

**FROM MAINTENANCE CHRISTIANITY TO A HOLISTIC
AND COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION:
A Case Study of Churches in the North Kivu Province of the Democratic
Republic of the Congo**

by

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my family on mission:

My wife, Joséphine Masika Bakalania,

My daughters: Afi Musavuli Nicole

Anaya Musavuli Lydie

Alice Musavuli Jeannette, and

My sons: Augustin Musavuli Mighisa

Abija Musavuli Karis

Adin Musavuli Fidèle

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the need to involve churches in mission according to the Lord Jesus Christ, whose mission was indeed holistic and comprehensive. To achieve this goal, the study calls upon churches to move from a “maintenance Christianity” status, which has been almost a way of life for churches, to a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission. Practically speaking, this is to be illustrated through a case study of churches in the North Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The churches in this part of the world present many challenges that sustain such an exploration, namely, misunderstanding regarding mission, lack of well-skilled and visionary church leaders, maintenance Christianity mentality, spirit of tribalism among Christians, and poverty. The study concludes with practical recommendations on how the issues raised through the dissertation can be applied to a broader field than the churches in the North Kivu Province.

KEY TERMS

Church of Christ in Congo, Church(es), Comprehensive, Contextualisation, Ecumenical action in mission, Ends of the earth, Holistic, Leadership, Maintenance Christianity, *Missio Dei*, Mission, missionary church, North Kivu Province, Poverty, Unity.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABFMS	American Baptist Foreign Mission Society
ACCMBK	Association des Chrétiens Congolais de la Mission Baptiste du Kivu
AEBK	Association des Eglises Baptistes du Kivu
AG	Ad Gentes (Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity)
BBE	Bible in Basic English
C.E.I.	Commission Electorale Indépendante
CADAF	Communauté des Assemblés de Dieu en Afrique
CBCA	Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique
CBI	Conservative Baptists International
CCC	Church of Christ in Congo
CCLK	Centre Chrétien du Lac Kivu
CEBCE	Communauté des Eglises Baptistes du Congo-Est
CEPAC	Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale
CEV	Contemporary English Version
CLMK	Communauté Libre Maniema-Kindu
CMLC	Communauté Méthodiste Libre au Congo
CMN	Congo Mission News
CMUCC	Communauté Méthodiste Unie au Congo Central
CNCA	Communauté Nations du Christ en Afrique
CNDP	Congres National pour la Défense du Peuple
CPC	Conseil Protestant au Congo
CP-SRP	Comité Provincial des Stratégies de Réduction de la Pauvreté
CWME	Commission on World Mission and Evangelism
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
FAR	Forces Armées Rwandaises
FCMS	Foreign Christian Missionary Society
FM	Frequency Modulation
GNB	Good News Bible
GW	God's Word
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
IMC	International Missionary Council
ISPCK	Indian Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
ISV	International Standard Version
IVP	InterVarsity Press
KJV	King James Version
LCWE	Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization

LG	Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution of the Church)
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LWF	Lutheran World Federation
MBK	Mission Baptiste du Kivu
NALU	National Army for the Liberation of Uganda
NET	New English Translation Bible
NKJV	New King James Version
PACLA	Pan African Christian Leadership Assembly
PMU	(The Swedish Pentecostal Mission Relief and Development Cooperation Agency)
PUF	Presse Universitaire Française
RSV	Revised Standard Version
SFM	Sweden Free Mission
SMS	Short message service/short messaging service
SPCK	Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge
TV	Television(s)
UAM	Unevangelized Africa Mission
UEA	Université Evangélique en Afrique
UEM	United Evangelical Mission
ULPGL	Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs
UPC	Université Protestante au Congo (Congo Protestant University – CPU)
USB	Université Shalom de Bunia (University Shalom of Bunia)
WCC	World Council of Churches

Almost all Scripture quotations are taken from the NET Bible (The New English Translation Bible). Biblical references are also used according to the model of the NET.

DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

Student number: **3512-366-4**

I declare that the dissertation entitled **“FROM MAINTENANCE CHRISTIANITY TO A HOLISTIC AND COMPREHENSIVE UNDERSTANDING OF MISSION: A Case Study of Churches in the North Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo”** is my own work, and that all the sources that I have used or quoted from have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signature

Date

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Statement of the problem and research question

After almost 2000 years of evangelism throughout the world, it is quite noticeable that there has been a remarkable growth of the church. Indeed (Shaw 2000:37), the growth of the church in Africa is one of the most surprising facts of twentieth-century church history. From an estimated 4 million professing Christians in 1900, African Christianity had grown to over 300 million believers by the year 2000. This is more significant throughout sub-Saharan Africa, where the DRC alone presents increasing statistics of Christians over the last 100 years, as follows: 1.4% in 1900; 91.6% in 1970; 94.7% in 1990; 95.3% in 1995, and 95.4% in 2000 (Barrett, Kurian and Johnson 2001:211).

The growth of the church has become the backdrop for a huge debate among scholars throughout the world, because the more the church grows in numbers, the less relevant it becomes within societies. According to Simmonds (1995:3), “There is a wide and deep gulf between the Church and the people.” As Christian denominations multiply throughout the world, the Church becomes less committed to a holistic and comprehensive perspective of mission. The more the challenges, due to the increase in globalisation in particular, the less the Church evolves into one that has been called upon for mission. In this regard, Rivers (2005:22) maintains that parishes or churches are spending a lot of time and energy serving people who are present, rather than reaching out to those who are absent. He (2005:38) also emphasises that most churches focus their attention, resources and energy primarily on the people who are already there, with little attention directed outwards towards mission.

In line with the above debate, the churches of the North Kivu Province in the eastern DRC seem to be more devoted to working internally, rather than both internally and externally. Since they were established by overseas missionaries more than 80 years ago, their activities have merely been limited to conducting usual Sunday services, pastoral acts and maintaining their assets and premises. They are less committed to external activities such as home visits, prisons, evangelisation and outreach. These churches seem indeed to practise a kind of “maintenance Christianity”, what Pivot (2004:3) regards as “the pastoral of maintenance”. Moreover, their qualitative growth seems to be undermined by a kind of introverted endeavour, because most new believers who are baptised are either children,

relatives or tribe members within the community. In other words, there are almost no new believers from outside the church's sphere. Indeed, there is an interesting link between the leadership of churches and families, tribes and other aspects. Thus, it seems that no-one can be easily appointed as a pastor, elder or deacon in an ecclesiastical congregation where he/she has no support linked to familial and ethnic aspects. Such practices prove that there is still a misconception regarding Church mission. Hence, Mpinga (2007:1) points out that a narrow understanding of mission leads to a crisis of identity, and misleads and limits the work of the Church in the world.

When taking into account the "Church of Christ in Congo"¹ which is assumed to help its members to promote evangelisation and mission, there is also a misunderstanding concerning mission. On the one hand, mission is merely limited to evangelisation and the sending of Western Christians to foreign countries. This second conception shows that mission is still considered to be the business of Western people, and is therefore a historical legacy that is only talked about when referring to the past. Accordingly, for many Christians, the concept of mission has become merely a museum concept. On the other hand, the "mandate for mission"² given by the Lord Jesus Christ is also still interpreted in terms of sending abroad. There can only be mission when there are people sent abroad, because the local church's sphere of activity is never considered to be a venue for mission.

It is also important to consider the fact that the world is evolving socially, economically, politically, technologically, scientifically and ideologically at a rapid rate, and that no-one can stop this progress. Aubert (2004:1) views this as "an accelerated globalization". The distances that separate people from one another are being reduced. The world is becoming like a small village in which people can do whatever they want, according to their will, without concern. Some parts of the world enjoy wealth, peace and scandalous abundance, while other parts are still stagnating in distressing and increasing poverty, famine, incurable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, lack of peace, hopelessness and illiteracy. Many have become refugees as a result of wars, ethnic and tribal conflicts, and other harmful events. It is also important to draw attention to the increasing number of overcrowded cities, the expansion of non-Christian religions, sects and mystical movements throughout the world, denominationalism, Western de-Christianisation, intercultural relationships, and natural disasters. All these events and circumstances need mission reflection.

¹ The "Church of Christ in Congo" (CCC) is a Christian Council of 64 established Protestant denominations in the DRC, created in 1902 (Braekman 1961:264-266, available at: www.ecc.faiithweb.com).

² To explain this concept, which is talked about in the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles, theologians also use the phrase "Great Commission".

With respect to the above background, which clearly shows the dimensions of the Church's task, the main problem upon which this study is based relates to a mere verbal perception of Christian mission, i.e. the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of souls, limited to the settings of local churches. This problem seems to result from the lack of mission consciousness and vision among Christians and church leaders of the North Kivu Province, and of the DRC as a whole. In order to solve this major problem so that mission can be understood in a holistic and comprehensive way, the current study will attempt to answer the following key questions:

- If the Church's task is wider than that described above, can churches still have a narrow view of their mission, a mission that is limited to their local setting? Indeed, before His ascension to heaven, the risen Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came upon them, and that they would then be His witnesses in Jerusalem, all Judea and Samaria, and even in the "farthest parts of the earth"¹ (Acts 1:8).
- If this scriptural statement is true, should churches continue to take care of themselves and do the same traditional things, while the world around them is involved in high-speed evolution? Are churches conscious of the risk of being irrelevant within societies?
- In keeping with Acts 1:8, how do churches in the North Kivu Province view the dimensions of their mission? In other words, what is their real understanding of mission? How far are they going in order to reach their goal, and what are their "farthest parts of the earth"?
- How can churches be moved from their traditional pastoral role, which is maintenance-oriented, to one which is mission-oriented?

1.2 Hypothesis and objectives of the study

Based on the problem and research questions described above, this study attempts to provide a holistic and comprehensive understanding of the mission of churches in the North Kivu Province of the DRC. Indeed, Christian mission can be understood in terms of two dimensions: internal and external. Kozhuharov (2006:14) qualifies these two dimensions as "the gathering-in mission" and "the sending-out mission". In fact, these two dimensions

¹ Other Bible versions such as the GW, ISV, NKJV and RSV translate this as "end(s) of the earth".

provide a significant insight into the “holistic and comprehensive perspective of mission”. Mission must be undertaken as both an internal and an external effort.

The internal dimension, which focuses on the internal care of the church, includes three aspects: liturgical, catechetical and diaconal. In terms of the liturgical aspect, the church needs to worship and celebrate the presence of the Lord as a preparation for and a foretaste of the great worshipping that will take place in the New Jerusalem (Rev 4:5-11). Kritzinger (2000:96) qualifies the liturgical aspect as the *koinonia*, which is the building up of the church in fellowship and liturgy. Bevans and Schroeder (2004:362) claim that in liturgy, God acts to empower the church for mission. In terms of the catechetical¹ aspect, the church needs to be taught in order to mature spiritually. As believers mature, they should be able to offer the true worship that God desires (John 4:23). In terms of the diaconal aspect, which is socio-economic service, the church needs to develop materially, so that it can serve the community, both internally and externally.

Indeed, one can assume that worship is the goal of church activities, and therefore the main objective of mission. The church is sent out into the world to make the people of all nations into the kind of worshippers that God wants (Ps 22:27 cf. Matt 28:19). For this reason, in order to renew the church by increasing the number of worshippers, the external dimension of mission is necessary and valuable. From this perspective, missionary efforts cannot be limited to the internal aspect, while there are many people outside the church who have not yet been reached. Rightly speaking, a Godless world should be a constant concern of the Church and all faithful Christians, who are awaiting the fulfilment of the Scriptures with regard to God's kingdom of peace on earth among men and women. Obviously, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Master of mission, was able to achieve both aspects of mission: internal and external. He looked after his disciples and other people, and provided for all their needs, both internally and externally. With regard to the scripture of Luke 4:14-21, which clearly emphasises the holistic mission of Jesus, Saayman argues that,

Jesus executed a ministry with distinguishable but inseparable dimensions – dimensions of evangelising; healing; compassion; social, political and economic justice; and of fellowship/community. All these dimensions should be reflected in the mission of the church; whoever neglects any one of these dimensions, thereby neglects the whole of mission. The need is therefore for a holistic approach, to counter any tendency towards polarisation, so easily caused if any one of the dimensions is over-emphasised at the expense of the others (Saayman 1983:87).

¹Asanbe (2005:207) states that *catechesis* is the announcement of the Word of God, with a view to leading or forming people to a deeper faith. Faith, having been sown in the process of evangelisation, the essential activity of nurturing in order to achieve maximum growth, belongs to the process of catechesis. It is also a process of providing information and formation to the faith.

Learning from Jesus' experiences, the Church throughout the world should be committed to accomplishing its mission, both internally and externally. Bevans and Schroeder (2004:363) support this by stating that the liturgy on the "inside" empowers and equips the Christian community for mission on the "outside". In terms of the above, one may indeed note that the two dimensions of mission are complementary. Internal mission is actually the result of external mission. The local church is then also the result of external mission. However, once established, the local church must generate external missions that will then build other local churches. There is hence a cycle of missionary effort in the world, whereby internal mission generates external mission and *vice versa*. Indeed, a new vision for mission should end up with the genuine commitment of the Church to mission in the world. The external actions of the church are not possible and successful without deep-rooted, local missionary work.

However, one should bear in mind that the main aim of mission is not only to convert unreached people, but to take into account all people's needs. This highlights the "holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission", as the opposite of "maintenance Christianity". In sharing this perspective of church mission, the purpose of this study is:

- To highlight and clearly define maintenance Christianity, in order to create a mission consciousness, which can help to move churches from this traditional pastoral approach of ministering to a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission. In order to envisage any forward move or change, churches need to be conscious of their shortcomings as result of maintenance-mindedness and its consequences. Thus, mission consciousness and the identification of the origins and causes of maintenance Christianity would certainly lead to some recommendations that could help in overcoming what are seen as impediments to the dynamic of the mission of the Church in the North Kivu Province of the DRC and beyond.
- To enable the churches of the North Kivu Province to understand their real nature and purpose, and what it means to be missionary in nature. Thus, the aim of this study is also to awaken the consciousness of churches with regard to their existence, because to misunderstand one's existence misleads one and leads to a lack of vision of the purpose of one's existence. This may also lead to an identity crisis. In so far as the church exists for mission, it needs to be conscious of its very nature, so that it can involve itself in mission, which is the purpose of its existence.

- To make churches aware of the dimensions of mission, so that they can follow in the footsteps of Jesus Christ, the mission's Master, towards "the farthest parts of the earth". Indeed, the gospel has since been preached on all six continents, but there are still some places, "the farthest parts of the earth", where the good news of God's grace through Christ has not yet been received (LWF 2004:54-55). In order to identify and reach their "farthest parts" of the earth, the churches of North Kivu need to renew their work methods and shape them to their specific contexts of war and socio-political and economic instability. In fact (Reapsome and Hirst 2005:i), the world is changing rapidly, and this requires churches to re-examine their old ways and explore new ways of functioning, in order to ensure that they are responding effectively to a challenging situation.
- To promote a new church leadership philosophy, where the qualitative growth of churches in the North Kivu Province is central to building churches that are committed to implementing mission according to the Trinitarian God. A new church leadership philosophy requires appropriate education and training, as well as a vision for mission. Indeed, church leaders should be aware of their missionary responsibilities within local churches and beyond. In so doing, churches will shape their identities by serving as a tool to sustain the process of peace and reconciliation among people.
- To bring about an ecumenical consciousness for missionary action among churches. This should be seen as a way forward in the fight against ecclesiastical egocentrism, tribalism and the exclusiveness of denominationalism, which not only maintain a useless competitive spirit and conflict among believers, but also present a great hindrance to the spreading of the gospel throughout the North Kivu Province and beyond.

1.3 Potential benefit of the study

This study could be of great interest to academics wanting to research and question the mission of the church today in the North Kivu Province. Church leaders and Christians in this part of the world would be able to draw, from the critical understanding debate, a truly holistic and comprehensive approach to church mission. The "Church of Christ in Congo" should play a role in creating not only consciousness of church mission, which should be achieved by its members both internally and externally, but also in assessing the impact of its presence within Congolese society. This would open the door for the holistic determination of suitable solutions to the needs of believers. As far as churches are able to move from a

maintenance mentality to a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission, they will not then be short of members and their financial ability to sustain their missionary programmes inside the country and abroad would increase dramatically. As such, this study could be valuable in terms of both mission implementation and the church's life and identity within the world.

1.4 Scope and limitations of the study

Drawn from the field of the theology of mission, this study is founded on the belief that Christian mission is the Church's participation in the *missio Dei* in the world. This means that anyone who would like to deal with mission should do so in collaboration with the Church. In order to be more focused, this study will take the issues of time and space into account.

In terms of space, the research field is limited to investigating three major denominations out of the 16 that constitute the North Kivu Province Secretariat of the CCC¹ in the eastern DRC. These three denominations are: the *Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale* – CEPAC (Community of Pentecostal Churches in Central Africa), the *Communauté des Eglises Baptistes du Congo-Est* – CEBCE (Community of Baptist Churches of the Eastern Congo), and the *Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique* – CBCA (Baptist Community in Central Africa). However, one should note that, apart from the 16 denominations that belong to the North Kivu Province CCC Secretariat, there are also, in the province, other established churches such as the Roman Catholic Church, Lutheran, Seventh Day Adventists and Nazarene Church, and a large number of independent and revivalist churches. This study does not focus on all churches within the Province, but only on the three denominations mentioned above, because of their historical missionary basis, as well as their expansion and dominant position throughout the North Kivu Province. These three key denominations are also the Christian pioneers in the Province, after the Roman Catholic Church, which was established throughout the DRC during early colonial times.

¹ According to www.ecc.faithweb.com, the "Church of Christ in Congo" has a membership of 64 denominations that are ministering throughout the DRC. Among them, the following 16 denominations are working in the North Kivu Province: CAC (Communauté Anglicane au Congo), CADAF (Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu en Afrique), CADC (Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu au Congo), CAFECO (Communauté Assemblée des Frères Evangéliques au Congo), CBCA (Communauté Baptiste au Centre de l'Afrique), CEBA (Communauté Episcopale Baptiste Africaine), CEBCE (Communauté des Eglises Baptistes du Congo-Est), CECA (Communauté des Eglises Chrétiennes en Afrique), CECA (Communauté Evangélique au Centre de l'Afrique), CELPA (Communauté des Eglises Libres de Pentecôte en Afrique), CEPAC (Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale), CEPK (Communauté Evangélique de Pentecôte au Katanga), CLMK (Communauté Libre Maniema-Kindu), CMLC (Communauté Méthodiste Libre au Congo), CMUCC (Communauté Méthodiste Unie au Congo Central), and CNCA (Communauté Nations du Christ en Afrique).

Although scientific accuracy requires that things be investigated from the time of their origin, this study examines and analyses the “maintenance Christianity” of the three target denominations in terms of the period from 1970 to 2007. Indeed, on 30 June 1960, the DRC obtained its independence from the Kingdom of Belgium. In the same circumstances, churches also obtained their autonomy from missionary leadership. However, there were not yet sufficient means at this time for indigenous believers to implement local church leadership, i.e. money, material resources and well-skilled executives. In this regard, Roux (1985:95-96) considers this kind of autonomy to be an “accidental or artificial autonomy”¹. As a result, missionaries continued to lead churches, in spite of the autonomy awarded, until 8 March 1970, the date on which the CCC was reformed, which put a definite end to missionary leadership in the DRC (CCC History; Barrett, Kurian and Johnson 2001:213). From this time on, the leadership of churches in the DRC has been in the hands of Congolese leaders.

In light of the methods and techniques described below, it would be helpful to discover the ways in which the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA have been fulfilling Christian mission over the last 28 years, and the ways in which this mission could be improved and shaped to the current context.

1.5 Literature review

Maintenance Christianity, as a key issue of this study, was not identified at random. Two major reasons justify the choice of this issue as worthy of academic research: the literature written about it over the years, and the reality of the ministry of churches on the ground.

Indeed, an exploration of the publications below proves that the problem which is going to be tackled in this study is not new to the research arena. Rather, it seems to be common to many churches throughout the world. Having experienced the phenomenon of maintenance Christianity, Hunter (1989:30) speaks of the “historical maintenance syndrome” of many churches. To highlight this reality in the daily life of the Church, other Christian

¹ In contrast to Roux, however, Pastor R.V. de Carle Thompson, the last white General Secretary of the CCC, didn’t consider the autonomy awarded relative to independence as being an accidental or artificial one. According to him, autonomy could not only be awarded when Congolese churches become mature, because the Early Church was able to resist Judaic attacks, Roman hatred and paganism, without becoming mature. As the CCC has the same founder and inspirator, the Holy Ghost, who influences everything and enables the weak to overcome the strong, there was no problem in being confident about the future of Protestantism in Congo.

In addition, H. Anet maintained that there was a conviction that evangelical Christianity in the Congo had been so strongly and profoundly established that no-one could uproot it. In many regions, the indigenous evangelical church has become a reality, with its weaknesses and gaps, but also with its own life and power for propagation (Braekman 1961: 337-338).

scholars use various terms and phrases such as the “pastoral of maintenance” (Pivot 2004), “maintenance-oriented communities” (Rivers 2005), “maintenance-minded” or “maintenance mindset” (Hanchey 1994), “mission kept at home” and “pastoral church” (Simmonds 1995), “parochial centrism” (DeSiano 1994:23), “static conception of the church” (Bosch 1991), “nurture” (Shenk 1984), “introverted church” (Leenhardt, in Roux 1984), “internally focused church” (Rusaw & Swanson 2004), “enclosed and self-sufficient communities”, “ethnic and linguistic solidarity”, “*cathedralisation*” (Maire, in Cassidy & Osei-Mensah 1978), “*volkskirche*¹” (Hoekendijk 1967), “dead-wood” (Nyasulu 2006), etc.

Rivers (2005) highlights maintenance Christianity by stating that churches end up spending a lot of time and energy serving parishioners, the people who are present, rather than reaching out to those who are absent. They have become so preoccupied with the challenge of maintaining their status quo that they risk losing sight of the greater mission of evangelisation. Rivers then proposes concrete ways to move from maintenance to mission-oriented parishes. He also presents a compelling vision for Catholic evangelisation, and outlines some strategies to help Christians implement the great vision to which they have been called and sent out into the world. In addition, Pivot (2004:1, 3) contends that the Holy Spirit spurs on the church, so that it does not content itself with "the pastoral of maintenance".

Talking about maintenance Christianity, Simmonds (1995) points out that there is a deep gulf between churches and people. For the majority of people in England, he highlights, churches are irrelevant, peripheral and seemingly only concerned with their own trivial pursuits. Church people prefer the church to concentrate on its traditional pastoral role, which offers some stability in a rapidly changing world. They opt to keep the church as they like it, even if this means keeping it for themselves. Most congregations are not structured to cope with an influx of new people, because the church was designed to maintain and pastor a Christian population. England needs a missionary church rather than a pastoral one. This is not to say that a missionary church will not pastor, since this is clearly not the case. A missionary church retains all the essentials of the church, but places mission at the top of its agenda.

In suggesting that Christianity should move from survival to celebration leadership in order to become confident church, Hanchey (1994) shows how concerned he is about the loss of spirit and enthusiasm within the American context of the Church. The contemporary American church, he maintains, is characterised by two distinctive ways of thinking about

¹ This indicates a church belonging in one sense or another to a given nation or ethnic group.

ministry, notably the “maintenance-minded” or “maintenance mindset”, which consumes the life of the church with its focus on survival (the works of the church in the world), and the “mission-minded” or “mission mindset”, which breathes life into the church through celebration. Among the two trends, however, the maintenance-minded is the most predominant, and constitutes a significant hindrance to the implementation of mission. To overcome this challenge, in order to move from an attitude of church survival to one of celebrating God at work in the world, Hanchey suggests that the church should be sustained by mission-minded leaders.

In addition to the three preceding authors, Hunter (1989) focuses more on the material aspect of maintenance Christianity, that is, building and renewing the material assets of the church. By losing the vision for mission, he argues, many church members strongly believe that maintaining the institution is the only mission of the church. To emphasise his observations regarding material maintenance, Hunter says that mission and maintenance priorities can be diagnosed in a church by looking at the annual budget. How much is spent on mission? How much is spent on maintenance? Even more significant is how much is spent this year compared to last year and the year before that, and each of the previous 10 to 15 years. The important issue is not so much the amount per year, but the overall trend. With regard to the question of how to stir a church that is caught in the historical maintenance syndrome into action, Hunter proposes three options:

- Developing a preventive strategy, i.e. the church should not maintain itself beyond its financial capacity. The Christian community should not overbuild, but instead has to ensure that what it is building is functional.
- Building a missionary spirit within the church by giving it top priority. God can change the attitudes of people, and this in turn will change the mission or maintenance priorities of the church. To do so, Jesus warns people to sit down and count the cost, before one can build a tower (Luke 14:28). Thus, building a missionary spirit within a local church needs a long-term plan.
- Planning new mission churches. This can be accomplished together with options one or two, or can be an alternative to option two. When a congregation is too old, too tired or too weak to build a significant spirit, or when it is faced with a need to change the culture of a new surrounding community, one of the best alternatives for God’s kingdom is to plant new mission churches.

Hunter concludes by proposing a balance between maintenance and mission in the following terms: “to be healthy, every church must have both mission and maintenance” (Hunter, 1989:30).

In contrast to Hunter, Shenk (1984) focuses on the spiritual aspects of maintenance Christianity, which he calls “nurture”, that is, spiritual maintenance which focuses on the nurturing of believers. To be more accurate in this regard, Shenk identifies two trends. Firstly, some churches emphasise mission to the neglect of the nurturing of their members. This imbalance produces a church which has little depth, because it constantly emphasises the winning of new people, but fails to take the time to ground them in the faith. Gradually, it loses its vitality. Secondly, other churches put nurturing first. They protect and pamper their members in the name of nurturing. This emphasis produces a church that is preoccupied with itself and dedicated to self-preservation. Such a church loses its missionary focus. Shenk states that true nurturing builds up new believers in the faith, but must have as its final goal equipping them for ministry and witnessing. In other words, true nurturing produces a fresh group of witnesses to the world. Accordingly, nurturing which only aims at preparing people for heaven is not biblical. Biblical nurturing prepares one for Christian service. Shenk ends on the same note as Hunter by saying that: “Every congregation must find a healthy balance between mission and nurture, between its responsibility to the world and its responsibility to the members” (Shenk 1984:68).

With regard to the externally focused Church, Rusaw and Swanson (2004) show that “internally focused churches” concentrate on getting people into the church and generating activity there. These churches may create powerful worship experiences, excel in teaching, offer thriving youth programmes and have vibrant small groups, but at the end of the day, what is measured is the number of people and activities within the church. These are churches filled with good people, and what they do is vital but insufficient for a healthy church. Worship, teaching and personal devotion are absolutely essential to building the internal capacity necessary to sustain an external focus, but if human and financial resources are only expended inside the four walls of the church, then no matter how “spiritual” things may appear to be, something is missing. Therefore, instead of internally focused churches, Rusaw and Swanson suggest “externally focused churches” which are nothing other than internally strong churches, but ones that are externally oriented. On the other hand, Nesson (1999) makes a persuasive argument for the centrality of mission in the life of the church, and provides a model of congregational leadership that may move a congregation from inward-looking to outward-looking ministries.

According to Bosch (1991:376-378), a static conception of the church has prevailed for centuries. The world outside the church was perceived as being hostile. If one reads theological treatises from earlier centuries, one gets the impression that there was only the church, no world. The church was a world on its own. Outside the church, there was only the "false church". Christian ministry and life were defined exclusively in terms of preaching, public worship, the pastorate and charity. "Practising" Christians were (and often still are!) defined as regular church-goers. The church filled the whole horizon. Those outside were, at most, prospects to be won. Mission was a process of reproducing churches, and once this had been achieved, all energy was spent on maintenance. Has the church become an institution of salvation only for those who belong to it? The church-in-mission is primarily the local church everywhere in the world. Bosch concludes that the missionary work of the church includes pastoral work, evangelisation and church planting, but is wider in scope than all of these (Bosch 1991:512). This means that the dimension of church mission is still a need that must be highlighted and defined if Christians are to implement Christian mission.

Bevans and Schroeder (2004:8-9) talk about the issue of maintenance Christianity, by pointing out that the goal of the church's mission is not the expansion of the church for its own sake. According to them, there is mission when the church focuses not on its own internal problems, but rather on other people elsewhere, in a world that calls and challenges it. Thus, a church comes to be a church when it realises that it has been called beyond itself. If it focuses too much on its own survival, structural development or perfection, it fails to understand its deepest reality, namely that it has been called upon to be the visible sign and instrument – the sacrament of the communion that God is, and to which all humanity has been called. These authors not only agree with Hunter's (1989) point of view, but are also adamant about the fact that the issue of maintenance Christianity is a real obstacle, which must be overcome because it obviously impedes the church from being a church.

By presenting mission as a remedy against church death, which can occur as a result of maintenance Christianity, Leenhardt (Roux 1984:310) maintains that the introverted church which satisfies itself by adhering to its high traditions is a dead church. According to him, mission may protect the church from this danger. In fact, the church is not a shepherd, and a shepherd's fold for his flock ensures that it is cared for with complete security. Instead, the church is always directed by its Lord to look for the lost sheep, rather than to look after the ninety-nine that are gathered in the enclosure (Luke 15:1-7). In addition, Hoekendijk (1967) mentions another danger, the perennial danger of the *volkskirche* and civil religion, whereby the main identity of a particular church is found in its language, customs and traditions, or

even in race and class. Thus, he poses the question as to whether the church is the goal of God's mission or its agent. In response, Hoekendijk affirms that Jesus' proclamation of the Kingdom occurred prior to the existence of the church, because the sphere of the church's missionary witness must be the world as a whole, not just individuals in it. Hoekendijk sums up his view as follows: "the nature of the Church can be sufficiently defined by its function, i.e. its participation in Christ's apostolic ministry" (cf. Kirk 1994:5).

Another interesting author is Maire (Cassidy & Osei-Mensah 1978:206-207), who asserted that if the church, in its local expression, is truly to minister to the world around it, it must have its doors and ministries totally open to strangers, to those who are "strangers to the faith, strangers to its own ethnic group, strangers to Christian conduct". The trouble is, as observed by the Zairian leader, that Christians often regroup themselves into enclosed and self-sufficient communities. In fact, in some villages, the church community sets its limits by the boundaries of several large families. Furthermore, old rivalries and antagonisms are often perpetuated under this sort of pious cloak. In some towns, the Christian community builds itself along the lines of ethnic or linguistic solidarities. Maire went on to highlight the need for *decentralising*¹ local churches, so that they could become true communities serving the world around them.

With regard to the maintenance status of the church, some scholars advise that the church should be a church on its way, a church on the move. In this respect, Nyasulu (2006:19-20) states that mission involves the whole life of the church – the church exists for mission. He goes on to testify that mission is both communicating the good news to those outside and establishing churches. No one can deny that the Christian church should be a missionary one. Its very nature is missionary. It exists by conducting missions, and it is intended to be a church "on its way", a church "on the move". This emphasises the fact that the church can never remain static and established, but must always be on the "go". In fact, it is a church only as long as it is missionary. The church's message only exists in the form of being on the way to reaching out to people. Without missionary work based on a clear vision, the church runs the risk of being like a "dead wood". Along with Nyasulu, Bate (1998:150) indicates that the mission of the church can be articulated as a journey: the journey that God's people walk towards the Promised Land. This is a spiritual journey that all Christian communities undertake in the presence of God's spiritual touch. It is a journey in time and

¹ Charles Maire coined this verb to express the status quo situation from which churches need to be removed.

space, a journey in the present which emerges out of and launches into the varying contexts of our history and geography, as the human community and the people of God.

In conclusion, it is important to mention that the different authors reviewed are all in agreement that churches are almost maintenance-oriented, and they have to be moved from this maintenance status to a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission. As far as all of them are unanimous regarding the fact that the church is by its very nature missionary, in contrast to its obvious status quo, the topic that is being tackled here seems to be worthy of missiological research. However, why then study a topic which has nearly been exhausted by other researchers? What are the specific demarcations and motivations of the current author?

There are two main reasons for undertaking the present study. First of all, apart from Rivers, Simmonds and Hanchey, who attempted to broaden the issue of maintenance Christianity, the other authors and scholars who have been reviewed deal with this key issue in only a few words, sentences or paragraphs. Moreover, their research is linked to churches in their own specific contexts. Therefore, the present study intends to deepen the issue of maintenance Christianity, in order to draw some useful and significant lessons for the churches in the North Kivu Province of the DRC. Secondly, the local churches in the North Kivu Province not only seem to be maintenance-oriented, but are almost unaware of mission as the main purpose of a church's existence. For this reason, the expectation is that such a study could awaken churches to a missionary endeavour. In addition, the research topic is relatively new, because no-one has written about it in the precise context of the North Kivu Province. Thus, the author is going to pioneer the research in this context. However, he will always need to learn from other researchers and scholars, so that the present study can be a reliable and useful tool for churches in the North Kivu Province and beyond.

1.6 Methodological approach

Missiology is by its very nature interdisciplinary (Kritzinger 2007:11) because, as a theological discipline, it includes in its articulation many aspects of other disciplines such as practical and biblical theology, Christian history, religions, anthropology, cross-cultural studies, etc. Accordingly, the study that is being conducted requires the use of more than one research method. The author is aware of existing research methods. Considering the nature of the present study, phenomenological, historical and qualitative methods will be used in a complementary way, in order to achieve the objectives of the study.

The research effort is phenomenological, as it involves examining and analysing the maintenance Christianity phenomenon that has developed within churches of the North Kivu Province over the past 28 years, that is, from 1970 to 2007. This period of 28 years corresponds to the Congolese church's independence from Western missionary leadership.

As a research method that helps in learning and understanding the background to and development of a chosen field of study (Historical Research Method)¹, the historical research method will be used to provide the background to mission in the North Kivu Province. This historical background provides an overview of North Kivu, the origins of Christianity and the first missionary societies within the province, as well as the growth, doctrines, leadership and crises of churches in this region. From these elements, one may determine the future of Christian mission in the North Kivu Province.

As a matter of fact, phenomenological and historical research methods need a desk review of existing literature on mission, as well as the historical, religious, socio-economic and political environment of the North Kivu Province. This will not stop the study from taking advantage of other relevant literature written in domains other than mission and history.

As a qualitative research method, the following tools will be used throughout the study: interviews, questionnaires and primary records such as board meeting minutes, personal writings of significant individuals, and direct correspondence with key personalities. Thus, collecting and analysing relevant data for the study will entail the need to survey and investigate the key denominations of the North Kivu Province, namely the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA. In addition, data will be obtained from the National CCC Secretariat which deals with the growth of the church within 64 established communities in the DRC, among them the three target communities.

How and where were data for this study collected? Data were collected mainly from Goma, the capital city of the North Kivu Province, where the head office of the extension of the CEPAC, and the headquarters of the CEBCE, the CBCA and the North Kivu Secretariat of the CCC are located. Goma was targeted due to the fact that churches, pastors and other church leaders in this capital city have a significant influence on the mission and life of the church in the rest of the province. On the other hand, due to the dependence of the CCC Provincial Secretariats on the National Secretariat in terms of administration, the National Secretariat Office of the CCC in Kinshasa was also targeted. The collection of data also

¹ This is available at: www.gslis.utexas.edu/~palmquis/courses/historical.html

targeted key personalities such as pastors, community leaders, heads of church departments, especially the Department of Evangelism and Life of Church, theology lecturers and professors, women, laymen and students, and made use of questionnaires and interviews. Finally, the study benefits from the author's personal experiences with regard to the church, as is shown in the following section.

1.7 Author's motivation and background to the study

1.7.1 Conversion

Having grown up within a Christian context, the author was interested, from an early age, in attending Sunday church services. For him, the most appealing church activity was the religious music and songs. Thus, after his baptism in December 1970 at the CEBCE Mabungo-Buturande, the author committed himself to being part of choirs. At the same time, he learned to play the trumpet and was integrated into the church brass band for evangelisation, which was under the chairmanship of a Western missionary. In order to grow spiritually and qualify for the church brass band for evangelisation, the author received training in the form of short biblical courses (Bible study, homiletics, liturgy and evangelism) and music. In addition to his involvement in church activities, namely Sunday services, choirs, youth and music groups, the Scripture Union and the Campus for Christ International Ministry (CCIM) also played an important role in his spiritual growth. All the above circumstances formed a background to the study that is now being conducted.

1.7.2 Theological education

Thirteen years after the conversion and effective insertion of the author into the life of the church, church leaders discovered the author's calling to serve God. Therefore, they sent him to the Bunia Theological Seminary, the current University Shalom of Bunia (USB), where the author was awarded a Bachelor's Degree in theology (le Graduat en Théologie) in 1986. During these three years of theological education, the author did not do any missiological courses, except for courses in evangelism and the history of mission and churches in the DRC.

After two years of service in the church, simultaneously as secondary school chaplain, Bible school teacher, staff member of the francophone church, and youth and choir leader, the

author was once again sent for another three years of theological training to the Bangui Evangelical School of Theology (BEST) in the Central African Republic, where he was awarded a Masters in Theology (MTh) in 1991. It was during this second phase of theological education that the author first did missiological and ecumenical courses. These courses were presented by Professor Göran Janzon, a Baptist missionary from Örebro in Sweden. The author is very grateful to this professor for having awakened him to missiological research, which ended in him writing a dissertation entitled “The Incarnation of Jesus Christ as a Model for Missionary Calling. An Exegetical Study of John 1:1-18 and 20:19-23.” Thanks to this dissertation and these missiological courses, as well as his own church experiences among missionaries, the author chose missiology as his field of postgraduate research. This background to his postgraduate research in missiology was made possible thanks to his ministry in church and academic activities, as is shown in the following sub-section.

1.7.3 Ministry

In October 1993, the author was appointed as the Chaplain of the *Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs*¹ (ULPGL). Over a period of nine years, he achieved success in pastoral work among students, lecturers and professors, office workers and independent people in the neighbourhood of the university, who were attending Sunday services and other spiritual activities of the church within the ULPGL. From this experience, which consisted of dealing with people from all spheres: Muslims, Catholics, Anglicans, Pentecostals and other Evangelicals, Independent and Revivalist believers, atheists, people from other non-Christian faiths, intellectuals and illiterates, etc., the author was able to acquire an ecumenical mentality. Unlike the way in which his own community, the CEBCE, perceived the work of the church in terms of the limited setting of the local church, the author developed a very broad vision of church mission. In spite of having been ordained a pastor by the CEBCE in April 1994, the author is no longer a true Baptist in terms of his perception of church mission.

In addition to the chaplaincy of the ULPGL, the author was also appointed as the treasurer of the Urban Council of Pastors from the 16 denominations that are members of the CCC in the city of Goma. This role, which lasted for seven years, was another opportunity not only for him to learn more about churches of other beliefs and doctrines, but also provided a further ecumenical experience. Another such experience was acquired by serving as a

¹ This means “Free University of the Great Lakes Countries”.

provincial member of staff of the Scripture Union, the Bible Alliance for the DRC, and the International Fellowship for Evangelical Students (IFES). In fact, these three organisations are international, and function beyond the setting of denominations and local churches.

1.7.4 Teaching and academic activities

In addition to having worked as a teacher in primary, secondary and Bible schools since 1981, both in the DRC and the Central African Republic, the author also taught at the Bible School and Promotion of the Women of the BEST in Bangui (CAR), the Bible School and Promotion of the Women of the ULPGL in Goma, and at the Faculty of Theology of the ULPGL as a junior lecturer. While doing research at UNISA, the author is still serving as a junior lecturer at the ULPGL.

Beyond the setting of the ULPGL, the author, in agreement with the Faculty of Theology of the ULPGL, established a one-year training course in missiology in Goma, in favour of pastors and lay leaders. This ended in the creation, in Butembo, of a three-year-academic course in missiology, a centre linked to the Faculty of Theology of the ULPGL. Due to the lack of a well-educated teacher in missiology, and the misconception regarding missiology among theologian lecturers and professors at the ULPGL in particular, only two years later, this centre was reduced to an ordinary Faculty of Theology. As a mere junior lecturer, the author was unable to successfully negotiate with the professors for the survival of this missiology centre. To awaken this former missiology centre and to create a Department of Missiology within the ULPGL are two of the author's motivations for doing postgraduate studies in missiology at UNISA.

As the one who has been in charge of the ULPGL Computer Centre since 1996, the author was also in charge of training new students and office workers in computer science. From 1994 to 2000, the author served as a registrar of the ULPGL. In 2001, he was also an academic secretary *ad interim* of the Faculty of Management and Economy for six months. In the meantime, he worked as a technical advisor for the "Uzima Tele" editing house. This enabled him to publish his own book, entitled *En mission comme le Seigneur* (Mission in the Lord's steps) in 1999. After this, in 2004, he wrote an article entitled *La vision globale de la mission contre un Christianisme sédentaire. Cas des églises de la ville de Goma* (The Comprehensive View of Mission versus Sedentary Christianity: A Case Study of Churches in the City of Goma). It is this article, written after seven years' experience among churches in

Goma, which is the real foundation for the present study, especially in terms of conceiving the title.

All the above information constitutes the author's motivation for and background to conducting the study entitled "From Maintenance Christianity to a Holistic and Comprehensive Understanding of Mission: A Case Study of Churches in the North Kivu Province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo." However, the current motivation for and background to the study, which is still imprecise, is being progressively clarified by scholars and well-skilled church leaders whose works have been read or who have been interviewed, so that the study can be a convincing tool for the Church in terms of mission awareness.

1.8 Brief overview of the study

This study comprises six chapters. The first chapter is a general introduction to the study that includes an overall look at the problem and research question, hypothesis and objectives, potential benefit of the study, scope and limitations, literature review, methodological approach, author's motivation for the study, and a brief overview of the study.

The second chapter is an attempt to place and identify the study within the context of the North Kivu Province. It focuses on an overview of the North Kivu Province, a historical background to mission, and the "Church of Christ in Congo" (CCC). The third chapter attempts to examine and analyse the phenomenon of "maintenance Christianity" within churches in general, and in terms of the key denominations, namely the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA in particular. From this chapter, one can establish and estimate the relevance of the maintenance Christianity phenomenon - its origins, causes and consequences. The fourth chapter aims at a theological and biblical reflection on the holistic and comprehensive approach to mission. This is highlighted through an examination of mission as *missio Dei*, mission according to Jesus Christ, mission as church participation in God's mission, and an attempt to provide answers to main mission's challenges in the North Kivu Province.

As a strategic plan, Chapter 5 deals with strategies for an effective mission, such as awakening the consciousness to mission, creating a network for mission mediatisation, moving churches towards self-reliance in ministry, implementing the concept of "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8), and targeting neglected social groups for mission. The last chapter will conclude the study by providing an assessment of the research conducted, as well as practical recommendations and suggestions for future missiological research.

Chapter 2

BACKGROUND TO MISSION IN THE NORTH KIVU PROVINCE

2.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, this second chapter is an attempt to place this study in the specific context of the North Kivu Province, located in the eastern part of the DRC. In order to learn more about the three target ecclesiastical communities, namely the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA, so that the study can focus on ways in which to move the church forward from a maintenance status to a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission it is useful to obtain a background to mission in the area of the North Kivu Province. Thus, this chapter will start with a brief presentation of the province's profile, from which a number of challenges that one should not overlook when dealing with Christian mission, will be highlighted. Thereafter, the chapter will focus on the historical background to mission within the province, which takes the first contact of the province with Christianity, as well as the pioneering work of the Swedish Free Mission (SFM) and the Unevangelized African Mission (UAM) into consideration. Finally, the chapter will end with a look at the "Church of Christ in Congo" (CCC), a council or fellowship of Protestant communities created in the early 1900s in order to unify and coordinate Protestant churches in their missionary efforts throughout the DRC.

2.2 Overview of the North Kivu Province

2.2.1 Location, brief history and population

The North Kivu Province is one of the eleven provinces in the DRC. It is located in the eastern part of the country, and shares borders with the Republic of Uganda and the Republic of Rwanda. Its capital city is Goma, a town built along the shore of Lake Kivu, under the active volcanic mountains, Nyamulagira and Nyiragongo¹.

The North Kivu Province consists of six territories: Beni, Lubero, Masisi, Nyiragongo, Rutshuru and Walikale. The three main towns found in the North Kivu Province are Beni, Butembo, and Goma, the provincial capital city (CP-SRP 2005:14). This province is also

¹ This last volcanic mountain erupted on 17 January 2002, and devastated the city of Goma, killing hundreds.

artificially divided into two regions: the *Petit-Nord* (Small North), which includes the territories of Nyiragongo, Masisi, Rutshuru and Walikale, and the *Grand-Nord* (Great North), which includes the territories of Beni and Lubero.

From 1935 to 1963, the North Kivu Province was a sub-province of the united Kivu Province, which included the Maniema, the South Kivu and the North Kivu. In 1963, the three sub-provinces became autonomous provinces. In 1966, during the Mobutu regime, the three provinces were brought together once again in order to constitute the great Kivu Province, with Bukavu as its capital city. In 1988, after 22 years, the Kivu Province was once again subdivided into three autonomous provinces, a situation which still exists today (Mabila Mantuba-Ngoma, 2004:411-412).¹

In comparison with the City Province of Kinshasa, the capital city of the country, and the Bas Congo Province, North Kivu is the smallest and most densely populated province in the DRC. Its land area is 59,631 km², which is only 2.5% of the total land area of the country, which amounts to 2 345 000 km². In 2004, the population of the North Kivu Province was estimated to be 4 780 170 people, compared to 58 000 000, which was then the estimated total population of the DRC. Its population density is 71.6/km², in contrast to the national population density of 25/km² (CP-SRP 2005:8-13).

Currently, the population of the North Kivu Province is about 7 000 000. This increase is due to two reasons. Firstly, the registration of voters between June and December 2005², in preparation for the general elections of 2006, revealed a total of 2 462 012 voters in the North Kivu Province. This number only refers to people who are 18 years old and above (C.E.I., 2006: 53, 56). If one takes into account an average of five children³ per household, and all other non-identified people, according to the census, the population of the province can be estimated to be more than 7 000 000⁴.

¹ From the Wikipedia Free Encyclopedia, available at: http://fr.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Historique_des_divisions_administratives_de_la_R%C3%A9publique_d%C3%A9mocratique_du_Congo&oldid=25976673, one notes that the date is given as 1988, in contrast to Mabila Mantuba-Ngoma, who gave 1986 as the date of the subdivision of the great Kivu Province into three provinces. Indeed, 1988 must be the correct date for two reasons. Firstly, data in the Wikipedia are relatively up to date ie February 10, 2008. Secondly, the researcher is a living witness to the last subdivision of the Kivu Province in 1988, at which time he was already teaching at a secondary school in Goma.

² The last official scientific registration in the DRC before 2005 took place in 1984.

³ According to the "Country Fact Sheet for the DRC, April 2007" – available at: http://www.irb-cisr.gc.ca/en/research/publications/index_e.htm?docid=324&cid=0&s, the fertility rate in the DRC is 6.45 children per woman.

⁴ Kyalangilwa (www.ucdp-info.com/presses_secu_d.htm), the President of the Great Lakes Forum International in Switzerland, talks about 7 460 642. According to him, the last registration, held between June and December 2005, involved about 33% of the population.

The second reason for the increase in the population of the North Kivu Province is that, in spite of wars, insecurity and many other disturbances, due to the massive influx of refugees from Rwanda in 1994, rebels and many armed troops, this province remains an attractive region because of its hospitable people, natural parks and tourist sites, Lake Edward, which is rich in terms of its fish population, its temperate climate, agricultural potential due to the very fertile volcanic and valley alluvial soils, and in particular, its mineral resources. It is also the second province, after the Bas-Congo Province, which brings many sources of revenue to the country through its two custom points in Kasindi and Goma. Because of all the abovementioned economic potential, the North Kivu Province welcomes immigrants from other places, even from foreign countries such as Rwanda. As a result, this province is currently overpopulated.

The estimated 7 000 000 people in the North Kivu Province belong to three main ethnic groups: the Bantus, the Pygmies, and the Nilotics. About 60 % of the population is rural, while 40 % is urban. From these three ethnic groups, the population of the North Kivu Province comprises thirteen tribes¹, namely the Nande, Hutu, Hunde, Nyanga, Kano, Pere, Tembo, Talinga, Mbuba, Kumu, Kusu, who are Bantus, the Mbute, who are Pygmies, and the Tutsis, who are Nilotics. In addition to their own local languages, these ethnic groups are unified in speaking the Kiswahili language.

The Bantu ethnic group forms the majority. Its 10 tribes are essentially farmers, fishermen and craftsmen. Among these tribes, the Nande, Hutu, Hunde and Nyanga are the most important in the province. The Nande, who make up about 50%², live in five out of the six territories: Lubero, Beni, Rutshuru, Goma³, and Masisi. They are more involved in the running of businesses and in agriculture than in fishing, crafts and other activities. The Hutu, who make up about 25%, live in Rutshuru, Masisi and Goma. The Hunde, who make up about 7% of the population, live in Masisi and Bwito (Rutshuru). The Nyanga make up about 5%

¹ Generally speaking, a tribe is a group of people sharing customs, language and territory (“Tribe” in Microsoft Encarta, 2006). According to the Macmillan English Dictionary (2002), a tribe is a large group of related families who live in the same area and share a common language, religion and customs. In the DRC, a tribe is understood more as a group of people sharing the same customs and language, regardless of the territory in which they live. In this sense, one may find several tribes sharing the same territory. However, according to customs and traditions, each tribe claims to have a homeland. The lands are always linked to tribes.

² According to Wikipedia (available at: http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/R%C3%A9publique_d%C3%A9mocratique_du_Congo#Congo_belge), the Nande occupy the fourth place in the DRC with 10%, after the Luba (18%), the Mongo (17%) and the Bakongo (12%).

³ Here, Goma is mentioned as a territory instead of Nyiragongo. Formerly, Goma was a territory, which included Nyiragongo as one of its municipalities. When Goma became an autonomous town within North Kivu, the territory of Goma became Nyiragongo. In spite of this change, however, Goma is still considered as a territory, instead of Nyiragongo.

and live in Walikale. For a long time, ethnic conflicts have placed the Hutu in opposition to these three tribes (Journal of Refugee Studies, 1996:269).

The Mbuti (Pygmies), who are the minority among other minorities, live on the fringes of society in forests, where they only crop fruit and hunt wild animals. Socially, politically and religiously speaking, they are neglected and uneducated. There are very few missionary activities carried out in their favour. The second minority group is the Tutsis (Nilotics), who usually live in the areas of Goma, Rutshuru (Jomba) and Masisi. They are generally shepherds, and live their lives searching for pastures for their flocks. However, the Tutsis, as well as some Hutus, are assumed to not have homelands within the Kivu region, a complex issue which is one of the sources of conflicts in the North Kivu Province.

2.2.2 Socio-economic and political environment

2.2.2.1 Conflicts

For decades, the socio-economic and political environment of the North Kivu Province has been characterised by constant conflicts. Despite the last presidential and legislative elections of 2006, the North Kivu Province is still the victim of disturbances that impede populations and churches from freely conducting their activities. Mismanagement and bad governance and their harmful consequences, such as poverty, political instability, and ethnic and land conflicts, are issues which hamper human development within the province. In order to put an end to ethnic conflicts, the former Mobutu regime attempted, with some success, to counter tribalism by banning ethnic organisations. In this respect, O'Ballance (2000:176) states that Mobutu's one positive achievement was to protect his country from fragmentation. In spite of this attempt, however, the Mobutu regime failed to govern its people and solve the crucial problem of poverty and leadership. As a result, socio-political issues such as tribalism, power and citizenship claims, and land conflicts have increased within the North Kivu Province.

Rather than the citizenship issue involving the Kinyarwanda-speaking people, which has been politicised and placed at the centre of conflicts within the province, even among Christians, the real root of conflicts and wars in the North Kivu Province and the eastern DRC as a whole is the mismanagement of people and land. At the root of the land conflicts is primarily the issue of immigrants from Rwanda and Burundi over decades, who, at the same time, claim to be both Congolese and Rwandan or Burundian. The fact that some immigrants seem to belong to more than one country is contrary to the Constitution of the DRC, which

stipulates that Congolese citizenship is exclusive and cannot be possessed together with any other citizenship. The Constitution goes on to stipulate that a Congolese person is someone belonging to an ethnic group whose people and land constituted the current DRC at the time of independence (RDC Constitution, Chapter 2 and Article 10)¹.

How and why did people immigrate from Rwanda and Burundi to the North Kivu Province? In order to respond to this crucial question, Pabanel (1991:32-34)² mentions five factors or phenomena pertaining to immigration in the North Kivu region: the delimitation of new frontiers, the Mission of Immigration of Banyarwanda (MIB), the enrolment of Rwandan men-power, political refugees, and clandestine immigrants.

The delimitation of new frontiers

According to Pabanel, pre-colonial Rwanda stretched to the eastern part of the current DRC. According to him, the areas of Jomba, Bwisha, Kanurunsi, Gishari, and the island of Idjwi belonged to Rwanda. In 1910, when the boundaries were mapped out between Belgian and German territories, these Rwandan areas were given to the Belgian Congo. Accordingly, the populations in these areas, which spoke the Rwandan language, legally became Congolese. The version of Rwandan history, as it is written by the Abbé Alexis Kagame, maintains the above position, according to which Rwanda had conquered vast portions of what would become eastern Congo as early as the fifteenth century (Turner 2007:113).

The Mission of Immigration of Banyarwanda (MIB)³

Pabanel indicates that because of the overpopulation of the small Rwandan territory, Belgian authorities considered Rwanda to be a breeding ground for manpower. In 1937, the MIB was created in order to organise immigrations from Rwanda, and to create a Rwandan district in the depopulated areas of the current territory of Masisi in the North Kivu Province. The land

¹ In the current context of globalisation, this Constitution of the DRC is questionable, because it is too exclusive. It could also be a source of conflict among the people.

² For more information, one can read Turner (2007:106-145).

³ The first two phenomena are questionable. As the Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi were under Belgian rule, it would not have been necessary to organise immigrations. Because of the next phenomena, notably phenomena 3 and 5, it is unbelievable that Belgian authorities would maintain the mentioned territories in favour of the Congo, if they were truly Rwandan. Furthermore, conscious of the ongoing socio-political and economic problems of Rwanda, it would have been better for Belgian authorities, after their peace agreement with the Germans, to simply return to Rwanda the so-called territories awarded to the Congo. With regard to the second phenomenon, if Masisi had belonged to Rwanda since the fifteenth century, why would the acquisition of Gishari in Masisi be the subject of negotiation?

awarded to immigrants from Rwanda was 350 km², and this territory was under the administration of Bideri, a Tutsi chosen from the immigrants. The act of transferring the land was done by the Bahunde tribe's Chief Kalinda, who received 29 600 Belgian francs as compensation from the Rwandan chief, Rudahigwa (Turner, 2007:112). From 1937 to 1949, some Rwandan families settled in the Gishari area in Masisi. Because of famines in Rwanda from 1949 to 1953, the number of immigrants to Gishari increased¹.

The enrolment of Rwandan manpower

The third phenomenon that characterised the immigrations from Rwanda to the North Kivu Province was the need for manpower by Belgian agricultural and mining firms in the Kivu Province. Through these immigrations, Belgium claimed to be responding at the same time to their need for workers and the overpopulation of Rwanda.

Political refugees

Pabanel also points out that another wave of immigrants from Rwanda was made up of political refugees. The period from 1959 to 1961 was marked by political and ethnic conflicts in Rwanda. When the monarchy was overthrown, the Republic of Rwanda was proclaimed. After this, the populations supporting the monarchy fled to the Kivu Province, especially to Masisi, where people of Rwandan origin were already living.

Clandestine immigrants

The problem of mismanagement of people and land is very evident in the DRC, especially in terms of the clandestine immigrant phenomenon in the Kivu region. As Pabanel maintains, clandestine immigrants from Rwanda to the North Kivu Province were present as a result of the permeability of the boundaries between Rwanda and the Kivu region, increasing overpopulation in Rwanda, domestic connections with some Congolese people having

¹ Mabilia Mantuba-Ngoma (2004:413) mentions 25 450 immigrants in the period between 1937 and 1945, and 170 000 between 1949 and 1955. From 1953 to 1955, immigrants from Rwanda went beyond the area of the Gishari, to other places such as Bashali-Mokoto in the Buhunde area. In the period between 1951 and 1959, the Rwanda-Burundi plan endorsed the settling of immigrants in the furthest parts of Masisi and Rutshuru. Hence, the land area of the immigrants from Rwanda in the Kivu Province had become more than 150 000 hectares.

originated from Rwanda, and fear due to ethnic and political conflicts between the Hutu and Tutsi tribes.

With respect to the above, Mabiala Mantuba-Ngoma (2004:416) asserts that every political crisis in the former Rwanda-Burundi generated a new wave of immigrants in the Kivu Province. This has been the case since political crises occurred in both Rwanda and Burundi during the 1990s. The most prominent case of immigration is the one related to the war of Rwanda in 1994, which brought about three million refugees¹ to both the North and South Kivu Provinces. This last war of Rwanda is assumed to be one of the major causes of current conflicts and wars in the DRC in general, and the Kivu region in particular. Matthiew, Matabaro and Tsongo (1998) sum up the issues related to immigrants and land conflicts in the following way:

Since 1993, northern Kivu, in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (former Zaire) has been the scene of large-scale violent fighting between rural groups of differing socio-ethnic origin. Between March 1993 and early 1996, tens of thousands of civilians were killed and hundreds of thousands displaced. This slaughter is the culmination of a long process of escalating conflict fuelled by a number of factors: the demographic and ethnic imbalances resulting from migration, the expropriation of smallholders, the uncertainties and confusion of nationality and, finally, political manipulation.

In addition to land conflicts and issues related to them, the North Kivu Province faces insecurity, poverty, tribalism and marginalisation of Pygmies and other vulnerable groups. These problems are also significant challenges for churches and Christian missions within the region.

2.2.2.2 Other challenges

Insecurity

According to the Provincial Committee in charge of Strategies for the Decrease of Poverty (CP-SRP, 2005:23-24), the insecurity in the North Kivu Province is mainly due to the presence of foreign armed troops, such as the former FAR, *Interahamwe*, CNDP, LRA, NALU and local uncontrolled militias. This insecurity is primarily as a result of military presence in the region. These soldiers and militias murder, rape women, plunder vehicles and goods inside them, extort populations, destroy crops and cattle, and poach animals. This also

¹ The Journal of Refugee Studies (vol. 9, No. 3, 1996:269-272) talks about 800 000 refugees, who were concentrated in three mega camps (Kibumba, Mugunga and Katale) around the capital city of Goma. O'Ballance (2000:157) talks about one million refugees who passed through Goma.

leads to food insecurity, especially in towns. The presence of foreign armed troops increases the traffic of guns and weapons. The permeability of borders leads not only to land conflicts, but also to conflicts among communities. The low wages and irregularity of payment of soldiers, and the lack of control of the military and police, increase the chance of a misuse of their powers. The lack of security thus makes many of the rural areas inaccessible to farmers, and also makes trade between rural and urban areas almost impossible.

The insecurity within the North Kivu Province is also evident in the practice of rape of women and girls. This is obviously a big factor in the spread of sexually transmitted illnesses such as HIV/AIDS. The rape of women is also a factor in conflicts within households and food insecurity, because it hinders women from going to their farms.

Poverty

As a result of the lack of security, the North Kivu Province is also facing poverty.¹ Poverty is a complex concept, often understood depending on whether one is rich or poor, educated or uneducated. Sustaining such a tendency, Bosch bears witness to the fact that,

Rich Christians increasingly tended to interpret the biblical sayings on poverty metaphorically. The poor were the “poor in spirit”, the ones who recognize their utter dependency upon God. In this sense, then, the rich could also be poor – they could arrogate all biblical promises to themselves. Gradually, however, the faces of the poor forced themselves on to the attention of the rich Christians of the West in a way that could no longer be ignored or allegorized (Bosch 1991:435)².

Along with Kirk (1999:97-98), poverty can nonetheless be regarded as an inhumane condition which is an everyday reality for the vast majority of people in the world. This means precarious housing, with large families sharing one or two rooms and sleeping together in the same bed, no running water, unsuitable toilets, open drains, scanty health services, unaffordable medicines and a meagre diet. Poverty also means death, death that is caused by hunger, sickness, or the oppressive methods used against any and every effort to free the oppressed. It is physical death, to which cultural death is added, because in a situation of oppression, everything that gives unity and strength to the dispossessed of this world is destroyed. Those who are the object of serious discrimination in any society, such as the disabled, women, and minority racial groups such as Pygmies, might be listed among the

¹ See also Mabilia Mantuba-Ngoma (2004:405-406) for more comments on poverty that characterises the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a whole.

² Cochrane, Gruchy and Petersen (1991:61) maintain also that ‘many who are not materially impoverished have a great fondness for defining poverty as a spiritual or emotional or psychological lack’.

poor. In addition to the above image of poverty, Bosch (1991:436-437) emphasises that the poor are the marginalised, those who lack active or even passive participation in society. Accordingly, poverty is a sub-condition, a scandalous condition, an evil, a total system of death. In effect (Kritzinger 2000:105), poverty has many faces - there are many indicators of it¹.

With regard to the North Kivu Province, the CP-SRP (2005:23-31) has identified several causes of poverty, namely:

- the dilapidation and impracticality of roads and paths to agricultural services, which do not facilitate traffic inside the province and beyond its borders. Accordingly, the prices of commercial products have increased significantly. Of 1 634 km of national and provincial roads, only 259 km² is tarred and usable to some extent.
- the downfall of agricultural, farming and fishing production. Due to the lack of a government programme for agriculture, people are still using traditional methods of production. Therefore, many have abandoned this sector in favour of other activities, such as trade. This has led to the rural exodus to cities and increased prices of local products.
- the non-payment of wages of civil workers and agents of the government. This exposes government agents and civil workers to corruption and vagrancy. In order to improve this situation, the province and the country need good governance and willing political leaders.
- mismanagement, bad governance and poor leadership. This is a real challenge that needs to be tackled urgently if the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)³, as defined by the

¹ See Kritzinger (2000:104-110) and Cochrane, Gruchy and Petersen (1991:60-65) for further information on poverty.

² In contrast to the report of the CP-SRP, the length of tarred roads is only 160 km, i.e. Goma-Kabasha (114 km), Goma-Sake (27 km), Goma central (10 km), Kayna-Kirumba (seven km), and Beni central (two km). However, this 160 km of tarred roads is also very dilapidated.

³ According to the UNDP Human Development Report (2002), Kofi Annan (2005) and Thirlwall (2006), the Millennium Development Goals are defined as follows:

Goal 1: Eradicating extreme poverty and hunger. Target 1: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than one dollar a day. Target 2: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

Goal 2: Achieve universal primary education. Target 3: Ensure that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Goal 3: Promote gender equality and empower women. Target 4: Eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015.

Goal 4: Reduce child mortality. Target 5: Reduce by two thirds, between 1990 and 2015, the under-five mortality rate.

Goal 5: Improve maternal health. Target 6: Reduce by three quarters, between 1990 and 2015, the maternal mortality rate.

Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. Target 7: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS. Target 8: Have halted by 2015 and begun to reverse the incidence of malaria and other major diseases.

United Nations, are to be achieved, something which the DRC has been urged to sign. The fight against corruption and impunity should be at the centre of the elected political leaders' minds for the improvement in the quality of life within the province.

- The weak revenue results from the weak existence of remunerated services, insufficient salaries and their irregular payment system, lack of security, abandonment and destruction of the domains of production, insufficiency of factories and lack of industries, lack of a loan policy in order to promote the activities of producers and businessmen/women, lack of a development policy, and insecurity, which limits the trade traffic throughout the province.
- Unemployment due to the scarcity of factories, industries, official firms and businesses. The private sector is not able to create sufficient employment. In fact, the existing firms are very domestic, and function on an informal status. Unemployment has also been caused by the last eruption of the Nyiragongo volcano in January 2002, which destroyed almost everything in Goma: the international airport, schools, churches, stores and shops, factories, private and official offices, hotels and other businesses.
- The inaccessibility of the population to basic social services such as drinking water, electricity, appropriate medical care and education at all levels.

Tribalism

As with almost the entire country, the pre-colonial people of the North Kivu Province were organised into ethnic groups, without any kind of competition among them. Despite differences of language and customs, the different tribes had relationships with one another

Goal 7: Ensure environmental sustainability. Target 9: Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources. Target 10: Halve, by 2015, the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation. Target 11: Achieve, by 2020, a significant improvement in the lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers.

Goal 8: Develop a global partnership for development. Target 12: Develop further an open, rule-based, predictable, non-discriminatory trading and financial system (includes a commitment to good governance, development and poverty reduction – both nationally and internationally). Target 13: Address the special needs of the least developed countries (includes tariff- and quota-free access for least developed countries' exports; enhance programme of debt relief for heavily indebted poor countries and cancellation of official bilateral debt; and more generous ODA for countries committed to poverty reduction). Target 14: Address the special needs of landlocked countries and small island developing states (through the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the outcome of the twenty-second special session of the General Assembly). Target 15: Deal comprehensively with the debt problems of developing countries through national and international measures, in order to make debt sustainable in the long term. Target 16: In cooperation with developing countries, develop and implement strategies for decent and productive work for youth. Target 17: In cooperation with pharmaceutical companies, provide access to affordable, essential drugs in developing countries. Target 18: In cooperation with the private sector, make available the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technology.

and ways in which to communicate. As long as each other's interests were respected, tribes were more a value than a vice. Feeling different to someone else because of language and customs was not a reason for fighting with or excluding one another. Thus, how and when did the phenomenon of tribalism come to the DRC and therefore to the North Kivu Province? This is a very difficult question to answer, because the tribalism phenomenon seems to be, at the same time, both acquired and cultural.

As an acquired practice, Nwaigbo (2005:134) suggests that the term 'tribe' has been misconstrued in the African context. According to him, colonialists categorised African linguistic groups as tribes, and attributed to them differences in culture and way of life. In the Congo, Belgian colonialists, who had the same misconception of tribes due to linguistic differences, brought with them their frequent and long-standing rivalry between Flemings and Walloons ('Belgium', in Encarta 2006). According to Cornevin (1956:322), the Belgian colonial system in the Congo focused on tribes. Within the tribal framework, therefore, Belgians established an administration of complex divisions. The Belgian Congo was divided into provinces, provinces into districts, districts into territories, territories into posts and indigenous administrative units such as chiefdoms (chefferies), sub-chiefdoms, sectors, centres, etc. (Crabb 1970:45-47; Turner, 2007:28). In order to implement tribal policy on the ground, the Belgians also divided people into groups according to ethnicity, assuming that some consisted of good workers, others lazy workers, good fighters, good rulers, good farmers, intelligent people, good people to be ruled over, etc. This discrimination according to tribes awakened a strong tribal feeling among people. From this point onwards, there was a climate of suspicion and mistrust between different tribes, who reorganised themselves in a spirit of self-defence. Therefore, weak and minority ethnic groups were marginalised. Turner (2007:28-29) bears witness to the fact that in Rwanda and Burundi, Belgians developed the theory which claimed that the Tutsis were born to rule. Consequently, all new chiefs were appointed from the Tutsi ethnic group. With regard to the exploitation of mining companies in the Katanga and Orientale Provinces, Belgians considered the Luba of Kasai and the Hutu of Rwanda to be hard workers, and therefore recruited them by the thousands.

Consistent with the above historical background, tribalism is highlighted in terms of all people who lived in the North Kivu Province. Politically and ecclesiastically speaking, however, tribalism is much more noticeable among the following ethnic groups: the Nande, Hutu, Hunde and Nyanga. Due to the fact that the Nande and Hutu are the biggest tribes in the province, followed by the Hunde and Nyanga, they also play an important role in all domains. From a political point of view, the two largest ethnic groups compete mostly for the

leadership of the province¹. However, it is important to note that Protestantism, which has greatly influenced the socio-political and economic environment in the province, was pioneered by the Nyanga, Hunde and Nande, not by the second of the two largest tribes, namely the Hutu. This last fact leads to religious competition, because the churches established by the two early missionary societies, the Swedish Free Mission (SFM) and the Unevangelized African Mission (UAM), only seem to belong to the tribes by whom they were created. This issue will be discussed in greater detail in the next chapter.

Marginalisation of Pygmies and vulnerable groups

In addition to Pygmies, vulnerable groups such as street children, people displaced because of wars and armed conflicts, widows and orphans, people living with HIV/AIDS, women who have been raped, child soldiers, and people living with handicaps, are marginalised (CP-SRP 2005:31). This is due to the lack of appropriate social policies. Because of their lack of vision and financial means, churches are unable to deal with the challenge of marginalisation. It is only in a few cases that international NGOs support ecclesiastical initiatives for taking care of marginalised people².

The marginalisation of women, for example, is also due to customs in some communities of the province, which are unfavourable to the progress of women within society. It is not only that farm activities are assumed to be carried out by women, but women do also not have much access to ownership of land, higher education or any kind of leadership or decision-making within households and society in general. This violation of women's rights presents an obstacle to the development of the province and the church. Up till now, no woman has been appointed to a position of responsibility within any church in the three main Protestant communities, or even in other churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church, within the province³. In reality, women can only depend on men's will (CP-SRP 2005:30).

¹ The statement of the Hutu ethnic group to the "Conference on peace in the North and the South Kivu Provinces" – AMANI LEO – held in Goma in January 2008, has revealed that there is rivalry between the Hutu and the Nande. For more information, see: www.amanileo.org.

² The PMU (Swedish Pentecostal Mission Relief and Development Cooperation Agency) grants some aid for taking care of raped women through the CEPAC. The United Evangelical Mission (UEM) does the same for widows through the CBCA.

³ From the author's experiences and surveys throughout the Province, and even the Provincial Secretariat of the CCC's records, no woman has been appointed to a position of leadership within a church.

2.3 Historical background to mission

2.3.1 First contact with Christianity

The DRC came into early contact with Christianity, on account of the expeditions of David Livingstone and Henry Morton Stanley. Falk (1979:77-80) notes that the history of Roman Catholic missions in the Congo is very interesting and merits serious study. Through these Roman Catholic missions, a significant part of the country was brought under Christian influence over several centuries. Thereafter, however, the work of these missions virtually disappeared.

In 1482, Diego Cao¹, a Portuguese navigator and explorer, discovered the mouth of the Congo River and created the first colony at Mbanza Kongo or San Salvador. He was not himself a missionary, but through him, in 1491, the first group of Roman Catholic missionaries from Portugal arrived in Western Congo. Among them were masons, carpenters and other skilled craftsmen, who came to build the capital of Mbanza Kongo. Sensitive to these relations with the Portuguese, the king of Kongo, N'zinga Nkuwu, his wife and his oldest son, Alphonso, were readily baptised. Therefore, king N'zinga Nkuwu took the name of Joao 1st. His son Alphonso became the governor of the province of Nsudi in 1504, and welcomed a new group of missionaries.

In 1506, Alphonso sent his son Henry to Portugal to be trained and educated. As a Christian, Alphonso devoted his efforts to the development of his country, and supported the work of missionaries by enabling new groups to arrive from time to time. A significant development took place in the Congo during Alphonso's reign. There were at least six churches in San Salvador, and other churches and schools could be found in other provinces of the country. In 1518, the young Henry, sent to be trained and educated in Portugal, had been consecrated as the very first African bishop, and was appointed as apostolic vicar of the Congo. He unfortunately died early in 1530, but other Africans were later ordained as priests. Apparently, however, the effort to create an indigenous clergy was unsuccessful. Even though Alphonso energetically supported the Christian mission, and many people were baptised, very little evidence of radical change among populations could be seen. Unfortunately, after his death, the kingdom declined rapidly.

¹ Other authors refer to him as Diogo Cam.

A number of Roman Catholic societies served with great success in the kingdom of the Congo during the sixteenth century. However, there was a great turnover among these workers because of tropical diseases, the death rate among missionaries and ill health. Moreover, the Portuguese did not maintain the quality of the effort to evangelise and bring European civilisation to the kingdoms of Congo and Angola, which were both under their rule. The complications brought about by the slave trade, the diminished interest of Portugal in missionary work, and the unwillingness to allow missionaries from other countries to come into these parts had led to the decline and death of Christianity in the kingdom (Lagergren 1970:32). According to Nelson (1961:32), the close connection between Portuguese political influence and the missionary effort caused the decline of Christianity, which had kept pace with the decline of Portuguese power. Thereafter, Falk (1979:80) maintains that even though external factors contributed to the disappearance of Christianity, the main reason for this sad outcome of several centuries of “Christian” presence is probably the life of the Catholic Church itself. Even though a few men were trained for the priesthood in Portugal, priests were not trained in proportion to the large number of people who were baptised. As a result, baptised people were not thoroughly educated in the Christian faith and easily deserted it. Thus, Christianity did not become a part of the life and culture of the people.

The first attempt at Christianity, which had disappeared by the end of the seventeenth century due to the failure of Portuguese rule over the Congo, did not reach the eastern part of the DRC. For about two centuries, from the end of the seventeenth century to the second half of the nineteenth century, there were no Christian activities in the Congo. However, the exploration of the Congo by Stanley from 1876-77 opened a new door to the interior of Africa, and led to the establishment, in 1884, of the Congo Free State (Dwight Tuppe and Bliss 1904:193). Therefore, in January 1878, George Grenfell and Thomas Comber of the Baptist Missionary Society became the very first Protestant missionaries to enter the Congo. In the same year, Henry Craven and the Danish mariner, Stroem, of the Livingston Inland Mission, arrived in Matadi, where they began a missionary endeavour in Palabala. Later that year, they began, with other new-comers, a second centre of activity in Mbanza-Manteke. This was the beginning of Christian ministry in the Congo, and of the effort to penetrate the country with the Gospel and establish a chain of mission stations along the Congo River, in order to link up with the ministry which had already been established in East Africa (Falk 1979:375; Paas 2006:55)¹.

¹ For further information, see Sundkler and Steed (2000:49-53), and the History of the CCC: Available at: www.ecc.faithweb.com

From 1884-85, the Berlin Conference established the boundaries of the independent state of Congo, and later permitted the Belgian king to assume the title of “sovereign” over the vast territory. As a result, Protestant missionary societies were suddenly under the control of a Roman Catholic state. They could not work freely and establish missions wherever they wanted. Falk (1979:394) emphasises that:

Helped by the government, the Roman Catholic missions worked in close collaboration with the state. Through this collaboration, the work progressed in earlier days, but many people mistrusted the sincerity of the Catholic missions at the time of independence and even more so during the Simba rebellion. (...) Until 1960 the Catholic missionaries regarded the Protestants with disfavour.

According to Delvaux (145: 103-119), during the Belgian rule in the Congo, Roman Catholic missions were called “national missions” and Protestant missions referred to as “foreign missions”. In 1939, there were 2902 Catholic missionaries with 259 stations, and only 830 Protestant missionaries with 168 stations from 44 different missionary societies. Therefore, Mpereboy (2008) maintains that the Roman Catholic missionaries, who were also sponsored by the Belgian state in everything, occupied cities and all other suitable places throughout the country, and did not allow Protestant missionaries to undertake any activities in these places. Protestant missionaries were brought to work in rural areas among divided ethnic groups. Over time, this led them to develop a greater spirit of tribalism than the Roman Catholic missionaries. Supporting this point of view, Nelson (1989:90) confirms that:

Protestant mission efforts in the Belgian Congo have been described elsewhere (...) as generally characterized by a “rural romanticism”. To a large extent this was true of CBFMS efforts, reinforced by perceptions that Catholic missions enjoyed privileged access to work among urban populations and that the government already was providing health clinics in such locales¹.

Indeed, Protestant missionaries had been brought to start their activities in the rural areas among tribes, and created what they called the “missionary fields system”. This means, according to Paas (2006: 172), that the country was divided into several parts according to the number of missionary societies, and in line with the generous idea of Peter Cameron Scott, who projected the establishment of a chain of mission stations across Africa, from the West (Congo) to the East (Kenya-Mombasa)².

¹ With regard to Catholic and Protestant rivalry in the early DRC, one can read Markowitz (1973:38-51).

² In 1891, Peter Cameron Scott was sent to the west coast of Congo to be a missionary for the Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA). In 1895, he created the Africa Inland Mission (AIM), which carried out its work from Kenya to North East Congo.

In the DRC, Protestant missionary activities were timidly launched within “missionary fields” among tribes in rural areas, whereas Roman Catholics were officially ministering everywhere, among almost every ethnic group. It was in these circumstances that the Gospel spread throughout the country. It was also in such a context that two Protestant missionary societies, the SFM and the UAM, were established in the North Kivu Province. At this point, one can highlight the fact that the manner in which missionary activities were organised from the start has significantly influenced the leadership behaviour of churches up till now. In comparison with the Roman Catholic Church, Protestant churches are more challenged and affected by ethnic conflicts.

2.3.2 First missionary societies in the province

2.3.2.1 The Swedish Free Mission (SFM)

The very first Protestant missionary society which was established in the North Kivu Province is the SFM, a Swedish missionary society. It stemmed from the work of the Swedish Pentecostal movement, which was a gathering of 600 different communities. One of the most important of these communities is the Assembly of Philadelphia in Stockholm. The Philadelphia Church of Stockholm, which became the headquarters of the mission, was expelled from the Swedish Baptist Society in 1912 and formed an independent group among many Pentecostal assemblies, which were organised as a council in 1926. Levis Petrus, the leader of the Pentecostal movement in Sweden, built up the Philadelphia congregation, where the pastor is usually also the chairman of the mission council. Swedish Pentecostalism was already evident in many countries, such as Tanganyika (Tanzania), Liberia, Egypt, India, Mexico and South America, before it began its ministry in the DRC (Irvine, 1978:98 cf. Braekman, 1961:212).

In 1921, Axel B. Lindgren was sent to Africa by the Philadelphia Church of Stockholm to seek a mission field for the Pentecostal church, i.e. the SFM. He travelled with Gunnerius Tollefsen from the Norway Free Mission, and arrived in the eastern Belgian Congo in August 1921 via Dar-Es-Salaam. During the same year, he established the SFM in the territory of Walikale¹ (Machumbi) in the North Kivu Province. He also started activities in the

¹ Pastor Bahati Lubao Christophe of the CEPAC in Goma (2 February 2008) states in detail that the SFM was first established in the village of Ngenge. As Ngenge was far from the main road, the missionary station was moved to Machumbi, further along the road. At that time, as Delvaux (1945:67) and Turner (2007:111) also

area of Uvira, where the SFM baptised its first five believers in 1923 in Lake Tanganyika. In 1922, Lindgren was joined by a large group of missionaries. In December 1923, they experienced discouraging difficulties as a result of the sudden death of three of them in one week, and the ill health of others.

In spite of the sad circumstances, a spiritual revival of the mission, based on the Scripture, took place: *Those who shed tears as they plant will shout for joy when they reap the harvest* (Ps.126:5). Thus, in 1925, a further group of missionaries was sent by Swedish churches, in order to replace those who had died. From that time onwards, many other missionary stations were created: Lemera (1924), Nya Magira, Uvira (1927), Bukavu (1948), Kavumu (1952), Ndozia (1955) and Bunyakiri (1956) in the South Kivu Province. Apart from Machumbi (1921), in the North Kivu province, the following were established: Walikale (1931), Ntoto (1932), Pinga (1935) and Goma (1960). By the 1960s, the SFM reported 110 missionaries and 35 000 adult followers (Braekman 1961:213; Irvine 1979).

The SFM stretched all over the South Kivu Province among many ethnic groups, but in the North Kivu Province, it stagnated among only the Nyanga and Hunde¹ groups. In fact, after Congo's independence in 1960, which caused an accidental church autonomy from missionaries, new stations opened in the North Kivu Province up to 1970, i.e. Kashebere (1969) and Mweso (1970), and these were always among the same ethnic groups. Thus, in this area of the DRC, the CEPAC, which comes from the SFM, is known to be the business of the *Banyanga* and the *Bahunde*. Even though a large number of churches² and the head office of the CEPAC are situated in the South Kivu Province, because of the historic legacy, the North Kivu Province has more weight in terms of the choice of church leaders.

2.3.2.2 The Unevangelised African Mission (UAM)

The Kibalituri, in the northern region of the North Kivu Province, had already been reached by the Africa Inland Mission (AIM), and Walikale and Masisi had been reached by the SFM. However, the vast area that constitutes the current territories of Goma, Rutshuru, Lubero and

testify, Walikale and Masisi were the same territory, known as Masisi. In fact, Machumbi was located in the current territory of Walikale, which was a part of the early Masisi territory, and occupied by the Hunde and Nyanga tribes.

¹ Kihangi Bindu, a Hunde originating from Masisi, mentions that the Nyanga and Hunde are two ethnic groups that share almost the same culture and former territory of Masisi, which included the current territories of Masisi and Walikale, even though each of them has its own language. According to this historical framework, these two tribes live and work together like real brothers and sisters. Thus, the author will talk about them in the same way.

² In this regard, Pastor Mene Mushunganya (March 2008), the chairman of the North Kivu CEPAC, reported from his office archives that the North Kivu Province has only 203 churches, against 724 in the whole of CEPAC, which is more established in the South Kivu Province.

Beni remained unreached. For this reason, Charles E. Hurlbrut, a former AIM leader, who was well informed about this vast unreached area, founded, in 1927 in California, a new mission society called the *Unevangelised Africa Mission*. In 1928, his youngest son, Paul Hurlbrut, together with four other missionary families, arrived in the North Kivu Province and established the first missionary stations at Kitsombiro and Katwa among the Banande tribe. Together with some early Banande believers, Hurlbrut and his missionary colleagues travelled throughout the Kivu Province, opening other missionary stations such as Oicha (1931), Mayutsa (1931) - which was transferred to Kihindo in 1940, after its devastation by the volcanic eruption of 1936 - Rwanguba (1932), and Mushweshwe (1938) (Braekman 1961:217; cf. Nelson 1989:42-52).

The UAM experienced continual financial difficulties, to the extent that by the end of the Second World War, it was in a desperate situation. Many missionaries went back home and only three remained. The station of Oicha was transferred to the AIM, Mayutsa was completely destroyed by the volcanic eruption, and others were simply closed. Nelson describes the causes of the crisis within the UAM in the following terms:

At this early stage, tensions were already arising in the new mission effort with conflicts over leadership and the distribution of scarce funds heightening, and issues of appropriate mission philosophy dividing missionaries. Dr. Carl Becker, James Bell, and Bennet Williams became quickly disillusioned with the UAM effort, questioning whether it was necessary to have a separate mission society from the better organised and funded African Inland Mission just to the north. Following several visits to AIM mission stations, they transferred their loyalties and joined AIM, taking the newly established Oicha station with them. A severe constriction of the mission's budget due to cutbacks resulting from the difficulties faced by supporting churches in America, in the midst of the Great Depression, exacerbated other disputes, as well. Some missionaries arrived with a sixty dollar/month support base for a family, and even this was not always guaranteed to be delivered in full. Others had come without pledged support from churches in America, expecting the mission to provide for them. Budget constrictions resulted in debates over missionizing tactics, as well, particularly, whether African workers should be paid by the mission. Hurlburt advocated, as he had at the beginning, the building of an independently supporting church, meaning that the mission was not to pay Africans to do church related work. But there was no consistent philosophy among the missionaries, and some had been paying African teacher-evangelists on their separate stations (Nelson, 1989:50).

Because of not having a sound solution to the crisis within the UAM, this missionary society was ceded to another missionary society. Therefore, in 1946, a new missionary society from America, the Conservative Baptist Foreign Missionary Society (CBFMS), founded as a result of conflicts within the Northern Baptist Convention, came to strengthen the ministry of the UAM, although under the leadership of Paul Hurlburt. It is important to note that before the arrival of the CBFMS, there were no Baptist churches in the North Kivu Province. Thus,

the churches founded by the UAM became Baptist, due to the change brought about by the CBFMS. Nelson (1989:88) says that implementing the Baptist principle of autonomy in local church congregations was an early goal of the CBFMS.

The new missionary society, the CBFMS, opened new stations, namely Burungu (1949), Kabisi (1952), Goma (1954), Bukavu (1954), Ndoluma (1955), Kasheke (1957), Singa (1958), Bunyakiri (1960) and Bwatsinge (1960). It also established social services such as two hospitals, one in Rwanguba in 1946, and the other in Katwa in 1952, and the Bible Institute of Rwanguba in 1948. Unfortunately, 12 January 1948 was a sad day for the CBFMS. In effect, on their way to inaugurating the Bible Institute of Rwanguba, three missionaries devoted to teaching Bible courses, that is, Paul Uhlinger, George Kevorkian and Edna Mae Sill, died in the flames of their small plane, which crashed in Katwa. This first big crisis within the CBFMS did not put an end to the Bible Institute project. On 2 March of the same year, the Bible Institute opened with 38 students, mostly from the Banande of the Kitsombiro and Katwa stations (Nelson 1989:89).

In 1959, the Belgian Congo authorities instructed CBFMS missionaries to remove the term “foreign” from their name. Therefore, the CBFMS became locally known as the MBK, i.e. *Mission Baptiste du Kivu* (Baptist Mission of the Kivu).

The previous problem of the UAM arose again in the MBK, especially in terms of the insincere collaboration between missionaries and native believers. Among the many issues in terms of which the natives felt that they were being discriminated against was that of education. In fact, no primary and professional schools created by the missionaries of the UAM and CBFMS were approved and subsidized by the Belgian Congo state, because their educational programmes were of a very low standard. The missionaries, according to Nelson (1989:97-98), were faced with the task of upgrading the quality of education, and there was considerable pressure from the colonial administration for them to do so. The debates regarding educational efforts on the part of the mission involved the issue of whether or not to accept government subsidies. This was an issue that would increasingly become a source of discontent among Africans during the 1950s. On the one hand, Roman Catholic schools had enjoyed the benefits of state subsidies since the mid-twenties. On the other hand, the Congo Protestant Council had been lobbying for similar benefits, arguing that Protestant subjects of the colony paid taxes but received no educational benefits in return. In 1947, the Belgian Parliament finally approved a plan for subsidising Protestant mission-sponsored schools, and these became available to mission groups in 1948. Some Protestant mission groups welcomed the subsidies, while others took a strong stand against them.

With regard to the issue of subsidies, Nelson (1989:99) suggests that the missionaries of the CBFMS/MBK were divided, and there was strong pressure from their foreign secretary, Raymond Buker, to reject them. Those arguing against the acceptance of subsidies were of the view that to do so would violate the Baptist principle of the separation of church and state ideologies, and would entail a loss of spirituality in the mission. The fear was that state ideological teachings would be a part of the mandated curriculum, and could include requirements to use Catholic religious texts, resulting in a loss of religious freedom. Because of the healthy doctrine concern in particular, missionaries did not accept colonial government subsidies for and control of their schools, even though this issue was the main concern of Africans.

Determined not to allow mission schools to open without government subsidies, Africans convened their own conference in Burungu from 18 to 21 August 1959. There they decided to upgrade the education programme against the missionaries' will, and created the *Association des Chrétiens Congolais de la Mission Baptiste du Kivu (ACCMBK)*, that is, the "Congolese Christian Fellowship for the Kivu Baptist Mission." The ACCMBK was strongly rejected by missionaries, and from that time on, most Africans decided in favour of a schism within the CBFMS/MBK. Thus, the ACCMBK later became known as the UBEIK (Union Baptiste d'Entraide Indigène au Kivu), SEPBK (Synode des Eglises Protestantes Baptistes au Kivu), and EPBK (Eglise Protestante Baptiste au Kivu), which is the former name of the current CBCA. However, within the province, the EPBK was regarded as the business of the Banande ethnic group. On the other side, the Africans who remained faithful to missionaries took the names of MBK, AEBK (Association des Eglises Baptistes du Kivu) and then CEBCE. Finally, the schism within the CBFMS/MBK was later strengthened by independence, as most Westerners were expelled from the Congo on 30 June 1960.

In spite of the schism within the CBFMS/MBK, the CBCA and the CEBCE, which both came from this missionary society, have many similarities in terms of their doctrine, liturgy, beliefs and work methods, etc. Furthermore, they are both called not only Baptists, but also "*Bahorobe*", which means "disciples of Hurlbrut", the one who founded the UAM.

2.3.3 The Church of Christ in Congo (CCC)

In order to gain a better understanding of the background to mission in the North Kivu Province, it is also important to have a look at the "Church of Christ in Congo" (CCC), which has played a prominent role in the history of missions and the church in the DRC since the

early 1900s. The CCC is still playing an influential role within the fellowship of more than sixty-four Protestant communities in all the provinces of the DRC.

2.3.3.1 Brief history

The Church of Christ in Congo is an important Protestant Christian council, which evolved in the DRC alongside the Roman Catholic Church and Kimbanguism. It originated with missionary ventures that were undertaken from the beginning of the twentieth century. Its roots go back to the Congo General Conference of Missions held in Leopoldville (Kinshasa) from the 18 to 21 January 1902, under the chairmanship of Georges Grenfell of the Baptist Missionary Society. According to the History of the CCC and Irvine (1979: xv), the key objective of the Conference was unification, in order to coordinate and protect the ministry of different missions against the antagonism of Roman Catholic missions and the pro-Roman Catholic colonial administration's religious policy towards Protestantism. Thirty-four missionaries, representing seven missionary societies¹, attended the Conference. Because of the common problems they experienced, Protestant missions were appealing to each other to work in collaboration. The early endeavour of the CCC was thus strengthened by the founding of the Continuation Committee in 1911, which was associated with the Edinburgh 1910 World Missionary Conference (WMC).

From 14 to 23 June 1910, the very first World Missionary Conference (WMC) was held in Edinburgh, Scotland, with 1 200 delegates from missionary fields all over the world. As some of its outcomes, the WMC initiated the creation of Continuation Committees, so that these could implement the recommendations that were formulated. The 1910 Edinburgh WMC also recognised that the Belgian Congo was the biggest missionary field in the world (cf. History of the CCC).

In 1911, according to Irvine (1979: xvii-xviii), the 6th Congo General Conference of Missions met in Bolenge and discussed how to implement the findings of the 1910 Edinburgh WMC. Thomas Moody, from the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (ABFMS), proposed the formation of the Congo Continuation Committee, believed to be the first overseas continuation committee organised after the 1910 Edinburgh WMC, and Alfred Stonelake was appointed as its secretary. At the same meeting, C.P. Hedges from the Foreign

¹ According to Braekman (1961:264), the seven missionary societies that attended the conference were: ABFMS- American Baptist Foreign Mission Society (1884), APCM-American Presbyterian Congo Mission (1891), BMS-Baptist Missionary Society (1882), CBM-Congo Balolo Mission (1889), CMA-Christian and Missionary Alliance (1888), DCCM – Disciples of Christ Congo Mission (1899), SMF-Svenska Missions Förbundet (1884).

Christian Missionary Society (FCMS) suggested that the conference should have its own periodical for circulation amongst missionaries.

In 1912 (cf. History of the CCC), the Congo Continuation Committee launched a common, official Protestant journal for missions, entitled *Congo Mission News* (CMN). Edited by Alfred Stonelake until 1928, the CMN became a significant tool for coordination and collaboration between Protestant missionary societies in the Congo (Goddard 1967:201-202). In order to strengthen the recent unity among missionaries, the Congo Continuation Committee launched other vital common ministries, such as the *Union Mission House*, the current “Centre d’Accueil Protestant – CAP” (1920), as a missionary guesthouse, the Evangelical Printing House and Store, called “Librairie Evangélique au Congo (L.E.C.O.)”, the current “Centre Protestant d’Editions et de Diffusion – CEDI” (1935), the construction of the headquarters of the CCC in Kinshasa (1951), and the Congo Protestant University (Université Protestante au Congo – UPC) (1959) (Braekman, 1961:270-284 cf. McGavran and Riddle 1979:67) .

In 1922, the Congo Continuation Committee changed its name to Congo Christian Council, and then to Congo General Council. In 1924, the Congo Protestant Council (CPC) was established and approved by the Continuation Committee, which it then replaced. This council met briefly in 1925. The CPC was organised as an advisory council of missions which met annually to unify and develop the work of Protestant evangelical missions in the conventional basin of the Congo, to foster the Church of Christ in Congo and to effectively connect the Protestant community with authorities and Christian bodies in other lands. In this respect, all Protestant missions working in the Belgian Congo were encouraged to join the CPC, but legal recognition was usually required as a condition of membership, and some of the smaller mission societies could not satisfy this requirement (Irvine 1979:xviii). Legal recognition was later awarded in 1942. At the general meeting held in Luebo in the same year (History of the CCC), the name of “Church of Christ in Congo” was adopted to replace that of “Congo Protestant Council” (CPC). Therefore, all evangelical missions became branches of the Church of Christ in Congo.

However, one must bear in mind that the CPC, as the successor to the Congo Continuation Committee, was a member of the International Missionary Council (IMC) created in 1921 at Lake Mohonk. Thus, after the meeting of the IMC held in Achimotha-Accra in Ghana (1957-58), where the decision was taken to merge the IMC with the WCC, in the process of forming the Division of World Mission and Evangelism, the CCC withdrew its

membership of the IMC, in order to avoid controversy among its member missions (cf. Bosch 1991:461).

What is important to highlight is the fact that up until 1957, the CCC, which once again became known as the CPC, after the meeting in Luebo, was still the business of overseas missionaries. African delegates, according to Goddard (1967:202), participated as full members of the Council for the first time in 1957. In January of the following year, the All African Conference on the Church (AACC) urged the CPC to transfer, with rapidity, the responsibility to Africans, and to realise “one Church”. Because of this, in the course of the CPC meeting in April 1960 at Kumbya in Rwanda-Burundi, it was agreed that a Council of Churches should replace the Council of Missions. Therefore, local churches became executive members of the Council, and missions became associate members, with executive power being transferred from missions to the Church of Christ in Congo in each area where missions had been working. It was through this dynamism that Joel Bulaya was elected as the first African President of the CPC from 1960-61, and Peter Shaumba as General Secretary from 1961 to 1968. In 1968, Bokeleale Itofo was elected to succeed Shaumba. Two years later, on the 8th March 1970, the Constitution of the CPC was changed in order to create the current form of the “Church of Christ in Congo”. This put a definite end to institutional missionary leadership in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (History of the CCC).

2.3.3.2 Organisational structure and objectives

The CCC is a Christian Council consisting of sixty-four Protestant communities’ members. According to McGavran and Riddle (1979:97), it is a united church, rather than a monolithic one. The CCC is also a federation of many communities, most of whom have denominational connections through missions to overseas churches. Each of the 64 communities of the CCC is autonomous; having its own legal standing with the government, as well as its own elected leadership, constitution, policy, doctrines and programmes. Indeed, the CCC has evolved on the basis of “unity in diversity”. For this reason, the National Secretariat of the CCC does not dare to meddle in the internal affairs of these communities, with one noticeable exception. It reserves the right to intervene in the case of conflicts within or between communities, whether invited as a mediator or not. On the basis of Article 8 of its constitution, the CCC allows three kinds of administration within its member communities: Episcopal administration, Presbyterian administration, and Congregational administration. McGarvan and Riddle point out that one of the major goals of the CCC is unity, as follows:

As a result of years of hearing the gospel, of experiencing the unifying love of Christ, and of participating in the growing visible unity expressed by the CPC, Zairian Christians were able to transfer their strong feelings of solidarity within the tribe, clan, lineage, and family to the larger entity – the family of God, the Church of Jesus Christ. This was in turn strengthened by the government’s increasingly determined effort to weld a unified nation out of the over three hundred tribes which live in Zaire. These factors taken together help to explain why the delegates to the final General Assembly of the CPC voted for a united Church structure (McGarvan and Riddle 1979:95).

In addition to working together for a common purpose, Article 3 reveals that the CCC functions according to three main goals:

- The internal and external evangelical goal, which consists of the implementation of the Lord Jesus Christ’s Great Commission, according to Mathew 28:19-20
- The educational goal which consists of the nurturing of the people of God, Christian education, growth of the church by faithful testimony and unity in diversity throughout the DRC and beyond. The Church proclaims the liberty, equality and dignity of the whole human race, created in God’s image, and removes barriers based on tribes, race, gender, social rank, culture and civilisation. The Church professes the love of God, one’s neighbour and the country.
- The diaconal goal, which seeks people’s material well-being through the achievement of religious and philanthropic works (educational, medical and all other works related to people’s well-being).

These objectives of the CCC (Constitution, Art .4) are to be implemented in the DRC, as well as in other countries.

The CCC is structured (Constitution Art. 8) in such a way it should be represented on all administrative levels in the DRC: national, provincial, denominational and local church levels. At the national level, the CCC comprises the General Assembly, called the National Synod, the National Executive Committee,¹ and the National Secretariat. This structure is supposed to be found at provincial and denominational levels of the CCC. At the local church level, there is the assembly, council and pastor.

The CCC also comprises six departments: the Department of Evangelism, Life of the Church and Mission, which is focused on the leadership of evangelisation and mission, the

¹ The National Executive Committee consists of the General Secretary, called the President, two deputy-presidents, provincial presidents, former national presidents, former national moderators, national president of the Protestant Lays Ministry (MILAPRO), national president of the National Federation of Protestant Men, national president of the National Federation of Protestant Women, national president of the National Federation of Protestant Youth, and one delegate from each associated department.

theological committee for the Life of the Church, and the universities' chaplaincy; the Department of Christian Education, which focuses on the MILAPRO, the Protestant Youth Union, Sunday school and choirs; the Department of Women and Family, which is focused on the National Federation of Protestant Women and the training of skilled women; the Department of Diaconate, which focuses on the Congolese Protestant Relief Agency, the Church Ministry for Refugees and Emergencies, and the Protestant Centre for Medicines Provision; the Department of Medical Services, which focuses on coordinating hospitals and other Protestant health services; and the Department of Protestant Chaplaincy for the Army and Police.

However, according to the Director of the Office of the CCC President, Dr Mazaburu (March 2008), the CCC currently has no vision and competencies for mission. Because of this, the Department of Evangelism, Life of the Church and Mission, which is supposed to be in charge of coordinating and developing missionary programmes for CCC member communities, has no head. Indeed, the CCC, which has its origins in missionary perspectives, deals more with other aspects of the church. This is why, in the current context of wars, ethnic conflicts and other harmful events that cause insecurity, lack of peace, famine, disease, poverty and death in the DRC, the CCC, on all its levels, is more devoted to humanitarian activities without a substantial and clear link to mission in its evangelical dimension. Accordingly, its departments that are concerned with humanitarian issues are often sponsored from outside, to the detriment of the Department of Evangelism, Life of the Church and Mission. Such practices prove that there is, indeed, a misunderstanding of mission, which should be viewed not only as linked to spiritual things, but as holistic and comprehensive.

The CCC is also associated with many other Christian ministries: the Bible Alliance for the DRC, the *Centre d'Accueil Protestant* (CAP), the Evangelical Medical Centre of Nyankunde, the *Centre Protestant d'Editions et de Diffusion* (CEDI), International Compassion, *Habitat pour l'Humanité*, the Evangelical Medical Institute of Kimpese, the Scripture Union (*Ligue pour la Lecture de la Bible*), the Campus Crusade for Christ, the Mission Aviation Fellowship (MAF), the Congo Protestant University (UPC), the Leprosy Evangelical Mission, and the International Fellowship for Evangelical Students (IFES).

2.3.3.3 The North Kivu Province Secretariat of the CCC

The provincial secretariats of the CCC have the same constitution, organisational structure, goals and policy as the National Secretariat. It is through the provincial secretariats, in effect,

that the National Secretariat of the CCC attempts to be a moral and spiritual support for its member communities throughout the country. The North Kivu Province's Secretariat of the CCC originated from the last administrative division of the former Kivu Province, which was split into three provinces in 1988, notably the North Kivu Province, the South Kivu Province, and Maniema. In response to this administrative decision, the CCC structure was decentralised and split into three secretariats: the Secretariat of the North Kivu Province, the Secretariat of the South Kivu Province, and the Secretariat of the Maniema Province.

Located in Goma, the North Kivu Secretariat of the CCC is assumed to be led alternatively by two local denominations: the CBCA and the CEBCE. Although the CEPAC has importance within the North Kivu Province, it is not assumed to actively participate in the leading or decision-making of the North Kivu Secretariat of the CCC, because this community does not have the status of a local community. In effect, the headquarters of the CEPAC is located in Bukavu, the capital city of the South Kivu Province. In summary, the North Kivu Secretariat of the CCC comprises two local communities, plus 14 extensions from other provinces¹.

These sixteen communities work throughout the province, alongside many other churches: the Roman Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church, the Seventh Day Adventists, the Nazarene Church, and a large number of independent and revivalist churches. Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, the CBCA, CEBCE and CEPAC, however, the other abovementioned communities and local churches are still a minority within the province. Accordingly, they do not have a significant influence in the province, as the first four do, because they have mostly evolved in urban areas. In addition, most of them are either dissidents or new churches created on the model of the main communities, which will be examined in detail in the next chapter.

2.4 Conclusion

To conclude, the North Kivu Province of the DRC provides an excellent example for a case study, because of its missiological research opportunities. Not only is the North Kivu Christian mission's historical background impressive, but it is also facing an important number of challenges: land and ethnic conflicts, refugees, displacement of populations,

¹ Cf. the list of the 16 denominations that belong to the North Kivu Province CCC, already talked about in the introduction.

widows and orphans, overpopulation within urban milieus, famine and poverty, mismanagement, bad governance and its consequences, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, sexual violence against and rape of women, and marginalisation of Pygmies and other vulnerable groups.

Indeed, despite the number of abovementioned challenges, it is important to emphasise the fact that Christian mission within the North Kivu Province has another opportunity in terms of the strong principle of “working together in unity”, which was identified by the CCC at the time of its creation. In this respect, McGavran and Riddle (1979:93) believe that the CCC is a very important factor in the church-growth picture in the DRC at present and in the future. While in other countries throughout the world, missionary societies and churches struggle in terms of whether or not their polity, theological stance or other considerations will permit them to form a council or federation of churches, in the DRC, these questions have fortunately already been answered.

If the principle of “working together in unity” is the backdrop to churches’ activities within the province, one needs to carefully examine Christian mission. Through this study, one will be able to identify the real problems facing the activities of large communities (CEPAC, CEBCA and CBCA). How are they working together so that they can reach their goals? Are they maintenance-oriented or missionary-oriented? How effectively, according to a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission, are they evolving within the North Kivu Province? Appropriate answers should be given or suggested in the next chapter.

Chapter 3

MAINTENANCE CHRISTIANITY WITHIN CHURCHES: AN ANALYSIS

3.1 Introduction

In an attempt to answer some of the questions posed in the conclusion to the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on “maintenance Christianity”, which is the main topic of this study. In order to understand what maintenance Christianity is all about, it is useful to first define this concept. In addition, it is important to investigate the key denominations, namely the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA, so that the origins, causes and consequences of maintenance Christianity can be clearly shown. Apart from the maintenance Christianity phenomenon, it should be noted that churches in the North Kivu Province face many other challenges, namely: misunderstanding of mission, lack of well-skilled church leaders, tribalism, and poverty. These last challenges are nothing other than consequences of “maintenance Christianity”.

The chapter will end by concluding that in a healthy church, both maintenance Christianity and mission should be approached in a balanced way. Rightly speaking, maintenance Christianity should be a means towards the end of mission. Never can maintenance Christianity become an end in itself (Hunter 1989:30). Accordingly, a church which focuses too much on its maintenance is more irrelevant than a church which focuses too much on its mission.

3.2 The concept of maintenance Christianity¹

3.2.1 Definition of the concept

The term “maintenance” comes from the verb “to maintain”, which means, according to the Macmillan English Dictionary, to make something stay the same, to continue to communicate with someone and not allow a relationship to end, to make sure that something stays at the same level, rate or standard, to make regular repairs to buildings, roads, vehicles, etc, so that they stay in a good condition, to continue to say that something is true, even if other people do not believe you, to provide someone with money and other things that they need in order to

¹ Here, Christianity is used to mean both “church” and “Christian faith”.

live (Rundell and Gwyneth 2002:863). As explained above, the term “maintenance”, as the action of the verb “to maintain”, may be used for persons, things and situations which need a certain degree of stability, repair, improvement or perfection.

With respect to the life of the Church, the term “maintenance” refers to the action of making the church stay the same, at the same level, rate or standard, and the action of making regular repairs to the church, so that it remains in a good condition. It is also used for the action of continuing to think that the church is well-led, even if church followers and outside people do not believe in what is being done within the church. This is what Rivers (2005) calls the “status quo” within parishes.

As evidence of the maintenance status within the American Catholic Church, Rivers (2005:22, 38) maintains that most parishes are maintenance-oriented. These parishes, he says, end up spending a lot of time, attention, resources and energy on serving parishioners and people who are already present, rather than reaching out to those who are absent. The people who are absent from the parish are thus invisible and forgotten because of the “parochial-centrism” system, which has led the parish to become the centre of Catholics’ lives. Bearing this understanding in mind, to look after church followers who are already there seems to be the main aim of the church. In other words, the church, as it is viewed physically, seems to be the exclusive possession of those who are already in it. Those who are outside the church are not only removed from the agenda of the church, but are also led to view the church as being inappropriate and irrelevant. In order to support this fact, Simmonds (1995:9) says that: “the message from the secular public is that the church is largely irrelevant, and some people in the church may feel the same”. Describing how the church has become irrelevant in the American cultural context, Rodney Clapp, quoted by Gibbs (2000:50), also asserts that some congregations have turned themselves into private clubs to which people are invited in order to have their needs met. Instead of bringing about social change, they help individuals to adjust to the status quo. According to him, other congregations have identified the church with the “manifest destiny” of the nation, so that Christianity becomes subsumed under the umbrella of a vague, deistic civil religion, manipulated for political ends.

Indeed, the more that the church becomes irrelevant for the people who are outside it, the more it will cease to be a local and native church, becoming instead a foreigner in its own place of work. The more that Christian “mission will be kept at home”, the more the church will be working as a “dead-wood”, which cannot bear any fruit. As some churches become irrelevant on the basis of their type of worship, origin and members, they often receive nicknames that are associated with the people who are believed to attend them. In Pretoria, for

instance, there are not only South African churches, but also Cameroonian, Congolese, Ethiopian, Nigerian and many other foreign churches. To move the church from an irrelevant to a relevant status, Rusaw and Swanson (2004:25) propose that “it is only when the church is mixed into the very life and conversation of the city that it can be effective force for change”. Moreover, Rivers (2005:22) appeals to church leaders’ consciousness, saying that,

The poor who don’t feel at home in our church simply remain on the margins. As result, we all too often think that everything is wonderful because the people who are present are contented. They tell us so – and they tell us when they are absent. But we don’t hear from the voiceless. This is not what we find in scripture. Jesus said to his listeners: “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not righteous but sinners” (Mark 2:17).

Maintenance does not only consist of taking care of believers who are already present in the church, but also of church assets. Churches actually spend a lot of money, energy and time on building, equipping, improving, renewing and repairing their assets. They also do the same in terms of creating powerful worship experiences, excelling in teaching, offering thriving youth programmes and having vibrant, small groups, filling themselves with good and strong people. The budget awarded to this maintenance exceeds that awarded to mission or outreach activities. Other churches do not even have a budget for mission and evangelisation. They simply content themselves with the size, beauty and equipment of their buildings and grounds, even if many of them have little significant ministry going on within them. What they do, as Rusaw and Swanson (2004:16) emphasise, is vital but insufficient for the healthy life of a church. These authors go on to state that worship, teaching, personal devotion and financial resources are absolutely essential for building the internal capacity necessary to sustain the external endeavours of the church.

In keeping with Hunter (1989:31), “mission and maintenance can be diagnosed in a church by looking at the annual budget. How much is spent on mission? How much is spent on maintenance?” What is amazing is that most pastoral churches are only known for the gigantic buildings of their temples, rather than for their ministry. In other words, there is a significant gap between church ministry and church assets. Churches are only visible to those who attend them. Schieler (2003:111-112) calls the churches that spend too much money, energy and time on themselves “dying churches”. According to him, “dying churches” consider church buildings and property as ends in themselves, often becoming “sacred cows”, and buildings are seen as being more important than ministries occurring within them because they take precedence over everything else. Schieler thus describes “dying churches” as follows:

They usually still have an altar guild (often down to one or two people), who see that there are flowers on the altar on Sundays, prepare the communion elements, and wash the dishes, and, of course, they have a group of men whose mission is to keep the building and grounds in top shape. The preservation of that building and those grounds has obviously become that church's primary mission. The building and grounds budget in a church like this is often more than half the budget, even more than the combined salaries and benefits of the staff! The buildings and grounds have become a "sacred cow" (Schieler 2003:111).

Advocating for the relevance of the mission-oriented church, Bevans and Schroeder (2004:9) warn against maintenance Christianity, by asserting that mission is the local church focusing not only on its own internal problems, but also on other human beings in a world that calls upon and challenges it. According to them, therefore, if the church focuses too much on its own survival, structural development or perfection, it fails to understand that in its deepest reality, it is called upon to be a visible sign and instrument of the communion with God to which all humanity has been called¹.

How and why do churches become maintenance-oriented? To respond to this question, the next section will focus on the origins and causes of maintenance Christianity in general.

3.2.2 Origins and causes of maintenance Christianity

From the different scholars reviewed in this study, one can assume that the maintenance posture of the church is derived from, firstly, a misunderstanding of the mission of the church, which leads to a lack of balance between maintenance and mission within the church. To emphasise this, Shenk (1984:68) says that "every congregation must find a healthy balance between mission and nurture, between its responsibility to the world and its responsibility to its members." Hunter (1989: 30) goes on to state that, "To be healthy, every church must have both mission and maintenance.

The maintenance status of the church may also derive from a misunderstanding of Scriptures, which then leads to a misconception regarding the church itself. Mukendi (2009) bears testimony to the fact that today, John 3:16 is read as follows: "for God loved the Church that He gave His only Begotten Son that...". According to him, churches have become so important that Christians care less about the world. Christians have become so indifferent to the very thing for which the Lord died. Consequently, the Church has become more concerned about its own well-being than about the world, unlike God's will for the church to

¹ For further information read Hanchey (1994). This author maintains that the maintenance Christianity that he calls "maintenance-minded" or "maintenance mindset", consumes the life of the church with its focus on survival, i.e. its material welfare.

reach the world. In this way, the Church has become, in some cases, an obstacle to God's mission. Indeed, John 3:16 says: "For God loves the world...", not the church. Likewise, the Lord Jesus died for the world, not for the church. Mathew 28:19 and all other versions of the Great Commission envision a sending to the world not to the church. In so far as the church becomes the target of mission, this is nothing else a misunderstanding of the Scriptures (Mukendi 2009).

Thirdly, the maintenance posture of the church originates with traditionalism. Many communities have a traditional conception of the church and its mission. According to their understanding, the church is itself the centre of Christianity, to which everyone must go. Hunter (1989:31) calls this the "we are here – come to us" mentality. This is strengthened by a misunderstanding regarding the temple in the Old Testament. Hunter emphasises this by stating that:

Many Christian churches have an Old Testament style of mission. In the Old Testament, Israel was to be a light to the nations. Their history was a story of the kingdom of God breaking into the world of nations. Their triumph showed God's triumph and served as a warning and an invitation to the nations, a sign of God's presence among them. The people of the nations were to "come" to Israel to see God's forgiving presence among His chosen people (Hunter 1989:30).

Furthermore, Hunter highlights the disassociation between the old and new generations within the church as being a source of its focus on maintenance. Children who grow up and become potential leaders of the church in the next generation do often not possess the pioneering spirit or mission zeal of their parents. For them, belonging to the church just happens. This phenomenon contributes to maintenance Christianity, because, subconsciously, the new generation thinks that the church mainly grows as people bring their children to it (Hunter 1989:31).

Finally, Shenk (1984:65) mentions the fact that currently, the church is motivated by a worldly spirit or method. In fact, the world, with its efforts consisting of fighting against wars, poverty, injustice, famine, disease, illiteracy and lack of suitable infrastructure, focuses more on the stability and well-being of people. Seeking a certain degree of stability in the world, the church tries to imitate this world model by concentrating on its members and improving its buildings.

In order to be more precise and pragmatic about the origins and causes of maintenance Christianity, it will be useful to return to this point after examining the following target communities: CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA.

3.3 The CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA

As it has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, apart from the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA, the North Kivu Province has 13 other communities which belong to the CCC. However, in order to be more concise in this study, it was decided to use these three communities as a sample, mainly because of their historical background with regard to mission and their influential position within the North Kivu Province.

3.3.1 The CEPAC

3.3.1.1 Overview of the CEPAC

The CEPAC is one of the largest communities of the CCC in both the North Kivu Province and the DRC. Before 1997, it was called CEPZa, i.e. Pentecostal Churches Community in Zaire. First established in both the North and the South Kivu Provinces, the CEPZa had begun to spread to other provinces and countries by 1970. The process of extending the CEPZa beyond the DRC borders led to its changing its name from CEPZa to CEPAC, i.e. Pentecostal Churches Community in Central Africa.

In the DRC, the CEPAC is active in all 11 provinces. According to its records, which were consulted at its provincial head office in the North Kivu Province, the CEPAC accounts for 724 local churches with about 800 000¹ members. However, most of its churches are found in the North and South Kivu Provinces, its historical home. In contrast to the entire community, the North Kivu faction of the CEPAC comprises 203 local churches, i.e. 28%, and about 239 075 members, i.e. 30%. Beyond the DRC borders, the CEPAC is starting to operate in Zambia, Kenya, Niger, South Africa and Holland (Mene Mushunganya 2008). Considering this expansion, the CEPAC will certainly need to once again change its name.

However, according to Pastor Mene Mushunganya, the former legal representative of this community, the expansion of the CEPAC throughout the DRC and abroad is not necessarily due to genuine missionary endeavour, but as a result of some voluntary members moving away from the CEPAC's sphere of activity. When dissatisfied by the new kind of worship found abroad, they prefer to create churches which suit them, and use the name of CEPAC. To accredit churches created abroad, the head office of the CEPAC carefully

¹ According to Pastor Bahati Lubao, this number should be treated with caution, because it takes into account all people who regularly attend Sunday services, whether baptised or not.

examines reports requested from their founders. Once accredited, the CEPAC encourages such initiatives by collecting money, monthly or annually, from local churches in their favour. However, the CEPAC has some reservations with regard to voluntary missionaries, because most of them do not have any skills for carrying out pastoral and missionary activities. They simply try to implement the Pentecostal experience acquired from their home churches. Usually, for most believers, the CEPAC's kind of worship has become a nostalgic phenomenon, to the extent that, without CEPAC churches, they do not feel free to attend other churches.

3.3.1.2 Conception of mission

In terms of the Constitution (2007:1-3), especially the Article 3 on the objectives of the CEPAC, mission is conceived as all the activities that this community has to deal with. The different domains in which the CEPAC operates are structured into departments. These departments are: the Department of Evangelism and Life of the Church, which deals with mission, evangelisation, media and chaplaincy; the Department of Christian Education, which deals with Sunday school, literature, Bible school, youth and lay people; the Department of Lower Education, which deals with pre-school, primary, secondary and professional schools; the Department of Higher Education, which deals with colleges and universities; the Department of Medical Workers; the Department of Social Workers; the Department of Community Development; the Department of Women and Family; and the Department of Finance.

Article 4 of the Constitution, which focuses on mission abroad, states that all the domains of mission must be given attention in the DRC, as well as in other countries. Practically speaking, as Elasi Wakakey (2008) reveals, mission is viewed, according to Matthew 20:18-20, as evangelisation that must be planned and implemented by local churches. In reality, local churches use their members to carry out individual evangelisation on the streets and from house to house. Once they have recruited some converts, they usually gather them together somewhere to start a cell of prayer, which will in future become a chapel and finally a local church, because the main aim of the CEPAC is to establish local churches. However, the concept of mission has not been clearly explained in the Constitution of the CEPAC, as argued by Elasi Wakakey. This means that each church leader has his/her own understanding of mission.

3.31.3 *Assessment of mission*

By taking a brief look at the preceding sections and the current size of the community, it is very easy to assume that the CEPAC is committed to missionary dynamics. However, when one carefully analyses the way in which the CEPAC operates, it appears as if mission within this community encounters some problems. These problems are mainly the following:

- the tribal spirit, which has become a lifestyle within the province, as well as the church. In examining tribalism within churches in Goma, Musolo w'Isuka (2004:170) indicates that the CEPAC is more focused on the Nyanga and Hunde ethnic groups. As the CEPAC was first established among these two ethnic groups, in the North Kivu Province, it has also become the private business of these ethnic groups. In the areas inhabited by people from other tribes, such as the Lubero and Beni, churches still have pastors from these two aforementioned ethnic groups.

This concentration is even more evident in Goma, a metropolitan city inhabited by more than 40 different ethnic groups, and in which the 20 quasi-local churches of the CEPAC consist of Nyanga and Hunde members. This phenomenon has negative effects on the functioning and development of local churches. In fact, these churches are not only populated by members, pastors, elders, deacons and other key members coming from the Nyanga and Hunde ethnic groups, which Pastor Ndundi Mathe (2008) calls biological church growth, but they are also a bad example to other local churches. For instance, some three or four local churches, not led by Nyanga and Hunde pastors, are also populated by members from the tribes and families of these pastors¹.

In so doing, local churches within the North Kivu area of the CEPAC have almost become the private property of pastors. Believers have also become, not members of the church as an organism, the body of Christ, but subjects of the pastors, who rule over them according to their own will. This situation is strengthened by the fact that in the CEPAC, there is no rotation policy for pastors, which means that pastors have to lead churches until their death². As a result, churches function as small kingdoms, with “kings”, i.e. pastors, “princes and princesses”, i.e. elders and deacons, and all other “royal court personalities”, i.e. members.

¹ Local churches that are not led by Nyanga and Hunde pastors are: CEPAC Antiokia, Mapendo and Hermoni. Because their pastors are from the Shi tribe, they are also populated by members from this tribe.

² One of the many examples is Pastor Kashira, who uninterruptedly led the CEPAC local church of “Kanisa la Mungu Office” from 1960 until his death in 2004.

Mene Mushunganya, Bahati Lubao and Elasi Wakakey (2008), all key pastors and leaders of the North Kivu Province region of the CEPAC, are aware of the phenomenon of tribalism, which is becoming a lifestyle within churches in the North Kivu Province. Mene Mushuganya says that: “we are very sorry about tribalism within even urban churches, where believers only go to a church led by a pastor from their tribe”. When questioned regarding the causes of such a situation, he simply answers that: “Believers from rural milieus are the main cause of tribalism, because when they come to urban milieus, they often choose churches at which their brothers are pastors” According to Elasi Wakakey, “the problem is regrettable, because it mortgages the future of the church in the province, as well as the DRC as a whole”. The key pastors and leaders of the North Kivu area of the CEPAC are well aware of this phenomenon, but they do not suggest any concrete way forward, in order to move churches away from this crisis.

In fact, the kind of ecclesiastical egoism already established on the ground has become a missionary method and strategy. The branches of the CEPAC throughout the DRC and abroad are all coloured by this new way of conducting mission. This is the reason why even the CEPAC in Kinshasa, the capital city of the DRC, gathers together not only people from the Kivu Provinces, but also holds its Sunday services in Kiswahili, an Eastern DRC language which is not spoken in Western DRC, or even in Kinshasa. With regard to this situation, which is common in many other CCC communities, as Professor Mpereboy Mpere (March 2008), the former Deputy President of the National Secretariat of the CCC in Kinshasa observes, one can ask oneself about the meaning and goal of Christian mission all over the world. Does the church only aim to gather believers from families, clans and ethnic groups in the same region and of the same culture?

- The lack of well-skilled leaders, due to misunderstandings regarding scriptures, especially in terms of the Holy Spirit. Since the missionary period, there have been teachings that state that believers do not need to be trained, because the Holy Spirit is the only one who teaches and trains, primarily by giving the gift of speaking in different kinds of tongues (cf. 1 Cor 12:10). Hence, according to Klaus (2007:39), Pentecostal mission is marked by exactness in affirming a literal interpretation of the Bible. Wrong teachings led to other problems, prejudgments and Pentecostal conservatism. Everyone who did not seem to be filled with the Holy Spirit was simply suspected and considered to be unborn.
- The lack of vision, methods and strategies for mission. Pastor Bahati Lubao (2008) is well aware that at the community level, there are no vision, methods and strategies for mission,

because the Department of Evangelism and Life of the Church, which is assumed to be in charge of mission, only receives reports from local churches, without devising a plan for them. Due to this problem, the 15 CEPAC Bible schools, including the Theological Seminary of Bukavu and the UEA (Evangelical University of Africa), do not have any missiological courses in their curricula (Byamungu Maivuno 2008). In addition, because of the lack of methods and strategies, the main target of mission, the Central African region, has not yet been reached. However, the CEPAC has been extended to Kenya, Niger and Holland. Here there is a certain misunderstanding regarding mission and church extension. Indeed, it is not possible to go to Kenya from the DRC without crossing Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi or Tanzania. It is not even possible to go to Niger from the DRC without crossing Congo Brazzaville, Gabon, Equatorial Guinea, Cameroon, Nigeria, or the Central African Republic of Chad. Finally, it is imprudent to fly to Holland from the DRC without a stopover in some of the important countries of Western Africa.

In reaction to the misunderstanding concerning mission and local church expansion, Leslie Newbigin, quoted by Nissen, indicates that mission is not just church extension, but something more costly and revolutionary. It is the action of the Holy Spirit who, in sovereign freedom, both convicts the world and leads the church towards the fullness of truth, which it has not yet grasped (cf. John 16:8-15). Mission is not in essence an action by means of which the church uses its own power and wisdom to conquer the world around it – it is rather an action of God, using the power of his Holy Spirit to bring the universal work of Christ, for the salvation of the world, nearer to its completion (Nissen 2004:69).¹ Without understanding the difference between church expansion and mission, it is difficult to deal properly with mission, which is essentially the act of witnessing to Jesus Christ in places where He is not yet known. This is of particular significance to most church leaders and missionaries.

In light of the above assessment, one can conclude that the CEPAC is still in need of more in-depth teachings in order to bring about a holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission. However, through its large number of schools, hospitals and health centres, the CEPAC is doing important work, which simply needs to be improved on by introducing a mission programme that takes the above-mentioned observations into account.

¹ This can also be read in Newbigin, L. 1978. *The Open Secret: Sketches for a Missionary Theology*. London: SPCK.

3.3.2 The CEBCE

3.3.2.1 Overview of the CEBCE

The CEBCE is one of the two Baptist communities and one of the three large Protestant communities ministering in the North Kivu Province. It was also the main Protestant community that contributed to the development of the church and the North Kivu Province as a whole through the following: schools, hospitals and health centres, a printing house, Christian literature, evangelical radio broadcasting, Bible schools and institutes, a school for the deaf and mute, a school of evangelism, a school for nurses, a Sunday school for adults, Campus Crusade for Christ, evangelisation throughout the province by means of aeroplanes and helicopters, a cinema, a fanfare worship team, the encountering of Pygmies in equatorial forests, translation of the Holy Bible and evangelical songs into Kinande and Kinyarwanda languages, farming, trade, crafts, and the construction of an aerodrome at Butembo and a hydroelectric power station at Rwanguba (cf. Kasereka Karongotse and Muhindo Lenga-Lenga, 2008). The ongoing development of the city of Butembo is mainly due to missionary initiatives from Katwa, the former head office of the CBFMS (Nelson 1989:249).

It is important, however, to mention that the quasi-totality of these developments was achieved by Western missionaries and their material and financial means, without the real involvement of the natives. Therefore, most of these things will fail once the missionaries have returned home. Through the abovementioned achievements, the CEBCE has been a good example to be followed by other communities and churches throughout the North Kivu Province. In essence, in order to become what it is today, i.e. one of the biggest and most organised communities in the DRC, the CBCA simply improved on the basic principles that it had acquired from the CEBCE.

Established mainly in the North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces, the CEBCE expanded to the province of Katanga in 1967 (Rasi Cirimwami 2008), not on the basis of a predominant tribe, but through the evangelical work of some Western and African missionaries. Before it extended its activities to the province of Katanga, it was called the CEBK, i.e. “*Communauté des Eglises Baptistes du Kivu*” (Community of Baptist Churches of the Kivu). However, due to its expansion to the Katanga Province, the southern part of the DRC, the acronym CEBK was changed to CEBZE and later CEBCE, i.e. Community of Baptist Churches of the Eastern Zaire/Congo. By 1988, the CEBCE comprised a mixed membership of about 56 000 believers (Nelson 1989:212). Currently, 20 years later, the

records of the CEBCE report a decreasing membership of 53 773 believers, 274 local churches, 16 sectors instead of 21¹, and 510 pastors. In the North Kivu Province, the CBCE has around 31 170 believers, 126 local churches, six sectors and 285 pastors (2007 records). As one can see, there are more pastors than local churches, simply because there is a lack of vision regarding the dimensions of mission within the church. In effect, local church activities seem to be the only duty of a pastor.

Since the schism of 1960, the CEBCE has remained a diversified group of many tribes loyal to the MBK: the Nande, Hutu, Hunde, Nyanga, Tembo, Pere and other tribes of the South Kivu Province such as the Shi and Havu. However, the main ethnic groups are the Nande and Hutu (Kinyarwanda-speaking people). Most church leaders have come from the Nande ethnic group, obviously due to the historical background of mission, from which the CEBCE came into existence.

In light of the political events related to the DRC's independence on 30 June 1960, missionaries were once again worried, and most of them returned home. Due to the separation of the predominantly Nande CBCA from the MBK, missionaries who chose to carry on working in the DRC started to become suspicious of loyalist Nande in the CEBCE. Chased away from Katwa and Kitsombiro by partisans of the revolution which had resulted in a split within the MBK, missionaries moved the headquarters of the mission to Rwanguba, the fiefdom of Kinyarwanda-speaking people. Therefore, even though most church leaders were from the Nande ethnic group, owing to the mission's historical origins within this tribe, missionaries were led to trust Kinyarwanda-speaking people more than other ethnic groups within the community. Furthermore, divisions occurred among missionaries, and some of them preferred to concentrate on ethnic groups among whom they were working. In this regard, Rasi Cirimwami (2008), the current General Secretary of the CEBCE, says that missionaries divided the CEBCE into several groups according to tribes.

It is also important to note that from the beginning, even during the period before the schism, when Africans had to rule over the community, the CEBCE was divided into two parallel administrations: the administration for missionaries only, and the administration for Africans and missionaries. Missionaries had to rule over the two groups, but Africans did not have any access to the missionary group. Thus, at the General Assembly held in Goma in

¹ In the CEBCE, a sector is a faction of local churches established in a particular area, called a "district" in other communities. According to the General Secretary of this community, Rasi Cirimwami, there were 21 sectors. However, five of them and their local churches, located in the territories of Rutshuru and Masisi in the North Kivu Province, were destroyed due to the conflicts and wars that have raged in these areas since 1994. This is the reason for the crisis within and decrease in membership of the CEBCE.

1988 (Assembly records of 1988), the quasi-majority of African delegates decided to merge the two parallel groups and create a unique administration to which everyone, both Western missionaries and Africans, had to belong. The “missionary convention” was then modified, with the understanding that the African leadership staff of the community should rule over everything, even missionaries’ salaries and “work budget”. Unfortunately, after the adoption of this decision, most missionaries felt that they could not be ruled by Africans. As a result, they decided to pull out of the CEBCE and return home. Before they went home, they sold or took away what was valuable to the mission within the CEBCE: the prestigious printing house called “Echo du Kivu”¹ mission houses, cars, hospital materials, radio broadcasting equipment and a helicopter. This event was the cause of the current crisis and conflict within the CEBCE.

From this point on, Africans who had not yet become well-organised began to publicly fight against each other for power over and leadership of the community. Furthermore, the crisis was strengthened by political events related to the two DRC wars, organised and launched primarily in Goma in 1996 and 1998. Since then, what was supposed to be a religious conflict within the CEBCE has become a political one. The Kinyarwanda-speaking people began to claim to not be as well represented in the North Kivu Province as the Nande were through the CBCA and the Nyanga and Hunde through the CEPAC. As a result of resistance by other ethnic groups against Kinyarwanda-speaking people, the CEBCE was once again divided into two main groups: the majority, consisting of Kinyarwanda-speaking people, and the minority, consisting of the rest of the community. The two groups have since then been fighting against each other in vain. Some CEBCE members began to move to other communities and sects. Due to increasing interethnic conflicts, especially in the territories of Rutshuru and Masisi, several CEBCE sectors and their local churches have been destroyed.

The series of negative events which have occurred in the CEBCE, even in the North Kivu Province, since 1991, have prevented the authorities in the CEBCE from accessing reliable church statistics. What is true is that each local church tries to focus on itself in terms of the origin of its members. Indeed, according to the Constitution, local Baptist churches are autonomous. However, this principle is being used in an extreme manner. For instance, in Goma, a metropolitan city in the province, there are currently four CEBCE local churches for

¹ This printing house was the biggest and most unique, with its modern equipment, in the Kivu region (Maniema, North and South Kivu provinces). From information obtained at the CEBCE offices in 1996, it appears that the rest of the equipment and houses belonging to the printing house “Echo du Kivu” were sold to the Norwegian Free Mission, which is working locally with the CELPA (Free Pentecostal Churches Community in Africa) in Bukavu, for a sum of US \$2 000 000. Today, this printing house is known as Shahidi Press.

Kinyarwanda-speaking people, two for the Nyanga and Hunde, two for the Nande, one for the Tembo and Havu, and two for other members.

What is more, as Rasi Cirimwami (2008) suggests, although missionaries achieved many good things, they did not establish a suitable policy for sustaining them over the long-term. They did not even train Africans on how to do this. Accordingly, almost all the ministries initiated by missionaries remained fragile, to the extent that, after their departure, some missionary stations failed, for example: Mushweshwe, Kabisi, Kihindo, Burungu and Singa. Others, such as Rwanguba and Bitobolo, were destined to fail. The stations that survived were those in the urban areas, such as Butembo and Goma, because of their interaction with other communities. Rasi Cirimwami concludes that, due to the failure to establish a policy, missionaries were the main cause of the current multiple conflicts and divisions that are affecting the CEBCE. Other causes of conflicts and divisions within the CEBCE, he states, are obviously the following:

- The abandonment of immature ministries by Western missionaries
- The lack of preparation for sound leadership
- The lack of skilled local leaders. Those who are managing the CEBCE are not only insufficient in number, but are also not good managers and leaders.
- The lack of development of the community through expanding and diversifying its services. Because of this, pastors fight against each other to do the same work.
- The lack of a contextualised Constitution. The one being used is very old and does not relate to the current needs of the CEBCE.
- The lack of exchanging of experiences through partnership with other communities and Christian NGOs
- Tribalism, which leads to competition for power
- The search for socio-political identity within the North Kivu Province
- The socio-political context that prevails in the DRC
- The lack of a comprehensive and holistic understanding of mission.

3.3.2.2 Conception of mission

As it comes from a very conservative and fundamentalist Baptist mission, the CEBCE strives for justification by means of faith, authority of the Scriptures, priesthood of the believer, baptism of believers by immersion, and the autonomy of the local church. It views the Christian mission in terms of the Great Commission according to Matthew 28:18-20 and its

parallel Scriptures: Acts 1:8, Luke 24:47-49, John 20:21 and Mark 16:15. This goal is to be implemented first in autonomous local churches, where pastors have to deal more with internal activities. In reality, in the CEBCE, local church autonomy means that pastors manage their churches without necessarily depending on external rules. Each local church is autonomous from other churches in the same community. Thus, as is the case within the CEPAC, churches within the CEBCE function according to the will of their pastors. In addition, there is no rotation of pastors. However, pastors can sometimes be replaced through elections within their local churches. This democratic principle, however, has already been abolished in nearly all churches in the community, in favour of the absolute power of pastors in their local churches.

Moreover, the Great Commission is to be implemented through services and works, as described in the overview of the CEBCE. Despite conflicts and divisions, however, the CEBCE is still conducting mission through schools, hospitals and health centres. There is still a need, however, for people who are well-skilled in the field of missiology.

3.3.2.3 Assessment of mission

In respect of what the CEBCE has initiated in the North Kivu Province, this community remains a good example to be followed in terms of the fulfilment of mission. Nevertheless, as Rasi Cirimwami (2008) highlights, from the start, no-one has ever been taught about leadership, mission and how to implement the Great Commission. Instead, missionaries have focused more on the local church and the pastor's internal duties, i.e. Sunday services, worship, preaching, prayer, baptism, Holy Communion and other such activities. Mission has become merely the fulfilment of local church duties.

Against this background, the pastors of the CEBCE believe that their activities are limited to their own local churches. Tembo Mathe (2008), one of these pastors, supports this position by indicating that in so doing, pastors should not lose their flocks. On the other hand, Rasi Cirimwami (2008) seems to contradict himself by saying that the internal dimension of mission is the normal duty of pastors, because, as a leader who is in charge of the life of the church, a pastor is only required to produce reports on the internal activities of the church. He goes on to state that the external dimension of the church is an extra for pastors, due to the fact that there is no means for dealing with this dimension of mission. He finally justifies his position by highlighting the five following issues:

- The CEBCE has no visions and strategies for the external dimension of mission. For this reason, it is not necessary to change the acronym CEBCE to something else beyond the eastern DRC area, because even this target area has not yet been fully reached.
- Pastors have never been taught about mission. Missiological courses have never been offered in Bible institutes, schools and theological seminary curricula.
- The Constitution of the CEBCE does not say much about issues related to mission.
- Mission issues have never been placed on any agenda for meetings and General Assemblies of the community. However, there have sometimes been discussions on evangelisation. However, this was always sponsored by Western missionaries. Since their departure, evangelisation is no longer on the agenda.
- There is a lack of application of Scriptures regarding mission, even though the Bible is very clear about this.

In support of Rasi Cirimwami, Tembo Mathe (2008) adds the following reasons:

- Pastors are exhausted as a result of incessant conflicts and divisions, and prefer to concentrate more on their survival and local church duties. In reality, pastors simultaneously perform many duties, between the church and their own survival. They need to be retrained and motivated.
- Believers are not taught to commit themselves or to support evangelisation and mission through their money and prayers. As the head of the School of Evangelism in the eastern DRC, Tembo Mathe reveals that he registers many candidates from several communities, except the CEBCE, which had actually initiated the school. Even in the Goma ULPGI Theological Seminary, there have been no CEBCE candidates for several years.
- There is no sincere partnership with the Conservative Baptist International (CBI)¹ or even other communities and Christian NGOs.
- A lack of belief leads to general discouragement, among pastors and followers.

Muhindo Bushu (2008) concludes by arguing that in the CEBCE:

- there is a pastoral routine and fight for survival. Thus, pastors fight against and suspect each other.

¹ The CBI is the new acronym for the Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society (CBFMS).

- there is a lack of skilled leaders. For this reason, churches are badly managed because they are already mortgaged by pastors. In addition, believers no longer trust their pastors.
- Due to the fear of being replaced, pastors do not want to improve their skills, even in order to promote the education of their believers, especially in Bible schools and theological seminaries.

In keeping with this assessment, it is important to note that in order to obtain a holistic and comprehensive mode of mission within the CEBCE, this community first needs good leadership. If this is achieved, there are possibilities for tackling and solving the problems that impede the missionary dynamics within the CEBCE.

3.3.3 The CBCA

3.3.3.1 Overview of the CBCA

The CBCA is one of the two Baptist communities in the North Kivu Province, and one of the biggest in the DRC. From the 2006 records, the CBCA as a whole has a membership of 97 000 believers, 524 pastors, 402 local churches and 15 ecclesiastical districts. What is amazing is the fact that in the North Kivu Province, the CBCA has a membership of 90 000 church followers, 311 local churches and 12 ecclesiastical districts. In light of this data, it is evident that the North Kivu Province itself has a membership of 92, 8% and 80% of the districts in the entire community. On the other hand, the two territories of Beni and Lubero, the fiefdom of the Nande tribe, have nine ecclesiastical districts and 269 local churches. This is due to the fact that the CBCA originated in these two territories among the Nande ethnic group. However, the three other ecclesiastical districts, with their 42 local churches that cover the four other territories of the North Kivu Province, which are inhabited by the Hutu, Hunde, Nyanga, Kano, Kumu, Tembo, Mbutu and Tutsi tribes, and many others who have been displaced or have immigrated, consist mostly of the Nande believers who moved there. With regard to the early schism that has occurred within the MBK since 1960, Nelson (1989:138) explains this phenomenon by highlighting the fact that the conflict centred on the predominantly Banande¹ populated North Kivu Province, and most opposition sympathisers

¹ The names of tribes in the DRC are also indicated by the prefix “Ba”. Thus, Nande becomes Banande; Hutu, Bahutu; Hunde, Bahunde; Nyanga, Banyanga; Kano, Bakano; Pere, Bapere; Tembo, Batembo, etc.

in central and southern Kivu were Banande, who had moved south when the mission effort expanded during the 1950s.

The situation in the city of Goma is that the 12 local churches of the CBCA comprise mainly Nande believers, and are all led by Nande pastors. Some of the non-Nande leaders are simply deputy pastors, teachers or agents in the office of the community. How can one interpret this phenomenon? Indeed, the separation from missionary rule within the MBK (CBFMS), as it is claimed, was the conquest of the Nande ethnic group. As this new group was developing into an organised church community, the Nande were more committed to it than other tribes.

In terms of this tribal lifestyle of the ministry within the CBCA, most people interviewed did not want to talk much about the tribalism issue, but saw its consequences as going against the growth of the church. Thus, Pastor Paluku Kavunga (2008), from the Francophone CBCA local church in Goma, responded that tribalism within the church is a real challenge to the Christian mission and must be defeated. On the other hand, Pastor Ndundi Mathe, from the local church in Himbi-Goma, stated that:

The leaders of the CBCA are well aware of tribalism, which is going to be established within the community. Over more than 10 years, they attempted to solve this problem by mixing pastors from the Nande tribe with those from other tribes. However, there was no solution, because pastors from other tribes do not adapt to the culture and ecclesiastical work of the Nande. However, in spite of some exaggerations, such as the favouritism and prejudgements of the Nande towards other tribes, it is possible that the doctrine of the CBCA fits very well with the Nande tribe. People who are not Nande have difficulty in sharing the gospel, which has been shaped by and mixed with the Nande culture. This is a real fact, which is also a challenge that the CBCA has to face (Ndundi Mathe 2008).

In support of the aforementioned observations, one can mention that the missionary dynamic of the CBCA is mostly limited to the socio-cultural boundaries of the Nande within the North Kivu Province. In fact, there is a kind of internal missionary commitment, which leads independent people in the province to keep their distance from the CBCA and consider it as “a private business of the Nande”. This phenomenon will be explained in more detail in the following paragraphs on the expansion of the CBCA beyond the North Kivu Province.

Until the 2000s, the CBCA was known as the CBK, i.e. Baptist Community in Kivu, because its sphere of activity was limited to the Kivu¹. When this community developed a vision for extending its activities beyond the Kivu boundaries throughout the Central African region, the acronym CBK was changed to CBCA, i.e. Baptist Community in Central Africa.

¹ Concerning its objectives, the CBCA was supposed to work within the boundaries of the Kivu region as a whole. However, until the 2000s, it was only working in the North Kivu and South Kivu Provinces. The other province of the Kivu, the Maniema, had not yet been reached by the CBCA.

Established mainly in the North Kivu Province, the CBCA is now represented in other provinces of the DRC: South Kivu, Orientale, Kinshasa, Maniema and Katanga. Beyond the DRC's boundaries, the CBCA has started a ministry in Gisenyi in the Republic of Rwanda. From the records consulted at the head office of the CBCA, except for the South Kivu Province, the other extensions of the CBCA have only some 900 members from nine local churches. However, as students Kakule Kowa, Mugenyi Mutukwonke and Muhindo Kasekwa (2008) note, what is important is the fact that the CBCA is not necessarily extending by evangelising unreached people, but more by gathering its former members and their children, who moved away from or immigrated beyond its sphere of activity. This is the case of Bunia, Kisangani, Isiro, Maniema, Katanga, Kinshasa and Rwanda. In the case of Rwanda, Muhindo Kasekwa (2008) indicates, from a survey of the records of the CBCA, that the local church that is being established in Rwanda consists of a group of Rwandan refugees, who have been hosted by the CBCA in Goma since 1994. Once these refugees returned home to Rwanda, where even their former churches were destroyed by the war, they were compelled to start a new church there as a sign of gratitude to the CBCA.

With regard to the expansion, Professor Kambale Baha (2007) believes that the CBCA do not have a defined leadership in terms of missionary dynamics, but rather move forward by groping. Baha adds that the CBCA goes wherever people organise themselves and call for it to be present. In terms of the gathering of members who have moved out or immigrated, Syayikomya Nganza reacts as follows:

Because the CCC failed to ensure that the “missionary fields” principle was respected, the CBCA has to evangelise, first of all, its own sons and daughters, wherever they can be found. Otherwise, the CBCA will have to evangelise members of other denominations, which risks being seen as *proselytism* (Nganza 2008).

This reaction reflects what the missionary method within the CBCA is – a kind of “spiritual ethnocentrism”, due to the spirit of maintenance Christianity. Indeed, the CBCA, in spite of its efforts to reach Central Africa, is more maintenance than missionary in nature. For instance, its local church, started in Kinshasa some eight years ago, is mostly a gathering of 350 North Kivu subjects. In order to maintain this church as one from the Kivu region, all its religious services are held in Kiswahili (Muderhwa Barhatulirwa 2007), the Eastern DRC language which is not spoken in Western DRC, or Kinshasa, the capital city. Accordingly, Professor Mpereboy Mpere (2008) responds that the natives in Kinshasa, as well as foreigners living there, cannot attend the CBCA in Kinshasa, because it seems to be clearly the business of people from the Kivu region. He also reveals that even other CCC communities extended

to Kinshasa are ministering in the same way as the CBCA. Hence, Mpereboy Mpere concludes that if the church of the twenty-first century is well aware of its duty to reach "the farthest parts of the earth" rapidly, it should not be content with expansion based on tribes.

3.3.3.2 *Conception of mission*

According to its Constitution (2005:1-2), the CBCA views mission in terms of the Great Commission according to Matthew 28:18-20, Acts 1:8, John 20:21 and Mark 16:15, and sees it as evangelising, witnessing to faith through baptism and holy communion, dealing with achievements and committing oneself to working according to the power of the Holy Spirit, the uniqueness of the church and the love of one's neighbour. In so doing, the CBCA has to level the path of the Lord, until He returns once again in His righteousness.

In line with this statement, Kateghe (2008), who is in charge of evangelism and mission within the CBCA, says that mission, according to the CBCA, is holistic, because the CBCA targets a person as an entire human being: the body and the soul. According to Pastor Paluku Kavunga (2008), the goal within the CBCA is also to establish local churches, care for pastors, deal with the *diaconia* and do whatever the church has to do globally. However, Kritzinger reacts against this kind of view by highlighting the fact that mission is definitely not restricted to what the church is accomplishing, because:

(...) when the pastor tends his flock, when the liturgy is followed, when the catechist forms the young church members, they are not doing mission; they are preparing people for their mission. The church also worships, the church members serve each other, and they are in fellowship. This is not mission. What we do say (...) is that everything the church does has a missionary dimension, even if not everything has a missionary intention (Kritzinger 2000:94-95).

Indeed, everything that the church deals with has a missionary dimension, because the church exists and has been called upon for the purpose of mission. This does not mean that everything that the church does is missionary, but because of the very nature of the church, there is always a missionary intention in all its activities.

Practically speaking, how does the CBCA ensure the effectiveness of its conception of mission? Is there any kind of maintenance Christianity within it? This is what will be examined in the following section.

3.3.3.3 *Assessment of mission*

From a brief look at the way in which the CBCA is working, one can easily conclude that mission within this great community is still hindered by a cultural phenomenon, namely spiritual ethnocentrism. This phenomenon is not without other negative effects. However, it generates the internal concerns of the church, the lack of visions, methods and strategies for mission, the lack of diversified education for pastors, and the lack of qualitative growth. What is true is that the apparent increasing growth of the CBCA is more quantitative, i.e. biological, than qualitative.

In terms of the internal concerns of the church, it is noted that pastors are more focused on their own local church duties. All services, namely Sunday services, Sunday school, morning prayers, youth and women's services, baptisms, weddings, widows and couples' groups, blessing of babies, burying of the dead, etc. are mainly carried out by preaching. Therefore, Ndundi Mathe (2008) says that everything, in all groups of the church at all times, is simply preaching. There are no missionary initiatives or Bible training in favour of believers in general, and deacons or elders in particular. The growth of local churches is merely due to the baptism of tribe members, relatives and especially children of church followers, in addition to the membership of the church. Indeed, this seems to be a common phenomenon in many churches throughout the world. Hunter, an American scholar, portrays the origin of the phenomenon within the historical "maintenance syndrome" as follows:

During the mission phase of the congregation, many of the members have young children. As the children grow and become the potential young leaders of the church in the next generation, they often do not carry the pioneering spirit – the mission zeal – of their parents. For them, growing up in the church just happened naturally. Their parents were members of the church, and they were brought to the church. Subconsciously, these second generation people think that the church grows primarily as people bring their children to church. After all, that is how it happened for them. This parallel phenomenon contributes to the maintenance mentality of the church (Hunter 1989:31).

On the one hand according to Kateghe (2008) the focus of pastors on their local church duties depends on established structures, which limit their activities to their local churches. However, this is going to change within the CBCA, because it leads to routine. On the other hand, the problem is due to the way in which pastors are trained in Bible schools and theological seminaries. From the beginning, during the missionary period, pastors were taught to focus only on the internal dimensions of the church. The external dimension was supposed to be the private business of white missionaries. Moreover, the very dated and general

curricula of Bible schools and theological seminaries never changed the conception of the work of pastors within local churches. In effect, there is no specific curriculum for Bible researchers, for instance, pastors, evangelists, teachers, missionaries, counsellors, managers, etc. Everybody is shaped according to the same mould, as if the mission of the church only consists of doing one type of work at all times and in all places. Indeed, pastors who are leading local churches are all generalists, and have never been specifically trained to be pastors¹.

To somehow avoid pastoral routine, the CBCA established the principle of rotation of pastors every two or four years. However, this principle is insufficient, because it simply involves the rotation of pastors, and not of their pastoral methods on the ground. Their rotation does not improve anything with regard to missionary dynamics.

Nevertheless, what is encouraging is the fact that, through its achievements and the exchange of workers within the framework of a partnership, the CBCA is in one way or another working towards a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission. With its 483 primary and secondary schools, the CBCA gathers together about 143 000 pupils and 4 000 teachers from many tribes, cultures and religions (Department of Education records for 2004). It is the same case with its three hospitals, 121 health centres and clinics, 36 physicians and a large number of diversified patients, who are consulted with and treated on a daily basis. Through these achievements, however, the CBCA seems to strive more toward material than spiritual development, and more toward quantitative than qualitative growth.

The exchange of workers within the framework of a partnership and ecumenical spirit enables the CBCA to benefit from the experiences of other church leaders from other denominations and countries, such as Canada, Germany, Tanzania and Cameroon. However, as Professor Kamabu Vangisivavi (2007) notes, this partnership is entirely sponsored by the United Evangelical Mission (UEM) of Wuppertal in Germany.

In order to achieve greater success, the CBCA needs many skilled chaplains who are trained in the specific areas of chaplaincy and evangelism. Indeed, some chaplains who are involved in schools, hospitals, health centres and clinics of the CBCA are all generalist theologians (Kateghe 2008).

¹ According to its statistics, the CBCA currently has 676 people educated in theology and Bible skills: seven PhDs, one Masters, 80 Honours, 15 undergraduates, 160 certificates from the Bible Institute and 414 certificates from Bible schools. Among these people, only one, i.e. Pastor Kateghe, holds a Masters degree in missiology, obtained in 2005. He is the only one educated in missiology in both the CBCA, and the North Kivu province.

3.4 Origins and causes of maintenance Christianity within the target communities

In response to the question: “What are the origins and causes of maintenance Christianity?”, respondents listed the following in their answers: tribalism, poverty, struggle for survival, egocentrism, bureaucracy, lack of visions, methods and strategies for mission, lack of mission consciousness, ignorance of the nature and dimensions of church mission, early missionary teachings, habits acquired from missionaries, the fact that mission was for a long time an unknown domain, reserved for white missionaries, lack of leaders who possess mission skills, lack of a calling for pastoral ministry, conflicts and competition among pastors, ignorance of the nature and identity of the church, quasi-absence of a missionary policy when new churches are established, fear of risks associated with external mission, commitment to protecting believers against sects, socio-political constraints, dependence on Western missionaries, ecclesiastical traditionalism, lack of leadership that is capable of improving pastoral ministry, lack of discernment of skills, lack of specific programmes in the training of pastors, lack of practical education and retraining of all church leaders, and pastors who seem to be more concerned with themselves than the kingdom of God.

Without neglecting the importance of each of these factors for the current study, the issues raised above can be summarised in terms of the following four points: the misunderstanding of mission, the lack of well-skilled church leaders, the tribal spirit within church leadership as a result of the colonial and missionary legacy, and poverty.

3.4.1 Misunderstanding of mission

In keeping with the assessment of the three target communities, the misunderstanding of mission appears to be another major cause of maintenance Christianity within the church. One talks about mission without knowing exactly what it is all about. Indeed, there is a narrow and limited conception of mission. What is generally known about mission is linked to the colonial era and to western missionaries and their material or financial means. Mbiti (1971:4) rejects this misunderstanding of mission by stating that the church in Africa has for too long been missionary-minded, but only in terms of welcoming missionaries and then depending on them. On the other hand, mission is also somehow perceived in terms of the implementation of routine duties of the church. Indeed, the concept of mission itself remains a theologically vague concept, simply because church leaders have not learned anything about mission. This

is due to the fact that the curricula of their biblical schools and theological seminaries do not include any missiological courses.

As long as the concept of mission is vague, goals and dimensions of the mission of the church will also be vague and/or ambiguous. In order to be mission-oriented, the church should be very conscious of the fact that it has been called and sent, and for what purpose. Church leaders should also be aware of their missionary responsibilities within the local church and beyond. Shenk (1995:86) is correct when he reinforces the fact that “without mission, the church becomes something other than what it was called to be”. However, the fact that churches focus too much on themselves is a clear indication that there is a real misconception of mission. In this regard, Shenk (1984:8) defines missionary consciousness as a religious group that feels compelled by the inner force of its faith to share this faith, so that others accept it as their own, because most religions are closely tied to a particular clan or tribe. This type of tribal religion, he goes on to state, arises out of its own history and is suited to its own needs, instead of intending to be shared with outsiders.

3.4.2 Lack of well-skilled church leaders

When missionaries handed over church leadership to Africans during the 1960s, there were not yet any well-skilled people in the DRC. The first African church leaders held at least one or two years of Bible school education, and others had four years of primary school education plus elementary Bible training of a few months, limited to Bible readings and preaching. Thus, Mbiti (1971:2) is of the view that “the situation in Church leadership in Africa could be infinitely better if we had better trained and educated ministers and lay workers”.

The lack of well-skilled church leaders was due, on the one hand, to the fact that Belgium was very late in promoting higher education in the Congo. In effect, the very first university, the Lovanium University, received legal recognition in 1949, but only opened in October 1954. In 1957, the Faculty of Theology was opened (History of the Lovanium University¹), and later, in 1963, the first autonomous theological Seminary in Kisangani. On the other hand, during the Belgian Congo’s rule up until 1960, higher education was somehow reserved for chosen people. In this regard, Turner (2007:28) reveals that schools for sons of chiefs provided the necessary skills for the new generation of literate chiefs, who would serve as intermediaries between the colonial administration and African masses.

¹ This is available at: www.md.ucl.ac.be/histoire/hislovanium.pdf

Even though churches today do have some well-educated pastors, the problem remains that all of them hold a general education, to the extent that one wonders whether or not they come from the same mould. The other problem is that all of them, even those who are unemployed, claim to be pastors and church leaders. Nevertheless, someone who holds a Bible school or theological seminary degree is not necessarily called upon to be a pastor or church leader. In this regard, Muderhwa (2008) is of the view that there is a lack of specific programmes in pastoral education, as well as a lack of discernment of skills. In fact, in addition to Biblical or theological education, whoever wants to be a pastor should also have been called to such a service, because one becomes a pastor by vocation. A pastor should also prove that he/she has the necessary skills for such a service. This is also the task of the entire church, which should use its gift of discernment in the recruitment of new church workers.

3.4.3 Tribal spirit within church leadership as a result of the colonial and missionary legacy

In the three communities surveyed, missionaries have been blamed not only for their paternalistic attitude towards Africans and the lack of methods and strategies for mission, but also for tribalism, which was clearly inherited from the colonial environment. One must bear in mind that in order to come to the Congo, missionaries had to first undergo a period of training in Belgium. During this time, they were learning, not the Bible or missionary skills, but the colonial language, i.e. French, and the ways in which they could help the Belgian colony to fulfil its objectives¹.

In addition to the above, Protestant missionaries worked in a particular context. In the beginning, they were not welcomed in the Belgian Congo, where Roman Catholic missionaries worked in close collaboration with the state (Falk 1979:394)². Without knowing more about the colonial conception of the tribe in Congo, Protestant missionaries guiltlessly pioneered internal mission among tribes. In so doing, they reinforced the colonial policy of

¹ The following is an extract from one of the ideological speeches of Mr Jules Renquin, the Belgian minister of colonies, addressed to missionaries in 1920: "The essential goal of your mission is not therefore to teach black people to know God. They already know him. They talk and submit themselves in a *Mungu*, a *Nzambe* or *Mvidi-Mukulu*, etc. They know that to kill, to steal, to commit adultery, to slander, to abuse, etc. is bad doing. Let's have courage to confess it; you don't come therefore to teach them what they already know. Your role consists essentially in facilitating the task to the administrative and the industrial. That means therefore that you will interpret the gospel in the way that it can serve better our interests in this part of the world (...)" (Musolo w'Isuka 1999:85 & <http://www.nlongi.be/>). This ideological speech was first given by the Belgian King Leopold II on 12 January 1883 (<http://dmedit.centerblog.net/4743411-EXTRAIT-DU-DISOURS-DU-ROI-LEOPOLD-I...>). It can also be found in *Avenir Colonial Belge*. 30 October 1921.

² Neill, Anderson and Goodwin (1971:142) assert that Roman Catholic missions were much favoured by the Belgian Congo government, which did not approve of the presence of Protestant missions.

tribalism. On the one hand, each missionary station that was established among a certain local tribe had to become the property of that tribe. Nwaigbo (2005:153) is correct when he argues that the church in Africa today is rooted in the respective spiritual heritage of different tribal communities. Emphasising the tribal phenomenon within urban churches in particular, Musolo w'Isuka (2004:170-171) presents the following example of communities ministering in Goma: the CADAF consists of the Bembe, the CBCA consists of the Nande, the CEPAC consists of the Nyanga and Hunde, the CMUCC consists of the Tetela, the CNCA consists of the Rega, the CELPA consists of the Shi, the CLMK consists of the Rega, the CMLC consists of the Bembe, and the CEBCE is struggling for tribal status. It is hence useful to highlight the interaction between rural and urban areas. As missionary stations were first established in rural areas, where they created mono-ethnic churches through villages, most urban churches stem from rural areas and possess a rural, tribal mentality. This is reinforced as people move from villages to towns. However, the tribal phenomenon is not a problem that hinders the missionary activity of the church in mono-tribal rural areas.

Because of the colonial and missionary legacy that hangs on the church, the impact of the gospel at the grassroots level has not yet been relevant from an African perspective. Thus, roots of Christianity were not regarded as being African, but rather Western, and that has detrimental consequences for the mission of the church in North Kivu (Prabhakar 2006:87). African believers and early church leaders were not associated with the management of mission, but merely received orders that they were compelled to execute. The mission had thus been viewed as an organisation which was functioning for the church but without it. In reaction to this situation, African priests stated in their first book, entitled *Black Priests are Questioning*: “Till now the missionaries did all for us, without us, and often against us, without willing it; but in fact many of their initiatives were against the African interest” (Flanagan 1982:61). Natives were neither prepared nor trained for the mission, maybe because missionaries regarded the mission as something which would be achieved in their time. Missionaries did not even imagine the effect of political independence on the mission. However, as Mbiti (1971:1) indicates, “the missionary task is eschatological – always pointing to the end in the future. If the missionary task is not motivated by this eschatological urgency, it simply doesn't succeed”.

3.4.4 Poverty

Poverty in the North Kivu Province, as has been briefly shown in the previous chapter, also affects churches. To the extent that churches are gatherings of people believing in Jesus Christ, the poverty of people entails, *ipso facto*, the poverty of churches. Apart from some aid from NGOs and overseas churches, churches within the North Kivu Province totally depend on offerings from believers. The expectation is that the more churches increase the number of believers, the more they are believed to at least increase their finances. However, this has never been realisable, because people live in a condition of poverty, whereby they have insufficient resources or income (Corbett 2005).

Judging from the practical experiences of churches in Goma between 1994 and 200¹, most of them hardly realised an average of \$50 USD per month. The monthly church needs, including the salary of the pastor, depended on this small and insufficient sum. Thus, one wonders whether or not it is possible to envisage the mission beyond local church limits without material means. Likewise, Power (1970:28) emphasises “the support for the road” as being one of the two conditions that must be met in order for a pilgrim church to go forward in its journey. In actual fact, in such financial circumstances, pastors do not think about things outside their churches, but they do face poverty in focusing more on their local churches, in the hopes of finding faithful and devoted believers who are capable of bringing more offerings. As Ndundi Mathe and Kateghe (2008) suggest, pastors have to work hard within their local churches, also because community authorities seem to appreciate financial reports and quantitative growth more than qualitative growth and spiritual reports. However, as Kuhrt (1995:67-72) points out, the church does not only need financial resources, but also human resources, building resources and grace. Thus, churches have to take advantage of these three resources in order to obtain financial resources.

Due to poverty, most pastors do not have enough time to deal with mission in holistic and comprehensive manner. Apart from their routine church activities, which are not even well performed, they also have to carry out other activities in order to survive. Indeed, in the North Kivu Province, especially in urban areas, pastors combine pastoral duties with other services – for instance, driving cars, teaching at schools, doing office and NGO work, farming, participating in crafts, trading, and running small businesses. On the other hand, some pastors who do not have external, private occupations are more involved in

¹ From 1994 to 2001, the author was working as a treasurer of the Urban Council of Pastors in Goma (CUPAGO: *Conseil Urbain des Pasteurs de Goma*), and was able to learn how churches managed their finances.

administrative activities of the church than pastoral ones. They become more bureaucratic and are more committed to the church's structural development and perfection than to its spiritual nurturing and mission. In this way, poverty becomes not only material, but also spiritual. Church leaders, as well as church followers, suffer from this new type of poverty because even the church is not sufficiently nurtured.

According to Corbett (2005), poverty can be caused by inadequate education, lack of employment opportunities and environmental degradation. It can also be caused by church disunity, which often generates conflicts, divisions, fights, rivalries, prejudices and accusations among Christians. Thus, Mbiti (1971:4-5) says that "Our Church resources are made even more meagre because of divisions; we duplicate work and effort because of divisions; we counteract and contradict one another's achievements because of divisions". The lack of unity among Christians is another type of spiritual poverty, which leads to material poverty. The more that Christians are divided, the less their efforts and financial means will be unified in order to build a church that is worthy of missionary dynamics. In fact, poverty in all its forms inevitably impedes Christian mission.

3.5 Consequences of maintenance Christianity

Since it has become the lifestyle of the church in Africa in general, and in the North Kivu Province in particular, maintenance Christianity is one of the challenges that the church has to face in its missionary task. Without ignoring the fact that there can be many other consequences of maintenance Christianity that handicap the church in its qualitative growth process, this section focuses on the following four major consequences: conflicts and divisions, denominationalism, the bad image of the church and a breakdown in the unifying process of evangelisation, and the lack of qualitative growth of the church.

3.5.1 Conflicts and divisions

The first major problem that occurs when the church is maintenance-oriented is often the discontent of some church members, who see themselves as being marginalised. In actual fact, churches that result from missionary endeavours in eastern DRC are all led by authorities from tribes that were favoured by missionaries (Mushagalusa 2004:160). In these churches, there are often two kinds of members. Firstly, there are members from the ethnic group of the leaders, who are thought to be favoured and who form the majority, having the pride of

community ownership. Indeed, as Ochieng Onyalla (2005:160) mentions, “the situation of leadership in some communities is dominated by the majority who fear losing the highest seat in the region as a tribe”. Secondly, there are other members who are not from the ethnic group of church leaders, and they constitute a bloc of discontented people, also seeing themselves as being marginalised. These people are the ones who usually generate conflicts when they realise that their voices are not being heard.

Conflicts are often of an administrative and spiritual nature. Administratively speaking, conflicts stem most of the time from financial and leadership issues. Because of the maintenance mentality, one can assume that there are more church workers than activities. Accordingly, church workers fight one another for the present activities confined to the limited sphere of the local church, forgetting that mission is very wide and must be viewed beyond this limited framework. The Lord Jesus Christ was well aware of the fact that the “harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few” (Matt. 9:37, NET). Therefore, the more the mission of the church is incorrectly understood, the more likely it is that all kinds of administrative and spiritual conflicts will arise. The more often conflicts are not quickly and carefully resolved, the more they will generate divisions within communities and have other harmful consequences.

Tribalism within the church, as has been emphasised earlier, is no less a source of conflicts. In his surveys of the North Kivu Province, Mushagalusa (2004:154-159) lists 38 religious sects¹ which have only been established from Baptist and Pentecostal communities since 1990. Conflicts within communities not only generate divisions, but also the discouragement and flight of believers, even towards religious sects and mystic movements. Conflicts and divisions really impede the church’s missionary dynamics, but there is also the issue of denominationalism.

3.5.2 Denominationalism

In the North Kivu Province, maintenance Christianity has led to a kind of spiritual egoism among church workers and even church followers. The greater the variety of denominations, the more individual spiritualities there are that are disconnected from one another. The members of the various denominations within the CCC tend to form groups, in which

¹ To avoid the meaning of the word “sect”, which generally has a negative connotation; religious sects in the DRC are currently called “revival churches” or “independent churches”. In effect, a sect is a religious group with beliefs and practices at variance with those of the more established main groups (Encarta 2006).

believers identify themselves not specifically as Christians, but more as separate families. If a denomination is “large group of religious congregations united under a common faith and name and organized under a single administrative and legal hierarchy” (Copeland 2006:3)¹, then within the CCC in the North Kivu Province, a denomination will mean a group of religious congregations that are divided according to families or tribes, under a common name and administrative, legal hierarchy. Indeed, when unity and faith cease to be the driving force within a denomination, it simply becomes denominationalism, which ultimately denies reality to any apparent doctrinal differences among denominations. Denominationalism is thus “the tendency towards the fragmentation of the church into religious ‘sects’ or ‘denominations’ and the maintenance of those divisions on the basis of an adherence to separate religious principles and organisations” (Vorster 1982:1). Moreover, a true denomination never claims to be the only legitimate institutional expression of the universal church. A true denomination never claims to undertake a missionary action without other denominations with which it is assumed to share the same faith.

In order to explain what denominationalism really means, Copeland (2006:4) points out five characteristics: the tendency to separate into religious denominations, the advocacy of separation into religious denominations, the strict adherence to a denomination, known as sectarianism, the devotion to denominational principles or interests, and the narrow emphasis on denominational differences, namely sectarianism. In reality, these five elements characterise CCC member communities, where believers have been made to belong to communities, rather than to the church as the body of Christ.

The misconception regarding membership of the church determines the fate of communities: worship, fellowship, expansion, unity, conflicts and divisions. No church can be truly mission-oriented with a misconception regarding its membership, which leads to denominationalism. Denominationalism is a real impediment to missionary dynamics, because it directs the church’s attention towards the selfish interests of a few individuals.

3.5.3 The bad image of the church and a breakdown in the unifying process of evangelisation

The church is, by its very nature, believed to be the “salt of the earth” and the “light of the world” (Matt 5:13-14). However, by being maintenance-oriented, which results in conflicts, divisions and therefore denominationalism, the church is really ceasing to be these things. By

¹ Copeland quoted this definition from *The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*.

concentrating more on its own members and assets, the church has instead become a private instrument through which God only bestows His grace on a limited number of people. This is not scriptural, because in this way, the church is presenting another image to the world than the one which is expected. As Jay (1978:140) emphasises, God is for the world, and His church is for the world – Christ was the incarnate word of God in the world, and His church is in the world.

In relation to the Great Commission (Matt 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 4:18-19¹, 24:47-49, Acts 1.8, and John 20:21), one can understand that if the church is in the world, it is intended for witnessing and making disciples, i.e. evangelisation. According to Shenk (1984: 67), “the Great Commission forces us to face outwards, beyond the concerns and welfare of our own congregations”. The Great Commission is therefore more an invitation to mission as evangelisation than a church’s maintenance or nurturing. In this regard, the maintenance or nurturing of a church, an aspect that is not forgotten in the mission process, should be done in order to strengthen the church to enable it to find unreached people, wherever they are. This is the evangelistic task of the church. In support of this view, McQuilkin (2000:649-650) says that: “the missionary task is to go, sent as representatives of the home church, to places where Christ is not known, winning people to faith and establishing congregations of those new believers”. However, this is not always the case within most communities. Church maintenance usually prevails over evangelisation, to the extent that it ends up replacing it. As a result, the church becomes very weak, because it is not being renewed by new believers. To emphasise this, Penoukou reports that in Africa, it is not the people who reject the church, but rather the church which does not recognise itself in the people, who are in solidarity with history (Jenkinson and O’Sullivan 1991:45).

Conflicts and divisions within the church are not of such a nature as to encourage evangelisation or denominationalism, which is the refusal to work in unity. As long as churches continue to fight against and watch one another with suspicion, little progress will be made towards evangelising the world. However, as Power (1970:183) indicates, if churches would turn their gaze from one another to the world, and look out on the millions of men and women who are totally ignorant of Christ’s message, then perhaps all churches would become aware of their common obligation to carry the news of Christ’s redemption, using the most effective means possible. To shape its image as a church called to mission and evangelisation throughout the world, Anderson (2000:197) suggests that the church should be

¹ Even though Luke 4:18-19 is often forgotten, this scripture is no less an eloquent version of the Great Commission.

an “influential church development”. In this way, the church will be able to have a greater impact on the larger society within which it operates. He goes on to say that the church and its members can have a more positive influence on the political, economic and social aspects of its area of service. It can thus shape its identity by serving as a tool to sustain the process of peace and reconciliation among people within the current, unsafe context of the North Kivu Province and the African Great Lakes Region as a whole. Indeed, the church needs to be cleansed of all kinds of criticism which not only destroys its image in the world, but also impedes it in its missionary endeavour.

3.5.4 Lack of qualitative church growth

The qualitative growth of the church is the main goal of any genuine missionary endeavour. This means that a mission-oriented church must be able to increase its membership not only by transfer or biological growth, but by genuine conversion (Anderson 2000:197). This conversion must therefore be the starting point for building the church and the driving force behind the church’s missionary activities. Indeed, the qualitative growth of the church also makes it grow quantitatively, because quality generates qualitative quantity. Nevertheless, churches in the North Kivu Province focus more on quantitative than qualitative growth. In reality, there are some local churches which have a membership of 2 000 to 3 000 persons, and huge temples built with hard materials among small houses built with thatch. However, the productivity of their labour does not reflect their quantitative growth, because they are overcome by internal maintenance, which leads to religious ethnocentrism, spiritual introversion, denominationalism, financial dependence – even in terms of needs which could be met through local sponsorship, the “plateau syndrome” (Anderson 2000:197), a sedentary attitude, conflicts, divisions and poverty.

The lack of qualitative growth of the church is in some way, a disobedience and denial of the Lord’s word, according to 2 Peter 3:18, which encourages growth in terms of the grace and knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. Hunter (1989:33) explains this by suggesting that the mission of the church is to grow up, grow together, grow out, and grow more. This means that the church has to continuously be more effective and relevant in the implementation of its mission, according to its calling.

3.6 Conclusion

Regarding the increasing growth of the world today, Shenk (1994) speaks of a global village, which is developing a global culture and pluralism from the modernity of communication systems. People move from their native communities to cities, where they meet other people from other religious, racial and cultural backgrounds. As the global community has become a pluralistic city, in the same way, the church has to become the most authentic community (1994:11), in which Christians from all cultures, tribes, languages, nations and races live together, glorifying God by worshipping, witnessing and tackling the issues which undermine the spiritual and social well-being of the global village. Against this general background, the church should be brought to a new understanding of the concept of mission. If it continues to function as a maintenance-oriented institution, this means that there is still a misunderstanding concerning what the world is becoming, and what the church is called upon to be and do within this new context.

The three target communities, as well as many others that are ministering in the North Kivu Province and the DRC as a whole, still have an introverted conception of the mission of the church. Contrary to Simmonds (1995:5), who believes that “the church is not an end in itself, to establish a church is not the end of the mission”, in the DRC in general, the local church seems to be in itself the end of mission. This is a big challenge for mission, because all churches’ efforts are geared towards their own internal interests: worship, fellowship, *diakonia*, building and improving church buildings and grounds, etc., forgetting that “Christianity is public property: nobody should monopolize it, and nobody should deny it to other people though this happens” (Mbiti 1971:10). Even though some communities are committed to expanding their activities to other regions and countries, the new churches that are established are often shaped in order to be and work in the same way as their mother-churches. Indeed, a local church is never in itself an end of the mission, but rather an instrument with which mission must be undertaken forever more. The church becomes the true church, not by maintaining itself, but by doing mission, because it has been called on to do this (Matt 28:19-20, Acts 1:8).

The origins and causes of maintenance Christianity within churches in the North Kivu Province, i.e. the misunderstanding of mission, lack of well-skilled church leaders, tribal spirit within church leadership, the colonial and missionary legacy, and poverty, show clearly that the church, as a result of missionary endeavours, needs to be well-nurtured before it can move forward. Thus, Shenk (1984:69) is correct when he asserts that true nurturing prepares the

church for the mission – nurturing which only aims at preparing people for heaven is not biblical.

The pioneering work done by Western missionaries in the North Kivu Province was undertaken more in a spirit of expansionism than an ongoing qualitative spirit of conquest. Accordingly, immature Christians were unable to sustain their mission consciousness. Likewise, they also could not establish mature churches from their evangelisation efforts. Finally, churches which were not mission-oriented could not create missionary churches, but instead, this led to spiritual and social consequences such as conflicts and divisions, denominationalism, spiritual and material poverty, the bad image of the church and a breakdown in the unifying process of evangelisation, and lack of qualitative growth of the church, among other things. These consequences present challenges which the church in the North Kivu Province, and in the DRC as a whole, has to face.

This chapter discussed and examined maintenance Christianity as a phenomenon which impedes the church's missionary journey. The next chapter will attempt to provide some suggestions and solutions through a biblical and theological understanding of the mission of the church.

Chapter 4

HOLISTIC AND COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH TO MISSION

4.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the conclusion of the previous chapter, this chapter focuses on some key ways of understanding mission from a holistic and comprehensive perspective, in order to make suggestions and provide some solutions for churches in the North Kivu Province. This is to be achieved through an exploration of the following three issues: mission as *missio Dei*, i.e. mission as the action of the Trinitarian God through His sovereign and eternal plan of love, care, salvation and restoration of human beings and the whole of creation; mission according to Jesus Christ, i.e. mission in word and deed or proclamation and participation, including cross-cultural mission; and mission as the church's participation in God's mission: the meaning of church mission, church mission as contextualisation, and church mission as action in unity.

In light of the examination of the abovementioned issues, this chapter will attempt to provide answers to mission challenges in the North Kivu Province, as highlighted in Chapter 3, notably: the misunderstanding of mission, the lack of well-skilled visionary church leaders, maintenance Christianity, tribalism, and poverty.

Before beginning in earnest with this chapter, it is best to first briefly define the key concept of "holistic mission." As far as this concept will be talked about in one way or another throughout this chapter, "holistic mission" can merely be understood as the fact that the church's mission in the world includes gospel proclamation, as well as socio-political, economic, and health dimensions. "Holistic mission" is thus concerned with ministry to the whole person through the transforming power of the Gospel. It views the functional uniqueness of evangelism and social responsibility as inseparable from the ministry of God's kingdom. It is therefore the intentional integration of building the church and transforming society (McConnell, in Moreau 2000:448).

The term "holism" is derived from a philosophical theory, according to which a whole system of beliefs must be analysed, instead of only its individual components. In terms of the theory of health, "holism" implies the theory of the importance of taking all of a person's physical, mental and social conditions into account in the treatment of illness ("Holism", in Microsoft Encarta 2006). According to Jeganathan (2000:163-164), "holism" means that the

word and *deed* or *proclamation* and *participation* are inseparable with regard to Christian mission. He adds that biblical witnesses, traditions, cultures, theological reflections and contextual realities are the basic foundations for identifying the basic truths as to what is meant by “holistic”¹.

The implementation of a holistic approach to mission implies a comprehensive understanding of mission. This is the reason why, throughout this study, the terms “holistic” and “comprehensive” are used in a complementary way.

4.2 Mission as *missio Dei*

When dealing with mission, it is important to bear in mind that this is primarily God’s mission. To express this reality, theologians use the Latin phrase *missio Dei*. What does this phrase mean? Over the centuries, mission has been understood in a variety of ways. It was often associated with soteriology, ecclesiology, culture and/or history. After the First World War, however, missiologists began to take note of recent developments in biblical and systematic theology, and Karl Barth became one of the first theologians to refer to mission as an activity of God (Bosch 1991:389).

Before Karl Barth, however, the concept *missio Dei* had already been used for the first time by Augustine, during the Trinitarian discussions. Since the Willingen meeting of the IMC (1952), therefore, the understanding of mission as *missio Dei* has been embraced by virtually all Christian persuasions (Bosch 1991:389; Nyasulu 2004:17-18). Mission was hence defined in relation to God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, for the mere reason that it derives from the very nature of God. It was therefore understood, as Reilly (1978:136-137) depicts, as God’s own ongoing process, which is Trinitarian in its initiation, Trinitarian in its realisation, and Trinitarian in its fulfilment. Mission is not something that occurred once in history, but rather a process that continues in history under the direction of the Holy Spirit to its ultimate fulfilment, when men/women shall be united with God, and the

¹ In this regard, Ringma (2007:431ff) suggests that the concept of “integral mission” should be used instead of “holistic mission”. According to him, there are three main reasons for his choice of the former concept. Firstly, holism suggests a movement from the whole to a part, whereas integration suggests the opposite movement. Secondly, to integrate something means the addition of parts which contribute to a greater whole. Thirdly, “holistic mission” is undoable and pastorally unsustainable, because it makes too many demands.

Ringma may be correct if he only focuses on a philosophical approach to the term “holism”. However, in missiology, as well as in medical science, the term “holism” also implies the fact that a human being should be considered as a whole. Therefore, in missiology, “holistic mission” is used in a practical sense to overcome the dichotomy between Evangelism and social action, word and deed, or proclamation and participation. Most missiologists believe that mission must be undertaken without separating Gospel from social action, because the human being, who is the target of mission, is a whole.

kingdom fully established. In short, according to Marie-Joseph, quoted by Reilly (1978:136), “mission is from the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Spirit – in the Holy Spirit, by the Son, back to the Father.”

Indeed, God not only created humankind in His image, and after His likeness, but He also loves, cares for and saves human beings, and is hoping for the restoration of the whole universe (2 Pet 3:10, 13 & Rom 8:18ff). This is God’s sovereign and eternal plan for humankind. The *missio Dei* thus springs from God’s love. God is also known as the one who comes down, in order to be actively involved in the whole life of his creation. The ultimate intention of His mission is to save and transform (Kirk 1994:6-8). Due to the fall of humankind in the Garden of Eden, the Trinitarian God, through His fourfold sovereign and eternal plan, decided to go to human beings. Therefore, it is clear from the Scriptures that God the Father sent his only Begotten Son, and God the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit, and thereafter, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit sent the church into the world. After the sending of the church, the process of sending has to continue until the Gospel has been effectively proclaimed “to the ends of the earth”. Without a doubt, a quick look at the Scriptures reveals that the Bible is indeed full of references to “sending” and “being sent”. In terms of this new dimension of understanding, the theology of mission is essentially Trinitarian. The mission is thus the action of the Triune God in His sovereign and eternal plan of love, care, salvation and restoration of human beings and the whole of creation (John 3:16).

However, Bosch (1991:391) draws attention to a fundamental point, which is the fact that *missio Dei* hinges on the doctrine of the Trinity, rather than on the doctrine of ecclesiology¹ or soteriology. In this regard, Reilly (1978:136) points out that “because of its Trinitarian origin, direction, and end, mission is not primarily an affair of men, the mission of the church, or the mission of the Christian community, but rather the mission of God.” According to Russel (1993:88), on the other hand, “the church does not have a mission; rather it participates in God’s mission, in the redemption of humanity and the restoration of all creation.” Rogers (2003:17) maintains that mission involves the entire scope of God’s activities over the course of human history, as He works to achieve His purposes. God may use the church to assist Him in accomplishing part of His mission in the world, but He is not restricted to working through the church.

The main focus of the term *missio Dei* is on God’s purpose, not on the church’s activities in working with Him to achieve His purpose. Finally, Bosch maintains that,

¹ According to Kritzinger (2000:94), ecclesiology is only a footnote to missiology.

Since God's concern is for the entire world, this should also be the scope of the *missio Dei*. It affects all people in all aspects of their existence. Mission is God's turning to the world in respect of creation, care, redemption and consummation. It takes place in ordinary human history, not exclusively in and through the church. God's own mission is larger than the mission of the church. The *missio Dei* is God's activity, which embraces both the church and the world, and in which the church may be privileged to participate. (...) The church serves the *missio Dei* in the world (...) *missio Dei* means that God articulates himself without any need of assisting him through our missionary efforts in this respect (Bosch 1991:391-392).

The approach of *missio Dei*, which is theocentric rather than ecclesiocentric, is very important. As mission is primarily and entirely God's initiative and duty, no one can engage in it without referring to God. In fact, the church in general and individual Christians in particular become agents of God's mission, since Jesus commissioned his disciples by saying: "Just as the Father has sent me, I also send you" (John 20:21). From this point on, the mission of God through Jesus Christ became the *raison d'être* of the church, and thereafter, the foundation of the church's mission throughout the world. In line with Mpinga's (2007:31) viewpoint, one may thus conclude that the church does not have any mission other than to participate in the *missio Dei*. The church has no mission by and for itself – rather, it must only fulfil the mission of the one who sent Jesus to the world to be His messenger. The mission of God determines the mission of the church. It is also the agenda and content of the mission of the church. In support of this, Kirk (1999:31) says that the church has no freedom to invent its own agenda. It is rather a community in response to the *missio Dei*, bearing witness to God's activity in the world through its communication of the Good News of Jesus Christ in word and deed.

Mission as *missio Dei* or divine task, however, needs to be understood in terms of an important point. Indeed, Nyasulu (2004:19) suggests, an over-emphasis on the divine task of mission poses a danger to the whole concept of mission, because in so doing, human responsibility disappears. Practically speaking, mission is not only God's task – it is also the task of the church. God provides everything for His mission, but the church is there to implement it. This suggests the need to learn more about mission according to Jesus Christ and mission as the church's participation in God's mission.

4.3 Mission according to Jesus Christ

In his article entitled "Jesus and Mission", Elwell (Moreau 2000:517) maintains that the concept of mission is central to an understanding of Jesus, because Jesus and his mission are virtually synonymous. This means that the main reason for the coming of Jesus into the world

was really his mission. In this respect, Jesus was well aware of his mission. More than 32 times in the Gospel according to John, Jesus claims to be sent by his Father (John 3:34, 4:34...). What was his understanding of mission? In responding to this question, the following points cover two important aspects that describe the missionary nature of Jesus Christ's work: mission in word and deed or proclamation and participation, and cross-cultural mission.

4.3.1 Mission in word and deed or proclamation and participation

Throughout the New Testament, the ministry of Jesus Christ and, thereafter, that of his disciples, may be described by two main terms: word and deed or proclamation and participation. Hence, the mission of Jesus and that of the church can be summed up according to this twofold dimension: the verbal mission, i.e. preaching, teaching, witnessing, evangelising; and the mission in deed, i.e. healing the sick, liberating people from demons and oppression, seeking and saving those who are lost, feeding hungry people, rising from the dead, etc. In order to more clearly explain this twofold dimension of the mission of Jesus, Musolo w'Isuka points out that Jesus, who was a perfect God, "took up place among human beings" as a perfect Man, and cared for human beings as a whole through his mission. Jesus deliberately concerned himself with the spiritual, physical and social troubles of humankind. He did not only proclaim the coming of God's kingdom, but also participated in healing, saving castaways, liberating people from demons, rising from the dead, and reinstating the marginalised into society, such as lepers and prostitutes. Jesus' mission was truly crowned and achieved through teachings in word and deed, proclamation and participation. He, for instance, called upon people to be fed by the word, which comes from God's mouth. However, he then gave himself to hungry crowds. Jesus declared that "blessed are the poor in spirit", but he contributed to the success and joy of a wedding celebration in Canaan, by providing good wine (Musolo w'Isuka 1999:73-74). In light of this, one may attempt to define mission as being the word plus service in the world – the service of the church as the body of Christ.

With regard to Jesus' mission, Schnabel (2005:265) reports the fact that Jesus was known to be a teacher, on the same level as his contemporary rabbis. His teaching ministry differed from that of the rabbis of his time. He walked from settlement to settlement and taught men and women, large crowds and small groups, in synagogues and in open fields, in public markets and in private houses. In reality, Jesus dealt with both the ministry of preaching and teaching, and the ministry of healing and feeding, without any contradiction

between the two. Bearing witness to his own mission as being in word and deed, proclamation and participation, Jesus eloquently states that, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and the regaining of sight to the blind, to set free those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Luke 4:18-19, NET).

In his article entitled “Once again: what is mission?”, Saayman (1983:87-89) identifies Luke 4:18-19 as a starting point for understanding the mission of Jesus. According to this passage, he states, Jesus performed his ministry with distinguishable but inseparable dimensions, namely those of evangelising, healing, compassion, social, political and economic justice, and fellowship or community. All these dimensions, he concludes, should be reflected in the mission of the church. Whoever neglects any of these dimensions also neglects the entire mission.

However, the conception of mission as word and deed, and proclamation and participation has provoked huge debate among scholars, even at conferences of the International Missionary Council (IMC) from the time of Willingen (1952) onwards. Some scholars reduced the mission to a mere verbal proclamation of the message of the Gospel, and confused the missionary with the evangelist, and the missionary action with the programme of evangelisation. Confirming such a tendency in the Indian context, Prabhakar bears witness to the fact that:

There is a conventional perception that the main concern of the church is most specifically on spiritual and religious areas. Most churches look at the questions of social justice, political or economic issues as concerns that are outside the purview and activity of the church. Some Christian leaders sometimes have the tendency that the church does not have adequate power or authority to address areas other than spiritual or evangelistic (Prabhakar 2006:48-49).

Others held the position that mission was the establishment of *Shalom* in the sense of social harmony, and focused more on the social deed than on the word. This is the reason why, since the meeting of the WCC Commission on World Mission and Evangelism (CWME), held in Bangkok from December 1972 to January 1973 on the theme of “Salvation Today”, a theme which strongly emphasised the social and political commitment of the church, non-Pentecostal Protestantism has been divided into two movements: the ecumenical and the evangelical. On the one hand, the evangelical movement called for withdrawal from the ecumenical CWME and convened the International Congress of Lausanne (1974), at which it established its own guidelines called the “Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization” (LCWE). Within the LCWE, absolute priority was given to evangelisation of the world, without much commitment in terms of social issues. On the other hand, the

ecumenical movement met in Melbourne in 1980, and committed itself to pursuing the CWME alongside the LCWE. The ecumenical movement emphasised the fact that God prioritises poor and marginalised people. However, these two main movements in contemporary Protestantism began to try to improve their mutual relations by the end of the 1980s. There were thus fruitful and official encounters between these two Protestant movements (Bria et al. 2003:62; Briggs 2000:108).

In order to distinguish between the two Protestant movements, Elwell (1984:726) says, on the one hand, that evangelicals are still chided for a mission theology that ignores the kingdom of God and focuses almost entirely on eternal life. On the other hand, Elwell reports that the ecumenical movement or Conciliar Protestants are accused of being so captivated by immediate social and human issues that they take unwarranted liberty with the Bible and bend its texts until evangelism is reconceptualised as politics. The church's obligation to evangelise "unreached people" is dismissed as irrelevant, and a religious encounter is confined to the sort of friendly conversation that eschews all thoughts of conversion and establishment of churches.

However, it seems to be very clear, through the four Gospels, that Jesus held a view close to that of the evangelical movement. On the other hand, he also recognised people's rights and responsibilities. He thereafter recognised the spiritual and physical needs of the human being as well, because the human being is by his very nature both body and soul. Indeed, one cannot care about the soul while neglecting the body, and care about the body while neglecting the soul. Moreover, the needs of the body impact very strongly on the needs of the soul, and the needs of the soul impact strongly on the needs of the body. Accordingly, in terms of the current understanding of mission, the "word" and the "deed" are twins that cannot be separated. In order to sustain this scriptural reality, Nissen (2004:32) writes that mission is not only a verbal proclamation, but also a healing action (cf. Matt 4:32; 9:35) which strives not only for "church growth" (as if the church were an end in itself), but also for the wholeness of creation, that is, for the total integration of human and cosmic history into the fullness of the eschatological Kingdom (Matt 10:7). Keeping the above reality in mind, however, it is necessary to consider the social deed as a logical consequence of the proclamation of the Gospel, because considering it as a means for evangelisation leads to the risk of forming materialistic interests in Christians.

In addition to the above debate on whether mission takes place through "word" or "deed", Shenk (1999:28-29) advocates for a withdrawal of the two concepts. He submits that the flaw in the "word and deed" paradigm is that it encourages Christians to focus attention on

the parts rather than the whole, which is God's new order. According to Shenk, when this partial way of looking by a Christian witness is accepted, it is impossible to arrive at the whole. Instead of focusing on the "word and deed" paradigm, he suggests instead a focus on recovering the fullness of the Gospel. Thus, mission must be thought of beyond "word and deed" (Shenk 1999:24-29). Through this last statement, Shenk seems to create a misunderstanding. Rightly speaking, mission cannot be thought of beyond word and deed. Since the Scriptures are very clear about mission both in word and deed, and that the Lord Jesus himself practised his own mission in word and deed, there is no way to escape these two essential aspects of mission. Christians should rather take into account the position held by Presler (2001:8), who maintains that the church does not have to make an *either – or*, but rather a *both – and* choice. In keeping with his view, the church, in its mission, may not need to choose, for instance, either evangelisation or social justice, but may be called on to embrace both. The Good News might be expressed through a justice ministry, an evangelic conversation might suggest an affordable housing initiative, and meals with the homeless might lead to the Eucharist. Ultimately, mission according to Jesus is not only in word and deed, but also involves cross-cultural mission.

4.3.2 Cross-cultural mission

The mission of Jesus Christ was not only in word and deed, but also a cross-cultural mission. It was initially fated for Jews, but then applied to all nations. Thus, in the beginning, Jesus concentrated on and limited himself to the Jews, the elected people, in order to offer them the reign of God which had been promised to them (Matt 15:24; 10:5-7). In support of this viewpoint, Shenk regards the focus of Jesus on the Jews, from the perspective of church growth, in the following way:

God planned well for the growth of the church. The plan included geopolitical strategy. God didn't want Jesus locked into any box. He placed his son in Palestine. That is the bridge between the continents of Asia, Africa, and Europe. Palestine is the crossroads of the world. Israel located in Palestine was at the right place for maximum influence throughout the earth. God had called Israel to be the light to the nations; Palestine was an ideal location for that light to penetrate into Africa, Asia and Europe. Jesus of Nazareth lived within this same meeting place of the continents (Shenk 1994:111).

Through this statement, Shenk explains why Jesus was born in Palestine. With reference to Nissen (2004:27), however, it is also important to point out that there are still problems in defining the real targets of mission. The universality of the final commission

according to Matthew is in striking contrast to the particularity of the mission instruction in Matthew 10:5-6 (NET): ‘Do not go to Gentile regions and do not enter any Samaritan town. Go instead to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.’ The final commission also differs from Mark 13:10 (NET), according to which ‘The Good News must first be proclaimed to all nations’. This leads to a contradiction, and there have been many attempts to solve this. Accordingly, Nissen proposes a solution to the problem as follows:

The best solution is probably to suppose that Matthew is operating with a two-stage scheme of salvation history implying two stages in the mission of Jesus. The mission of the earthly Jesus is a centripetal mission directed to Israel in the hope that the conversion of his people will inaugurate the “eschatological pilgrimage of nations to the mountain of God” (cf. Isa 2:2; Mic 4:1) and so lead to the salvation of the world. But the Jews reject this mission (cf. Matt [sic] 21:33-46; 22:1-14). (...) This leads to the death of Jesus, making the end of his centripetal mission to Israel. But the vindication of the death by God through the resurrection invests Jesus with “all authority in heaven and on earth” (28:16) and opens the way for a universal post-Easter to all nations (28:18-20). (...) The transition from Matt 10:5-6 to Matt 28:18-20 has often been understood as if Jesus proceeded from a mission to Israel to a mission to the nations – that is a kind of quantitative augmentation, or a transition from “home” mission to “foreign” mission (Nissen 2004:27-28).

Thereafter, Jesus adopts a new perspective, which shows that he is also interested in other nations. Some scriptures will thus prove that Jesus was involved in cross-cultural mission, despite his home mission among the Jews. In Matthew 15:21-28, Jesus challenges traditional thinking when he speaks with the Canaanite woman and heals her daughter through her faith. It is said (v. 30) that Jesus also healed those who were not true Jews, and through this act, crowds returned glory to the Almighty God of Israel (v. 31). In John 4:4-26, the conversation of Jesus with the Samaritan woman also presents strong proof of the extraversion aspect of Jesus’ mission. In Matthew 16:4, Jesus evokes Jonah's example in order to explain his death and resurrection, but also to sustain the movement towards mission. Mark 11:15-19 deals with the sellers who are driven away from the temple. Here, the fundamental sense is that God's house will be called a house of prayer for all nations (v. 17), whereas for the pagans, it is only a square that has been reserved for them for prayer.

Therefore, Jesus understood his mission as being both centripetal and centrifugal. Thus, with regard to the notion that mission is not to be kept at home or within a framework of cultural boundaries, Jesus opened the eyes of his disciples when telling them that the differences between sacred and profane things did not have value anymore (cf. Matt 15 & Acts 10:15, 34-35). Indeed, the major focus of Jesus, in his relationship with his disciples, was to prepare them for a holistic and comprehensive mission. In order to achieve this goal, Jesus, among his disciples, dealt with mission as a worldwide mission, a mission beyond borders.

Whereas Jews adopted a xenophobic mentality, refusing to interact with foreigners socially, politically and religiously, Jesus created a new understanding of mission, by presenting himself as a sociable man who loved and looked after people beyond his own borders. Jesus reveals the ultimate meaning of his mission in his last speech to his Apostles, as Luke relates in Acts 1:8, saying that, "... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." In this scripture, the universality of mission is clearly shown, to the extent that no one can regard it any longer as a mission restricted to Jews.

This section examined mission according to Jesus Christ, which is a model for the church's participation in mission, the following section will focus on church mission in relation to God's mission. This issue is very important in terms of understanding mission according to a holistic and comprehensive perspective.

4.4 Mission as church participation in God's mission

In order to draw attention to what the church is really there for, Rogers asks three relevant questions: "What is the church? What is it in relation to God, to the world, to the saved, to the lost? Is there a difference between what the church is and what the church should be?" As he puts it, it is not about simple questions which must be quickly debated in order to arrive at simple answers. Rather, Christians must spend a great deal of time reflecting on the church – its identity, its mission, and how to more effectively be who and what God wants them to be (Rogers 2003:66-67). In fact, dealing with mission from a holistic and comprehensive perspective requires that particular attention should be paid to the fact that the church plays a participatory role in God's mission.

4.4.1 Church mission

With regard to the church and mission, there is a threefold truth that needs to be stated in terms of the fact that mission is primarily and essentially God's mission. Firstly, the church stems from God's mission. Without God's mission, the church would have no reason to exist. Secondly, the church is not itself the whole of God's mission, but rather the privileged part of it. In His sovereignty, God remains a living, missionary God before the birth of the church, through the church, and beyond the church's sphere of activity. In terms of Reilly's (1978:136) view, God's mission works through the church's mission, but at the same time, it

is wider than the church's mission. It is not a church-centred activity, but rather a God-centred one. According to Rogers (2003:17), God has always worked independently of his people in order to achieve His purposes, because mission does not refer to the specific things that God may do in an individual's life, or even in the life of the church. Despite the fact that God's mission is to be regarded as going beyond the church, the church is at the heart of God's mission. In fact, "it is the church that evangelises, finds appropriate cultural channels to express the faith in the name of Jesus Christ, participates in the struggle for justice and the care of the environment, engages in dialogue with people of other faiths, and builds peace" (Kirk 1999:205). Thirdly, the church is called on and sent to do God's mission. In this respect, the church is more the one that is sent than the one that sends (Bosch, 1991:370). Its fundamental mission is God's mission. On the one hand, mission does not come from the church, but it is from the perspective and in terms of mission that the church has to be understood (Prabhakar 2006:110). On the other hand, however, the church does not have its own mission. Its mission is meaningless and dangerous without God's mission. According to Mpinga (2007:31), who shares the point of view of Bosch (1991) and Russell (1993), the church is called on to participate in God's mission and to be an instrument in the hands of God for the fulfilment of His redemptive purpose for humankind. In this regard, Prabhakar (2006:110) stresses that the church, as the people of God, is not the centre and goal of mission, but rather the means and instrument. It participates in God's mission in terms of what God is doing in the world. In this respect (Kirk 1999:218), the church is not what it does, but rather what God does. Jeganathan highlights the calling of the church and the fact that it is an instrument for God's mission by stating that:

The church is an instrument for God's mission (*missio Dei*), in the world and it has been called to serve in the society so that the society can be transformed according to the will of God. By serving as co-workers with God, the church has great responsibilities in respect of God's mission; it has no mission of its own; it has been called to participate in God's mission and challenged to meet the contemporary challenges like poverty, religious pluralism, illiteracy, globalisation, ecological degradation, etc. In this context, the church has to be equipped and empowered and its commitment and its activities have to be designed on the foundation of biblical witness, theological reflections and contextual realities (Jeganathan 2000:163).

The above truths regarding the church and mission are very important to the church's ability to understand what its mission is really about, and how it must be implemented. Indeed, since the church has been declared to be essentially missionary (AG: 9), its activities should be viewed from a missionary perspective. The church's activities are not merely internal, but also, and to a greater extent, external, because the church by its very nature is not

itself the mission, but rather has been called on and sent to carry out God's mission. Among many other existing teachings with regard to the church and mission, it is very useful for this study to emphasise the following fundamental truths: "the church is called and sent for mission in holistic and comprehensive mode, it is God's instrument and means for mission, and its mission is merely an obedient participation to God's mission."

The church, or *ekklesia*, which comes from the Greek verb *ek kaleo*, i.e. "called away from", is called upon to be sent, not to itself, but to the world, to all nations. Herein lies the problem, whereby there is still great misunderstanding among most Christians. The church is still conceived of as a building which focuses on its internal activities in order to consolidate itself as an organisation. Mission is also still viewed in such a limited way, as if the church was an end in itself. In line with Sookhdeo (1987:101-102), *ekklesia* is neither a building nor an organisation, but a *calling out* of redeemed people. Because *ekklesia* is a gathering of human beings who have been born again, and who have to deal with other human beings, it needs structure in order to function. However, structure cannot be at the top of its agenda, because this is not the purpose of the *ekklesia*. The church or *ekklesia* is essentially there for mission. This is why, in describing the nature and role of the church in relation to mission, Pentecost (1982:53-63) distinguishes between two virtual dimensions: internal and external. According to him, the first dimension consists of worship, fellowship and instruction. These three elements aim at nurturing and developing the church as the body of Christ. In keeping with Mpinga (2007:32), these three elements concern the health, equipment and preparation of the church for mission. Since the church is called upon for mission, it is essential for it to equip and prepare itself in order to respond effectively to its divine calling. The second dimension, according to Pentecost, includes proclamation, witnessing and services. These last three elements of the church mission are very much externally-oriented. They are concrete and practical expressions of the fact of being sent into the world by God. They aim at expressing and communicating the universal love of God to the world. When the church is involved in these activities, they become a remarkable sign of obedience to God, who called upon the church and sent it for mission.

The two aforementioned dimensions of church mission should only be classified in terms of the place in which mission is needed: inside the church, i.e. mission directed at faithful Christians and the church's body, both as an institution and a community, or outside the church, i.e. mission directed at other non-Christian peoples and nations. In terms of this understanding, both internal and external dimensions constitute indistinguishably and inseparably the missionary nature of the church (Kozhuharov 2006:11). In this regard,

Kozhuharov is more accurate when he affirms that there is no clear distinction between internal and external dimensions of mission, because the area of application of one is inherently rooted in the same theology and has the same source: Jesus Christ, the Saviour. In fulfilling their mission in his name, according to Kozhuharov, Christians, filled with the love of God, seek salvation, both for themselves and their neighbours, wherever they may be (Kozhuharov 2006:11). In agreement with this point of view, Nissen (2004:69) merely states that, “The mission doesn’t change only the world, but also the church.” Indeed, the more the church implements its mission throughout the world, the more it will shape its identity, both internal and external, and the more relevant a tool it will be for two-fold mission: centripetal and centrifugal. However, as Kozhuharov (2006:11) suggests, such theoretical considerations of Christian mission need to be found in the real Christian life of believers and of the church’s body.

In addition, Pentecost (1982:58) presents the two dimensions of church mission as two halves of a set of scales, in which true balance is attained in the ideal local assembly. Rivers (2005:32) emphasises this by comparing the church to an ellipse with two focuses: its internal life and its external mission, which cannot be separated. Indeed, these two dimensions of church mission are complementary, with the predominant focus on the external dimension, because mission is, first and foremost, a sending out. Rivers expresses this very clearly in the following terms:

All organisations need mission if they are to stay healthy. Organisational development theory tells us that healthy organisations are ones that have a clear sense of mission. Low morale often results from the aimlessness and malaise that come from the lack of mission. When we have a clear outward focus, some of our internal problems tend to fall into perspective. When we are not absorbed by the mission, these internal problems are magnified. When we do have an outward missionary focus, our problems diminish in importance because we identify with, and seek to do something about, suffering in the world. In adopting a missionary rather than a maintenance approach, parishes are not only being faithful to the mandate of Christ, but they also find a remedy for the malaise that comes from excessive focus on their internal dissensions (Rivers 2005:23).

On the one hand, when the church has fully understood its missionary nature, it has to achieve a balance between internal and external activities, or it must work towards achieving this balance, and then become a missional church. With regard to the missional church, Roxburgh and Romanuk (2006:xv) define it as a community of God’s people who live according to the belief that they are, by their very nature, God’s missionary people who are living proof of what God plans to do in and for all of creation through Jesus Christ. According to Stetzer and Putman (2006:49), “to be a missional church means to move beyond our

churches preferences and make missional decisions locally as well as globally.” Furthermore, Simmonds (1995:6-7) is very adamant when he asserts that a missional church retains all the essentials of a church, but puts mission at the top of its agenda. A missionary congregation is therefore a church which takes its identity, priorities and agenda from participation in God’s mission throughout the world. On the other hand, however, when the church fails to comprehend its missionary nature, it ends up being fundamentally maintenance-oriented, at its own peril. It becomes something other than what it has been called upon to be. To sustain this, Kirk states that the church is by its very nature missionary, to the extent that, if it ceases to be missionary, it has not just failed in one of its tasks, but has ceased to be church. Accordingly, the church’s self-understanding and sense of identity (its ecclesiology) is inherently linked to its call to share and live out the Gospel of Jesus Christ *to the ends of the earth* and to the end of time (Kirk 1999:30). A church is only truly a church if it lives effectively as a missionary in the world. According to Rivers (2005:23), a church needs mission in order to remain vigorous and alive.

As far as the word “mission” suggests a movement towards other peoples (Chenu, in Bosch 1995:5), in the same way, a church “called and sent for mission” suggests a church on the move, a church on the way and on the go (Nyasulu 2004:19). In agreement with this, Kirk (1999:217) believes that the essence of mission is “going” and “being” in the heart of the world, and the church should see itself as a people on the move. The idea of mission as a “go” or “movement” towards peoples and nations is what the Great Commission according to the four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles is all about. Thus, the fact that the church is on the way implies that the church cannot be conceived of as being static, established or maintenance-oriented, but must always be regarded as being on the “way”. In effect, the church’s Christian message only exists in the form of being on the way to peoples and nations. Therefore, the church does not exist for its own sake, but rather for the sake of the world (Nyasulu 2004:19-20), because its journey is both *to the ends of the earth* and to the end of time (Kirk 1994:9). The church, on its missionary journey, however, has to deal with peoples in their different “*ends of the earth*”, that is, their contexts at different times. Thus, the next section focuses on mission and contextualisation, because contextualisation, which stems from God’s mission, is inherently linked to the church’s mission, just as it was for the mission of Jesus Christ.

4.4.2 Church mission as contextualisation

Mission always implies social groups in different situations, geographical spaces, and times during which its purpose must be achieved. Human beings and their situations, the environment and the times, which all determine the context, are ultimately the practical reality of mission. In order to express this need for dealing with the context of mission, theologians coined the term “contextualisation” in the early 1970s. This term (Bosch 1991:420) was thus used in the circles of the ecumenical Theological Education Fund (TEF), with a particular view to the task of education and formation of people for the church’s ministry. Afterwards, it became the foundation for a variety of theological models (Bosch 1991:421), and then a much debated method in missiology and Christian mission.

In keeping with Ahonen (2003:29), the usage of the concept of contextualisation was linked to the reflections on contexts in relation to the intercultural and interreligious translation process, both verbal and nonverbal. By means of contextual criticism, theology would take into account the prevailing contemporary culture in all its dimensions. From a historical background to the concept, as Ahonen maintains, the integration of non-western cultures with Christian faith has entailed a number of concepts. These are, namely, *indigenisation*, used in Protestant missiology to denote the implantation of the faith in the soil of foreign cultures, in order to make it indigenous; and *adaptation* and *accommodation*, belonging to the terminology of Roman Catholic theology, mainly before Vatican II. The concept of contextualisation, however, goes beyond these aforementioned concepts. Firstly, the concept of culture is more dynamic. Cultural systems are no longer considered to be closed, static, traditional and past-oriented. They are responsive to internal developments and external influences. Secondly, the cultural reality is seen as containing not only purely cultural (that is, anthropological and religious), but also social, political and economic dimensions, both locally and globally. Thirdly, unlike indigenisation, contextualisation is found to take place everywhere, not only on foreign soil. All cultures are subjected to the same process. The approach to the concept of culture is indeed crucial to the course of contextualisation (Ahonen 2003:31-32).

The concept of contextualisation has therefore been defined as a continual process through which God’s truth and justice are applied to and emerge in concrete historical situations (Thomas 1995:170). Compared to indigenisation, contextualisation is more holistic, because all aspects of human contexts and relations between cultures and social groups are considered; more global, that is, applicable to all cultures; and more dynamic, since it accepts

the reality of socio-cultural change. The WCC consultation of the Theological Education Fund judged the contextualisation of the Gospel to be “a new missiological necessity.” Instead of conducting theology from above as the product of research and reflection by a closed circle of specialists, contextual theology is a theology from below by the people of God – even the poor and culturally marginalised – engaged in action and reflection (praxis). Contextual theology is thus more missiological than conventional, as it aims primarily at taking the Gospel as truly Good News to the people in their concrete situation (Thomas 1995:170). In accordance with Thomas, Bevans (2002:27) simply maintains that contextualisation is the preferred term to describe the theology that takes human experience, social location, culture and cultural change into consideration. Bevans also specifies that contextualisation points to the fact that theology needs to interact and hold dialogue not only with traditional cultural values, but also with social change, new ethnic identities, and the conflicts that are present due to the contemporary phenomenon of globalisation, which is experienced by the various peoples of the world (Bevans 2002:27). On the other hand, Rogers spells out what contextualisation means in terms of dealing with mission, by asserting that:

A concentration in contextualization focuses on how to make the Gospel and the church relevant and culturally appreciated in a given society. It assumes that a transplanted Western church is not what Jesus originally had in mind when he told his followers (who were not Westernized people) to go and proclaim the Good News to all people. The need of contextualization grows out of an anthropologically informed view of culture and theology. It is related to anthropology, but focuses specifically on the many issues related to how one (who may be a Westernized person) tells the story of Jesus in a way that makes sense to people who have very different cultural assumptions and practices than the person who is telling the story. The need for contextualisation is not limited only to the telling of the story of Jesus and reconciliation to God, but extends to how people live out their faith as a worshipping, serving community of God’s people (Rogers 2003:79-80).

From the above statement, one can conclude that contextualisation is a driving force in mission. Even though contextualisation only came to the fore during the early 1970s as a new concept in theology, Jesus Christ and even the Apostles had already used it more than 2 000 years ago (cf. the four Gospels, 1 Cor 9:19-23). To emphasise this, Scherer and Bevans maintain that the concept of contextualisation is both ancient and modern. It has been a part of the Christian church from its inception, although this term only dates back to the early 1970s. Contextualisation is a perennial challenge, one that Christians have faced every time they have communicated the Gospel across language and cultural boundaries. The church has struggled with this problem through the ages as it moves from one era to another. Essentially, contextualisation is concerned with how the Gospel and culture relate to one another across geographical space and time (Scherer and Bevans 1999:42-43). On the other hand, Rogers

(2003:57-59), quoting Gilliland, views contextualisation as an effort made by a particular church to experience the Gospel in its own lifetime in terms of the Word of God. The process of contextualisation, through the Holy Spirit, continually challenges, incorporates and transforms elements of culture, in order to bring them under the lordship of Christ. Contextualisation, according to Rogers, must therefore be an ongoing reality in the life of the church in each culture and situation. In fact, theology is not static, but something that always needs to be contextualised. Therefore, each group of people who encounter Jesus Christ through the Gospel must reflect on God and godly living in ways that are appropriate for them (Rogers 2003:59-60).

However, contextualising mission does not mean that the church will be confused by it. In order to avoid the risk of syncretism, which often occurs when contextualisation is not conducted under the control of the Holy Spirit, Rogers draws attention to the fact that contextualising the Gospel does not involve changing the Gospel in any way, adding anything to or deleting anything from it. Instead, as he goes on to say, contextualisation means telling the authentic story of Jesus in a way that will be clear and understandable, culturally appropriate and accessible to the people of a given culture (Rogers 2003:58). Likewise, Pentecost demonstrates that it is not to be expected that the church will take on different clothing according to its environment, different forms of expression in worship and pattern of instruction, and different forms of expression in fellowship. Furthermore, it is not likely that the form of local church government will also vary according to the patterns of government in a given society (Pentecost 1982:62-63).

After having examined the concept of contextualisation in relation to mission, one may conclude that this concept is one of the most important issues in church mission. As this study focuses on the problem of how to move the church from a maintenance-oriented to a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission, this objective can only be achieved if missionary efforts take contextualisation into account. Indeed, as Ahonen (2003:1993) points out, God's mission is the critical "text" that can also judge the contexts and, therefore, be a determining and driving force as far as the process of contextualisation is concerned. In this sense, contextualisation is not something that can be used in mission (or not), but is rather a must. According to Schineller, quoted by Scherer and Bevans (1999:43), "We have thus the obligation to search continually for ways in which the Good News can be more deeply lived, celebrated and shared." In light of this truth, the following three objectives of contextualisation in mission, as identified by Scherer and Bevans, need to be highlighted:

- Contextualisation in mission attempts to communicate the Gospel in word and deed, and to establish the church in ways that make sense to people within their local cultural context, presenting Christianity in such a way that it meets people's deepest needs and penetrates their worldview, thus allowing them to follow Christ and remain within their own culture.
- Contextualisation in mission aims at offending, but only for the right reasons, that is, good contextualisation, not the wrong ones. When the Gospel is presented in word and deed, and the fellowship of believers is according to appropriate cultural patterns, people will then more likely be confronted with the offence of the Gospel, exposing their own sinfulness and tendency towards evil, as well as oppressive structures and behavioural patterns within their own culture.
- Contextualisation in mission aims at developing contextualised expressions of the Gospel, so that the Gospel itself will be understood in ways that the universal church has neither experienced nor understood before, thus expanding people's understanding of the kingdom of God. In this sense, contextualisation is a form of mission in reverse, whereby one can learn from other cultures how to be more Christian in one's own context (Scherer & Bevans 1999:44-46).

Mission as church participation in God's mission implies not only church mission as contextualisation, but also as action in unity. This is the main focus of the following section.

4.4.3 Church mission as action in unity

The main issue to be highlighted here is the fact that, among many other challenges, such as the misunderstanding of mission, lack of well-skilled, visionary church leaders, colonial and Western missionary legacy, tribalism, poverty and a lack of contextualisation, as emphasised above, mission also has to deal with church divisions. If this is not the case in other countries of the world, in the DRC, particularly in the North Kivu Province, church divisions are a real challenge to mission. In support of this fact, Mbiti describes the church in Africa by showing that one of its areas of great absurdity and shame is the matter of disunity. He goes on to affirm that every type of faction and division, and everybody who wants to start a business in church divisions, can be found in Africa (Mbiti 1971:4). How can one remedy the situation of church divisions and the denominationalism linked to it?

With regard to cooperation, ecumenism and unity in mission as ways in which to remedy the challenge of church divisions, Nyasulu found that due to diversity in terms of understanding the New Testament, many churches have been created and have witnessed Christ in the way that they were taught by their forefathers in faith. Such churches were and are free to develop their own church pattern, taken from the Bible by their founders, Roman Catholics, Reformists, Calvinists, Methodists or Lutherans, etc. This trend continued until churches started noting that there was something which hindered their missionary work, and this was nothing other than division. Those church denominations performing their mission separately and individually with rivalries preached their denominations – the “isms” such as Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, Methodism and Anglicanism – rather than the Gospel. Each of these denominations was “the church”, and did not only treat other religions such as Muslims as people of other faiths, but also treated fellow Christians as belonging to other faiths. In order to remedy this situation, ecumenism was born, referring to biblical teachings on the unity of the church in the whole inhabited world, that is, the *oikoumenē*. Henceforth, the quest for church unity has been on the agenda of discussions in meetings of missionaries and churches (Nyasulu 2004:108). Herein lies the origin and purpose of ecumenism, which deals with unity among Christian churches. What does the concept of ecumenism imply?

Among scholars who defined the concept of “ecumenism”, Redmond seems to be more accurate and complete in his definition. According to him, “ecumenism” is a movement towards worldwide cooperation and unity among Christian churches. The term comes from the Greek word *oikoumenē* (inhabited). Thus, the councils of the church were viewed as being ecumenical because representatives attended them from churches throughout the known world. The first ecumenical council was held at Nicaea in 325. During the nineteenth century, the term *ecumenical* came to signify to the Roman Catholic Church a concern for Christian unity and a renewal of the church. For Protestants, who have pioneered in and advanced the modern ecumenical movement since the early twentieth century, the term has applied not only to Christian unity but, more generally, to the worldwide mission of Christianity. However, during the early twentieth century, the unity movement was almost exclusively Protestant (Redmond, in Encarta 2006). According to Thomas (1995:237), the word *oikoumenē* is related to the word *oikos*, meaning ‘house’. The theology of *oikoumenē* challenges Christians to view the whole world as the house of God. Thus, the ecumenical movement is the “means” by which churches from the house or *oikos* of God are seeking to live and witness before all people that the whole *oikoumenē* may really become the *oikos* of God through the crucified and risen Christ and the power of the life-giving Spirit.

The well-known starting point of Protestant ecumenism is the World Conference of Missions (WCM), held in Edinburgh in 1910. From this conference, three important movements were born: the *International Missionary Council* (IMC), in Lake Mohonk (New York) in 1921, the *Life and Work* (LW), in Stockholm in 1925, and the *Faith and Order* (FO) in Amsterdam in 1927. At a common committee held in Utrecht in 1938, these two last movements merged in order to form the World Council of Churches (WCC), which was officially established in Amsterdam in 1948 (Roux 1984:21, 135-136). The IMC, as a council of mission societies, evolved beside the WCC by focusing only on mission, whereas the WCC, as a council of churches, focused only on unity, in order to implement the fellowship of churches. This became indeed a dichotomy which was maintained for a long time on both sides. To put an end to this persistent dichotomy between mission and unity and unity and mission¹, at the WCC's general assembly in New Delhi (1961), the IMC was integrated with the WCC, and became the WCC's department in charge of mission and evangelisation. From this, a crucial theological point emerged: unity and mission belong together (Bosch, 1991:459-460), what Saayman (1984:112-116, 126) calls "the indissoluble link between unity and mission." The decision to integrate the IMC into the WCC was taken mostly as a result of the awakening regarding mission within the WCC, which evolved as a mere fellowship of churches, without a deep concern for mission (Bosch 1991:459ff). In reading between the lines, however, one finds that, while belonging to the WCC, some churches and agencies advocated in favour of mission, without worrying too much about unity. Thus, because of the integration of the IMC into the WCC (Bosch 1991:461), many evangelical agencies withdrew from the wider ecumenical movement of the WCC.

According to the above perspective, mission and ecumenical action must not be understood in a mere ecumenical sense, linked to the movement of the WCC, but rather as a dynamic for churches to cooperate by working together for the sake of mission. This kind of unity is fundamental among Christians and between churches. Unlike the evangelical movement's mere emphasis on spiritual unity (Bosch 1991:461), "unity in mission" must be lived both spiritually and visibly. In reference to the scriptures of 1Corinthians 12:12-30 and Romans 12:4-8, however, unity in mission does not mean uniformity of Christians or uniformity of churches and methods. Therefore, Sookhdeo (1987:95-96) clarifies the above

¹ In agreement with Bosch (1991:469), the conference in Edinburgh in 1910 suggested, without spelling it out, that authentic unity could not be achieved without authentic mission, without an open window towards the world. In the course of time, however, these first halting steps towards unity in mission and mission in unity would lead to the conviction that it is impossible to choose in favour of either unity or mission. The only possible choice for the church, or any part of the church, was for or against both (Saayman 1984:127).

scriptures by indicating that the unity of the body is enriched by the variety of its members, as this unity is not supposed to be a lifeless or colourless uniformity. On the contrary, he adds, the unity of the church, far from being monotonous, is exciting in its diversities. Thus, diversity in the church is not only necessary but imperative, as is unity.

Why is unity essential among Christians and between churches? According to Sookhdeo and Mbiti, Christian unity is essential for the following reasons:

- Disunity seriously weakens the worldwide mission of the church. The mission of the church is seriously affected when, for instance, competing groups go to the same area to scramble for members, occasionally by preaching against one another. Church resources are made even more meagre because of divisions. In fact, division retards growth. Divided Christianity is an anomaly in mission. It can no longer be theologically justified, because the main grounds for keeping divisions are arrogance, prejudice, fear and self-interest. Unless disunity is wiped out or greatly reduced, the mission task will be forever weak and ineffective.
- Disunity hampers and destroys fellowship. It also hinders spiritual renewal. In reality, spiritual life renews itself through contact and fellowship with other believers.
- Disunity is an offence to God. Since it is God's expectation and Christ's prayer to see Christians united, disunity remains an offence to the Triune God. Disunity also grieves the Holy Spirit, who has come not only to dwell within Christians, but also to produce the gifts and fruits which are necessary for a truly united church.
- Finally, disunity negatively affects the impact of the church's prophetic ministry on society. If the church is going to challenge political leaders to be united, church leaders themselves should demonstrate that they are themselves united. If the church has to challenge those in authority to be concerned about injustices in society, churches must then set an example of justice within their structures. Unless the whole church has the courage to speak with one voice, it cannot exert a strong influence on society. If denominations counteract and contradict one another, the world cannot comprehend the authentic position of the church (Sookhdeo 1987:96-98; Mbiti 1971:4-5).

Rightly speaking, if church mission derives from God's unity, the Trinitarian God, the church should not engage itself in mission by neglecting unity. When Jesus prayed that all his disciples would be one so that the world might believe (John 17:21), he made a clear connection between the unity of the church and the acceptance of the Gospel. Indeed,

common witnessing is the essential calling of the church's life. It expresses visible unity and increases service to God's word, strengthening churches both in proclaiming the Gospel and seeking the fullness of unity (Thomas 1995:236). It is only through action in unity that the church can implement its mission throughout the world, because unity is the central force in mission.

4.5 Attempt at answers to mission challenges in the North Kivu Province

The main issue to be tackled here is how to find a way forward to remedy the challenges that mission is facing within churches in the North Kivu Province, namely the misunderstanding regarding mission, lack of well-skilled and visionary church leaders, maintenance Christianity, tribalism and poverty. These are not the only challenges that face mission within churches in the North Kivu Province, but they are the main ones which, once remedied, can open the way for effective church mission. To remedy these challenges, so that churches and individual Christians may participate in mission in order to implement it, it is best to go back and learn about *missio Dei*, mission according to Jesus Christ, and mission as the church's participation in God's mission. These three preceding sections provide sound biblical and theological answers to mission challenges. However, the following section further attempts to provide answers, which should also be taken into account.

4.5.1 Misunderstanding regarding mission

As has been mentioned in the preceding chapter, mission is misunderstood within churches of the North Kivu Province. Christians are still unaware of mission and its goal, simply because it is still conceived of as one of many international NGOs that have been involved in the area within the framework of humanitarian activities related to wars and conflicts for almost two decades. Churches do not know exactly what they are, the purpose of their calling and their state of being sent into the world. From the misunderstanding of mission, which logically includes a misconception regarding the church, other challenges such as a maintenance mindset, tribalism and poverty are the order of the day within churches.

In the three previous sections of this chapter, mission has been described not as a mere activity of the church, but rather as its essence, life and *raison d'être*. As Mpinga (2007:34) suggests, the whole existence of the church is for the purpose of mission. In this respect, without mission, there would be no church, because the church stems from mission, the

mission of the Trinitarian God. Mission thus belongs to God. Its deepest origin is in the heart of God (Bosch 1991:392). The church is called on and sent to participate in God's mission, in order to be a healthy and living church by performing mission. By its very nature, the church has been called on in order to be sent into the world (Matt 28:18-20, John 15:16). Therefore, the church is an "apostle". If the church is thus regarded as an "apostle" (one sent), it means that it finds itself in a missionary situation, and its existence and nature become missionary (Mpinga 2007:33).

Since mission is understood in the above terms, the church as an institution should no longer be at the top of the agenda - mission itself should be. Mission-mindedness is fundamental, because it places the church in a state of self-identification and discovery of the world which it is called on and sent to serve. This should create in the church a sense of responsibility, honesty and sensitivity towards God, the originator and leader of mission, and towards the world, the addressee and the venue of mission (Mpinga 2007:42). Mission-mindedness, as rooted in the Trinitarian God, is a strong and effective remedy against maintenance Christianity and its harmful consequences. Hanchey (1994:17) believes that the mission mindset promotes spiritual growth. Indeed, in order to be relevant within society, the church needs spiritual or qualitative growth. To be more efficient, however, mission-mindedness requires that both church leaders and members should be educated and trained in missiology. This will be dealt with in Chapter 5 as one of strategies for effective mission. The next challenge to mission, which is closely related to the misunderstanding of mission, is the lack of well-skilled and visionary church leaders.

4.5.2 Lack of well-skilled and visionary church leaders

Another challenge to mission that needs to be remedied is the lack of visionary church leaders. This challenge is indeed linked to the fact that the church in the North Kivu Province is viewed more as an institution based on a strong administration than a living organism, that is, the body of Christ. This belief disorients the church from its goal of being a church, and this has a significant impact on mission. With regard to the theology of church leadership, Richards and Hoeldtke (1980:30-42) assert, in relation to 1 Corinthians 12:27, that the church must be perceived as a living organism, the very body of Christ, rather than an institution in which one person preaches, a few teach, and a few others work in an administrative ministry, while the vast majority simply listen, learn and follow, without becoming functioning

members of the body. Indeed, responsibility within an institutional church is more autocratic than leadership-based. What does leadership mean? How can a church be a leader?

In terms of leadership, Weems (1993:15) humbly notes that this concept is difficult to define, because more than 350 definitions have been given to it, and its meaning remains ambiguous. Perceiving leadership as a complex reality, nonetheless, Dorr (2006:64-65) offers the following working definition: “Leadership is the influencing, motivating, guiding, directing, or coordinating of individuals, groups, communities, or organizations in a way that affects their behaviour or actions, especially in relation to bringing about change or resisting change.” On the other hand, Williams and McKibben (1994:22) indicate what leadership is not, such as authoritarian, autocratic, telling people what to do, and even knowing more or having more experience than others. In this regard, Ngambi (2008) makes a clear distinction between *leading* and *managing*, and *leaders* and *managers*, which is shown below:

Managing	Leading
Directing others	Guiding/Developing
Competing	Collaborating
Using a hierarchy	Using a network
Consistency/sameness	Diversity/flexibility
Requiring permission	Using judgement
Risk aversion	Risk-taking
Individual contributors	Team players
Being managed	Self-management
People as an expense	People as an asset
Managers	Leaders
Administer	Innovate
Maintain	Develop
Control	Inspire
Have a short-term vision	Have a long-term vision
Ask how and when	Ask what and why
Imitate	Originate
Accept the status quo	Challenge the status quo
Do things right	Do the right things

From another list of differences between managers and leaders provided by Dale (1998:22), one may also conclude that managers “take top-down decisions”, whereas leaders “take bottom-up decisions”. Finally, Weems (1993:27) concludes by stressing that leaders do not manage or administrate, manipulate or dictate, process or enable, but rather “lead”. Christian leadership is thus perceiving and articulating the vision of the Kingdom and effectively defining and communicating its incarnation, following Christ’s example of service (Williams and McKibben 1994:22). It is also a clear vision (Dorr 2006:85-89) for the development and implementation of the work that is planned for the future. Speaking of

leadership according to God, Hunter (1989:93) affirms that, “God calls His pastors to lead. That means being out in front. It requires taking the initiative. It means directing, guiding, empowering, and releasing people for their work of service. It also includes setting the vision and motivating others.” Here, the notion of vision is very important for church leaders, because the lack of vision for mission plunges the Church into darkness, confusion and routine, and affects all of the community’s life (Mpinga 2007:2). However, mission vision predisposes or prepares the Church to face new challenges.

In light of the above debate, churches in the North Kivu Province need well-skilled and visionary leaders. This is possible if one can learn from the model of Christ, just as the apostle Paul invites Christians to become his imitators, as he is of Christ (1 Cor 11:1). Indeed, Jesus was a good leader who fulfilled the characteristics of a leader as described above. To be a good steward of the mysteries of God, Hunter (1989:92) maintains that the church needs leadership in the pastorate. This is the reason why, in order to be a good church leader or mission-minded leader (Hanchey 1994:16) requires not only Holy Spirit guidance (Dorr 2006), faith, training, and education, but also specific programmes in pastoral education, such as leadership, counselling, management and administration, missiology, etc., and, of course, the development of skills. No one can randomly be a good church leader. A well-trained church leader should be well aware of all the above criteria that are needed in order to be effective.

4.5.3 Maintenance Christianity

Instead of maintenance-mindedness, Jesus, in Luke 15:3-7, teaches people to regard mission as leaving ninety-nine sheep in order to look for the lost one. In fact, the main aim of Jesus’ mission is obviously to seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10). To “seek the lost” is also the central theme of Luke 15, which consists of three parables: the lost sheep (v. 3-7), the lost coin (v. 8-10), and the prodigal son (v. 11-32). In the first parable (v. 3-7) that concerns this study, Luke reports as follows:

So Jesus told them this parable: “Which one of you, if he has a hundred sheep and loses one of them, would not leave the ninety-nine in the open pasture and go look for the one that is lost until he finds it? Then when he has found it, he places it on his shoulders, rejoicing. Returning home, he calls together his friends and neighbours, telling them, ‘Rejoice with me, because I have found my sheep that was lost.’ I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to repent” (Luke 15:3-7, NET).

Through the stories of the lost sheep and the lost coin, Jesus demonstrates that God is so concerned about the needs of the lost people that He is willing to do whatever it takes in order to help them. What is important to note in Luke's account is the fact that, in order to seek the lost sheep, the shepherd has to "leave the ninety-nine sheep" in the open pasture. Indeed, to "leave the ninety-nine sheep" is imprudent, but also very meaningful for the task of a shepherd, which is to take care of each sheep, wherever it may be. To "leave the ninety-nine sheep" in the wilderness is imprudent because some of them may also stray. To overcome this challenge, Bailey (1983:149-150) seems to mistrust the authenticity of the parable, arguing that "the leaving of the sheep in the wilderness need not to be understood as an authentic element of the story." According to him, in the Middle East, a flock has never been attended by one person – instead, two or three shepherds are in attendance. When one sheep is lost and a shepherd goes to look for it, the other shepherd takes care of the flock and guides them home¹.

Rightly speaking, however, leaving ninety-nine sheep to go and look for the lost one shows clearly how valuable the lost sheep is. The message must therefore be understood in terms of the worthiness associated with the lost sheep. In order to stress this, Jesus shows that the recovery of the lost sheep leads to a rejoicing event (v. 5-6). The best missiological interpretation is that the lost sheep represents the tax collectors and sinners talked about in v. 1-2 – in short, all people who stray to the "ends of the earth". In addition, the ninety-nine sheep represent people who do not need help because they have already been found – they are therefore in no danger. Jesus then (v.7) concludes that, "I tell you, in the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to repent."

In line with this study, the ninety-nine sheep may logically be understood as representing the church followers who are already present in the church, and who the pastor sometimes has to leave in order to witness to non-Christian peoples and nations. Thus, seeking the lost people does not mean abandoning the established church. Furthermore, a church that is mission-oriented is not one that contents itself with the flock that is already there, while neglecting the lost sheep. It is no longer one that goes away from the flock to seek the lost, and abandons the flock forever, but rather one that achieves a balance between the flock that is already there and the lost sheep, the internal (maintenance) and external

¹ In his book entitled *Finding the Lost: Cultural Keys to Luke 15*, Bailey (1992:72-73) maintains the same point of view, because as the story moves on to concentrate on a lost sheep, the fate of the "ninety-nine" remains a mystery. For more information about this author's views on Luke 15:1-7, one can read pages 54 to 92 of his book.

mission. According to Hanchey (1994:27), however, in terms of the balance between maintenance and mission, mission must come first. This is correct, because maintenance should be considered as a way forward to empower and prepare the church for mission, not the other way around.

In relation to Luke 15:3-7, churches within the North Kivu Province urgently need to move from being maintenance-oriented to mission-centred, because being maintenance-oriented consumes the life of the church, with its focus on survival – the work of the church in the world (Hanchey 1994:6). In so doing, the church becomes a heavy burden for believers, and its qualitative growth is negatively affected. This challenge of a maintenance mentality can also be overcome through consciousness of mission and by the appointment of mission-minded church leaders.

4.5.4 Tribalism

Instead of a church being tribalism-oriented, Jesus teaches people to view church mission as mission for “all nations” or “tribes” (Matt 28:19-20; Luke 24:47), mission “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8). Because mission according to Jesus Christ is not of such a nature as to be kept at home, in the context of a specific ethnic group, according to Acts 1:8, the Apostles were warned to bear in mind the local (in Jerusalem), national (all Judea) and international (Samaria to the ends of the earth) dimensions of mission. In keeping with Schnabel (2004:372), the phrase “to the ends of the earth” does not specifically refer to Rome, the Jewish Diaspora or the land of Israel, nor to Spain or Ethiopia or the Gentiles, but literally to the farthest reaches of the known inhabited world at the time¹. In this sense, Talbert (1997:27) and Keener (1993:324) are correct when they suggest the phrases ‘everywhere’ and “all peoples” as an accurate interpretation of “to the ends of the earth.” Of course, Jesus promised that, once empowered by the Holy Spirit, the disciples would be his witnesses everywhere to all people. In Luke 24:47, Jesus talks of “all nations”, a term which comes from the Greek words *ta ethnê*. Since the beginning, indeed, the hope of God in Christ was for all nations.

In actual fact, Luke’s phrase “to the ends of the earth” describes the geographical scope of the missionary assignment of the Apostles, who have to fulfil their commission only when they penetrate the borders of the earth. Indeed, their mission is designed to be a world mission. For this reason, Christ directs them to initiate a universal mission that begins in

¹ To learn more about the “inhabited world known at the time”, one may refer to Schnabel (2004:373-375).

Jerusalem, reaches the surrounding regions of Judea (including Galilee) and Samaria, and then extends as far as the border regions of the earth (Schnabel 2004:375-376).

Through the above scriptures, Jesus established mission as a worldwide ministry in favour of all tribes, languages, nations and races of the world. In this regard, Kritzing (2000:95) argues that, “Mission is the church at work in the world. Mission takes place where the church meets the world. (...) Mission is the church as witness intentionally in contact with the world.” Mission is thus not designed to be kept within a particular social or geographical framework. No one can still regard it as only belonging to certain ethnic groups.

4.5.5 Poverty

Because of poverty due to ethnic and land conflicts, increasing insecurity, mismanagement and bad governance and their harmful consequences, war and political instability, as has been indicated in Chapter 2 of this study, churches within the North Kivu Province should not still be dealing with mission as a one-way activity which is evangelical or spiritual in nature. They should not even still be working within a maintenance framework by looking at questions of social justice and political or economic issues as concerns that are outside the scope and activity of the church (Prabhakar 2006:48). In the sense that the mission of Jesus had a “preferential option for the poor” (Luke 4:18-19), this divine model should be a vivid motto for churches. In this respect, Bosch (1991:436) maintains that “... the poor are the first, though not the only ones, on which God’s attention focuses and that, therefore, the church has no choice but to demonstrate solidarity with the poor.” In a context of endemic poverty, such as that existing in the North Kivu Province, therefore, mission should also be thought of as a prophetic action. In this regard, Kirk (1999:102-103) suggests the following practical solutions to poverty:

- The one-off cancellation of major categories of debt of severely indebted nations, and the favourable rescheduling of debt of moderately indebted nations
- Trading terms in which prices for primary products reflect just wages and humane working conditions, and remain stable over extended periods of time
- The creation of stable democracies, which include free speech and action for opposition political parties and groups, and which encourage local grassroots political action, such as civil society

- A drastic reduction in arms trade, which rarely has any strategic justification and which only benefits the manufacturers
- The retention of a greater percentage of the wealth created within the nation – this will entail some kind of control at the level of both the dividends expatriated to foreign-based companies and the location of locally generated wealth overseas
- A more equitable distribution of wealth within and between nations through some kind of graduated tax-system, which would give potential treatment to low earners, thereby encouraging their greater participation in the national economy.

Beyond these general solutions to poverty, the North Kivu Province needs, first and foremost, peace, after which people can once again undertake their labours freely, so that they can produce according to their daily needs.

Although it is generally agreed that the eradication of poverty should be a priority for governments and all economic role players (Kritzinger 2000:105), poverty is a challenge that should also be responded to by churches. Therefore, Kirk (1999:111-117) believes that it is the church's role to secure justice for the poor. According to him, the members of Christian communities worldwide are themselves poor. The church does not then stand against the poor, because the poor are in the church or are the church. The church has thus an immense interest in the transformation of their situation. It is also a major player in the struggle for justice, in which, according to Kirk (1999:111), Christians have four responsibilities that can be expressed in the following theological affirmations: to know God as the author and upholder of justice, to proclaim a Gospel of justice, to create a preferential option for the poor, and to overcome materialism.

4.6 Conclusion

Through the exploration of this chapter, which dealt with mission from a holistic and comprehensive perspective, one may conclude that mission stems from God as He reaches out to human beings, and the mission of Jesus is also his being sent from heaven to human beings. Likewise, the sending out of the church is also a move towards all nations of the world. According to the Great Commission, this sending out is not a stagnant action, but an ongoing dynamic of being on the "go". This is what mission is inherently about. In light of these fundamental truths, the church should not still view its mission in a spirit of maintenance. It should not even still deal with it in a one-way manner, because mission ultimately implies,

and at the same time, both internal and external activities. Finally, mission should be understood from a holistic and comprehensive perspective, i.e. mission with distinguishable but inseparable dimensions of evangelisation, healing, compassion, social, political and economic justice, and fellowship or community (Saayman 1983:87). Accordingly, Nyasulu (2004:29) states that the ministry of Jesus, which is a model par excellence for the church, was truly holistic.

Preaching, teaching and healing (Matt 9:35), being filled with compassion for hungry people and giving them food (Mark 6:30ff), being the voice of the poor and all marginalised and oppressed people (Luke 4:18-19), are other important services that the church is expected to render. These texts and many others described Jesus as being immersed with people and ministering to their needs. Through his holistic and comprehensive ministry, Jesus reached and transformed people in all aspects of their lives. It is thus advisable that those who are involved in fulfilling the Great Commission should avoid separating spiritual from physical needs (Nyasulu 2004:29). They should not even attempt to content themselves with some existing church structures or restrict themselves to a certain setting, as if mission should end in their sphere of activity.

If the mission of the church is to be understood from a holistic and comprehensive perspective, this needs to be practically implemented. It is this last necessity which will be the main focus of the following chapter.

Chapter 5

STRATEGIC PLANNING FOR AN EFFECTIVE MISSION

5.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous chapter, which examined mission from a holistic and comprehensive perspective, this Chapter 5 is an attempt to present some practical strategies that churches, especially the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA, can use in order to implement mission within the North Kivu Province and beyond. In this regard, the chapter suggests five main strategies for an effective mission within the North Kivu Province.

As the first strategy, the chapter will focus on the awakening of consciousness for mission. In this section, it will be necessary to examine how this is possible through the sensitisation of the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC), the promotion of missiology within biblical and theological education, and the reshaping of the ministry of the target communities, by suggesting the creation of departments of mission, training and retraining for church leaders, and sensitising lay-leaders and church followers to mission. As the second strategy, the chapter suggests the creation of a network for mission mediation. It is believed that a network for mission launched by the main and pioneering churches of North Kivu will be a good project for the promotion of mission. As the third strategy, this study requires churches to shift from dependency to self-reliance in their ministry. It is only at this level of autonomy that churches will be able to deal freely with their mission, according to their calling by God.

The fourth strategy is an appeal to implement the concept of “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8), which sustains and leads to a good understanding of a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission. In Acts 1:8, mission is clearly defined as an effort that is inherently internal and external. As the fifth strategy, this chapter intends to make the three target churches aware of some neglected opportunities for mission, that is, marginal and vulnerable social groups, hegemonic social groups, the entertainment industry and Muslims.

This chapter ends by stating that if churches and individual Christians are well aware of the purpose of their calling by God, that is, mission, then they can make significant progress in missionary endeavours throughout the North Kivu Province and beyond.

5.2 Awakening the consciousness to mission

Because of an evident misunderstanding regarding mission, there is a real need to awaken the consciousness to mission within the churches of the North Kivu Province. This must be done through all church structures that are implied, in one way or another, in the life of the Church. These structures are, namely, the Church of Christ in Congo, Bible schools, colleges and theological faculties, local churches themselves, and their internal structures.

5.2.1 Sensitising the CCC to mission

Even though the CCC does not dare meddle in the internal affairs of its member communities, except for the role of a mediator in the case of conflicts, it plays, nevertheless, a significant role in the lives of churches through its evangelical, educational and diaconal goals (CCC Constitution, Article 3). By the 1970s, the CCC was very committed to sustaining ministries of Christian education, Diaconate and evangelism, by providing materials, training, programmes and other useful means for the growth of the Church in the DRC (McGavran & Riddle 1979:100-103). Although the CCC was not yet well aware of the mission endeavour, its department in charge of evangelism and the life of the Church was in good working order. The only problem was the fact that evangelism was understood as a separate activity, without any connection to mission. Up till now, this misunderstanding still exists within the CCC and its member communities. On the other hand, when the country started to fall into crisis, mainly from the 1980s onwards, everything began to go downhill, even the CCC. As a result, the CCC department currently in charge of evangelism, the life of the Church and mission, as it is called, is not in working order. According to Dr Mazaburu (2008), this department does not even have a responsible person to lead it.

Rightly speaking, the CCC is not a physical, local church, but a Secretariat which deals with its goals and objectives through its member communities and their local churches. Without communities and churches, the CCC has no reason for existing.

In order to be a real tool for sustaining church growth throughout the DRC and the world, according to its threefold goal, the CCC needs to be awakened to mission, so that it can implement it through its member churches. This should be done by rehabilitating and reshaping its departments, especially that in charge of evangelism, the life of the church and mission. First of all, the CCC should urgently appoint, for that department, a well educated

leader, who has the skills and vision for mission. In effect, a vital department in charge of the life of the church should not be neglected to the extent of lacking a responsible leader. On December 31, 1971, since all Protestant churches and mission agencies were required by the former President Mobutu regime to be associated with and to work through the CCC, or cease their activities within the territory (Irvine 1978:142 cf. Sundkler and Steed 2000:967), it seems that member communities and their theological faculties and colleges were instructed to await work programmes and strategies from the CCC Secretariat. The affiliation to the CCC thus created a kind of dependency spirit within member churches. Therefore, the appointment of a well-educated person skilled in missiology would be helpful in providing training programmes and strategies, not only for evangelism, as was formerly done, but for mission as a whole, i.e. the holistic and comprehensive approach to mission.

Secondly, the department in charge of evangelism, the life of the Church and mission, which should be called the “Department of Mission and Life of the Church”, should be equipped materially and financially, as other departments connected to humanitarian issues¹ are. In fact, the CCC, which stems from missionary undertakings, should put mission at the top of its agenda, so that it can earn its position as the National Secretariat for the guidance of its 64 member communities. It would be better, through CCC guidance, for churches to be compelled to take a critical look at how mission is practised. Is mission a real praxis of faith, intentionally aimed at effecting transformation, reconciliation and empowerment in society, or is it simply practice? In fact, churches should be encouraged to conduct a mission practice assessment in order to determine, for instance, whether the whole church is engaged in the whole mission, or whether the different elements of mission, namely proclamation, service, advocacy and care of creation lead to transformation, reconciliation and empowerment (cf. LWF 2004:61).

Awakening the CCC to mission also implies the reformation of educational policy within the 11 theological faculties (Educational Statistics, in *History of the CCC*) throughout the country which function under its control. The most important among them is the Faculty of Theology at the Congo Protestant University (*Université Protestante au Congo – UPC*) in Kinshasa, which belongs to the CCC, and whose curriculum acts as a reference for the 10 other faculties of theology which are also under the control of the CCC.

¹ For instance, the Department of Medical Services, which focuses on coordinating hospitals and other Protestant health services, is much celebrated throughout the country for its campaigns of SANRU – *Santé Rurale* (Rural Health) and SANTE POUR TOUS (Health for Everyone). The CCC seeks and provides means for these campaigns, to the extent that they create pride at the national level.

5.2.2 Promoting missiology within theological and biblical education

In general, mainline churches of the North Kivu Province are led by pastors trained within their own church's Bible schools¹, which provide basic biblical education within two to four years. Some pastors, however, have only had some short biblical courses within two to six months. Church workers who hold a university level education have been educated within the theological faculties of the four main universities: the Congo Protestant University (Université Protestante au Congo – UPC) in Kinshasa, the Free University of the Great Lakes Countries (Université Libre des Pays des Grands Lacs – ULPGL) in Goma, which belongs mainly to the CBCA and CEBCE, the Evangelical University in Africa (Université Evangélique en Afrique – UEA) in Bukavu, which belongs mainly to the CEPAC, and the University Shalom of Bunia (Université Shalom de Bunia – USB) in Bunia, initiated and managed by the CEBCE, together with five other communities.

Apart from courses in evangelism and the history of missions in relation to Church history, until 2007, none of the four abovementioned universities included missiological courses in their curricula, nor has a department of missiology even been created (Ngangura 2007; Muamba 2007; Mazaburu 2008).² As a theological domain, mission has almost never been talked about. With reference to the ULPGL, which is well known by the author and at which he lectures, even the library of the Faculty of Theology, with about 6 000 volumes, including reviews and journals, has only five missiology books³. In addition, no authorities and teachers think of ordering missiological books, simply because missiology has never been on the agenda of their educational vision. Indeed, theological education is still based on an old model, which has no room for mission. In referring to the Indian context, Singh (Sargunam 1992:359-360) speaks of “imported and imputed theology”, which is not born from local experiences and contexts. Such a theology is a logical result of “rootless seminaries”, he adds. On the other hand, Cochran, De Gruchy and Petersen (1991:101) describe such a situation within churches in South Africa, by asserting that current theological education and training does not cope with what is required, and it perpetuates

¹ It is important to note that almost every one of the main communities of the CCC has its own Bible schools. In the North Kivu Province, for instance, the CEPAC has 15 Bible schools (Maivuno 2008), the CEBCE has three Bible schools (Rasi, 2008), and the CBCA has two Bible schools (Kateghe 2008).

² Dr Mazaburu is a lecturer in the theological faculty of the UPC, and is responsible for some courses at the USB. Dr Ngangura is also a lecturer in the theological faculty of the ULPGL and is responsible for some courses at the UEA. Dr Muamba is a lecturer at the USB.

³ These books are: the French version of Bosch (1991) edited in 1995, Roux (1984), Bria et al. (eds) (2001), Blaser (1983), and Blaser (ed.) (2000). In terms of reviews and journals, there are only some copies of *Revue Protestante de Missiology* “*Perspectives Missionnaires*”.

models derived from other times and places. According to these two authors, one needs to go beyond current models of theological education.

In order to remedy the discord between theology and mission, Singh (Sargunam 1992:358) advocates an imperative co-existence between theology and mission. According to him, “without Theology the Mission of the Church dissipates and without Mission the Theology of the Bible stagnates.” Kirk (1999:11) emphasises that “There can be no theology without mission – or (...) no theology which is not missionary’.

As a result of neglecting Missiology in favour of other theological fields, the DRC as a whole can account for only eight PhDs in the field of Missiology. However, most of these PhDs live and work abroad.¹ Due to the fact that, in all likelihood, no church, missionary agency or theological seminary has awarded a study bursary for Missiology, those who have done it by themselves feel free to remain abroad after their studies. Among the four who live in the country, two are involved in teaching in Kinshasa, and the other two in church administration, respectively at Kananga in the province of Kasai Occidentale, and at Gemena in the province of Equateur (Muambazambi 2008). However, Nzash-U-Lumeya, who is living in the USA (Fresno), established, in the 1990s, the *Centre Universitaire de Missiologie – CUM* (Missiological University Centre) in Kinshasa, where Dr Nzuzi is the chief Missiology lecturer. Compared to the scope of the country and the number of theological faculties, colleges and Bible schools, the CUM, which delivers up to a Bachelor’s degree, cannot meet all the crucial needs in terms of missiologists, new centres to be created and departments of Missiology within theological faculties throughout the country.

Concerning the issue of how to implement mission, there is an apparent closed circle between churches and Bible schools and theological faculties. This is obvious, due to the fact that the graduates of the four abovementioned faculties of theology, without any missiological content in their programme of education, are the same persons who are in charge of training and teaching pastors, and of church leadership. Accordingly, since they do not have any missiological skills and vision for mission, they cannot deal with missiological teachings at Bible schools and colleges, and mission within churches. For this reason, there is a kind of closed system, from the time of early missionaries to current church leaders, which a new biblical teaching such as missiology cannot penetrate.

¹ Among them, the following live abroad: Nzash-U-Lumeya in Fresno, USA; Emmanuel Tshilenga, Esaïe Mulefu and Kalemba Claude Mwambazambi in Pretoria, South Africa. Those who are living and working in the DRC are: Manunga and Nzuzi Mukawa, in Kinshasa; Mulumba in Kananga, and Sanguma Mosay in Gemena.

In light of the above description of the issue related to the lack of mission consciousness within churches, the reformation of educational policy within theological education in favour of missiology appears to be an urgent strategy for mission implementation. Supporting such a strategy for mission awareness, Bosch (1991:494) advocates a missiological agenda for theology in the following terms: “We are in need of a missiological agenda for theology rather than just a theological agenda for mission; for theology, rightly understood, has no reason to exist other than critically to accompany the *missio Dei*.” Thus, he adds, “mission should be *the theme of all theology*.”

The reformation of educational policy within theological education in favour of missiology should be put into practice by creating departments of missiology within the theological faculties of all universities involved in the education and training of pastors and other church workers in the North Kivu Province, namely the UPC, ULPGL, UEA, and USB. The first two universities are especially needed to be involved in the missiological dynamic, because they provide a larger number of church workers than the others do. They are also the most influential Protestant universities, being strategically situated in the country: the UPC in the west, and the ULPGL in the east. Because of their influential position within the DRC as a whole, their involvement in the missiological dynamic would certainly be a starting point for all other theological faculties within the country.

Creating departments of missiology within theological faculties would contribute to providing missiologists for churches and Bible schools and colleges. According to Cochran, Gruchy and Petersen (1991:101), “A change in the seminary must be accompanied by a change in the parish, and vice versa”. This means that the closed circle between churches and Bible schools and theological faculties must be positively reformed in favour of missiology. In accordance with Mpinga, departments of missiology should also initiate a short-term missionary training programme, in order to prepare those who have a calling to work as missionaries. Such a programme could be open to anyone who holds a qualification in any discipline and wants to serve as a missionary in a sector related to their qualification (Mpinga 2007:83).

In the context of the North Kivu Province, a short-term missionary training programme can be easily implemented through the “Christian Centre of the Lake Kivu” (*Centre Chrétien du Lac Kivu – CCLK*), which trains evangelists and produces them each year by the hundreds for churches in the eastern DRC. Established in Goma, the CCLK limits itself to training evangelists because of the lack of information and resources for mission and missiology. Nevertheless, its main goal consists of equipping churches with human resources

capable of sustaining them through evangelisation in rural and urban areas (Tembo Mathe 2008). It would be very easy to improve the training programme of this centre and make it suitable for the missionary needs of churches. The MET (Missions Exposure & Training) in Pretoria could be a good model for the reformation of the CCLK's training policy. In fact, the main aim of the MET is to serve as a tool that equips churches for global missions. Thus, its mission consists of empowering and transforming local churches into dynamic missionary congregations, by exposing and training their leaders and missionary candidates for multicultural and global missions (MET leaflet). The goal of the CCLK is not indeed very different from that of the MET, except that the focus is on evangelism instead of mission. In effect, mission includes evangelism. Therefore, if the CCLK can reform its training programme for mission purposes, it would be a good opportunity for transforming local churches into dynamic missionary congregations.

Because the Church in the DRC has almost no missiologists, the process of promoting missiological education should in the meantime be started through the partnership of theological faculties with educational institutions already experienced in missiology education, such as the University of South Africa (UNISA) and the University of Pretoria.

5.2.3 Involving churches in the mission dynamic

The tasks of the church do not only consist of preaching and celebrating pastoral acts, but also of teaching, training and retraining. This educational task cannot be limited to formal primary, secondary and professional education, which has already taken place within churches over the years. Training or retraining should not necessarily be done through a college or seminary. As Rogers (2003:109-110) maintains, it can also be done through the common concept of "learning by doing". Such an educational method is what Jesus applied to his disciples, who travelled around with him, watching, listening and doing, as they were given opportunities and assignments (cf. Matt 10). Such a training method requires well-educated church leaders, because "Someone who is blind cannot lead another blind" (Luke 6:39). Unfortunately, the common educational method of "learning by doing", which is mostly used in African churches, faces a problem in that even employed church leaders lack the skills and vision for mission. They also need to be trained. In this respect, training and education within formal schools and colleges is still necessary. In this regard, however, Rogers (2003:110) advises that those who train church leaders in African cultures must not make the mistake of training them according to Western ways of thinking and doing. This

advice is also useful for those who train church workers and leaders in local schools and colleges, because since the colonial period, these educational institutions have been established in line with Western models of thinking and training.

In so far as theological and biblical education can be involved in missiological teachings, there will certainly be well-trained pastors who are devoted to mission. Indeed, the pastor is the main animator of church life, which cannot be a true, living church without missionary activities. Williams (Sargunam 1992:229) emphasises this by asserting that the pastor is the key to the programme of missionary education in the local church. According to him, the pastor provides leadership and ministry. On the other hand, Williams points out that the pastor must be convinced of the following four principles: mission is the chief objective of the Church; the chief objective of ministry is to guide the church in this work and equip it for this; the chief objective of preaching to a congregation ought to be training; and the chief aim of every minister in this regard ought to be to prepare himself thoroughly for this work (Sargunam 1992:229-230).

Bearing Williams' teachings in mind, pastors are essentially the main target of missionary education. Thus, in order to involve their churches in the mission dynamic, pastors should be encouraged to be trained and retrained, so that they can do the same for all the other workers involved in the life of the church, namely the elders, heads of church departments and ministries, deacons, lay-leaders¹, etc. These pastors' collaborators should be trained and retrained, so that they can help to motivate and make church followers aware of mission and other biblical teachings. In this respect, Schieler (2003:101) says that the primary mission of Christian Education is to disciple all members – adults, youth, and children – in the way of Jesus. Every member is expected and encouraged to participate in at least one discipling opportunity each year, with a large percentage of them doing so.

Rightly speaking, the task of pastors does not consist of doing all the church activities by themselves. Rather, it consists of them being out in front, taking the initiative, directing, guiding, empowering and freeing people for their work, setting a vision, and providing motivation for the work (Hunter 1989:93). To highlight the reality of involving pastors and their collaborators in the church's mission dynamic, Buono (2002:204-208) speaks of

¹ It can be noted that pastors have some reservations about lay-leaders in the church. This is often due to the fact that the importance and role of a lay leader in the church is misunderstood. Quoting Gibbs and Morton, J. Putmury (in Mattan and Kim, 1997:135) defines a lay person as one of the privates in God's army; and the officers are the clergy. The latter have the task of running the church, of deciding the doctrine, administering the sacraments and preaching in the church (cf. Gibbs and Morton, 1964:9). The laity is supposed to listen to the clergy, receive the sacraments and be submissive.

“missionary animation”. Animation comes from the verb “to animate”, which means to endow somebody with a soul, with life; to give liveliness, to give life; and to enliven, vivify, or stimulate. Buono explains this “missionary animation” as providing missionary life and motivation to the local church’s pastoral activities, in order to help it achieve consciousness of its own missionary nature and to express it (Buono 2002:204). Its aims are to create a conscience and missionary mentality, above all by means of theological formation (Buono 2002:207).

Another thing that can help in involving local churches in the mission dynamic is to create departments of mission within communities and local churches. As a genuine “Department of Mission and Life of the Church” can be created within the national structure of the CCC, in the same way, departments of mission could be the local structures for coordinating mission within communities and churches. As it is important to call them “Departments of Mission and Life of the Church”, it is indeed these departments that would be in charge of all issues related to mission, although under the leadership of pastors.

5.3 Creating a network for mission mediatisation

With regard to missionary practices, Pivot (2002:2) indicates that up to now, mission has been lived according to a confessional competition mode. Instead of competition and struggle between churches, churches need to promote a media focus on internal and external mission, in a spirit of unity that is advocated by the CCC. With regard to this issue of a media focus on mission, Schieler (2003:27-32) suggests that a living church should have a “mission statement” that sums up, in a few words, the basic, most essential tasks, vision or purposes and “business” of a particular church. This “mission statement” does not seek to describe everything that the church does, nor is it a compilation of personal preferences, desires, wishes or whims of the entire congregation. Rather, it is a church motto couched in simple, clear and concise language which is easy to remember, so that everyone in the church is able to learn it, repeat it and attempt to live up to it. The primary function of the “mission statement” is that it needs to become the internal guidance system regarding what the church may and must do, as well as what the church may and must not do in its everyday life (Schieler 2003:29).

To give a clearer picture of what a “mission statement” is, Schieler uses the following three examples:

- The mission statement of the Frazier United Methodist Church in Montgomery, Alabama is: “Win! Disciple! Serve!” This means “Win peoples to Christ”, “Disciple them in the way of Christ”, “Serve the world in the name and Spirit of Christ.”
- The mission statement of the United Methodist Church in Gughamsburg, Ohio is: “To know Jesus, and to make him known.”
- The mission statement of the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Longmont, Colorado is: “Extending the reach of Christ” (Schieler 2003:29).

Generally speaking, having a “mission statement” for churches within the DRC should not be a problem or a novelty, because in 1966, the CCC, formerly known as the CPC, had launched such a motto campaign, called “Christ for All”. According to McGavran and Riddle (1979:95), the “Christ for All” campaign was not only a vivid means of cooperation within the CPC, but also a vivid campaign that significantly challenged churches and mission societies to a nationwide mission task. Thereafter, in the 1980s, another vivid motto campaign called “I Found It” was launched by the Crusade Campus for Christ throughout the country. In order to make this evangelical motto well known and popular, the Crusade Campus for Christ had translated it into almost all spoken languages of the DRC. In the North Kivu Province, this motto had been known as: *Je l’ai trouvé* in French; *Nimepata* in Kiswahili; *Nabiribanayo* in Kinande; *Naibonye* in Kinyarwanda¹. Returning to McGavran’s words, this evangelical motto campaign was a vivid means of cooperation in evangelisation, and posed a great challenge for churches.

The Network for Mission also managed to use available mass media such as radio and television broadcasting, Christian literature² and the Internet. This is what Kozhuharov (2006:27, 35) calls “the informational mission”, i.e. a wide-spread witnessing by using mass-media and publishing books and periodical literature. Apart from the five TV channels that are fundamentally limited to the urban areas, the North Kivu currently has about 20 radio stations, of which 7 belong to churches³. This does not, however, solve the problem raised by Müller (Gisel 2006:877), who found that the use of local and private radios and televisions by Protestants remains discreet and uncertain. This is true in the case of North Kivu, where the high-frequency range public and private radios and TVs that are listened to and watched

¹ French, Kiswahili, Kinande and Kinyarwanda are the four languages most often spoken in the North Kivu Province.

² See Rogers (2003:132-133) for further information.

³ The Roman Catholic Church has 3 radio stations: Beni, Butembo and Kyondo; the CBCA has 2: Butembo and Kanyabayonga; the Seventh Day Adventist Church has 1 in Lukanga; and the CEBCE has 1 in Goma, which is assumed to be the radio station for all Protestant churches.

throughout the province are not exploited by churches. Some local radios managed by churches only broadcast within a very limited range, with very poor programmes, because of a lack of specialists in media and press. Christian literature and the Internet are also not exploited. Churches do not have newspapers and websites through which they can make themselves known. Although Protestants had pioneered the launching of newspapers in missionary fields, even in African languages (Bria 2003:200), after the turnover of Western missionaries due to political events related to the DRC's independence, the Baptist and Pentecostal churches in North Kivu no longer produced Christian literature. The Network for Mission's mediatisation should also focus on producing Christian literature, because it is a medium that is easy to access.

Beyond existing media potentialities for mission, it would be better to launch a "Unity Day for Mission" that could be solemnly celebrated once a year. Such a day would be managed by the Department of Mission and Life of Church of the provincial Secretariat of the CCC, in order to help motivate Christians for mission. It would also be the climax for the Network for Mission.

5.4 Moving from dependency towards self-reliance in ministry

Another strategy for an effective mission consists of moving from dependency towards self-reliance in ministry. Indeed, one of the challenges that churches, stemming from Western missionary endeavours, have to respond to in Africa in general and in North Kivu in particular is dependency. Dependency is most noticeable not only in terms of financial support, but also in terms of theological, pastoral, liturgical, administrative and educational efforts. Churches are still dependent on their Western mother-churches: the CEPAC, on the SFM and the PMU in Sweden, and the CBCA on the UEM¹ in Germany. With regard to the financial domain, the CEBCE, which lost its relationship with the CBI² since 1988, seems to be like an injured community vis-à-vis the CEPAC and CBCA. The spirit of dependency of some churches, and the quest for dependency by those that lost their sponsors, are the only things that hinder churches in their missionary endeavours. Due to this, churches are not free to be true local churches within their own cultures. They do not even succeed in becoming

¹ The UEM is not the founder of the CBCA, but the one to which this community turned after its separation from the MBK (*Mission Baptiste du Kivu*).

² The founder of the CEBCE and the CBCA is the UAM, which was relieved by the CBFMS (*Conservative Baptists Foreign Missionary Society*) and changed into the CBI (*Conservative Baptists International*).

true westernised churches, but rather something in between Western and African cultures. Describing such a situation, Penoukou is adamant that:

Ecclesial institutions are often imitations of those in Western churches and are a heavy burden. As result, the African churches are permanently beholden to others for financial support. Projects are undertaken according to the possibility of obtaining outside help. Even Mass offerings come from churches elsewhere, their purchasing power and their “intentions” penetrating even the Eucharistic celebrations of Africans. Numerous aid organizations are established and then compete with each other. Without them, there is no survival for our dioceses, our institutions, our pastoral works, our seminaries, our theology faculties and formation centers (Penoukou 1991:40).

To emphasise the above, Mbiti (1971:4) states ironically that “The Church in Africa has too long been missionary minded, but only in terms of receiving missionaries and depending on them.” Indeed, instead of implementing local financial potentialities, so that they can easily sponsor their educational and other projects, churches ask for financial support or aid from Western sponsors, who often award them for the sake of maintaining a situation of paternalism. Therefore, by explaining the word ‘dependence’ as “the state of being dependent, influenced, controlled, or determined by something else; reliance on someone else for support or aid”, Williams (Sargunam, 1992:78-79) assumes that the umbilical cord of dependency connecting churches to their founders has never really been cut. On the other hand (Penoukou 1991:40), dependency strikes at the very identity of the church as a symbol of sacrament and salvation – it calls into question the credibility of the church in Africa.

In order to move churches from dependency towards self-reliance in ministry, Paul advises the Thessalonians as follows: “Make it your aim to live a quiet life, to mind your own business, and to earn your own living, just as we told you before. In this way you will win the respect of those who are not believers, and you will not have to depend on anyone for what you need” (1Th 4:11-12, GNB). In this regard, Pivot (2004:4-5) suggests the self-supporting principle which should be achieved as a result of the deep evangelisation of local churches. According to him, the self-supporting principle is an opportunity for a sense of responsibility on the part of God’s people, and the apprenticeship of a responsible solidarity. It is thus in terms of the self-supporting principle that the local church is called upon to be a concrete and active presence of the Church, so that the local church becomes what it is intended to be, i.e. a participant in the *missio Dei*.

5.5 Implementing the concept of “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8)

Understanding Acts 1:8 is another sound strategy for an effective mission. In this biblical passage, Luke reports that the risen Lord, before He went up to heaven, gave orders to the Apostles he had chosen, saying: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”¹. This Great Commission according to Luke’s second volume is a conclusion to the answer that the Lord Jesus Christ gave to the apostles’ question, asked in verse 6: “Lord, is this the time when you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?” According to Luke’s second version of the Great Commission, short but eloquent, the mission evolves in three phases. Beginning in Jerusalem, as Jesus had foretold, the mission moved from there to all of Judea and Samaria, and to “the ends of the earth.” As such, Acts 1:8 sums up the entire contents of the book of Acts. Although Talbert (1997:27) believes that this passage does not give an exact outline of the book of Acts, this book can nevertheless be structured as follows: Chapters 1-7 deal with the beginning of the Church and a description of the spreading of the Gospel in Jerusalem; Chapters 8-12 provide a description of the spreading of the Gospel in Judea and Samaria, and Chapters 13-28 give a description of the spreading of the Christian mission to the whole world or “the ends of the earth”, which was launched by Paul through his four missionary journeys.

Acts 1:8 and the two preceding verses, 6 and 7, evidently constitute the climax of the instructions given by the Lord Jesus during His last forty days, in the company of the Apostles. More attention needs to be given to verses 6-7, because verse 8 comes as a correction to the false expectation articulated in verse 6. Therefore, the full meaning of verse 8 depends on a prior understanding of what it is in verse 6 that has been corrected (Dunn, 1996:9). In responding to the question that the Apostles asked Jesus (v. 6), Jesus said (v.7): “You are not permitted to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. (v.8) But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end parts of the earth.”

In light of this answer, one can note that the Apostles are more concerned with the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel than in the fulfilment of Jesus’ earthly ministry. They are

¹ Unlike the original translation from the Greek, which is expressed as “the end of the earth”, many other Bible versions, namely the BBE, GNB, GW and ISV, speak of “the ends of the earth”, the NET of “the farthest parts of the earth”, the KJV of the “uttermost part of the earth”, and the CEV of “everywhere in the world.” Despite these differences, the missiological understanding of Acts 1:8 remains the same.

still functioning according to a maintenance mentality, the introverted conception of mission. Their maintenance attitude caused them to hope that Jesus might lead a political attack against the Roman authorities, so that the Jews could be restored to a free state, a Jewish state like David's monarchy, but only with a greater glory under Jesus' kingship. This was not the purpose of Jesus' mission, but rather an evident failure on the part of the Jews to understand the spiritual nature of the kingdom, which would be characterised by the rule of Christ in the hearts of believers, resulting in every aspect of life and thought to be captive to Christ (Keddie 1993:16). In fact, the restoration of the kingdom (sovereignty) to Israel is really something that is promised in the Scriptures (Jer 23:1-8; Ezek 17; 34), and for which Jews regularly prayed in the Eighteen Benedictions. It is against the background of such hopes that the question of the disciples is to be understood (Talbert 1997:27). Therefore, Jesus reminds them, using the conjunction "but", which introduces verse 8 of Acts 1. Then, when Jesus tells the Apostles that they will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come to them, and they will be His witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all of Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth, he means that his ministry entails a worldwide mission. It is not of such a nature as to be confined to the geographical area of Judea, nor to that of Israel as a whole, because salvation is not restricted to Israel. It is not about a political understanding of the kingdom of Israel, but rather of the Kingdom of God.

Because mission according to the Lord Jesus Christ is not of such a nature as to be kept at home, i.e. in Jerusalem, according to Acts 1:8, the Apostles were encouraged to bear in their minds also the national (Judea) and international (Samaria) dimensions of mission. In effect, local, national and international stages of the mission effort are important and interdependent. In actual fact, local mission empowers national and international mission. In addition, the spreading of mission to all of Judea and Samaria does not mean the end of the initial mission in Jerusalem, as if the mission was itinerant or nomadic. Indeed, missionary workers are or can be itinerant, but the mission remains a dynamic effort, which must always be regarded as a continuous activity, from the centre to the edges, and from the edges to the centre. Here, the mission is viewed as being centrifugal-centripetal, in contrast with Jarick (1997:26), who believes it to be centrifugal rather than centripetal. For the above reasons, Dunn (1996:11) says that the Apostles maintained the continuity of the mission by staying in Jerusalem, and did not themselves take the message to "the ends of the earth". Nevertheless, Peter and John did some work in Samaria. As Jesus Christ had foreseen all the aspects of mission, he appointed the Apostles to be his witnesses on the basis of a comprehensive understanding of mission.

What is the meaning of the phrase “to the ends of the earth”? This phrase has been a subject of huge debate among scholars over the years. According to Talbert (1997:27), “to the ends of the earth” has various meanings in the literature of the time. It can mean Babylon (Deut 28:49), Rome (Ps 18:15) or Spain, but “everywhere” seems to be the best of the alternatives in the reading of Acts 1:8. According to Keener (1993:324), however, after having considered Ethiopia (Acts 8:27) and Rome (Ps 18:15) as being the “ends of the earth”, from a widespread perspective, the phrase “to the ends of the earth” means all peoples (Ps 67:7; Isa 45:22; 49:6; 52:10; Acts 13:47).

In keeping with Schnabel (2004:372), it is important to emphasise that the phrase “to the ends of the earth” does not refer to Rome, the Jewish Diaspora or the land of Israel, nor to Spain or Ethiopia, nor to the Gentiles, but literally to the farthest reaches of the inhabited world known at the time¹. In terms of this understanding, Talbert and Keener are correct when they suggest the phrases ‘everywhere’ and “all peoples” as being the interpretation of “to the ends of the earth.” Of course, Jesus promised that the disciples would be his witnesses everywhere once they were empowered by the Holy Spirit. In the Gospel according to Luke, Jesus talks of “all nations”, which comes from the Greek term *ta ethnê* (Luke 24:47). The promise or prophecy of the risen Christ is thus the starting point of the Acts of the Apostles, and therefore the starting point of the centrifugal mission.

In actual fact, Luke’s phrase “to the ends of the earth” describes the geographical scope of the missionary assignment of the Apostles, who only have to fulfil their commission when they penetrate the borders of the earth. In fact, their mission is designed to be a world mission. For this reason, Christ directs them to initiate an international and universal mission that begins in Jerusalem, reaches the surrounding regions of Judea (including Galilee) and Samaria, and then extends as far as the borders of the earth (Schnabel 2004 :375-376).

The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) has an interesting practical approach to the phrase “to the ends of the earth.” According to this Federation, the Gospel has since been preached to all six continents, but there are still some places where the Good News of God’s grace in Christ has not yet been heard and received. In both the North and the South, about two-thirds of the world’s population does not yet or no longer recognises and receives Christ as their Lord and Saviour. Even in some countries known to be Christian all over the world there are spheres of life in which Christ is no longer known. For a missionary church, all these unreached places or people are always considered to be the “ends of the earth”. They

¹ To learn more about the “inhabited world known at the time”, one can refer to Schnabel (2004:373-375).

may not be far geographically speaking, but may represent new situations, which offer new and challenging opportunities for witnessing to the Lord. These are not necessarily “places”, but may be ideologies or interest groups or spheres of life such as advanced technology. In reality, advanced technology, when correctly used, affords comfort and helps save lives. However, in some cases artificial intelligence may rob people of their dignity. Therefore, how can the church make technology more humane? How can it formulate ethical responses to the use of this advanced technology? Indeed, there are opportunities for the church to accompany people as they face the onslaught of thriving, destructive, underground businesses – for instance, the trafficking of drugs, arms, women and children, and pornography via the Internet, which are pervasive, privatised and hard to contain. More elusive is the exploitation taking place in professional sports, spiritualism and secret cultic societies, which has a significant impact on international politics. The church, wherever it is established, is best placed to identify those “ends of the earth” areas, and to design appropriate mission accompaniments (LWF 2004:54-55).

The “ends of the earth” may be found in all the places where Jesus is not yet known. This may be in the nearest or farthest places. Thus, if the world is indeed round, this means that each place is at the same time a departure point and an arrival point for mission – each place is at the same time the “farthest place” from the others. Hence, when Jesus Christ says to the Apostles, “You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth”, this simply means that the Apostles will have to bear witness to him in all places, without neglecting any social groups. Through this meaningful statement, Jesus portrays Christian mission as a worldwide ministry, in favour of all cultures, tribes, languages, nations and races of the world. Christian mission is thus not intended to be kept within a certain cultural, social or geographical framework. However, there are often some neglected and ignored opportunities for mission. Without attempting to discuss all the neglected and ignored opportunities for mission, the following section examines the most important social groups that have been neglected or ignored by churches within the North Kivu Province.

5.6 Targeting neglected social groups

The North Kivu Province has many neglected social groups which churches can capitalise on as opportunities for achieving an effective holistic and comprehensive mission. The most important social groups among them include the following: the marginalised and vulnerable,

hegemonic social groups, the entertainment industry and non-Christian religious followers such as Muslims¹. Qualifying such social groups as new horizons or new building sites for mission, Aubert (2005:1-2) highlights another group, the plural and cross-bred society that comprises communities made up of several nationalities. This notion of “plural and crossbred society” is very important in the North Kivu context, where churches only tend to be involved in serving families and tribes, instead of the global community of believers. In effect, it is important to admit that the evangelical efforts undertaken each Sunday by churches within the framework of a “maintenance module of Christian communities” (Aubert 2005:3) do not reach all targets of mission. Indeed, if churches focus only on Sunday morning or evening activities, they are no less sedentary or maintenance-oriented. In so doing and being, therefore, churches will not accomplish their mission, which consists of making disciples of all nations (Matt 28:19). To justify their existence according to God’s calling; on the other hand, churches do not have to content themselves with some voluntary members who attend them each Sunday. However, one can draw attention to the fact that neglected and other unreached social groups may also be found within churches. In this regard, Sookhdeo (1987:149) speaks of “pseudo-reached” groups.

Each one of the abovementioned neglected social groups, which can be properly investigated in a full range, independent study, needs an appropriate missionary accompaniment. Consequently, the following sections will consist of a brief presentation, in order to make churches aware of these groups that live around and among them.

5.6.1 Marginalised and vulnerable persons

In the context of the North Kivu Province, marginalised and vulnerable groups mainly comprise women, illiterate people, displaced people and refugees, Pygmies, and children and teenagers. Each of these groups voluntarily or involuntarily slips out of the control of churches, simply because the latter are maintenance-oriented. Women are not only targets of rape, but also have their rights violated within households and society, as well as within churches. Illiterate people passively undergo things that happen to them, without any

¹ For more information about neglected social groups in general, see Scherer and Bevens (1999:208-211). In addition to the abovementioned groups, Scherer and Bevens also mention indigenous peoples; Africans in the Diaspora; the elderly; persons who are casualties of economic, social and political wars (immigrants/migrants, those who make their living from the garbage heaps of big cities, prostitutes, single and teenage mothers, drug-users, alcoholics, child labourers); poor, unemployed or underemployed people, and those with inadequate skills for the high-tech demands of the current global market; persons living with HIV/AIDS; persons who are physically or mentally different-abled; persons with a sexual orientation other than that of the majority in their society, and their advocates; and religious minorities.

possibility of reacting. Displaced people and refugees are not often targets of genuine care, but rather a means to gain financial support from NGOs and overseas churches. Pygmies live in forests and are deprived of the normal things that make life valuable. According to Vincent (2000:53), “They often live isolated lives, cut off from other people or from involvement in common activities which give meaning and richness to life, and which come from the mutuality and relatedness which social activity brings.” Because of poverty, the loss of love and security through the death of one parent or both of them, divorce, abuse, spiritual and other social problems within households, many children experience trauma and become “street children¹”, who are often the target of police prosecution. Churches ignore the phenomenon of “street children”, which has become a reality in almost all urban African areas. They do not even have an accompaniment policy.

On the other hand, youth between 13 and 19 years of age, i.e. teenagers, escape from the control of churches. Their world is not well known, even by their own parents, because of many different external teachings, which constantly put psychological pressure on them. The use of advanced technology in the form of mobile phones, SMS, Internet, DVDs, MP3/4 devices, earphones and films, etc., not only facilitates the communication of messages which no-one else can easily decode, but also creates a new type of youth. It is within such perverted circumstances that many teenagers have become “child soldiers” in the eastern DRC. In support of this, Aubert says that,

Most youth, even those who are of Christian origin, grow up without any contact with the church. They are developing their own culture and language, expressed through, for instance, the use of SMS messages, in terms of which the Gospel runs the risk of remaining foreign to them. (...) There again, to present the Gospel to these growing generations cannot be done by repeating the same [sic], but by launching new missionary initiatives carried out by teams prepared for such a task (Aubert 2005:4). [Author’s translation from French]

The above brief portrayal of marginal and vulnerable social groups is tangible proof that the mission of the church is still in its early stages. Therefore, churches still need to do mission not only in favour of visible and known unreached groups, but also in favour of “pseudo-reached” groups within them, as well as other neglected social groups. The eventuality of “*pseudo-reached*” within churches means that mission remains a great,

¹ The UNICEF (Pallipuram 2001:28) defines street children as those for whom the street, more than their family, has become their home, a situation in which there is no protection, supervision or direction from responsible adults. In a strict sense, a street child is one who has made the street his home – a place of eating and sleeping – and who has no contact with his family. In the wider sense, a street child is defined as one who lives and works on the street, but has occasional contact with his family. In the widest sense, a street child is one who has family to go back to, but uses the street for his earnings and spends much of his time there.

unfinished task that calls upon the willingness and commitment of the Church as a whole, and of individual Christians. To emphasise this, Pope John Paul II stated that,

The mission of Christ the redeemer, which is entrusted to the church, is still very far from completion. As the second millennium after Christ's coming draws to an end, an overall view of the human race shows that this mission is still only beginning and that we must commit ourselves wholeheartedly to its service. It is the Spirit who implies us to proclaim the great works of God: "For if I preach the Gospel, that gives me no ground for boasting. For necessity is laid upon me. Woe to me if I do not preach the Gospel!" [1 Cor 9:16] (Paul II 1991:50).

In this regard, Jesus says: "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few" (Luke 10:2, NET). There are not only marginalised and vulnerable social groups, but also hegemonic ones.

5.6.2 Hegemonic social groups

In the context of this study, a hegemonic social group is one that comprises all social groups that have administrative, political, financial, intellectual or military power within society. They are the opposite of marginalised and vulnerable groups in terms of power and influence. These groups are: administrative and political authorities, businessmen and businesswomen, intellectuals, and military and paramilitary groups. According to Tshilenga (2008), who works with OPERAF (*Opération Africaine*), a holistic-oriented "Christian African Network", whose vision is to establish the kingdom of God in political, economic and academic leadership, sums up hegemonic social groups using the concept of politicians. In view of the fact that the word "politics" includes the idea of formulating policies, influencing individuals and institutions, and organising societies (Dryzek, 2006), Tshilenga assumes that each person who holds a certain influential position within society is also a politician. In this sense, lawyers, physicians, master builders and other influential workers can be added to the list of hegemonic social groups.

Hegemonic social groups are mission's potential targets for two reasons: these persons are not just objects of God's love and salvation, but also, through their social standing, can strongly influence the world in one way or another. Because of this latter reason, churches should not neglect them, because their loss of God or salvation may entail a lot of people facing death. In this regard, Paul says that: "First of all, then, I urge that requests, prayers, intercessions, and thanks be offered on behalf of all people, even for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life in all godliness and

dignity” (1 Tim 2:1-2, NET). The phrase “even for kings and all who are in authority” suggests and emphasises the fact that hegemonic groups should occupy a preferential place within the mission of the Church. Therefore, churches’ neglect of these groups may lead them to be taken by other worldly, mystical or faithless powers such as Rosicrucian and Freemasonry, or *Illuminati*, which claim to protect politicians and their powers.

In answer to the question: “Why do churches neglect hegemonic social groups or politicians?” Tshilenga (2008) provides the following three main reasons:

- Along with the belief according to which they are apolitical, churches perceive politicians and all other hegemonic groups as being “dirty game”, i.e. sinners. Churches prejudge politicians and politicians prejudge churches. Thus, churches often suffer from an inferiority complex with regard to these powerful groups.
- As churches consider themselves to be weak, peaceful and poor, they are not prepared to stand up to politicians, intellectuals and all other people who hold power. In contrast, churches seem to only turn towards poor and weak persons within the limited spheres of families and ethnic groups.
- Because of their security and the fear of being asked for financial support, politicians and other hegemonic people do not easily open their doors to churches. Churches can only meet them in the context of feasts and public meetings. However, these occasions are not favourable for mission talk with “kings and all who are in authority”.

On Tshilenga’s list of reasons to neglect hegemonic social groups, one can also add the lack of missionary skills, methods and vision for mission among Christians to address such powerful persons. In fact, what Tshilenga suggests above, results from the lack of adequate education of church leaders and the misunderstanding of scriptures. Rightly speaking, some scriptures highlight God’s concern for and purpose towards hegemonic people: Acts 9, which talks about the conversion of Saul; Acts 10, which talks about the salvation of Cornelius; Romans 13:1-7, which talks about submission to civil government, which is also God’s appointment; and 1 Timothy 2:1-8, which talks about prayer for all people, even for kings and those who are in authority. These scriptures are indeed convincing proof that churches do not have to neglect any of these hegemonic social groups, if they are really conscious of their calling and are really ministering as participants in God’s mission.

5.6.3 Entertainment industry

Another sphere which is almost unknown or poorly known by churches is the entertainment industry, which includes leisure activities such as sport, cinema, theatre (drama), motion pictures (movies), secular music, dance, games, festivals and feasts, electronic home entertainment such as radio, television and the Internet, etc. The world of entertainment is the most powerful one, and it attracts enormous crowds of people of almost all ages and conditions, especially the youth. Speaking of sport as a field of Christian mission, Rytco states, in the preface of the *Catholic Church, Pontificium Consilium Pro Laicis*, that,

The practice of sport, which dates back to the dawn of human history, has now become firmly established as a mass phenomenon without equal precedent. According to some scholars, sport's capacity to engage huge crowds of people on a planetary scale, and to straddle geographic, social, economic and language barriers, makes it one of the most universally recognised components of popular culture (*Catholic Church, Pontificium Consilium Pro Laicis* 2006:5).

In contrast to the above vivid reality, churches unfortunately still remain too spiritual and introverted, to the point of ignoring almost all the entertainment industry. When one looks at the CCC's constitution, leisure activities do not appear on churches' agenda. This domain has not been talked about since the Western missionary period. Accordingly, the churches in North Kivu, for instance, perceive those youth who take part in a sport such as soccer as being perverted and lost. There is thus a wide gap between churches and the domain of sport. However, in keeping with Rytco (2006:7), today's sport must not be viewed merely in terms of abuse and deviance. According to him, Christians must resist the temptation to condemn sport across the board, because the depressing pictures of the evils that afflict this vast and diverse area are only part of the story.

In light of Rytco's advice, churches should seek ways forwards to penetrate the world of sport and the entertainment industry, and consider them to be a good opportunity for mission. As far as the church is called upon and sent out to the lost throughout the world, it does not have to fear or hesitate to deal with people involved in secular activities, perverted or not. To seek and save the lost (Luke 19:10) is the very nature of the mission of the church as a participant in God's mission.

5.6.4 Muslims

Although the DRC is the most Christianised African country, with more than 95 per cent Christians (Barrett, Kurian & Johnson 2001:211), Islam, with two per cent Muslims (Fegley 2006) is slowly but surely conquering its eastern parts. The growth of Islam¹ is due to its strategic methods, which consist of public teachings, job provision, bursaries, free loans for businesses and trade, and other social facilities, especially within urban areas. According to the Christian Concern for Muslims (CCM), even in South Africa, Muslims are offering free loans to young black men, particularly in rural areas, so that they can start businesses, and those who convert to Islam or marry Muslims also get employment and their children receive free Islamic education². The methods used by Muslims seem to be welcomed and attractive, especially within the context of poverty, hopelessness and precariousness. Muslims' main targets are Christians. Hence, Dudley (Moreau 2000:506) bears witness to such a situation by affirming that "Contemporary Muslim mission has been organized both to win converts and to counteract Christian missionary efforts."

Beyond methods fundamentally based on material bait, Islam is taking advantage of weaknesses and immoral practices such as divisions, conflicts, egocentrism, competition, mutual exclusion and lack of solidarity between or among Christians. Whereas people of different religions live together as a nation or tribe (Nyasulu, 2004:96), Christians stand out through their denominationalism and disunity. This is a big challenge for mission among Christians, because while Muslims are multiplying strategies and methods for winning Christians, churches do not seem to mind. Islam is not on churches' agenda or that of mission in general. Moreover, there are no educational projects in such a domain of research. There are not even means and methods that can help them to face Muslims. To illustrate such a situation, Schreiter (2001:41) says that "The second millennium began with Christianity in disarray, feeling before the Muslims and unsure of the future but determined to fight on."

Thinking about how to do mission among Muslims, Nyasulu suggests the following practical approaches:

- Christians need to know and master their religion well. They must know their Bible in order to stand for the truth when they witness to Muslims.

¹ With its three mosques, Islam has a membership of more than 5 000 followers in the town of Goma (Report of Muslims gathered in the stadium in 2007). This number is more than the membership of the eight local churches of the CEBCE, and more or less the membership of the 10 local churches of the CBCA in Goma.

² The CCM is available at: <http://www.30-days.net/>

- Christians also need to study and know Islam as a religion which represents competition. They must study, understand and interpret it well.
- Christians should also look for things which are common to both religions, so that they can act as bridges between them. By using their false doctrine or half-truth teachings, one can point out their weaknesses or flaws, and apply its true Christian teaching.
- Christians need to expose their Christian literature to Muslims as much as they can, and even allow them to come to their Christian institutions.
- Christians need to pray and be strong in their faith, so that they can deal with challenges when they face opposition and resistance. This will also reduce the chance of compromising the Gospel.
- When Muslims decide to not accept the Gospel, Christians need to be prayerful and tolerant, but should not compromise. Even if they face opposition and resistance, they still need to love and respect them.
- Christians should extend their social services/responsibilities such as charitable works to everybody, including Muslims (Nyasulu 2004:97-98).

Along with Nyasulu's approaches for dealing with Muslims, the churches of North Kivu should be mindful of the fact that Islam has a long history within the eastern DRC. In fact, Kibungula (2008), who is researching the emergence of Islam in the eastern DRC, found that this religion was brought there more than 1 000 years ago by Arabs who were in charge of and trading slaves and ivory there. Arabians had been displaced in 1885 by the Roman Catholic regime, which ruled over the DRC as a private property of the almighty Belgian king, Leopold II. As this Roman Catholic regime did not tolerate living together with other religions, and in order to put an end to the trade of slaves and control ivory trading, the Belgians fought strongly against the Arabians and chased them out of the Congolese territory. However, in spite of this Arabian defeat, they remained in the area, and spoke the Kiswahili language, which is a mixture of Arabic and eastern Africa local languages. In order to reconstitute Islam within this region, therefore, Muslims have also been taking advantage of this historical heritage and of the law¹ that promulgated cult liberation in the Congo on 31

¹ The Law that liberated the cult in Congo (Zaire) was promulgated in the following terms:

LOI N° 71-012 DU DECEMBRE 1971 REGEMENTANT L'EXERCICE DES CULTES.

L'Assemblée Nationale a adopté,

Le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit:

Article 1^{er}

December 1971 (Asch 1983:303). This has also been strengthened by current political disorders – with the massive influx of Rwandan refugees in 1994, there were among them many Muslims, as a result of the kind of power-sharing between national authorities and the UN which brought Muslim peacekeepers from India and Pakistan within the framework of the MONUC (*Mission Onusienne au Congo*), whose main headquarters after Kinshasa are in Goma in North Kivu. In view of these realities concerning Islam in eastern DRC, churches have to take this into consideration and learn how to conduct mission among them.

5.7 Conclusion

If holistic mission is to be understood as the whole church being called upon to bring the Gospel to the whole world so that the whole of humanity can be saved, the whole society liberated and the whole of creation preserved (Crafford 1994), churches need appropriate strategies to implement mission. This chapter has dealt with some strategies related to the context of North Kivu, not in a comprehensive way, but simply as a sample to awaken Christians, so that they can pay attention to the ongoing and plentiful mission of the Church. The hope is that, bearing in mind the fact that Christian mission is still unfinished and plentiful, this no longer enables churches to function according to a maintenance-oriented spirit with its causes and consequences, such as the misconception regarding mission, lack of well-skilled and visionary church leaders, tribalism, poverty, denominationalism, conflicts and divisions, competition within the ministry, lack of collaboration and lack of qualitative church growth.

The best strategy beyond those which have been suggested above, and all those that churches discover during their missionary journeys, however, is one that consists of continuing to do mission with faithfulness, humility and obedience to the mission's Master, Jesus Christ. Therefore, fulfilling mission according to God's will remains a matter of determination and commitment of Christians under the Holy Spirit's guidance. The following and final chapter will give an assessment of this study, in order to draw conclusions that will serve as the substance of this dissertation.

Conformément à l'article 10 de la Constitution : 'Toute personne a droit à la liberté de pensée, de conscience et de religion. Dans la République, il n'y a pas de religion d'Etat. Toute personne a le droit de manifester sa religion ou ses convictions seule ou en commun, tant en public qu'en privé, par le culte, l'enseignement, les pratiques, l'accomplissement des rites et l'état de vie religieuse, sous réserve de l'ordre public et des bonnes moeurs' (Asch, 1983 :303).

This law can also be found in *JOURNAL OFFICIEL DU ZAIRE. Edition provisoire n° 2 – 15-1-1972.*

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

This last chapter aims at concluding the study by providing an assessment of the findings of the research conducted, as well as practical recommendations and suggestions for future missiological studies.

6.1 Appraisal and conclusion

This chapter sums up answers to the problems raised in the study concerning the existence and identity of the Church vis-à-vis Christian mission. The study established that Christian mission is in danger if churches do not urgently pay attention to it. By remaining internally oriented and focusing too much on spiritual needs that merely lead to baptism, churches are no longer envisioning their status of being a Church as well as being called upon and sent out into the world as a genuine participant in God's own mission. It has been highlighted through this study that the Church is only a healthy and vibrant church when it is involved in its calling and sending out into the world (Matt 28:18-20) as a participant in God's mission. This means that the church is missionary in terms of its very existence and nature. Thus, without doing mission or being missionary, the church becomes something other than the church according to the Lord. While the main focus in this study was on the three main denominations of the North Kivu Province, i.e. the CEPAC, the CEBCE and the CBCA, the lessons learned can also be useful to the wider field of the Church of Christ in Congo (CCC) and beyond.

The main issue tackled through this dissertation was the notion that Christians should not focus too much on serving, repairing and renewing their local churches and assets, as if the local church was in itself an end of mission. Jesus, who is the initiator of the Church (Matt 16:18), did not build a temple or chapel. He did not even undertake a project for local church assets, not because he had insufficient means to do so, or because local churches and assets were useless, but simply because local churches as buildings and assets were not the purpose and priority of his mission. Focusing too much on serving, repairing and renewing local churches and assets not only misleads and makes the church blind to mission, but also proves that the church lacks vision for mission and its real dimensions. In this regard, unlike maintenance-oriented churches that concentrate too much on themselves, Maire (Cassidy &

Osei-Mensah 1978:207) advocates the need for “*decentralising*” local churches, so that they can become true communities serving the world around them. In so doing, churches can be relevant to both those who are inside them and those who are outside them. In this respect, the balance between maintenance and mission, as suggested by Pentecost (1982:58), Shenk (1984:68) and Hunter (1989:30), cannot be understood as an absolute solution to the issue of maintenance Christianity, because mission is the very life of the Church and must always be placed at the top of the Church’s agenda. Besides, if maintenance plays the role of preparing and empowering the Church for mission, maintenance cannot be at the same time equated with mission. Rightly speaking, the means has never been equal to the goal. In this regard, maintenance Christianity within the Church should always be viewed as a means to achieve the purpose, which is mission. In the broad sense of the term, maintenance Christianity should be considered as an element of the great dynamic of mission, because mission is both internal and external. In this regard, Mattam (1987:65) says that churches and their pattern of relationships and structures are also mission territory.

Instead of expanding their denominations, the churches of the North Kivu Province should rather expand their mission efforts, and let the local populations reached create churches according to their understanding of the Gospel. It is meaningless, for instance, to have the CEPAC as a denomination in Holland, Kenya, Niger, South Africa and Zambia, and even the CBCA in Rwanda, instead of the Gospel. Indeed, when churches expand their denominations instead of the Gospel, this is no different to what early foreign missionaries did. These early Western missionaries are often blamed and criticised for having brought into “mission fields” their denominations and divisions, namely Baptism, Anglicanism, Methodism, Presbyterianism, Catholicism, etc, instead of the Gospel (Roux 1984:135-136). Should churches in North Kivu and beyond continue to perpetuate this old and weak method of doing mission? The answer is no, and this study has shown a new way forward for moving churches from maintenance, the status quo, to a holistic and comprehensive approach to mission. Through an exploration of this topic, the origins, causes and consequences of this old method of doing mission, which is maintenance-minded, have been highlighted in order to make churches aware of them and then to empower churches to avoid these methods, in order to involve themselves in missionary dynamics.

In order to achieve the abovementioned goal, the study highlighted a number of challenges that churches should urgently address. These include the following:

1. To have a good understanding regarding mission. In effect, the process of creating a mission consciousness within churches should not be ignored if the Church is really missionary by nature. In this regard, awakening the consciousness of mission is an urgent duty of the Church. In the context of the North Kivu Province and the DRC, this should be done through sensitising the CCC to mission, promoting missiology within theological and biblical education, and involving churches in the mission dynamic. In addition, a good understanding regarding mission should be obtained by doing mission in unity among different denominations. This does not imply an organisational unity that focuses on administrative aspects of denominations, but a practical unity in doing mission, i.e. unity in action. Working together in unity was the prayer of the Lord Jesus Christ on behalf of Christians, as John reports below:

I am not praying just for these followers. I am also praying for everyone else who will have faith because of what my followers will say about me. I want all of them to be one with each other, just as I am one with you and you are one with me. I also want them to be one with us. Then the people of this world will believe that you sent me. I have honoured my followers in the same way that you honoured me, in order that they may be one with each other, just as we are one (John 17:20-22, CEV).

In order to be implemented throughout the world, mission depends much more on Christian unity. This is the reason why this study suggested the creation of a network for mission mediatisation, which could serve as a common tool for different denominations.

2. To provide churches with well-skilled and visionary leaders. In order to achieve this goal, there is not only the need to promote missiology within theological and biblical education, but also the need to target appropriate education for church leaders, in addition to theological training. This may be, for instance, leadership and administration or management training. However, the criterion cannot be mainly academic education and qualifications, because as Hunter (1989:74) argues, "Seminary professors are often academicians, not practitioners. Consequently, those who study under them learn by modelling how to be academicians, not practitioners." To avoid this challenge, another way of providing churches with well-skilled and visionary leaders, in addition to academic qualifications, is to be discerning when appointing church workers. It should not be done on the basis of familial and tribal affinities, or friendship, but on the basis of vocation and experience, which have been approved by the whole Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The recruitment of church workers and leaders requires a spirit of

discernment within the Church. In order to implement mission throughout the world, the Church should not randomly appoint its workers and leaders.

3. To move church leadership and Christians away from the spirit of tribalism. This challenge calls upon the need to understand the real meaning of mission and its addressees. As far as the Church has to act as a participant in God's mission, whose target is all tribes, languages, nations and races throughout the world (Rev 5:9), tribalism should no longer be present in church leadership. To emphasise this, this study emphasised the scriptures of Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 24:47 and Acts 1:8, in which the addressees of Christian mission are clearly shown to be all tribes, languages, nations and races of the world. Commenting on Luke 24:47, the NET Bible (2005) says: "The hope of God in Christ was for all the nations from the beginning." Development within churches on the basis of tribalism is not only a negation of obedience towards God, but also a sin that destroys the Church in its efforts to be missionary. The current study thus pleads against this sin for the sake of mission effectiveness. Instead of only working within the limited setting of families, tribes and friends, the study suggests that churches in North Kivu should have a worldwide dream and vision of mission, which takes neglected social groups and domains such as the marginalised and vulnerable, hegemonic social groups, the entertainment industry and Muslims into account. This pertains to what this dissertation means by a "holistic and comprehensive understanding of mission."
4. To fight against poverty within churches. Poverty has been tackled not only as a blight on society and churches, but also as a sin that must be defeated by Christians. In the North Kivu Province, poverty is experienced on three main levels. At the material level, poverty is experienced as a lack of basic human needs, such as adequate and nutritious food, clothing, housing; clean water, health services and education (cf. Corbett 2005). At the moral level, poverty is a permanent feeling of being poor, to the extent that people become almost dependent on the outside world, even for things that can be provided locally. At the third level is spiritual poverty, which is experienced within churches as a lack of sound teachings and prayer opportunities because of church survival strategies. In order to eradicate poverty, the study has shown that churches should focus on the ethics of work and production among believers, move from dependency towards self-reliance in ministry, empower and equip churches with sound teachings and prayers, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Nonetheless, the fight against poverty should not mean that the church loses its prophetic, evangelical, and sacramental goals, i.e. the holistic mission, in favour of

financial and economic issues, what one can term the “business mission”. The challenge is that, without discernment and wisdom, the Church runs the risk of losing its purpose in the name of fighting poverty. Likewise, living in poverty can also result in the Church losing its purpose.

6.2 Recommendations

With regard to the above assessment and conclusions, this study recommends that the three main denominations of the North Kivu Province use their responsibility, as pioneers of the Gospel in this region, in order to implement mission. This should be made possible through a humble attitude of agreeing to move from their current status of maintenance-mindedness to mission-mindedness. This means that they should constantly examine themselves in relation to the purpose of their calling, so that they can involve themselves in mission according to the Lord. This also means re-examining their working methods and shaping them to the new understanding of mission, as is shown in this dissertation. While the CEPAC, CEBCE and CBCA have for a long time relied upon early missionaries’ legacies in the domain of thinking and working, it is now time to move forwards, because the context is no longer the same. In effect, mission must be approached holistically and comprehensively, not narrowly and partially.

In addition, this study recommends that the three target denominations should focus on the education, training and retraining of church workers and leaders in diversified theological domains, including other useful domains. Education and training, in only focusing on the ecclesiological aspect of the Church, are bound to lack knowledge about the real dimensions of the Church mission. In the terms of Kritzing (2000:94), ‘ecclesiology is only a footnote to missiology.’ Thus, approaching mission holistically means that the Church has to move from worship (liturgy) to social works such as healing, justice, reconciliation, ecology throughout the world, and then back to worship. This trajectory, which goes from the church to the world, via the world, can be called a “missionary cycle”. Kritzing (2007) speaks of a cycle which goes from the gathering (of the church) to the gathering via the building up and sending. Therefore, the mission of the church is a cycle of gathering, building up and sending. This missionary cycle should thus be maintained until the end of times, because a church on its way through the world has still not reached its destination.

It is also recommended that churches target everyone in their contexts. In the context of the North Kivu Province, as well as the Great Lakes region, this would include marginalised and vulnerable social groups such as refugees and people displaced because of wars; powerful social groups; followers of non-Christian religions and beliefs; and people in the context of globalisation. Targeting everyone also means addressing the issues of basic education, poverty, HIV/AIDS, ethnic conflicts, lack of peace due to wars and disasters, because recipients of mission should be reached in all aspects of their lives. This should be done in order to make the Church effectively relevant to society. However, such a task is tough and enormous – it cannot be effectively done without the knowledge, discernment and commitment of Christians. Indeed, by involving itself seriously in mission, the Church can really be relevant in the world, because as Hunter (1989:57) highlights, “the business shapes the action”. This means that the more the Church implements mission throughout the world, the more it will shape its identity, in order to make itself significant to those who are already inside it, as well as those who are outside.

6.3 Suggestions for further research

The present study focused on a precise aspect of mission, according to the objectives that were defined. Due to its scope and limitations, the study could not respond to all missiological issues related to the topic. Therefore, it is suggested that further missiological research and exploration should be conducted in favour of churches in the North Kivu Province on the following three subjects:

1. Church leadership and mission. As it has been shown through this dissertation, one of the main challenges that impede the churches of the North Kivu Province in their attempt to do mission is that of leadership.
2. Ecumenical endeavours and mission. For a long time, ideas about working together in unity and teachings on ecumenism have been interpreted as a sign of the beast of the Revelation among evangelical churches in the region. Such a belief dates back to former Pentecostal and Conservative Baptist missionaries, who pioneered the North Kivu Province and whose conception of the WCC was very negative. To prevent churches against the eventual “sign of the beast of the Revelation”, missionaries created an introverted spirit among churches, and this almost resulted in “maintenance Christianity”.

Research on ecumenism and mission should thus be conducted, in order to inform churches in this regard, and assist them in collaborating with regard to mission.

3. Politics and mission. Research on this last topic should be conducted, not only in the context of the North Kivu Province, but also of the DRC as a whole. As politics has a great influence on people and orients them, research on this topic would help in showing how politics should be addressed according to God.

If the completion of this dissertation is the fruit of hard labour, more hard work remains to be done in terms of the lessons learned. This study has been explorative, and it is hoped that it will encourage other researchers to investigate other aspects of church mission. May the almighty God make it a modest tool to equip churches for mission.

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