nor attack belief in God. It affirms that believers within many religious traditions remain loyal to what they conceive to be God. This observation clearly distinguishes phenomenology from theology which presumes that the sacred actually exists and has manifested itself in ways described within various traditions. Phenomenology arose as a reaction to some forms of theological reductionism thus, Antonio Barbose da Silva (1982: 73) talks of a theologically normative approach where "its proponent takes one religion as the only "true religion" (which is actually his or her own) and compares it with all other religions regarded as false religions". Approaches implied in this research are related by their common interest in sacred human relationships.

1.6 Methods of Data Collection

Against the above background, the present study was conducted within the qualitative paradigm. One of the major distinguishing characteristics of qualitative research is the fact that the researcher attempts to understand people in terms or their own definition of the

world. In Johann Mouton's distinction, the focus is on an insider-perspective rather than on an outsider perspective (2001: 194). By utilising the qualitative approach, an attempt was made to understand the Musami Catholic Community's experience, from the subjective perspective of the individuals involved, because the complexities, techniques and diversity of their lives could only be captured by describing what really went on in their everyday lives, incorporating the context in which they operated, as well as their frame of reference.

1.6.1 Sampling Technique

Musami Mission data was found from the church register where active catholics were picked as key informants and directly involved in the church activities thus, a selected purposeful target to the study. Overally, one hundred and fifty respondents were used and issued with questionnaires. In-depth interviews, were conducted with fifty respondents and the focus group discussions consisted of five to ten respondents, bringing together different 'actors' including serving Catholic nuns and priests

1.6.2 Data Collection

In order to acquire information regarding the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals, the researcher participated in a number of ecumenical after-death programmes, more particularly liturgical celebrations. In this case, the researcher was a participant observer. During such ceremonies, the researcher observed the rituals, noted what was done, who said what, and who ate what, and closely monitored how the programmes were administered. He also visited the Musami Mission Memorial Shrine commemorating seven murdered missionaries, who were first buried at Chishawasha cemetery and later reburied at Musami; upon collection of soils from their graves in Chishawasha the research gathered data from witnesses of the memorial service. Why Musami? The Musami Catholics, in particular, inculturated theology in an intense and far-reaching way. The main significance of the Musami Catholics lay in their "spontaneous indigenization of Christianity, unhibited by direct Western control", and in their unique erection of "bridgeheads between the

Christian gospel and the traditional thought form," as noted by Daneel (1989: 54). The Musami Catholics had a contextual theology, addressing issues relevant to a specific people as they tried to understand and illuminate their experience in the light of their faith and Christian tradition (Knox, 2008: 160).

Data collection was from primary and literary sources. These included African theological journals, archival sources, anthropological literature on post-death rituals in Africa, Christian missionary writings on death and burial, African scholars, Honours, Master's and Doctoral Theses belonging to the Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy department at the University of Zimbabwe and also a review of African women's theological writings, together with other relevant literature.

Furthermore, other sources such as oral histories, indigenous after-death accounts, culture and kinship studies, and qualitative parts of large survey studies gave brief glimpse into the everyday lives of the local Catholics. The research looked for "detailed" wholistic accounts of the experiences of the indigenous Musami Catholic community, which revealed the complexity, the richness, the diversity of their lives. Following are data collection techniques used in this study which are questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions and observation.

1.6.2.1   Questionnaires

The researcher also used questionnaires to collect data. In this study, the questionnaire study targeted priests, catechists, and members of different guilds, as well as non-Catholics. The technique was relatively cheap and easy to implement. The method reached respondents who lived far from the researcher. The interviewer assisted with issues in the questionnaires which were not clear to the respondent. Questionnaires proved very effective. "Questionnaires" say D. Holmes and S. Warn (1982: 6) "enable the researcher to

collect activity data so that the researcher can find out what people do, how often and when and also attitudinal data such that the researcher can find out people's opinions". The researcher needed to collect background or classification data so that he could analyse the results from different samples, taking into account, age, sex, locations of the respondents, and local guilds (*zvita*).

Questionnaires are useful in that the researcher can find out information about people's opinions and behaviour. A case in point; personal convictions about after-death rites which are not available anywhere else were made available in this study. The information would be up to date and could be compared with historical data. D. A. De Vaus in his 2002 publication, *Surveys in Social Research* states that "questionnaires" as a general term includes all techniques of data collection in which a person is asked to respond to the same set of questions in predetermined order. Mark Saunders (2003) affirms that questionnaires include both structured and interviews as well as those on which the questions are answered without an interviewer being present. Grummitt (1980) concurs with Saunders (2003: 272), R Higgins (1996: 21) in his work, *Approaches to Research: A Handbook for those Writing a Dissertation* sums up the merits of using questionnaires as follows; quantitative data is easily captured, and questionnaires can be distributed to the target group, who in turn can complete the questionnaires at a convenient time.

The researcher was aware of the limitations of questionnaires, such as receiving incompletely filled questionnaires, and the provision of weird answers by respondents and they were expensive to print. In some instances respondents gave unrealistic answers to match what they thought the researcher wanted to hear, thereby missing some of the important issues. Since respondents were Christians, they tried to match their responses to the religion, pretending they did not know about African tradition (Pritchard 1965:68). However, questionnaires were complemented by other strategies, such as interviews and focus group discussions.

1.6.2.2   Interviews

J. Bell (1999) and Saunders (2003) assert that interviews can be differentiated according to the level of structure and standardisation adopted. Different types of interviews are useful for different research projects; for example unstructured, in-depth and semi-structured interviews would explore the after-death rituals and explain other findings. Face to face, semi-structured and randomly sampled interviews were conducted in order to elaborate quantitative data, in order to make all people involved to become part of the study.

Radom sampling is a part of the sampling technique in which each sample has an equal probability of being chosen. A sample chosen randomly is meant to be an unbiased representation of the total population. If for some reasons, the sample does not represent the population, the variation is called a sampling error. In this study, one hundred and fifty respondents were used to conduct the survey.

Holstein and Gubrium (2003: 294) describe interviewing in qualitative studies as a unique form of conversation, which provides the researcher with empirical data about the social world, simply by asking participants to speak about their lives. The benefit of conducting face to face interviews is that it enables the researcher to gain a participant's cooperation by establishing a relationship with them, which therefore, facilitates the production of a high response rate (Holmes and Warn 1982: 11).

This study utilised qualitative interviews as described by Mouton (2001:196). This model of qualitative interviewing emphasises the relativity of culture, the active participation of the interviewer, and the importance of giving the interviewee a voice. It is anticipated the model will be made of individual "cultural views," which focuses on the norms, values, understandings and taken-for-granted rules of behaviour of the Musami Catholics. In combination with the above, individual topical interviews, which were more narrowly

focused on a particular event or process, and were concerned with what happened, when and why, were used to gain information from the conversational partners involved in the study about Musami Catholics' post-death experiences. In-depth interviews offered the researcher the opportunity to explore meanings, including those that were culturally specific, and the researcher needed to be aware of cultural differences and their implications (Dooley2004:16).

All interviews were audio-taped where permission was granted. These recordings were transcribed verbatim and resulting texts analysed. In cases where permission for tape recording was not granted, extensive notes were taken. In combination with the above individual qualitative discussions, towards the end of the data collection stage, focus group discussions were held. These interviews were used in order to obtain opinion and/or attitude at another level, for instance group consensus or disagreement on post-death rituals celebrations was sought. Kobus Maree (2007) indicates that groups create their own structure and meaning, and a group interview provides access to their level of meaning, in addition to clarifying arguments and revealing diversity in views and opinions.

1.6.2.3   Focus Group Discussion (FGDs)

In some isolated cases, it was feasible for the researcher to use pre-existing groups (sections and outstations), and seek their opinions about after-death ceremony celebration. The groups were made up of five to ten participants who were drawn from different sections or cells of the parish. M.J Pritchard (1965) indicated as an advantage of using Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) as that all qualitative data is easily captured, such as people's attitudes, beliefs and perceptions. FGD administration is easy and in that the guide is used. Maree (2007: 50) in his work *First Steps in Research* , asserts that focus group interview strategy is based on the assumption that group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experience and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing information. Mouton (2001)

views FGDs as important as they serve to help the respondent to re-evaluate a previous position or statement that is in need of "amplification, qualification amendment or contradiction." The group interview was used as a source of validation, through interviewing together respondents who had previously been interviewed separately as well as bringing the researcher closer to the truth by the addition of interpretative data. Each group consisted of ten people, taking into consideration age, sex and culture and relevant sensitive areas.

However, J. Grummitt in his 1980 publication, *Interviewing Skills*, looked at some of the problematic elements associated with FGDs, for example they are difficult to analyse. He also suggested that care should be taken when dealing with FGDs. Extroverts might dominate the interview, whilst the introverts were left out. It could happen that some participants experienced focus groups as threatening, and had to be attuned to a conducive atmosphere. The researcher had to observe the focus groups properly and very carefully, watching out for domination of the discussion by the more outspoken individuals, being wary of group-think, and the difficulty of assessing the viewpoints of less assertive participants. Sometimes the grouping of the people had to be done with much caution, taking into consideration age, sex and culture. Since the researcher was dealing with the different Christian communities, the granting of permission took a long time in some instances. Maree (2007: 90), further states that there is need for the representation of the target population, keeping factors such as homogeneity/heterogeneity, age and gender, race and class, lay versus professional, socio-economic status, literacy level, income and demographics. All these variations were taken into account during the establishing of the FGDs.

1.6.2.4 Observation

A period of time was spent with Musami Catholics and non-Catholic communities, who are local Christians to gain firsthand experience of the phenomena in the area of study.

Comprehensive notes were documented throughout and broad questions were asked, phrasing initial questions in an open way, to hear what various conversational partners thought, before in advertly narrowing down the options for questioning. I got completely immensed in the setting, and focused mainly on my role as observer in the situation, retreating from becoming part of the research process, in order not to interfere with the believers testimony

1.6.3 Data Analysis

The study adopts a descriptive approach. The aim of such an approach, according to Higgins (1996) in his work, *Approaches to Research: A Handbook for those writing a Dissertation,* "is to discover some hitherto unknown attributes," which is also the purpose of this study. The study described the intended outcome of the research findings for the Catholic Church in general and the Archdiocese of Harare in particular. The researcher examined various trends of events and developments of Musami post-death rituals, and identified traces of inculturation.

In its critical aspect, the study sought to determine whether the present method of celebrating post-death rituals in the Catholic Church was still viewed as meaningful and helpful by indigenous Catholics, and establish if there was any need to extensively restructure the present after-death liturgy. The study sought to analyse every situation presented by historical findings, as well as the responses obtained from questionnaires study, detail-oriented probes and oral and focus group discussion interviews. In this way the researcher sought to determine which information was relevant for inclusion in the findings of the study.

1.6.4 Ethical Considerations

It should be mentioned that all names of church-based respondents are pseudonyms. Protection of the identity of the interviewees owing to the sensitivity of the matter has been guaranteed, but in other instances, especially the academics, retained their real names. Clearance was sought from the church authorities for both interviews and use of the archival materials, and it was explained that there were no financial gains to the respondents who volunteered to participate in this study.

1.7 Literature Review

The researcher acknowledges that a number of writings on the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals in other areas have been explored before in passing and in detail. Very often, these reflections were heavily coloured by the European explorers, a bias which early missionaries could not be exempted from, causing a lot of confusion, misunderstandings and misinterpretations as far as post-death rituals were concerned, thereby causing schism in the indigenous Christian camp.

This literature review will be in three sections, namely writings of local Catholic priests, writings of lay-Catholic scholars and writings of non-Catholic clergy. There is considerable literature on inculturation and post-death rituals in Zimbabwe and Africa. It is not possible to present an exhaustive list owing to space considerations. This study builds on the available literature by embracing positive insights and drawing attention to the limitations.

Catholic religious (Jesuits, Franciscans, Bethlehem Fathers, Dominicans and Carmelites) have written on the topic of post-death rituals with some pre-conceived ideas, viewing the indigenous people as unlearned, uncivilized and primitive; thus, they had attitudinal biases towards local traditional ceremonies. Several archival sources (from Methodist and Catholic missionaries)with Western home-grown mindsets on the rituals are available.

Some anthropological literature on after-death rituals has also been published. The researcher applauds non-missionaries such as Michael F. C. Bourdillon (1987), J. F. Holleman (1973), Michael Gelfand (1973), Aschwaden (1999), Bucker (1980) and others, who pioneered writing on the indigenous culture, as outsiders providing the foundation on the oral tradition into written form. What is also worth appreciating with the above mentioned scholars, is that they laid the historical foundation and wrote extensively about the indigenous culture.

There is still widespread ignorance of the cultural-sociological facts relating to post-death rituals. More recent anthropological studies from Gerrie ter Haar (1990) exist, but they are hardly taken into account. There is still very little research on the material on what is actually going on, as distinct from what people believe or say is being done. At present, it is the practices of the Karanga group among the Shona people that are receiving most attention, while the practice of ethnic groups in Zimbabwe other than the Shona are virtually ignored, with exception of the Ndebele.

A number of indigenous clerics, J. C. Kumbirai (1966), I. P. Chidavaenzi (1999), E. J. Mavhudzi (1966), B. Ndlovu (1974) and I. Zvarevashe (1980) have argued that post-death rituals, such as memorial services and unveiling of tombstones, *kurova guva* (bringing home the spirit of the deceased) strengthen the family or community and have sustained indigenous African Christians for a very long time. These celebrations have been viewed in the eyes of the Shona as confirming that family bonds and chains are not broken by death. Bourdillon (1987:3) asserts that the living exert much protection, support and guidance from the deceased; thus post-burial rites are given special place in the Shona traditional religion. This study will build up this argument, as culture changes with time. However, a substantial number of African theologians (Chiromba, Machida, Mbiti and Gundani) have been divided over the whole issue of after death rituals, as they have been affected by their churches' theologies. This study will survey and contextualize the applications of after death rites in some selected churches.

1.7.1 Catholic Priests and the Adaptation of Post-Death Rites

One of the most consistent writers on the topic of post-death rituals in the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe was Fr Joseph Kumbirai. He was a Karanga (one of the Shona ethnic groups) priest, from Gweru Diocese, educated at Chishawasha Seminary, who pioneered and wrote extensively about post-death rituals, including *Maitiro ekuviga vafi (*the rite to bury the dead*)*. According to Munetsi Ruzivo (2013), Kumbirai is considered a towering figure in the history of inculturation theology, a trend setter and trail blazer who emphasised the affective, experimental and emotional elements of religiosity. For Claude Mararike (2011), Kumbirai was one of the champions for liturgical change, whose experimental rites provided the backbone of post-death ritual draft (Drienfontein Mission Archives, 1966). Kumbirai (1966: 218) proposed "baptising" the Shona belief in ancestors and christianing of *kurova guva* and was instrumental in the *Revised Supplement to the Burial Rite*. Kumbirai recalled the norms of the decree of Vatican Council II in the Liturgy pertaining to liturgical adaptations. One has to appreciate with gratitude the work of the late former priest. Kumbirai conducted a qualitative study to find out how the Catholics on the ground were actually responding, inorder to construct contextualization models derived from the way (the laity) were responding. Methodologically, Kumbirai is original, for he generated inculturation theology from below. According to Ruzivo (2013), Kumbirai was a pathfinder who broke the silence on the deadlock by looking at, and understanding, the Catholic faith with an African eye. He admonished and encouraged local Christians not to disown their humanity as Africans or their cultures. Instead, he created a platform to engage the integration of the whole being and culture into Christian worship. It started haphazardly and some people thought he had gone too far. However, people's eyes were opened and they saw that the problem was there, and is still there. He proposed the adaptation of the traditional post-burial procedures into a Christian ceremony thus, a Christianised *kurova guva* rite. He looked at the cultural implications for the transmission of the Christian faith. This study complements and updates his efforts.

Xavier Marimazhira (1973) was another Karanga Gweru diocesan priest, who was one of the early ordinands and Kumbirai's contemporary, who pleaded for a more radical acculturation of Christianity. For him, there was no family tie or blood relationship between the saints and living African individuals. For him, it would be better to replace the saints' cult with ancestors' cult, not vice versa.

Constantine Mashonganyika (2009), in the *Catholic Church News,* was from the Gweru diocese and was educated at Gokomere Mission and later went to Chishawasha Major Seminary where he completed his priestly studies. He was once Secretary of the Bishops' Conference. Mashonganyika concurred with his fellow Karanga priests, Kumbirai and Marimazhira, as far as the reinstatement of the deceased was concerned. Maybe this was caused by the way the Karanga people wanted to restore confidence in their cultural heritage.

Charles Machida, a young Masvingo Diocesan priest writing in the *Catholic Church News* (2009) perceives that traditional post-death rituals have no place in the Christian faith. He insists that there should be no compromise of Gospel values for the sake of traditional beliefs and practices. According to Machida, it causes more confusion and division within the Church. He further states that such debates do not promote peace and the growth of the Body of Christ, but chaos and confusion. Fr. Mashonganyika (2009) castigates Machida, whom he views as despaired and calling those who are still pursuing the subject to stop the exercise. This study recommends debate and suggests that this subject of post-death rituals be tackled in a meaningful and non-antagonistic way.

However, Marimazhira, Machida and Mashonganyika considered post-death rituals at the level of theoretical framework. Therefore, this study explored what was transpiring on the ground that is, attempting a contextual theology from below. Few Musami Catholics would go along with Machida, who was at the level of orthodox theological formulation. A good

number of the members of the Musami community would be happy to see orthopraxis theology.

Marimazhira (1975) and Mashonganyika (1999) argue that the post-death theological debate has lasted long and has not adduced any new arguments against the Christianised rite. They view the whole argument as a futile regurgitation of the same material. This study intends to shed light on this by carrying out an empirical exploration.

Fr Bernard Ndlovu (1974) was the first local diocesan priest for Bulawayo Archdiocese. He presented his personal views after consulting the laity, elderly lay persons and some non-Catholics. He concluded that the *kurova guva* was a sacrificial ceremony. He also stated that one could not "christianise" part of it and condemn the rest of it. Ndlovu (1974) after a careful study of the Shona, Ndebele and Kalanga practices of the reinstatement of the dead arrived at the conclusion that what they did was at best a religious sacrificial act. He went further, and saw the whole ceremony as a violation of the first commandment. For Ndlovu (1974) performance of the ceremony was out of fear on the assumption that the spirit of the deceased had the power over the living, if they did not perform the ritual. Ndlovu viewed the concept of a disembodied spirit as contrary to the teaching of bodily resurrection by the church (Gundani 1998: 212). Thus, he considered Marimazhira's position of "Christianising ancestor-veneration as illogical and utterly ridiculous, since it was connected with consulting *n'anga* and appeasing spirits by means of sacrifice." The present study moves the debate from theoretical to the empirical investigation. This study realises the spiritual vacuum that exists among African Christians, since a lot of questions remain unanswered, such as, is it permissible to have *kurova guva*?

According to an analysis by the scripture scholar, and first Chinhoyi Diocesan priest, Fr Ignatius Chidavaenzi (1999), the killing of animals, the libation of blood and beer and the common meal connected with it, and the rite of atonement are clear characteristics of

latreia (latria) which is reserved to God only. They are not merely *douleia* (dulia), a form of great respect and reverence. For Chidavaenzi, these sacrifices constitute divinisation of the deceased and should not be acceptable in the church (1999: 10).

Frs Chidavaenzi (2000), and Charles Machida (2009) are viewed other local clergy as preoccupied with very narrow concepts of sacrifices that are stifling liturgical creativity. This study on the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals by the above clergy, have a hypothetical stance, which needs to move to a more pragmatic way.

Fr. Emmanuel Mavhudzi (1968), an elderly priest and one of the early ordinands of the Archdiocese of Harare, sees no meeting point between the African post-death belief system and Christianity. For Mavhudzi, the two are diametrically opposed. Emmanuel Ribeiro, Mavhudzi's contemporary, and a renowned music composer and singer, who introduced drums, *hosho* (rattles) and dancing in the church, feels *chivanhu* (Shona traditions) should be part of the liturgy. This is an extremist point of view as far as Mavhudzi is concerned, but his fellow priest Emmanuel Ribeiro (2012) castigates him, using the term "exaggerated holiness." Ribeiro thinks Mavhudzi has lost his African identity, and needs to be re-Africanised. The Catholics in Musami have also found the two stances of Mavhudzi and Ribeiro irreconcilable. This present study will integrate Christianity and indigenous traditions. This research engages both of views and seeks to find a model that will harmonise them.

Fr. Ignatius Zvarevashe SJ (2013) a local Jesuit missiologist, confesses that he found tension that has been created by the collision of the two-world views (the Christian faith and ATR) not easy to reconcile. So, there is need for a practical theological stance.

Fr Raymond Kapito (1978) SJ was once Harare Archdiocesan priest, who later joined the Society of Jesus, and wrote a lengthy paper in which he looked at the ceremonies of *kurova guva*(to bring back the spirit of the deceased) and *kuchenura mufi* (to purify the deceased) ceremonies in the large context of the Shona way of life, their beliefs and customs. He was then asked to redraft the document to form a catechesis (1978: 1). Due to lack of time, it was said, Kapito and others were unable to work out the desired catechesis. The revised catechesis is not consistent with the way Musami Catholics responded in real life situations. This study visits the revised catechesis as prepared by *ad hoc* committee which was approved *ad experimentum* for three years.

1.7.2   Lay Catholic Scholars

Paul Gundani in "The Second Vatican Council and Beyond: A Study of the Transformation Process" (1998), highlights the role of the lay Catholic Association in making Christianity relevant to local needs. Gundani (1998) asserts that after death rituals are important and take place very differently from place to place, region to region and are celebrated within specified periods. For Gundani, post-death celebrations are therapeutic for they end the official mourning and settlement of the affairs of the deceased. He propagates a "theology cooked in an African pot." This study appreciates the pioneering work of Gundani, and explores its implications for Musami, and in the way the Catholics are responding to post-death rituals.

The Roman Catholic Church and the Kurova Guva Ritual in Zimbabwe (1994), by Paul Gundani begins by shedding some light on the Shona people's belief surrounding death and after death. For Gundani post-death rituals among the locals stand out as major community gatherings. One important reason for this, as I come to understand, is that the ancestors play a large part in the lives of the living. The importance of post-death rituals and memorials relates directly to the importance of ancestors in the Shona life and death. Furthermore, the significance of such events (post-death rituals) as observed by Gundani

lies not in only in this fundamental relationship to the ancestors, but also in the post-funeral's bearings on relations among the living. Such events as asserted by Gundani, provide occasions for family reunions, therapeutic expression and the healing of strained relationships. They even provide an opportunity for courtship to the young, historical commentary and transmission and creation of knowledge, as well as performances of verbal and gestural art such as drama, music, and dance. This study appreciates Gundani's works as starting point.

Canisius Mwandayi (2011), in his research in the field of The Theology of Cultural Encounters grapples in particular with the problem that ensued after the Shona traditional ceremony of Bringing home the Spirit (*kurova guva*) was forbidden to the Christian converts by the early missionaries. According to Mwandayi's work, *death and after-life in the eyes of the Shona; dialogue with the Shona Customs in the quest for Authentic Inculturation,* the absence of post-death rituals was regarded as a frightful curse in the Shona Culture, hence *kurova guva* is so important in the Shona social pattern, that its omission is considered as a gross breach of social etiquette. Mwandayi took a hypothetical stance which can be used in this study, which will however use empirical evidence on the *kurova guva.*

Michael Gelfand (1973:21) in his work *The Genuine Shona: Survival Values of an African* asserts that in the eyes of the Shona family bonds and chains are not broken by death. The strength of the family is fortified by the intimate bonds existing between the living-dead relatives(spirits of the immediate departed) whom the living look to for much protection, support and guidance, thus; post-burial rites are given a special place in the indigenous tradition. J.F Holleman (1973) systematically follows after death rituals paying particular attention to the significance of the ritual, submitting that it puts an end to the mourning. This study will help in acquiring a theology that adapts itself to fit with local rituals.

1.7.3 Non Catholic Clergy and Adaptation of Post-death Rites

Levee Kadenge (1998), a Methodist Church in Zimbabwe clergyman explored various contours of post-death rituals. He looked at the significance and theological implications of suchritual for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe. Kadenge acknowledges the richness in the rituals, and maintains that there is a meeting point between local and foreign religions. Kadenge touched on very salient points such as the *nyaradzo*, the role of *n'anga* and the sacrificial aspect of k*urova guva* in passing. Since these features were cursorily touched, this study will address misunderstandings, misinterpretations and exaggerations of after-death ceremonies among the indigenous converts by examining fundamentals and non-fundamentals of post-death rituals. There is no doubt that Kadenge's work can be used as a stepping stone, since there have been new developments. Currently, many Christians in Zimbabwe undertake memorial services and tombstones unveiling as replacements for*kurova guva*,to which Kadenge did not accord a lot of attention. This study will add new knowledge in this critical and sensitive area of African Christian theology, by advocating a contextual theology.

Reverend Solomon Zwana, Kadenge's colleague, responds to the challenge of tombstone unveiling in his book, *Beyond the Stone: Significance and Theological Implications of Tombstone Unveiling* (2002) and explored various contours of the meaning which had a relationship directly or indirectly with this ritual, and offered a theological justification for tombstone unveiling as a Christian ritual. However, he did not discern the different levels of meaning and see how *kurova guva* impacted on the tombstone unveiling ritual. This study will incorporate ecumenical views of post-death rituals. Until recently, the Catholic Church cultivated exclusivism, as the "Church", the "chosen people" and treated other churches as heretics. All the signs are that different Christian churches need to work together; this does not mean there is no longer a Catholic Church point of view or a Catholic identity. This study will assess an up-to-date ecumenical outlook.

Canaan Sodindo Banana argued for a true Christianity and theology in Africa in many of his published works. He marries socialism and Christian faith advocating for people to find

their own feet. Banana (1982) regards the tools of Western Christianity not only as inadequate for the African situation, but as positively misleading, for they are, he believes, the product of capitalistic cultures. Banana saw the need, for a theology that is not sytemetised by the capitalistic elite, but rather than one forged out by the people themselves, by the poor and religiously oppressed masses who "have elementary right to think, to reflect on their own life and their own faith in God", this is not entirely true, especially as regards to the Catholic church. Banana attempts at a relevant theology in Zimbabwe that recognises that African traditional religion plays a significant role in Africa. there can never be an authentic Christianity in Africa, if Christianity fails to take seriously African culture and religion. However, he is criticized of having unsystematic theology. His views can be used as a stepping stone in this study.

Muzorewa (1990), in his work, *An African Theology of Mission*, calls for an African theology of mission, where Africans should no longer be object of mission, but subject of mission where the locals undertake the mission. Muzorewa grapples existential problems, in Banana and Muzorewa's view, Christian theology must be situational in order to be relevant. This study appreciates and takes this view seriously.

According to Bucker (1980), in his work, *Spirits and Power;* An Analysis of Shona *cosmology*, examines the spiritual world view of the Shona people. This appreciates his works as a backdrop in this study. In Shona belief as attested by T. Shoko, reburial process and according the proper rites effects "drying the tears of the dead." Depriving the deceased descent burial is viewed as abominable and demeaning for it to deny that (deceased) ever lived. Thus, reburial, as 'healing'' reasserts their (the deceased) position, acknowledging their identities and affiliates them to their families once again. This study tries to accommodate Shoko's views.

Anyone who, over the years, has been following the Zimbabwean debate on traditional and christianised post-death rites will have noticed how localised and regional this discussion has been. It is also very interesting to note that non-Zimbabwean authors (for example, Manunga (2001), Bujo (1992) and Hillman (1989) express appreciation of the Christianised funeral rites in Zimbabwe as successful examples and rare but "hopeful tokens" of inculturation. According to Hillman, there may not, however, be:

> Culturally relevant to all the ethnic-culture groups in their respective countries, much less to the people of neighbouring countries. The Zimbabwean post-death rite, for example, rooted as it is in Shona custom, would be foreign as an Irish wake to the Masaai of Kenya and Tanzania.

Aylward Shorter (1989: 263) in *Towards a Theology of Inculturation* praises "the innovative character of the Zimbabwean funeral rite" with its "conditional invocation and symbolic reinstatement of the deceased according to Shona custom."

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter laid the foundation to the whole research because it showed how the study would proceed to achieve its aim. This introductory chapter has highlighted the problem at stake. It also stated the area of investigation, and the justification for the study and methodologically, this chapter argued for the establishment of a relevant and effective model of contextual theology, which speaks to the lived realities of contemporary Catholics, by providing empirical data relating to the rituals undertaken as part of contextulization. The literature review dealt with some local Catholic priests, some lay-Catholic scholars and some non-Catholic clergy, moving this study's debate from a hypothetical framework towards pragmatic investigation. The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has been grappling with Shona beliefs and practices related to post-death-rituals, and several models have been applied in the Catholic Church. Conversion theories have been assumed. Several methods of collection that were employed, such as interviews, focus group discussions, were described in this chapter. The chapter also outlinedand described intended research findings. Having

introduced the study in this chapter, the following chapter analysesthe traditional Shona beliefs on post-death rituals, setting the background on death rituals.

CHAPTER TWO

TRADITIONAL SHONA POST-DEATH RITUALS

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will discuss some of the general and specific aspects of Shona Traditional Religion (STR). The chapter will explore the Shona religion before the coming of missionaries, looking at the post burial and post-death rituals that have been celebrated among the Shona Zezuru people in Musami, Mashonaland East Province. It should be noted that this presentation endeavours to present a detailed picture of post-death rituals, though there are regional variations relating to some details which may not be the same ones experienced in other areas beyond Musami. It should also be revealed that a number of post burial rituals vary from one family to another, from village to village, from clan to clan, from ethnic group to ethnic group and from province to province. Although there are minor differences, the purpose and intention would be largely the same.

In this particular case, the study will look at the religious experiences of the Shona people of the Musami community in Murewa. W. Magwa (2002) is of the view that the term "Shona" is an umbrella term for mutually intelligible dialects that are spoken widely in Zimbabwe including the Zezuru, the Korekore, the Ndau, the Karanga and the Manyika.

According to Kahari (2012), to determine what exactly is meant by Shona religion is very difficult. Every generalisation runs the risk of forgetting that Zimbabwe consists of a multitude of people, beliefs and traditions; therefore, Shona religion refers to certain common traits and philosophical paradigms that reflect a general mindset, belief system or life approach. The words "Shona" and "Zezuru" will be used interchangeably in some places in this study.

Historically, the Shona people are believed to have come from the Eastern part of Africa and settled in the formerly uninhabited land (Zvarevashe 2013). Among the Shona people are many dialects, resulting in the formation of sub-tribal groups or camps like the Karanga, the Zezuru, the Ndau, the Kalanga, the Manyika, the Tavara and the Korekore (Mutsvairo 1996:16). In spite of the diversity of these groupings, in principle the Zezuru people share some basic common understanding and experience of death and communion with the dead with the rest of the groups (Mararike 2011). Certain cultures may differ from one group to the other. Among the Shona, the Supreme Being is called *Musikavanhu* (Creator of Human Beings). The complexity of the Shona religion lies in that, while they believe in a monotheistic deity, their ancestral spirits (*vadzimu* or *midzimu)* with whom they share a profound bond of communion directly control their lives (Mabiri 2007: 6). Thus, as Killef (1999) goes on to suggest, the Zezuru people believe in supernatural and spiritual powers. The Creator does not directly control their lives, nor is he directly involved in the day to day affairs of the Shona people. Thus, *Musikavanhu's* position has little to do with the Zezuru, who is felt indirectly related to *varipasi*, the living-dead. Living relatives have an obligation to appease the dead by celebrating memorials for them, which mark the bringing of the living-dead back home (Zulu 2011).

The fact is that, Shona traditional religion remains at the heart of the identity of every Shona person. Manomano (2011) of Murenge Village indicates clearly, that to underestimate Shona religion, would mean to deprive the Shona culture of the essential element of dynamism. In Zimbabwe, Shona traditional religion has played a vital role in the life of the indigenous people. Kurewa (2011), states that a traditional Shona today is a very different person, from the traditional Shona of 1890, before the advent of the Christian missionaries. Sanganza (2011) admits that the traditional Shona was not interested in speculative theology, but in day-to-day bread-and-butter issues, where she or he reflected a unique world view, which is full of spirits of good and evil. The STR is the religious and cultural womb from which most people in Musami, Murewa came. It is a living tradition. It

takes on various forms and expressions in different parts of Musami. Usually one has to dialogue with individuals who practice STR, or one can see it as a religious patrimony and cultural heritage common to all members of some ethnic groups. It is impossible to eradicate indigenous beliefs and practices for they are in the bloodstream of the local people,as they give them a form of cultural identity as a people. This being the case, all the Musami persons have a set of religious beliefs, and practices that have survived the test of time up to the present day despite strong Christian influence (Gororo 2011). The original indigenous religion has displayed a spirit of unprecedented resilience to the extent that it exists today, either partially or substantantively and still plays a major role in the Musami mission community.

2.1 The Shona People's Understanding of Death

Death is an inevitable occurrence that gives access to the realms of ancestors who are within the spirit world of *Nyikadzimu*. "According to our tradition," alludes Sekuru Chitimbe (2011), a devout Catholic, "an elder should die a peaceful and natural death and calls his/her people and blesses them, he/she exposes hidden property and pronounces his/her last will and wish". Sekuru Makuwe (2011) from Nzungu village concurs with Chitimbe by confirming that death empowers, and makes one a junior god; if one dies, "one becomes more sacred and more powerful for he/she is nearer to Mwari", sums Francis Tsuro (2011), a herbalist. Not all people who have died become junior Gods, but those who have been honoured with post-death rituals. Therefore, it is fitting to perform rites designed to honour the dead as they are sent to their eternal place of rest in the spiritual world.

Pfende (2011) says that some rituals are performed to protect the living from the evil of death. Mukakanhanga (2011) gave a summary of how death was viewed by the traditional Shona. He indicated that, death was caused by evil, but did not sever the bond between the living and the dead. He affirmed that death was not the end of life, but was viewed as a

serious occasion for seeking more life, for it affected the whole community. Kaseke an eighty-nine year old catechist interrupted Mukakanhanga (2011) by commenting, "A long life is not good enough, but a good life is long enough". "Thus, death for the older people was somehow acceptable, but death for younger ones was treated with much suspicion", Sekuru Kaseke went on to give a summary programme of how death was dealt with. First was the announcement of death, where the deceased was housed in his/her hut. This was followed with mortuary rites, depending on age and sex and of course the marital status was also important. Mbuya Mhembere (2011) said that there werealways purification ceremonies carried out in order to render people pure from the "bad omen" associated with death. For example, men were required to wash their hands or bath with water treated with traditional herbs immediately after burial. Mbuya Mhembere (2011) went on to suggest that the clothes and bedding of the deceased be washed.

It should be clearly stated that death, burial and post-death are key elements, apertures, in understanding the Shona religious beliefs of the Musami community. Once death is ascertained as a "good" death or "bad" death, the close relatives of the deceased proceed to organise the final rites that befit the status of the dead person. Usually, as observed by Muchemwa (2002: 31), there are a number of stages including burial, mourning and transition to ancestral status. All these stages, particularly the transition, are accompanied by rituals. These should be judiciously performed in order to facilitate the passage of the deceased to the ancestral world.

2.2 Shona Post-Death Rituals prior to 1890

In this section, the researcher will look at the religious world-view of the Musami people. The world-view comprises the sky, the earth and the world. In this world-view, a lion can cease to be just a wild animal; it can be regarded as an ancestor and in some instances as a*mhondoro.* The underworld is very important in relation to traditional beliefs. For example, "the African world is populated by spirits, not all spirits speak, and not all spirits

are ancestors," affirms Gwembe (1993:2). Before one delves into the sacrificial aspect of *kurova guva,* one should look into the Musami Community's attitude to the dead. The Musami locals have great respect for and fear of the dead, like all other Shona people. It is a broader view on the matter which extends to other cultures, adds Gwembe (1993: 2).

For Jani (2011), post–burial rituals start immediately after death, with the *muzukuru* (nephew/niece) of the deceased putting together the clothes and bedding of the deceased and in some instances gathering the clothes and washing the dirty ones, in preparation for *kugova nhumbi* (disposal of the deceased's clothes). Before going deeper into some of the rituals, it is important to understand how the dead are perceived among the Zezuru people of Musami, Murewa. Mbiti (1969) refers to the dead as the "living-dead". *Sabhuku* Guvheya (2011) concurs with Mbiti, "They are dead, but are living in spiritual form." According to Tabona Shoko (2007) they are half human beings and half spirit. A number of post-burial rituals are done for married or matured people; children are excluded, because they are symbolically not human, propounded Sekuru Muzanenhamo. He added that the rituals would be held not too far away from home depending on the next of kin, through consultations with the diviner to ascertain the cause of death, taking into cognizance other unexpected occurrences beyond the family which would crop up unexpectedly (Muzanenhamo 2011).

2.3 Introduction of the Post-Burial Ritual

Michael Gelfand (1973) asserts that in the eyes of the Shona family bonds are not broken by death, since death is an inevitable occurrence, for it gives access to the ancestors who are within the spirit world of *Nyikadzimu*. Kahari (2012), highlights that family strength is fortified by the intimate bonds existing between the living, and the living-dead spirits of immediately departed relatives, to whom they look for protection, support and guidance; thus, post-burial rituals are given a special place in the Shona traditional religion. In the

following sections, I outline the process associated with death in the area under study. I commence with the role of the living towards the dead.

2.3.1 The Role of the Living towards the Dead

While death is painful and involves the loss of life, paradoxically for the Zezuru people it is viewed as the beginning of a new life. At death the spirit leaves the body, but is not annihilated. It lingers in the vicinity of the village; it cannot enter the world of its predecessors, the ancestors. At the same time it cannot come back to the human family. So it is caught in between and cannot help itself. It is precisely for this reason that communion with the dead becomes vitally important for the Shona people. It is the duty of living relatives to perform a ceremony which brings peace and rest to the deceased (Jemwa 2011).

The Shona people believe that when they bring back the spirit home (*kurova guva*), the spirit becomes for them a spiritual benefactor, and can bring them good fortune and protect them from other harmful alien spirits, confirms Rhodha Chioniso Munemo (2011). In this line of thought, Gelfand (1982: 4) shows a string view that the Shona (Zezuru) people were thus strongly traditionally religious. In a typical Zezuru worship, according to Mabiri (2007: 7) one would find a specially designated leader of the ceremony called a "*mbonga*" (a religious Zezuru leader usually unmarried, who conducts traditional ceremonies of worship) forwarding family or clan pertitions to *Musikavanhu,* through intercessions of the known and unknown ancestral spirits. According to Mabiri (2007: 7) the formula goes something like this: "*Vanhingi, vanhingi, vanhingi navanhingi, nemiwo vanhingi tisvitsireiwo kuna Musikavanhu. Itii mhuri yati huro dzaoma, tachema nemvura."* This literally means, by mentioning the names of their ancestors, they say: "so and so, so and so, so and so, convey this petition for us to *Musikavanhu.* Say to him our throats have become dry, and we are asking for water (rain)." The living reveres their living-dead relatives who in turn intercede

with *Musikavanhu* on their behalf*. Musikavanhu* then provides for the people's needs at the intercession of the living-dead.

2.3.2 Day One after Burial

Immediately after burial, the nephews put together the clothes and bedding of the deceased (*kusunga hembe dzomufi)* if the deceased was male, the son of the sister of the deceased would do it. If the deceased was female, the daughter of the brother of the deceased the*dunzvi*(niece) would be in charge of the preparation of *kuparadza nhumbi dzomufi* (disposal of the deceased's clothes).Close relatives would visit the cemetery, including the widow/widower who did not attend the burial ceremony, to see that no unwanted and suspicious activities took place and to wake up the spirit of the deceased (*kumutsa mudzimu).*Katsiru (2013) held that the spouse of the deceased was not allowed to go to the cemetery on the day of burial. He or she would only be allowed the following day. Maybe it is because of emotional attachment accompanying the loss of a loved one.

2.3.3 A Few Days after Burial (between 3 days to 10 days)

Zulu (2011) asserts that a delegation takes off for a*gata* (visit to diviner) for a post mortem (to find out the cause of death). All departments (relational) would be representedto ask (*kuenda kumashope-shopekunobvunzira*) what caused or killed the deceased. The services of a*n'anga*(traditional medical practitioner) would be sought. The *n'anga* bridges the gap between the spiritual and human world.   The diviner can be a male or female who specialises in different areas such as divination and healing,according to*Sabhuku* Manomano (2011). The traditional medical practitioner diagnoses hidden things such as who bewitched the deceased, and also exposes things that are incomprehensible to the individual eye. The *n'anga* plays fundamental roles among the indigenous people. However, some traditional doctors abuse their authority, naming and labelling some people as witches and wizards, and sometimes advise their clients to commit immoral acts such as murdering for lucky charms, or raping, for reasons best known to the diviner.

After *gata, follows* the official mourning period. During this mourning period, widows and widowers were restricted in their movements confirmed Jemwa (2011). This would take place when the death was natural. Sekuru Tapiwa Gandanga (2011), of Maponga Village, by way of illustration, said "if a person dies in a road accident, or death which was viewed as unnatural, the corpse would be buried, but burial would be incomplete, until the deceased person's spirit is fetched from the site of the accident or incident and be brought home".

2.3.4 Several Weeks after Burial (approximately 3 weeks to about 6 weeks)

After the *gata* the post-mortem results are known and confirmed. The autopsy results facilitate the clearing ceremony forthe undertakers and mourners, the idea being that people who participate during the funeral are polluted by death, so they all have to be cleansed. In some places cleansing includes items such as picks, shovels and hoes used during the funeral, hence the*doro rekugeza mafoshoro,* the beer to wash shovels and other equipment used during the funeral, submits Pfende (2011), a local headman. *Doro repfukudza tsoka,* beer to erase footsteps of the deceased and those who came to attend the funeral, is used by the Zezurus, along with *doro rehonye* (beer for maggots), as it is believed that the body and soul are parting ways. VaManyika and VamaHungwe call it *doro remvura* (beer of water), for water symbolises coolness. Among the Vabudya (Mutoko) and the Korekore, it is called*doro remasodzi* (beer of the tears); in some other areas it is called *doro remasadza* (beer of the *sadza*) in some other areas *mharadza musasa* (farewell). In other regions it is called *nhonga mabwe* (beer of arranging the stones on grave). It is at this ceremony that the clothes of the deceased are disposed of. Time would have been allowed for those in charge to gather all the clothes of the deceased, in case one has two homes, in town and the rural areas, *vazukuru*(nephews) need time to collect all the deceased's belongings, if one has been a polygamist . Disposal of the deceased's clothes is done at once, so it is important that all who know and have clothes belonging to the deceased bring them *kuvaridzi vake* (to his/her relatives). A legal guardian *(sarapavana)* is appointed, and

kusunga zviyo (tying rapoko and clothes in a sack) is conducted in preparation for *kurova guva* which will be dealt with in due course.

Tapiwa Gandanga (2011) further states that the time frame is flexible, that is, from three weeks to about six weeks after death taking into cognisance other things which may emerge unexpectedly. As far as *doro rekufukudza* is concerned, Headman Chando (2011), sixty nine years old United Methodist lay leader, views it as a claim that the person whom people used to meet even during beer drinking is no longer there. *Sahwiras* (ritual friends) lead in dancing and singing, for the occasion would not be of a mourning nature. "Usually eating and drinking were salient features," reiterated Pfende (2011). It is of paramount importance that all post- burial rituals be followed, since the dead are alive in spiritual form, especially when buried at homestead cemeteries, for it signifies that there is no separation between the deceased and those long gone, who are resting in the spiritual world.

2.3.5 A Year after Burial or Slightly More

According to the belief of the Shona, the spirit of a dead person first roams around restlessly, after his/her death for half a year or a whole year, before the *kurova gu*va (literally "beating the grave") ceremony is held by the family. The family will consult a*n'anga* or *sangoma* or a traditional medical practitioner to give guidance. The *n'anga* or diviner is expected to be trustworthy, upright morally, friendly and ready to serve, and above all, ready to discern people's needs and should not be exorbitant in charging, and should give spiritual and physical assurance and assistance (Mutandwa 2011).

According to Edmore Jemwa (2011), the logic behind *kurova guva* is that the spirit is believed to be lost, and therefore is very hostile and dangerous, so there is need for the spirit of the deceased to be invited back home, thus, pre-*kurova guva* consultations are

necessary to ask for permission from those concerned for the ceremony to take place. The ritual lasts three days and is preceded by various preparations. It is true that *kurova guva* is held as a very important ritual by the living relatives of the deceased. When indigenous people perform the ritual, it is done according to the knowledge and memory of those who are present on that occasion.

This explains why there are so many variations of the same ceremony, with differing understandings of what one ethnic group would think important and essential to the ceremony, according to Chidavaenzi (1999:25). Thus, the same ritual is named differently in different regions; the Zezurus call it *kurova guva* (beating the grave) and this does not mean physically beating the grave, but it is symbolic. The beating (*kurova*), aspect may also be related to the beating of drums for the grave ceremony which can also be a reference to the type or theme of the beat (Zwana 2000: 5). The Makaranga call it *magadziro* (to purify the spirit of the deceased). For Zvarevashe (2013), the *magadziro* is a reparation in order to restore or recover what was lost through death. Bringing back home the spirit of the deceased is an act of restoration. Zulus call it ukubuyisa, amaNdebele call it *umubuyiso*. The Korekore call it *kutamba guva* (to dance on the grave) or *kukomba guva* which means to gather around or to surround the grave, gathering around something implies forming a circle. A circle is significant in the African mind as a symbol of wholeness or completeness.

Zwana (2000: 4) reveals that *kutamba guva* refers to the common ceremonial practices of singing, and playing drums which are essential features in most traditional religious practices. It also implies celebrating in joy and in the spirit of victory. VaManyika and VaMaungwe call bringing back the spirit of the deceased *chenura,* to re-sacralise the grave, which may have been desecrated by witches and the ceremony involves reinstatement of the spirit of the deceased person according to Mafurutu (1973: 5). He also adds that the spirit of the deceased would have inflicted "a black spell" so to achieve purification of the departed spirit, it would be done in consultation with the clan of the person of the deceased person. The spirit of the deceased is invited to join the family hierarchy of spirits (Mafurutu

1973: 6). Although this ceremony has a variety of names, and is held at varying times depending on the local customs, Bourdillon (1987: 109) contends that in all Shona areas, it has a common pattern and function. Bourdillon further states that the ceremony may take place six months to two years or more after burial. Its purpose is to induct the spirit of the deceased to full status as family spirit guardian. This means that the spirit is enabled to join its ancestors and to re-integrate with its living descendants (Gundani 1998: 119). In most areas, Kumbirai (1977: 123) asserts that the ceremony is also associated with the final dissolution of the deceased's estate, and the installation of the new family head who carries the name of the deceased and the inheritance of the widow(s).

After closest kin have done all necessary consultations for *kurova guva,* then permission is granted to go ahead. Ritual attendants and officiants are male, consisting of senior members of the family, who start the administration of the ritual,with *varoora (*daughters in law) and *sahwiras* (ritual friends) are mainly in the catering department. The *muzukuru,* who is the deceased sister's eldest son, normally acts as the master of ceremonies, while the eldest male relative acts as the main ritual celebrant, with juniors concelebrating. When all is arranged, participants wake up early the following morning and proceed to the grave. The purpose of the trip is to collect the spirit of the deceased and bring it to the homestead (*kutora mudzimu*). For the Zezuru, the deceased is in a state of liminality before the rituals are undertaken. This rite of passage is designed to ensure the incorporation of the deceased into the council of ancestors (the living-dead). This ritual contains transition and incorporation phases (Cox 1998:61). Animal blood is smeared on the headstone and the deceased is informed that he or she may now exercise protective and leadership roles. There are libations, ululations and beer drinking and dancing in procession as people move back home together with the spirit which is considered to be accompanying them.

Daneel (1971:105-109) divides the whole ritual into five stages, but for the sake of this presentation, the study will enumerate only the most important, the whole ritual is very elaborate. Below are Daneel's five stages of the ritual:

i. The closest kin of the deceased visit the *n'anga* about the performance of *kurova guva.*

ii. On the second day, the home-bringing ceremony takes place, either in the early morning or late afternoon. The procession moves with pots of beer from home to the grave, ululating and dancing.

iii. Then, or perhaps at a later date, the name and some personal belongings of the deceased are handed over to the heir, while invoking the dead person.

iv. Towards the evening of the second or third day, the sacrificial meat is eaten with maize porridge,

v. On the last day, the personal belongings of the deceased are distributed; in the case of the deceased being a man, the widow decides whose wife (among the deceased's brothers) she wants to become. It is, however, left up open to her to remain a widow.

The *kupira* (sacrificial ceremony) forms the real core of the whole ritual, and is conducted in private with close relatives. The meal is regarded "as the essential act of veneration," asserts Daneel (1971). The *mbudzi yeshungu* (goat of anger) is roasted and eaten without salt at the grave, which cools the anger of the spirit for a lot of wrong acts that might have been performed before the spirits' incorporation. In case of a deceased man, the widow is inherited by the deceased's brother of her choice. According to Gundani (1998: 202), the widow(s) could object to all potential suitors and opt to live with their son or sons; this would mean that the widow expects the son to take up the responsibilities that a brother or nephew inheritor was expected to do. It is, however, left up to her whether she has to prove at the ceremony that she did not go astray by *kusvetuka tsvimbo* (jumping the knobkerrie) three times. This test, as revealed by Chitemerere (2011) is meant to prove that the widow did not have sexual relations with anyone since the death of her husband. For widowers, nothing of this nature happens; it was expected that he can do as he pleases. In other areas, the *n'anga* will be present through the whole ceremony for guidance. According to the Shona tradition, no transformative rituals may take place after mid-September. November is deemed the most sacred month, with no marriage and other rituals taking place.

According to Mbiti(1969: 11), the living-dead are bilingual: they speak the language of the men with whom they lived, and also speak the language of the spirit of God to whom they have drawn nearer. Shoko (2011) calls them half human and half spirit. In the African traditional world view, death is a transformative process that confers a supernatural status on the deceased. Buti Tlhagale (2000), further states that appropriate funeral and post-burial ritual ensures that the dead person becomes an ancestor. Ancestors are not prisoners in their graves, but are alive, and active in the affairs of their own descendants. According to Nyamauya (2011), if the living-dead had been improperly buried, or were offended before they died, or were mistreated or abused by relatives, it is believed that they would take revenge in the form of misfortune, especially illness or disturbance of the peace.

2.4 The Significance of *Kurova Guva*

Having given a description of *kurova guva,* I explain the interpretation in this section.   The Shona religion should be understood in the context of their world-view. While the Shona are strictly monotheistic, their religious, social and private life is fundamentally moulded by ancestor-veneration. Mbiti (1969) regards *kurova guva* as the most important of all the funeral rites. The *kurova guva* is the initiation ceremony of the deceased into the ancestral world, in other words, it is a graduation ceremony into ancestorhood. According to the Musami elders beer should be brewed from millet or rapoko prepared in a very special way, by *vakaguma/ vasisateveri/mhandara* (those who have reached menopause and virgins). The millet or rapoko should have been planted after the death of the deceased. The libation ceremony includes the pouring of beer on the grave, and also in some instances, the giving of meat and *sadza* to quench the deceased's thirst. It should be highlighted that before the *kurova guva* no marriage ceremonies within the family should take place, or else one risks *kupisa guva* (literally burning the grave). This would imply that no respect has been granted to the deceased's unpurified spirit. It is a punishable offence which requires the fine of a cow or cows depending on how the family seniors perceive the gravity of the offence. Beer poured on the sacrificial goat confirms acceptance of the ritual by the shaking of the goat (*kuzunza).* If it does not shake, something is wrong somewhere. Then the*n'anga*

should be consulted as soon as possible, confirms *Sabhuku* Abednigo Shambira (2011). In other cases, water is used instead of beer. Bourdillon (1987: 211) wrote, "The officiant takes water in a gourd and pours it over the animal, saying set words to the deceased spirit followed by family members who announce their names and their relationship to the deceased." Again, the animal is expected to react to the water by shaking its body or by urinating (Gundani 1998: 201). This act is interpreted as approval by the spirit of the deceased person who is being brought home. In some Shona localities, the victim (goat) is taken to the grave to be sacrificed (Bourdillon 1987: 211).

According to Gundani (1998: 202), the outline given above shows the complexity and inter-relatedness of the rites performed by the Shona people from the time an adult member dies up to that time when his or her spirit is inducted into the family and the ancestral world. Gundani (1998) points out that the rites also illustrate the dynamic and personal relationships that exist between living members and the ancestors. The *kurova guva* not only dramatises the common bond between the living and the departed elders; but also underscores and reasserts the Shona people's most cherished value of integral community.

2.5 The Ritual Significance

In traditional Shona Religion, myths are important. J.W.Z Kurewa in his book, *Drumbeats of Salvation in Africa* (2007: 19) defines a rite as a religious ritual - a ceremonial act or observance with at prescribed rule. According to Victor Turner (1959:42), a ritual is a kind of drama, with a number of distinct acts. Turner views a ritual as a repeated action which involves some symbolic communication. Turner (1959) distinguishes three levels at which ritual symbols can be interpreted; the exegetical which are meanings which the believer can articulate, the operational, which can be assessed from responses, and the positional which are the meanings expressed through the relationship a symbol has to other symbols in a ritual process. Rituals can be conveniently divided into three kinds, namely rituals of social

relationships, which are performed at a given time, and directly refer to the social structure of society (1959: 43).

Bourdillon (1990: 315) affirms the second kind of rituals which are rites of affliction, which are usually performed in response to some problems, particularly sickness and lastly comprise attempts to manipulate the material world through ritual. Bourdillon complains that when ritual norms are broken, unexpected cultural shocks are experienced, but rituals continue to be performed even though their original meaning has been lost. In religious rituals, which is the third kind of ritual among humans, many actions are performed, even though the current participants are not able to give any other explanation than that they are traditional. Religious rituals involve setting certain actions apart from everybody life and putting them into a sacred context, Bourdillon (1990: 316) further states that in the sacred context, ordinary rules do not apply; the normal structures of society are challenged. At the end of the ritual, there is a return to normality, and usually traditional values and norms are re-asserted. Some scholars argue that rituals serve primarily a social role. Although rituals are religious acts, their importance lie in what they attain for society. Turner (1959: 58), therefore, with other scholars, operates on the assumption that rituals have the role of diffusing tension within the society. It is of paramount importance not to lose sight of the religious context which rituals represent. Although Turner's theory has received a lot of attention, it does not feature prominently in this study, as the study focuses more theological than anthropological.

2.5.1 The Significance of Religious Myths

Having looked at ritual significance, this section would be incomplete if I do not say few remarks on myth(s). In common English, very often myth connotes something widely believed, but in fact it will be untrue. According to the *Oxford Secondary Dictionary*, a myth is a traditional story handed down within that culture about gods and ancestral heroes/heroines. The defining characteristics of a myth are that of using symbols, hence

has meaning beyond the literary meaning of the story. Myths do contain important meanings (Bourdillon 1990:54). Some authors postulate that myths are stories that express spiritual truth, or the basic convictions of a culture through narrative; in Musami there was a myth that if the murdered missionaries' spirits were not dealt with properly, this would cause serious misfortunes for the entire Musami Community, until such a time as their spirits were appeased. Myths give explanation of origins. Religious people tell stories in the form of myths describing how the original, formless, unstructured, chaotic and hence homogenous space became formed, structured, ordered and non-homogenous with fixed centers. Mircea Eliade (1959:29) calls this the founding of the world, told and untold in mythic language. He thus, calls the principal type of myth a cosmogonic myth (a myth which tells of the origin of the cosmos). It should be noted that myths circulate often in a range of different forms. Myths are more difficult to deal with than a simple lack of knowledge. Where there are gaps in knowledge correct information meets little or more opposition. But myths often appear more plausible and palatable than expert knowledge and seem to provide stronger behavioural guidance than expert knowledge (Wiles 1977). A number of things make a myth plausible, according to Campbell (1982: 462).

- A myth cites authority
- It has at least a grain of truth
- It tells a story that, to those who accept, it is more desirable than other explanations that are offered.

Generally, myths that gain value in a people's mind are reported to come from afar from another country, a distant organisation, or an individual of the highest social status such as a doctor or healer or scientist. This distance limits the ability to challenge the myth's supposed source of authority. Those myths which contain some partial truth also are given credibility. Also, when myths offer something more palatable than what is put forward by others, they have a greater chance of being entertained, for they offer an expected response to often desperate people (Smart 1973: 80).

2.6 Ancestral Veneration

The Musami people believe in ancestral worship. Belief in ancestors implies faith in their continuous presence. In fact the dead are not dead, they have only departed to meet with the ancestors, they have left us, passed away gone to rest; this is the way many African people express it. Though having departed, the dead continue to be present; they are constantly in communion with the living and participate in their daily lives through food and drink reminding them of their duties with regards to tradition.

Ancestors are sometimes classified as the living-dead; there is a paradox here. Mbiti uses this term understanding that the ancestors are spirits of people who have died, but now serve in a spiritual form. Ancestors in Shona tradition are also called shades (*mimvuri*); they protect people against misfortunes or problems. They can also haunt people. Ancestors have a certain type of shadow, the *bvu*ri which is an abnormal shadow; it is a disturbing manifestation. A white shadow is frightening; it can encounter people and communicate verbally, telling people what it wants. The *bvuri* may be seen standing upright when the person is really dead (Mhembere 2011). This shows that the deceased is not pleased confirms Shoko (2011). This would be a clear testimony of injustice and abuse suffered by the deceased before he joined his/her ancestors.

The ancestors are the ones who have founded and preserve the tradition, and allow life to continue, and flow in abundance. One expects the oldest son, to be an example to all in the conservation and transmission of life which she/he received from the ancestors. Because of this obligation of being exemplary, the first born takes on the responsibility for doing things for the younger ones. He represents all the living of the family before the dead.

The living-dead are sometimes called upon mentally or ritually to intervene in certain circumstances, for it is believed that they return to their families from time to time to share

meals with them, however symbolically. They are also perceived as guardians of family tradition and ethics, and play a pivotal role in the maintenance of the moral fibre of the kin group, providing guidance and protection to blood relatives. Both the living and the living-dead are caught up in a network of obligation and responsibilities. The ancestors' cult, sometimes confusingly called ancestor worship is practised openly or in the backyard. Isabel Mukonyora (2006) views the ancestors as the sole custodians of cultures, land, and authority. She further states that there is a long chain of intercessors "whose ultimate function is to intercede on behalf of humankind." Amanze (1998:10) believes ancestors control and influence events and they are always spoken as a group, and never in a singular form.

The Musami people revered their ancestors (*mudzimu,* singular *vadzimu*/*midzimu*, plural) and did not worship them, but rather accorded them respect they deserved. The *vadzimu* enjoyed consultation and communion with those who knew them, while living members viewed them as just intermediaries between them and *Mwari* (Chitando 2006: 18). African traditional religion is a victim of anxieties that are born out of fear of evil spirits according Sawyer (1973:129). He further asserts that traditional people, especially Africans, are consciously aware of evil injustices that might be directed towards the ancestors, thereby undermining their rank. Musami Catholics placed the concern to venerate and promote good relationships with the ancestors on the priority list of their religious activities, by engaging a variety of cultic rites so as to keep their forbearers happy and well-disposed towards their descendants (Sawyer 1973:131).

Consequently, the living approaches the living-dead in the same way as they did when they were alive. The respect given to ancestors is often incongruously mixed with the casual manner of a normal family gathering. Ancestors may be persuaded to grant requests. Sometimes relationships with ancestors are believed to be governed by the reciprocity. According to Tlhagale (2000), ancestors participate in naming ceremonies, marriage rites, funeral and post-death rites. Ancestor veneration, or at least belief and acknowledgement

of their intervention in human affairs, continues to be a common practice among the Shona people (Tlhagale 2000). He further submits that the body decomposes after death; the spirit is separated from the body (2000:15). This spirit ends up in the world of spirits, imagined to be somewhere in the ground, hence the Shona expression *vari pasi* (those in the ground) or located somewhere in the universe *vari kumhepo* (those in the wind). Having looked at what an ancestor is, it would be proper to see who qualifies to be an ancestor.

2.6.1 Qualification of an Ancestor

Does everyone in African religion become an ancestor? Not at all, only those who played a significant role in the life of their descendants while they were alive become ancestors. Children, unmarried persons, married persons without siblings, witches, wizards, outcasts, leprosy sufferers, *tsvimborume* (unmarried men), and *tsikombi* (unmarried women) are generally excluded (Tlhagle 2000:4). Ezekiel Pedro Gwembe (1993:5) reveals that one who is to be accepted as an ancestor;

- Must be an elder; thus, maturity is measured through menstruation for women, among the vaRemba, and there is an initiation for boys to mark transition from childhood into maturity through circumcision.

- Should have been married and have procreated; an ancestor is one who above all during his/her life existence among the living promoted life, somebody who did not just preserve well the life which s/he received, but also passed it on abundantly. A person who dies without offspring cannot be an ancestor.

- Should fulfill social obligations and be morally upright, and observe the traditions of his/her ancestors by practicing them, adultery and witchcraft are serious offences.

- Should have undergone appropriate funeral rituals. In the Africa world-view, death is transformative process that confers a supernatural status on the worthy deceased. Appropriate funeral rituals ensure that the deceased becomes ancestor. It should be mentioned that once rites of incorporation (*Umbuyiso* in Ndebele, *kurova guva* in Shona) have been correctly performed, the deceased become members of the collective ancestral realm. Hence they are considered guides and protectors of the people for they are believed to

fight evil spirits, bringing peace and harmony with a united family interceding with Mwari; thus, they may be called conveyor belts. They shape the morality of people, and influence people to behave properly. Thus, *kurova guva* is a graduation ceremony into the spiritual world.

- Should be somebody who died well, that is, somebody who died a natural death, of old age and left many descendants who mourn him/her; one whose illness was neither very long nor extremely short, but of sufficient time to be able to leave his/her home in order, to pass on his/her will to those remaining (having dealt with contracted debtors, unresolved legal disputes) because it is necessary to die well and peacefully.

- Should be males and female relatives who have died and now are existing in spiritual form, for they are said to be half human and half spiritual; thus, they have a double component. Ancestors are important for they look to the welfare of the living providing rain, and are conveyor belts between the living and the living-dead. Ancestors can also bring bad things, for instance, death or diseases; but ancestors themselves are always regarded positively, only human error brings problems. The ancestors, on the contrary, infuse confidence, and the living try to keep their contact with them alive. When ancestors punish, it is to remind the living of their duty, while bad spirits punish in order to take revenge.

Amanze (1998: 163) insists that ancestral veneration is an African way of confronting life experiences fraught with vexing human problems, and natural and unnatural happenings. It is how Africans celebrate and communicate with the mystery of the sacred in their midst. Finally, it is a ritual of the recognition of the existence of spiritual reality and an acknowledgement that an intensity of power lies beyond the living and beyond nature.

The above section discussed ancestral spirits. There are other spirits which are not viewed as ancestral spirits such as alien spirits (*mashavi*) and many more. This is relevant to the Musami situation; for Musami Catholics believed that the missionaries had died a bad death, and if no ritual was done, they would come back as evil spirits (*ngozi*) or could take revenge; so preparation for such misfortune needed to be watched for.

2.6.2 Not all the Dead are Ancestors

A distinction should be made between spirits and ancestors. The ancestors are spirits, but not all spirits are ancestors (Gwembe 1993:2). For the Shona people, next to Mwari are the ancestors (*vadzimu* or *midzimu*) those whose spirits, preferably adults and married would have been purified through *kurova guva,* and become benevolent spirits for their families. There are also alien spirits, and also nature spirits such as *zvidhoma* (goblins).

2.6.3 Alien Spirits

The above section discussed ancestral spirits; there are also other spirits which are not deemed of ancestral spirits. *Shavi* spirits may also be called stranger spirits or alien spirits. These are spirits of individuals who died accidentally, in battle or far away from home, and were denied proper burial, no rituals were conducted, and thus they are said to have no home, and therefore, they cannot be ancestors (Crawford 1967:54). According to Gelfand (1959: 111), s*havi* spirits are wild and dangerous and are capable of causing harm. Holleman (1952:257)further states that these are spirits of outcasts such as witches, sorcerers, suicide victims, spirits of children, spirits of bachelors and spinsters, sometimes spirits of foreigners, and disabled persons, together with spirits of albinos. These can cause havoc, if not attended to. One can see that the murdered Musami missionaries belonged to some of the categories stated above.

For Shoko (2011) *shavi* comes from *Shava* (red) or is associated with hunting, that is, *kushava* (to search). As hunters would kill animals and shed blood, the colour red is important, for it is also associated with clothing for *shavi* spirits with red symbolising danger. The *shavi* spirits possess whoever they like. First one falls ill, and illness is incurable; so people consult a traditional healer (*n'anga*) who identifies the problem and gives the treatment. Lewis (1990: 321) has observed that possession by spirits is prominent among females. This may be because they attend more often to the spiritual

cult, since most of them do not go to work. It may also be because, they are scapegoats, for women are often held responsible for witchcraft.

2.6.4 The Avenging Spirits

Avenging spirits are relevant to the Musami post-death rituals. The Musami people believed in them to the extent that they would not accommodate a non-relative in their homestead, in case he/she would die in their homestead. Among the Shona people, there is the concept of *ngozi.* These are the spirits of those who died harbouring grudges. One can confirm that *ngozi* spirits are spirits of people who had a "bad death". They inspire fear, and affected persons try to defend themselves by applying for help from a man with penetrating insight such as sangomas or *n'anga.* The ancestors, on the other hand, infuse confidence and the living try to keep their contract with them alive.

When ancestors punish, it is to remind the living of their duty, while the "bad" spirits punish in order to take revenge. These spirits can take on an animal or human form or maybe that of an object. The spirit may require blood, so that one would have to kill his or her relatives. This spirit exacts a debt which the offender must fulfill, otherwise, things become dangerous. Lewis (1990) says women succumb to spirit possession so that they can air their grievances; as an oblique social protest; thus, they disturb the social order which is predominantly controlled by men. The avenging spirit (*ngozi*), as mentioned already, represents for the Shona a particularly fearful type of affliction. The attacks of avenging spirits are said to be very sudden and extraordinarily harsh, involving, for instance, the death of several persons in quick succession. Gelfand (1959:142) says there are four kinds of avenging spirits. However, he lists five altogether. According to him, an avenging spirit can be the spirit of one of the following categories of persons who left this world in an aggrieved state of mind;

     i.   The victim of murder
    ii.   A servant (slave) who was ill-treated and deprived of his/her rightful recompense;
   iii.   One from whom goods were stolen or borrowed and never returned;

iv. A husband or wife who was neglected by his/her partner;
v. A parent who was deeply hurt by his/her own child.

However, Bourdillon (1976) has correctly pointed out that "the concept of an avenging spirit refers not so much to a type of spirit as to its supposed action, namely death and destruction in the victim that confers a supernatural status on the deceased". This explains the fear, which the concept holds for the Shona. There are several types of avenging spirits, such as the *shavi dzviti* associated with fighting, spirit of *udzimba* (indigenous spirit of hunting) and the *chisena* from Mozambique. These are spirits of migrants who came to Zimbabwe, in search of work and died in Zimbabwe. There is also *shavi rechipfambi*, unquenchable thirst for men, prostitution that makes money. Some say it is hereditary, but are also viewed as extraordinary behaviour for instance, *chihure*, *mhombwe* (prostitution) and *kuba* (stealing).

2.6.5 Other Spirits

The most feared spirits are those called *zvipoko* (ghosts, the singular is *chipoko*). The *chitukwane* (the small one) and the *chidhoma* (goblin) which may take human form as a short dwarf with long beards, business minded, and has one eye on the forehead reveals, Shoko (2007). The *goritoto* can shoot up into the sky and then "dissolve into flame" into embassies of fire, and also perform mysterious acts such as speaking or moving backwards argues Makuve (2011). These beliefs are in the other cultures in the region, for instance in Zulu, Swazi. Xhosa and many more.

In Africa human body parts may be used to magically bring prosperity in business. All this shows that a dead person can come to life. Voices may be heard. There have been incidents of voices heard in grinding mills according to Sabhuku Manomano (2011).

2.7 Conclusion

The chapter gave elements of Shona traditional religion as background to the traditional post-death rituals. The Shona post-death rituals were briefly explained as to see how the indigenous people conducted their funeral rituals before the advent of the missionaries. It is important that all the Shona people are connected with several rites associated with post burial of the deceased. These rites presuppose that the spirit of the deceased continues to live. This chapter also established that the Zezuru people are deeply religious. They believe in all-powerful spirit, the creator of all things whom they call *Musikavanhu* (Creator). Shona people strongly believe that there is life after death. This is seen by the strong bond or communion between the living and the living-dead. The vital link between the Shona people and their creator is anchored by the role played their living-dead relatives who intercede for them with *Musikavanhu* (creator). Thus, they believe that by dying, one joins the ancestors and acquires the status of a benevolent ancestor to his/her family. The next chapter examines different models of contextualization that have been developed within the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CONTEXTUALIZATION DEBATE IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ZIMBABWE

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter explored traditional Shona post-death rituals as background to this study; and laid the basis of this chapter. This chapter will trace the history of inculturation mainly in the Catholic Church, models of contextualization will be explained and briefly focus on the attitude by Protestant denominations, Pentecostal/Evangelical communities and the African Independent Churches, for the Catholic Church does not deal with contextualization alone. If one is to understand the interaction between the indigenous traditional religion and Christian developments in Zimbabwe, one has to undertake a historical analysis of the implantation of Christianity in Zimbabwe. This will enable the researcher to see the pattern and/or change in the church's response to various issues. While this study does not seek to repeat the story, however, a number of issues are important, if one is to appreciate the emergency of Christianity in Africa. This chapter serves as the background to the emergence of contextualization, since the thesis is very much concerned with the interaction between Shona religion and Christianity. Later on, types of contextual models will be dealt with as the study progresses.

3.2 Inculturation and the Local Church

This section will briefly describe how people in the Catholic Church have handled the contextualization debate up to the present day. Nigerian Cardinal Francis Arinze, head of the Pontifical Council of Inter-Religious dialogue spoke to his fellow Bishops of Africa in Rome in 1977, urging them to promote inculturation more intensively in Africa and Madagascar (*Ecclesia Africa, 64*) and he also reminded them in a simple, but incisive manner of their responsibility in the promotion of inter-religious dialogue with African

traditional religion (*Ad Gentes*, 22). In some cases, inculturation and contextualization have been used interchangeable in places.

This appears to be an appropriate moment to look at the history of inculturation in Zimbabwe with regard to ancestor veneration (traditional ceremonies of accommodating the spirit of the deceased persons among the Shona people and efforts to "Christianise" them), the practice which to a larger extent has survived all the changes of modern life as well as the efforts of Christianity to do away with the *kurova guva* rite (the bringing home of the spirit of the dead).

While there seems to exist a fairly wide consensus on the need for inculturation of the gospel into African culture, most difficulties arise when it comes to application to particular areas, or aspects of Christian faith and life. The ultimate aim might be clear, but there is disagreement, hesitancy, passive and active resistance to the means and stages for getting there. This is especially true, when it is a matter of a practice which contains, in a nutshell, essential traditional beliefs about the Creator and the relationship of the living to the world beyond.

The beginning of Christianity in Africa was accompanied by ready-made theologies and rituals, and missionaries advocated the total eradication of African cultural values, including the religious beliefs and practices of the African people. Some missionaries discounted all the social, political, economic developments of the pre-colonial African as primitive (Zvobgo 1986:43). the missionaries wanted total conversion in both attitude and perception. The missionaries ignored the traditional rituals and imposed what they believed to be Christian rituals; the Africans subverted the western form of post-death rituals, believing that without the African rituals, the work was not done to completion. There was dissatisfaction from the beginning. However, there were some missionaries who were sympathetic to Africans. Specific cultural practices that had religious roots were

attacked. Top on the agenda were those which had to do with ancestor-veneration, which was mistakenly referred to as ancestor-worship, this was vigorously prohibited, not always with success, but the intention was always there. Thus, this study will trace the historical context within which Christianity developed in Zimbabwe.

3.3 Attitude of Missionaries in the Pre-colonial Era

It is worth noting that missionary endeavours started before the European occupation of the Shona/Ndebele territory. *The Centenary Booklet of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe/Rhodesia*(1979) mentions that the missionaries by "their presence in the country before the European occupation made it clear that their presence was not connected with it;" they did not come in the European baggage (Rea 1979: 7). On the other hand, certain Anglican and Catholic missionaries went hand and glove with the British South African Company (BSAC) which began occupation of the country in 1890.

It is of paramount importance to point out that before the advent of Christianity in Africa, the locals had developed their own religious system, which formed the basis of much of their social and cultural life. In Zimbabwe, Shona Traditional Religion has played a vital role in the lives of the Shona people, who like all other African people in the continent are notoriously religious by nature as indicated by Mbiti (1969: 2). Willoughby (1928) rightly observed that Bantu life is essentially religious and that the relation of the individual to the family, the clan, tribe and indeed all other aspects of his/her life, good or bad are all grounded in the Bantu Religion. This assertion has been made more forcefully by Mbiti (1969:2), in his book *African Religions and Philosophy*, where he has convincingly argued that in Africa, religion integrates all departments of life, so fully that it is not easy or possible to isolate it.

Early African theologians such as Tertullian, Augustine of Hippo and others made no attempt to Africanise the Church, since they were catering for the spiritual needs of the Roman and Greek middle classes that constituted the African Church in North Africa, so that Christianity spread to Africa at its very beginning. But the churches which were inspired by Augustine, Origen, and Perpetua and Felicity (women martyrs) disappeared (Waliggo 1986:11).They failed to cope with heresies and take root in local cultures, and also failed to penetrate the interior of the continent (Waliggo 1986: 12). Ancient Coptic and Ethiopian Churches were no longer in communion with each other. Augustine, however, did take seriously the challenge of Egyptian religion for Christianity (McClymont 2014).

3.4 The Historical Triad

A number of historical accounts of the implantation of Christianity in Zimbabwe already exist (Beach 1973:25). While this study does not seek to repeat the story, a number of issues are important, if one is to appreciate where one is coming from and going to. Thus, the history will be in three sections, that is, the initial phase (1560-1858); the second phase (1859-1890) and the third phase (1890 onwards). Ruzivo (2013) pointed out that within the last centuries the position of Christianity has changed from being the "tribal religion of the Caucasian people" to becoming a truly world religion.

3.3.1 The Initial Phase (1560-1858)

White penetration into Zimbabwe commenced around 1570, but the advent of Christianity started about the same time with the Portuguese Jesuit Gonzalo Da Silveira reaching the Mutapa Court, in north east Zimbabwe, in January 1561 (Beach 1973:26).Through mutual rapport between the clergy and the king, Da Silveira succeeded in baptising the emperor as well as his mother, and also managed to convert between two hundred to three hundred people. The court received pictures, sugar, tea leaves and many more commodities. Bible stories were narrated, and a few were converted, added Beach (1973:28). But unfortunately, Da Silveira was eventually murdered owing to clashes between Portugal and

Mozambique, and Da Silveira's missionary endeavour was a fiasco according to Bhebe (1979: 45). Fr Da Silveira's solo assault on Shona traditional culture ended with his execution on the 6th of March 1561 (Verstraelen 1990:3).

According to Stanslous Mudenge (1986: 8), missionary efforts revived in the 15th and 16th century, the age of Da Silveira and the priesthood of the son of Monomotapa. Ultimately, these left no trace, because of close links with Portugal and failure to adapt to the people, and difficulties in penetrating the interior of the continent. There was to be long lull in missionary activities in what was to become Zimbabwe. At the beginning of the 17th century, Jesuits and Dominicans built some churches in Manyika and Mazoe. However, in 1667,missionaries were withdrawn, because of political upheavals, leaving a few Christian symbols which were added to the traditional religious expressions of the locals (Zvobgo 1986: 44). Long after the Jesuits had departed, travellers noted Christian practices mixed with customs of the local people (Weller and Linden 1984:3). In this initial phase, Christianity failed to Africanise itself quickly and deeply enough to become more indigenous. The missionary approach was very suspicious of local beliefs, values and practices for Gospel and culture were perceived as antagonistic.

3.3.2 The Second Phase (1859-1890)

Phase two started around 1859 to 1890, and was characterised by the advent of the London Missionary Society (LMS), asserts Zvobgo (1986: 56). In Matabeleland, systematic missionary work among Zimbabweans started with the opening of Inyati Mission in 1859, north of present Bulawayo, thereby establishing the oldest mission in Central Africa. The LMS came with traders led by R.J Moffat, and T.M Morgan, and their main target was King Mzilikazi's territory. They attempted to convert the King, but Mzilikazi was adamant, and gave them rough treatment. Again, this endeavour, in a way, was a failure, but there were converts, as reported by G. Z. Kapenzi (1979:4).

On the 16th of April, 1879 Jesuits sent priests and lay brothers from South Africa, on the 16th of April, 1879 to the Ndebele Court of Lobengula at Old Bulawayo. Unfortunately, they did not make much progress among the Matabele people, and returned to South Africa (Chirongoma 2008:136). In 1888, the Reconnaissance Tour led by the Anglican Bishop of Bloemfontein George Knight –Bruce, resulted in Anglican Missionary work in Zimbabwe (Verstraelen 1998:3). Like other missionaries, progress was minimal.

In 1890, colonial occupation opened the way for missionary activities in Zimbabwe. However, it was not a walk over; there were challenges of new missionary movements, and congregational rivalry with mainline churches. This era saw various Protestant and Catholic missionaries setting up mission centres in the country (Kapenzi 1979:9). Again, missionaries continued to trivialise African culture. The quest for African cultural authenticity often entailed hostility towards the Church. Systematic evangelisation began in the nineteenth century, as did the subsequent growth of the church in Africa up to the present day.

3.3.3 The Third Phase (1890-onwards)

Phase Three, followed after 1890.This time the Union Jack had been raised accompanied by Christianity. It is undeniable that the dawn and spread of Christianity in Africa was associated with colonialism. Jesuits and Dominican missionaries accompanied the Pioneer Column of the BSAC that occupied Mashonaland in September. These nuns and priests came as nurses and chaplains to the white adventurers and settlers, and had a persistent vision of establishing the Catholic Church among the African peoples north of the Limpopo. Thus, a "dual mission" to serve both the white and the blacks was inaugurated (Dachs and Rea 1979:2).

Therefore, the predicament that followed the African Christians, who were forced to renounce their identity, was manifested in other areas of human life, as Africans disdained local cultures, and identities, finally adopting a Western lifestyle. Unfortunately, Christian missionaries did not realise that the African situation was one in which "life" is not divided artificially into sacred and secular; that it was one in which reality was regarded as one, and in which things of the earth had meaning only in terms of the spiritual realm (Idowu 1973:84).

Missionaries wanted to see something like church buildings or mosques in order to say that Africans had a religion. Thus, derogatory terms were used to describe the locals' religion, as observed by Kapenzi (1979: 16). By 1900, the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) was running Chishawasha, and the Wesleyan Methodists were administering Epworth, as Christian villages. The idea was to put up community of believers in "protected villages", or "quarantined" villages following Cecil John Rhodes generosity towards missionary bodies, since land was in abundance (Bhebe 1973:43).

Later on, Catholics introduced new protected Christian villages such as Driefontein, Musami, Gokomere, Holy Cross Missions and many more. The Anglicans had to aquire their position in Old Mutare, St Augustine's (KwaTsambe), Bernard Mzeki, Chiweshe, with Howard Institute being established under the Salvation Army (Barrett 1982: 771). Methodists in Zimbabwe had a monopoly in Chihota with Waddilove, Kwenda and Chemhanza. The Dutch Reformed Church settled in Masvingo at Morgenster Mission, and the London Missionary Society had its Christian villages at Hope Fountain, Bulawayo (Zvobgo, 1991:26).

Ronald Nicolson (2008) agrees that the introduction of the "protected Christian villages" did not offer much room for individual creativity and innovativeness for African communalism, and its prestige motive was an inhibiting factor in the appropriation of

Christianity, which promoted the spirit of entrepreneurship. Nicholson further suggested that church membership provided religious justification, spiritual protection and practical assistance to the converts (for example, hospitals, schools and mission farms). Emulation of Western civilisation took centre stage; thus, there were imported versions of modernity which were not relevant to the local society (Ter Haar 1990: 41). Emulation killed creativity and innovation; African societal values were disfigured and community relationships were damaged. According to Ruzivo (2013), all outcasts such as witches or wizards, or girls who refused polygamy, widows who refused to be inherited and those who refused traditional rules and regulations found refuge in quarantined villages. Some of the socially rejected people in protected Christian villages became catechists under the protection of nuns and priests. The idea was to make residence in Christian villages unpolluted. This was evidenced by the production of devout Christians' fishers of men (*vabvuwi*) prominent in the United Methodist and Anglican Communion (Bertram 1992).

3.4 The Churches' Attitude towards Shona Culture

This section gives a general introduction to a particular traditional religious issue, the adaptation of *kurova guva* and traces the churches' attitudes from the beginning of the missionary efforts in Zimbabwe up to the post-Independence era. The missionaries who came to Africa during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had long concluded that there was nothing like "African Religion", just as explorers and the colonialists, who either preceded or were accompanied by the first missionaries from the same countries, had denied that there was anything like African history or African civilisation. Thus, Africans were regarded as people who did not have a past (Kurewa, 1995: 13).

According to W.R. Peaden (1970:21), early missionaries of all churches were as a matter of fact, opponents of the ancestor cult to the extent that they did not even shy away from the use of corporal methods, resulting in the participants of such functions being sometimes beaten or pursued with dogs; and spirit mediums were beaten with sticks. On one occasion

the village of a *n'anga* (traditional healer) was destroyed, and was threatened with hanging (Peaden 1970: 34). This confirms that a good number of missionaries were there to destroy the local people's way of life by making them think that their tradition and culture were ungodly.

The Africans were regarded as a people who did not have a history, civilisation, culture or religion of their own. John Gates, a United Methodist Church missionary from the United States, who worked in Southern Rhodesia in 1919, represents the thinking of many missionaries of his time, when he wrote:

> The people of these pagan lands of Africa are primitive and hopeless. And it seems to us, that their primitiveness has hindered them rather then helped them with the Church (Minutes of the Rhodesian Mission Conference, 1919: 33-34).

In 1909, an Anglican missionary and a catechist had a discussion with Chief Makoni, whose concern was that Christianity was neglecting the ancestors and sacrificial offerings due to them. The catechist replied, "The Catholic Church teaches respect for the dead, and their burial places, and that is a good thing to remember in prayers those who have gone before us." He further announced that "the spirits cannot themselves give help to the living, but there is one great spirit who has risen from the dead who can help" (Peaden 1970:32). The chief saw the missionaries as robbing the African people of the freedom that they were supposed to enjoy, for the intruder made Africans slaves of a foreign culture (Kurewa 1999: 15). The catechist was not satisfied as to how the Anglican Church was handling the ancestral spirit issue. The Chief saw the problems that the missionaries were bringing to his land. One obviously sees here an example of adaptation.

One should not misunderstand missionaries mentioned by Peaden as naïve in the sense that, they did not have exact knowledge of the local customs. The Jesuits were as well informed as was possible without ethnological competence. Fr. Biehler SJ (1907: 306) published an article on Shona customs. In it, were a few brief remarks about the *kurova*

guva, "Six months after a person's burial, beer is made in honour of his spirit, offered at his grave and drunk. An article signed "X" deals with marriage and burial among the Mashona; describes them objectively and abstains from any value judgment(ZMR, 1906:22).

In 1917, Fr. Aegidius Pfister (1917: 53), of the Religious Missionaries of Mariannhill described "Some Tribal Customs of the Manyika", including a short description of a burial. In 1920, there is an article signed E. S. which is mostly probably by Fr. Emil Schmitz (1920: 281), who wrote about some religious customs of the Makaranga, and thought the people's religiosity was "superficial".

In 1917, an Inter-denominational Missionary Conference (IMC) was held in Southern Africa at Great Zimbabwe (presently Masvingo) , where missionaries resolved that the laity had to disregard paganism in Africa, as the first component of the dual crisis faced by Christianity. One can confirm a bent on the wholesale eradication of African religion and culture as wholly unnecessary to Africans. Derogatory remarks about the African ways of life or African religion from the pulpit as unchristian and heathen took centre stage (Kurewa 1998: 9).African forms of worship were considered fetishist, pagan, animist (Tylor 1924: 23), and heathen described as, ancestral worship or the work of the devil, primitive (Gates 1919: 33), savage, native, tribal or idolatrous (Frazer 1930). In spite of the efforts of the adversary, African religion has held on up to this day, despite the use of negative and very disparaging terms. Such erroneous terminology was used "only to satisfy personal, racial, ethnic or political egocentric attitude" (Idowu1973:108).

June 1920 witnessed the First Conference of Catholic Missionaries at St Georges College in Bulawayo. Various topics, such as the validity of pagan marriages, Christian villages, beer drinking and the *catechumenate* were discussed. Two years later, the Second Conference discussed certain names and their meanings, which were connected with ancestors; giving people the names of ancestors was condemned as superstitious, since it implied that the

ancestor had reincarnated in the child (Marconnes 1922:126). Catholics, of course, are forbidden to believe reincarnation, for it is considered a heresy.

According to Siegel, St Paul's Mission in Musami was founded by Fr C. Daignault SJ, with eight pupils and three teachers, in 1923. About fifteen outstations were opened (Dachs and Rea 1979:281). More on the St Paul's Mission Memorial Service will follow in due course, since it is the case study of this thesis.

Fr. A. Burbridge SJ (1924: 15) published a well thought-out article about the religious system of the chiShona speaking people. Although he related a case of *mudzimu* worship and draws a distinction between a *shave* (a revenging spirit) which at times possesses an unrelated person and a *mudzimu,* he did not deal with the *kurova guva*. Is it possible that missionaries had no access to these rites, since they were conducted very early in the morning or very late at night?

In 1928 Fr H. Quin SJ (1928:254), a missionary among the Karanga, wrote in the *Zambezi Mission Record*, about Native Beliefs and Practice in Mashonaland. When writing about the spirits, he stressed the element of fear in Shona religion. Quin called this "sacrifice," to the spirit of the dead. He gave a short description of the rite along with the Shona belief in *Mwari*, which he saw as "a small foundation on which to build". Concerning the belief in spirits, he reflected the experience of many missionaries.   In the 1950s, the rite of bringing the spirit home was dealt with in a serious way by the first Bethlehem missionary Robert Federer (1954: 205). His attitude could be a guiding principle even today,

> It would be an ill people that did not remember their dead. And it would be foolish of us if, because the *Chikaranga* custom of *kugadzira* involves some elements contrary to the faith as for instance, ancestor worship, we should try to eliminate it root and all. It is very doubtful whether we would succeed, and if we did, we might have done more harm than good.

Fr Federer (1954: 206) confirmed that his discussion with a Catholic Men's society came to the conclusion that form of the *kurova guva* rite should be permitted to the Christians:

- The only way to put the soul of the deceased to rest was through prayer and the Christian sacrifice. The Christian relation should therefore attend the Mass.

- On the way to the cemetery, they should recite the rosary.

- No beast may be killed, rather buy meat from the butchery to eliminate sacrifice which will be idolatrous.

- The widow of the deceased husband should not be included in the estate.

- In order to keep a check on what was going on, the Christians were supposed to inform the priest-in-charge of the mission station and bring the Mass stipend.

- The gathering may not be held on a Sunday, but should if possible, take place on the traditional day of rest (*chisi*).

With the assistance of the Catholic Men's and Women's Associations, this form of *kurova guva* spread quickly to several areas. This proposal showed that the missionaries were somehow willing to work with the locals, although a lot of discussions were necessary. The missionaries wanted also to dictate the pace, for they did not trust the locals.

In the fifties, missionaries expressed their thoughts relating to ancestor veneration more frequently, but they were already there in earlier days, as the article of the pioneer Bethlehem missionary J. Michlig (1957:162), who wrote about consulting the spirit. The consultation of the spirit was of course closely related to the topic of ancestors as observed by Hannan (1959: 34) who spoke of the *Communio Sanctorum*. According to Hannan (1959: 39), the Christian and African traditional religions share a common faith in the existence of the other world (of an afterlife).

3.4.1 The Second Vatican Council's Call

However, later developments showed a way to the Christianised *kurova guva* rite which was more complicated. With the advent of Vatican II (1962-1965) wider discussions on ancestors and the rite of bringing home the spirit took centre stage. The Second Vatican Council called for greater adaptation in the field of liturgy, by providing impetus and breathing space for creative experiments with new rites. Substantial increase in indigenous vocations provided an added advantage for any adjustment of ritual and liturgy to "closer conformity with the African social customs and habits," in order to make the local church more appreciably African, than the Western Europe.

3.4.2 The Post-Vatican II attitudes

By 1966, Fr Kumbirai formulated a burial rite, which he argued was capable of meeting the spiritual needs of Shona Catholics. Kumbirai, courageous advocate of the adaptation of the traditional rite, was also a member of the *Kurova Guva* (KG) Commission. The rite was approved *ad experimentum* for three years. A Christianised Shona Burial Rite, *Maitiro okuviga munhu,* which was amended twice, but remained basically the same in intent and purpose, opted for the Christianisation of the *magadziro* ceremony (1966:21). The thrust towards inculturation and the making of the Christian faith sensitive to African traditional belief (1966/67) was always on the cards. According to Elsener (2001: 13), a *Revised Supplement to the Burial Rite* was produced as a "*kugadzira*" which was given a Christian coating in the *kuita musande*, rites for the "appeasement" of the missionaries. A number of priests felt that fundamental Christian truths were not expressed strongly enough in the rite, such as redemption through Jesus Christ, the cleansing and atonement of purgatory and the functions of the Holy Mass. Kumbirai (1967:476) proposed to "baptise" the system of *vadzimu* (ancestors). He stressed the importance of Christianising the *kurova guva* ceremony from inside, which he considered possible, since the *midzimu*(ancestors) were not evil in themselves.

Around 1968, the debate on *kurova guva* extended beyond Diocesan borders of all Shona-speaking areas of Zimbabwe. Elsener and Kollbrunner (2001: 14) admit that the local clergy were generally more cautious in the question of adaptation of ancestor veneration; hence more and more proposals came in from *kurova guva* and *kuita musande* up to *kususukidza munhu kuna Mwari* (to present the spirit of the deceased to God). There was a general feeling that the adaptation of the *kurova guva* ceremony was worth investigating and several priests warned against moving in haste.

Fr Emmanuel Mavhudzi (1968: 84), one of the early ordinands of the Archdiocese of Harare, composed and proposed an alternative rite which was more elaborate than Kumbirai's, but much more detached from the traditional form; that is, the rite insisted that there should be no blessing of the animal to be slaughtered. The liturgy would consist of a procession from the home to the grave, Holy Mass by the graveside, a sprinkling with holy water ,the incensing of the cross, the blessing of the tombstone, and the sprinkling holy water on it and incensing it, the reading of the epistle by a relative, the offertory procession followed by the *preces fidelium*, the post Mass invocation of the saints and the ancestors, procession back home, blessing with water of the homestead and surrounding fields, concluding words and the final blessing (1968:54).

Mavhudzi (1968:86)also produced a paper on *kurova guva*, which he preceded with the claim that *kurova guva* ceremonies were sacrifices to the spirits and were therefore, against the first commandment. This led him to the conclusion that *kurova guva* could not be adopted by the Catholic Church. However, a substitution that integrated some authentic elements would be welcome.

The Shona Liturgical Commission of the Archdiocese of Harare with representatives from other dioceses assigned by the Zimbabwean Catholic Bishops' Conference, tackled the *kurova guva* issue well before a full *kurova guva* discussion centered mainly on *kusuma*

(offering and presenting). Present were Frs T. Chiginya (later Bishop of Gweru), C. Dober SMB and Marimazhira (Elsener and Kollbrunner 2001: 15). They gathered in Harare to see how the *kurova guva* issue would be dealt with from Church's point of view. The term *kusuma* has secular meaning in ordinary life. But it also has a religious meaning. During the *kurova guva* rite, grain (*zviyo*) for the brewing of beer and a beast (*mombe)* are offered (*kusuma*). Is *kusuma* sacrificing to the ancestor during *kurova guva*? The answer would depend on the meaning given to *kusuma*. The majority of the commission held that *kusuma* meant sacrifice in the *kurova guva* rite; therefore, such offering had to be omitted, arrived Mavhudzi (1968:93). But, the Gweru Diocese representative Fr Chiginya disagreed with the majority (Elsener and Kollbrunner 2001: 23). It is also worth noting the reaction from an African catechist who was present quoting Matthew 15: 14 (the blind leading the blind), who revealed that, "we prayed for priests of our own and now our own priests are misleading us… Are they leading us back to the ancestors?"(Minutes of the Shona Liturgical Commission in *Guti* (1968: 93).The catechist doubted the competence of his fellow blacks. For him any attempt to Christianise the *kurova guva* was attempting the impossible.

 A recognisable substitute for the traditional *kurova guva* rite without *kusuma* was to be composed. Finally the commission recommended that the whole of traditional Shona culture needed to be studied and consultation with *vakuru* (elders) and with other churches was to be undertaken. By 1969, the commission recommended that the ban on *kurova guva* should be lifted leaving three schools of thought;

    i.   Those who were fundamentally opposed to *kurova guva* and showed great reluctance

    ii.   Those who were neither for nor against it, and just left it up to the laity themselves (which encouraged dual allegiance)

    iii.   Those who tried to find a Christianised *kurova guva* rite locally and discussed it with the faithful (Elsener and Kollbrunner 2001:23)

One found a division among Catholics; some clerics were labeled as heretics, and some were viewed as rebels. In a nutshell, the whole debate on *kurova guva* proved that it could not be a one-day event, and that the alternative "adaptation" or "substitution" was largely of

an academic nature. Up to now the Church is still struggling to come up with a theologically sound proposal that satisfies the expectations of the Shona people.

The pressures of African nationalism, the lapse of many Christians from church services and the demands of the church brought a revived call for the adaptation or recognition of *kurova guva* Kumbirai (1966:26)warned:

> Christianity will stand or fall in proportion to the seriousness of the attitude taken by missionaries regarding adaptation on the continent of Africa. Christianity stands in danger of being classed as a by-product of colonisation and Western culture which must be discarded when it proves cumbersome and incongruous to the African way of life.

Kumbirai led in the formulating of a new Christian liturgy for burial among Shona Catholics, forcing the setting up of a special Commission which later shifted the ban on *kurova guva.* Kumbirai declared that Christianity should be permeating the African way of life, which should be perfected not annihilated. For Kumbirai, and other indigenous clergy, *kurova guva* as a means of accepting the traditional way of honouring the dead was either improved or put some additions. Meanwhile the missionaries tried to replace the "ancestor cult" with the saints' cult, but it was not successful. The saints in the view of Africans had no family ties or blood relationship with the living individuals concerned.

3.5 The Purgatory Doctrine

Belief in a particular judgement after death is not a personal opinion, but an official teaching binding all Catholics. According to Conway (1929:393), the Catholic Church defined the existence of purgatory in the Decree of Union drawn up at the Council of Florence (1439), and again the Council of Trent said:

> The Catholic Church instructed by the Holy Ghost, has from Sacred Scripture (SS), and the ancient traditions of the Fathers, taught in Sacred Councils and very recently in the Ecumenical Synod (Canon

30) that there is a purgatory, and that the souls therein detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the Altar.

The same Council taught in Canon 12, in accordance with scriptures (Numbers 20: 12; 2Kings12:1, 3-14) that God does not always remit all of the temporal punishment due to forgiven sins, the Scriptures teach that nothing defiled can enter heaven (Wisdom 7: 25; Isaiah 25:8). All therefore, who die in venial sins, or with the temporal punishment of their sins still unpaid must atone for them in purgatory (2 Maccabees 12:43-46).

Conway (1929: 372) stated that after Judas defeated Gorgias, he came with his company to bury the Jews, who had been slain in the conflict. He found under their coats some of the votive offerings, which they had, contrary to the law (Deuteronomy 7:25) robbed from the idols of Jamnia. Judas at once prayed to God that their sins would be forgiven (2 Macc12:37-42), and he did not consider their sin grievous "because he considered that they, who had fallen asleep with godliness had great grace laid upon them". The sacred writer then adds "It is, therefore a holy wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from their sins," (2 Macc 12: 43-46).

Purgatory has been depicted as a necessary stage after death through which a sinful human becomes fit for eternal life with God. It is a state of purification as Boros (1965:129)affirms:

> ...every sin a man commits entails a debt as of punishment (*reatus poenae*) which cannot simply be paid each time by turning away from the crime committed and nothing else. From this, it follows that the essential thing in the process of purification consists in paying this debt of punishment through the pains of satisfaction *(satispassio)*. Nevertheless, it is one of those eschatological symbols which have endured a great deal of dispute among theologians. In fact, some non-Catholic theologians still argue that the doctrine was somehow exaggerated at a certain phase of the church history.

The logic of this doctrine, however, must have been due to two understandings: firstly there was need to provide certainty for forgiveness of those who alienated themselves from God after baptism and secondly, that nobody is spiritually perfect enough to go directly to God's presence after death.

3.6 The Doctrine of the Saints

The Catholics teaching on the invocation of the saints was defined by the Council of Trent:

> The Saints, who reign together with Christ, offer up their own prayers to God for men and women. It is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have resources to their prayers aid, and help for the obtaining of benefits from God... (Conway 1929:368)

McClymont (2014) asserts that the saints are canonised by an infallible decree of the Pope, for the church believes they are in heaven. Sometimes an uncanonised person may be so holy, that people are sure that they are in heaven, but this is not always the case.

The cult of the saints motivated a good number of some indigenous clergy to do something similar for their living-dead. They pointed out that the Shona people were closely linked to their recently deceased. It was; therefore, appropriate to express this reverence for the dead in rites that were meaningful to the clergy and the laity. Unfortunately, division among the clergy intensified for nothing in the form of catechesis materialised.

St Cyril (315-368) of Jerusalem wrote;

> We commemorate those who have fallen asleep before us, patriarchs, prophets, apostles and martyrs in order that God by their prayers and intercessions; many receive our petitions(Conway 1929:389).

With the Catholic position on the dead, the local clergy did not see any discrepancy in honouring, venerating and respecting their living-dead. Thus, Kumbirai (1966) expressed discontent and called for religious reform in the Catholic Church.

A new initiative was started by some missionaries, who worked within Shona speaking dioceses. In contrast to the 1963 edition of Chishawasha Catechism, the 1971 edition no longer referred to the ban on the *kurova guva*. Some local clergy however considered it illogical and utterly ridiculous to "Christianise" the *kurova guva*, since it was essentially connected with *kushopera, kunobvunzira,* or *kuenda kugata* (consulting traditional healers about the causes of an illness or calamity) and *kupira midzimu* (appeasing a spirit by means of an offering or sacrifice).

3.7 The Sacrificial Ceremony

One could not "Christianise" part of the sacrificial ceremony and condemn the rest, argues Chidavaenzi (1992:21). His answer to the question whether the *kurova guva* was sacrificial ceremony was a very clear "YES", because it had all the elements of a sacrifice. In 1969, there was a debate on whether *kurova guva* was a sacrifice or not. The debate or argument revolved around a definition by Rev Joseph A. de Aldama which announced that a sacrifice was "a special act of external worship by which something which can be perceived by the senses, is legitimately offered to God. The action of offering involved a certain change in the thing being offered to show recognition of his supreme majesty. (Circular letter L7 /SR/BR RCBC: 30.1.6G.P1). This definition is of "permissible sacrifice" but a definition of sacrifice which included sinful or idolatrous sacrifice would be broader than this. For Chidavaenzi (1999: 4), sacrifice differs from prayer in that it is always a supreme act of concecration and therefore, appropriate to God alone. The circular, referring to this definition, talks of "The definition of sacrifice or perhaps one can only call it a description which for practical purpose is sufficient ..."

This definition is narrow. It does not include sacrifices to idols, chiefs, supernatural powers and graven images and gods. It is from this definition, that the majority of the commission concluded that, "there is no sacrifice in the theological sense in the *kurova guva* ceremony. The opposing minority judgement stated that, 'the ritual offering at *kurova guva* is of a sacrificial nature." Chidavaenzi (1992:24) maintains, "A sacrifice is an act of worship and serving which should be offered to God alone, and not to anybody else whether an idol, Satan, or the spirit of the dead (*mudzimu*, *mhondoro* or *shave*) or an angel".

Chidavaenzi (1999:9) notes that all rituals are offered to a spiritual power and indicates the types of spiritual power (Satan and *mudzimu* or God), and claims that there are sacrifices offered to different personalities. Chidavaenzi (1999) reveals that in Old Testament times, sacrificial offering was not provided for the dead only, but also for the atonement of the sins of the living.

Generally, the aspects of *kurova guva* or *chenura* ceremony may be set out as follows, according to Chidavaenzi (1999: 10):

Subject Matter and Title	Old Testament	*Kurova Guva*
Victim(s)	Cattle, Goats, Sheep, Wine Cereal	Goats and cattle, rarely sheep
Presentation	Laying hands on the victims (standing)	Pointing with a knife or stick to the victim squatting
Immolation	Victim killed	Victim killed
Libation	Pour victim blood on the altar	Pour blood/beer on the grave

Consummation	Burn some meat for God (burnt offering)	Meat roasted on fire
Sacrificial Potion	Give part of meat to the priest and Levi	Give part of the meat to *sahwira(hunda)* *zvomukati*(offals) *(Amai vemunhu)*
Target	Offered to spiritual (God)	Reconciliation and peace with the spirit of the dead
Purpose	Reconciliation, peace with God thanks communication ritual purification	Reconciliation and peace with the spirit of the dead
Result	Prosperity Sheol Heaven	Introduction into the spirit world (*nyikadzimu*) Possession of happiness
Officiating	Head of the family ordained, levitical priest	Head of family preferably male.

Chidavaenzi (1999:10)

Elsener (2001) in his article on the *kurova guva* says that the instruction in Shona to the "*Kuchenura munhu*" ritual takes pains to show that *kupira* in the life of the Shona, for instance, the pouring of some beer to the ground by the living people such as the chief to a dead person is not a sacrifice. Elsener (2001: 40)agrees that this is purely a symbolic gesture without sacrificial commotions in the theological sense. Chidavaenzi (1999) reiterates that the Shona use of the term *mupiro* from *kupira* and *muteuro* from *kuteura* are truly sacrificial. If they were not, they could not be used as terminology for the sacrifice of the Eucharist (*Muteuro we Misa).*

Several missionaries and local priests discussed the matter (the *kurova guva* ritual and its sacrificial aspects) with the laity and were quickly perplexed by the rite with the local differences in its performance, and by different interpretations by Shona Catholics, not cast by the indigenous mode of thinking. Besides *kupira and kuteura* various indigenous concepts needed explanation. Among such terms were *kusuma* (offering), *kuchenura* (to purify), *magadziro* (to purify the spirit of the deceased person), and *kutamba guva* (dancing a grave). Some of the terms created divided loyalty among the Shona Catholics and other African Christians. They were torn between two worlds, the world of the Christian beliefs and values and the world of Shona traditional beliefs.

It should be admitted that much confusion existed among the clergy and the faithful about the rites drawn up in reverence of the dead. At one given time, the *kurova guva* was approved by the Catholic clergy; another minute there was a ban on the rite. One can see problem with such changes, a case in point is, the *Revised Supplement to the Burial Rite* of 1967, which was to be used *ad experimentum* for three years, which was accompanied by further confusion (Kumbirai 1967: 25). Some clergy and laity thought they were adapting traditional rites, while others quarter thought they were merely substituting a Christian rite in place of the traditional ceremony. This scenario however, created lukewarm Christians who could do as they pleased. A flexible rite was necessary, as precaution against rushing into some of these traditional post-death rituals, and there was need to study thoroughly the Shona Traditional Religion (STR) particularly, the *kurova guva* or else the church would produce half-baked Christians or underdone Christians. With all these religious manipulations, some clergy and laity knew for certain that "things would simmer" if the Christian adherents were not careful, because the Church had serious challenges with the interaction between faith and culture, for it was unfinished business. Thus, a number of disguising terms were used. These included the *kuita munhu musande* rite (to make someone join the communion of saints) for the "appeasement" of the missionaries. And some opinions were given a Christian coating again to appease the missionaries (Dachs and Rea 1979: 9). For example, traditional rituals were forbidden, the faithful continued using terms missionaries would want to hear, such as *kunotamba Jerusarema* (Jerusalem dance)

and thus continued with their prohibited indigenous dance, with terms that the missionary ear would like to hear (Nhariwa 1966: 227).

3.8 The Proposal of New Rite

Individual local priests were ahead of others in composing and proposing alternative rites, some which were more elaborate and detached from the traditional form. Mavhudzi (1996) concluded that the *kurova guva* could not be adapted in the Catholic Church. However, a substitution that integrated some authentic elements would be welcome. Over and above, subsequent discussions, some local priests shifted their views, resulting in no common denominator. Several indigenous clerics were emphatic that it was not just the *kurova guva* ceremony, but the Shona traditional religion as a whole which called for careful study by ethnologists, and anthropologists, followed by an equally independent theological evaluation of their findings, which was not meant to discourage or disqualify already existing researches.

With all the deliberations about traditional rites the matter rested for a while without a definitive Christian solution. As a result of this delay, a number of missionaries started acting on their own. Consequently, three groups of clergy emerged as previously mentioned.

The above is a clear indication that the *kurova guva* issue was something which needed much attention, and a lot of homework needed to be done. It should be pointed that the Shona people were re-awakened to their cultural heritage; they continued to participate in the ceremonies in bad faith, and the cause of this should have been removed because there were not adequate theological reasons for the banning.

We may take note of Fr Mcgarry SJ used *sadza* and beer (*chibuku*) to celebrate mass in the early 1990s in Chishawasha, which caused him to be asked to say no public masses; for probably he took the whole issue too far. A lot of dubious experiments were done behind scenes. If things are left unresolved a lot can happen, for there may be growing anxiety from the laity to receive guidance from the church.

Having seen the challenges to Christianising the *kurova guva* ceremony, the Catholic Bishops' Conference approved the National Association of the Diocesan Clergy (NADC) which was tasked to do further research on local customs, and advise the Conference on the pastoral procedure (RCBC1974: 9). To complement this, the conference established its own Theological Commission. Among its terms of reference was a very thorough study of African customs (RCBC 1972:2). Several plenary sessions on the *kurova guva* ceremony evoked a lot of new ideas. Around 1978, the secretary for the commission on the Christian Formation and Worship issued guidelines for the new rite of *kuchenura munhu* (to achieve purification of the deceased spirit) in harmony with that purification which is believed in line with purgatory.

The document on the *Kuchenura* rite had three parts;

   i.   Catechesis
   ii. Description of rites
   iii. The ritual with prayers (ZCBC 1982:40)

Unfortunately, this did not go well with some clergy and laity, as no one had power to purify the dead, except God alone. Reactions to the rite were not easy to supress, the function of the *n'anga* and the role of the priest became a cause for controversy, for it was totally incompatible with Church teachings according to Mavhudzi (2000). It was concluded by some that *kurova guva* was a family affair, and the priest was an outsider. For certain

priests, the *kuchenura* rite was too long, so they were content with just saying Mass and continuing with other pressing pastoral assignments.

In fact, according to Dachs and Rea (1979: 218), early missionaries had to present gifts of blankets to parents in order to get their consent for pupils to attend. Some parents were reluctant to allow their daughters to go to school, since it was considered that their future life as married women did not warrant education, observed Fr M Hannan SJ (1954). This attitude persisted for some time up to around 1945, when Fr Hannan started the Home Craft School for girls. In 1946, the first Standard Six examinations took place with four pupils passing out of nine.

By mid-19th century, local vocations were promoted and between 1950 and 1960, African nationalism expressed itself on Zimbabwean soil, and it did not leave the Christian Church unaffected. The persistence of ATR, the experiencing of Christianity as a foreign religion, and the de-Africanising thrust of missionary and Western education, together with the rhetoric of nationalism provided the background to the rise of African Theology in Zimbabwe (Chitando 2000:3). Failure to contextualize the Church in Africa became more noticeable during the missionary era, for many of the missionaries advocated for the total eradication of African culture. In this phase, the view was reinforced that conversion to Christianity was understood as conversion to modernity, and shunning ancestral beliefs and practices. Literacy was the vehicle for shedding "the old", while simultaneously authoring "the new". This was in line with the dominant missionary ideology that sought to banish indigenous beliefs and practices, and replace them with a purified Christianity. Schools were a very powerful agent in dislocating young Africans and introducing them to that foreign religion (Chitando and Mapuranga 2008:20).

In his thesis on the Holy Apostolic Church of Rome, the Catholic Church, P.H. Gundani (1994: 118) highlighted the role of the lay Catholic Association in making Christianity

relevant to local needs, pressing for the recognition of some African cultural forms such as the *kurova guva* (the bringing- back- home ceremony), which is a critical rite of passage in the Shona traditional religion, through which the deceased is transformed into an ancestor. The missionaries banned it, but many African Catholics argued that it could be harmonised with Christian beliefs on the after-life.

According to Ruzivo (2013), the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) had an impact on Zimbabwean Catholicism. It was convened by Pope John XXIII, but mostly presided over by Pope Paul VI. The Council is known for reform of the existing church, and for encouraging new theological frameworks for traditional church doctrine, that had far reaching results. Dialogue with Protestants, use of vernacular languages for the mass, and the use of new critical methods in the Catholic Biblical Studies were some results of the Second Vatican Council.   The Council also encouraged new Catholic translations of the Bible, and commentaries to assist the understanding of non-experts.   The Vatican Council unquestionably provided a tremendous impetus for change, covering vast range of issues, most of them aimed at adopting the Christian message to modern men and women. The ecclesia was to read the signs of the times, with the church coming to people, walking with people, and talking to people (Boff1986:79).

African traditional systems, often overlooked by the church officials, and sometimes hidden from them, became more meaningful to the people than the standard Euro-American rite used in the churches in Africa. The thrust towards inculturation and making the Christian faith sensitive to African realities became sharpened. Fr Kumbirai (1966:17), for example, wrote a series of articles outlining traditional Shona beliefs.

African theological reflection in Zimbabwe between 1965 and 1980 was characterised by a passionate search for the true character of indigenous religion. In addition, the need to respect African practices within the Church, such as drums, whistling and vigorous dancing was underlined. Shona belief in God before the missionary effort, the mediatory role of the

ancestors, traditional culture and medical practices were topics that received attention (Chavunduka 1974: 131). Kumbirai (1977: 123) saw a need for Christianity to creatively interact with African cultural dynamics, such as the *kurova guva* ritual, as a consistent thread.

3.9 Post-Independence Theological Changes (1980-2008)

The attainment of political independence on the 18th April 1980 was a watershed in the history of the Zimbabwean Church. Given that the Church had been caught up on either side of the divide, independence brought a fundamental challenge to theological reflection; thus the Church adapted to the new social order in Zimbabwe(Mafico, 1981: 171).

According to Frederick Chiromba (1989: 16), concern with issues such as handling Shona spiritual realities, and making the Eucharist relevant to the Shona cultural situation, together with the rites of passage, such as those associated with marriage, death and the time after death continued to receive attention in the post-colonial situation. According toGwinyai Muzorewa (1985: 16), the inculturation of liturgy in both the Catholic and Protestant churches precipitated notable theological reflections. The Church has also witnessed remarkable growth of the spirituality of African women, as attested by Mukonyora (1995: 243).Terence Ranger has accurately observed that there has been remarkable religious innovation in Zimbabwe. According to Ranger(1967: 226), there has been systematic borrowing and interaction between ATRs and Christianity. The decades between 1980 and 2008have marked a transformation in the history and development of religious practice in Zimbabwe. This period marks an era of spiritual and religious intensification, invigoration and reconstitution of the religious space and scope (Zvarevashe, 1980: 25).A study of Zimbabwean theological literature shows a continued preoccupation with making Christianity sensitive to the local context.

The above paragraphs gave an overview of the interaction between Shona religion and Christianity. The next section, as mentioned earlier, will discuss models of contextualization, in order to set the stage for explaining types of "contextualization" models grounded in the data of this study. It is hoped that the meaning of the word contextualization will unfold, as various terminologies associated with it will be explored.

3.10 Types of Contextualization

Before looking at types of contextualization, it is important to give a brief historical background as to how Christianity became contextualized. Since the Church is in an era of inculturation theology, it would be helpful to begin this contentious topic by giving a brief Christian historical background. Christianity can be traced back to its earliest articulation in St Paul's debate with a form of Jewish Christianity is described in the first chapters of Acts (Russell1991: 7). A second type, Gentile Christianity, began with Paul; it understood salvation as coming independently of the Jewish Law. Certain Jewish believers confused their faith with their own ethnic conventions, cultural practices and laws, which they wished to, impose upon all non-Jewish converts to Christianity. Thanks to the broader vision of Paul, the greatest missionary to the Gentiles, Judaizing Christianity failed. Vindicated by St Paul, the principle of adaptation or accommodation succeeded so well that from that time onwards, missionaries used this principle (which will be explained later), without problems, whenever they went about implanting the gospel. Christianity began to take roots among people of different Western cultures, as well as some parts of Africa. So the principle of inculturation can be discerned at the very beginning of the Church. There was already, inculturation, even though this term was not yet used.

A third type of Christianity was inaugurated during the Vatican II Council (1962 - 1965) characterised by the presence of bishops from every corner of the world, and its adoption of the vernacular, each nation praying in its own language. The Council called for greater adaptation in the field of liturgy, proving impetus and breathing space for creative

experiments with new rites, incorporating local customs into Catholic worship (Shorter, 1988:16).

Clarification of terms is necessary, for different concepts have been confused among various authors who have written on inculturation. Some of the terms are viewed as synonyms of inculturation, but bear noticeable differences that cannot be ignored. The term contextualization in theology is used to refer mainly to a situation or context in which the gospel is to be proclaimed (Amadi 2008: 19). Stephen B. Bevans (1992: 1) defines contextual theology, as a way of doing theology, in which one takes into account; the spirit and message of the gospel; the tradition of the Christian people; the culture in which one is theologizing; and the social change on that culture.

Chuba (1997: 49) uses the term "contextualization" to mean putting an element, or thing or practice to suit participation in a particular context or situation. Bevans (1992: 1-3) observes that, "there has been a noticeable development in the understanding of contextualization, and this can clearly be shown by the passage from one terminology to another". These terms which are explained below, in order to see not only how they relate to contextualization, but also how they can help to understand its meaning as well, so that its discussion may become clear as the study progresses.

In an effort to re-express the Christian message with African idioms and conceptual tools, expressions such as adaptation, acculturation, accommodation, indigenization, enculturation, incarnation, inculturation and Africanisation, have been employed to contextualize African theological discourse. Most of these expressions are used interchangeably as confirmed by Peter Schineller (1990:14), Dickson (1975:116), and Justin S. Ukpong (1984:26).

3.10.1 Adaptation

The Random House Kememan Webster's College Dictionary defines adaptation as a change, or adjustment in an animal or plant, which increases its chances of survival in a specific environment, that is, something that is adapted is changed, or modified to suit new conditions or needs. Schineller (1990: 16) confirms that "to adapt is to make fit". It implies a selection of certain rites and customs, purifying them, and inserting them into Christian rituals, where there was an apparent similarity (Waliggo, 1986: 11). Many scholars, like Schineller and Waliggo, agree that the term was widely used in the past.

Pope John Paul II not only approved the term "adaptation", but also supported the church's position on its use when he states: "An adaptation of the Christian life in fields of pastoral, ritual, didactic and spiritual activities is not only possible, it is even favoured by the Church" (Schineller 1990: 17). From all indications, therefore, the model of adaptation was accepted and approved by African Catholics and missionaries at some stage. However, it felt short of expectations, and was inadequate on its own, for it implied selection of certain rites, customs and purifying them to blend with Christian rituals, without changing its structure and content (Sipuka, 2000: 240).

At the 1974 Synod of Bishops in Rome, African prelates rejected the "theology of adaptation", which was considered completely out of date, and accepted rather the theology of incarnation (Ukpong 1984:29). Adaptation was again utterly rejected by the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM) (*IMBISA* document 1993: 46).

3.10.2 Accommodation

The *Free Dictionary* defines "accommodation", as making or becoming suitable: thus adjusting to new circumstances or as of differences, hence the meaning assumed in the Contextualization debate. According to Sipuka (2000), accommodation maybe defined as the respectful, prudent and, specifically and theologically sound adjustment of the Church to the native culture in attitude, inward behaviour and outward behaviour, and practical

apostolic Church. The term was found inadequate to express the process by which the Church becomes inserted in a given culture (Chiromba 1989:3).

"Accommodation" caused Western Christianity and local traditions to live side by side in Shona/Ndebele hearts and minds. Here, one is not talking about biblical Christianity for it is very different from Western Christianity, which destroyed ancestor veneration. Accommodation does not go far enough to express the reality of the indissolubility, the indelibility of the marriage between biblical Christianity and the local culture. Accommodation Christianises certain elements of the local traditions. The term was found inadequate to express the process by which the church becomes inserted in a given culture by numerous bishops at the 1974 Synod in Rome (Chiromba, 1989: 3). It was found outdated and was rejected outright.

3.10.3 Africanisation

The term Africanisation, like liberation, was first used in the political arena. As early as the mid-1920s, when tension was already growing between white control and African initiative in the Gold Coast (Ghana), the Governor Guggisberg was forced to adopt an "Africanisation Scheme" to put Africans in key positions in the civil service. This transfer of leadership and management authority later affected every field where there was European presence or domination, including the Church (Mudimbe 1988:169).

It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1954, Rev Peter K. Dagdu of Ghana addressed the World Council of Churches Second Assembly at Evanston on the urgent need to Africanise the Church on the continent. He declared:

It is becoming increasingly necessary for the missionaries to hasten their Africanisation policy so as to overtake the political advancement in certain areas where African leadership is an accepted feature of life (Dagdu 1954:12).

Africanisation was also found unsuitable to *express* the same purpose for they only meant a process which mainly involved the training of African ministers, (priests, nuns and friars) to replace their European counterparts, which was a result of the independence of the state. Black leaders took ecclesiastical powers in the Church, but were still controlled from America and Europe financially and administratively (Zvarevashe 2009:22); thus, one could see "remote control".

Many expatriates were afraid of these terms, which to them seemed to have the connotations of replacing them with the African personnel. Yet the truth was that expatriate missionaries would never be redundant in Africa provided they were willing to take second place, or share their positions of authority with the local clergy.

The Church showed concern for the Africanisation of the Church by adopting herself to African conditions as observed by Gallina (1969:12). Two major problems arose for the African section or adaptation process; lack of sufficiently numerous indigenous clergy and lack of a trained Catholic laity (Gallina, 1962:13). The task was therefore, to train priests and lay folks to be cadres of Africanisation, but other things did not change (venial change), as to change is to risk (Zvarevashe, 2009: 22).

3.10.4 Vernacularisation

The *Free Dictionary* relates "vernacularisation" to the everyday language or dialect spoken by a people, as distinguished from the learned language. The problem of theologizing in foreign languages; verbal or nonverbal, as the vehicle of expression used in the urgent for task of replying Christ's ministry, proved difficult for the response of the locals would be

incomplete. It also proved difficult to accept, for it was just a process of translating English or Greek or Latin into Shona/Ndebele, but nothing else changed. The term was rarely used in the Catholic Church, but was widely used in ecumenical spheres. It also meant translating, English, Latin and Greek hymns or Bible into local languages. Again, the term was rejected, for it specifically touched the languages only, leaving other areas unchanged.

3.10.5 Enculturation

Isaak (1998:67) endorsed enculturation as the process through which human being acquires his/her own culture. According to the *Collins English Dictionary*, enculturation is the learning of the appropriate behaviour of one's own culture. The learning of one's society's culture can be formal or informal. It is important to mention that the individual who may be learning his/her culture for the first time is open to learn every aspect of this culture (Amadi, 2008: 21).

Enculturation is therefore, important to this study of contextualization, for it enables the individual to know his/her culture, so as to be able to dialogue well, with a new culture or religion. It also helps one to appreciate other people's culture. Readiness to appreciate other people's culture must be emphasized, because it helps to promote contextualization.

3.10.6 Acculturation

Webster's College Dictionary defines acculturation as a process in which members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs and behaviours of another group; thus the term also refers to the process of adopting the cultural traits or social patterns of another group.

Isaak (1998:67) asserts that acculturation connotes contact between cultures, the contact which an outsider has. Although acculturation is usually in the direction of a minority

group adopting the habits and language of the dominant group, acculturation can be reciprocal - that is, the dominant group may also adopt patterns typical of the minority group. Assimilation of one cultural group another maybe evidenced by changes in language preference, and adoption of common attitudes and values (Shorter, 1997: 8).

According to the above definitions, acculturation is a necessary condition for contextualization (sometimes confused with inculturation, for these terms are sometimes used interchangeably), because acculturation makes it possible for the two cultures to come into contact. One can safely say that acculturation facilitates communication between cultures, for no culture is superior to another. Schineller (1990: 22) indicates the difference between acculturation and inculturation, saying "the process of inculturation as will be seen later, calls not only for contact but for insertion". Thus, inculturation goes beyond cultural contact, making acculturation important to help the understanding of inculturation.

3.10.7 Incarnation

The origin of the word "incarnation" is reflected in John 1:14, "the Word became flesh and dwelt among us". According to the *IMBISA Study Document* (1993), incarnation is the most directly theological word available to express the meaning of inculturation. This refers to the entire Christ event-the coming of Christ, his birth, his suffering, his dying and his resurrection.

The African prelates insisted on using incarnation in two senses. In the first sense, it meant the process of mutual penetration of the gospel and culture so that Jesus Christ might be present today in every culture. The most directly theological word available to express the meaning of inculturation was incarnation, which referred to the entire Christ event, the

coming, the birth, growth, daily life and struggle teaching, healing, resting, celebrating, suffering, dying and rising of Jesus Christ, (*IMBISA* Study Document1993:46).

As the *Lineamenta* for the African Synod says,

> Thus, inculturation or the process through which the Christian faith is "incarnated" in cultures is bound by its nature to the proclamation of the gospel. This is explained by the fact that inculturation is rooted in the incarnation of the word of God (*logos*, "word"). Because it was integrated and concrete, the incarnation of the Son of God was an incarnation into a culture (Pope John Paul II, 1982:1)

This explains the fact that inculturation is rooted in incarnation of the word of God. In effect, the incarnational model of inculturation shows the importance of integrating the Gospel with the culture of a particular Christian community in such a way that the Gospel is expressed vividly through culture (Amadi 2008: 25).

It has been shown how some of the above examined terms are related to inculturation. It is proper now to talk about the origin and definition of inculturation.

3.10.8 Inculturation: Origin

Having examined the above terms, one can see a shift from anthropological enculturation to musicological inculturation asserts Zvarevashe (2000: 22). Maybe it is proper at this juncture to highlight that the term "inculturation" was coined by Pierre Charles SJ in 1953, when he published an article, in which he used the word "inculturation", to indicate an analogy between how a child adapts himself/herself to the discipline of his/her social group or culture, and the way the Gospel encounters culture. Aylward Shorter, however, in his book *Towards a Theology of Inculturation*(1988),says that the term was first used in a theological sense by Fr Joseph Masson SJ, a professor at the Gregorian University in Rome, shortly before the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962. However, the term was popularised through its use at the 32nd General Congregation of the Jesuits (Society of Jesus) held from December 1974 to April 1975. According to Zvarevashe (2009: 27), the full

theological meaning of the term "inculturation" was developed later by the former Jesuit Superior General Pedro Arrupe, first in his intervention at the 1977 Synodon Catechesis, and then in his letter to all Society of Jesus Missionaries in 1978, where he wrote on the subject of inculturation.

The process of inculturation is a historical growth of the integration of Christianity in a given culture, distinguished by three stages, as summarised by Chiromba (1989:13), namely translation, assimilation and transformation (acculturation); the blending of distinct cultures; and thus the purifying, changing, renewing and perfecting of that culture. According to Archbishop Zoa of Yaounde in Cameroon, there is first a transmission in which the evangelizer needs to adapt his/her message to the evangelized. The second stage is that of assimilation in which the Christian message becomes part of the people themselves. The final stage is that of re-expression, in which the evangelized group seek to re-express or reformulate the gospel message according to its way of thinking, understanding and cultural setting (Butturini, 1975:247).

Having attempted to clarify some of the concepts or terms that are viewed as synonymous with inculturation, I will look at several definitions of inculturation and discuss only a few of these for reference purposes in the course of this study.

One of the most urgent problems of the modern church is that of relating the Gospel to various cultures. It should be acknowledged that no Church Council prior to Vatican II ever addressed the question of culture. One finds remarks on inculturation especially in the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (*Lumen Gentium*), in the decree on the Church's Missionary Activity (*Ad Gentes*), and in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *(Gaudium et Spes)*. The same theme is taken up again by the Synod of Bishops in 1974, on Evangelisation and Pope Paul VI's Apostolic Exhortation (*Evangelii Nuntiandi*), which Pope John Paul II called the *Magna Charta* of Evangelisation. The same

theme is treated by the Synod of 1977 on *Catechesis Tridentate*. The problem also reappeared in the Synod of 1980 on the Family (Chiromba, 1989:1). Pope John Paul II addressed the same problem in establishing the Pontifical Council of Culture in 1982. The 1994 African Synod had inculturation on its agenda, as did the Second African Synod of 2007.

3.10.81 Meaning of Inculturation

Having identified some of the magisterial documents of the Catholic Church referring to inculturation and having offered theological reflection on their doctrinal and pastoral content, it is appropriate to consider some of the definitions that have been given so far. The first step towards exploring the meaning of "inculturation" is to examine what some authors and researchers have said about it. Waliggo (1986:11), Schineller (1990:6) and Shorter (1997:XI) agree that inculturation as a term is relatively recent. For Waliggo(1986:11), however, "the reality it signifies has been present in various degrees in the Church since its foundation.

Pope John Paul II (1985: 21) defines inculturation as "the incarnation of the gospel in native culture and also the introduction of the culture into the life of the church". He also refers to it as "a movement towards Evangelisation". Following a similar trend of thought, Paul Gaggawala (1999: 9) sees inculturation as "the process by which the gospel or Church is inserted in a given cultural context". Inculturation, therefore, is the process of bringing into harmony a particular cultural expression with the Good News of Jesus.

Zvarevashe (2009: 26) views inculturation as the process by which the Christian life message become integrated into a given culture. Inculturation in Nicholas Creary's (2011: 339) view is about "adapting the church universal to specific local cultures". For Oscar Wermter (2012), inculturation goes well beyond adaptation. Makamure (2012)affirms that it is a dialogue between Christian faith, and African culture giving each other the best they have. Inculturation, in the view of the Zambian Prelate Milingo (1992: 181)is cultural cross

fertilisation in which different cultures enrich each other by merging or fusing, while preserving the characteristics which make up their identity. The emphasis, in this case, is on what binds rather than what separates people and culture. Masson(1978:721) describes inculturation as the insertion of the Christian message and of the church into a particular people. According to Shorter (1988:11), inculturation is the on-going dialogue between faith and culture. It happens almost automatically that slowly and unconsciously the old patterns of thinking about culture or cultures change. More fully, what is the creative and dynamic relationship between the Christian message and a culture or cultures. For Mashonganyika (2009:10) a senior cleric in Gweru Diocese, inculturation includes two dimensions, on the one hand, "the ultimate transformation of authentic cultural values through their integration in Christianity", and on the other hand, "the insertion of Christianity in the various human cultures." Fr Chapwanya (1993: 46) defined inculturation as "earthing the gospel or a different church or a different brand of morality, as some tend to propose". All it means is that the gospel takes flesh in different cultures.

When one talks of inculturation as observed in some of the above mentioned definitions, one is also talking about culture, which is central to Christian faith. Pope John Paul II maintains that, "a faith which does not become culture is a faith which has been received, not thoroughly thought through, not fully lived out" (Waliggo 1986:7). In short, there is a close link between faith and culture. Collins (1986:43) describes inculturation as:

> The integration of the Christian experience of the local Church into the culture of its people, in such a way that this experience not only express itself in elements of this culture, but becomes a force that animates, orients and innovates this culture so as to create a new unity and communion, not only within the culture in question, but also enrichment of the Church universally.

This Christian experience of the people can be summed up as their life experience, which includes the way they worship, marry, interact with one another, their general occupation, the way they rejoice when they have good fortune, such as a new birth and how they mourn when they have misfortunes such as bereavement in the family (Amadi, 2008:26).

In theological terms, Justin Upkong (1984:30) has eloquently described all that is entailed in the inculturation process. He says:

> It is the task of confronting the Christian faith enlightens, as African culture and the basic data ofrevelation contained in scriptures and tradition are critically re-examined for the purpose of giving them African cultural expression. Thus, there is integration of faith and culture, and from it is born a new theological reflection that is African Christianity. Thus, inculturation is not one-sided; it goes either way, picking out the common good and renovating both cultures involved.

Roderick R. Hewitt (2012: 17) in his book, *Church and Culture: An Anglo-Caribbean Experience of Hybridity and Contradiction* says:

> The process of inculturation constitutes the first step in communicating the gospel into the meaning system of the culture. Rooted in the concept of "inculturation" is the understanding that the gospel transforms a culture, and is also transformed by the culture in the way that the gospel is formulated and interpreted anew: this implies that inculturation is an ongoing phenomenon.

This definition is relevant to this study. For inculturation, deals with Christian experience of a local church into the people's culture (Crollius 1986), as the incarnation of Christian life and the Christian message in a particular cultural context. That is, there is need to have the Gospel rooted in the local culture through inculturation, contextually, which is in line with this study.

3.10.8.2 Papal Contributions to the Inculturation Debate.

In a letter to the All African Symposium in Uganda in 1969, Pope Paul VI (1969:16) had this to say:

> ...you may and you must have an African Christianity. Indeed: you possess the human values and characteristic form of culture... capable of a richness all of its own and genuinely African. You have the strength and grace necessary for this ... because you are Christians and you are Africans.

The Pontiff encouraged reformulation of African Christian theology space and scope indigenously, by critically examining and analyzing changes, and patterns of continuity in the Church's after-death rituals. Yet as with other principles derived from belief in life and after-life, and despite much eloquent lip service, there has been formidable resistance to any attempts to enflesh the faith in non-European cultural ways of being human and religious. Early Catholic missionaries had a hermeneutical approach which dismissed all African belief systems.   They condemned without proper evaluation African religious beliefs and practices, imposing Western cultural and religious traits. They demanded "not only a break with the traditional religious system (*kurova guva*) rituals, beer drinking, polygamy, ancestral veneration and traditional dancing, but also with anything deemed unchristian" (Bhebe 1973:46). It has become clear that African theology is usually taken to mean Christian thought that concerns itself fundamentally within the relationship of Christian Theology to African cultural beliefs, and that evinces a particular concern to relate to the scriptures and Christian tradition.

3.11 The Protestant Churches' Response to Post-death Rites

 It can be said without exaggeration that among Christian missionaries, the Catholics have been the most accommodating towards some traditional rituals. I do not intend to explain the attitudes and praxis of other churches, but merely indicate some trends. It should be pointed out that there are millions of Africans in the so-called mainline churches for whom their traditional religion is still a living reality. Although this study is specifically on the Catholic Church's response to post-death rituals in Musami, it is also important to see the influence of ecumenism, since Catholics interact with non-Catholics on a daily basis. There is no way inculturation could take place in the Catholic Church without affecting other churches, for all locals need to put their heads together. Evangelisation should not be seen in isolation, but as intimately related to culture, requiring dialogue and showing vital links with all concerned to increase mutual understanding and develop more effective ecumenical witness and action at the local, national and international levels. This helps to foster closer unity through joint action and service in faith and to encourage reunion in the

whole Christian community, since Catholics do not live in a vacuum. Catholics should deepen their sense of belonging that shows no regard for colour, or race,

3.11.1 Some Historic Churches' Response to Post-death Rites

Protestant churches have struggled in their attempts to Christianise the local culture and religious concepts of the Shona people; thus this has remained an uncompleted task. Among the pressing issues are ancestor veneration, brewing and drinking traditional beer and other issues. After initial wholesale condemnation of Zimbabwean indigenous culture, most denominations began to see the value of some practices such as paying lobola. Protestant churches in Zimbabwe such as the United Methodist Church (UMC), Methodist Church in Zimbabwe (MCZ), the Salvation Army, the Anglican Communion, the Church of Central Africa (Presbyterian) (CCAP), the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ), the Reformed Church in Zimbabwe (RCZ) formerly known as the Dutch Reformed Church and the Lutheran Church have to come to terms with some of the indigenous post-death rituals. It should be mentioned that responses by non-Catholic churches do affect Catholics' response to inculturation.

Daneel (1971: 264), confirms that the Reformed Church of Zimbabwe has constantly rejected all ancestral rites including all post-burial procedures such as *manyaradzo* (memorial service) and *kurova guva*. Wezhira (2012) suggested that the Reformed Church abolished *manyaradzo*, ceremonies in their Church which aimed at the adaptation of traditional post-burial procedures, as soon as it became apparent that the ruralist members were turning it into a glorified *magadziro* ritual. Other historic churches like the CCAP and the UCCZ concur with the RCZ. Yet, although members pretend not to participate in traditional ceremonies during the day, some do in private. They may not attend the ritualistic function, but in most cases they finance cultural functions.

3.11.2 The Anglican Communion's Response to Post-Death Rites

This section will deal with the Anglican Communion. An Anglican contribution to the theme was to argue against the continuation of the *kurova guva* ceremony among Anglican Christians, since Canon Magava (1973:151) charged that the motive behind the ceremony was that of fear, and a belief that the spirits of the dead would have acquired great powers which they did not possess during their lives. The Anglican Commission on Idolatry and Evangelism recommended the practice of having Holy Communion or *Requiem* Mass celebrated on the first anniversary of the deceased, a practice which is rapidly gaining acceptance among the Anglican Communion (Magava, 1973: 155).

The Commission rejected the proposal for celebrating *kurova guva*, leaving Anglicans once more to look for their own solutions. According to Rev Dzavo (2012), the Anglican Communion had inherited traditional denominational theologies, with theological relics with little to do with the realities of today. A survey undertaken by the Anglican Communion relating to the participation of their members in the *kurova guva* rites elicited a variety of answers which ranged from total rejection to offering a substitute, which either does not accommodate the social needs of African members, or did so only very minimally (Bertram, 1992: 35). Anglicans in Musami still are not sure as to what to follow; some practice both the Christian rite and the traditional rite.

3.11.3 The Methodists' Response to Post-death Rites

A more permissive attitude seems to have existed in the United Methodist Church. M.W. Murphree (1969: 64) in his case study among the Budja in Mutoko noted that, belief in tribal spirits *(mhondoro)*, and the family (*midzimu*) spirits was unacceptable to the Methodists. But for the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, ATR and Christianity are complementary; hence this Wesleyan formation argues that a mutually respectful and

symbiotic relationship between culture and faith should be encouraged, supported and developed (Murphree, 1969:65). But according to Murphree's observation, traditional rites are performed in addition to those of the Methodist and of the Catholic Church. As a result a good number of *Mahwisiri* as they are sometimes called, pray and practice indigenous rituals, the Musami Methodists in this respect are like the Musami Catholics. Methodist Church in Zimbabwe clergy are buried at their homesteads, probably to enable traditional rituals to take place. The Rev Juru died, and was buried in Musami, where some of the clergy attended his *kurova guva* ceremony, Mbuya Chanakira (2011) revealed.

At a Ministers' retreat in Gweru, Rev Levee Kadenge presented a paper on *kurova guva* and its impact on Christianity. Many questions were raised by the participants, confirmed Zwana (2002: 11). It came out clearly that a considerable number of church-members had not been able to completely, if at all, break away from this practice. It was noted that some church members were performing the ritual secretly or under the guise of a Christian ritual such as the *nyaradzo* (Service of Remembrance or Tombstone Unveiling). The subject of celebrating post-death rituals took centre stage. A Bishop of the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe, Rev F.J Chirisa (2012) then asked the participants, "What is our way forward? Don't we need to develop a theological position?"All participants felt challenged, but procrastinated. Some participants carried out research on the subject and presented their draft of intention to the Literature Committee. That saw the beginning of a process which was subject to interruptions by other researches which were deemed more urgent.

3.11.4 Pentecostal Churches' Response towards Post-Death Rites

Verstraelen (1998) refers to Pentecostals as a recent phenomenon and a special brand of Christianity, largely from the fundamentalist stream of the church of American origin, reflecting views espoused by the Religious Right on the United States of America. They are often against other Christians who have a strong social conscience, or those who are politically minded. Their attitude seems to pay scant attention to the issue of justice and

they underscore the unbridled rapacity currently in vogue. Wealth acquired for purely selfish motives seem to become a god-Given blessing; prosperity is the name of the game. Mainly the congregants are young ones, the middle-age and a good number of professions, who have left some of the mainline churches for one reason or the other. Verstraelen's assessment of Pentecostalism, however, tends to be extreme, as some Pentecostals have sought to address socio-political issues in Zimbabwe.

Another brand of Christianity worth mentioning are the New Religious Movements *(*Verstraelen1998:15), in other circles they are called New Movements. They have mushroomed in Zimbabwe since 1982, and have been imported from abroad with a pre-packaged mission and message (Gifford, 1990:28). These are a vibrant from Christianity, evangelical in their drive to seek the spread of Christianity, and Pentecostal in their role according to the Holy Spirit, and preach radical conversion. Yet their often lively Pentecostal type of worship together with their "gospel of prosperity," attracts a good number of young people who people who feel insecure in the context of socio-economic and cultural changes; during gospel-of-prosperity sermons, congregants are cleverly asked to hand over the little they have in order to receive in abundance, eyes to everyday opportunities and the taking of advantage (Verstraelen, 1998: 9). Unfortunately, one cannot preach prosperity, but teach it.   Some believe that God wants his children to eat the best; he wants them to have the best of everything. Thus, if one is poor one has little or no faith. With radical *metanoia* (conversion), the old passes away, thus local culture, should be no longer be entertained for it represents the state before salvation and redemption. One of the distinguishing features of new movements is the demonisation of traditional religion.   Like some Protestants, they see traditional religion as an opponent to be vanquished as did early pietistic missionaries. Any reference to the need of Christianity to have an African face is viewed with suspicion. Based on radical Biblicism, Zimbabwean Pentecostal churches, sometimes called the Born–Again Christians have little time for the local culture, and concentrates on fundamentalistic Pentecostal Fellowship. Pentecostalism in Musami has preached openly against the Catholic stance of entertaining the traditional post-death rituals. They denounce the *kurova guva* ceremonies left, right and centre, for

them, such rituals are motivated by fear which only arises if the ceremony is omitted. For Pentecostal churches, the *kurova guva* contains superstitions with regard to the power of the ancestors, which limit the power of God as seen by Christian faith.

While these New Religious Movements such as the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa (ZAOGA), the Apostolic Faith Mission (AFM), the Family of God (FOG), the United Family International Church (UFIC) and the Pentecostal Assemblies play a role in transforming "personal lives", they do not challenge the ills of African societies. What they offer are mainly personal and often illusory solutions, leaving the real questions which face the indigenous person unanswered, for they offer nicely produced and inexpensive Bible tracts and leaflets which attract pastors from African Initiated Churches (AIC) and mainline churches. Some denominations have produced cultural mercenaries, half-baked Christians for no church life can fully grow from a foreign soil and foreign air. Many things have changed, with Christianity in Africa, and African voices claiming the central stage; theological conflicts have found vigorous discussion. It is evident that many "established' Christian churches, evangelists, AIC and others apparently stress their own denominational identity rather than being challenged to find a common Christian identity. Pentecostal churches go to the extent of dismissing African culture as sin, evil, and bigotry.

3.11.5 Indigenous Churches' Response towards Post-Death Rites

The abbreviation "AIC" stands for African Instituted/ Initiated/ Independent/ Indigenous Churches. AICs are founded in Africa by Africans, and primarily for Africans to worship in African ways to meet African International Churches that provided to meet African needs as after themselves feel (Turner 1979:10).

According to Bourdillon (1990:273), there is no consensus as to which of the above is most appropriate, since some of AIC shave seceded from white mission–controlled churches,

chiefly on racial grounds or local grounds seceded from nowhere, which are self–extending, self-supporting and self-governing; and have tried to bring the church down to people in contrast to established "Christian formations" which are conservative. Daneel (1971) considers their growth as having its basis in a willingness to seriously engage with the traditional worldview, in comparison to historical churches whose theologies are in his view carbon-copies of the theologies of their mother churches in Rome (Catholics), England (Anglicans), German (Lutheran),United States of America (United Methodist) and many other overseas states. AICs are sometimes referred to as New Religious Movements (NRM), but Verstraelen (1998) rejects the term here, for they hardly qualify for the epithet "new", since some of them were already gaining momentum in many African countries from about 1870 to 1917,with some Shona migrant labourers in South Africa becoming pioneers of Zionism.

The term "AIC", does not refer to a single theological tradition, but rather to a group of denominations, characterised by a variety of theological views, teachings, ways of worship and historical background. The theology of some of these churches is generally determined by their origin, that is, if they were Methodist, one would witness a Methodist spirituality. A case in point, is Guta RaJehovah (GRJ)'s Mai Chaza, a former Methodist Church in Zimbabwe member, whose theology is best known as an applied theology which attempts to respond to African realities and problems (disease, barrenness) as observed by Chipwere (2012). AIC practitioners are ordinary members of the congregation whose theology is not written, but enacted form of worship expressed in actions and symbols such as milk, water, cooking oil and some small stones (*miteuro*), used in worship and healing activities.

Some people, such as politicians, argue that AIC, are a symbol of African religious boldness, and novel theological creativity, a step toward the construction of an authentic black religion for the Africans of the 20th century. However, conversion is interpreted to mean a radical break away with the past, thus rejecting the African past (Chitando 2006:115). There are however, differences among the individual Independent churches. In the area researched by Daneel (1984: 58)in the Chigombe Chiefdom in Gutu District, the Zionists of

Mutendi and Masuka (later called *Ndaza* Zionists) were officially against ancestors "worship" for the word *mudzimu* has a negative connotation and is occasionally identified with Satan; but most believers however have a more benevolent attitude towards the *midzimu.*

The situation is complex in the locally formed churches whose strength lies in their rejection of certain traditional religious practices. However, there are differences among AIC Christian brands. Daneel (1984: 55) confirms that the Zionist Mutendi was officially against ancestor worship. Unofficially ,the members would adopt another attitude.

Generally speaking, the AICs'strength lies in their rejection of certain traditional religious practices, According to Daneel (1984), their attacks on traditional practices, come from an inner conviction based on personal experience, whereas rejection of their practices by mission controlled conservative churches come from "outsiders who do it on some doctrinal grounds and sometimes depreciatingly." AICs such as Vapostori vekwaMarange, Vadzidzi vekwaWimbo (now vekwa Juwa) Johane Masowe Chishanu, Wenguwo Tsvuku, Mughodhi, Guta raMwari, Guta RaJehovah (the list is endless) argue that the church should concentrate more on helping people spiritually, rather than devoting most of its time to inherited traditional dogmatic and doctrinal denominational cultures. They argue that the Church has to find a creative way of dealing with what is traditionally authentically African on the basis of human rights. Those churches who read the Bible such as the followers of Mwazha, Mai Chaza and Mugodhi, normally quote Ecclesiastes 9: 5–6 which they interpret to mean that no ceremony should be performed in respect of the dead. Those who do not read the bible but claim that they are led by the spirit, such as Johanne Masowe and Vapostori VekwaMarange view post-death rites as "rehearsals of funeral or redoing the funeral", as confirmed by *vadzidzi* (followers) Sponsiya, Zebhonejiya and Memoraji G (2012). *Mudzidzi* Spatineji P and *madzibaba* (male title for church member) Lawrence Katsiru agrees with *madzimai* (women title of a church member) Whispereji G (2013), "The number three is holy, so if one dies all post-death rituals should be done exactly three

weeks after burial following prescribed church rules and regulations". During their funerals slaughtering of animals is prohibited.

3.12 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the interaction between ATR and Christianity as background to the study. Several models where explained. It is important to note that the models are inclusive in nature: there is no need to commit oneself to any one model, to the exclusion of one or more of the others. On the other hand certain models can function more adequately within certain sets of circumstances. The move to understand theology as contextual is also a move to recognize the complexity of theological pluralism. With such an understanding of theology, the question of the best model of contextual theology is an appropriate one, but within today's world of radical and ambiguity, the best answer to the question can only be, "it depends on the context".   The above discussion has also illustrated the complexity of the debate on inculturation, especially in cases where the Christian gospel encounters a religious traditional world view like that of the Shona people.   Various attitudes from different churches have confirmed the constant need for adjustment so that a very innovative effort can be furnished with a sounder Christological grounding consistent with the demands of Christian orthodoxy. The post-death ritual debate in the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe has yielded some positive developments by advocating for pragmatic inculturation, where inculturation or contextualization takes direction from the application of several models such as accommodation, adaptation, indigenization and incarnation, helping other churches to respond and change their attitude towards the Catholic position. Contextualization was dealt with in general. Debate on contextualization has been purely academic. The following chapter will deal with contextualization specifically as witnessed at Musami Mission.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH'S RESPONSETO POST-DEATH RITES:

THE CASE OF MUSAMI MISSION

4.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the Shona (Zezuru) traditional post-death rituals have been dealt with and types of contextualization were described as to give a background to this study. This chapter seeks to discuss the relevance and significance of St Paul's Mission Musami to this study. It will explore situations and conditions that arose at the Mission since its inception up to the persecution of the seven missionaries, and how their spirits were laid to rest in accordance with indigenous post-death rituals. Contextualization cannot be universalized; this chapter focuses on a model found in data from Musami.

The chapter will be in-depth, discerning different levels of meaning and value relating to how the Shona traditional post-death rituals impacted the Missionaries' Memorial Service, bearing in mind that variations in ceremonial rites should be appreciated, for different Shona people do them differently. The researcher will analyse contours of meaning which have relationship directly or indirectly with the ritual mentioned above and explore the Catholic clergy's response.

4.1 An Overview of the Musami Mission

The Musami Mission is about seventy four kilometres (fifty miles) north-east of Harare, and is under the jurisdiction of Chief Mangwende in Mashonaland East Province. The Musami–Murewa community hosts the Zezuru people, who are one of the Shona ethnic groups as the majority. Through immigration, and cross-cultural marriages, expatriates (from Malawi,

Zambia and Mozambique) are also resident in this community. Other ethnic groups are minority residents in Murewa-Musami, such as the Mabudja, Maungwe, MaKorekore and AManyika.

The mission is located in the centre with potential turn-out from villages in the surrounding environment which include Beta, Cassino, Chanetsa, Chemhondoro, Chidhau, Chikohore, Chikupo, Chikwaka, Chivhinge, Gezi, Gosha, Govo, Guvheya, Maponga, Kadenge, KwaRota, Mabika, Manomano, Matinhe, Mhembere, Mukanhanga, Murenge, Mwanza, Nzungu, Nyahungwe, Pfende, Darangwa, Shangure, Zhakata and Zvomuya (see Appendix 3– Page 253). The above villages constitute several outstations and preaching points and hosting several primary and secondary schools, which are served by Dominican sisters and Jesuits missionaries. At the time of writing, the local sisters, the Little Children of the Blessed Lady (LCBL) are serving Musami Mission together with the Jesuits.

4.2 Local Vocations and Soccer legends

On the 16th of April, 1950 at St Paul's Musami Mission, His Lordship Francis Markall SJ ordained three African seminarians to become sub-deacons and three received minor orders as acolytes during an open air mass on a large cement-covered platform. This was followed by erection of buildings such as a hospital wing, the boys' lavatory, and additional sleeping quarters for the boys. Foundations were laid for new brick classrooms in outstations, preaching points and teaching points, supervised by Fr Davis SJ who was the superior (Dachs and Rea, 1979:218). The building of the famous St Paul's Musami Mission Soccer Stadium was in 1955, through the help and influence of Chief Mangwende, many bricks were made by locals on the banks of Shavanhowe and Nyaguwe rivers. Felix Mbidzo (2013) narrates how the Musami mission stadium was constructed, and about the formation of the Musami soccer team. It is important to acknowledge that St Pauls Musami Mission was also known for extra curriculum activities such as soccer, that's why, soccer legends are part of this study. The team was founded in 1952, and was promoted to the

Second Division from 1960 to 1964. Felix Mbidzo was the captain who represented Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) in Mauritius. The team coach was Fr Davis SJ. It is worth mentioning some of the St Paul's Musami soccer legends who helped in the lifting of the BAT trophy: Felix Mbidzo of Musami village, Fredrick Mukozhiwa, James Hombe, Vitalis Kanonda, John Dube, Louis Karonga, Paul Tsumbe, James Nxumalo, Jawett Nechironga, John Madondo, Austin Nyazika, George Shayanewako, Able Chinyani of Chidembo village, Roy Cook (the only white player in the team) and Francis Chitemererere of Gonzo village who later built the Musami memorial shrine which will be dealt with in later.

4.3 Church Affairs and Liturgy

According to Dachs and Rea (1979), on June 10, 1961, church affairs and liturgy were put on the table. Fr Francis Markall SJ, Archbishop of Salisbury (now Harare), suggested that liturgical issues be dealt according to the norms and forms of the Catholic Communion throughout the world. "The porch of the Church is most uninteresting", asserted the prelate. The Salisbury (now Harare) Vicariate noticed in regard to the laws of fasting and many more, that they were quite out of date and that they needed to be replaced by the then current Notice. Lists of the contributions at various missions and parishes towards the Pontifical Mission Aid Societies were observed by another Notice. St Paul's Musami Mission collected £1.10 for the October for the Pontifical Association of the Propagation of the Faith. No records from other stations were recorded. It reflected the urgent need for greater exhortation to the people about their obligations in the matter of support of the Church.

Dachs and Rea (1979) revealed that singing and saying prayers in the Church had greatly improved. It was suggested that the gospel of the Mass could be read in the vernacular, wherever it was thought opportune to do so during the week at Low Mass. It must be noted that the singing of the proper mass at Musami, the *MissaCantata* or *MissaSolemnis* was of obligation, and was never to be omitted (SRC 3994). "The Instruction of the Sacred

Congregation of Rites on Sacred Music and Liturgy" was to be followed as ordered by Bishop Markall SJ. By then, Musami was a Vicariate Apostolic, which differs from a prefecture in that it is ruled by a bishop, but is not yet considered sufficiently established for a territorial diocese to be set up.

In 1964,Fr McCabe SJ joined Musami Secondary School, and the first Cambridge School Certificate was introduced. Meanwhile, the Second Vatican Council was being held. In April 1967, history was made at the National Sports of the Africans, when St Paul's Musami School lifted up prestigious British American Tobacco (BAT) Cup.   At last the 1955 Musami Soccer Stadium construction saw the first fruits of their hard labour. Two years later, the mission witnessed a canonical visitation from Bishop Francis Markall SJ. The following year, a canonical visitation of the Dominican Sisters convent in terms of Canon 512, paragraph 2, showed that all was inorder, with regard to the care of the Blessed Sacrament, Sacred Vessels and Vestments. During the same period, the reception of postulants and novices of the St Peter's Claver community took place. However, the Diocesan Brothers Congregation was discontinued (Dachs and Rea 1979:228).

For about five decades, Musami Mission was under the control of the Jesuits and also Dominicans (Order of Preachers) who have since left the mission. The local diocesan sisters–Little Children of the Blessed Lady (LCBL) are running the mission together, with the Jesuits who are still in control of the mission. These religious communities drew their attitudes toward the Church from the period before the Second Vatican Council (1962 - 1965), and regarded liturgical adaptation of the Mass as an unnecessary and unsettling innovation, for the task of the priest was to administer the sacrament to catechise, and raise Catholic communities by visiting the sick and taking care of the needy. Priests assumed a new range of activity with the zeal of a novice; pastoral work included being school masters and farm managers and they accepted the new roles with vigour and determination which was almost incredible.

4.3.1 The Church and Traditional Beliefs

In their preaching and teaching centres, the Jesuits had two particular characteristics which strongly influenced their missionary endeavour. Firstly, the sacramental character of the church, and the clear formulae and rites for administering the sacraments, which meant that in their adaptation to the African customs and rituals they would not dilute Christian rites, or entertain an attempt at "heathen practices" such as respect of ancestors and belief in the power of ancestral spirits which were central to the Shona Religion. It should be clearly stated that the missionaries systematically isolated converts from their culture by instituting Christian schools, Christian villages, compounds and hospitals (Snook 1982:52). Jesuits and other missionaries launched determined attacks on traditional beliefs associated with death and after-death, thus all converts were buried at the Church cemetery, for the clergy to check that no traditional post-death rituals were to be performed, since mission cemeteries were guarded by mission security guards.

Rituals to honour the dead or the living-dead were banned, and those who violated the rulings were expelled or censured. The Catholic mentors feared that all their efforts to completely transform the indigenous converts would be in vain, if some of the traditional rites persisted. Consequently, they consistently underplayed the indigenous religion for they believed that Western European civilisation was superior and better. Prohibition of traditional rituals did not destroy ceremonies or Christian attendance at all. Without "crucifying" the missionaries with the wisdom of hindsight, it may be noted that their interaction with the indigenous people was quite trying. Cutting across denominational divisions was a conviction of the superiority of Christianity and European culture (Chitando 2000:16).

Later, missionaries came to recognise that Christian burial rites were incomplete, and inadequate in the view of the local converts. The shortfall was mitigated by the ordination of the indigenous clergy, who brought new light to the understanding of the ceremonies

themselves. Dachs and Rea (1979: 225) highlighted that African priests claimed that the custom of respecting the dead was out of social respect for the ancestors, rather than an act of religious worship of them as distinct deities. However, the locals, persisting in their culture would modify and almost disguise concepts with traditional functions using a Christian coating; terms such as *bigidhina* (big dinner), *bhavhadheyi* (feast in honour of a saint or birthday feast) were used (Dachs and Rea 1979: 9), which forced the "cultural mercenaries" to examine closely and sought to reconcile African beliefs and needs with Christian faith. Some Catholics developed compromised rituals which were held publicly, camouflaged by new rites, called *kuita munhu musande* (to make a person a saint) depending on the area (Gundani 1998: 204). With the pressures of African nationalism, the lapse of many Christians from church services, and the demands brought in a revived call for the adoption or recognition of some locals' belief system. For example, Fr Kumbirai (1966)broke the silence by looking at and understanding the Catholic faith with an African eye. He admonished and encouraged the local converts not to disavow their humanity as Africans or their cultures.

> In Africa we have to face the problem of either building a liturgy from the ground or, of transplanting a European liturgical structure, and then we start chopping off, adding and patching up, until we end up with something neither African nor European (Drienfortein Mission, Archives 1966).

4.3.2 The Local Clergy and Church Affairs

As the leadership and personnel of the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe became increasingly indigenous, a lot of changes took place, for there was a need to adjust to ritual customs and habits, in order to make the church more appreciably African than Western European. Greater adaptation was permitted by the reformed attitudes of the Second Vatican Council, and certainly pressures for change were great locally. Shona customs associated with respect for the ancestors and ancestor veneration, or at least the belief and acknowledgement of ancestral intervention in human affairs, continued to be a common practice among Africans. These persisted alongside Christian practices and rites (Amanze 1998:10). The missionary became more and more aware that he/she had not moved into a

religious vacuum, and that practices of the African people rather than replace them, so he/she came to recognise the need for immediate adjustment of Christian practices in African social life.

In the 1970s some local clergymen at Musami, Frs Mavhudzi and Mapfumo, tried to discard the indigenous rituals by forming groups of *vabvuwi* (fishers of men) who were totally against brewing and drinking beer, smoking and followed Western Christian values (Missionary Magazine October 1972:62). Unfortunately, the *vabvuwi* were short lived, since a lot of its members would rather follow the majority who believed in "baptising" local indigenous rituals. Recognising the need for adaptation, the prelates set up a commission headed by the Jesuit Rector of Chishawasha Seminary to enquire into the sociological function of the *kurova guva*, the theology behind it and the liturgy of Christian burial as practiced at that time. The commission consulted priests and nuns, and found a division of opinion as confirmed by Fr Kinnane SJ (Dachs and Rea 1979:239). Half of the African priests consulted considered *kurova guva* to be so bad intrinsically that no adaptation was possible. This confusion went on for some time, leaving a divided African Christian community.

The Bishop left the decision in the hands of mission superiors. Perhaps, what aggravated an already irritating sore was the perpetuation of foreign tools at the expense of the local context, an attitude which was still held by some African Christian leaders as well as the locals, sometimes even more zealously than the missionaries themselves. For some local clergy, the Gospel did not destroy good cultural traits, but negative cultural traits. While it is true that everything in the African culture may be useful for the purpose of adaptation, some elements had to be purified, while others had to be totally rejected.

4.3.3 The Church in Transition

Doing away with ancestral beliefs was viewed as secondary civilisation, for local cultures had been more or less submerged under expanding missionaries and colonial powers from elsewhere. In Musami local cultures were largely destroyed, supplanted or isolated. Sometimes local cultures were overlaid and dominated by the invaders without being wholly destroyed in the process. Some missionaries were plagued with religious prejudice according to Masarirambi (2011), a retired teacher at St Paul's Musami Primary School. Masarirambi wanted to see African rites practiced in the Church; professionally, he had influence and respect from the community.

For the next few years, from 1975 or thereabouts, foreign priests diligently practiced and learnt the local language and culture, until they became fluent and were able to travel extensively among the locals, instructing baptising, preaching, and building churches and mission houses.

The Musami mission's pastoral area extended over several square kilometres, with much of communal interdependence, which has the respect of ancestral wisdom as part of their beliefs (see Appendix). The missionaries were determined to lure the local people, "to break away" with what they called paganism and embrace new life in the new world. Canaan Sodindo Banana (1988:3)argues that Anglicans, Catholics and Methodists in the colonial period were not sensitive to African spiritual needs and realities. Additionally, undercurrents of cultural, linguistic and class diversity precipitated an "oil and water" relationship between the locals and the visitors. This prompted Christian converts to establish an identity that appeared to have one leg in tradition and the other in modern Christian values. This persisted for some time up to when the second Chimurenga liberation war intensified.

4.4 The Assassination of the St Paul's Musami Missionaries

This section is the core area of this study; the researcher will discuss the events in great detail and pay close and critical attention to events as they developed. This section is highly significant for this study for it will enable the researcher to debate on the response of Catholic clergy to inculturation in Zimbabwe.

According to Sr Dominica Siegel OP (1997: 17), the first rumblings of war and violence were again heard in the hills surrounding Musami in 1976. On Saturday morning, 6 June 1976, the day before the new Mission was to be consecrated; a voice from "heaven" in the form of a megaphone from a military plane was heard. It announced to all people around the Mission that a curfew had been declared. Anyone seen beyond a radius of fifty metres outside their residence, house or hut between 6 pm and 6 am, could expect to be shot by the security forces. Occasionally, the exchange of fire could be heard from the hills. Sr Siegel reported that road blocks were mounted by the Rhodesian army, checking the movements of the people in the area and the loads carried in the back of the trucks by the missionaries. In their Annual Report at the end of December 1976 the Dominican nuns still described their relationship with the local population as "friendly and cordial" (Ida Tomasi, 2000: 212). According to Tomasi (2000) the missionaries of Musami lived consciously with the possibility of a violent death. Each had her own individual reaction to this eventuality.

4.4.1 The Woeful Evening at Musami

According to Tomasi (2000: 220), the five Dominican Sisters had shared the Sunday dinner with the Jesuits; each one had enjoyed it in his/ her own way. Around 19:45 hours the three young Sisters; Ceslaus, Joseph and Magdalahad remained behind to watch television together with Chris and Conway. The old woman Anna and little Epiphany were off to the convent for an early turn in.

Fr Myerscough had bid good night to everyone and retired to his room, according to Ted Rodgers (1996). Fr Martin was already busy correcting piles of exercise books. Br Dennis Adamson SJ was away visiting a teacher that night. Harold-Barry (2000: 15) maintained that Myerscough was reading quietly in his room, when Sr Magdala tapped on his door telling him that he was wanted outside. Myerscough opened the door and found a gun pointed at him. As Fr Myerscough came out, Harold-Barry (2000) continues, he saw Magdala and Martin Thomas. The missionaries were forced along the access road through the mission and down past the fish pond. Harold-Barry stated that on approaching the Dominican convent, they saw armed men there, and were gathering the sisters; Magdala, Epiphany, Joseph and Ceslaus. The older Sister, Anna was left behind for she pleaded she was old and infirm: So the eight religious were led to the road, where they were lined up in silence along the hedge bordering the road. They remained quietly, composed and calm, while the armed men argued among themselves in the local language.

Fr Myerscough, who had just arrived a few years ago, was the only one who did not understand the language. Fr Shepherd-Smith recognized the danger of the moment, and the seriousness of the situation, and begged Fr Myerscough to give them all General Absolution. The latter responded and made a big sign of the cross. Fr Thomas at the request of Fr Myerscough gave the latter the General Absolution. According to Srs Elizabeth Hafeneger OP and Consillia Renner OP (1999), with a hail of bullets the group of Sisters and Priests was mowed down. Fr Myerscough fell to the ground, without have been hit by a bullet. The bodies of Sr Joseph, Sr Magdala, and Fr Martin had fallen over him, thus preventing him from being hit. Sr Ferrera Weinzierl OP (2014) insisted that the tall ones were hit on the chest and the short ones on the head. During the same night two villagers five kilometers north of the Mission were also killed (Siegel, 1997: 18). Later, Fr Myerscough was able to recount the violent event in all its terrible details (Tomasi, 2000: 221). One hundred and ten bullets were used to kill the seven missionaries.

According to the 1983 Jesuit Provincial, Fr Wardale SJ, former Dominican Regional Superior Sr Ferrera Weinzierl OP (2014) and Sr Dominica Siegel (1997), a dark cloud befell St Paul's Musami Mission on the 6th of February, 1977, when seven missionaries were killed during the Second Chimurenga liberation war. The deceased were two English Jesuits, namelyFrs Christopher Shepherd-Smith (1943-1977), the youngest aged 34, Martin Thomas (1932-1977) aged 45 and Irish Brother John Conway (1920-1977) aged 57, together with three German Dominican Sisters, namely, Epiphany Schneider (1903-1977) aged 73, who was Teacher Training Tutor, Ceslaus Stiegler (1916-1977), aged 60,who was a Mathematics lecturer, Teacher Training Supervisor Magdala Lewandowski(1933-1977) aged 43,and the English Sister Maria Joseph Wilkinson (1922-1977) aged 55, a medical practitioner. Survivors were Sr Anna Reggel OP, Br Dennis Adamson SJ and Fr Dunstun Myerscough SJ. All the deceased were buried at Chishawasha Mission Cemetery a few days later (See Appendix 5 – Page 255 and 258 for the names of the deceased).

Sr Ferrera Weinzierl (2014) outlined the events at St Paul's, Musami as follows.

Sunday 06 February 1977   : The Fatal Evening

Monday 07 February 1977   : Bodies taken to the morgue in Salisbury (now Harare).

Tuesday 08 February 1977 : Two days after the incident, Pope Paul VI named the seven murdered missionaries "Martyrs of Peace and Charity"

Wednesday

09 February 1977   : The seven biers were laid out on the day prior to their funeral for body viewing.

Thursday 10 February 1977: Mass of the Resurrection.

On Thursday 10 February 1977, thousands of people gathered in the grounds of the Dominican Convent, 4th Street, Harare, and among them were Elizabeth and Cecilia, Martin's

sister and niece (Harold-Barry, 2000: 17). In front of the altar were seven open coffins, and there were the dead, Martin and Christopher in their vestments, the nuns in their habits, and Br John Conway in the familiar shirt in which he worked. They were laid to rest peacefully. In Martin's hand was his father's rosary. According to Harold-Barry (2000: 17), the Mass of the Resurrection was celebrated by Archbishop Chakaipa with eight bishops, and one hundred and twenty priests, and forty-two pall bearers. The choir of Musami sung their voices full of emotion; the drums were throbbing and the people of Musami wept. The sermon was preached by the most senior local priest, Fr Isidore Chikore. After the requiem, Hafeneger and Renner (1999: 2) reported that the funeral cortege moved to the Chishawasha Mission Cemetery (25 km to the east of Harare). The missionaries lay side by side in the cemetery at Chishawasha.

Who was responsible for this atrocious blood bath, asks Srs Hafeneger and Renner (1999: 2)? The white regime accused the terrorists; for to them, in this cruel deed they showed their true faces as atheistic communists. The leader of the guerillas accused the white regime of the murder of the missionaries, in order to show the entire world their battle against the godless communism. For the seven missionaries, however, their death was a risk which they consciously chose in faithfulness to their calling, and to him who had called them, the good shepherd, who also gave his life for his friends.

According to Shereni (2011), all activities at the mission were suspended, for there was need to go back to the drawing board, so as to resume missionary work or stop completely. A lot of administrative issues were to be tackled. Owing to logistical issues the Musami community were denied permission to bury their "people", to the extent that even the deceased's bodies did not come to the mission, and only a few laity went for the funeral to Chishawasha mission, for the atmosphere was very tense at St Paul's Mission at Musami. The Musami community was still in shock, for such a thing had never happened in their area, revealed Masarirambi (2011). The Musami Christians felt cheated, for they wanted a fitting send-off for their beloved brothers and sisters.

4.5 Reburial Changes after Independence

The independence era in 1980 brought about changes, and a general movement towards the re-burial of some heroes and heroines who were buried outside Zimbabwe. Josiah Magama Tongogara, who died on the 25th of December 1979 in a car accident in Mozambique, Herbert Chitepo, who died in Zambia, Jason Ziyapapa Moyo, who also died in Zambia through a letter bomb in 1977, and Leopold Takawira who was exhumed, were reburied at the National Heroes Acre after Independence. One can see the dynamics and factors that prompted and generated the process that finally resulted in the building of the St Paul's Memorial Shrine at Musami.

4.6 St Paul's Mission Memorial Shrine

In an effort to re-express the Christian message in African idioms, and with conceptual tools which have been reviewed already in previous chapters, contextual models and expressions such as adaptation, incarnation, indigenization, accommodation and inculturation have been employed to contextualize African theological discourse, though most of the expressions have been used interchangeably.

According to the St Paul's Mission Superior Fr Johnson SJ, an opportune time came six years later after the assassination of the seven missionaries. On February 6, 1983, a new memorial site in remembrance of the religious men and women, who were killed during the liberation war of 1977, was built. Several thoughts were brought forward, as to what design would be appropriate for such an event. It seemed obvious, that the normal type of Western war memorial design would be meaningless in this regard. Mr Francis Chitemererere was the architect who designed a traditional Shona hut, for the idea of the round hut came to mind while trying to think of the religious significance locally.

According to Chris Gororo (2011), Francis Chitemererere was a well-known builder and catechist, whom the missionaries and the locals had trust in. He ran a family building construction company with his brothers –Toddy Chitemererere, Fradrack Chitemererere, Sylvester Gororo, Barnabas Gororo and Anthony Manomano – who built the St Paul's memorial hut (See Appendix 5 – Page 256). He came from Gonzo Kraal under Headman Chitopi of Mukakanhanga village. He was also instrumental in the building of the St Paul's Mission Stadium at Musami. A number of the faithful were asked for their views on what the memorial shrine would look like. For the Musami community, the time had come to mourn and confer their gratitude on the murdered missionaries. Shereni (2011) and Chiwashira (2011) applauded the missionaries for leaving the entire project to the locals. The ritual integration of the deceased spirit into the family the *kurova guva* was viewed as one of the biggest doctrinal problems in the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe as, observed by Gundani (1998: 198). The local Christians argued that the spirits of the murdered missionaries were in transitional and uncertain states (a black state), not fit to be associated with until such time a ritual of settling the "blackness" was carried out. So the local Christians were in agreement to settle the blackness through building of a Shona hut (see Appendix 5 – Page 257). Chiwashira, Tseriwa and Nyamauya were asked to look into the symbolic meaning of the Shona hut (Johnson 1983: 2).

4.6.1 The Symbolic Significance of the Memorial Shrine Hut

Eliade in *The Sacred and Profane* (1959) confirms that sacred places are places which are sanctified, and which are believed to be of religious and historical significance. According to Eliade, every religious tradition has sacred places which have religious significance to their adherents. Such consecrated places are important for conducting rituals. Like other religions, Shona traditional religion, also makes a clear distinction between the sacred and profane. For instance, the traditional Shona kitchen hut is regarded as sacred since;

- The Shona usually communicate with the ancestors in the traditional kitchen (Chishimba 2011).

- The *Huva/Chikuva* constitutes the most sacred part of the hut and it is in the hut which receives a corpse prior to burial (Chanakira and Govo 2011)

- It is in the hut that most rituals take place, such as marriage ceremonies or counseling sessions (Shereni and Gonzo 2011).

- It is in here, that all dancing of *kurovaguva* is conducted and the pots of beer (*makate)* are brought and kept (Jani and Kaseke 2011).

- It is in the hut, where corpses lie in state before burial, although this has now taken on a new shift, for some huts are too small to accommodate corpse and mourners. Nowadays alternative arrangements are made; thus, the sitting room of the main house may be used (Mashonganyika 2011).

- Not all corpses which lie in the hut are placed at the *chikuva/huva,* but only that of the father and mother of the house; children and others are housed in the hut but not at the *chikuva/huva.* Gathering around something implies forming a circle, which signifies holiness or completeness. One only needs to look at the circular shape of the traditional African huts and the concentric villages (Zwana 2000:4).

- Congregating for religious purposes such as ceremonial singing, playing drums, and dancing celebrating in joy and in the spirit of victory, singing ancestral songs and sometimes the conduction of erotic dances all take place inside the hut or outside, but near the hut (Chikupo and Tsuro 2011).

- It is in the hut, that several rituals or ceremonial acts are performed as a group or individually(Chiwashira, Tseriwa and Nyamauya 2011).

Rural newlyweds, when they want to build a *musha* (home), start building the hut/kitchen, although now some people are mono-citizens, and some are no longer interested in having a second home (*kumusha*), affirmed Chiwara (2011).

Within all societies there are certain rituals or ceremonial patterns by which values are collectively expressed and affirmed. These ritual procedures serve to create, strengthen and transmit the sentiments necessary to the community's way of life at a particular place, such as mosques for Muslims, synagogues for Jews, churches for some Christians or any

other designated place for such ceremonies. Thus, the Musami people had a hut (kitchen) for such prescribed ceremonial activities.

This supports Eliade's notion that some natural features are not merely themselves, but have some religious significance. So the design according to Fr Superior and Parish Priest, Fr Nigel Johnson SJ (1983), was based on a half-kitchen hut. The ceremony for the sixth memorial anniversary was based on the *kurova guva*: the idea was that *kurova guva* brings the spirit of the deceased back home to protect the family at home, and that the spirit can also be prayed to as one of the ancestors from time to time. The veneration of ancestors stems from the belief, and acknowledgement of the intervention of the ancestors in human affairs, which continued to be a common practice among the Shonas/Zezurus in the Musami Murewa constituency. It is a ritual performed to revitalise nature, to celebrate new life or to absorb the pain of the dissolution of life.

4.7 St Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Service Liturgy

Traditional religion is a whole system and one cannot adapt one bit of it without affecting other dimensions of it. So, the whole memorial anniversary celebrations were done in accordance with the *kurova guva* ritual previously referred to. After the initial arrangements, the big event was to be conducted during the week ending 6th February 1983, commencing from 4th February and 5th February the same year (see Appendix 2 – Page 250 for the programme). All was arranged as follows, according to Fr Provincial Joe Hampson SJ, Fr Nigel Johnson SJ- superior of the mission, Masarirambi (2011) - Primary School Teacher, Mrs Shereni (2011) – Retired Secondary school bursar and some archival material from the Jesuits provincialate.

4.7.1 Day One (Friday 4ᵗʰ February, 1983)

According to Sr Ferrera Weinzierl OP (2014), Fr Wardale SJ, being the head of the Jesuits, and Mother General of the Dominican Sisters, Sr Hildegand Zahnbrecher OP, first went to Chishawasha Mission Cemetery to collect seven bags of soil from the seven graves in line with the Shona tradition. If someone gets buried away from home unavoidably this is made up for by bringing some of the soil from the grave home and burying it at the proper home. In this scenario, all seven murdered missionaries were resident at Musami Mission, but due to the intensity of the liberation war in the area, the deceased were buried at a "foreign" mission, that is, Chishawasha. As the local tradition dictated, the seven bags of the deceased missionaries' soils were brought to their home, Musami Mission. Seven holes were prepared for burial. These holes were then covered with brass plates, each with initials of the person whose grave soil the hole contained. In this case the initials were JC for Brother John Conway SJ, CSS for Fr Christopher Shepherd-Smith SJ and MT for Fr Martin Thomas SJ. For the nuns, ES was for Sr Epiphany Scheider OP, CS for Sr Ceslaus Stiegler OP,MJW for Maria Joseph Wilkinson OP, and finally ML for Sr Magdala Lewandowski OP (see Appendix 5– Page 260 and 262 for the brass plates).

At some stage, Fr Johnson SJ had to sprinkle the *mombe* (cow) to be slaughtered with holy water. This was done for convenience only, for according to the Zezuru tradition at least, the seven deceased missionaries were not related. In order to run the programme, one beast was killed and dedicated to the spirits of the deceased religious men and women. This was followed by dancing, singing, chanting and entertainment all night, with all outstations and the whole diocese invited. St Peter's Kubatana Marimba band and a Jerusarema dance group from Nyamutumbu (Murewa) entertained the guests.

4.7.2 Day Two (Saturday 5ᵗʰ February, 1983)

Saturday, 5ᵗʰ February 1983, after supper all Jesuits and Dominicans present assembled in the Society of Jesus' common room to bless the meat (of the slaughtered beast) and beer.

Beer was brewed by local Catholic women, as would be done during the *kurova guva* ceremony. Besides the local *Chibuku* or seven days beer, exotic beer found a place in the common room fridges, for those who could not drink the indigenous beer, owing to differences in environmental and cultural situations.

People of different cultures (in this case, the English and German missionaries) together with the indigenous community from different backgrounds were pleased, concerned, annoyed or embarrassed about different things, because they perceived situations in terms of different sets of premises. Some missionaries were so accustomed to the perpetual conventions of their own world that they lost sight of the fact that such conventions would not be the same elsewhere. While the exotic attendants would drink clear beers, brands, and whiskeys for such a function, for the indigenous people this would be a taboo. For the locals, the traditional *Chibuku* beer (seven days) was appropriate, and fitting for such indigenous functions. A given act may be considered good manners in one society, bad in another community, and probably a serious moral offense in a third and what is accepted as ordinary behaviour in one culture may be defined as indecent or obscene in another.

According to Shambira (2011), dedication or *kusuma* prayers were said by Fr Johnson SJ, who stood in as the father of the deceased religious men and women. After the prayers, the local Catholic women brought in seven pots (*makate*) of beer which had been brewing all week, and this was followed by traditional dances such as *Jiti, Mhende* and *Chibhanduru* dances described by Tsuro (2011).These are common ceremonial practices of singing, playing drums and dancing which bear essential features in most traditional practices (Zwana 2000: 5). It also implies celebration in joy and in the spirit of victory. From a Church perspective, the dancing and ululating were very suggestive, for they were viewed with much suspicion as dedicated to the spirits so they were seen as pagan, since the participants sang special war, funeral and ancestral songs in mourning of the deceased, and in honour of the spirit of the dead. The missionaries took the whole dancing ceremony as a

drinking party for there was beer, which was against their regulations, which banned beer drinking, polygamy, ancestral veneration and traditional dancing (Bhebe 1973: 46).

Saturday night, was time for the actual celebration with different types of songs being sung until dawn. The *Jiti* was led by youths, with music accompanied by fast beating of drums, and dancing in a circle with people taking turns to dance inside the circle in tune with the rhythm of the drumming, high-pitched singing and clapping. They sung simple songs widely known among the participants. Church songs were also included in the celebration in order to give the function a Christian coating. The singing stopped occasionally for the people to rest, and to drink beer and a specially prepared non-alcoholic beverage (*mahewu*).

As narrated by Tseriwa (2011), the festivities continued all night. At around 2200hrs, it started raining so everyone was transferred to the Church. The rain was interpreted as a favourable sign from the ancestors, who were in a position to exercise authority over the entire neighborhood, and confirmed an ultimate absorption into some kind of cosmic spirit, one comforting belief held by most of the indigenous attendants. The rain was a clear sign, that the ritual had been accepted by all those who were in the spirit world. All this was done under close monitoring of the local elders according to Shereni (2011). The status of the elders is an earned status; one acquires it in part by the amount of knowledge, and practical life experiences one has, and how one is able to bring this wealth of knowledge and experience to bear, to inform actions and judgment. Old people in great majority of societies are respected and deferred to as long as they retain their faculties. They are the repositories of tribal lore and wisdom. After the prescribed ceremony, came the general celebrations, involving a mixture of preaching, and readings organised by the people from the Parish and Mass centres, with the marimba band from St Peter's Kubatana, the local Jerusalem dance, and a local Mbira group .This went on from 22:30 hours to 05:00 hours the following morning according to Siegel (1998).

4.7.3 Day Three (Sunday 6ᵗʰ February, 1983)

It had been six years since, on the 6ᵗʰ February 1977, three Jesuits and four Dominican sisters had been killed in an attack on the Musami Mission during the pre-Independence war. A shrine was built to commemorate them (see Appendix 5 – Page 256). The then Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Simon Muzenda, with Senator Makunde and Mr Byron Hove, arrived before the mass which was celebrated in the church at 10:00 am by the Archbishop Patrick Fani Chakaipa and nineteen concelebrants. Altogether there were thirty priests and Brothers, fifty Dominican Sisters, and fifty Sisters of the local indigenous congregation (LCBL), and about three thousand congregants. The gathering included Fr Danstun Myerscough SJ, Sr Anna Reggel OP, and Br Dennis Adamson SJ, all of whom had been members and survivors of the Musami Mission community six years ago affirmed Sr Siegel (1998: 43). The memorial hut was opened on the 6ᵗʰ February 1983 in a memorial service at which the Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Simon Muzenda, gave an address, which will be given later.

The next morning, Sunday 6ᵗʰ February 1983, the big day, around 0530 am, started with the slaughtering of the goat (*mbudzi yeshungu*) on the rock outside the Society of Jesus house. A distinction must be made between death rites and funeral rites, as indicated by Ikenge-Metuh (1981: 9). The purpose of "death rites" is simply the interment of the corpse, whereas the purpose of the "funeral rite" was to assure that the deceased who are believed to be angry, especially these religious men and women who did not die natural deaths, and would have liked to seek vengeance, would have their temper cooled by the slaughtering of the goat and pouring of libation to the long-gone.

Archbishop Patrick Fani Chakaipa had banned the smearing of the contents of the stomach of the goat even on graves, or the pouring of beer, but the Memorial Service attendants did what they could under given circumstances. Guests from all over started arriving around 0800hrs, including lots of Jesuits, Dominican Sisters and other religious communities of

European and American origin. Since it was a very big feast, the then Deputy Prime Minister Simon Vengai Muzenda, a Catholic, was the Guest of Honour. Among very important dignitaries were the Nuncio (Papal representative) and the Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Harare, His Grace Patrick Fani Chakaipa together with more or less three thousand people from all over the Zimbabwean Catholic community (see Appendix 5 – pages 263).

4.7.4 Lay Participation

The local *Chita ChaMaria Munyaradzi Wavatamburi* (Legion of St Mary Comforter of the Sorrowful) and *Chita ChaMaria Hosi Yedenga* (Legion of St Mary Queen of Heaven) -formerly known as the sodality of Women, staged two excellent dramas on the life of Fr Shepherd Smith SJ and Brother Conway. Both were done with great affection, but also with great realism. Brother Conway SJ, was portrayed driving his Land-Rover with lots of kids on it, and sneaking sugar out of the rectory's dining room for the kids, saying, "*Fadzamoyo*" (appease your heart), as he gave them sugar, which in turn would provide necessary energy for the kids to always come to him for energy boosters constantly. Fr Shepherd-Smith was portrayed as being excited at the arrival of the new statue of Our Lady from somewhere, and presenting it to the *Chita* women, who then travelled around with it accompanied by Christopher attempting in vain to get all the local drunken men to agree to come to church. Typically they all agreed, but then did nothing about it of course. What the *Chita* women did was *chiroora* or *chisahwira*, in the traditional Zezuru culture, daughters-in-law and ritual friends often put on dramas, imitating what the deceased used to do.

Unfortunately, the women staged their performance for the men only, and did not put any dramas for the nuns. Maybe the nuns were too busy at the Teacher's Training College with male students, since by then women could not attend teacher training, since most of them were destined for marriage. Under normal circumstances, it would be proper to see women imitating women, but in this case, one would see that these Legion of Mary women

were comfortable to mimic Fr Shepherd-Smith and Bro Conway. For most of the time, priests had more time with women, since the majority did not go for any formal training. They were more at home and visiting the mission regularly. In addition, most of the *Chita* women were also employed at the mission as matrons, cooks, general hands, and nurse aides were employed as catechists and sacristans. The *Chita* women were obliged by their constitution to clean the mission church and its surroundings. Most of their prayer sessions (rosary), meetings and *Chita* lessons (*Zvidzidzo zvevashanyi nezvevaedzwa*) were also done at the mission (see Appendix 5 – Page 265 Grotto: St Mary's statue).

4.8 The Eucharistic Memorial Celebration

At 0930hrs, the Archbishop led a procession to the Memorial Shrine, he incensed it, and sprinkled it with holy water, and this was followed by Holy Mass, where the Archbishop was the main celebrant, with the Nuncio, the Jesuit Provincial, Fr Wardale SJ, several indigenous priests, and religious priests con-celebrating. Shereni (2011) confirmed that, the Archbishop preached very strongly about following pagan practices such as *kurova guva* and *mbudzi yeshungu*. He strongly warned the congregants how bad it was to perform ungodly rituals as Christians. He castigated the pervasive belief that prosperity was ascribed to the favour of *midzimu* (ancestors) and misfortunes to their anger. He denied the supremacy of the *mudzimu*, saying proverbs such as *mudzimu wadambura mbereko* (the ancestors have ignored you), *chawawana batisisa mudzimu haupe kaviri* (guard what you find the ancestors do not give second chance)were a clear indication that ancestors (*midzimu*) were not of much help. For the prelate ancestors had no authority over Christians. He downplayed dual allegiance, that is, Christians who were Christians in church buildings only, but who when outside, were otherwise. He also suggested that the role of the ancestors was restricted to the lives of their descendants only. They are believed to have nothing to do with the lives of people from other clans. One could, therefore, argue that a Eurocentric mindset enveloped the Archbishop. The congregants could only imagine what would have happened, if the prelate had been there, during the previous days' celebrations, submitted Masarirambi (2011).

4.8.1 The Archbishop's Sermon

The Archbishop's theme was communion between the living and the dead in response to the challenge presented by ATR. He did not merely give his own opinions, but wished to speak for the Church as one of the collaborators of the Bishops' Conference, who are authentic teachers of the Catholic faith. The Bishop challenged the traditional belief that the spirits of the dead had power to take possession of the living relatives. For Chakaipa, Christians must "taste and see that the Lord is good" (Psalms 34: 4), and learn by faith that "where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" (2 Cor 3: 17), so as to be able to distinguish the spirits that were in God from restless and terrifying ones that were not. The Archbishop told the congregation that they could be in communion with their departed brothers, sisters, parents and grandparents, not by being hosts to their spirits, allegedly still restless and roaming about, but by bringing them home into the peace of God and sharing in this peace themselves. He concluded his homily by saying:

> Let Christ free us from any bondage or fearful submission. Let us submit only to Christ so that, at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the Glory of God the Father (Phil 2: 12).

4.8.2 Evaluation of The Archbishop's Sermon

For the Bishop, one has to distinguish between a basic idea, which one might be able to adopt and its external expression which could not be adopted, with regards with some customs, for example, the blessing of the animal in the *kurova guva*. The bishop was fearful of the return to magical beliefs. Likewise, he did not approve of the use of beer in this connection, for he saw there was danger of syncretism, as a wrongful adaptation of such ceremonies would contradict the Christian tradition of remembering the dead. It should be noted that Chakaipa was in charge of the Liturgy Commission of the Bishops' Conference, and spoke consistently in favour of the Christian adaptation of some local customs, the

denounced performance of pagan rites despite their prohibitions. The prelate was more cautious on the question of the adaptation of ancestor veneration, and that certain elements in the pagan rite seemed to be totally unacceptable to Christians. These were the consultation of the *n'anga* (*kushopera*), the belief of the power of *vadzimu* (ancestors) that they ought vengeance and the libation of beer on the grave. For the Bishop, all these contradicted with several Christian beliefs such as heaven, hell, the resurrection of the flesh and redemption. The bishop revealed that conversion demanded departure from the pre-Christian life-style by embracing the Christian way of life, since Shona culture over-emphasised the family at the expense of the mystical body.

The bishop encouraged the faithful to celebrate anniversary masses for their loved ones, and expressing their loving respect for the dead by decorating their graves with flowers and Christian symbols. He also concurred with the idea of visiting cemeteries as an occasion to pray for those still undergoing painful purification. For Chakaipa, the Holy Eucharist was the proper occasion to pray for ancestors still to be brought home to God, since in the Eucharistic celebration, Christ is the "first born from the dead" (Col 1: 18). Such prayer would transform our relationship with ancestors from one of fear into one of loving respect. Chakaipa (1983) reminded the faithful to preserve all cultural values that were not against the faith, and which would therefore be assimilated. One could argue that a lot of things happened behind the bishop's back. He was not involved before, or during preparations. He came only after all had been arranged without knowing what had been taking place. This is evident from his sermon. All in all, Chakaipa threw spanners in the work of inculturation in Zimbabwe, despite leeway provided by the Vatican II Council. As the head shepherd of the Diocese, the Archbishop continued defending the church's established position, for the ordinary people (the faithful) are not answerable to Rome. It should be clearly mention that the Archbishop's sermon was the official statement which should go along with official teaching of the Catholic Church. Chakaipa could not be against the church's face, for Zimbabwean Catholic Church had no official position, so for the prelate cultural practices destroy Christianity, taking it from early missionaries who condemned traditional rituals of post-death as superstitious, and off-shoots of the devil's work.

Instead, the Bishop complained about the dichotomy of life of the faithful, whom he felt were not converted to Christ, by being Christians on Sunday and pagans for the rest of the week. The excessive claim that Christianity being the true religion, and the traditional religion erroneously regarded as the off-shoots of the devil has blocked chances of healthy dialogue in the church. That era is gone. Positive outlook of ATR, one speaks of its good practices and worship, and not of evil steps. One should respect the freedom of believers who endeavour to integrate Christian faith with their traditional beliefs.

After Mass, the Guest of Honour, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Zimbabwe Cde Simon Vengai Muzenda (1983), gave the following speech:

> I was asked to come and share in the commemoration of this shrine, which commemorates the seven missionaries senselessly killed here at Musami mission, on the night of 6th February 1977, and all those others who lost their lives during the national liberation war in this area. The seven missionaries being Fr Martin Thomas SJ, Fr Christopher Shepherd-Smith SJ, Br John Conway SJ, Sr Epiphany Bertha Schneider OP, Sr Joseph Paulina Wilkinson OP, Sr Magdala Christa Lewandowski OP and Sr Ceslaus Anna Stiegler OP.

> We, who are solemnly gathered here, are not all British, Irish or German by nationality, but Zimbabweans. What is the purpose of our gathering here today? The purpose is to honour and commemorate all those mentioned above, who had become Zimbabweans by personal devotion, commitment and sacrifice. Allow me to read I Kings 21: 1-16. However, before I read the chapter, let me say these two axioms, referring to the quality of sacrifice; self preservation, is the first law of nature, and self-sacrifice is the highest rule of grace.

> Ought these missionaries to have died? Couldn't they have known that staying at Musami meant death? One may ask himself a similar question, why had Naboth had to die? Didn't he know that refusing to part with his vineyard meant certain death to him? The answer is, it was not possible for Naboth, to part with his inheritance, whether it meant death or no death. Equally, it was not possible for these missionaries to abandon Musami for the work they had sacrificed themselves to, which has

not been accomplished even to this day. They had become Zimbabweans by sacrifice. We may name them by places where they were born, but by dedicated service, conviction and sacrifice they had become Zimbabweans, for to teach, to educate, to cure and enlighten mankind became the highest rule of grace, and of self-sacrifice to the seven missionaries.

They were ready to forgo the first law of nature, of self-preservation; hence they all died for the sake of their sacred mission. Naboth told the King; "God forbids me to give you the inheritance of my fore-fathers". Likewise the seven missionaries stood firm to their killers and said: "Our work for Zimbabwe is just and right, we sacrificed to come and work for Zimbabwe. The work is not yet completed. We work to complete it, and, after completion, we shall continue with Zimbabwe's development".

After all, the work of the church is to free the people from slavery of sin, slavery of ignorance, slavery of hunger, slavery of ill-education and slavery of being dominated by colonialism, or by other racial groups. The above tasks are the tasks expected of the church. Who can say the missionaries, whose shrine we are commemorating here, did not die for those tasks? Indeed, the commemoration brings a new vision of a new Zimbabwe not Zimbabwe-Rhodesia. A Zimbabwe re-born because this is a new Zimbabwe, not Zimbabwe-Rhodesia…

A Zimbabwe rejuvenated; because all of us have a new stamina to shape a new Zimbabwe, a new nation… A Zimbabwe re-created, because the new creation of the Republic is the creation of a new Zimbabwe, a young Zimbabwe, objective and free from tribal, religious or racial prejudices.

Our commemoration of the shrine of these noble sons and daughters, of the church six years after, they tragically departed from us, clearly shows that they did not departed in vain. This shrine is in the same vein and spirit as the National Heroes' Acre in Harare, commemorating all those who, like these missionaries, lived their conviction and paid the supreme sacrifice for the sake of well-being of others.

Finally, the Mission Superior invited all present for lunch. However, he complained that three quarters of the budget went on food (Johnson 1983: 3).

Nyamauya (2011)stated that, all in all, it was a very successful series of ceremonies for the building of the memorial. All went well, and shortly after dawn the *Chita* women brought the seven pots of beer made of rapoko, which had spent the night in the Jesuit common room. All interested indigenous and foreign religious men and women drank the beer again with dancing. By this time, all guests had left for their respective destinations. Fr Spence SJ complained bitterly that it had cost too much, especially since most of the two thousand and five hundred pounds which is equivalent to four thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars of expense was on food and drinks (Masarirambi 2011). But it was exactly what happened at *kurova guva/kudzora munhu mumusha* which means bringing back home the spirit of the deceased. According to the Zezuru culture, this ceremony is not performed for small children who are in their infancy and those who are unmarried and without children. The ceremony is done only for married people who die presumably leaving children behind. Someone who dies unmarried is not thus revered. Zezuru oral tradition does not seem to have a clear position about the welfare of such a spirit thereafter.

4.9 Analysis of the Musami Expedition

This section will analyse what happened during the ceremony of the murdered missionaries, looking at the similarities and differences with the traditional ceremony. The study will outline how the indigenous rituals were blended with the Catholic liturgy on post-death rituals in Musami.

In an effort to repair a battered African identity, local Catholics insisted on a contextually home-grown Christianity, thus the expression of two cultures to get the best from each of them. Ribeiro (2012) approved that the indigenous Christians had to seek to retrieve African spiritual values that were relevant to their time, looking at the venerable and sacred tradition, handed over by generations of ancestors, rather than make a complete break with the past. Zvarevashe (2013) observed the Zezuru culture had undergone tremendous

changes, and yet in some ways critical phases remained untouched. The Church had worked to subvert the local culture and discounted all the social political and economic developments and failed to acknowledge the power of the spirit world by the distortion of reality, according to Shambira (2011).

Chiwashira (2011) pointed out that some of specific cultural practices that had local religious roots were attacked. Those at the top of the list had to do with ancestor veneration. Festivals relating to ancestors were vehemently attacked, and the pouring of libation was prohibited on grounds that the final sacrifice was made on the cross by Jesus Christ. The confrontational approach which had been employed by some church leaders left an indelible mark on religion in Musami.

4.9.1 Was the Musami Function a Kurova Guva?

As explained earlier, the *kurova guva* is simply a ceremony which brings the spirit of the deceased home, and maybe causes it to graduate into the spiritual realm. As previously mentioned, not all the dead enjoy the privilege of having their spirits brought home. Children, outcasts and those not married are sidelined during such rituals, for they cannot be ancestors.

The seven missionaries fall in one of the above cited groups. They were not married and did not have children. In short, the Musami function was something else. One of the root causes of many anti-life forces, systems and problems in Musami-Murewa, has been the failure to embark on the movement of religious awakening of indigenous moral and cultural systems. The Musami Catholic clergy somehow succeeded reasonably in establishing factual truth, that is, correction of what the previous trauma of indigenous Catholic Christians had experienced. Catholics agree to pursue a model of restorative religious understanding rather than retributive religious understanding. It is important to recall the legacy of the missionaries, who were convinced of the liberating power of the scriptures, and demanded "not only a break with traditional religious systems, but also an

abandonment of the African background" (Bhebe 1973: 45). This time Catholics tried to hold an African ritual for non-qualifying outsiders. Maybe one would consider Platvoet's (1990) argument that ATRs are "tolerant" and "ecumenical". Catholics saw room for acceptance on the other hand a group of lay people and clergy argued that the First Commandment did not in any way prohibit *kurova guva* because it was not any act of worshipping gods (Zwana 2000: 9). The group argued that *kurova guva* was justifiable in the light of the Fourth Commandment which speaks of honouring one's parents (Gundani 1998: 155). It was argued that in *kurova guva,* there was no worshipping of the dead, but only honouring and venerating.

4.9.2 The Similarities of the Musami Function with Kurova Guva

It is an essential element in Shona belief that the living and the dead exist in a symbiosis interdependent, capable of communicating with one another, for it is believed that the *midzimu* (ancestors) determine the well-being of the people. Generally among the Shona the process of *kurova guva* was followed, including the brewing of beer, the slaughter of the beasts (goats and cattle), the festive mood, rituals by superiors, the re-burial of the soils of the deceased, and the killing of the *mbudzi yeshungu*(goat of anger). According to Zhuwawo (1990), the killing of the beast and distribution of the meat was done traditionally by in-laws of the deceased, in the case of Musami, the local Christians, acted as the in-laws of the slain missionaries.

Some of the fundamental modalities of *kurova guva* were observed at Musami, that is, the gathering people from all walks of life with the intention of observing this traditional rite. The *kupira* ceremony formed the real core of the whole ritual, and was privately conducted in the presence of close relations of a sort that is religious men and women of the Society of Jesus and the Dominicans respectively. The presentation and blessing of grain for brewing beer, and the slaughtering of the sacrificial beast, concluded by the offering of the traditional beer to the spiritual world confirmed the similarity with the *kurova guva*

ceremony. The procession to the graveyard to pick a handful of the soil from the graves of each of the seven killed missionaries was done in accordance with local customs.

The presentation of the animal, and of the goat of anger (*mbudzi yeshungu*), in the case of missionaries who were deemed angry (though Christians sometimes die praying for their persecutors) since they did not die a natural death, and were not buried at their resident cemetery, so that their spirits were to be taken in (*kutora midzimu*)from Chishawasha Mission to Musami Mission, also was a clear resemblance to the of *kurova guva*. The other similarity with the *kurova guva* was that the ritual lasted three days preceded by various preparations. Finger millet, for the sacrificial beer was prepared in a very special way, was followed by dancing and ululating, Saturday night, dancing and singing songs until dawn; in the midst of these celebrations the *sahwiras* (ritual friends) and the *Chita* women imitated the characteristics of some of the deceased in a dramatic and humorous way.

4.10 Differences with the Traditional Rituals

According to Zwana (2000: 6), the *kurova guva* is actually a series of rituals. The process includes consulting diviners for guidance, and help in removing possible obstacles. Appropriate people take part in the rituals at the relevant times and stages. These stages include consecration of the grain, soaking it to ferment, bringing it out, a night long vigil, and rituals at the grave, which involve pouring of beer libations on the grave usually on the headstone, and smearing animal blood on the headstone. In the process, the deceased and the ancestors are addressed. The climax at the gravesite is the act of ritually taking the spirit of the deceased home, with a lot of singing and dancing in procession. The mood is one of triumph. This explains why war songs and sometimes successful hunting songs are sung. The eldest male child is then ritually named after the deceased, followed by an inheritance ceremony. Things then return to normal for the deceased family.

The Musami Memorial Service was not much of a *kurova guva* for there were more differences than similarities with the *kurova guva* ceremony. Outsiders (non-relational) to the deceased missionaries participated fully in the ceremony. The Shona *kurova guva* ceremony is joined in by parents, that is, the father of the deceased and the mother of the deceased participate in the ritual, by saying set words from the paternal side followed by the maternal side. However, in this case all the deceased missionaries had no relatives on site, but congregational representatives, such as Jesuits Provincial Fr Wardale SJ and the Dominican Mother General Sr Hildegard Zahnbrecher. Immediately after death, the spirits of the deceased are considered "unpredictable and dangerous", as asserted by Bourdillon (1973: 11), and are hovering around the veld, or find temporary residence in some large trees, as revealed by Gundani (1998: 199). Thus, the *kurova guva* ceremony may take place between six months to two years after burial; but this was performed six years later. Sometimes the *kurova guva* ceremony takes long time to be performed for several reasons, such as lack of resources or sometimes other punishable obstacles may prolong the ritual performance, as maintained by Tsuro (2011).

The first step in the ritual involves a series of preparations. The family elders must consult a sacred practitioner called *n'anga,* who is able to tell them, if any obstacles have turned up to proceeding with arrangements at Musami. There was no consultation of *n'anga* or divination by spirit mediums, whose role was necessary to correct and effectively confirm the performance of the ceremony. The visit to *n'anga* would have been done by close relatives of the deceased. At Musami, there was no libation of beer on the graves, which makes it obvious that there was no induction of the spirit of the deceased into the company of other spirits. According to Bourdillon (1987: 216), the basic principle of inheritance "is that a man's personal name and position can be only by the son, but this position as head of a large family group may be inherited by a younger brother", but in this case, *nhaka* (inheritance) ceremony was nowhere to be officiated, maybe this has to do with evangelical counsels observed by the deceased such as the vows of poverty, chastity/celibacy and obedience. The deceased missionaries had nothing of their own; all they had belonged to their communities.

At this event, there were seven deceased persons, so seven beasts would have traditionally been sacrificed but in this case, one beast was slaughtered for all seven murdered missionaries, who were not immediately related to each other, except by virtue of all professing the same religious vows. Their graves were traditionally supposed to be cemented (*kudzururwa*) with goat dung (*nhoko dzembudzi)* accompanied by the pouring beer on the graves, but this did not happen. The removal of seven bags of soil from Chishawasha cemetery to Musami cemetery for re-burial was supposed, traditionally, to be accompanied by a goat's head in each grave; in this case, seven goats' heads would have to be buried in different graves, plus the soil of each deceased missionary. Again, this was not witnessed.

The seven murdered missionaries were celibate men and women who lived their sexuality without giving it genital expression (McAinsh 1997: 4) and were not married, and had no progeny; they had vowed celibacy and chastity; the four nuns were not to be married for the rest of their lives. *Kurova guva* celebrations are for the married, who would have left children. The *nhaka* ceremony at Musami was not necessary. It was the mere adaptation of the traditional *kurova guva* ceremony into a Christian rite. Certain fundamental modalities were not taken into cognisance. The use of traditional medical practitioner (*n'anga*) was omitted. One cannot take some of the elements of *kurova guva* and ignore others. One cannot understand, if *kurova guva* ceremony can be done for white missionaries, for the rite is strictly done for the indigenous people. It is true that some missionaries had adopted some local totems, such as *Murehwa* or *Matema,* but that doesn't guarantee that they follow in the protocol of *kurova guva* as dictated by cultural beliefs.

Zhuwawo (1990: 16) submits that the whole of *kurova guva* ceremony is concluded with a ritual called *kudzurura* (smearing), which actually seals or closes the graves of the deceased. This usually occurs after the *kurova guva* ceremony. On the chosen day, the *sahwira* (ritual friend) goes to the grave with two pots of beer which are carried on the heads of two women related to the deceased. He also brings some undigested food found in

the stomach of the slaughtered goat (*chinzvinzvi*). At the burial site, the *sahwira* removes any objects from the grave and moulds the earth into a well compacted shape. The women approach the graves with pots of beer into which the *sahwira* mixes the undigested food from the goats. He then pours the mixture over the grave, smearing it smoothly, until the entire grave is sealed. These acts conclude the *kurova guva* ceremony, but this did not happen.

4.11 The Musami Christianised Rite

Having looked at the similarities and differences between the Musami mission function and the indigenous post burial rituals, this section will look at how the Musami ritual was Christianised.

A decision was taken to lift the ban on the *kurova guva*, but not to give official notice of this decision officially. Instead, the National Pastoral Centre was assigned together with the Commission of Christian Formation and Worship to prepare a pastoral guide, which would preserve and stress all cultural values that were clearly not against the faith and which could therefore be assimilated and which excluded all elements contrary to the Christian faith (NADC Minutes Meeting 14-16Dec 1976). A pastorally unsatisfactory situation was created. It became widely known that the Bishops had lifted the ban on *kurova guva*, with no adopted Christian rite and no pastoral guide. Supplementation in the pastoral field, left without control, resulted in cases of a return to the traditional rites with theologically dubious ceremonies, and attempts were made to marry traditional and Christian rites.

Above all, the Christian rite of *kurova guva*, which was presented to the Bishops' Conference by National Association of Diocesan Clergy (NADC), proposed the celebration of the Eucharist as an integral part of the rite. It should be celebrated after people had returned from the graves, and before they begin the festivities of eating and drinking. By locating the

celebration between the graves and homestead for instance, under a big tree, the Eucharist, "would stand out as the main rite which brings the *kurova guva* proceedings to their climax and completion," asserted Hermann (1997:31)in comparing the traditional rite with Christian sacraments. Hermann agrees with Murphee (1969: 3) that the Shona rite of *kurova guva* is "an induction ritual which marks the transition of the *mudzimu* from his/her status outside the hierarchy for the spirits (ancestors) to full incorporation in their ranks". According to Hermann(1997:44), "what has to be done is to show how in the Shona rite, and its faith find its fulfillment in the Christian faith and its sacrament of baptism". For him, everything that *kurova guva* offers (cleansing from all evil, state of freedom and now life, eternal life) is found in its fullness in baptism (1997:40).

4.12 The Pastoral Consideration of the Musami Rite

The Musami Catholic community expressed an appreciation of the Christianised funeral rite in the diocese as a successful example and rare but "hopeful token" of inculturation. The Musami Christians were praised for the innovative character of a local Catholic post-funeral rite with its conditional invocation, and symbolic reinstatement of the deceased according to Shona custom, which deserved a wider trans-cultural horizon. The involvement of the Church gave weight to the proceedings for the ceremony was accorded solemnity causing some people to take the idea of memorials and monuments seriously. Masarirambi and Shereni (2011) concur with Shorter (1977: 122) who said:

> Death has disruptive effects on the family and clan. Thus, the Shonas need to make it intelligible through rituals by which they humanise and give purpose to that which was apparently uncontrollable and debilitating.

Bro. Jonathan SJ and Chris Gororo (2011) indicated the importance of honouring the dead and for the living to continually remember and act on their obligations, and especially to the departed, with appropriate rituals. Musami Christians saw the ritual as consistent with the Church's belief on the Communion of the Saints. *Midzimu* (ancestral spirits) were seen as having an intercessory role like the saints. Moreover, the *kurova guva* was thought to have a

purificatory effect on the deceased's spirit, and this was also similar to Catholic teaching on purgatory, and the need to intercede on behalf of those in purgatory yet. If the spirit of the dead, is not yet properly in the spirit world (as *kurova guva* suggests), then it is not in purgatory, but only on earth. This is a contradiction with the idea of purgatory (Mavhudzi, 2000).

The Church in Musami entered a new age, with growing awareness that people could embrace their culture, and still remain Catholics, that the Catholic Church can become more diverse in their expression of faith and yet remain Catholics. At times one h+ear warnings against dangerous syncretism. Thus, Mavhudzi (2000) warned, "We must be careful to maintain the sometimes very thin distinction between contextualization and what scholars call 'syncretism'", and went on to quote the definition of syncretism in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, which said it was "the process by which elements of one religion are assimilated by another religion, resulting in a change in the fundamental tenets or nature of those religions". Some clergy on the other hand pleaded for the acceptance of some elements of traditional religion, by pointing out that Christianity should permeate the African way of life; it should complete, purge and perfect, and not destroy it, thus accepting the traditional way of honouring the dead with what additions or improvements the gospel had to offer.

4.13 General Catholics' Response on Post- Death Rites

The Triumphant Church, which is also called the Glorious church (Raphael 1999: 116), refers to the saints who have made it to heaven, and have been rewarded with eternal life. Some of the saints are known by name like St Lawrence, St Mary, St John, St Catherine; the list is endless. There are also those that are not yet known by their names. The Church provides the great Feast of All Saints (canonised and non-canonised) celebrated each year on the first of November in the liturgical calendar, to give the opportunity for the veneration of unknown saints and ask for their intercession (CCC 1956). The month of November has

been set aside as the month of the dead, where Catholics all over the world visit graveyards, cemeteries and family heroes and heroines' acres weed and also pray for the dead (not to the dead). Musami Christians have followed suit to comfort the bereaved and sometimes offer financial assistance; organising prayer sessions, and visiting the bereaved are viewed as important post-death rites.

Most Christian cemeteries have become sacred ground chiefly, because of the Christians which are lying there. So, Christians gather at these church cemeteries for worship services, and celebrate the anniversaries of those laid to rest in "holy ground". Emphasis is also put on veneration of and loyalty of the dead, especially canonised saints. Memorials have historical efficacy, and are an evaluation of the past (Zwana 2000: 20). Musami Catholics and others are not content with the remembering and giving thanks; there is a transformation and re-orientation of life. There is somehow a link between one's present Christian conduct and what happens beyond death. The Musami Mission Memorial Shrine and other shrines are occasions for instilling hope for the dead, and encouragement to the living (1 Corinthians 15: 12-58, 1 Peter 1: 2-9, 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18). The dead are presented as lessons to the living and the living are reminded of their commitment, and preparation for the life to come (Zwana 2000: 26). In Catholic tradition, names of saints are said during Eucharist prayers, and these saints are venerated, for it is believed that God has given grace to the faithful to follow the saints in faith and truth, and that they may faithfully run with perseverance, the race that is set before them, with them receiving the unfading crown of glory.

4.13.1 Musami Catholics' Response to Post- Death Rites

Several formulations of burial and post-burial rites have been proposed, but Musami Catholics sought to perform their own adopted post-burial ritual, which blended the indigenous and Catholic traditions, to which Catholic clergy gave the blessing. The Church must be applauded for its reformation and restoration, which emphasised positive and

creative aspects by correcting ills in the Musami church, and invigorating its life and missions as prescribed by the Second Vatican Council.

Most local Musami Catholics were not aware of the complicated Christological and doctrinal controversies that had troubled the church in the past; the church had continuously discerned the signs of the times by engaging in inter-denominational dialogue by participating in ecumenical activities. Verstraelen (1998: 19) observed that;

> Differences that formally separated churches are now disappearing. Previously Catholics looked at other churches, and condemned them, because of different theological convictions. People want to mix across denominational borders. Common Christians do not worry much about theological issues.

African Christians tend to be "evangelical in their faith and ecumenical" in their relation to the world. Therefore, they can easily bridge the gap between their church and that of others. The Church has also responded by revisiting the area of inculturation, by calling for African Synods with a great call for African theological evangelistic outreach programmes – such as use of Small Christian Communities (SCC), which some parishes call them cell groups or neighbourhoods.

Originally the Catholic clergy in Musami held the same position as other missionary churches such as the Methodist Church in Zimbabwe with regard to the outright condemnation of *kurova guva*. Those Catholics found guilty of *kurova guva* were liable to face disciplinary action as observed by Gundani (1994: 127). This prompted the secret performance of *kurova guva* during the night. This time, the Musami missionaries accepted that the indigenous rite (*kurova guva*) might be experimented with, despite the argument that allowing the *kurova guva* ceremony would weaken their attitudes to God, and his place in their lives, which would result in them resorting to pagan practices.

One needs to appreciate attempts by Musami Catholics, to create an atmosphere of open debate. It is also highly commendable that Musami Catholics viewed the whole problem (*kurova guva*) as both theological and pastoral, and there were efforts to relate arguments for and against the church's doctrinal standards. The fact that the Musami Catholics and the Jesuits community were able to establish a theological position in itself is a great achievement. Musami Catholics argued that they were not worshipping the dead, but were honouring and venerating them. Furthermore, the ritual was seen as consistent with the Church's belief in the communion of the saints. Ancestral spirits were seen also as having an intercessory role, like the saints. Moreover, for the Musami Catholic community the *kurova guva* had a purification effect for the deceased's spirit and so was consistent with Catholic teaching on purgatory, and the need to intercede on behalf of the dead.

4.14 The Episcopal Responseto the Musami Christianised Rite

As cited above, Chakaipa (1983), maintained that traditional ancestral rites should never be practised in the Church, for they only related to the tradition of a family, the clan and the tribe, or what totem they belonged to. According to the Catholic Bishops' Conference, human culture must be founded, formulated or shaped by the splendour of the truth revealed by God in Jesus Christ. Hence, instead of the conflict caused human culture's resistance to the cleansing effect of the Gospel, local Christians should strive for the unity of their cultural practices and the Good News in a manner that genuinely serves as a means of proclamation of Gospel truth. This underscores the importance of inculturation in the shaping of the values that the indigenous Christians respect and wish to preserve.

Chakaipa took a swipe at those who did not tell the truth, especially those who turned to traditional religion, not believing in it, but that they fearing to be criticised. He agreed with Musami Catholics not to have merely an*ukama* (relationship) which obliged one to be more helpful to one's kith and kin, but to belong to Christ, where all people were equally treated. The bishop agreed that the *kurova guva* had been part of the traditional life for all ages. But

he declared that it belonged to the past. It no longer had any significance in the new faith in Christ. He quoted Paul's second epistle to the Corinthians: "if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold the new has come" (2Corinthians 5: 17). "Then why cling on to the past when you have been made new creatures in Christ Jesus?" urged Chakaipa (1983). He reminded the congregation about the story of new wine in new skins and old wine in old skins. In a nutshell, the bishop declared the *kurova guva* ceremony had no place in Christian faith. Unfortunately, the bishop was not aware, or informed about how the whole memorial service has been arranged and administered. He only came to put icing sugar on an already baked cake. A lot happened behind his back, and he was not thoroughly informed on what was happening about the ground.

His sermon was taken as important for it appeared to be suppressing internal religious democracy. Having seen the bishop officiating at the service, for the Musami Catholic community the *kurova guva* was canonised and solemnised, they could do with it as they pleased. For the Musami faithful, dealing with death and post-death properly contributed towards healing for it was an essential element of African belief that *kurova guva* was a kingpin ritual. To deny it for its adherents was to deny what was of ultimate concern. For some, it was like uprooting oneself from reality into a world of uncertainty. Others would rather compromise than abandon it completely. In most cases compromising meant putting on new labels and introducing modified versions.

The Musami community was aware of the defunct *Kurova Guva* Commission, and decided to undertake an experiment to Africanise the Church liturgy. The rite at Musami was thus, based on *kurova guva* ceremony, since the ban was lifted for some strange pastoral reasons, but was without pastoral procedures, thus local women participated with vigour, in contrast the use of Bible elsewhere to entrench patriarchy and perpetuate the subordination of women, which will be talked about later.

A significant point is that there was religious upheaval paradoxically occurring with Christian communities (not only Catholics). Its repercussions, thus tended to affect the Catholic Church, and what happened was seen as symbolic of the situation in the African Christian Church. It thus illustrates the kind of challenge which ATR poses to Christianity; a view which goes beyond religious aspect, as Gerrie Ter Haar (1990)asks, is it possible for African Christian to be truly African and truly Christian? Bediako's (1999) position seems to have little to do with theological insights, but he subtly refers to a reverse mission, "where African Christians should run their own affairs, without much interference from the episcopate". The Catholic Church in Zimbabwe, however, owes allegiance to the Pope, and cannot therefore; cut herself off from the Church outside. One needs to appreciate the ability of the Catholic Church to create an atmosphere of open debate on the *kurova guva*. It is also commendable that Catholics viewed the whole problem as both theological and pastoral, and there were efforts to relate arguments for and against the Church's doctrinal standards. The fact that Musami Catholics were able to establish a theological position is in itself a great achievement.

4.15 The General Effects of the Adapted Liturgy

Musami indigenous Christians wished to articulate the fact that Africans have their own cultural agendas. These encompass ways of being together as people with a destiny, and with their own cultural goals and meanings. It is, therefore, clear that religious expression for the Musami people was dictated by a particular need, and hence the supplications made had to have a direct bearing on the issue. Ongong'a (1983) submits that at death, ceremonies are concerned with two main themes; that the deceased may be sent satisfactorily on their transitional journey without revenge on the living, and that the living in their rite of separation may be exposed to acceptance and resignation, and be assured that despite the loss, the flow of life will continue. Evidently, there is an element of fear in both themes, and unless that fear is neutralised, the ceremonies would not be considered complete.

A one-sided liturgy, would therefore, be detrimental to the living, for the Catholic clergy's tendency might be to give very little prominence to prevalent Shona beliefs, which prescribe funeral rites as events not to be performed hurriedly, but guarded and protected, otherwise the person(s) would not rest, and would cause havoc for the living in the Musami community. The Musami escapade had certain ritual or ceremonial patterns by which values were collectively expressed and confirmed. These ritual procedures served to create, strengthen and transmitted sentiments necessary to the community's way of life(Ongong'a 1983:24). The practice was understood in symbolic procedures that operate the same way as the idiomatic expression of a language. The expressive actions took their meaning and value not from anything inherent in the acts themselves, but from the emotions they evoked and the social context in which they occurred, as indicated by Masarirambi (2011), one of the St Paul's Mission Memorial Service organisers at Musami. These ritual practices had in common certain characteristics, continued Masarirambi. They were generally expected or even obligatory in given situations: they often occurred in crisis situations, or in connection with recurring events that were important to the community. They followed prescribed forms that were often formal, or dignified and they expressed what the participants felt, or ought to feel about certain values.

Brown (1963:136) confirms that the ritual behaviour follows a prescribed traditional form. What one says or the way that one acts, does not necessarily represent the way she/he feels, but the way she/he ought to feel under the circumstances. The Musami ceremonial acts were performed by the whole community, subordinating self-interest to group activity. Singing, chanting, or repeating in unison creeds, prayers, or other formulas required that each individual yielded themselves to the rhythm, the tune, and the words of other expressions described. All these and other numerous activities served to subordinate the individuals to the group, and strengthened the emotional dispositions that bound the entire community together.

Thus, locals continued consulting some religio-cultural continuities (Martey, 1993:28). "It is the end", continues Emmanuel Martey, "that some elements of African traditional religion and culture, such as ancestriology, chieftaincy, sacrifice, healing, anthropology, the concept of family and so forth provide the framework for constructing African Christians". The Musami Catholics needed doctrinal development from an African perspective, which evidently integrated some ATR elements with Christianity, thus domesticating Christianity.

It is undeniable, therefore, that when fundamental elements of the indigenous religion are retrieved and updated, one recognises, those essential aspects which are invaluable to the integral healing of the local people as they continually struggle with the question(s) of what it means to be human, amid the situation in which the essence of human life has been greatly altered. Today, there is still tension between culture and faith in Musami Mission. To date, however, the numerous multi-course ecclesiastical diets of the locals have received little literary attention. The underlying factor is that, whether secular or sacred, the dead are not forgotten. The dead were not just remembered, but there was a note of triumph (Zwana 2002:20) as Christians would justify them (those dead in the course of Christian duty) as having joined the Church Triumphant. This would be an expression of gratitude to those who gave up their lives, such as the seven martyrs of peace and charity.

4.16 The Musami's Adaptation of the Post-Burial Rite

The success of St Paul's Mission's adaptation of the post burial rite at Musami, was a contribution of all the channels of religious distribution in transmitting both Christian and indigenous information. At the end of the service, "a homegrown Christianity," thus a marriage of the two to get the best from each, came on board. It was for the open-minded flock to take such a risk in correcting the uncorrected version of both religious cultural traditions.   The Musami after-death rite helped in unearthing deep-seated African misgivings regarding their status. It was a wake-up call, as reflected in the New Testament, where one finds several pericopes which are applicable to the insider/outsider problem.

4.17 Musami Catholic Women's Response to Post-Death Rituals

Musami Catholic Church has responded in post-death rituals, by discounting the compulsory wearing of black mourning attire (*sori*) for all *Chita* women. One used to put on a black dress, instead of the white *Chita* uniform dress, and then put a gown on top of the black dress instead of the prescribed *Chita* uniform. Musami Catholics have seen no need to advertise that they are in mourning; thus the Catholic church of Musami has sought to retrench Shona spiritual values irrelevant to the church.

The role of Catholic women in Musami is a very crucial one, as "the mothers of revolution", far from showing evidence of internalised oppression, have avoided what activist Rudo Gaidzanwa (2012) refers to as the "re-domestication of Zimbabwean women" – thus attaining women's liberation through empowerment of the laity. Musimbi Kanyoro (1997: 404) writes;

> Women are often dictated to by cultures which are not all affirming of women's worth and dignity. Rural women, as persons suffer most of these restrictions, because their lives are governed by the community living according to the ideals set out by the traditions.

The Musami women played leading roles in the traditional post-death rituals, although exposed to cultural habits including puberty rites, which forced women into a position with little or no decision-making powers. Musami Catholic women searched for appropriate Christian and traditional symbols in order to integrate traditional practices with Christian forms. These women demonstrated how the original opposition of the clergy had been transformed in Zimbabwe by integrating the traditional post-death practices with Christian liturgies.

The Church has a deep conscience to promote Musami women and their dignity. The Church has been accused of demeaning, even dehumanising women. Some cultural misogyn of the past has infected Christians, such as exclusion of women during death and post-death ceremonies, for they are treated as *vatorwa* (foreigners), not belonging to the family, as observed by Wermter (2012).The women of Musami have also proposed and anticipated the emergence of life-giving masculinities that challenge gender-based violence, and have created a new world order based on justice and equality for all as far as post-death rituals is concerned.

Musami Catholic indigenous women (lay and religious) thought the black book (*Maitiro ekuviga vafi*), used during the death and post-death rituals to be misleading in its unqualified invocation of the *madzitateguru* (the long dead elders of a particular clan). In most cases only male *madzitategurus* were invoked; thus in the liturgy, local Musami Catholic women saw a lack of personal involvement in fixed male dominated forms.

Musami women responded by asking for an authentic local church, that did not spoon-feed, but which enables the faithful (especially women) to stand on their own two feet and accept the responsibility of caring for one another as sisters and brothers in Christ (Wermter2006: 22), especially at death and after death.

Musami Catholic women and women from other denominations have seen that marriage rituals, death and post-death rituals were interconnected, according to Chiwashira and Tseriwa (2011). They saw the importance of the *bonde/rukukwe/rupasa* (reed mat), and how the *bonde* influenced in all indigenous rituals. For Shambira and Shereni (2011) life begins *pabonde* (on the *bonde*) so that one has to have a relationship with the reed mat until death and afterwards. The *rukukwe* symbolises undisturbed life, thus, when one dies, the *bonde* is cut half, symbolising a broken life. One half of the *bonde* would be put in the grave, and the other half would be brought home, to be used for any rituals pertaining the

deceased. Thus, after burial the clothes disposal would be conducted with all clothes of the deceased put on the remaining half of reed mat.

4.17.1 The Musami Catholic Women's Observations

Some African Women theologians critique aspects of African culture that adversely affect the well-being of women. They cite in particular, purification rituals and widowhood rituals that require the temporary exclusion of widows in the community as alluded earlier in this chapter. According to Oduyoye (1995), "Rituals are the means through which ATRs operate in human community as that which determines power influence domination and oppression". Klaus Fiedler (1996) castigates some churches who deprived women of leading religious roles, women being considered to be too immature to lead and organise themselves, with some Synods deciding that women can never meet, except in the presence of a respected man. Women gatherings such as *Chita cheHosi Yedenga*,*Chita chaMaria Mutamburi* (Legion of Mary) and *MbuyaAnna* (St Annes) are viewed with suspicion by some clergy in the diocese, for men cannot attend them. In Musami, the *Chita* women would seek approval of men to participate in the Musami post-death rituals. Their requests were vetted and approved as required by men.

Harmonious relationships are the product of hard work by committed Christians. Hypocrisy and lies in all forms should be rejected, while truth and justice are affirmed. A sense of superiority and insulated comfort should be dismantled. A false heroism of "knowing all" should be eliminated to make place for a true spirit of patriotism and common humanity. Today post-death rituals are complex and a centrally important series of events in the ritual life of several Musami Christians. They differ in size and complexity depending on circumstances of death, and the gender, the social, political, and economic status and of course the religious affiliation or commitment of the deceased.

4.17.2 Culture and Women in Musami

Most aspects of culture are no longer relevant to or are now detrimental to the communities. Culture is essentially dynamic and should change to suit changing situations; men sometimes use culture to uphold unfair and unwise practices, which are usually misinterpreted for selfish purposes. This is not to say that traditional African culture has no positive cultural values. Musami Catholic women admit that, they are sometimes consulted as to how some after death rituals should be conducted, but women of Musami are quite aware that consultation does not mean decision making (Mare 2011). Muwati et. al. (2012) in their work, *Re-discoursing African Womanhood in the Search for Sustainable Renaissance: Multi-disciplinary Approaches,* purports to show that Shona women are not oppressed, but it's about role differentiation. Clarke and Nyathi (2010), in their work *Lozikeyi Dlodlo Queen of the Ndebele,* confirm that resistance of external forces is not a new thing for the Zimbabwean women, as Queen Lozikeyi resisted colonial oppression.

4.17.3 The Significance of bonde in traditional rituals

Women were asked to sit on a full *bonde* when life begins, and on the introduction of a new *muroora* (daughter in law) into the groom's family. She was to sit on the *bonde*, and all marital counselling was done while she sat on the full *bonde*. According to Chikupo (2011),the *muroora* brought a *gate* (clay pot) and *chinyu* (oil containers) and she gave the groom's family water to bath from the *gate* (clay pot) and oil in the *chinyu*, thus when the groom's parents died, the *varoora* were expected to bring the *gate* in order to bid farewell to the deceased father-in-law or mother-in-law. Thus, the Musami *Chita* women acted as *varoora* on the St Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Day by bringing *makate* (clay pots), as they treated the deceased missionaries as their in-laws. Chezani (2011) confirms that when *muroora* dies, she belongs to her people not where she is married; that is why she is referred as *mutorwa* (foreigner) in her matrimonial family.

According to the Zezuru the *chinyu* (oil container) represents the body of the deceased, thus the husband or his relatives may be charged a cow, if the oil container is not found. According to the Mabudya popularly known as Matoko, there is a literal handover to the parents of the body of their daughter to be buried at her parents' homestead, a custom which is slowly fading. Use of the reed mat during the Musami memorial shrine celebrations was of significance. The *makate* (clay pots) of beer were placed on the reed mat, and all rituals were performed on the reed mat. The collected soils of the deceased missionaries from Chishawasha were laid in state on the half-*bondes* signifying life had stopped as confirmed by Govo (2011).

Musami Christian women have seen how difficult and problematic some of these traditional beliefs are; so a lot of today's *varoora* (daughters-in-law) have resorted to the use of modern lotions or vaseline rather than *chinyu*, and, through Christian values, they have declared peace during and after women funerals. They do not want to be treated as *vatorwa*, but as children and as legitimate members of their matrimonial family. Finally, Musami women have challenged the popular saying that some women's funeral and after death rituals are problematic where misunderstandings are tone of the day.

The Musami women have contributed a lot as far as death and post-death rituals are concerned. They have challenged exclusion from some post-death rituals, and have managed to address some of the challenges met during and after death by indigenous women.

4.17.4 Widowhood in Musami

Edwin Smith in *African Idea of God* (1950) writes of confraternities or secret societies as well as participation in cultural practices associated with widowhood; this readily indicates another variety of societal challenges for Christian engagement in Musami. Though

attitudes or interpretations may vary among the villages, clans, denominations of these subjects, yet the challenges constituted by cultural practices in Musami have affected most women. Customs require that the widows should not go to the graveside, should anoint the face of the deceased husband with cooking oil, or should sleep with the corpse (as the case in Mutoko), thus widows are subject to torture and punishment, sometimes by implication (even if fortuitous) which gives the erroneous impression that the widow caused the death of her husband. As if this is not enough, other inhumane practices are the solitary confinement of the widow; the requirement that she should be unkempt (with dirty clothing), or in mourning black attire (*sori*) and desolate looking, plus the restriction movement confining her to the homestead. Below are some of the abuses experienced by Musami widows:

- Any culturally unapproved move by the widow would result in stigmatisation, resulting in the full implementation of the customary sanctions against the "dissident" widow (Masarirambi 2011).

- By shaving their hair, women are symbolically killing their former self, and rising to new life. The act of shaving of one's hair underlines one's commitment to a new vision of life. In terms of indigenous spiritual beliefs, one cuts off his/her old self, and embraces a new personality (De Gruchy 1991:17).

- At the *kurova guva* widows (young and old) are forced to jump the *tsvimbo* (knobkerrie of the deceased husband) as evidence that they have not been sleeping around after death of their husband (Tseriwa 2011).

- Most widows are mere guests at funerals as well as after-death celebrations. Nearly all rites are imposed, to make matters worse by fellow women, who work under close male instructions, on who would be dominating in the administration of the funeral (during and after) on the grounds that the widow is a *mutorwa* (foreigner/stranger) (Shereni and Gonzo 2011).

Inculturation generally appeals to African traditions and cultures as source for theological articulation. However, these traditions and cultures have been identified by Musami Catholic women, as at least socially and ideologically ambiguous in so far as they have not always been friendly to women, or in so far as they have positively promoted the oppression of women. The contributions by some Musami women show that inculturation, is shaped by different ways in which it is used to synthesise aspects of both Christian faith and indigenous systems of knowledge. The Musami Christian women cannot be forever kept at bay. Their participation in Musami, within the circles of the Shona traditional religion, was a stepping stone. The voice of women in traditional Shona culture has been and still should be accorded the attention it deserves. It should be also placed in the mainstream of religio-cultural dialogue, because of the collective wisdom which it brings with it.

For Musami women, inculturation, like any development in life or thinking that involves cultures, does not happen by plan or theory. It happens when the people involved feel free to live, and express themselves in the terms that best respond to their experience, and the mental, or interactive frameworks within which they are most truly themselves. This applies to liturgy, ecclesiology, marriage, religious life and after-death activities. Culture is a reality that has a life of its own, and keeps growing, changing, adapting, and responding to new events and environmental changes as observed by Fr Adolfo Nicholas SJ (2010). He further states that inculturation is a way of living in a wider context, whatever makes human life human. Thus, the encounter between culture and faith is ongoing, mutually influential and hopefully a source of ongoing growth and purification. Musami women have entered the ecclesiastical and academic scene in Zimbabwe, albeit in limited numbers, and have been exposed, in one way or another. The complexity of the process of inculturation needs a serious doctrinal development from the Musami women's perspective, not so that they are second class Christians but seriously change the current theological outlook. Inculturation can never be a once-and-for-all event. To be authentic, Christians have to consistently interrogate, engage and reflect on the women's worldview that they encounter.

4.17.5 Effects of Inculturation on Musami Women

The Musami women called for the Catholic Church to give a gender sensitive expression to the church teachings and practices. Women advocated for a church which was responsive to the Musami women needs and conditions. It is easy on hindsight, to speak of Shona culture meeting Western and Christian cultures in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance, and search of those common elements that reinforce the values embedded in each culture. This has not been always the case. Gender injustice did not create space for the Musami women and culture. The dominant group of male overlords did not recognize that the Musami women had their own wisdom, insights and value that informed the lives of the Musami women until their participation in the Musami Mission Memorial Shrine Service.

Oduyoye (1997: 28) goes on to say that, "It is only those who existentially engage in African traditional rituals that benefit from them". For Oduyoye and others, it is African women who can modify, ratify and transform ritual practices as they deem fit, given the fact that sometimes inculturation does not spare them from oppression and suppression. Sipho Mtetwa (1998:59) sums it all and when he observed that popular and other writings on the experience of gender balance have been dramatised, caricatured and captured in graphic detail by various individuals and inculturation.

The effects of inculturation at Musami effects were to alter, disrupt and destroy, what Olufemi Taiwo (1993) calls "indigenous modes of knowledge production," which resulted in Musami women succumbing to a sort of "recurrent reduction" whereby culture and cultural products are accorded the status of epiphenomenal manifestations of more structural orders. It should be acknowledged that the inculturation agenda brought in new epistemic structures, new ways of being human were prescribed, new modes of perceiving and describing the world were preached and enforced. Christianity imposed a new moral conscientiousness and new forms of identity, women were no longer treated as outsiders,

but as insiders like their male counterparts, who abhorred and despised social institutions and cultural beliefs against women.

Mudimbe (1988) warns against the dangers of naïve culturalism, a new mixed cultural order. First there can be no doubt, that inculturation is an oppositional discourse, whose goal is to resist and displace the epistemic claims of a male inflected Christianity. Secondly, the other way in which inculturation relates to Musami women is through its commitment to deconstruct the epistemic systems and beliefs of male theology.

Practitioners of inculturation and some Musami Catholic women attempted to recover the goods of a depressed, subjugated and travestied indigenous cultural memory. Mudimbe (1998: 14) further states that inculturation has taken the form of a celebratory "return" to all the elements of this African past before its advent. One of the claims of Western thought according to Mudimbe has been the idea that, Western cultures together with ATR are all shaped and driven by a universal rationality, which can and whose historical mission is to subsume, purify and correct any aberrations, such as those represented by non-Western culture.

Women advocate that not everything in African cultures may be useful for the purpose of inculturation; some elements have to be purified rather than others and some have to be totally rejected outright especially those which treat women as second class citizens of this world, or even exclude and discriminate women, especially with regards to abuses experienced during death, and after death ceremonies

Isabel Phiri (1998) calls the process of dealing with gender justice in Africa, "a joint partnership between men and women," to restore relations and wholesomeness among the two genders in Africa. These calls do not undercut the issues raised by feminist and womanists in the struggle for redressing gender inequity. Rather they embrace a

fundamentally contextual, yet holistic, analysis and hermeneutic of gender inequality to the extent that one context has socio-historically differed from the other (1998:2). The amplitude of recent meetings by the Musami Christian women shows that African Christianity has assumed such formidable stature, and prominence that it cannot be ignored, at least in Africa. These women gathering poignantly allude to the need for dialogue between African male traditionalists and the Musami women. The genius of African traditional life in community is the mosaic of which is aptly portrayed by Amba Oduyoye in her article, *the role of African Christian beliefs and practices from Christian theology*, she points succinctly to the contribution of African indigenous beliefs and practices to Christian theology. In another context Maluleke (1997) contests Kwame Bediako's (1992) claims that Africa's prime religions remain a cubicle within which the gospel was prepared for permanent embeddedness. Maluleke (1997: 219) argues that African religious traditions and practices are "systems-that are essentially independent of Christianity", even as these systems continue to exist alongside Christianity.

Musami Christian women are aware of variations on how inculturation supports some rituals which ill-treat women among Shona groups. However, there are certain broad concepts which are common, and certain kingpin rituals exists inspite of the plea to revisit them. Musami women have asked for review of the malechauvinistic mind set, traditional focus on wisdom was overshadowed by conformity with European Christian faith standards. Women of Musami have bemoaned lack of formulation of appropriate cultural sociological evangelistic outreach programmes which know no boundary of colour, gender or race, but accommodate all.

4.17.6 Empowerment of Women during Post-Death Rituals

Literature is replete with definition of and explanations for empowerment. Some authorities suggest that empowerment can be defined as "to give official authority or legal power" (Holpp 2004). Today's environment is characterised by global competition, gender

issues, continuous changes, and informed societies. In such an environment, indigenous women achieve excellence through gender-sensitised people who have freedom to think, act and above all question procedures that interfere with women's issues. Women's organisations (both religious and non-religious) believe the route to achieving excellence in women empowerment (as evidenced by the full-time involvement of the Musami women during the 1983 Memorial service) is very possible.

For Holpp (2004:42) empowerment means that decisions are made where the work gets done. This means that, wherever possible, team members who actually do the work will have a say in how it is planned, organised and carried out. Sell (2001) views empowerment as delegating to the most appropriate level of responsibility to take action to improve performance. Lloyd and Berthelot (2004:17) agree that women should empower themselves to have a sense of determination, a sense of meaning, a sense of competency, a sense of impact and a sense of ownership. Musami Catholic women have started supporting each other during death and post-death celebrations by not succumbing to oppressive traditional rites, such as *kugarwa nhaka* (inheritance), and putting on black mourning dress.

What Musami Catholic women are asking for is empowerment which entails: giving women authority to make decisions, and to act without having to get approval each time; allowing women to use their intelligence, experience initiation and creativity to increase organisational effectiveness and listening to women and acknowledging and using their ideas, whenever death or post-death rites are celebrated, since most of the function is female dominated (Majome 2011).

Musami women have seen some potential benefits in being empowered. It enables a latent knowledge to be utilised, and again empowerment leads to increased commitment, since there is genuine participation, and involvement in decisions affecting women even during

inculturation debates. However, Musami women are quite aware of several forms of empowerment such as fake empowerment and genuine empowerment, as observed by Kuda Mutsimbi in *Feminists Leadership: A Newsletter of the Women's Trust* (2006:16). The former is the most widely talked about in various circles. As the name implies, fake empowerment is devoid of genuineness.

4.18 Non-Catholics' Response to Post-Death Rites

Although Musami has enjoyed a Catholic monopoly for almost a century, owing to cross-cultural marriages and the expatriate influx, non-Catholic denominations have found a space in the hearts of the Musami community, such as the Anglican communion hosting Saint Bernard Mzeki and St John's Chikwaka, whose members also have dual allegiance to both the Christian faith and the local Zezuru tradition, but in addition upholding Catholic practices such as November being the month of the dead; for they also commemorate the first of November as All Saints' Day and the second of November as All Souls' day on their liturgical calendar.

Several AICs have found ground in Musami,maybe owing to poor pastoral care by some Catholic clerics who lacked personal touch for the faithful. Top of the list are Johanne Masowe weChishanu and Nguotsvuku, along with several apostolic groups such as Vadzidzi vekwaWimbo and Marange who have diluted the once Catholic territory. However, their post-death theology is problematic, in that there is a lot of mixture, with traditional ceremonies given a Christian coating.

A few Pentecostal congregations and assemblies are in their infancy, like ZAOGA and AFM. These have influenced and affected the Musami Catholic community as far as death and post-death ceremonies are concerned. According to Jani and Kaseke (2011), most of these denominations criticise Musami Catholics for tolerating African traditional beliefs and

values; but secretly there are also some Pentecostal members who practice dual allegiance. For most Pentecostal assemblies anything indigenous is demonic, and works of the devil therefore, cannot be incorporated into the Christian Church. They are rebuked in the outmost terms, observed Chezani (2011).

Mudzidzi Granzwenzi (2012) applauds Catholics for attempting to merge local beliefs and the Christian faith and rebukes some of the Pentecostal followers for presiding over the *kurova guva* rituals in secret. For him, their spirit type apostolic sects do not accept *kurova guva*, but in its place they do the *nyaradzo* (consolation service). In the *nyaradzo*, ritual elements which are regarded as un-Christian are removed, and those seen to be consistent with Christian beliefs are preserved. The ritual (*nyaradzo*) is more than a consolation as there is also the idea of escorting the soul of the deceased to heaven, where he/she will help to prepare a place for the living, as observed by Zwana (2000: 13).

4.19 Conclusion

The above chapter showed the relevance and significance of the St Paul's Mission Memorial Service at Musami. The Musami community had no clear catechesis on matters of the living and communion with the dead, so Musami Catholics managed to put together a comprehensive local ritual with liturgical celebrations, particularly in the light of the St Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Shrine of the murdered missionaries. This chapter has explored the mystery of death and concept of communion between the living and the living-dead from a Christian point of view, by highlighting the role played by local Catholics in making Christianity relevant to local needs by pressing for the recognition of indigenous post-death practices. It is equally clear that full and active participation of women is a pre-requisite for social transformation and progress in the inculturation debate. This chapter drew a comparison between the Musami Memorial Liturgy and the traditional *kurova guva*, by pointing out similarities and differences of the ritual. The Church's position was given by the Archbishop, who saw a contradiction between the local rituals and Christian doctrine.

In a nutshell, this chapter gave historical overview of the St Paul's Musami Mission, since inception up to the killing of the seven missionaries, and related how their spirits were laid to rest in accordance with indigenous culture. Musami managed to have a grounded model of contextualization which cannot be universalized.

This chapter also looked at the Catholics' response to post-death rituals. The Musami community managed a breakthrough by looking at the criticality of inculturation from below, thereby reaching out to Christians beyond the confinement of the Catholic Church. The Musami local church used inculturation as a window to promote gender justice and confirmed that each member in the church had a role to perform in the transforming of the church, by contributing to the divine life, and showed that the laity too had an essential part to play, for one cannot honestly speak of living in a proper Christian community when the laity are systematically excluded from any in part the decision-making in their own church. The following chapter will analyse data from the study and give a conclusion of the whole study.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS

5.0 Introduction

This study looked at the implantation of Christianity in Zimbabwe, the contextualisation debate and the Musami Mission Memorial Service. A number of lessons can be learned and deployed in the diocese and other churches, although situations and contexts are different. Ethnic particularity and sensitivity is very important, since the Church is universal, but expressed locally.

Catholics in Musami have responded contextually as far as post-death rituals are concerned. Musami Catholics believe that ancestors are similar to the Christian saints as they are seen interceding the same way ancestors do. The Catholic Church has sought to retrieve African spiritual values relevant to the Church today.

For the Church death is irresistible and inevitable; while it separates the living and the dead, it does not bring total separation, as there still remains some form of communication between the living and the dead. To commemorate the lives of the faithfully departed and others who are not known by their names, Mother Church celebrates the Feast of All Souls on the second of November each year.

5.1 The Musami Mission's Shift to Acted Theology

According to Shorter (1998: 37) the church in Africa has had an anti-urban bias. It started in the rural areas before many towns were founded. Later church centres moved from the country side to the city. The church has tried to address mobile factor enhancing human

potential to improve conditions and to help people(the faithful) undergo a change of heart. Combining the urban and rural pastorate has been difficult, especially when new towns have mushroomed in rural areas, the so-called growth points.

A growth-point mentality has moved the Musami community from the "closed society" to an "open society," which according to Hackett (2012), has alternative courses of action, thus, patterns of thought or integrating theories change. Change may be radical, but it is seldom total. There are continuities as well as discontinuities (Shorter 1997: 29). Nevertheless, cultural diversity increasingly seems to present possibilities rather than difficulties, as observed by Patrick (2000: 5). The sense of cultural pluralism has an inevitable impact on theology. The work of theology is to study questions asked about one's faith; but if there are many cultures and backgrounds, many different questions will surface with responses producing different theologies. One can say all theologies are product of a particular and limited historical and cultural experience (Ryan 2000: 10). Theology, according to John Paul II, should be rooted in the word of God. Culture cannot replace the word of God. Otherwise what happened to the Judaisers would happen again in Africa. In Musami, the Church made a strong effort to re-root Christianity in the cultural context of African people, undertaking a re-assimilation process, and trying to build their identity. The Musami Catholics managed to have an acted theology (the real and effective theology) which the nascent African church should accept and imitate, rather than a talked theology.

There was tension in Musami between what the Church said, and what the tradition had instituted with regards to post-death rites. Therefore, Christians who were both members of the church and the community found themselves torn between the two. Since they considered both Christianity and indigenous post-death rituals as equally important, they stuck to both, because they did not want to lose either. As a result, they led a dualistic life by wavering between the two worlds, thus new theologians (Musami Catholics) rose addressing themselves to the issues in front of them, and sought a Christian response to the contemporary social religious issues that had affected the entire diocese.

This emergent Musami theology brought light to other new dimensions of the gospel. It was a theology relevant and conducive to a particular context, fully natured and keenly participated in by the indigenous without excluding the participation of people from other contexts, such as other Christian communities, and missionaries who came from all over the world. This was a down-to-earth theology which triggered a productive change in the African's attitude to Christianity rather than imposing alien patterns, and was often intelligible to African according to Sarpong (1972). "The Christian at worship must give his (and her) best; our best is our own culture that makes meaning to us without limitations".

The interaction between Musami and Western cultures provided both cultures with an opportunity to develop, since both camps expanded their world-views in the face of their differences. Somehow, the Musami Catholic community realised the African dream by demonstrating that signs of the times needed integration.

Having observed the Musami memorial shrine celebration, one can see that the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe needs a second liberation, one much more profound than the first one, which changes the people from inside. The Church should continue to find inspiration for understanding new situations and facing new theological challenges. The Church needs the restoration and renovation of positive African values and traditions, which should not be uncritically abandoned, but which penetrates in all areas.

5.2 The Second Vatican Council's Impact in Musami

The Church should take seriously Pope John XXIII who made an announcement on the need for reform in the Church. He also announced the convening of the Second Vatican Council (11th October, 1962 – 8th December, 1965), and called the entire Church to pray for it – thus a new wind was blowing from Rome which led a number of faithful to be more forceful with

their demands on the church. The Second Vatican Council was a huge wave in the history of the Church, yet not as much has been done as could be to publicise the effect of the council, for the ordinary faithful. The documents of the Council have remained treasures for theologians and those in priestly formation, and "inaccessible" to ordinary Catholics as observed by Muropa (2012: 2). Muropa (2012: 3) adds that Catholics (lay or religious) must understand what the Council taught, and how it enriches the lives of believers, the role of the laity, and how the Church understands herself, and her relationship with other Christians and non-Christians.

The significant statement of the Second Vatican Council *Ad gentes* 19 has to be put into practice:

> ...faith should be imported by means of a well adopted catechism, and celebrated in a liturgy that is in harmony with the character of the people. It should also be embodied by suitable canonical legislation in the health institutions and customs of the locality (Ott 1998: 104).

Thus, Musami liturgical celebrations were in harmony with the character of the people. In Article 40 of the Sacred Liturgy, the Second Vatican Council addressed the relationship between the Gospel, and local cultures. Vatican II invites the Church of today to find out ways, and means of bringing the gap between that of Christian faith and the different cultures of the world, between the Gospel of Christ, and the daily experiences and concerns of the people. Again, the Musami Catholic community in line with the Second Vatican Council's expectations produced their own way of celebrating the deceased martyrs.

The Musami Memorial Service has brought new circumstances in the Church's mission, making the faithful realise that new evangelisation requires finding new approaches to evangelisation, so as to be the Church in today's ever-changing social and cultural situations. Pope John Paul II (1982) could not emphasis more than this when he said, "The moment has come to commit all the Church's energies to a new evangelisation".

5.3 Proposals for Resolving Theological Challenges

One key challenge already identified in the phenomenon is a syncretistic fusion of the gospel and traditional cultural elements. It is not the gospel that has evangelised culture, but the other way round. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* states that evangelisation includes preaching, catechesis, liturgy, and the sacramental life of people, popular piety and witness of a Christian life (EN 17, 21, 28). There is a form of rigid conformity to traditions and the status quo in the church as a whole, which fails to take sufficiently into account the present spiritual needs of its flock. The church is stuck in liturgical fences rather all-embracing liturgy. Emerging from the challenges observed inthis research, the study makes the following recommendations:

5.3.1 Catechesis

An informative and transformative catechesis is what the Church needs. It is not enough for people to attend catechetical formation simply, because they want a particular sacrament. Dioceses should introduce an on-going catechetical formation together with proper catechist training, for Catechism is precious and entrusting its instruction to catechist without needed training is a gross violation of the rights of the people of God. In the *Porta Fidei* Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI (2011), called upon Catholics to;

> ...rediscover and study the fundamental content of faith that receives its systematic and organic synthesis in the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).

It is true that Catholics need to re-learn their catechism, but not just by reciting memorised answers (Nyagwaya2012: 22). He indicated that experiences of life were dynamic and cannot be responded to by memorised answers only. Although memorised answers are still important, they are skeletons which the flesh needs. In many cases Catholics cannot deal with challenges such as post-death rituals.

The Musami Christian community found courage to tread the path first traced out by their pioneers, for Christianity did not grow upon a kind of culture-free vacuum, as Bujo (1992: 58) observed, but always been in living dialogue with the surrounding culture. The Church has an important role to play in assisting this new society which depends on striking a right balance between the new and old schools. Christian preaching (homilies and sermons) should help to restore the confidence of the people of Zimbabwe in their cultural heritage. So, the Church needs an enlightened catechesis that knows how to distinguish between traditions which are still alive in the hearts of the faithful, even if only implicitly, and those which have truly died. This catechesis needs to be able to discriminate so that it may be seen which traditions should be maintained, or perhaps recalled from a kind of cultural limbo into which they may have fallen. There is no need for irrelevant, lifeless, and theoretical theology, and for elaborating theories which cannot be put into practice by the local society of today.

5.3.2 Upgrading of Theological Training

The Church needs to demystify theology, and take it to the laity. She needs portable and useful methods of doing theological reflection for the laity. Theological studies should be affordable to the laity. Some theological institutions have started doing it, such as Wadzanai (Borrowdale), but more needs to be done. Lack of proper teaching (catechesis) on African after-death rituals, and Christian post-death rites on the part of the faithful should be taken seriously. Current methods of catechising are not adequate to equip the faithful properly with the practical knowledge of death and post-death rituals. Clear teaching on hagiology and ancestrology should be taught so that they make sense in the light of present day liturgical celebrations. Paul John Paul II (1982) says:

> The synthesis between culture and faith is not just a demand of culture, but also of faith. A faith which does not become culture is faith which has not been fully received, not thoroughly thought through, not fully lived out.

So the Church should be ready to listen and learn, and should acknowledge new theological insights. The Catholics should change their attitude which has hardened over decades. It is understandable that it takes time to resolve what is sensitive, but the longer Catholics take to carry out reforms, the more disillusioned people could become, one could liken it to building plans for renovating a house. The plans look good on paper, but they have to be implemented.

Seminary education is still modelled on the prescriptions of the Council of Trent, as noted by Bujo (1992: 89). All is European: theology, spirituality, and style of life. Now seminaries should thought out afresh. Biblical interpretation, systematic theology, moral and pastoral theology should be connected with the actual situation in Africa. Even courses in Canon Law and Church history should take that situation as their starting point. Once candidates for priesthood have really woken up to the major problems of Africa (Zimbabwe in particular), a new kind of spirituality can be developed which situates the ministerial priesthood within the context of African theology. Zimbabwe needs priests who have arisen to meet particular needs of a particular historical context, who recognise the signs of the times. Apparently, the Church in Zimbabwe would thus have pastors who exercise careful discernment of situations, showing a high degree of concern and understanding. Given that there are quite different cultures in Zimbabwe, it should be mentioned that they may still live side by side, so that some kind of uniform pastoral approach is necessary. For this to happen, one has to speak of the necessity of spirituality which take into account the Zimbabwean background and religion, and whose idea of community includes both the living and the dead.

The Church with the help of the theological commission should transform theological training in Zimbabwe, so that Church conducts a critical and thorough evaluation of African cultures, particularly with issues relating to inculturation. Major seminaries should start on an Afro-Christian theological construction looking seriously at ATR issues which are universal in Africa, and be able to streamline ATR issues which are particular to a targeted

area, and help future priests to deal with and handle death and post-death rites properly, in order to contribute positively towards healing, and the removal of fear associated with post-death rituals. It should be noted that all theological endeavours on inculturation should be completed with attention to church politics, and power sharing; otherwise any theology would lose the energy, and creativity for further engagement of the local in the global. A lot of theological research has to be done, enabling new models for a world-wide church, united in diversity, integrated ecumenically and continuously discerning the signs of the times.

5.3.3 The Need for a Theological Commission

There is also need to appeal to traditional theological concepts, and search for some problems associated with doing, or not doing certain rituals such as *kurova guva* and many more, so as to address some relevant issues to the Zimbabwean situation. There is then need for the appointment of a permanent active and vibrant Theological Commission which would deal with present day-to-day issues among them, clear teaching on hagiology and ancestriology. The commission should also help in vigorous campaigns of enlightened catechesis which clearly distinguish traditional values which are still alive in the hearts of the African Christians, and those which are dead, since the local Christian community has always been subjected to temptation in two opposite directions in its relation to the world, either to flee the world and be separate from it or to embrace the world and absorb it as observed by Come (1993) in his work, *Agents of Reconciliation*.

5.3.4 Gender and the Local Church

Wermter (2012) has accused the Church of demeaning and de-humanising women; some cultural misogyn of the past has infected the church. Chitando (2007: 26) argues that gender injustice is not given the serious attention it deserves by the church. Shona males in Zimbabwe, and indeed in most African contexts, wield a lot of power which should be used

positively to ensure that women are also treated fairly. Theological rigidity, asserts Chitando (2007: 2), accounts for the slow pace with which the Church is moving and intellectual aridity has rendered the church irrelevant and unresponsive to gender issues at the heart of the HIV and AIDS pandemic.

Silence has its own effects when applied wrongly, it can bring fatal results. Both Church leaders and the laity are sailing in the same boat. One should not close eyes and mouth, when one crazy person takes a hammer and a chisel and makes a hole in the boat. If one does not speak loudly they will all drown and perish. Sermons should be contextually sensitive, they should also address gender issues and suffering imposed on women (especially during post-death rituals), and challenge all forms of injustice and proclaim abundant life for all as promised in John 10:10, thus transforming choking cultural and traditional systems into rivers of life (Chitando 2007: 1). Some preaching and teaching about post-death rituals has divided the church; for there is no consensus as far as after death ceremonies are concerned. Some dioceses, for instance Masvingo, have the Supa Roma, a splinter movement, as the result of failing to come up with a decent and authentic post-death theology.

5.3.5 Church Leadership and Signs of The Times

A great discovery of today's generation is that one can change his/her circumstances by changing one's attitude of mind. Church officials should go into the world and be the vanguard of the beginning of a new paradigm shift. Bishops should never give up on seeking new information, and should also resist the temptation of resorting to shortcuts for this will lead to unnecessary delays. Bishops should help in building an authentic local church that is not spoon-fed, but which enables the faithful to stand on their own feet, and accept the responsibility of caring for one another as brothers and sisters in Christ. The prelates should encourage a laity-driven church rather than a cumbersome church bureaucracy, with a sign of openness to the whole segments of the Christian life, and church

drawn into new networks and in this process there is a changing church which is not constantly over-rigid, but dynamically adapting to new situations and facing new challenges.

Pope John XXIII called the Second Vatican Council in order to bring the church up-to-date (Bujo 1992: 13). It should be noted that one of the achievements of the Council was to produce non-European theological models, and in that way to suggest questions which could not be answered simply on the basis of the tradition (Bujo 1992: 14).

5.3.6 Rome and the Local Church

The African Synods (1994, 2004) should have been unique forums to assess what has been done, and what remained to be done, all in the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. However, the *lineamenta* for the synod was collated into one document which became the *Instrumentum laboris* (The working document),and was prepared entirely in Rome without paying attention to the real problems that affect the continent (Mpako 2000: 55). It is remarkable that African bishops put forward the question of the "legitimate autonomy of the local Churches" when submitting their comments on the *Lineamenta* for African Synod (Mpako 2000: 56). However, the church is hierarchical, not a democracy.

"It cannot be ignored", remarked Alberigo (1992: 203), "that the preparation has been made up to now without giving a say to those most directly interested – the Africans". The *lineamenta* text was disappointing and very inadequate to its reference to crucial aspects of Christian presence on the African continent according to Alberigo (1992: 204). The Church seems often to answer questions that people today do not really ask, and to the questions that people do really have, the church seems to have no answers. This could be because people are not asking right questions.

The arbitrary appointment of bishops in some Zimbabwean dioceses is another matter of concern. It is evident that a bishop from another culture and of another language is seriously handicapped in his ministry. Often the result is almost intolerable tension between the bishop and the diocese. In all matters, the impression is that Rome equates material and economic underdevelopment with religious and spiritual underdevelopment. Bujo (1992: 88) noted that bishops and priests have been placed at the head of the Eucharist assembly. Their position, however, is not simply one of privileges, bringing honour to the occupants. It is rather a matter of service, *diakonia*. Priests and bishops who preside at the Eucharistic assembly should thereby become aware of the multifarious and often crushing problems of the faithful. Bujo (1992: 92) observed the danger of some bishops of regarding themselves as experts in all fields ignoring advice even from the priests who are supposed to be their collaborators, and the faithful.

5.3.7 What should be Inculturated?

Inculturation is concerned with ATR. In fact, according to Verstraelen (1998: 31), it is the entire Christian life that needs to be Inculturated, liturgy, sacraments, translation of the bible, the whole life encompassing the whole being of a person. The Bible needs to be translated into settings that are different from its own.

It should be mentioned that attempts to discourage African Christians from veneration their dead have had negative effects, for local Christians venerated their dead in secret, and African ancestors according to Verstraelen (1998: 32) do not belong to the past, but still form a vital past, giving cohesion and identity in the changing flux of life.

Makamure (2012) confirms that somehow substantial ground has been covered as regards death, post-death and inculturation; but the local church has not done enough research. Makamure encouraged the Universal Church to discontinue or reduce imposition of

limitations, as in the African Synod of 1994 and 2009, where the Vatican prepared the *lineamenta* (working paper) giving guidelines of what should be discussed (directive), thus limiting on how and when it was to be discussed. One could see that the Vatican imposition gives limited space. The *Lineamenta* restricted creative to contributions. It is not possible to prescribe standards for what as these would differ with according to the nature of the topic being investigated. Most cultures and tribes have their own specific requirements which govern, among other things, the way they do things.

It is not an exaggeration to confirm that all areas of life need proper inculturation from rites of passage (birth, adolescence, marriage, death, burial and after death), bereavement management, liturgy and even administration. Canon law should be contextual.

Inculturation has been hitherto more of concept, with no serious translation from on paper. It has been taken for granted that the inculturation process is in the hands of experts (the elite); yet it is a process to allow the Church with wisdom to avoid errors with the Gospel gospel message, to make sense and connect the laity with the divine. Unfortunately, experts (the missionaries) locked out values thus leading to tragic mistakes. Some local values were good, but were totally disregarded, so as to promote half Christians and syncretism.

This study refers to several African scholars like the missionaries who concentrated on inculturation from the top, and thus were pre-occupied with inculturation from the top. The Musami Mission experiment critically, took on inculturation from below. This was a breakthrough through privileging the experiences, lived realities and voices of the lay Catholics of Musami and other lay Christians.

The Musami community saw that inculturation needed flexibility, creativity, openness and inspiration and thus an inclusive approach. An encouraging sign of this snail-pace journey

towards change happened in Musami, under Musami Christians. Some local Catholics also sought to weave an inclusive theology, to overcome women's subordination in Christian and Shona culture. Inclusive theology therefore, reflected on an interface between theology and culture (Uchem2001: 241). The Musami Mission Catholic community took inculturation seriously, as a process of shifting cultures in the light of Jesus' Good News of liberation, and inclusion by trialogue between the received gospel, Shona culture and the Good News, making a contextual theology.

Musami saw a need for inculturation that had to involve African religio-cultural worldviews, by encouraging the Church to walk on "two feet of love" (love of God and love of African culture), by helping its adherents to have an outward conversion that demonstrated a complete inward change in the mind and the will of the believer (being born again).

5.3.8 Promoting Ecumenical Spirituality

The Catholic Church cannot discuss inculturation on its own; the quest of inculturation should be ecumenical. There is need for a guided, wider interaction with people of other forms of Christianity, and even other faiths in the spirit of ecumenism. This should be done with due care and respect, so as not to interfere with the essential Christian doctrines and dogmas. In the light of the HIV/ AIDS pandemic, the scourge of which does not spare Christian families, interdenominational pastoral centres should integrate and articulate various inter-denominational pastoral programmes, by offering some basic techniques of counseling the dying and bereaved.

Ecumenism can never be perfect, until everyone is a Catholic, and all Christians are not just spiritually, but visibly united. A difference of opinion is not a division of the Church in the strict sense. People may differ in opinion, but the Church is still one. "*Extra ecclesiam nulla salus*", that is, no salvation outside the church, is too broad.

The Musami family of today comprises Christian and non-Christian members. It is this dichotomy in Christian families that has brought in a lot of religious discrepancies. It emerged from the research that some weak and defenceless Shona Christian members of the family were sometimes coerced to participate in the Shona traditional rituals for the dead. To address this discrepancy, a new-evangelisation should be proposed, spiritually aggressive enough to revive small Christian communities holistically with an articulate emphasis on family as a whole.

5.3.9 Catholics and Self-Talk

Catholics' pre-occupation with soliloquy (self-talk) should be set aside. If Zimbabwean Christianity is to move forward, the quest has to be done in dialogue. Catholics should be challenged to stop self-talk as far as inculturation is concerned. Considerable ground has been covered; Catholics debating among self should be encouraged to reach out to Christianity beyond confinements of the Catholic Church. For some Catholics, non-Catholics do not belong to the body of the Church, but to the soul of the Church according to McClymont (2014). So, Protestants belong to the soul of the Church, not to the body. The rebellion of the Protestants against the Catholic Church is a historical fact. For Catholics, the title "Protestants" is not a label, but a new name for an identifiable point of Christianity. The relationship between Christian teaching and the practice by some Christians is not one, which suggests that there is disconnection somehow on the essential system between the two.

The situation of Catholics, according to Mabiri (2007: 82), portrays a very serious problem of syncretism, which poses a great challenge before people of God. The problem seems to be compounded by many elements, and therefore, is very complex according to Mabiri. Its complexity seems to emanate from varied situations. These seem to be unwarranted fear of the spirits, uncertainty in one's Christian faith, the apparent ignorance of one's faith and

obstinacy in attachment to tradition (Mabiri 2007: 82). Catholics should remove their superiority complex and interact with other churches, and stop labeling them with unreasonably insulting designations.

5.3.10 Inculturation and Pastoral Components

One may not debate inculturation while missing out pastoral components and several church documents on inculturation may be used as a window to promote gender justice, empowerment, and a sense of social justice. Such a practice of inclusion will involve both a shift in consciousness regarding women's nature and roles, and a practical implementation of the new consciousness (Uchem 2001: 242). Ruzivo (2013) says the Church is equally guilty, when it comes to women issues, as far as gender relations are concerned, as the record has not been impressive.

Most discourses on inculturation have been gender blind, and have not seen the opportunity availed to promote gender injustice, and have been going along with what has been happening. In this case, doing justice is to recognise women's equal humanity, autonomy and its practical implementation by the full inclusion of women in the human, and ecclesiastical community in ritual leadership, and governance (Uchem, 2001: 242). Let women be asked to give their views, and give mopping up strategies tackling some of their problems, since some interpretations of the Bible are not fair to women.

Inculturation should therefore, tackle the deeper issues of the Musami women's cultural subordination which has been reinforced by Christians, as Gaggawala (1999) puts it dialogue between the gospel and the local culture is important. Women have suggested a trilogue among the received gospel (which is a mixture of Greco-Roman culture with Christianity), the Gospel itself and the liberating good News of Jesus Christ (Uchem 2001:

228). Inculturation should help in a participative liturgy which is creative and nourishing to all sharing it (Uchem 2001: 233).

5.4 Characteristics of an African Spirituality

Having looked at some of the theories which do not work in today's society, one has to look at the practical or acted theology by which the Musami Christian community shared their experiences according to a particular perspective. One can speak of African (Shona) spirituality only in a limited context, which is limited to a common cultural spectrum. Maybe it is proper to look at what spirituality is all about.

Traditionally, Shona thinking has been described as being holistic and systemic rather than analytical (Louw 2000: 72). In Shona spirituality, there is no division and/or differentiation between the animate and inanimate, between spirit and matter, dead and living, physical and metaphysical, secular and sacred, the body and spirit. Berinyuu (1985: 5) underlines the fact that most Africans generally believe that all things (human beings included) are in constant relationship with one another and with the invisible world and that people are in a state of complete dependence upon these invisible powers and beings.

Spirituality is an aspect of any religion, regardless of what religion it maybe. According to Skhakhane (2000: 121) to be religious means being grasped or governed by a particular concern which is of central value to a person, which affects a person in his/her way of thinking, acting or feeling. One tends to respond and react to other beings and to nurture as a whole in accordance with one's religious conviction. It is what Tillich (1964: 50) calls ultimate concern or ultimate value. Theo Witvliet (1985: 100) says;

> In religion we have a manifestation of this restless search of identity for the fulfillment of not yet. So religion is not a finished affair. It is more than simply reactionary... it is also an expression of utopia, of longing for the manifestation of the *homo absconditus*, the person who is still hidden.

Spirituality is lived faith, just as blood keeps one alive; spirituality is a permanent and constant source of life, which emanates from the very depth of a person. This is not possible if someone is estranged from one's culture.

Skhakhane (2000: 120) sees spirituality having several shades of meaning. According to the *Dictionary of Christian Spirituality*;

> This is a word, spirituality which has come much into vogue to describe those attitudes, beliefs and practices which animate people's lives and help them reach out towards super-sensible realities

The author goes on to add, "It has not always had this meaning in English". In one sense spirituality could be considered merely as something which is in contrast to the secular. The *Oxford English Dictionary*, for example, gives the following definition of spirituality: "Spirituality is what belongs or what is due to the church or an ecclesiastic".

At times one speaks of material or spiritual things and beings. Spirituality, is therefore, concerned with life as a whole. It means that which influences a person to live in a mode that is truly fulfilling in which he/she is brought up. An indigenous Musami Christian was, in addition to traditional values, also expected to uphold and live on the Western Christian values which s/he has been educated. This state of affairs resulted in an untold painful inner struggle.

According to Skhakhane (2000: 125), the African worldview does not entertain any dichotomy between that which is spiritual and that which is material. Everything works for the total welfare of a human being. The community is the core of African spirituality (Dlungwana 2000: 132) by "community", here is not only meant the living, but also the living-dead. By way of a corollary one could say that African spirituality is a spirituality of responsible stewardship towards creation including mutual relationship, as rightly advocated by Skhakhane (2000: 127). For him, spirituality is what each community has accepted as a basic principle of their welfare, and therefore a driving force of their actions in an attempt to attain that very goal of life. In the African context, the whole life of persons

constitutes the field of spirituality so that one does not need to distinguish between spirituality and the material world, because everything falls under the category of the sacred. In a word, as Magesa (1998: 74) puts it;

> "Africa has no need for spiritualism. On the contrary, Africa is crying for Christian spirituality which has formed, which is incarnated, which acts and also offers tangible results in terms of bringing about peace, justice and reconciliation among people as Jesus came to do".

"For Africans", according to Witvliet (1985: 95):

> "There is unity and continuity between the destiny of human persons and the destiny of the cosmos… the victory of life in human person is also the victory of life in the cosmos".

Xolile Keteyi (1991: 24) describes African spirituality as an experience:

> …the joyful recognition that the values of our forebears still abide deep down in us. That is, with an experienced spirit or attitude something that goes further than the individual person, and reaches out the other person.

Pobee (1983: 5) is more elaborate in outlining the characteristics of African spirituality. He sees it as a personal and human relationship with God, that is, the peculiar manner in which an African in his or her totality appropriates the salvific mission of Christ. Keteyi and Pobee lament the fact that Western Christianity, and the manner in which it explained the doctrine of the Bible has failed dismally to penetrate the African soul. Consequently, the African Christian (as in the Musami community) has tended to live with a dual personality which is firmly established on his or her African tradition. The Musami Mission Memorial Service should be taken seriously, and one should not take for granted the impact it had in African theology. Like all earlier movements of reform that happened in the history of the church, the St Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Service, cause local Musami Mission local Christians to be catalysts in a spiritual renewal process. Their way of life is a living testimony. Christ calls for all Christians to invest in enkindling new life and inspiration in every age.

The spirituality of the Musami Mission Memorial Shrine was also in fact a new holistic approach to Christianity, which seem to appeal more adequately to the African (Shona) world than the old Christianity had done, and in many respects seemed more satisfying than the old traditional religion has been. Furthermore, the Musami Mission Memorial Service seemed more meaningful and precise, because it continued some religious expressions which were also truly Shona, becoming an effective recruitment method, as an extremely effective form of pastoral therapy, mostly practised in private, a moral corrective and indispensable facet of Christian ministry. The Musami memorial service confirmed that Christians could be in communion with the departed sisters and brothers, parents and grand-parents, not by being hosts to their spirits, allegedly still restless and roaming about, but by bringing them home into the peace of God, and sharing in this peace themselves.

5.5 Current Debates on Post-death Rituals

Influenced by increasing debate in the Catholic publications, as well as by questions raised at diocesan Congresses, the Bishops Conference admitted at its meeting of 2nd to 3rd December, 1997 that "much confusion existed among the clergy and faithful", about the rites drawn up by the Conference in respect of the dead (ZCBC Administrative meeting 2/3 December 1997, No 126/97: 5). It has become therefore, impossible to report unanimous or majority agreement. I will attempt to summarise the debate on the Catholic attitude to the practice of *kurova guva* for the past years.

There is still widespread ignorance of the cultural–sociological facts related to *kurova guva*. There is little research on material on what is actually going on, as distinct from what people believe or say is being done. At the theological level, the basically positive approach to other religions and cultures recommended by the Second Vatican Council and subsequently upheld by the African Synods has hardly taken effect. Peter Schineller SJ (1990: 110) has observed on the difficult and delicate task of inculturation:

For inculturation to flourish, one needs a theology of grace, that is, more extensive than the world that is explicitly Christian. The concept of inculturation implies a confidence in the *semina verbi*, a conviction that the seeds of the word are present before the church enters a culture. It is difficult to be committed to inculturation and at the same time harbour elements of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* in one's ecclesiology. God, the Father must be seen as one who wills that all men and women be saved (1Timothy 2: 4).

While there might be a fairly wide consensus on the missionary principle of inculturating the gospel into African culture, most difficulties arise when it comes to the application of the general principle to a particular religious aspect or a traditional ritual. This is particularly the case with the *kurova guva* rite, since it touches upon such important aspects of culture as Shona cosmology, the Shona world of spirits, the extended family, the importance of life and the meaning of death and so on.

Nyamiti (1973: 46) has in my opinion given the framework within which a Christian veneration of the ancestors and a Christianised *kurova guva* rite have to find their appropriate theological and liturgical expression;

The idea of the Church's *koinonia* in ancestors naturally favours traditional teaching that the militant Church on earth, and the suffering and triumphant church of purgatory and heaven form one single tripartite church, in which the members are vitally and pneumatically linked together in mutual concern and faithful exchange of various benefits. The moral implications behind this teaching are that the Christian conduct of the earthly church members should always be associated with their living-dead in heaven and purgatory. This should be manifested especially in prayer and liturgical life. Such prayers and ritual activities should be addressed to these divine and human ancestors in a manner that is, as far as possible, adapted to the African traditional way of ancestral veneration … Special devotions should be shown to 'African Christian ancestors' (those African traditional ancestors who died in the state of sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit).

At the pastoral level the trend seems to be to move from an acceptance of the traditional rite *in toto* in the direction of the acceptance of positive elements of new ritual forms. At

least in the urban areas, there is a movement away from the traditional *kurova guva* to a more neutral and/or christianised form of *Nyaradzo,* and the unveiling of the tombstone. However, Ikenga-Metuh (1996: 175) is convinced that inculturation does not come so easily. An authentic inculturation effort must be preceded by in-depth research by a team of experts in various fields, ranging from biblicists, theologians, liturgists, anthropologists, specialists in ATR, church historians and many more, which many Zimbabwean dioceses or even Episcopal Conferences can ill afford. However, a firm commitment to inculturation towards the realisation of indigenous Christianity is enough to make a modest beginning. This should follow intense study, research, experimentation of theories and praxis in inculturation accompanied at every stage by intense enlightenment programmes to educate the people on the meaning and importance of inculturation (Ikenga-Metuh 1996: 176).

5.6 Areas of Further Study

This study has predominantly focused on the developments in post-death rituals among Catholics in Musami. However, as I have indicated (4.18), Musami is now characterized by a plurality of denominations. A separate study focusing on patterns of contextualization in these other churches, would be very informative. Non-Catholics helped in capturing a general trend in the debate. Catholic Church can learn lessons from other churches.

While the study has highlighted transformation of post-death rituals among Catholic women in Musami, there is need for more focus study on this theme. An assessment of women's experiences of post-death rituals would be quite valuable.

There is need to examine the impact of ethnicity in how particular Catholic theologians and Catholic Church leaders approach the theme of contextualization (history of debate).

5.7 Conclusion

In a nut-shell, proposals of resolving theological challenges were made, and the study recommended effective catechism, upgrading of theological training, and serious commitment to gender issues. The chapter noted difficulties bedeviling efforts to analyse the growth of adaptation of traditional culture and making post-death rituals more meaningful to Catholics. There was no need for substitution of the adapted method.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

The introductory chapter laid the foundation of the whole study, for it showed how the research would proceed to achieve its aim, by outlining and describing intended research objectives. Chapter two, explored elements of Shona traditional religion, as background to the traditional post-death ritual, by establishing that the Shona people are religious, and believe in the all powerful spirit, the creator of all things, whom they call *Musikavanhu* (creator).

In order to build up a strong argument, in the validity of Shona traditional practices chapter three begins by examining models of contextualisation, that have been developed within the Catholic church in Zimbabwe. This chapter illustrated the complexity of the debate on inculturation, especially in cases where the Christian gospel encounters a religious traditional world view, like that of the Shona people. Catholics do not live in a vacuum, interaction with other churches, was deemed necessary, not explaining their attitudes and practices, but indicating some trends.

Chapter four discussed in detail the relevance and significance of the St Paul's Musami Mission memorial service to the study. It explored situations and conditions that arose at Musami, since its inception up to the persecution of the seven white missionaries, and how their spirits were laid to rest, in accordance to the indigenous post-death rituals. However, the Bishop preferred to defend the status core (official position of the Church), by clinging to the model set by missionary activity, but the local (the faithful), utilizing the

recommendations of Vatican II, took up step in pragmatic inculturation. Chapter five presented data analysis of the whole study.

Shona/Musami traditional beliefs in post-death rituals have been analysed. The study also traced the debate on inculturation within the Catholic Church in Zimbabwe, which helped to explore Catholics' response towards post-death rituals in Musami, by examining the St Paul's Musami Mission Memorial Shrine liturgy thereby paving the way for the laity to take the initiative in a contextualization model (thus, passing from a theoretical framework to empirical evidence), which brought about the academic study of the Musami Shrine.

Current models of contextualization have been inadequate and inconsistent with the Catholics' response to post-death rites. The Musami community used an eclectic response that is, employing a mixed models approach that was inconsistent with the Catholic Church's position on inculturation, and which was driven by syncretism. Musami Catholics were guided by orthopraxis not orthodoxy. The success of other models depended on how the Catholic Church was prepared to take head on. The Musami experience brought a new orientation, and thus a contribution to contextualized African theology.

Tension has risen between these two "selves" (local culture and faith),especially in times of crisis. The locals have been expected to do away with traditional beliefs and culture but in times of crisis they resort to ATR (Fashole-Luke1978:357).Only when local churches have immersed themselves fully in the life and culture of their people, can a Christian community in each place be a sign of salvation among people. The Musami Mission was the only mission that had a down-to-earth theology, that is, the laity took on the task of adapting indigenous post-death rituals. The adaptations of post-death rituals by Musami remained very significant for locals as insiders to Shona culture and traditions took it upon themselves to do it their own way. The liturgy was very distinctive in that it was a breakthrough by privileging the experiences, lived realities, and voices of indigenous

Catholics of Musami. For the Musami church, the time had come for the local church to take up responsibility alone, as the Church planted by the Apostle Paul did, without fear of anything. Local Musami Christians knew that missionaries had stressed aspects of discontinuity between Christianity and African cultural traditional religion, to such an extent that they excluded the aspects of continuity between Christianity and African culture; but they challenged the missionaries whom they convinced that African culture and traditions would blend well with Christianity. The Musami community attained a remarkable achievement in the field of inculturation and made substantial contributions to Zimbabwean Catholic theology, by emphasising the need to take into account the Shona heritage in developing a valid local theology. The Musami Catholics managed to produce a theology which suited the circumstances of the local Christians. The liturgical approach to the indigenization of theology found its focus in Musami community, in the Eucharist, with which salient features of Shona worship relating to post-death rituals were integrated, thereby transformed and transfigured. Central to this transformation of traditional ritual through Christian liturgy is the role of the priest, but this time the laity took it upon themselves to produce a vibrant theology.

In a nutshell, Musami indigenous Catholics confirmed that God is present in all cultures at all times, and that traditional religion is indeed worship of a true God and that there is hope to blend local religion and Christian revelation. Inculturation calls for participation and reflection upon a religious faith. Thus, Musami Catholics made a practical exercise rather than a theoretical or merely an academic exercise, one which has been seen to influence the daily lives of local Catholics. Musami Christians triggered a productive change in the African attitude towards Christianity by practicing a down-to-earth theology versus up-in-the-air theology.

Musami Catholics managed to come up with a contemporary contextualized cultural best Christological formulation to post-death rituals, thus, bringing a new orientation. In Musami, the gospel transformed culture, and culture also transformed the gospel. Dealing

and handling post-death rituals properly contribute towards healing, for its therapeutic. Ignoring African traditional post-death rituals drives into secretism, for kurova guva in an integral part of Shona culture, and its continued practice in modern Musami can be incorporated into Christian post-death rites. In order to bring about a comprehensive model of African Christian post-death rites, Musami Indigenous church integrated the traditional world view into Christian theology.

The Musami community staged a contextualized liturgy, where women played a pivotal role by reassessing attitudes to meet African social customs. The Musami rite illustrated the complexity of the process of inculturation, especially in cases where Christian gospel encountered an ancestor-based worldview like that of the Shona. The Musami Catholic church recognised that inculturation can never be a once-and-for- all event. Gundani (1997:92) argues that for inculturation to be authentic, the gospel has to consistently interrogate, engage and reflect on the worldview that it encounters. The indigenous church of St Paul's in Musami integrated the traditional worldview into Christian theology.

To conclude, I would like to use John XXIII's words;

> The Church ... does not identify herself with any particular culture not even the Occidental culture to which her history is closely bound. Her mission belongs to another order, to the order of the religious salvation of men and women. Rich in her youthfulness which is constantly renewed by the breath of the Holy Spirit, the Church is ever ready to recognise, to welcome and indeed to encourage all things that honour the human mind and heart even if they have their origin in places of the world that lie outside this Mediterranean basin which was the providential cradle of Christianity (John XXIII, *Princeps Pastorum*, AAS(51) 1959).

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APPENDICES SECTION

Letter from the Reseacher to the Jesuit Community

11/11/09

University of Zimbabwe
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
Mt Pleasant
Harare

The Provincial
Society of the Jesuits
Mt Pleasant
Harare

REF:

Dear Father Provincial

I am a DPHIL student with the University of Zimbabwe researching on Inculturation in regards to post death rituals. I am a practising Catholic.

I am asking from your office any form of assistance as regards to my study area, be it literature, church documents, even resource personnel both the clergy and the laity who may be eager to share on the subject.

I hope this letter will receive your blessing.

11/09/2009

Lawrence Kamwendo (R021471J)
(Cell: 0912 252 340)

DPHIL STUDENT – UZ

Letter to Pastoral Centre Synod House

University of Zimbabwe
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
Mt Pleasnat
Harare

Reverend Father Mabonga
Pastoral Centre
Synod House
Harare

REF:

Dear Reverend Father

I am a DPHIL student with the University of Zimbabwe researching on Inculturation in regards to post death rituals. I am a practising Catholic.

I am asking from your office any form of assistance as regards to my study area, be it literature, church documents, even resource personnel both the clergy and the laity who may be eager to share on the subject.

I hope this letter will receive your blessing.

11/09/2009

Lawrence Kamwendo (R021471J)
(Cell: 0912 252 340)

DPHIL STUDENT – UZ

Letter to the Archbishop

University of Zimbabwe
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
Mt Pleasnat
Harare

His Grace
Archbishop of Harare
Harare
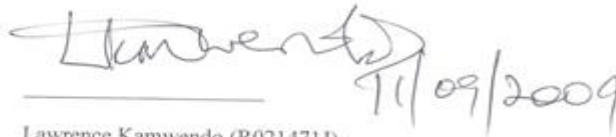
REF:

Your Grace

I am a DPHIL student with the University of Zimbabwe researching on Inculturation in regards to post death rituals. I am a practising Catholic.

I am asking from your office any form of assistance as regards to my study area, be it literature, church documents, even resource personnel both the clergy and the laity who may be eager to share on the subject.

I hope this letter will receive your blessing.

11/09/2009

Lawrence Kamwendo (R021471J)
(Cell: 0912 252 340)

DPHIL STUDENT – UZ

Letter to the Nuncio

University of Zimbabwe
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
Mt Pleasnat
Harare

His Excellency
Papal Nuncio
Mt Pleasant
Harare

REF:

Your Excellency

I am a DPHIL student with the University of Zimbabwe researching on Inculturation in regards to post death rituals. I am a practising Catholic.

I am asking from your office any form of assistance as regards to my study area, be it literature, church documents, even resource personnel both the clergy and the laity who may be eager to share on the subject.

I hope this letter will receive your blessing.

11/11/2009

Lawrence Kamwendo (R021471J)
(Cell: 0912 252 340)

DPHIL STUDENT – UZ

Letter to the Bishops' Conference (ZCBC)

University of Zimbabwe
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
Mt Pleasant
Harare

Reverend Father Chiromba
Secretariat
Synod House
Harare

REF:

Dear Father

I am a DPHIL student with the University of Zimbabwe researching on Inculturation in regards to post death rituals. I am a practising Catholic.

I am asking from your office any form of assistance as regards to my study area, be it literature, church documents, even resource personnel both the clergy and the laity who may be eager to share on the subject.

I hope this letter will receive your blessing.

_7/11/2009_

Lawrence Kamwendo (R021471J)
(Cell: 0912 252 340)

DPHIL STUDENT – UZ

Responses from the Jesuit Community

Zimbabwe Province of the Society of Jesus
Email: secretary@jesuitszimbabwe.co.zw
Tel: (263-4) 744 507 / 745 335 / 293 0005 / 091 2 357 583
Fax: (263-4) 745 334

Mr Lawrence Kamwendo   18 June 2010
308 Godhope Road
Westgate
Harare

Dear Mr Kamwendo,

Re: Request to Use Documents in the Zimbabwe Province Jesuit Archives

Thank you for your request to have access to documents in the archives of the Zimbabwe Province of the Jesuits in the course of your research in African theology, and specifically the traditional ceremony of *kurova guva*.

These archives, as you know, are the working tools of the Jesuits in Zimbabwe rather than a public facility. They also of course an important resource for some aspects of the ecclesiastical and civil history of Zimbabwe.

You may have access to documents in the areas of research that you have listed for the archivists under the conditions detailed in our Research Access Policy, a copy of which I enclose.

With best wishes for the success of your research,

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Buckland SJ
Provincial

Copies: Fr Tony Bex SJ, Archivist Zimbabwe Province

Zimbabwe Province of the Society of Jesus
Email: secretary@jesuitszimbabwe.co.zw
Tel: (263-4) 744 507 / 745 335 / 293 0005 / 091 2 357 583
Fax: (263-4) 745 334

Mr Lawrence Kamwendo   20 November 2009
Department of Religious Studies, Classics & Philosophy
UNIVERSITY OF ZIMBABWE
Mount Pleasant
Harare

Dear Mr Kamwendo,

Re: Your Research into Inculturation and Post-Death Rituals

Thank you for your letter (no date) asking for assistance with regard to your area of study and research. I am afraid that I know very little about this area myself and so am unable to help you. I have asked the archivists of the Jesuit Province whether there is any material relevant to this topic in our archives, and have received a negative answer. Our archives are primarily a working resource of the Jesuits and deal mostly with matters of private administration.

The archivists did, however, recommend that you contact the following people for assistance in this matter:

(1)   Fr Fraderick Chiromba who is or was the chairman of the Catholic Theological Commission. This Commission did, I am told, organise a conference on the topic of post-death rituals, or *kurova guva* in particular, which took place at the Chishawasha Seminary some time ago. Fr Chiromba, as you probably know, is the General Secretary of the ZCBC and has offices at Africa Synod House, near the Cathedral.

(2)   Fr Ignatius Chidavaenzi who is a biblical expert and teacher at the Chishawasha Seminary. He apparently took part in the above mentioned conference and presented his own vigorous views on the matter.

I feel sure that these will be able to assist you. I wish you all the best for your proposed study and for your degree.

Yours sincerely,

Stephen Buckland SJ
Provincial

Copies: Archivists, Garnet House, Mount Pleasant

GARNET HOUSE

JESUIT ARCHIVES

Research Access Policy

The Jesuit archives are a private facility primarily for the use of the Jesuit Province of Zimbabwe and the Society of Jesus more widely. They are not open to others except with permission.

Permission to use the archives is given by the Provincial of the Jesuits in Zimbabwe, or the one to whom he delegates that authority. Permission can only be given to genuine *bona fide* researchers who produce current references from their institutions of research. The Zimbabwe Province of the Society of Jesus reserves the right, without explanation, to deny permission to use the archives, or any parts of them.

Applications for permission should be sent in writing well beforehand to "Jesuit Archives, P O Box 610, MOUNT PLEASANT, Harare" or archives@jesuitszimbabwe.co.zw . No permission will be given without a previous application.

Researchers making applications to use the archives will be required to state exactly what types of records they are asking to examine, as well as give an indication of the sort of information they hope to find. If permission is given, these will be made available in a separate room from the archives: access to the shelves of the archives will not normally be given.

The Jesuit archives do not have extensive facilities for accommodating those doing research and can only do so to one researcher at a time. In addition, it may not be possible to guarantee regular opening hours, and the archives do not have photocopying facilities. That being the case, consideration may be given to the use by researchers of scanning devices and digital cameras. However, permission to use such equipment, if given, will be on the express understanding that any copies made will not be passed on to any third party, without the express approval of the Provincial and an undertaking to that effect will have to be signed. Further, the reproduction of such copies in any publications that may result from research undertaken in the archives will again have to be with the express permission of the Society.

Finally, the Provincial will expect to be furnished with a copy of any research paper that utilises information obtained from the Jesuit archives.

23 September 2009

Response from the Nuncio

APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
IN ZIMBABWE

5 St. Kilda Road, P.O. Box MP 191, Mt. Pleasant, Harare
Tel. 04-744547. email: nunzim@cybersatafrica.com

20 November 2009

Mr. Lawrence Kamwendo
Department of Religious Studies, Classics and Philosophy
University of Zimbabwe
Mt. Pleasant

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSIONMEMORIAL SERVICE SUMMARY PROGRAMME

Friday 4 February

Morning:

Collection of soils (From Chishawasha Cemetery to St Paul's Musami Mission Shrine)

Afternoon:

Arrival of the soils of the seven deceased missionaries,

Welcome by Rector whose *non-de-guerre* was Mrewa

Slaughtering of the rituals beast

Prayers by Fr Johnson SJ

Evening:

Singing, marching, dancing, clapping in rhythm and drinking,

Recitation, chanting formal prescribed prayers,

Dramas, drinking and eating (*Pfonda) Chibhanduru*

Saturday 5 February

Morning:

Burial of the "souls" (seven bags of the deceased soils) at the memorial shrine

Arrival of some guests from other invited Parishes and local outstations

Evening:

In SJ Common Room

       Offering sacrifice to the slaughtered beast and beer (traditional)
       Dedication prayers by Fr Provincial
       Drama by Chita Women on Fr Smith and Brother Conway
       Drinking and Eating
       Vigil singing of *Chibhanduru, Jiti, Pfonda* till the following morning

Sunday 6 February 1983 (Big Sunday)

Morning

       Slaughtering of the Goat (*Mbudzi yeshungu*)
       Breakfast
       Arrival of dignitaries, Papal representative (Nuncio), Archbishop P. Chakaipa, Vice

       Prime Ministers S.V. Muzenda, Senator Makunde and Mr Byron Hove.
0900
       Procession to the Memorial Shrine incensing and sprinkling of holy water
       Blessing of the Shrine
       Consecration of the Shrine
0930
       Eucharistc Celebration by Archbishop and Main celebrants (Nuncio and The

       Provincial)
       Welcome Remarks: Fr Provincial
       Eulogy: Mother General (OP)
       Tributes: Fr Superior
       Humility: His Grace
       Guest of Honour: Hon V.P Muzenda
1300
       Lunch Hosted by Mission Superior

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSION MAP

MUSAMI MISSION 1983 STATISTICS

NUMBER	NAME	VAKURU	VADIKI	TOTAL	A GUILDS	Y GUILDS	DEAD	BAP AD	BAP INF	COMMU	CONF	CATH MAR	MIXED MAR
1	35 MILES	40	8	48	35	0	4	0	0	0	0	1	0
2	BHORA	87	43	130	67	18	3	3	0	1	5	1	1
3	CHANETSA	98	35	133	43	20	2	3	2	3	0	1	0
4	CHEMHONDORO	304	146	450	159	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	CHIDHAU	50	13	63	45	13	5	4	0	0	0	4	2
6	CHIKUPO	130	20	150	117	30	3	6	4	6	4	4	0
7	CHIKWATI	30	14	44	21	6	1	1	0	1	1	1	0
8	CHITSA	31	12	43	15	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	0
9	CHIZANGA	55	7	62	41	14	5	15	6	0	0	0	0
10	DEHWE	180	50	230	89	16	4	0	0	0	1	0	0
11	DOMBODZVUKU	36	52	88	31	10	3	0	0	0	2	0	0
12	DZVETE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
13	GEZI	109	40	149	59	10	3	3	0	2	1	3	0
14	JAMES FARM	31	24	55	28	1	2	1	3	0	3	0	0
15	KADENGE	68	6	74	49	18	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
16	KADZERE	70	14	84	59	12	7	0	0	0	0	2	0
17	MABIKA	70	50	120	60	12	7	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	MANJONJO	48	5	53	48	2	1	4	0	0	0	0	0
19	MAPANGA	31	12	43	21	7	1	3	0	3	0	0	2
20	MARUTA	25	38	63	7	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21	MAVHUDZI	140	25	165	98	22	5	12	7	7	2	5	1
22	MUNAMBA	56	20	76	35	1	5	0	0	0	0	0	0
23	MUSAMI	349	113	462	-	-	-	-	-	-	20	-	-
24	MUSHINGA	110	38	148	51	10	3	3	1	0	0	1	0
25	MWANZA	263	47	310	134	46	4	2	1	2	0	2	2
26	NHERERA	35	15	50	28	11	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
27	NORAH	107	30	137	76	23	0	4	7	4	2	1	0
28	NYAMUTUMBU	24	5	29	15	2	0	3	0	4	0	1	1
29	PAKATI	100	60	160	14	35	1	0	0	6	0	3	0
30	ROTA	328	184	512	225	40	12	16	72	45	0	2	4
31	RUKA	44	12	56	39	3	2	7	0	7	7	0	0
32	SABAS	20	7	27	11	1	1	0	1	4	0	3	5
33	SHAMU	83	28	111	72	24	2	3	0	3	0	4	4
34	SHANGURE	70	45	115	19	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	ZHAKATA	48	26	74	41	10	0	0	0	12	1	0	0
36	ZVOMUYA	96	25	121	72	15	6	0	0	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	3366	1269	4635	1924	483	98	93	104	112	49	39	22

AN INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Describe the traditional beliefs and practices associated with death and post-death

   rituals.
2. Do you regard the Catholic Church's response to death and post-death rituals as

   satisfactory?
3. What are your comments on contextualization in other churches?
4. What is the status of women in the traditional beliefs and practices associated with

   death and post-death rituals?
5. How has the Catholic Church addressed the position of women in death and post-

   death beliefs and practices?
6. Do you think the Catholic Church's contextualization has been effective? If yes, why?

   If no, why?
7. What is your understanding of inculturation? Has it managed to establish a meeting

   point between African Religion and Christian faith in terms of post-death rituals?
8. Can you describe from your experience the conflict between African Traditional

   Religion and Christianity as with regards to the relationship towards the dead?

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSION BILL-BOARD

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura

RESURRECTION MASS (10TH FEBRUARY 1977: CONVENT YARD 4TH STREET HARARE)

Sr. Casinus Stiegler with a bunch of flowers from her precious garden.

A Sister teaching in a classroom at St. Paul, Musami.

Sr. Magdala visiting a village.

The seven biers on the day of their funerals. A huge crowd of mourners fill the Dominican Convent yard in Harare on February 9, 1977.

Photo by Sr. Dominica Siegel O. P

A TERRIBLE BEAUTY IS BORN AT ST. PAUL'S — MUSAMI

Sr Joseph Wilkinson OP

Sr Epiphania Schneider OP

Sr Ceslaus Stiegler OP

Sr Magdala Lewandoski OP

Brother Conway SJ

Fr Christopher Shepherd-Smith SJ

Fr Martin Thomas

Photo by Sr. Dominica Siegel O. P

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSION MEMORIAL HALF-HUT

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura

THE INSIDE OF THE MEMORIAL HALF-HUT WITH GRAVES OF THE DECEASED

MISSIONARIES

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura

NAMES OF SEVEN ASSASINATED MISSIONARIES OF ST PAUL'S MUSAMI

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura

SEVEN GRAVES OF THE DECEASED MISSIONARIES AT ST PAUL'S MUSAMI

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura

BLESSING OF THE SHRINE ON SUNDAY 6TH FEBRUARY 1983 AT MUSAMI

Photo by Sr Julia Lenze O. P

OFFERTORY OF THE MASSON THE 6TH FEBRUARY 1983

The offertory of the Mass at the opening of the shrine to the three Jesuits and four Dominican sisters who died at Musami during the civil war in Zimbabwe.
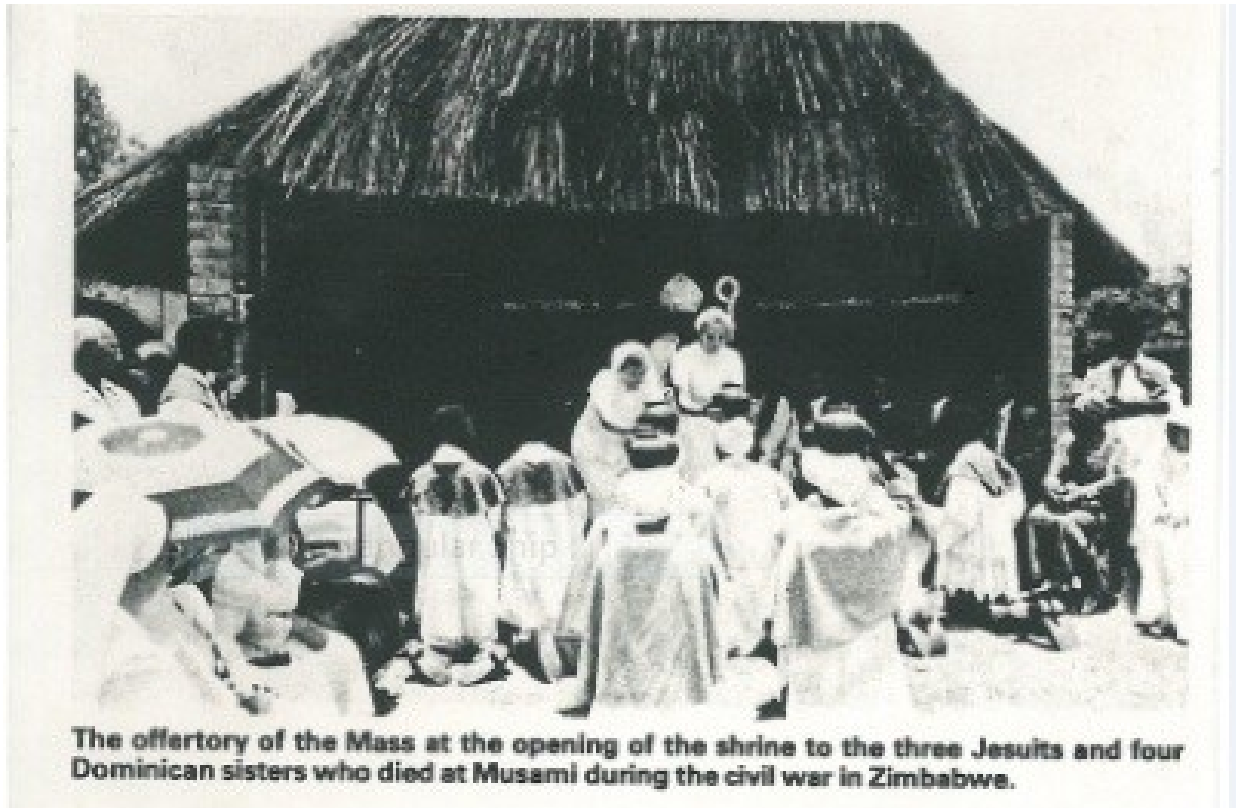
Photo by Sr Julia Lenze O. P

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSIONARIES KILLED IN 1977

Top left to bottom left: Srs Epiphania, Ceslaus, Magdala, Joseph   OP.
Top right to bottom right: Frs Christopher, Br John Conway   SJ.

Photo by Sr Julia Lenze O. P

MEMORIAL SERVICE OFFERTORY PROCESSION

Sunday 6th February 1983

MUSAMI
MEMORIAL
SERVICE
1983

Women offering water for
the spirits of the deceased
to the next-of-kin,
srs Julia + Dominica

Shrine erected in memory
of the slain Missionaries

Photo by Sr Julia Lenze O. P

ST PAUL'S MUSAMI MISSION GROTTO DEDICATED TO ST MARY

Photo by Christopher Gororo Mutangadura