

The Responsibility of Religious Leaders in the Promotion of Dialogue for Peace in a Religious Diverse Society

Thaddeus B. Umaru

Abstract

The role played by religious leaders in any society cannot be underestimated if peacebuilding process is to be sustained. Religion impacts significantly on the lives of people and remains a contentious phenomenon especially in our modern pluralistic society. There is a multiplicity of religious beliefs; however, religion does not act on its own. The function of religion in any given community depends on the leaders of such a religion. Using descriptive and analytical methods, this article reflects on what it means to be a religious leader in a contemporary world, highlighting the responsibilities of a religious leader. It articulates why religion can be a source of conflict and peace, and examines the role of religious leaders as interpreters, preachers and teachers of faith traditions with emphasis on the need for religious leaders to be knowledgeable within their own faith tradition and that of the 'other.' As such, this article recommends that religious or faith leaders have a unique responsibility in and through dialogue to create, promote, build, and sustain peace and harmony in and between diverse religious communities. And it concludes that they are catalysts for peace and harmony in a religious and socially diverse contemporary society.

1.0 Introduction

One of the major characteristics of contemporary society is diversity. This is challenging and it is expressed in culture, custom, tradition and the general outlook on life, with religion caught in the centre of it all. It can be argued that for centuries, religion has defined, shaped and continue to play vital role in the development and advancement of peoples. Described as an institutional framework within which specific theological doctrines or dogmas and practices are advocated, pursued and lived-out usually within a community of like-minded individuals (Greetz, 1973), religion is a combination of belief systems, shared values, collective practices, culture, customs, ethical and moral principles of which men and women are ordered towards the Divine (Best, 2001). Furthermore, religion creates identity, community and impinges on human sentiments with diverse effects.

It is evident that the world is ever becoming a global village, and the emergent awareness of the value inherent in the promotion of friendship and respect between men and women of different religious traditions cannot be over emphasised. The world and communities are in some way becoming smaller due to the phenomenon of migration, social media, communication, increase in travels, contact among individuals and communities of different faith traditions, cultures, and religions. Moreover, religion has remained a central characteristic for defining a people and civilizations (Paden, 2005). This reality however, calls on every religious/faith community to face the challenge of understanding the 'other' such that trust and harmony becomes the hallmark of diverse religious and social encounter (Pontifical Council of Interreligious Dialogue, 2013).

Accordingly, religion as part and parcel of human existence does not exist on its own or in a vacuum. As a cooperate human reality, religion is coordinated by leaders or religious actors; who have the responsibility to guide, direct and spearhead religious activities within their faith communities and the society at large. Such may be a person or group of persons who are recognised within their faith group as having the decision making authority for and on behalf of such a group. However, with the growing extremist-fanatical interpretation of religious texts and traditions, there are incessant violent religious conflicts, outright call for religious war, *jihad* and forced conversion; for instance, the activities of Boko Haram in northern Nigeria, ISIS or Da'esh (Hosken, 2015). What are the responsibilities of religious leaders in an ever changing world? How can religious leaders continue to be instruments of peace and harmony within this diversity? What is the importance of dialogue in the processes of building and nurturing harmony within a religiously diverse community? Can religious leaders and their faith communities become beacons of hope for a society in search? This article focuses on the role of religious leaders as catalysts for peace and harmony in a religious and socially diverse contemporary society, as I argue that religious or faith leaders have a unique responsibility in and through dialogue to create, promote, build, and sustain peace and harmony in and between diverse religious communities.

2.0 Religious Leaders in a Diverse Contemporary World

Religious leaders in a diverse contemporary world are one or group of persons who offer spiritual, moral and pastoral or managerial guidance to individuals or faith communities, lead in public worship, and other religious ceremonies. In many cases, they further have the responsibility to make decisions, exercise authority and (may) have the final say in administrative matters. Leaders of religions have the added obligation to maintain, direct, teach and catechise their faithful in matters of faith and religion; and have pastoral responsibilities towards their faith communities (John Paul II, 1979). Their faithful in turn respect, listen and obey them with much keenness.

In addition, a religious leader is a sign of the presence of his or her faith community in the larger society. Thus, preaching, teaching and catechising becomes the essence of their vocation since they affect the spiritual lives of people and the society in its entirety. Consequently, they must be able to listen attentively and be sensitive to the feelings and needs of those they minister to, and be open to share and learn from the experience of others and the society at large (John Paul II, 2004). Religious leaders ought to recognise and be conscious of the responsibilities associated with their office or ministry; because they shape and model the behaviour of their adherents by their teaching, preaching, instructions and demeanour. They must further watch, protect and lead everyone in the community i.e. serve by ruling and rule by serving all.

It can thus be argued that, the role religion has played for instance in the fields of ethnicity, culture, economics, education and the socio-political life in our civilisation cannot be over emphasised (Barrajon, 2013). However, these days more than ever, the world is confronted with the delicate, complex, and urgent challenge with regard to respect for religious sensibilities and the need for peaceful coexistence in an ever more pluralistic world, i.e. of establishing a fair relationship between freedom of expression and freedom of religion. The relationship between these fundamental human rights is proving difficult to manage and to address, seemingly at both local and institutional levels (see. Tomasi, 2015). On the other hand, it should be recognized that open, constructive, and respectful debates on ideas, as well as interfaith and intercultural dialogue at the local, national, and international levels, can play a positive role in tackling religious hatred, incitement, and violence. Moreover, failure in this effort is evident when for example excessive and irresponsible use of freedom of expression results in extremist-fanatical interpretation of religious texts and traditions that result in intimidation, the use of bellicose language, threats, and verbal abuse of the 'other' leading to violent confrontations and conflicts (Tomasi, 2015). These infringement upon freedom of religion in no doubt, have sadly led to intolerance and violence. Hence, religious leaders have the obligation to denounce any form of violence and violation of human rights or dignity and at the same time must be apt to expose any attempt to justify every form of hatred in the name of religion or vengeance in the name of God (Gavlak, 2017). Contemporary religious leaders and preachers must be peace initiators, lovers and promoters of peaceful initiatives, resourceful and ingenious in peace making. They have a duty to respect and lead their adherents to appreciate everyone's religious identity and be encouraged to welcome and accept diversity, and the right to be different. That those who belong to a different culture or religious tradition must not be seen as enemies or treated as such, but should rather be welcomed as fellow-travellers in search of the divine (Beswick and Glatz, 2017).

Religious leaders (and preachers) in our contemporary diverse society ought to be interested in dialogue, initiate and champion interreligious dialogue or interfaith sharing. Dialogue can be defined as a conversation or a frank discussion between parties willing to learn from and understand each other. It can be revolutionary when it fosters cooperation, enrichment and collaborative sense of leadership that recognises (religious) diversity; that accepts the right of the other to be different (Umaru, 2013). Leaders of faith might consider making it a point of duty to create and promote the atmosphere for genuine discussions which aim to bring people together, to listen, learn and expand capacities for encounter as such activities have the potential to weaken stereotypes, biases and misconceptions that tend to divide people along religious lines (Umaru, 2013). Moreover, it is not good enough for religious leaders in the modern world to be mere administrators. Responsible leadership challenges faith leaders and preachers to look deeply within themselves as individuals, evaluate and reassess their positions as superiors, taking into cognisance their functions in the community *visa-vis* the pluralistic nature of the world and how diversity will continue to impact on leadership and community in the larger society (Pope Francis, 2013). Such vivid and lively self-awareness will inevitably lead to a better knowledge, understanding and coherent focus on the need for collaboration with other societal leaders if peace and harmony are to be entrenched in our Society.

3.0 Religion as source of Conflict and Peace

Social anthropologists and scholars in the field of religion, conflict and peace building contend that religion plays an ambivalent, paradoxical role in society. Religion has the potential to promote tolerance, conflict and reconciliation within and between communities (Little and Appleby, 2004). On its own terms, religion can underwrite both conflict and peace (Dubois, 2008). Others have argued that religion in itself is not so much the problem, but rather the politicisation, manipulation and exploitation of religion by selfish individuals, political elites and the governing class who perceive religion as an opportunity to take advantage of, and ride on the religious sentiments of people to achieve their aim of gaining political power and of course control over resources (Francis, 2007). Besides, religion by itself does not create conflict. It rather institutes and sustains communities. It functions and continues to perform a task fundamental in large groups as it links people emotionally, behaviourally, intellectually, morally and spiritually into communion and thus community (Sacks, 2015). According to the scholar Jonathan Sacks (2015), religion, he argues, is the metaphysical grounding of the social structures of society and the basis for both political mobilisation and manipulation.

One unique character of every human person is the search for identity in relation to the 'other.' Religion nonetheless primarily fulfils that fundamental

human need and more. It provides identity; offers meaning, direction, code of conduct and a set of rules for moral and spiritual life in such a way that no free-market or liberal democratic setting does (Sacks, 2015). Also, religion impresses on both personal and collective sentiments of a people. And of course, folks will guard jealously and zealously their beliefs, with great propensity to protect even violently their beliefs especially when threatened.

However, what a religion teaches can sometimes be totally different from how its adherents practice it. Hence, religion can be manipulated to suit various interests. Throughout history, religion has been used in many instances to promote discrimination, hatred, stereotyping, prejudice, political difference, ethnic conflict, war and violence in different societies. People have been killed, community life and property destroyed in the name of religion. There is no doubt then that under certain circumstances particular religious actions or interpretations can contribute to violence which gives religion that unique susceptibility to exacerbate violence (Umaru, 2013). For instance, the political adoption and use of religious language that promotes religious ideologies, reinforces ethnic rivalries, prejudice and discrimination especially on religious grounds (Umaru, 2013). Such can have divisive and violent tendencies, especially when mobilised with the wrong selfish intentions or motives and because it impinges on the sentiments of people, it can instigate violent conflicts and thus the saying, 'religion causes conflict'.

But the good news is the fact that religion has the potential to build and foster peace, unity, forgiveness, contrition, reconciliation and dialogue. Theologians, religious leaders and scholars in the field of religion and peace building agree that even though religion can be a key factor in the promotion of violent conflicts, significant religious values and actions are equally symbolic and viable in the advancement of peace and concord in and between communities (Little and Appleby, 2004). For instance, Christianity and Islam are built on and dwell on themes that are ruminated to be the spiritual block for peace building. This is because such postulations provide the stepping stones upon which peace and harmony can be initiated, tutored and nurtured in a community or society at large. Christianity and Islam have Scriptures that guide them (the Bible and Qur'an); and within these classical texts we find the themes of diversity, love, forgiveness, kindness, mercy, compassion, peace, harmony and of course, dialogue. Nonetheless, it is sad and dismal that some interpreters of religious texts and tradition have misunderstood and interpreted these scriptures with an extreme and narrow minded viewpoint such that these religious texts have been used or quoted in support of violent discrimination against the 'other' (Gavlak, 2017). As such, we cannot genuinely encounter peace without first getting rid of our narrow notions of a god who reflects only our own understanding of Gods' omnipotence and power. For true faith makes

us see the 'other' not as an enemy to be conquered and overcome, but as a brother or sister to be loved, served and helped (Warm Welcome, 2017). This leads to dialogue and respect, and the courage to defend the rights and dignity of everyone and not just of the self (Warm Welcome, 2017). Moreover, a dynamic perception of religion, text and tradition has the potential to bring about this awareness and religious leaders and interpreters of tenets have a proficient role to play if we are to entrench peace and harmony in society.

4.0 Religious leaders as Interpreters, Preachers and Teachers of Devout Traditions

Conventionally, the office of a religious leader comprises the tripartite functions of an interpreter of religious text and tradition, a preacher and teacher of religious tradition. He or she bears the responsibility of interpreting, preaching and teaching the faith to adherents of that religion and represent such a faith tradition. This places them in a position of nobility, influence and expertise.

4.1 The Religious Leader as an Interpreter

A religious leader as an interpreter of text and tradition means that he/she is one who endeavours to search, discover and explain the true meaning of scripture and tradition (A Practical Dictionary, 1959). This presupposes one with the basic skill in grammatical and philological knowledge of the language in which for example; the sacred text is written, an acquaintance with the laws of logic and rhetoric, and a familiarity with the data and facts of historical circumstances. It is further expected that the commentator possesses some basic background in the original language of the sacred works and is well-versed in sacred history and other theological themes within the said faith tradition (New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia, 2018). Moreover, interpretation of scripture and tradition is the science of hermeneutics that depends on the knowledge of the original language of the text, history and a comprehensive familiarity with the development of the faith and the cognizance of how the sacred author used a particular passage as building block in a literary context, abets in unearthing the meaning of a passage (The Bishop's Committee, 1982).

It can however be argued that, enthusiasts of a religious tradition depend considerably on, and listen for instance, to the theological explanation and meaning given about scripture, doctrine and or the spirituality of a faith tradition. And since the commentator is adept with the skills of interpretation and the obligation to communicate the true significance of religious themes, it is therefore incumbent on interpreters to investigate through recourse to original texts, value and true merit of the sacred text and tradition (Pope Pius XII, 1943, nos. 14 and 23). Besides, being thoroughly prepared by knowledge and

afforded by expertise in interpretation, the interpreter ought to undertake the task, namely, of discovering and expounding the genuine meaning of the sacred Book; bearing in mind that their foremost and greatest endeavour is to discern and define clearly the essence of the sacred text. And further aided by the context and by comparison with similar passages, let them therefore, by means of their expertise search out with all diligence the literal meaning of the words in order to abundantly make the message clear to the faithful (Pope Pius XII 1943).

It follows then that, to truly comprehend scripture and faith tradition, and for the faithful to hear the message and apply such in their lives, depends very much on the expertise, dynamism and experience of the exegete. This further means that, adherents of each religious tradition have to listen and hinge on the explanation given by their expert interpreter in order to understand and relate with the true meaning or message of the text. This however, places the one who interprets in a very significant position, because the faithful will listen and adhere to what the interpreter says and (to a large extent as within the Nigerian context) live faithfully by it.

One of the major challenges we face in our contemporary world of religious diversity is the extremist interpretation of scripture and religious tradition. This is a situation where for example, those without proper training or skills for interpretation (of scripture/religious tradition) venture into the science of exegesis and end up reading their own meaning into the text without reference to or listening to other experts in the field, and insist on their approach which everyone must accept as the only truth. Or as the political scientist Linda Groff puts it: a stance in which the interpreter holds and provides a literal interpretation of the sacred text or tradition and believe their own reading, rendering or meaning they give to the text remains the ultimate truth, and tends to omit the possibilities of other perspectives, more dynamic or lucid interpretation (coming from within their own or other religions) of the same text and or religious tradition (Groff, 2008).

This has remained a predicament that religious traditions must seek to address as the faithful are gullible. Since they may never question the message as given nor go the extra mile to seek for instance, a second opinion. And on rare occasions would the faithful challenge or question the interpretation or the exegete. The faithful believe and trust their religious leaders and interpreters. They give them the benefit of doubt because faith leaders occupy honourable positions in the society. The place of leaders in the community, their level of education, experience and the respect accorded their status makes them (religious/interpreters) exceptionally powerful in the society. They therefore play vital role in the community and can contribute significantly in making,

promoting and sustaining peace and harmony in any religiously pluralistic community, and can also cause conflict by the message they preach.

4.2 Religious Leaders as Preachers

Religious leaders are preachers. They not only lead at worships, they speak, preach, give sermons and deliver homilies especially at public adulations. Authorised preachers deliver public sermons to instruct hearers on their faith tradition and encourage the faithful to practice them (A Practical Dictionary, 1959). Religious preachers are charged with the duty to prompt adherents of their devout responsibilities as they respond daily to the divine invitation. A religious preacher is one who being conscious of his/her role as the representative of the people, strives to preach in such a way that indicates awareness of, and identify with the people to whom they address. Thus, their preaching ought to be pastoral, displaying a sensitive, concerned knowledge of the struggles, doubts, fears, concerns, joys and pains of the members of the community (The Bishop's Committee, 1982). A preacher in the context of a liturgical assembly becomes a mediator, the voice of the community and an interpreter, connecting faith, beliefs and the real life experience of the people. Accordingly, the aim of the religious preacher always ought to be; to enlighten and nourish the minds of the faithful, by putting people in touch with each other in fostering community spirit, strengthening their wills and enthusing the heart of men and women with the love of the divine and the 'other'. (John Paul II, 1979 and Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, 1965, no. 23).

However, it must be stated that every human person has the right to freely seek and adhere to religious truths without force or coercion on the part of individuals, social groups, the State or any human power (John Paul II, 1979 and Declaration on Religious Liberty, 1975, no.2). Furthermore, in matters of religion, no one is to be forced or compelled to act against his or her conscience or prevented from acting in conformity to their convictions, in private or in public, alone or in association with others. Besides, the search for truth must be carried out in a manner that is appropriate to the dignity of the human person and their social nature, namely, by free enquiry with the help of preaching, teaching, instruction, communication and dialogue. This is the means through which men and women share with each other what is learned in an attempt to help one another in the search for truth (1975, no.3).

This further reiterates the fact that religious preachers play very significant role in our communities and must be careful, taking full responsibility for what is said and preached. As the content of the so-called truth in what is preached, the way it is preached, the preacher and where it is preached can have profound impact on the listeners and the community. what is said in the name of preaching can arguably unearth and express deep-seated feelings of

resentment, anger, prejudice, stereotypes and all forms of frustrations within and between communities which has the propensity to (build or) destroy the 'other' and society at large. For instance, the Kafanchan riots of March 1987 (Kukah, 1993), and more recently the discourses of the leaders of Boko Haram and ISIS have exhilarated a number of followers (Mohammed, 2010; Stern and Berger, 2015).

Consequently, preaching necessitates discipline and responsibility on the part of religious preachers. They ought to be careful and fastidious as their preaching and their message give, impinge on the religious sentiments of people, affecting the socio-cultural, economic, ethnic and political experience. This remains one of the greatest challenges of preaching today. There are many preachers around and especially many of them are found all over the internet-YouTube; and for instance in Nigeria public preaching is a common practise within the Islamic and Christian tradition. Besides, we cannot be ignorant of the growing trend of terrorism fuelled by religious fundamentalism that is motivated by extremist-fanatical interpretation of religious text and tradition. Regrettably, there have been moments where congregations have been starved of more lucid, dynamic and inclusive interpretation of text and tradition. Some so-called religious preachers have openly called for *Jihad* and forceful conversion of the 'other' with the promise of heavenly bliss should a faithful die (martyrdom) in the process of (*Jihad*) 'fighting for Allah' (Imam Urged, 2017). Furthermore, some have ceased such prospects to brainwash, indoctrinate and impose their fanatical ideologies to which some young minds have fallen prey. A few have been radicalised via YouTube, for example, by listening and following extremist preachers of hate who continue to spread rhetoric of fear, intimidation and condemnation (Dolan, 2017). Some others have been radicalised and taught how to make and plant bombs, wear the suicide vest or belt, while others, where the opportunity presents itself, have been groomed and taught how to plot, attack and murder the religious 'other' (Smith, 2015, Camber, 2018 and Dolan, 2018). Such incidents continue to challenge the claim for example that Islam and Christianity are religions of peace and harmonious cohesion in society.

I agree that the social media present a unique, suitable and effective way of reaching out to the public. Nonetheless, religious preaching either through the use of social media or live before an assembled congregation has to be done responsibly. The task before religious leaders, preachers or religious actors in an increasingly diverse world is to demonstrate that genuine religious beliefs and the desire to carry out divine will cannot be a compulsive, divisive or disruptive element in society (Arinze, 2003). It should rather be the firmest foundation for justice, harmony and fraternal love for others, which remains the building blocks for a peaceful society. Religious traditions must strive always to

train their leaders/preachers, and as much as possible devise ways to superintend those who act on behalf of such a faith tradition; to form, inform and bring about transformation in society.

4.3 Religious Leaders as Teachers of Religion

Religious leaders do not just represent, speak and preach on behalf of their faith communities; they are furthermore teachers of their faith traditions. Since they are trained and theoretically are knowledgeable in the truth about the faith tradition, it is obligatory for them to speak, teach and instruct the truth of their faith tradition. They become teachers by virtue of the fact that they instruct neophytes and all who seek to know more about such a faith. By their teaching and instructions, they build and shape the religious minds of their faithful, their perception of the religious 'other' and their general out-look on life. Religion in its essence has the capacity to bring about social cohesion and commitment, at the same time it is the fundamental guide to individuals and religious communities, therefore, the sort of religious education a congregation or neophyte receives impact significantly on their commitment and the way and manner they relate to the 'other' and the society at large. (Pignedoli, 2003). Coherent religious discourse, teaching and instructions are of significant value if teachers of religion are to foster accord in any socio-cultural and religiously diverse society. Poor education and knowledge of one's religion and that of the 'other', flawed religious instruction(s) and teaching have been injurious to communities leading to deficient perception of the 'other', stereotypes, and biases and in some situations violent conflicts.

Therefore, a deeper understanding of one's faith and that of the other is central to peace building and harmonious coexistence (Schnitker, 2016). Moreover, theology is faith in search of intelligence (/understanding) which finds expression in religion, and religion makes a deep impression on people of faith (Kristenson, 2009). It is pertinent that teachers of faith be capable of schooling their faithful in such a way that the truth about one's faith and that of the 'other' is presented with respect and objectivity. Religious leaders as teachers of faith ought to rid themselves of all forms of superiority or inferiority complexes and become more receptive of the way those from other religions explain themselves and their tradition (Borrmans, 1981). Such attitude of receptive openness and dialogue should characterise their act of educating and instructing their congregation, which further necessitates the need for proper formation and training of religious leaders.

5.0 The need for proper Education and Formation of Religious Leaders and Preachers

The formation of responsible religious leaders is significantly essential for sustainable peacebuilding efforts in any socio-cultural and religiously diverse

society. Religious leaders play a very vital role in the community; they are respected and listened to, and people will more or less do exactly what they say. Since they occupy such important position in society, they should have some level of education and be properly trained.

For religious leaders to be effective, it is imperative that they be educated. Effective peace process demands good and efficient learning, formal or informal (Umaru, 2013). A religious leader or cleric must be grounded in his or her own faith tradition and be knowledgeable about others. Furthermore, they should be schooled in a style of learning that recognises diversity, reinforces, promotes and nurtures living together in harmony with the 'other,' because, despite our difference, we all belong to each other. Such religious scholarship must seek to highlight our communal bond built on the value of mutual communion, dialogue, respect, peace and harmony. Their learning must aim to form, inform and transform them for the good of everyone in society irrespective of creed. Contemporary peacebuilding efforts demands that religious leaders and clerics feel obliged and challenged to consider cooperating with each other to engage in dialogue and peacebuilding efforts with the various communities. Therefore, a balanced knowledge about religious otherness has the propensity to dispel ignorance and promote tolerance (Umaru, 2013). Besides, the prospects of fostering better understanding will be enhanced if, for instance, religious leaders are also trained in the art of communication, the use of language, history of religions and the proficiency of dialogue. Moreover, it is important that religious (public) preachers use language in a positive-constructive way to engender harmony in any diverse society.

6.0 Conclusion

The challenge for religious leaders and preachers for instance in Nigeria is on how to balance competing identities and values within and between religious communities in the promotion of tolerance in our religiously diverse (Nigerian) society (Paden, 2005). As a nation in search, the relationship of religious values and identities, and the demands of pluralism will always be evident in contemporary societies as religion remains a central characteristic in any progressing civilization. Religion at the same time provides a prospect for its leaders, clerics and religious actors to cultivate, foster and nurture diversity proficiently using their strategic positions.

Leadership here means being able to manage diversity for peaceful integration. Thus, they might wish to consider investing in responsible dialogue within and between communities, the kind of dialogue that seeks to build bridges and connect peoples of different backgrounds, in such a way that everyone sees in the other not an enemy, not a rival, but a friend, a brother or a sister to be

welcomed, loved and embraced (Povoledo, 2013). Also, to prevent, overcome and grow out of the negative consequences of religious stereotypes and conflicts, it is important for example that Christian and Muslim leaders lead their communities to recall the religious and moral values we share, while acknowledging our differences. By responsible dialogue, through which we recognise what we hold in common, and accord respect for our legitimate differences, we can more firmly establish a solid foundation for peaceful relations in society, moving from competition and confrontation to an effective cooperation for the common good (Tauran, and Ángel Ayuso Guixot, 2018). Peace making and peace building remains a task of every man and woman, but to religious leaders, preachers and actors, it is an imperative and an important mission. Religious diversity nevertheless, denotes cooperation to foster and nurture esteem for human dignity, which demands a common effort of the leaders and preachers of religions to work towards world peace (D'Souza, 2004).

REFERENCES

- A Practical Dictionary of Biblical and General Catholic Information. (1959). "Interpretation." *The Holy Family Bible*. London. Harwin Press Ltd.
- Arinze, F. (2003) "1993," *Meeting in Friendship Messages to Muslims for the End of Ramadan 1967-2002*. Vatican City: Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.
- Barrajon, L.C. P. (2013). "Religions and Leadership." <http://integralleadershipreview.com/8297-religions-and-leadership/> Accessed February 27, 2018.
- Best, G. S. (2001). "Religion and Religious Conflict in Northern Nigeria," *University of Jos Journal of Political Science*. 2, no. 111, 61-81.
- Beswick, R., and Glatz, C. (2017). "Condemn those who commit evil in name of Faith, says Pope." *The Universe*. Scotland.
- Borrmans, M. (1981). *Interreligious Documents 1 Guidelines for Dialogue between Christians and Muslims Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue*. Trans. R. Marston Speight. New York. Paulist Press.
- Camber, R., and Dolan, A. (March 2018). "Jihadi Teacher's 110-Pupil Death Squad." *Daily Mail*. Scotland.
- Camber, R. (May 2018). "Target Prince George Muslim Teachers urged fanatics to attack young royal at his new school and poison supermarket ice cream." *Daily Mail*. Scotland.
- Dolan, A. (October 2012). 'Jailed for life Islamic State nail bomber Radicalised on YouTube.' *Daily Mail*. Scotland.
- Dubois, H. (2008). "Religion and Peacebuilding an Ambivalent yet Vital Relationship." *Journal for Conflict and Peace*. 1, no. 2. Retrieved from: http://www.plowsharesproject.org/journal/php/article.php?issu_list_id=10&article_list_id=32 on February 23, 2011.
- D'Souza, A. (2004). "Leaders for Today, Hope for Tomorrow," In A. D'Souza. *Empowering and empowered leadership*. Atlanta, GA: Pauline Publications. Retrieve from: <http://www.integralleadershipreview.com/8297-religions-and-leadership/> on February 27, 2018.
- Flannery, A. (ed). (1981). "Declaration on Religious Liberty." *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. England: Fowler Wright Book Ltd.
- Flannery, A. (ed). (1981). "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation." *Vatican Council II The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. England: Fowler Wright Book Ltd.

- Francis, J. D. (2007). *Uniting Africa Building Regional Peace and Security Systems*. England: Ashgate.
- Gavlak, D. (May 2017). "Pope of Peace defies security fears to build, promote deeper faith Relations." *The Universe*. Scotland.
- Geertz, C. (1973). *The Interpretations of Cultures: Selected Essays*. New York: Basic Books.
- Groff, L. (2008). "Religious Diversity, Interreligious Dialogue, and Alternative Religious Futures: Challenges for an Interdependent World," *Journal of Futures Studies*. 13, no. 1, 65-85. Retrieved from: http://www.jfs.tku.edu.tw/?page_id=1920 on May 11, 2015.
- Hosken, A. (2015). *Empire of Fear inside the Islamic State*. Great Britain: Oneworld.
- 'Imam Urged Youngsters to become IS Martyrs.' (September 2017). *Daily Mail*. Scotland.
- John Paul II. (1979). *Catechesi Tradendae Apostolic Exhortation on Catechesis in our Time*. London: Catholic Truth Society.
- John Paul II. (2004). *Rise. Let us be on our Way*. Vaticana: Warner Books.
- Kristenson, O. (2009). *Pastor in the Shadow of Violence Gustavo Gutierrez as a Public Pastoral Theologian in Peru in the 1980s and 1990s*. Sweden. Uppsala Universitet.
- Kukah, H. M. (1913). *Religion, Politics and Power in Northern Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books Limited.
- Little, D., and Appleby, S. (2004). "A Moment of Opportunity? The Promise of Religious Peacebuilding in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Conflict." In Coward Harold and Smith S. Gordon (Eds). *Religion and Peacebuilding*. New York: State University of New York Press, Albany.
- Mohammed, A. (2010) *The Paradox of Boko Haram*. (Ed) Mohammed Haruna. Nigeria: Moving Image limited.
- New Advent Catholic Encyclopedia. (2018) "Sources of hermeneutics principles." *Hermeneutics*. Retrieved from: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/07271a.htm> on April 10, 2018.
- Paden, N. P. (2005) *Muslim civic Cultures and Conflict Resolution the Challenge of Democratic federalism in Nigeria*. Washington D.C: Brookings Institution Press.
- Pignedoli, S. (2003). "1976," *Meeting in Friendship Messages to Muslims for the End of Ramadan 1967-2002*. Vatican City: Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue.
- Pontifical Council of Interreligious Dialogue. (2013). "To Participants in the Plenary Assembly of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue." Retrieved from: http://www.pcinterreligious.org/speech-to-the-plenary-session-of-the-p-c-for-interreligious-dialogue_137.htm on March 21, 2016.

- Pope Francis. (2013) *The Joy of the Gospel Evangelii Gaudium*. Vaticana. Libreria Editrice.
- Pope Pius XII. (1943). "Divino Afflante Spiritu." Retrieved from: http://w2.vatican.va/content/pius-xii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_30091943_divino-afflante-spiritu.html on April 10, 2018.
- Povoledo, E. (2013). "Pope Appeals for More Interreligious Dialogue." *The New York Times*. Retrieved From: <https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/23/world/europe/pope-francis-urges-more-interreligious-dialogue.html> on May 10, 2018.
- Tomasi, M. S. (2015). "Freedoms of Religion and Expression: Adopting an Ethics of Responsibility," *Vatican Information Service*. Retrieved from: www.visnews.org on March 27, 2015.
- The Bishop's Committee on Priestly Life and Ministry National Conference of Bishops. (1982). *Fulfilled in your Hearing the Homily in the Sunday Assembly*. United States Catholic Conference. Washington, D.C.
- Tauran, J. L., and Ángel Ayuso Guixot, M. (2018). "Message of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue to Muslims for the Month of Ramadan and 'Id al-Fitr 1439 H. / 2018 A.D." Retrieved From: <http://press.vatican.va/content/salastampa/en/bollettino/pubblico/2018/05/18/180518a0.html> on May 28, 2018.
- "Warm Welcome and Enthusiastic Mass bring smiles to all." (May 2017). *The Universe*. Scotland.
- Sacks, J. (2016). *Not in God's Name Confronting Religious Violence*. Great Britain: Hodder.
- Schniter, H. (March 2016) "A deeper Understanding of Faiths Key to Harmony." *Scottish Catholic Observer*. Scotland.
- Stern, J., and Berger, M.J. (2015) *ISIS the Stets of Terror*. London: William Collins.
- Smith, M. (2015). *Boko Haram inside Nigeria's Unholy War*. London: I.B Tauris&Co.Ltd.
- Umaru, B. T. (2013). *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in Northern Nigeria: A Socio-Political and Theological Consideration*. United States of America: Xlibris.