CATHOLIC CENTREDNESS IN SELECTED PLAYS PRESENTED
AT KENYA NATIONAL CATHOLIC DRAMA AND MUSIC
FESTIVALS, 2015

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DECLARATION

The work reported in this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any other university for award or for any other degree.

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to:

The Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops for giving me a chance to do this research;

All the young people who find fulfilment in theatre for evangelization,

My great parents, who never stop giving of themselves in countless ways,

To all my family, the symbol of love and giving,

My friends who encourage and support me,

All the people in my life who touch my heart,

I dedicate this research.
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OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms will recur in this document and therefore, it is opportune to offer their working definitions;

Theatre of Evangelization: Enactments of daily events or Bible stories spearheaded by church and its affiliates for the express purpose of ministry

African Synod: The blueprint developed by African Bishops of the Catholic Church to guide its evangelization mission using five subthemes which are proclamation, enculturation, dialogue, justice and peace and means of social communication.

Language: This study adopts the Jakobson’s definition of language as a system of conventional spoken, manual, or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. The functions of language include communication, the expression of identity, play, imaginative expression, and emotional release.

Catholic centeredness: An artistic process or production which upholds the tenets and draws energy from the pillars of the Catholic faith.

Production design: The totality of stage props, costumes, sets, scenic décor, lighting and sound as used in the realization of a theatrical piece on a stage.
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

These are the abbreviations appearing in this document:

AMECEA: Association of Member Episcopal Conferences in East Africa
KCCB: Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops
SCC: Small Christian Community
Can. Code of Canon Law
CCC Catechism of the Catholic Church
Fr. Father (will largely mean a Catholic priest)
ABSTRACT

The Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music festival is an annual festival whose idea was mooted in the year 2000 by the Kenya Conference of Catholic Bishops. It is an event whose theme is derived from the Pope's message to the youth and then customized to fit the Kenyan situation. The main purpose of this event is to motivate the young people into the work of evangelization using their creativity. Cognizant of the fact that young people are the majority in every congregation, the Catholic Church has put in place a number of media to evangelize them. Evangelization by the young people by use of theatre reaches out to where the young people are, both physically and in their life situation, and offers a genuine response to their yearnings. Evangelization provides opportunities and conversations that deepen young people’s relationship with God, encouraging them to live as disciples and discover Christ’s invitation to full sacramental relationship with Him. Young People are to be encouraged and assisted to use many and varied creative means, drama and music inclusive, always seeking to build a bridge between the ancient faith and the contemporary world, between the tabernacle and the street, between cathedrals and theatre halls. This is the objective of the Catholic Church in establishing the Kenya Catholic Drama and Music Festivals. However, the question that needs to be answered is this; how does the Festival achieve this purpose? Are the items in the festival Catholic-centred? This is a qualitative research that used content analysis of the data that was gathered through observation, viewership and close reading of the performances and the performance texts of three (3) plays that were presented during the 2015 edition of the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music festivals held in Embu diocese in December 2015. This study was based on theatre performance theory as propounded by Richard Schechner and supported by Eli Rozik as well as religious theatre theory as propounded by Kevin Wetmore. From a Performance Theory standpoint, this study examined; how the performance-texts made meaning in respect to the issue of Catholic centredness within the parameters of the Catholic Church. And using the religious theatre theory, it sought to interrogate how the plays were faithful to the Catholic way of evangelization. The study hopes to contribute useful and valuable knowledge in the area of theatre and the church in Kenya and elsewhere. Such knowledge will be valuable because little in-depth study has been carried out in this area either in Kenya or elsewhere.
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The Kenya National Catholic Youth Festival is a conglomeration of two festivals rolled in one that is organized by the Catholic Church in Kenya for the express purpose of bringing the Catholic youth together in a religious function and evangelizing to them. The two festivals are Drama and Music Festivals which started in the year 2000 as part of the fulfilment of the Pope's message that he delivers during the World Youth Day. The Catholic Church imagines art as one of the tools for achieving its objective. In its blue print on youth catechism as espoused in the book *Youth Catechism*, the Catholic Church affirms that the artistic nature of man approximates God’s own creative temperament. However, it quickly also points out that art must serve a purpose which is to help man live a worthy life and remember God.

In a way that closely approximates Gods creativity, inspiration and human skill are combined in the artists so as to give a valid form to something new, a previously unseen aspect of reality. Art is not an end in itself. It should uplift people, move them, improve them, and ultimately lead them to worship and thank God. (p.251)

Thus, art is considered a component that can be deployed in achieving the core objectives of the church of uplifting people in their earthly lives and realization of the Eminence of God

The Catholic Church considers the youth as the majority congregation of the church. However, this congregation does not use the same mode of interaction as that of the mainstream liturgy of preaching on the pulpit for evangelization. While adults may sit
for long hours concentrating on the liturgy, the youth get bored and therefore, like to engage in vibrant activities that take both the mind and the body (AMECEA, 2009). As Wetmore (2009) states, the Catholic Church recognizes the power of performance and the power of the spoken word as one of the vibrant arts. The Catholic Church in Kenya therefore, realized that the involvement of other methods of communicating the gospel were needed and the traditional forms of communication were thus to be revitalized. Indeed, Gifford (2009) supports this assertion that the theology of Kenya’s mainstream churches is ‘consciously focused on African culture, a non-negotiable foundation and the Catholic Church has an additional agenda –to Africanize its religious congregations’ (p.1).

Theatre and drama are seen as part of the ways of speaking to the youth yet still rooted in African culture. This gave birth to the idea of diversifying the engagement of the youth within the church and the Festival was seen as one of the activities. It is important to note at this point that the Catholic Church has heavily diversified its media of evangelization including but not limited to the following; Radio Waumini; a broadcast radio that covers the whole country as well as AMECEA countries; Catholic Mirror; a monthly magazine publication; Ukweli productions; a film and video production house as well as the annual Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festivals.

In an interview with Fr. Charles Odira, the national Catholic youth chaplain (2011-2017), this study found out that the annual Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festivals was seen as a means of achieving the following objectives:
1. Evangelical objective; By deepening creative works that have messages about the church and the gospel, the youth will be learning the gospel by themselves and spreading it to those who listen to them.

2. Social objective; by bringing like-minded youth together in enacting creative pieces that hinge on Catholic doctrines creatively, the youth are able to learn and interact with each other as well as build the Catholic community.

3. Exploitation of talent, as an avenue for the youth to exploit their creative talent but still remaining within the confines of the church. This also means that the festival is one way of making use of the time that the youth have at their disposal especially after form four and when joining college.

4. Affirming the African synod. The Catholic Church in Africa came up with a policy document/strategic plan for evangelization called the African synod. In this document, the youth are placed at position five of the key agents of evangelizing Africa. The exhortation on the youth is captured in the 1995 Synodal document called *Ecclessia in Africa* as thus,

   The Church in Africa knows well that youth are not only the present but above all the future of humanity. It is thus necessary to help young people to overcome the obstacles thwarting their development: illiteracy, idleness, hunger, drugs. (181) In order to meet these challenges, young people themselves should be called upon to become the evangelizers of their peers. No one can do this better than they. The *pastoral care of youth* must clearly be a part of the overall pastoral plan of Dioceses and parishes, so that young people will be enabled to discover very early on the value of the gift of self, an essential means for the person to reach maturity. (Ecclessia in Africa, 1995)
Therefore, the drama and music festival is seen as one of the ways of fulfilling the objectives of the African synod since it is assumed that the youth preach and pass the gospel messages to each other when they congregate in festivals. Furthermore, it merges African cultural music and drama tastes to the gospel thereby moving evangelization from the utopian European style to an afro-centred style in a process that the synod labels ‘inculturation’.

The information given above can well be summed up by Schechner (2003) in his appeal of the theatre/performance as a transformative agent. He posits that,

…theatrical transformation appears to be of only two kinds: 1) the displacement of antisocial, injurious, disruptive behaviour by ritualized gestures and displays, and 2) the invention of characters who act out fictional events or real events fictionalized by virtue of their being acted out… (p. 116)

It is interesting to note that the national level of this festival was not the idea of the Kenya Catholic Conference of bishops (KCCB); the highest decision making organ within the Catholic Church in Kenya. Far from it, the idea came from the parishes (the lower administrative organs of the church). Parish priests were organizing competitions in their own parishes among youth from different sub parishes. The national office, KCCB, saw the need to streamline these activities and hence, nominated a national youth chaplain; a priest whose mandate is to coordinate the activities of these festivals as well as any other activities that involve the youth in the church at the national level. Therefore, the environment in which the church was operating occasioned the rise of the national youth festival in the year 2000. (AMECEA 2009).
Administratively, the festival is organized from the sub-parishes all the way to the national level. Since it is a competition, the performance items ranked as number one, two and three during the sub-parish competitions are shortlisted and allowed to move to the next level which is the parish. The first three winners from each parish in each genre proceed to the deanery level. Winners at the deanery level proceed to the diocese level. Then only the winners from each diocese proceed to the national level. This means that those who participate at the national level are the best from each diocese. The diocese is not only a pastoral unit of the Catholic Church but also an administrative one.

From the above discussion, it can be well noted that the main objective of the festivals is to evangelize to the youth through art. Evangelization provides opportunities and conversations that deepen young people’s relationship with God, encouraging them to live as disciples and discover Christ’s invitation to full sacramental relationship with Him (Ecclesia in Africa, 1995). It therefore, behoves to note that the church sees the need to use drama and music as tools of evangelization. It is not drama and music that uses the church in their growth in Kenya, rather drama and music serving the needs of the Catholic Church. This begs and raises fundamental questions as to how these Catholic needs are met through drama and music as or being creative arts. The interactions between creativity and Catholic message therefore, needs to be investigated to establish their points of intersection and/or divergence.

Artistically, the festival is organized following themes that are derived from the message of the Pope to the young people during an occasion dubbed the World Youth Day celebrated biannually. For example in 2015, the message of the Pope for the world
youth day was on the purity of the heart achieved from the sixth of the eight biblical beatitudes found in the gospel of St. Mathew and which states that *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God* (*Mt 5: 8*). The themes are further extracted from the message of the Cardinal (head of KCCB) during the Lenten campaign. The participants have seven genres to choose from which, are set pieces of songs and own compositions for music and dramatized oral narrations, dramatized cultural dances, solo and choral verses as well as a 25 to 30 minutes play. It is the latter that this study used as a microcosm of the whole festival since it was the most competitive and offers a better theatrical platform for an academic inquiry.

The study interrogated three plays that were presented in the 2015 National youth festival. It subjected them to academic inquiry in terms of their creativity and how this creativity was hinged on the main objective of Catholic evangelization. To determine the creativity, the study examined three areas of creative drama which are the use of language, the use of characters and the use of production design of the plays.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music festivals has been in existence since 2000. The festival was brought to the national level of organization as a follow up of the African Synod with the intention of evangelizing among the Catholic youth and as a way of fulfilling the Pope's message on finding alternative media to evangelize among the youth. However, much as this has been happening, the national youth office has few documents to show that any study has been done on evangelization through
theatre. Additionally, there is scanty academic study that seeks to establish the Catholic-centredness of plays presented in this festival yet the festival is supposed to serve the needs and objectives of the Catholic Church. This study appraised three plays that were ranked the best overall at this festival in terms of production design, language and characterization in order to ascertain the theme of Catholic centeredness in them.

1.3 Objectives of the Study
While the overriding purpose of the study is to appraise the Catholic evangelization through theatre and how it provided opportunities and conversations that deepened young people’s relationship with God, encouraging them to live as disciples and discover Christ’s invitation to full sacramental relationship with Him, the specific objectives were as follows;

1. To interrogate the language used in the selected plays and how it brings out the theme of Catholic evangelization to the youth.
2. To interrogate characterization as a key component of theatre on evangelization in the selected plays especially to the youth.
3. To examine the production design used in the selected plays to bring out the theme of Catholic centeredness.

1.4 Research Questions
Arising from the above objectives the research sought to answer the following questions;

1. How was language used to bring out the theme of Catholic evangelization?
2. Was characterization a key component of theatre on evangelization in the selected plays?

3. How was production design used to bring out the theme of Catholic evangelization?

1.5 Research Assumptions

Since these plays were presented in a festival organized by the Catholic Church for the express reason of evangelizing among the youth, this proposal assumed the following;

1. That the language used in the plays was effective and specific to Catholic evangelization.

2. That characterization in a play of the festival was key in the process of theatre for evangelization.

3. That the production design was effective in delivering the message of Catholic evangelization.

1.6 Justification and Significance of the Study

This study is envisaged to be crucial in advising the national Catholic youth chaplain on the potency of the plays presented at the festival as agents of Catholic evangelization. It also forms a ground breaking sub area of theatre called theatre of evangelization. Furthermore, it strengthens the study of the interstice between the church and theatre.

The study further contributes useful and valuable knowledge in the area of theatre and the church in Kenya and elsewhere. Such knowledge is valuable because minimal study has been carried out in this area either in Kenya or internationally. Therefore, it can
become a reference point for other studies in these broader areas by priests, youth social workers, theatre artists, as well as researchers in the areas of religion and theatre arts.

Additionally, recommendations of this study form a corpus upon which characterization, language use and production design of theatre can be studied and referenced for purposes of research in universities and other institutions of higher learning by those interested in theatre arts and religion.

1.7 Scope and Delimitations

The Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festivals usually has two levels of competition which are drama and music. This study took only the drama component of that festival. The drama component usually has plays, creative dances, narratives and verses. This study further narrowed down to plays.

The study examined only three (3) top plays that were presented at the 2015 edition of the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festivals which took place in December 2015 in Embu Diocese. It further limited itself to analyzing language, characterization and production design in the plays.

Therefore, the study neither sampled other genres nor made comparisons to other genres or plays in any other festival but confined itself to close reading of those three plays.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

During the recording exercise of the scripts, sound quality was poor and therefore, some of the words were not very clear. The researcher corroborated this by going through the scripts which had been provided by the directors and the playwrights.
1.9 Review of Related Literature and Theoretical Framework.

1.9.1 Theatre and Religion

1.9.1.1 The Ritual origins of Theatre

There is a tremendous body of literature on the theatre in the church and/or on religious theatre festivals. Theatre, as an imitative human activity, is thought to have originated from religious rituals in the antiquity era. This has been particularly theorised that the Greek theatre of antiquity was derived the ritual worship of Greek gods, especially the god of fertility, Dionysius (Fritz 2007). The belief behind this argument is that performance was a way of maintaining the cosmic equilibrium between the gods, mortals and fate. In an online call for papers for a conference on theatre and religion, Edelman (2014) offers a curious quip to the relationship between theatre and religion. He sees a regeneration of religion through theatre when he writes that,

Performance is a key means by which religious communities are maintained and renewed, and it is also frequently used as a means through which to challenge them. When religion is affirmed performatively – as opposed to by doctrine or belief – the ways in which it is deeply bound up with the patterns and affects of community are often readily apparent. When aesthetic performance makes use of religious material or gesture, it often does so to make use of or interrogate the communitarian nature of its audience.

Theatre performance also has roots in medieval religious ritual as Schechner (2003) affirms,

As for medieval theatre which has as one of its sources church ritual, the players kept the biblical characters and plots while abandoning the form of the Mass and embroidering the stories with secular incidents. (p.7)

Varadpande (1993) concurs with Schechner (2003) by suggesting that there exists a multi-dimensional relationship between religion and theatre. He goes back in time to
observe that the early man’s religion was heavily stooped into ritual to the extent of making it dramatic. He notes that,

A ritual is defined as a system of esoteric and sacrosanct rites with prescribed procedures. It was, and still is performed to appease the spirits, avert calamity and set benevolent forces into action. A pronounced element of theatricality is present in rituals. Many a time a ritual takes a form of rudimentary drama. (p.4)

Varadpande’s explanation aided the study to analyse the dramatic pieces of plays presented at the Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festival as emergent from a ritualized system of worship which essentially the Catholic Church is.

The evolution of theatre took a further step when the characters no longer just represented the deities and the supernatural as the ritual theatre did but the actor taking the role of a go-between the deity and the audience. As Fflur et.al (2009) point out, the actor delivered the message of the supernatural to the mortal. In this way the actor impersonated rather than represented the supernatural hence bringing into focus a make believe situation that is a hallmark of a dramatic piece. The actor put himself into a trance and allowed the supernatural (gods) to perform through him. This often involved dancing using a vast amount of energy, because he danced so long and so hard hence making people/audience feel that he must have been in possession of supernatural powers.

Nagler (1952) notes that although rituals were conceived to praise and offer supplications to the gods, an imitative element that was geared towards serving a pleasure function was added by an enterprising chorister called Thespis. This imitative element consisted of singing and dancing that was elevated beyond the conversational
use of the voice and the body to worship, praise and offer sacrifices to the gods. Indeed, the performance theorists like Schechner (2002) credit this element of imitation as the singular definitive aspect of theatre. It is from this humble beginnings that theatre grew in the later years.

1.9.1. 2 Liturgical Drama: Middle Ages Ritual Drama

In the late medieval era, the Catholic Church began to develop a theatrical practice of its own. Scholars believe that the liturgical drama grew out of the Mass in the form of a trope, or a lengthened musical passage used to elaborate some moment in the liturgy. The most widely cited trope is the *Quem Queritis* (*Who do you seek*) John 20:15, the trope that accompanies the Easter Mass in the form of a dialogue between the three Marys (the Virgin Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Mary, the sister of Lazarus) and the angel at the tomb (Johnson & Savidge, 2009). This simple passage was accompanied by stage directions written in the tenth century by Bishop Ethelwold in the *Regularis Concordia*, instructing the monks to position themselves around the tomb "in imitation of the angel seated in the tomb, and of the women coming with spices to anoint the body of Jesus" (Nagler, 1952, p.39). The theory of the development of liturgical drama holds that these miniature dramatic performances which were called Passion plays became more elaborate and developed into the later outdoor vernacular religious drama, following the ritual-to-drama trajectory. It further inclines that these tropes led to the rebirth of theatre in the church through what is popularly known as morality plays of the medieval era.
1.9.1. 3 Mystery, Morality and Miracle Plays and Medieval Religious Drama

Before theatre was reborn in the church in the medieval era, it had faced serious opposition and almost a near-death blow from the puritans; a clique of hardliner and extremist Christians who believed that the theatre was useless as it only served a pleasure function which according to them was not a proper end of human activity (Johnson & Savidge, 2009, p. 34). This explains why the re-entry of theatre in the church was more like crawling back rather than making a grand entry since it was hidden under the guise of the celebration of Corpus Christi; a catholic celebration of the body and blood of Christ. With the establishment of the Feast of Corpus Christi as a church-wide celebration by Pope Urban IV in 1264, outdoor religious drama began to form. The same church that had opposed theatre earlier on, was now appropriating elements of the surrounding culture and wedding them to sacred texts particularly in the feasts and religious activities that were processional in nature like the Corpus Christi. The festival allowed for several developments: the presentations could be much more elaborate outdoors, and the stories could be performed in the vernacular because they were situated outside of the formal Mass. Furthermore, since the festival was an annual festival, all the events of the Church calendar were covered at one time, allowing for the dramatization of the life of Jesus or even the entire Bible from the Creation to the Last Judgement. The outdoor cycles continued to use the mansion and platea staging from the indoor pieces.

These kinds of plays, called mystery plays, were dramatic adaptations of biblical stories. They had emerged from liturgical drama which was performed by priests in the
sanctuary, where dialogues and chorals were in Latin, accompanied by Gregorian chants and music (Johnson & Savidge, 2009, p.39). Also called cycle plays, they liberated the religious theatre from just clergy oriented performances to performances of social nature. They enacted both biblical doctrine as well as its tradition since they drew attention to the physical realities of the gospel stories they enacted.

The success of mystery plays emboldened theatre artists to establish a different but related subgenres of theatre which was later labelled as Miracle plays and morality plays. While Miracle plays was drama based on the lives of saints, morality plays was intended to communicate moral choices through typological characters. Additionally, Miracle plays dwelt on enactments of debates on issues of church controversy. For example the play *The Croxton Play of the Sacrament* examined the issues of transubstantiation and whether Jews can convert to Christianity. On the other hand, Morality plays instructed the audience in how to be a good Christian. For instance, the play *Everyman* was explicit in instructing Christians to attend confession regularly to ensure that their accounts with God are in order when death unexpectedly visits them (Johnson & Savidge, 2009).

### 1.9.1. 4 Sacred Endeavours of Theatre in Religion.

The above brief history of theatre in religion points to a chequered relationship which has nonetheless flourished up to date. Viewing theatre and religion as related affects the way both are practised, thought about, and evaluated. Thus an understanding of the relationship of theatre and religion perhaps also necessitates the understanding of the sacredness of theatre. Through the lens of religion, theatre artists are not just
entertainers: they are shamans, who serve as intermediaries between spiritual realities and audiences. From the perspective of religion, by viewing faith through the lens of theatre, stories and images can be appreciated as truthful and vital without the need for literal, legalistic interpretation. When the gospel story is thought about like a play, new levels of complexity and beauty may emerge. The possibilities are endless when theatre and religion are engaged in conversation with one another. And thus, the interrogation of the relationship between the catholic church expectations and the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festival productions becomes urgent and an enterprise for researchers.

1.9.1.5 Contemporary Religious Drama

Modern practice of the theatre in the church has received its fair share of research. Mastin (2007) in a research titled, *contemporary drama ministry – theatre in evangelical Christian church* found out that,

Theatre is paving way through the doors of Evangelical Christian Churches. In 2005, the Bama group, a Christian run-research on Christian Churches that included drama as a tool of ministry. They found out that 62% of Protestant Churches were using drama in their sermons and special events. This can be illustrated by the incoming of the New Year, Easter celebrations and even Christmas which were performed before thousands of people. Drama has moved inside the churches. P.54

Further, her findings demonstrate that the contemporary world does not view the theatre as an abomination or a secular art but an instrument that can serve the interests of the church. In her book, *Christian Theatre* Speaight (1960) expounds that, ‘the sanctuary, however, primitive, was a stage, and the faithful, however few, were the audience as well as the actor...' (p.25). She concludes that this in essence is the birth of the drama in
the contemporary world. Just like the other authors reviewed in this study, her findings were useful in determining material for elements of production as well as the practice of the contemporary theatre in this study.

1.9.2 Theatre and the Catholic Church

1.9.2.1 The Jesuit Catholic Theatre Movement

The Catholic Church has had a long association with theatre as the above review on theatre and religion has shown. However, there is a point of association that needs emphasis. This is the Jesuit Theatre movement established by the Society of Jesus (Jesuits) led by Ignatius of Loyola in the 14th century and still practised to date. Park (2010) notes that the Jesuit Theatre movement was part of the larger educational programmes of the Society of Jesus (Jesuit movement) which served several objectives including encouraging students to embracing the power to imagine oneself inside other persons and place. It thus was used to serve the purpose of encouraging free thought and imagination as basics to acquisition knowledge and skills. Secondly, Rea (2017) in an entry in the Encyclopaedia Britannica also notes that the Society of Jesus saw theatre as a tool to propagate Catholicism and its evangelical doctrines particularly to counter act the effect of the proponents of reformation led by Martin Luther. Thirdly, the Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica (2008) write that the Jesuits believed that by imitating a good character, actors and spectators could become better people. The society therefore produced plays for both educational and religious purposes as school annual competitions of drama and plays on important holidays such as Christmas, Epiphany, Corpus Christi, and Easter. They also celebrated canonization of saints through play
performances and also during celebrations of royalties (Park; 2010). Therefore the use of theatre for didactic and religious purposes is not new to the Catholic Church. The establishment of the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festival is an activity in a continuum of catholic theatre. What therefore matters is how it is used in this evangelical process; a matter that this study sought to address.

1.9.2.2 Theatre in the Contemporary Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church’s position on theatre can be discerned from its position on the Arts in general. In the Youth Catechism (2011), Pope Benedict XVI provides direction by articulating the importance of the art in the church thus; ‘What cannot be said in words or expressed in thought is brought to light in art. It is “freely given superabundance of the human beings inner riches”’. (p.251).

The church service whether Catholic or Pentecostal has time and again been read as a dramatic action. Grainger, (2009) writes of the Anglican Church service as a dramatic experience. He starts by comparing the rite as having a time chain sequence that resembles the dramatic plot. Then he looks at symbols that abound during the service as part of the conveyers of the covert meanings and codes within drama. He then looks at the liturgy as bearing the shape of a dramatic story. And just as drama celebrates life and is meant to transform it, so does the liturgy in its true meaning and sense. Although Grainger’s analysis is on the Mass service that has been established and canonized as the order of worship by the church, it helped this study find points of convergence of
drama within and between activities led by the ordained as dramatic and activities by
the lay people of the church.

Thomasma (1996) reads the Christian service as a dramatic experience when he notes
that the church and drama should not be seen as contradictory words since
contemporary drama has roots in the church. He notes that,

…drama as we know it today, has its origin in the Mystery, Morality and
Passion plays of the middle ages. It was developed by the church, an
extension of the liturgy, as means of educating the mainly illiterate body
of believers (p.11)

He further justifies the importance of drama in the church by stating that,

…the point is, we are created in God's image, and so made, our creativity
is the reflection of Gods creative power. Because of our own finiteness,
God, must tailor His communication to our physical limits of sense,
intellect, understanding and creativity. Vicarious experience is one of
His chief tools of communication. (p.8)

In this assessment, one gathers that Thomasma (1996) anchors the vicarious experience
of drama as serving the needs of the church hence it must be seen as part and parcel of
the raft of agents that the church can deploy in fulfilling its core mandate of
evangelizing. However, this evangelization mission must be subjected to checks and
balances to find out what is in it that serves the intended purpose. This study benefited
from this information by interrogating the plays presented at the Kenya National
Catholic Drama and Music Festivals.

According to Seal (2005), theatre of evangelization can also be called theatre or drama
ministry. He conceives drama ministry as a valuable asset to the church since it
provides a means of education, praxis, outreach, evangelization and fundraising. This
study was interested in the evangelization function in which he states that the church
can use 'Parables and rewrite them in modern day circumstances' when telling a story for the church on stage. (p. 65). On the use of language in a dramatic piece for the church, Seal, (2005) posits that it is possible to modernize the language in a scene ‘to bring home the idea that these old stories are about us today.’ (p.65).

This means that the stories do not have to be re-enacted as what he terms as “old archaic artefacts (sic)” frozen in time but dramas that help the youth navigate through the contemporary problems. This can be further achieved by reviewing already known parables and re-presenting them with a fresh and local touch. Such readapted plays usually will 'have something to say to the community.' (p. 66). Additionally, he observes that it is possible to use a play that is connected to the church but not a religious or quasi morality play. He explains that '…these are plays that are secular but are hinged on moral and ethics of the Catholic teachings…' (p. 66).

From his explanations, this study took interest in the function of theatre as a resource towards evangelization. However, this study differs from Seal’s study since he did not analyse plays in a festival but selected performances in selected churches in United States of America. That notwithstanding, his ideas were key in establishing the kind of language and characterization the plays selected for analysis embodied.

1.9.3 Theatre and the Church in Africa

By the time Christianity was being introduced to Africa through colonialism, European Catholicism had delinked the church and theatre to the extent that African theatrical practices could not be allowed in the Catholic Church. Even after colonialism, theatrical elements and performance were never tolerated within and in the precincts of the
churches since they were considered as contrary to the mission of Christianity (Mbiti, J.1989; pp.213-4). It took the convening of a special synod for Africa by the Pope in 1989 which gave its recommendations that were published in 1994 for the matter of the use of African indigenous forms of communication to be pushed to the fore again. The synod, whose one of the themes was finding working points between the church and the myriad of African cultures in order to entrench evangelization, noted that,

The traditional forms of social communication must never be underestimated. In many places in Africa they are still very useful and effective. Moreover, they are "less costly and more accessible". These forms include songs and music, mimes and the theatre, proverbs and fables. As vehicles of the wisdom and soul of the people, they are a precious source of material and of inspiration for the modern media. (Ecclesia in Africa, 1995)

These exhortations contained in the African Synod thus help identify the genesis and anchor of the need to entrench the theatrical pieces in the church since they are sanctioned by the highest authority of the Catholic Church.

Additionally, the Catholic Church in Kenya maintains a high national profile when it comes to public debates that touch on sensitive issues in the church (Gifford, 2009:57). This is done through press statements as well as public pronouncements by individual Bishops or the Cardinal. This is done in the understanding that the Catholic Church needs to guide its flock on the social issues especially reproductive education in primary schools, constitutional matters as well as insecurity among others. This active involvement in public affairs provides a wide range of material to the playmakers on the subthemes that fall under evangelization. How they are packaged was the subject of this study.
Alembi (1994) examined some of the church theatre Festivals in Kenya. Noting that many Christian churches organize drama festivals at different levels throughout the calendar year in Kenya, he went on to look at the status of theatre in the Christian churches in Kenya, and how theatre can be tapped for the Christian church. Lastly, he examines constraints that face theatre performance in Kenyan churches and offers possible solutions. Of importance is that he conceives the idea that theatre in the church in Kenya can and should be subjected to academic inquiry since it is a social activity that informs Kenyans. Taking cue from his ideas, this study sought to examine how the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music festival informs Kenyan Catholics.

1.9.4 The Study of Theatre Practice and Festivals in Africa

In writing about theatre and theatre festivals in Africa, David Kerr’s 1995 seminal work, *African Popular Theatre* comes to mind. In this survey of theatre forms in sub-Saharan Africa from pre-colonial times to the present day, Kerr (1995) interprets popular theatre widely to include not only conventional drama, but such non-literary forms of performance as dance, mime, dramatised story-telling, masquerades, improvised urban vaudeville theatre, and the theatre of resistance and social action. He lays the first, foremost and firm foundation and structures of how to analyze African performances using methods that are decentred from European thought as well as deeply African. Kerr’s groundbreaking structure of synthesizing a performance and linking its theatricality to various changing practices (social, economic and political) in the countries that the movements are set in greatly aided this study. This is an approach that the present study rode on since there is an assumption that the Kenya Catholic
Drama and Music Festival is thoroughly Kenyan and can only be analyzed within the framework of the religious Catholic practice in Kenya. This study falls into what Kerr (1995) terms as the literary theatre. This is a theatre which is conceived and scripted and then performed on a stage to a popular mass audience. Although not popular theatre per se since it does not address mass culture neither does it take the popular theatre tradition of grassroots mass conception and participation, the Kenya National Catholic Drama Festival nonetheless has elements of mass attraction since winning plays usually undergo a series of performances before they are performed on the national stage.

Kerr’s text, as he confesses, is full of over simplifications and is neither literally criticism nor textual analysis. It does not subject performance scripts to deeper interrogation and neither does it look at the elements of the performance—texts. It merely chronicles African popular theatre. This study selects a number of plays in a specific festival which in essence is quasi popular theatre and subjects them to a deeper analysis of the performance elements of characterization, language and production design through close reading to ascertain the intended delivery of the Catholic-centred message.

Nearer home, Outa (2009) takes a sweeping analysis of the performance of power in the postcolonial popular theatre in Kenya, particularly in the 1980s to 1990s. He examines the unpublished plays by Okoiti Omtata, Wahome Mutahi as well as Oby Obiero Odhiambo. The proposed study drew strength to study unpublished theatre pieces from Outa's own study when he notes that,
…my example (*in studying the texts*) here hopefully serves to indicate that such an "unpublished"/unprinted body of popular theatre can be engaged in their own terms and in whatever forms and shapes they occupy at any given time (p.6).

The research on the unpublished plays presented at the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festivals was greatly boosted by the methodology inaugurated by Outa.

Several publications have been dedicated to the study of the Kenya Schools and Colleges Drama Festival that is run under the auspices of the Kenya Ministry of Education. Notable among them are Otieno (2002), Tsikhungu, (2008), Kinya, (2008), and Chetambe, (2012). Otieno, (2002) analyses the feminist or lack of gender equilibrium in selected plays presented at the Festival while Tsikhungu, (2008) interrogates child centeredness in selected plays presented by primary schools in the festival. The two address themselves to themes that are not related to religion and theatre festivals in Kenya; a gap that this study hopes to fill. Kinya, (2008) and Chetambe, (2012) interrogate the oral narratives presented at the Kenya Schools and Colleges Drama Festival and not even plays. While Chetambe, (2012) looks at issues of disempowerment on gender terms, Kinya, (2008) examines the aesthetics of the oral narrative at the Festivals. All these studies offer insights on how festival items can be analyzed hence, they were useful to this study.

Most studies on the history of theatre in Kenya generally ignore the religious theatre in Kenya. Mwangola (2008), Osiako (2004) and Obura (2000) in their different and differing treatises of the historical developments of theatre in Kenya completely forget
to mention the place of theatre in the churches, Hindu temples, Islamic mosques and other religious denominations. If ever it is discussed like in wa Thion’o (1986), and Kerr (1995), it is simply to dismiss it as an agent of the colonial enterprise. This blanket condemnation does not recognize the specificity and simultaneous multiplicity of religious theatres. It also sinks into oblivion, the fact that the religious theatre in Kenya has always married aspects of indigenous theatre with the contemporary eurocentred ones.

1.9.5 Theoretical framework

This study was primarily based on theatre performance theory as propounded by Richard Schechner (2003) and supported by Eli Rozik (2010). Secondly it also drew to some extent from Kevin Wetmore’s theory of the Catholic theatre which in turn draws from the theory of religious theatre. From a Performance Theory standpoint, this study examined; how the performance-texts make meaning in respect to the issue of Catholic evangelization within the parameters of the Catholic Church. The religious theatre theory provided the framework that anchored the research in understanding characters’ dramatic dialogue and language that has a direct impact to the mission of evangelization.

1.9.5.1 Performance Theory

Performance Theory is credited as having been founded by Richard Schechner (1985, 2003) as documented in his seminal volume Performance Theory. He expanded the investigation and application of the concept of ‘performance’ beyond the limits of
theatre to other human activities including ritual. Schechner proposed a concept of performance which transcends text-based drama and embraces the formal relations between play, sports, theatre and ritual. To him, the intertwinement of these human activities have common strands: they have time, performance space, objects, non-productivity and rules. It is within these strands that this study sought to discuss the Catholic theatre performances. All the strands were used in discussing the three objectives of the study which were language, characterization and production design.

Performance theorists look at performance as ‘a restored behaviour.’ Performances in everyday life and artistic life consist of “a recombination of a number of already behaved behaviours” (Schechner, 1985; 28). In the logic of restored behaviour, performance is but a repetition of some original. Theatre performance is therefore, an imitation; a reliving of human lives in “a marked, framed or heightened way” (Schechner, 1985; 28). In the present study, the researcher assumed that the performance-texts will be marked by performance aesthetics that include theatre codes and heightened enactments which stand out uniquely over and above every day non-theatrical activities.

In the sense of restored behaviour, theatre performance is symbolic and reflexive (Schechner, 1985). This presupposes that a performance is more likely to be understood or enjoyed by those who understand its codes. For example a Catholic performance will therefore, be fully understood if Catholic codes are also appreciated and reflected upon by the audience. According to Schechner (2003), “Reflexivity in theatre goes hand in hand with audience participation” (p.131). This explains why the researcher found it
necessary to appraise literature on the Catholic Church and actually attend and observe the rendition of the plays on the day of performance. In respect to the audience, this study describes how performers on stage, as recipients of symbols, reacted to those particular messages.

Alter (1990) says, “Performances always reflect those models of social behaviour that prevail in a given society” (p.1990). This uniqueness draws from the material of the place and the nuances of interactivity (Schechner 2003). Therefore, an explication of the drama at Kenya National Catholic Drama Festival must be rooted within the Catholic dogmas, the Kenyan situation as well as theatre traditions in particular but also in a global context.

Performance theorists perceive performance as an activity constituted by different parts that are none the less united in communicating a wholesome message. According to Schechner (2003), each element in a performance matrix speaks its language but “all elements of theatre are in the same plane” (p. 62) thereby contributing to a unified effect. Schechner identifies these elements as: performer, scenery, costuming, lighting, sound, props and so forth. The performer and the ‘scenic view’ complement one another on equal terms though the director might foreground an aspect at certain moments during a performance. These performance-text’s segments collectively “describe a fictional world and affect thereby a spectator” (Rozik, 2010; 271). This research was interested in how these performance-texts meet the expectations of an evangelical theatre through their production designs.
Rozik (2010) further comments on the multifaceted nature of performance as a ‘macro-unit’. This macro unit, he adds, unites the text, the theatre and the rules that govern its performance. He notes that,

A performance-text is an integrated macro-unit composed of a describing text, generated by the theatre medium, and described by poetic rules. These components can be distinguished from each other only through analysis. Performance analysis should focus on the aspects of its performance. (p.208)

This study further drew strength from Rozik’s assertion on the models of analysis of the text which he labels as assuming the possible segmentation of the performance text itself. Since this study had already segmented broadly the areas of analysis being production design, language and characterization, it went further to explore their means of application as theatres of evangelization. Indeed, he sums that,

The notion of ‘analysis’ presupposes the possible segmentation of performance text. A crucial task of performance analysis is, therefore, to establish the principles of segmentation and suggest the means for their application. The aim of performance analysis is to understand the principles through which this medium generates theatre meaning, a method of performance analysis presupposes first and foremost mastery of this medium (p.273).

This research anchored its justification in interrogating how the productions performed on the Catholic evangelization platform generate evangelization meaning through their production designs, language and characterization.

1.9.5.2 Theory of Religious Theatre

Since this study was interested in the manner within which the plays presented at a Catholic festival express the evangelical matter, it was important to interrogate the plays using a framework that underscores or is sympathetic to a religious way of thought.
This explains why religious theatre as a set of guiding principles was selected as the framework for analysis. Religious theatre derives from the ritual theatre which subscribes to the cosmic unity of the supernatural and humanity in performance. As a theory, it was popularized especially by contributions in the journal of Religion and Theatre edited by Kevin Wetmore. Proponents of religious theatre assert that the many parallels that exist between religion and theatre justify theorizing the two as inseparable.

Bert, N. (2002) takes this argument further by noting that the kernel of religion is *cults* which he defines as, ‘the system of religious performance.’ This cults is the base upon which myth is enacted through highly evocative words (liturgy) and actions (ritual) by personnel (pastors, catechists, priests, bishops clergy etc.) also called people of cloth since they use aesthetically raised and highly stylized vestments that make them stand out from the rest and also to emphasize their function. Additionally, ‘they use or are associated with props that help them perform and the rituals—vessels, symbolic weapons, wands, incense, candles, and the like.’ The priests execute the cults on behalf of, and frequently in the presence of members of the community, the *worshippers*. And the cults typically takes place in a sacred space constructed or at least enhanced for the purpose, the *temple*.

On the other hand, theatre uses texts that are performed through dialogue and action by actors and actresses dressed in costumes in a theatre or a performance spaces identified for the specific purpose of theatre. This interlock of and parallels between theatre and religion give rise to the theory that religious theatre does Indeed, exist.
Wetmore (2011) asserts that theatre is a product of ritual and thus the two are inseparable. It is from ritual that theatre grew. However, he also points out that the main medium of both theatre and religion is the word. Just like the church uses the proclamation of the ‘word’, so does the performance invoke the ‘Word’ whether acted or uttered in passing its message. Evangelization can thus be proclaimed both on the pulpit and on the stage using the word. It is from this perspective that the study ought to establish the use of the word as part of language in passing the message of evangelization in the selected plays.

Religious theatre is an art that privileges the functional level of theatre in Horace’s dichotomy of art that is *util et dulce* (teach and please). The line between entertainment and religious instruction is very thin in religious theatre and hence content is given more prominence than the form. However, since matter is expressed in manner, the aesthetic value of religious theatre is also of great importance.

Indeed, Wetmore (2011) clarifies that the Catholic Church recognizes ‘the power of performance and the power of the spoken word’ p.5. Just as the transformation of reading the Gospel during Easter Mass into enacting the scene resulted in the recreation of theatre in the early modern era; speaking and enacting are at the heart of Catholic ritual and belief: “the words spoken at the consecration of the Mass transform bread and wine into Jesus’ body and blood. Words of absolution dissolve sins. Theatre and Mass continue to point towards one another in the present back to the origins of theatre.’ (Bert, 2002; 6)
The first and foremost tenet of religious theatre that this study adopted is that it is functional since it coalesces around the major theme of God, service and/or humanity. It is meant, “to transform both performers and audience, deepening their sense of their own humanity, stirring their devotion to the God found in all things, and moving their will to embrace a life of virtue in service of the common good.’ (Wetmore, 2011; 11)

Secondly, religious theatre has a stylized language which is highly connected to the language of the morality, ethics and sacredness. Even when dealing with secular issues, the language is tailored to suit the triumph of good over evil. (Seal, 2005:65). This tenet guided the study in appraising the language used in the selected plays.

Thirdly, religious theatre takes utmost care of characterization as vehicles of furthering its agenda of connecting humanity to the supreme through service. Thus, characters are in most cases prominent figures within the religious sect like high priests, acolytes, and the community members. (Bert, 2002; 3).

Last but not least, it is often ritualized since it relies on the myths and beliefs of the concerned church to craft the stories that are re-enacted. These myths and beliefs are highly repetitive just as ritual is (Schechner, 2003; 5). This tenet was useful in justifying the anchorage of the plays as part of the Catholic Church.

Since the study narrows down further within the religious theatre paradigm to adopt a Catholic perspective, the following key documents of the Catholic Church have been extensively cited to provide anchorage;
1. The code of canon law which is the legal document of the Catholic church on its daily operations,
2. The bible which is the key reference material for Christian life,
3. The Catechism of the Catholic Church which is the key formation text of a Catholic faithful,
4. The Ecclesia in Africa which is the document containing the African synod of 1995,
5. The Catholic encyclopaedia which is the online text containing explanation of Catholic terminologies and concepts.

1.10 Research Methodology

1.10.1 Research Design

This is a qualitative research since it used content analysis of the data that was gathered through observation, viewership and close reading of the performances and the performance texts. Data from interviews were only used to ascertain, corroborate and/or dismiss data gathered through content analysis.

1.10.2 Research Location

This study is located in theatre and performance analysis and used Schechner's methods of performance analysis. In terms of spatial location, it is situated in Kenyan theatre where the analysis of Kenyan dramatic performances is undertaken. Temporally it sought to analyze plays presented by the Kenyan Catholic youth in the year 2015 at a festival that was held in December 2015 in Embu Diocese.
1.10.3 Sampling Techniques

Two sets of data were used in this study. The first was the primary data which was obtained from the performances and performance texts. This data was obtained from three *purposively sampled* plays that were presented at the Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festivals to be held in December 2015 in Embu diocese. The study selected the first three because the winners were assumed to be the best within the country in terms of content and form. Furthermore, limiting the number to only three allowed the study focus and in-depth intense analysis and since they can be seen as representative of other plays that were presented by the 25 dioceses of the Kenya Catholic Church that take part in the festivals.

The 2015 festival was purposively selected since there is no systematic archive that has scripts for the preceding years: be it in video or written form. Therefore, the only way of getting them is either recording them or soliciting them at the time of performance. That is why the researcher and his assistants purpose to attend the 2015 festival, solicit scripts from directors and playwrights as well as record the performances for purposes of this study.

The second level of data which is the secondary data was sampled depending *on its suitability* in appraising the connection between the church and drama and especially theatre of evangelization. Books, journals, archival data and any written material that investigates how the church and particularly the Catholic church uses drama and theatre to evangelize were sampled and used in providing the secondary data.
1.10.4 Data Collection Methods

Primary data was gathered by analyzing the performances and the performance texts of the three plays that were ranked position one to three of the plays that were presented at the Kenya National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festivals held on 6th of December 2015 in Embu Diocese. The researcher assembled a team of six assistant researchers and film equipment and travelled to Embu to observe, fill the observation guide, conduct interviews and record the stage performances. In filling the observation guide, the researcher employed participant observation as guided by Cargan (2007). In this technique, the researcher participates in research area while at the same time taking observation notes (pp. 147-8). In the case of this study, the researcher and his assistants sat in the auditorium and watched all the plays that were presented and made notes using an observation guide appended at the end of this study. Armed with this information, the researcher sought out the directors and scriptwriters of these performances at the end of each and conducted the interviews using the interview guide also appended on this study. The data gathered through observation was used to analyze the production design of the plays that were selected and formed part of the second chapter of the thesis.

The researcher also solicited performance texts (play scripts) from the directors of the plays and this was used to analyze the language and characterization used in the texts. Additionally, more data for these discussions was derived from analyzing the video recordings of the three plays. Where there was a disparity between the recorded text and the written script, the recorded performance text was given priority since this study is a performance analysis.
Interviews that were administered to the accompanying priests, playwrights and play directors provided data that guided the study in validating the primary data obtained from participant observations.

Secondary data was gathered from written material from archives, libraries and curia archives of dioceses and the National Youth Chaplains office at *Mji wa Furaha* in Ruaraka. Libraries in Catholic centred institutions like St. Thomas Aquinas Major Seminary in Nairobi, Tangaza College in Karen as well as the library of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa were instrumental in collecting literature on the foundations of Catholicism. Libraries of universities that teach literature, film or theatre arts in Nairobi were also visited to collect secondary data. Where books or journals were not available in libraries, the researcher endeavoured to purchase them. Secondary data was also used to validate the primary data and the perspective that the study took.

1.10.5 Validity and Reliability

To ensure validity and reliability the study conducted content analysis using the observation guide developed earlier in the proposal stage. This observation guide was premeditated as can be seen on the observation guide schedule attached as appendix I. Furthermore, the study ensured validity of the data by restricting it to the objectives set out. Any data that was be found to be inconsistent with the set objectives was deemed unnecessary and thus not given prominence.
1.10.6 Data Analysis and Presentation

Data collected from these sources was analyzed using content analysis approach at the same time using the tenets of performance analysis established by Richard Schechner (2003) and propounded further by Eli Rozik (2010). The evangelical foundation of the study was anchored in Kevin Wetmore’s theory of religious theatre as discussed in his books and articles as well as key Catholic texts like the Bible, the code of canon law, the catechism of the Catholic Church and the Catholic encyclopaedia.

As part of characterization, the portrayal of impartial and important elements and figures in the Catholic Church like Mary, Pope, Priest, nun, lay apostolate, Catholic youth, and (the Catholic family) was sought for and interrogated. Furthermore, the concepts and ideas that the characters embodied were also interrogated. Information from interviews and observation guide was classified under the broad categories of the objectives of this study. Then consistencies between the interview responses and observation notes were sought for and classified together. In case of inconsistencies information from secondary sources was summoned to clarify, justify or explain. Thus, a discourse analysis that hinges on content analysis was employed.

Data so obtained is presented in form of an analytical discourse with the three discursive chapters that follow closely the three objectives of this study.

1.10.7 Ethical Considerations.

Permission to carry out this study was sought from the National Youth Chaplain to video-record the plays that were presented during the 2015 edition of the Kenya
National Catholic Youth Drama and Music Festivals held on 6\textsuperscript{th} December 2015 in Embu diocese at the Kangaru School.

All sources of data whether primary or secondary are duly acknowledged. While the written texts of the plays are credited to the playwrights, the performance texts are credited to the directors of the plays. In case of conflict the directors of the plays are given priority since this study is a performance analysis rather than script analysis.
CHAPTER TWO
PRODUCTION DESIGN AS THEMATIC SIGNIFIER OF CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION

2.1 Introduction

This chapter delves into definitive understanding of production design elements and description of how the said elements are utilized in the selected plays to bring out the central message of Catholic evangelization to the youth. The elements of theatrical production design discussed include, set design, properties, costume and make-up design and sound design.

2.2 Set-Design

Set design is a creative and imaginative process that evokes interpretation of the performance text through visual thinking in order to create a visually aesthetic picture of a production (Brockett & Ball, 2004). It is aimed at creating visual worlds that characters live in and to arouse interest in the audience. Deborah Dennison quoted in Di Benedetto (2012) aptly captures, set design in theatre ‘… involves supporting the ideas of the play and the director’s interpretation, creating a dynamic space which feeds the action of the play, the blocking, and the performances. Of equal importance, the set must give the audience as well as the actors a powerful and accurate sense of time and place’ (p.54).

Sets can be abstract, highly realistic, or anything in between, and they are a chance for a designer to showcase interesting concepts, new techniques, and unusual materials. The
primary function of a set, of course, is to provide the audience with some context for the play, but it can also be a chance to create something stunning to draw in the audience.

Set designers are innovative and original as they draw inspiration from almost anything or any place to tell a story creatively. They create a concept that is in line with the director’s vision, and decide how it will be built, painted, and decorated. The look of the stage as a whole is largely their responsibility through their imagination and ingenuity (Brockett & Ball, 2004).

Barranger (2002) refers to set design as a collaboration between the director and the set designer to address the eye of the mind of the audience in order to focus it to the theatrical space. She further notes that designers "create a three-dimensional environment for the actor and make the play’s world visible and interesting for audiences, p. 237). This is a definition also affirmed by Wilson (1980), who reiterates that set design can be referred to as the strange metamorphosis which, ‘creates an environment for the performers, helps set the tone and style of the production, establishes the locale and period in which the play takes place, develops a design concept and coordinates the scenery with other production elements’ (pp.157-158).

From the three assessments, the crux of production design emanated from the appeal to aesthetically and meaningfully populate the performance space including the back wall (background), the centre stage (performing space), and the floor. Set design as a practice in theatre and as Cohen, 2008 explains, traces its roots in the Elizabethan theatres era although not pronounced because the theatres were open air. Scene design
came to bloom with the development of the European indoor at first with painted canvas and temporary wooden structures. Cohen (2008) further notes that this flat scenery gave way to a generally realistic or metaphoric or a combination of both of the modern theatre scene design in which attempts are made to depict, often in great detail, a specific time and space in the real world where the play’s events are presumed to take place’ P.140.

In the present practice of theatre, scene design is no longer just about paintings and boards and backdrops. It is rather an elaborate visual and spatial architecture of the plays performance that is intrinsic to the plays action. “…it is the place where the play exist…determines exactly how the play exists and helps reveal the plays deepest meanings.” Cohen, (2008; 144) (emphasis in the original). This creates what Brockett & Ball (2008) refer to as the floor plan where “opportunities for movement, composition, character interaction, and stage business take place” (p.361). This floor plan has a background, a centre and a foreground.

2.2.1 The Background Set

The background sets in the sampled plays are primarily ply wood flats mounted on stands draped with fabrics or painted with varying symbolic and realistic impressions of the setting or thematic images. This may be explained by the transient and transportable nature of the productions that form the gamut of the competitions in the Kenya Catholic Drama and Music Festivals. Transient because the plays rarely have a focus for the future since the scripts are hastily assembled, the cast is quasi-theatre-practitioners and the directors are simply amateurs. Transportable in the sense that the performance
spaces are never fully determined. While going through the different levels of competition, a play gets to be performed in all sorts of halls; mostly dining halls, church function halls, social halls and other halls not exactly suited for a theatrical performance. One has to be adaptable to such professionally and conventionally unconvincing and inconveniencing spaces of performance hence, the need for a transportable set design.

The play *The Tabletas* for instance has sparsely spaced background flats draped in yellow and white fabrics and on other flats there are paintings of a cupboard on one board at centre stage smouldering fiery pot on the foreground of unblended lines of green, red and blue sky dominated by a sun-like yellow round mass impression. The colours and the impression are largely dull and the images rather rudimentary. The cupboard in the context of the play is an attempt to capture the setting as a living room in a home, but the image of the smouldering-fiery pot is an African traditional kitchenware which is very important, as it symbolizes a wealthy family (see figures 1a, b and c below).

When a pot cracks, it means there is a fault developing in the family ceramic which by extension shows the waning of the family’s financial strength, support and well-being. The cracked and shackled fiery pot in the painted flats is therefore, a symbol of a family ravaged by debilitating intrigues that have torn its fabric and shackled its pillars. The case of incest in the play is well supported in this instance. The image and its allegorical connotation though, are fetched from the cultural point of view and not the Catholic
emblems, and though it drives a point home, it cannot be said to be a manifest of a Catholic borne didacticism.

Fig. 1a. Homabay diocese background set in the Tabletas

Fig. 1b. The cupboard painting in the Tabletas. Fig. 1c. The flaming pot in the Tabletas

The background set in the Homabay diocese play therefore, largely falls short of evangelizing in the Catholic liturgy. This is because the symbols on the décor are either
too simple or too abstract to be deciphered by an audience that is not schooled in the interpretation of the production. Secondly they have little in terms of Catholic centred symbols that this study discusses in chapter four.

The play *Friends of our Lives* on the other hand is characterized by tightly spaced wooden flat boards with realistically painted impressions. On one pair of boards a painted rendering of a kitchen washing bay, complete with a sink and utensils storage racks on the walls above the sink, with a few utensils drawn thereon, which the characters occasionally mime to pick and replace. The centrepiece of the painted backdrops is a realistic impression of a dinner set. The curtains overlap to the next flat on which a restroom set is painted with a toilet seat painted on a short front piece of board blended with the painting of a high level cistern on the backdrop behind.

![Fig. 2. Background set in the play Friends of Our lives.](image)

The set is largely rendered realistically and plays the role of denoting the setting, which is emphasized by the few attempts at making it functional with the characters flushing the toilet, picking utensils on the rack and sitting at the dining place with the assistance
of other props like rostra. In terms of evangelization, it serves little purpose as it focuses on realistic depiction of a house setting.

The play *Fr. Makarios* is more elaborate with the background sets also made of wooden flats but with an attempt to render more realism and symbolism of the setting. For instance a one flat placed at the down stage left is painted in plain earthen brown and is perforated to create the confessional box, and on stage are numerous flats with paintings of huts to signal setting.

The centre piece is a sanctuary containing an altar (a place of sacrifice) with a bible and three lit altar candles which are apt significations of evangelization since light signifies the presence of God in Catholic liturgy.

![Fig. 3. Background set in Fr. Makarios by Nakuru Diocese](image)

It also depicts the painting of a tabernacle which in Catholic context is the place for storing the blessed Eucharist for purposes of adoration, and a realistic painting of a mitre (the bishops hat), and the holy cross. The painting of the mitre, which is one of
the components of a vestment, specifically adorned by senior members of the Catholic Church like bishops, is a sign of authority and as in the painted flats; it encapsulates the altar and tabernacle in an aura of authority.

Therefore, the centre-piece of the background set in the play *Fr. Makarios*, speaks on the authority of the church reinforces the centrality and hierarchical importance of the church in the depicted society and in the development and refractions of the message in the play. The choice and ultimate path of Fr. Makarios despite vehement opposition from family centrifuges and finally sediments in the church, which the mitre aptly captures.

The backdrops are flipped as the play progresses to a flashback that reveals realistic paintings of a traditional village made up of grass thatched huts in a scenic village with a picturesque waterfall in the distant horizon painted on the centre piece and the rostrum below the waterfall painted in ague colour gradient of blue and white.

*Fig. 4. Second Background set in Fr. Makarios.*
The images on the backdrop in contrast with that of the mitre do not expressly denote Catholic evangelization. However, with the actor in the foreground, the overall picture formed is that of a village and its inhabitants, who are the target of evangelization. The villagers represent the worshippers who help in evangelization and those ‘lost sheep’ whom the evangelization actually targets. In this sense therefore, the production calls ultimately for the conversion of the lost into the fold of the church hence serving the purpose of evangelization it sets out to achieve.

In the three plays therefore, as here-before discussed, the backdrops mainly depict the settings and advance various symbols, some of which are far removed from the Catholic liturgy. In the case of the Nakuru diocese play, however, there is an attempt, with the painted flats, images that augur with Catholic symbols and blend with the message thereof. From this assessment, it can be deduced that although, in the sampled plays the backdrops do not pronounce themselves in the semiotics of the Catholic evangelization, there is in principle and practice a possibility to achieve this by having images, shapes and forms of objects that are conformist to Catholic tradition.

2.2.2 The Centre Stage Set

The centre stage in the context of this discourse refers to the performance space, where most of the actions and movements of the actors take place. The centre stage therefore, in this study includes the performance space extending from the backdrops, through the fourth wall and extending to the stage apron downstage. The centre stage set is characterized by set props that are functional to the performance.
Fig. 5. Centre-stage/floor set with the confessional box in the play Fr. Makarios.

The play *Fr. Makarios* has set in its centre stage, a combination of functional backdrops and staired rostrums that the performers regularly ascend on as the performance proceeds. The rostra function to elevate the various actors in moments that their role is of authority in the play. They are painted in yellow and blue; the centre rostrum is painted in a gradient combination of sky blue and white. The centre rostrum also works as a functional exit and entrance to the stage and backstage. In the Catholic context the rostrums can be understood as elevations akin to the pulpit that is raised at the front centre of the church.
In The tabletas, the centre stage set is characterised by three symmetrically placed, two-level wooden platforms, decorated in black and patterned in white. The pedestals are placed on both the right and left wings, with one placed centrally in the deep stage.

As in the Nakuru diocese play the pedestal plays the role of elevating characters that ascend them while in action. The elevation places a sense of importance to the elevated...
characters, comparable to the raised platform where the priest and other ministers stand as they conduct a Catholic Mass.

The floor set in the play, *Friends of Our lives* by St. Peters Kapsabet parish is bare, and basically utilizes the proscenium terrain as is, and improvises set props using coached actors backs as chairs and tables that characters utilize.

While the centre stage set marks the space where most action takes place, it can be concluded that its sparse population with sets in the three plays served to create more space for movement of actors and actresses. It may also be argued that since the plays were performed on indeterminate stages and halls, the sets could not be made complex and elaborate. However, this same reason may not suffice for the costume design which has little to do with the kind of hall one performs in.

### 2.3 Costume Design.

Costumes are the adornments characters clothed in which are a very important ingredient in characterization, storytelling and the general aesthetics of a performance. While set design is interested in the visual image of the stage environment within which the action develops, costume design is interested in the visual appearance of characters (Brocket & Ball, 2004). In performance theory, costume mean virtually everything as they define the performer and subsequently the performance. The shapes, the colours and the harmonies and/or contrasts they create go a long way in defining and edifying the characters and allegories thereof in the story. If a Catholic Mass can be regarded as a theatrical performance, then an array of costumes abound. Beyond the wide variety of
adornments, the many members of a congregation showcase, the church itself has
demystified and distinguished its characters with a variety of costumes ranging from; a
priests cassock; the nuns habits; the bishops mitre; widely divided into clerical
adornments and vestments. Such costumes replicate the ministry process and thereby
deeply imply Catholic evangelization.

In the sampled plays there is an evident attempt at costuming the characters for the
different performances. In the Nakuru Diocese play, Fr. Makarios the main protagonist
is dressed in a black cassock and a purple stole in the opening scene of the play.

![Fr. Makarios in his priestly vestments](image)

Fig. 8. Fr. Makarios in his priestly vestments (cassock and purple stole).

The Cassock is a pastoral garment while the stole is usually put on while a priest is
administering the sacrament of reconciliation. The vestments he is dressed in as seen in
the figure above show that he is in the process of administering a sacrament and the
purple stole, which signifies reconciliation grounds the scene properly in the sacrament
of penance or confession which is quite accurately depicted in the play. The sacrament
of penance is one of the most important pillars to be observed by a Catholic Christian as it points to repentance which is one of the great missions of evangelization.

The reverend sisters and the mother superior are costumed in habits, the heads covered in wimples (headgear) and pectoral crosses slung around their necks. The habit and pectoral cross in the Catholic Church are adornments that are worn by professed sisters, which mean that the play accurately costumes them. This precise depiction of characters points to presence of the church and therefore, the presence of the evangelistic ministry within society.

Another priest, father Karasko, is costumed in black pants, and a grey shirt with a clerical collar, which are regular pastoral garments that identify a church minister in other activities aside from celebration of mass or administration of sacraments. This is also an important pointer of a church minister while “off-duty” or while mingling with everyone in activities outside the church like attending meetings and so on. Another character in the play, Fr. Makarios is the Nuncio who is a representative of the pope in a country. He is costumed in a white cassock a red amice and a red zone (cloth belt).

The ministers costumes discussed in the foregoing discourse are then, in the play, contrasted with those of the villagers. These villagers are mostly dressed in kitenge and khanga patterned clothes, punctuated by regular monochrome garments and headgear. The dancers are dressed in animal print costume while Fr. Makarios’ grandfather is dressed in a paternal elders robe and a colourful bubble hat ornate with pom-poms. Rosa, like other villagers is in a khanga waist wrap and a head scarf.
The costumes in the Nakuru diocese play therefore, are a representation of the whole gamut of the church attendees. The priests, the catechist, the sisters and the Nuncio capture to an extent the silhouette of the Catholic ministers’ costumes and carry with them an aura of the church and process of the ministry.

![Fig. 9. Villagers’ costumes in the play, Father Makarios.](image)

The costumes in the play Tabletas on the other hand are in a way of regular adornments worn by people of various cadres. Mama Adhiambo at the beginning of the play is costumed in a sleeveless brown top, a Leso waist wrapped around her waist and a head scarf and towards the end of the play is in a black dress with patterned details. The costuming depicts a mother in her regular stay-home clothes, which are not fancy, with waist wrap and headscarf functional suggesting engagement in house chores.

Titi, the boy in the play is dressed in a tee-shirt and sweatpants, Adhiambo his sister in jean shorts and a Vee-neck t-shirt. This is similar to junior (madam Damela’s son) who
is dressed in a black pair of shorts and a white short sleeved shirt. The look on young characters also exhibit a regular way of dressing which exhibit youth and casualness which contrast with Leah another young character in the play who is dressed in a red patterned \textit{kitenge} dress. The \textit{kitenge} (African printed fabric) gives her a semblance of more maturity as compared to Titi and Adhiambo and comparatively similar to Madam Damela`s knee length, white dress with red floral details.

The older male characters in the play are costumed in perhaps matching costumes of black suits, white shirts with the only difference being the bowtie worn by Baba Adhiambo and black long tie worn by Baba Junior. The costuming in the play \textit{The Tabletas} therefore is a reflective of everyday dress codes ranging from casual dressing to official dressing and offers no direct bearing to the Catholic Church clerical or vestment dressing.

In the play \textit{Friends of our Lives}, female characters are dressed in a variety of \textit{kitenge} patterned dresses and plain coloured dresses with older women wrapping their heads in head scarves contrasted with young ladies with pony tails and plaited hair. The house help adds a \textit{Leso} waist wrap and a kitchen apron to her costume to cement her characters look. The male characters on the other hand include the poignant black suit, white shirt and black tie and the crowd scene characters exhibit regular trousers, tee-shirts and shirts of varied colours and designs.

The policeman is costumed in sky blue pilot shirt and black trousers which is proximate to the Kenya Police Uniform. The costumes therefore, in the plays present a range of
ideas and define the characters to varied degrees. The play *Fr. Makarios* spares a lot of effort to invest in costumes that depict characters in the Catholic Church setting suggesting rank, role and function of the characters that include priests, nuns, deacons and bishops. This is in contrast with *the Tabletas* and *Friends of our Lives* that only feature regular persons dressing with no tethering to clerical or ceremonial church ministries dressing. So, on the question of evangelization using costumes, only the *Fr. Makarios* is specifically explicit in depicting church ministers and their interaction while immersed in the church roles even in everyday lives. *The Tabletas* and *Friends of our Lives* offer no direct link to the church in view of costuming. Although the regular dressing would also suggest the church congregation or object of the evangelization one would also argue that the absence of the ministers removes the aura of the church from the plays and thereby negate the chance to evangelise using costumes.

### 2.4 Sound Design

Kimani (2016) defines sound design as the deployment of sound elements in a sound track to enhance storytelling. While Kimani discusses sound design in film, his definition can be transposed to theatre. Barringer (2002) also discusses sound design in theatre as one element of the overall design that seeks to embellish the stage performance and enhance creation of meanings in a play. The content of a theatre sound track relies mostly on non-verbal sounds since a play performance verbalises its sounds live as the actors’ dialogue on stage. The sampled plays deploy sound effects and music in their oral designs to advance the story and enhance the Catholic evangelization in the plays.
2.4.1 Music
The Nakuru play deploys a variety of songs (instrumentals and fused) that are generically religious, traditional and contemporary. For instance, the play severally deploys a version of ‘Ave Maria’ in scenes that depict sacramental activity like the confessional scene and a Eucharistic Latin melody with a church bell sound in its instrumentation. This is a uniquely Catholic tradition and it identifies the play as Catholic in nature. The chorus of the song Ave Maria is in Latin which is song as Ave Maria, Gratia Plena, Dominus Tecum, Benedicta tu (Hail Mary, Full of Grace, The Lord is with you, Blessed are you among women). The extolling of virtues of Holy Mary the mother of Jesus is also uniquely Catholic hence, by incorporating this song in this play marks it out as Catholic centred both at the level of form and content.

The play also deploys a range of contemporary music including ‘mukangala’ a luhya song as the narrator bridges the story to a flashback, ‘African Twist’ by Daudi Kabaka during the courting scene between Hazel and Nakhumicha; ‘Amigo’ an oldies song by les Wanyika as Hazel narrates his family tree; a taarab song that the characters dance to simulate sex on stage as Hazel and Nakhumicha try to procreate a boy child and the soulful “chiquitita” by Abba to enhance the emotion when Rosa and Makarios are chased away because of the latter’s insistence to study for priesthood at the seminary.

A Luhya song is sung by Hazel accompanied by dancers as he serenades Rosa during their courtship. He sings Rosa Ndakhuyanza as he engages in vigorous traditional dance steps with the backup of other dancers. Friends of Our Lives and The Tabletas on the other hand deploy a variety of tense and melancholic instrumental music tracks in some scenes.
2.4.2 Sound Effects
Various sound effects have been deployed to enhance dramatic action and deepen emotional texture. The three sampled plays deploy synthetic banging and throbbing percussive and hollow sound effects to enhance tension. There are also banging sounds when Baba Adhiambo whips his children in the Homabay diocese play; an ambulance siren and toilet flushing sounds in the play, *Friends of Our Lives*.

The sound effects and music deployed play various structural and aesthetic functions in the play to enhance the actions and the narratives, but some like the religious music in the play *Fr. Makarios* enhance church or sacramental scenes, which provide a worship mood; a vital component in evangelization. Sound design therefore, remotely enhances actions and episodes that reflect the effort to evangelise and thus, sound design qualifies as one of the evangelistic tool in the theatrical renderings.

2.5 Conclusion
The chapter started by introducing the definitions and historical growth of set design in theatre. It then located the set designs of the productions as transient and transportable since the productions are conceived in the knowledge that they will not be performed in fixed or proper theatres. In delving in individual plays, the study has noted that most of the plays had components of set design that were in tandem with this conception. Flats were mostly used in which scenic views were painted to create an atmosphere of the real location of the play. However, most of them failed to convey the message of evangelization as there were disconnects between the thematic concerns addressed and the multiplicity of meanings displayed on the backdrops.
Secondly, the chapter also analysed the use of costumes and noted that only the play Fr. Makarios creatively used costumes to pass a message of Catholic evangelization. The chapter also appraised the sound design in the plays selected for analysis and concludes that again there is failure to tie the sound design as a production design element to serve the purpose of evangelization to the youth. There is an exception though since the performance by Fr. Makarios uses music to enhance church scenes thereby remotely enhancing actions that reflect efforts to evangelize.
CHAPTER THREE
CHARACTERIZATION IN THEATRE OF EVANGELIZATION

3.1 Introduction

Characterisation is one of the key elements of storytelling and messaging in theatre. Indeed, characters are the driving force in the story as they are the story subjects, that partake the odyssey through the events of the narrative and it is their tribulations and triumphs that the narratives recount. In performance studies, Rozik (2010) insists that a theatrical performance has functional characters who are;

…designed to be at least apparently akin to interacting character-authors usually assign human characterization to functional characters to various extends, thus enabling them to generate human like behaviour, and facilitating their apparent integration into the human fabric of a fictional world. (p.71)

Characterisation is a key element in theatre since it helps the audience identify reasons behind the physical, sociological, psychological and moral traits of personages in a production (Brockett & Ball, 2004). Being a study on evangelization, it follows that more weight will be given to the sociological, psychological and moral traits of characters in the plays. This analysis, taking from performance theory, regards characters as representations of larger categories of people within the society. Indeed, as Brockett & Ball (2004) say, spectators easily relate to characters with traits of people they know. This chapter probes the various characters from the theatrical and evangelical point of view as models of evangelization, catalysts to evangelization, evangelists and stumbling blocks to evangelization. It thus clusters characters as;

1. Religious men and women
2. Family
3. Other members of society
3.2 Characterization of Religious Men and Women

A distinction ought to be made between the clergy and religious men and women as used within the Catholic understanding. The clergy is a collective term that draws its definition from the code of canon law which looks at them as all those consecrated within the Catholic faith who are the Bishops, priest and deacons. This should be differentiated from religious men and women who may now include sisters, brothers, catechists, and other lay readers. The clergy are thus defined as;

…Christ's Faithful who, professing their evangelical counsels through vows or other sacred bonds recognized and approved by the church, are consecrate to God in their own special way and promote the salvific mission of the church. (The canon Law Society Trust, 1983; Canon.207)

The above definitions proves the exclusion of non-consecrated faithful when classifying the clergy. In the selected play performances for this study, only in Fr. Makarios has religious men and women as characters. These are a Nuncio, two priests and two sisters. This study therefore concentrates on those three sets for a deeper analysis.

3.2.1 Fr. Makarios

Fr. Makarios is an ordained priest who is the main protagonist in the story. To contextualise Fr. Makarios and the other clergy in this play, study gives a precise definition of who a priest is and his role in the church and society. A priest is a baptized man who freely and willingly enters into the vocation of service to the church. After usually about six or seven years of training, he is ordained by receiving the sacrament of ‘Holy Orders.’
The Catholic belief is that when a man receives Holy Orders, he is configured to Christ, which means that when he carries out his ministerial work, he is acting in the power of Christ, and not in his own power. This is usually called “a special grace” of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit within the Catholic realm is described as God’s power, energy and wisdom (Canon Law, 1983). The Catholic further believes that Ordination creates a new man, one who, if living his vocation (calling) faithfully, and who can say with St. Paul as written in the book of Galatians 2:20 in the bible: ‘It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.’ He is changed not because of what he can do, but because of what he has become. Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) describes Holy Orders as

‘The sacrament through which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles continues to be exercised in the Church until the end of time…’ (CCC 1536).

In definition and in function, the Catholic Church through various exhortations insists that becoming a priest is not and must not be seen as an escape from a social, economic or political challenge (Canon Law, 1983). It is expected to be a free willing normal person entering a contract with the church through the three ecclesial vows of:

1. Chastity
2. Poverty
3. Obedience

In history, there have been challenges of priests who escape from reality only to find themselves at the crossroads of life since they are unable to keep the promise of the three (3) ecclesial vows. How have the priests in the plays overcome challenges of life?

At the beginning of the play, Fr. Makarios exhibits the patience of a priest, shows the idealistic clergyman, clearly detached from the vagaries of the wider society and his interest is in the church service. The play opens with him in the confessional box
engaged in offering the sacrament of penance as Christians go to confess to him. He barely moves, and maintains an upright posture throughout the confession (see fig. 10).

*Figure 10: Fr. Makarios at the beginning of the play in the confession box waiting for the Christians to come in for the sacrament of penance.*

However, this changes when Hazel walks in to confess and not before he notes the voice familiarity.

*Figure 11: Fr. Makarios during the confession of the first Christian. He is calm, relaxed and composed.*
His change of demeanour raises stakes in the play. It becomes a sign in the performance theory matrix towards the complication of the play. This is the inciting incident that changes the general flow of the calmness that the play had been hinged on (see fig. 12)

![Figure 12: An angry Fr. Makarios during the confession by Mr. Hazel.](image)

The change leads the audience to ask what should happen in a confessional box when a biological parent meets his own son (a priest) as the cleric. Father Makarios, presented with this dilemma, opts to become hot tempered, stubborn and vengeful. The director makes him cut short the second confession when he notices that the voice of the confessor is that of his father and then refuses to listen to his confession insisting that his father should leave the church compound so that he can continue listening to other Christians’ confessions. In rising anger, Fr. Makarios tells Mr. Hazel from behind the confession box that, ‘there is no doubt in my mind that I am talking to the person whom I have sworn not to talk to all the days of my life.’
It can therefore be concluded that Fr. Makarios goes against the dictates of priesthood by refusing to listen to the confession of his own father. Within the Catholic faith, a priest cannot refuse to listen to a confession unless it is out of his own personal danger or if he is an accomplice to the crime that the confessor has committed and wants to confess of the same. The priest can also turn down a confession if there is incompatibility of language. Outside these three reasons, a priest is obliged to listen to a confession and perform the rite of penance.

What emerges in Fr. Makarios refusal to absolve his biological father is a case of a priest who has not dealt with his past. In the formation of priesthood, one is expected to come to terms with his past before ordination. In fact, eight days to ordination, the would-be-priest mandatorily proceeds on a secluded retreat with the aim of personal reflection. At such a time, the would-be-priest undergoes a kind of purgation of burdensome emotions and past actions that may weigh him down as he proceeds into the life of priesthood. This retreat is timely since it would allow the would-be-priest to fully understand the consequences of taking the three binding vows of poverty, chastity and obedience.

As it will become clear later in the play, Fr. Makarios refuses to absolve his father due to a past experience that he has not come to terms with. Despite the pleadings of the father (Mr. Hazel) who keeps quoting the canon law, Fr. Makarios continually threatens to violently eject him from the church and exhibits fits of anger, which is a stark contrast from the peaceful priest noted at the beginning of the play. Upon insistence that
he is a true Catholic, confirmed, baptised and entitled to the sacrament of confession, 

Fr. Makarios defiantly retorts that,

I have declined to listen to your confession. If you don’t mind, other Christians are waiting to confess. I will not see you now, or any other time.

Fr. Makarios angrily threatens to throw him out and when he remains defiant Fr. Makarios proceeds to violently grab him and carry him shoulder high amid screams and protestations which attracts the attention of the reverend sisters who show up to find out what is happening. Still hoisted dangerously on Fr. Makarios’s shoulders his father hilariously and in reference to the sudden outburst of violence to eject him from the church, observes that “Fr. Makarios has turned from being a priest to a security guard.”

Later, when Sister Joyce fails to cajole Mr. Hazel to leave, Fr. Makarios rushes for his father to attack him and it takes the effort of Mother Superior to stop him by holding on to him as reverend sister Joyce holds his father. Fr. Makarios promptly puts the man down when the mother superior orders, but insists that his dad must leave before he does ‘something stupid’ which suggests more violence. On further provocation occasioned by the defiance of his father to leave and insistence on the confession, Fr. Makarios yanks his own father Mr. Hazel violently by the scruff of his neck.

These violent outbursts by exhibit his hunger for vendetta and an unforgiving spirit that is contrary not to his divine calling to priesthood, which requires of him to not only forgive, but forget the misdemeanours committed against him.
As a minister of the gospel, it is then unfathomable that Fr. Makarios does not only deny forgiveness to Mr. Hazel, but also wreak vengeance by denying him a chance to receive penance, which is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. He advertently vetoes the opportunity for Mr. Hazel to fulfil his desire for true and complete worship to God. This presents a contradiction to the mandate of the great mission of evangelization which is the anchor to the Catholic Church.

In essence, the only time that a Christian is not allowed to participate in the sacrament of penance is when they have not received the initiation sacraments which are baptism, Eucharist and confirmation. The other scenario is when one has received all the initiation sacraments but has not wedded in the church. Mr. Hazel intimates that there is nothing that can stop him from receiving the holy sacrament of penance. Catechistically, this puts the priest in a very awkward position since he has no reason to refuse administering the sacrament of penance to Hazel. In this context, it is Fr. Makarios abdicating his pastoral duties due to his inability to control his anger.
inciting incident of penance thus gives rise to the complication of denying it to a person the priest has had a bitter past with.

Figure 14: Fr. Makarios grabs his dad by the scruff of his neck.

In their struggle they embrace tightly and the Nuncio walks into a scene of the two pairs clasped into each other’s arms which leaves them embarrassed by the wayward moment.

Figure 15: The struggle between Fr. Makarios and Mother superior as well as Mr. Hazel and Sister Joyce is seen here as a compromising embrace.
This is a motif that clearly places the clergy at a cross-purpose with their mission. They are caught ‘pants down’ going against that which they preach, which is a clear stumbling block to evangelization. This provides a very important aspect in the process of swotting evangelization which is a vital element of the theatrical engagement in evangelization.

The characterisation of Fr. Makarios is complex in the sense that he exhibits double-edged emotions. When the play starts he is calm, but as it progresses he gets stormy and as the play moves towards the end, he becomes calm again. Perhaps this illustrates the pyramidal kind of plot that the director wanted to build in the play. At the fall of the curtain, Fr. Makarios reconciles with his ‘parents’ now Grandparents, and the facts that define his family and in that moment he expresses his sadness and confusion on the many events around him and then collapses. His fall signifies the collapse of his bad memories and resentment towards his family and the end of the lies and intrigues that caused him to deviate from being an ideal priest as the Catholic canons dictate. Following immediately in the wake of the reconciliation, the ‘sleep’ serves as a process of cleansing, after which he wakes up as a new person with a conciliatory past to reckon as he trudges the future.

By being calm and respectful in his relation and correspondence towards other members of the church and congregation like the mother superior, the other priest, Fr. Karascos, the Nuncio and even the journalists that come to cover his story, Fr. Makarios’ character helps the play achieve its resolution and ultimate end. This is a key aspect in the theatrical presentation of evangelization since it helps the audience realize the power of
forgiveness. By this act of contriteness, Fr. Makarios as a character helps build the image that forgiveness can conquer even the deep seated burdens of hatred that can afflict every member of society including priests. In a way, this act of contriteness signifies that Fr. Makarios has finally come to terms with his past; an act that he should have done long time ago before he was consecrated.

3.2.2 Fr. Karascos

Fr. Karascos an assistant priest arrives to inform Fr. Makarios that the Nuncio has arrived and wants to see him. He is calm, and collected. He is satisfied by Fr. Makarios’s promise to see the Nuncio in a minute and does not insist, question or nag. He just walks out. This shows the trust he has in his brother priest that even if they do not go together, he will eventually obey. The response of Fr Makarios shows a priest who is ready to obey his superiors which is one of the cardinal virtues of religious life. It is good to note that during ordination, every priest promises obedience to his bishop and those who will come after him. The Nuncio, who is pope’s representative in any country, is a senior member in the order of episcopate at the level of Archbishop although it should be noted that he is not on the hierarchy of leadership. An archbishop is more senior than a bishop. The pyramidal figure below shows this hierarchical order;
Fr. Karascos is a priest who seems to respect the authority of the church and this portrays him as a role model to the sisters.

3.2.3 Sisters

Knight (2017) in the Catholic encyclopaedia defines sisters as females consecrated to God by religious vows. Sisters are women of the church who have devoted their lives to serving the community. Like priests, sisters take the three evangelical vows of chastity, poverty and obedience (Kaam, 1968). There is need to differentiate nuns and sisters. All nuns are sisters but not all sisters are nuns because nuns are sisters who have embraced the monastic life. Gambari (1986) writes that Nuns are admitted into religious life through formation after which they take their vows. In terms of execution of their duties
it is worth noting that though all sisters serve the community, their duties are not uniform because various congregations are guided by various charisms. When writing about religious life, Gambari (1986) defines a charism as,

>a gift bestowed for the good of the Church where there is a diversity of members and functions…it differs from ordinary graces granted for the sanctification of the faithful; it should not be confused with the personal taste or a certain natural disposition or ability that some may manifest (p.47).

This explains why there are various congregations that have different charisms that include nurses (for example sister of Mary who run hospitals), teachers (who run schools and vocational centres for example Consolata sisters), compassion and sacred heart of Jesus (who run homes for the poor or children's Homes for example Little sisters for the poor) among others.

A contentious issue regarding sisterhood has been their unmarriageability. According to the Catholic understanding, sisters are unmarriageable so that they are always available to the people of God. Sisters are called to love the people of God through words and deed and to totally surrender to the service of evangelization (Kaam, 1968). In this context, chastity is love for all which is inclusive in nature (includes everybody in the service) as opposed to the secular way of love which is exclusive by nature (love to an individual). This explains why sisters live in communities because community life is a distinctive mark of religious living. A religious sister lives within a group of other religious sisters in a communal way (Kaam, 1968).

Given this kind of life, sisters by virtue of their womanhood and humanity face some unique challenges that any theatre piece can exploit. In a world that commodifies and
sexualizes women, sisters are not left out. They face social pressure of sexualisation since the society views them as rebels of nature. By choosing chastity and inclusive love life, sisters are ridiculed and shamed as wasted resources since they cannot love exclusively and procreate. Secondly, sisters being human beings, also face the larger temptation of going against the vow of chastity particularly when tempted by the men-folk. However, the institution of sisterhood has put in place mechanisms of overcoming this kind of temptation. First, a sister can request for time off from her duties to retreat and pray for as long as the temptation lasts. Secondly, the communal life that sisters lead shields them against such temptations and unnecessary exposure. (Kaam, 1968).

The third challenge sisters face as human beings relates to the vow of poverty. Sisters are seen as having nothing to offer in terms of material wealth and knowledge. Since they do not own property, sisters are looked down upon as individuals who cannot help even their family members whenever need for money and other material wealth is required. As a woman, one feels the urge and need to care for others but since a sister doesn't own property she cannot support a person in such a need of material resource. Also, they are seen as less knowledgeable and not educated. This arises from the fact that earlier on education was never a requirement to joining sisterhood. Although this has changed and many sisters are now well educated and serving the society in different professions, the mentality of an unknowledgeable sister still endures (Kaam, 1968).

With the above mentioned challenges, one might be forgiven to conclude that sisters have a miserable life. Far from it, sisters do enjoy privileges the most important being that of feeling closer to God through adequate prayer time with few distractions. Since
they are not encumbered by worldly possessions, riches and hustles, sisters devote most of their time to prayer and this is believed to move them to a closer connection with their faith and God. Moreover, sisters ironically enjoy the advantage of poverty since everything that a sister needs in the line of service is provided for by her congregation. This gives them a sense of adequacy and belonging and it saves them the hustles of life. Lastly, the issue of inclusive love is an advantage to sisters as they are not obliged with the burden of ownership of one man like married women. Security of warmth of a community shields a sister from the loneliness of life (Kaam, 1968).

How are sisters in the selected plays portrayed? The following discussion analyses the portrayal of mother superior and reverend sisters in the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru diocese.

3.2.3.1 Mother superior

A Mother Superior is considered a spiritual leader of a congregation of sisters. She also doubles up as an administrative leader of the congregation as well as its spokesperson. In the play *Fr Makarios* by Nakuru Diocese, the character mother superior is given qualities of a gentle and pacifying sister. Given her position as a leader of her congregation, mother superior comes in with a rare maturity exhibiting a reconciliatory tone. With the scuffles going on between Fr Makarios and his dad, she does not take any side but tries to pacify the situation with her motherly tone and presence. Her authority is unmistakably clear and almost tactile. She directs the priest to stop whatever he is doing and go see the Nuncio citing that ‘’it is morally wrong to keep the Nuncio waiting.’’
She stands out as a moral authority in full knowledge that every priest has a moral duty to obey his superiors as part of the fulfilment of the vow of obedience which every consecrated life member takes. This is shown by the respect she commands both from the priest himself and the sisters whom she is their superior. By characterizing her as such, the play enables the audience to see mother superior not as no nonsense strict disciplinarians that the society characterizes them but as people of respect who can be emulated. This in itself is a very evangelical statement relayed to the audience. It also teaches the audience how it is important for the religious men and women to work together in perfect harmony.

The scene also brings out another aspect of the Catholic faith; prayer. Mother superior leads in prayer which also communicates the need to pray always even in times of crises. Indeed, in normal religious life, one of the roles of mother superior is to provide spiritual leadership by leading her fellow community members (sisters) in prayer. The prayer starts with the sign of the cross which communicates Catholicity. Ghezzi (2006) asserts that the sign means a lot of things. He describes six meanings, with and without words. The sign of the cross is, he says, a confession of faith; a renewal of baptism; a mark of discipleship; an acceptance of suffering; a defence against the devil; and a victory over self-indulgence.

The sign of the cross is a mark of discipleship. The Catholic Church derives it from the bible in the book of Luke 9:23 when Jesus says, “If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.” When one makes the sign he/she is professing a mini version of the creed — one is professing ones belief in the
Father, and in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. When we say the words and pray in someone’s name we are declaring their presence and coming into their presence — that’s how a name is used in Scripture. (Ghezzi: 2006)

One of the main teachings of the early Church Fathers is that the sign of the cross is a declaration of defence against the devil. No wonder it’s an opportune moment to use it in this war-like situation. Mother superior seems to understand the power of prayer in rebuking the evil one. In fact, it is through her intervention that Fr Makarios calms down and his tone changes from the earlier angry tone and the sadness that bore the anger begins to become poignant (Ghezzi: 2006).

3.2.3.2 Reverend Sisters

Generally depicted as respectful melodious angels who echo mother superior’s words in a melodious way. The leader among the sisters is Sister Joyce, presented as prone to a violent streak as she threatens to physically and violently eject Mr. Hazel out of the church compound. On deciding to take matters into her own hands, to deal with a devil that has not responded to prayers and coaxing, she approaches father, rearing for a fight. Just like the character of Fr. Makarios, Sister Joyce is presented as a member of clergy that trods on matters of society with a bible on one hand and the other clenched in a fist, ready to attack, those who seem to inconvenience the church. Sisters Joyce says she was bad news before she joined the convent and that it is the convent that changed me. She even proceeds to demonstrate how she used to clobber people who crossed her path.

Generally, the character of men and women of cloth have been deliberately used in this play to serve the role of anchoring and mainstreaming the play within the Catholic faith.
Additionally, the content of the characterisation has served to show how disputes within a Catholic spectrum can be solved particularly using the Catholic hierarchy of leadership and adherence to the vow of obedience. This has been noted by the Nuncio being characterized as the pacifier in a dispute between a priest and his family. Lastly by accepting to be pacified and reconciled with his family through the intervention of the Nuncio, Fr. Makarios is also obeying his superiors hence adhering to the vow of obedience.

3.3 Characterization of Family Members

The Catholic Church views family life within the prism of the holy family of Nazareth that includes Joseph, Mary and Jesus (Ecclesia in Africa, 1995). This is the mirror through which the Catholic Church draws her inspiration in guiding its members on how to live family life. The Holy family is characterized by love for one another, shared values, and unity of purpose, respect for work and embrace responsibilities, raise God-fearing children, mutual complementarity, and submission to the will of God (Brockman, 1991).

Family is important to the Catholic understanding because it raises children of the kingdom through procreation which is a key component in God's plan for mankind. In the African synod, family was identified and considered as the fourth important avenue of evangelization. It is through family that kingdom of God is established and given early teaching concerning the church (Code of Canon Law 1983).

With modernity and rapid urbanization, families face several challenges. These have been as a result of family members having to work often for long hours and sometimes
away from each other. The close family unit that is essential in bringing members together is sometimes lost. It also suffers from individualism that results from urbanization that works against communal life which is a mark of family life. What challenges beset family characters and how do they overcome or succumb to them? How does their handling of these challenges hinge on evangelization?

3.3.1 Characterization of Family members in the play Fr. Makarios

Mr. Hazel is Fr Makarios father as the play begins and by the time it ends, we learn that he is in fact, his grandfather because Fr. Makarios is the son of Hazel’s daughter called Sikujua. He is a frenetic, quick tempered character who constantly engages in conflicts. Actually, the main conflict of the play seems to stem from his ill-tempered actions that alienate and fill Fr. Makarios’s heart with vengeful anger. He is a violent character who slaps his wife when she supports Makarios’ decision to join the seminary. In another instance, he punishes his daughters by caning them ruthlessly. He is not only violent towards his wife, but he displays a level of disrespect to her by calling her a dunderhead and slapping her in front of the children.

Hazel is also exhibited as a character tightly knotted in his beliefs and convictions of tradition when he says his son Makarios “amevuta bangi” (has smoked cannabis) just because he wants to join the seminary. So much is he against the idea of Makarios priesthood that he callously declares that, “If he joins the seminary, I will disown him.”

This assertion not only betrays his averseness to the idea of priesthood but also unveils the real challenges that those with a calling to evangelization go through. It goes a long way to also reveal the stumbling blocks that exist in the process of evangelisation.
The character of Hazel also helps in deconstructing the conduct of the clergy. In response to Mother Superior, who says that they should pray because the devil manifests itself on the eve of Christmas in the holy grounds, Hazel responds by saying,

“I wonder what it has come to in today’s church. How dare he, call me, a devoted Christian who came for confession a devil? I only came here for confession in preparation for the birth of Jesus Christ! Now can I get it clear, between me the confessor, and Fr. Makarios the confessee, who has refused to listen to my confession, who is the devil?”

Fr. Makarios is irked by this supposition and quickly retorts and warns his father for referring to him as a devil. Though unfair and insulting to the priest, the reason given suffices in conviction since Fr. Makarios seems to be doing the bidding of the devil. By denying a deserving penitent, Fr. Makarios is Indeed, being the metaphoric devil as suggested by his dad. In fact, he responds to the threat by adding,

“I did not call you a devil, I only asked a question, but calling you a devil could be metaphorical”

In his words and actions, Mr. Hazel seems to challenge the members of the clergy to uphold the church creed and values by detaching themselves from personal biases. He plays the role of the prickly thorn piercing through the roles of the clergys’ shoes, reminding them of their uncompromising role in offering sacraments and ministry without the need to “look at the faces” of the partakers in a biased way, as it is an impediment to evangelization.

In the end, Hazel acquiesces to the reconciliation and turns out to be a repentant character, a trait that is important in Catholic Christians. The turnaround of his character therefore, presents a good opportunity to evangelize on the need to forgive, reconcile
and cohere with ones adversaries and live in harmony with them as brothers and sisters in Christ in spite of the sins that such adversaries may have committed.

3.3.2 Characterization of Family Members in the Play *The Tabletas*

*The Tabletas* is a story of two families. Mathew's family which consists of Mathews the father, Megi the mother, Titi the son and Adhiambo the daughter. Damela's family consists of Mr. Mikaus as the father, Damela as the mother and Junior as the son. Mathews and Damela are always off for seminars and now their spouses are complaining. These complaints provide the inciting incidents of the actions.

3.3.2.1 Megi

Megi is the wife to Mathews and mother to Titi, Adhiambo and Leah. The play opens with two children Titi and Adhiambo lying flat on the ground with their father with a cane in hand punishing them for stealing his tablet and the mother beside him trying to defend them. The mother, though she knows the gravity of the offense, stands out as a defender of the children and thereby exhibiting her motherly care. Her presence does not only assure the children but also brings in the taste of motherhood. This brings out one of the gospel values of being the salt of the earth. A Christian mother isn’t necessarily better than other mothers; but rather she has special seasoning due to the presence of the Holy Spirit.

She exhibits traits of a believing mother who has a wealth of resources at her disposal to train, discipline, and love her children in the grace of God. She seems to understand that there exits another form of discipline thus shouting; 'stop beating my children'. The
father continues to cane them undeterred by her noise thus prompting her to escalate her verbal pleas. This reveals another quality of a Christian mother; the one who brings order to chaos. The bible says in Proverbs 31:2. “She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness”. As a Christian mother, Megi is marked for her diligence and resistance to laziness or slothfulness. Her chief concern isn’t the perfect home, but rather a healthy home full of love, laughter, and order. She keeps her home free not only from physical clutter but watches for the spiritual and emotional clutter of worldliness.

Megi engages her husband about a text message that he receives on his mobile phone because she suspects its content and intent. And to confirm her fears, her husband simply barks that it is none of her business, citing that he doesn’t bother with hers. He nevertheless tells her that it is about a seminar in Eldoret. They then engage in an argument about him being away from home for 16 days. She values the physical presence of her husband in the family. The husband does not take her concern positively. In fact, he begins a monologue lament about Kenyan women and how ungrateful they are; Getting a good man who provides everything but still want to ‘put him in the pocket’.

From her characterization, Megi is an epitome of a Christian mother who values time with her family and nonviolent means of resolving issues. Although children hurt her deeply by engaging in an incestuous affair (symbolized by the action of playing with the tablet), she calmly leads her ferocious husband in resolving the conflict, forgiving the children and agreeing to forge ahead. She thus helps the play achieve its objective of
portraying how a Christian mother should behave when caught in a very difficult situation that threatens the core of her family.

3.3.2.2 Leah

Although the play has three child characters belonging to the family of Mathews and Megi, Leah stands out since her activities propel the plot and ultimately hinge on the theme of evangelization.

Leah is the young daughter to Megi and Mathews as well as the younger sister to the mischievous Adhiambo and Titi. She is not part of the punishment since she does not participate in Titi’s and Adhiambo’s mischief.

Leah is forthright and stubborn. Even after coercing and threats from Titi, she vows to say what they were doing with the tablet. This reveals a child who is not ready to go with the wind but stand with the truth. She is honest and focused but also very sociable.

Leah apologises to Titi for making him run away. This is a girl, who on introspection realises her mistakes and rights the wrongs. She is a child who is more concerned with family harmony than the drama which seems to characterise their family.

Leah innocently enters and wonders where everyone is, the father tries to make her understand the wrongs committed by her mother. She is the voice of reason in the family, she represent the innocent ones whose vision is not clouded or coloured by biases of ill intentions. She just wants her family together and things done right.
3.3.2.3 Baba Adhiambo (Mr. Mathews)

Mr. Mathews is the head of his family and the subplot on his family in this play revolves around him. His absence from home creates a conflict that makes his wife, Megi agitated. In this opening scene Mathews unfairly orders his wife to leave the house to which she adamantly refuses hence setting the stage for a conflict. This scene shows a family that is perpetually in turmoil. Baba Adhiambo questions and admonishes Adhiambo for going out and seems cheekily angry about it. In his dubious nature, he questions Adhiambo whether she has ever had sex with a man. She confesses to have had sex but says she was confused and adds that she is pregnant. The father questions her on the paternity of the child which turns out to be Titi. In her defence, Adhiambo says their behaviour was inspired by the movies they watched on his tablet.

Fuming with anger, the dad declares that she must procure an abortion. He then turns violent, holds Titi by the scruff of the neck. This scene reveals a man who is against the pro-life teaching of the Catholic Church that life starts at conception and ends at natural death. The Roman Catholic Church has consistently condemned abortion — the direct and purposeful taking of the life of the unborn child. In principle, Catholic Christians believe that all life is sacred from conception until natural death, and the taking of innocent human life, whether born or unborn, is morally wrong.

The Church teaches, human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.
This teaching is against any form of abortion for whatever reason. Baba Adhiambo is therefore, a man in conflict with the Catholic Church’s moral teaching.

3.3.2.4 Mr. Mikaus (Baba Junior)

Mr. Mikaus is Damela’s estranged husband and father to Junior. He is a man under siege since he cannot control his wife who seems to be more exposed, and negatively so, than him. Baba junior is arguing with his wife Madam Damela complaining about her endless trips and seminars that constantly keep her out of home. He says he wants to divorce her. Damela says the house help was in the house when she was away. The husband tells her if she brought the house help to be secretly married to him then he is disappointed. The narrative takes a new turn when Damela tells him that junior is not his son.

This raises a pertinent question on how the Catholic evangelization treats questions of divorce. Can one divorce an adulterous wife? Can a man divorce a woman who reveals that all along the child she has does not belong to the man she is married to? When writing about a theological and pastoral perspective of divorce, Kunhiyop (2008) considers that,

Christian marriage is for life. The Christian ideal is that marriage is the lifelong union of a man and a woman. Christian marriage is monogamous and indissoluble and is intended to be enjoyable and fruitful…. divorce is the antithesis of marriage and God’s reaction to it is succinct, "I hate divorce." (p.254)

The indissolubility of marriage means Mikaus cannot divorce Damela. Instead the Catholic Church prescribes that he seeks intervention from church elders to reconcile them and save their marriage. Although they do not go to church elders for
reconciliation, they never the less reconcile and thus the play advocates for family reconciliation through their characterisation.

3.3.2.5 Junior

Junior is the ping pong ball in the emotional game being played by his parents. He presents the character of the innocent bystander in a battle front. When told that Mr. Mikaus is not his real biological father, he mourns, wails and grovels. It hurts him even more when the conflict between his parents escalate and a separation looms large. However, his presence in the family leads his parents to reconsider their hard line positions and climb down to a compromise. The play therefore, seems to silently acknowledge the role that children can play in the process of reconciliation.

3.3.3 Characterization of Family Members in the Play *Friends of our Lives.*

3.3.3.1 Baba Jasmine

Baba Jasmine in the play *Friends of our Lives* is a cornered man due to his behaviours. He impregnates Alice and accuses mama Jasmine of being the cause. He says that she is always unavailable for him while attending conferences and studying for her doctoral degree and when at home she is always on her IPad browsing on Facebook, Twitter and WhatsApp. In mitigation, he says he was lonely leading him to do what he did. This negates his commitment to his wife. The church would view this man as one who is unfaithful not only to his wife but also to God. Biblically, faithfulness is remaining true to a commitment or promise one has made. Biblical faithfulness is two-fold; a godly man will choose to remain consistently faithful both to God and to his wife. He will
exhibit behaviour that is based on the fact that he made a commitment, not on how he feels at any particular moment. This fact indict the man who is blaming his bad manners to loneliness. However, he later becomes apologetic and seems ready to face the consequences of his action. But when he learns that Jasmine was being mistreated he swears to chase away his wife, (Jasmine's step mother) after beating her up.

He is an abusive husband and father not only emotionally but also physically. This is shown by the way he drags Mama Karen out of the house and how he beats Karen up when she is brought home by the police for being drunk and disorderly. The fact that he has to be restrained by people to prevent him from getting more violent exhibits his taste for expressing himself violently. Later in the play, he expresses pride in being a grandfather. This shows that he has turned around from a bitter man to a forgiving and loving father.

3.3.3.2 Mama Jasmine

Mama Jasmine is obviously a disappointed mother, referring to Jasmine she shouts; “You can get pregnant as many times as you want but not in my house”. She is not only disappointed with her daughter but also angry at her philandering husband. On discovering of her new husband’s infidelity, she raves mad, wails, shouts and walks away from him. She becomes depressed, anorexic, dysfunctional and sick after the infidelity. She is a true Catholic who understands what the church teaches about infidelity. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that; Adultery refers to marital infidelity. When two partners, of whom at least one is married to another party, have sexual relations - even transient ones - they commit adultery (CCC, 2380). Christ
condemns even adultery of mere desire, Mt 5:27-28. The sixth commandment and the New Testament forbid adultery absolutely, Mt 5:32; 19:6; Mk. 10:11; 1 Cor. 6:9-10. The prophets denounce the gravity of adultery; they see it as an image of the sin of idolatry, Hos 2:7; Jer 5:7; 13:27. Mama Jasmine’s fate demonstrates the wages of infidelity and the kind of devastating results they can visit upon a previously well-knit family. Mama Jasmine therefore, represents the casualties of a sinful life, which is a vital element of evangelization.

3.3.3.3 Jasmine

Orphaned and chased from home by her foster mother, Jasmine is a character whose traits point towards the need to be mindful of the abandoned children. The playmakers first make her undergo extreme difficulties before she redeems herself. She is attacked by thugs who assault and rape her and to make matters worse, she conceives from this rape ordeal.

All these happen at the beginning of the play before a flashback gives us a glimpse to her earlier life.

The flashback shows that life was good earlier on. Jasmine remembers how life was good when the mother was alive. The step mother is mistreating her triggering her to miss her mother. Had her dad behaved well, she could not be where she is today. This is a reminder of how important it is for a family to live together. The infidelity of her father brought the family where they are now. She finds herself at a loss due to the unjust treatment she is going through with her step mother. The catechism of the Catholic Church number 2381 states;
Adultery is an injustice. He who commits adultery fails in his commitment. He does injury to the sign of the covenant which the marriage bond is, transgresses the rights of the other spouse, and undermines the institution of marriage by breaking the contract on which it is based. He compromises the good of human generation and the welfare of children who need their parents' stable union.

Clearly this girl can feel the heat of the injustice caused by her father’s act of adultery. The father shows up and tries to apologies but Jasmine refuses to listen. The pain in her heart cannot allow her to conceptualize forgiveness let alone entertaining an apology. Moreover, she is perseverant since she takes in a lot of vagaries from her cruel stepmother and step sister and uncaring step father without breaking her spirit. Her triumph and ability to unite her step mother to her father and forgiving them is the ultimate meaning of Christian forgiveness which knows no boundaries.

3.4 Characterisation of other Members in the Society

This study has analysed the characters who play supportive roles to the family members and how this support is linked to the quest for Catholic evangelization. In defining family members, the study limited itself to the biblical definition of the family of Nazareth i.e. father, mother and child (children).

3.4.1. Baba Hazel

This is the father to Hazel and grandfather to Fr. Makarios in the Nakuru Diocese play. However, as the play’s plot gets resolved, we learn that he is actually the great grandfather to Fr. Makarios. He is a man who lives in his own world for he does not believe that women can offer anything substantial into human growth. This deviates from the Catholic theology of marriage which asserts that men and women are the same
in the sight of God. Indeed, marriage comes from the loving hand of God, who fashioned both male and female in the divine image (see Gn 1:27). A man "leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and the two of them become one body" (Gn 2:24). The man recognizes the woman as "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Gn 2:23). God blesses the man and woman and commands them to "be fertile and multiply" (Gn 1:28). Jesus reiterates these teachings from Genesis, saying, "But from the beginning of creation, 'God made them male and female. For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother [and be joined to his wife], and the two shall become one flesh.'" (Mk 10:6-8). And from this bible quotations, the Catholic Church drives her meaning of marriage.

These biblical passages help us to appreciate the Catholic interpretation of God's plan for marriage which is an intimate union in which the spouses give themselves, as equal persons, completely and lovingly to one another. By their mutual gift of self, they cooperate with God in bringing children to life and in caring for them.

Baba Hazel represents the patriarchal generation and calibre of individuals that are pegged on the belief that “girls are not children”. He seems to implicitly believe that a family is complete by having sons and not daughters and insists that 14 years after marriage and no son in Hazel and Rosa’s marriage is a bad thing, which contravenes the modern societal principle of equality. Compared to the clergy in the play, that places the priest and mother superior in a position of authority in the church which is a microcosm of the larger society, the church then provides a good example of the importance and role of both genders in the growth and order of society.
To emphasize his point and underscore his disdain for the idea of Makarios joining priesthood, Baba Hazel asks where the heirs shall come from, to which the clansmen insist “tumeisha!” (We are finished!). And to the other question asked; “My clansmen is a seminary the place where people who do not marry go?” the assembled clansmen answer in a resounding chorus, “Aii Kwisha sisi”. This goes a long way in exposing the collective mind of the society on the idea of priesthood and its terror on the vow of celibacy or chastity. The vow of celibacy is a pre-requisite for the practice of priesthood and it is pegged on the commitment to the ministry by detaching them from the worries of the world. Celibacy therefore, is one of the biggest acts of self-sacrifice a Catholic priest is called upon to make, forgoing spouse, progeny and sexual fulfilment for his relationship with parishioners and God. According to the Catholic Church’s code of canon law, celibacy is a “special gift of God” which allows practitioners to follow more closely the example of Christ, who was chaste. Another reason is that when a priest enters into service to God, the church becomes his highest calling. If he were to have a family there would be the potential for conflict between his spiritual and familial duties (Canon Law, 1983). The Vatican regards it as being easier for unattached men to commit to the church, as they have more time for devotion and fewer distractions (Vita Consecra, 1996)

3.4.2. Makaraka

Makaraka is the father to Rosa Nakhumicha and father in law to Mr. Hazel in the play by Nakuru Diocese. He is also the maternal grandfather to Fr. Makarios. He arrives (with villagers) to find out the cause of the screams in Hazel's home only to find that
Hazel was beating up his daughters and wife and he complains about the beatings. He is supportive to his daughter and forces clansmen to take his side of the discipline.

His traits point towards a sober minded man who sees through the lies propagated by Hazel and his father. By helping a would-be-priest when he needed support most, Mr. Makaraka’s character is thus purposefully employed to appeal to the audience always to extend a helping hand to Rose who aspire towards consecrated lives. Ultimately, had Mr. Makaraka had taken Rosa and Makarios in and encouraged them, Makarios may never have made it as a priest.

3.4.3 Alice

Alice is a domestic worker in Baba and Mama Jasmines home. From the onset she is seen to be an important person to the family as she is responsible for the welfare of everyone including; preparing food, cleaning up and running the errands around the house. However, she is late in serving breakfast and takes numerous and sudden bathroom breaks, which makes Mama Jasmine suspicious that she is pregnant as signalled by the morning sickness. On questioning, Alice says that Musa, the watchman is the one responsible for her pregnancy but soon after changes her statement and says that Baba Jasmine is responsible. That is the straw that breaks the camel’s back in their marriage and leads to Mama Jasmine’s death. Alice therefore, is the proverbial serpent that broke the blissful relationship between God and Man, forged in the Garden of Eden. She is a character who constitutes the whole sermon on temptation and on fornication and its devastating effects. She is an example of what can go wrong in the
family especially when the parenting goes wrong. The church encourages proper parenting for a healthy family because the family is the basic unit of the church.

Like any family, Baba Jasmines family too has got challenges. When faced with the prospect of his maid being pregnant, Baba Jasmine ought to have followed the Catholic way of resolving the issue. According to the Catholic Church, human life has to be protected at all costs. In this case therefore, Baba Jasmine ought to have become the guardian to the pregnant maid and helped in nursing the pregnancy to full term while at the same time exploring the possibility of a prior commitment to marriage attached to the pregnancy. Then he would have made a referral to the biological parents of the maid for commencement of the cultural rites of marriage which would have culminated into solemnization of their union in church. In case the maid did not have parents, The Catholic Church would advise that Baba Jasmine takes the responsibility as a guardian to the maid while still allowing her to make her own choices.

However, as we realize and as discussed above, Baba Jasmine does not take the Catholic point of view and hence the plot develops differently with its twists and turns.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter set out to interrogate characterisation as an agent of Catholic evangelization in the plays. Using the theory of performance, the chapter identified and clustered the characters into three groups which are men and women of God, family members, and other members of the family. The chapter found that most characters had their roles hinged on Catholic evangelization as well as making the plays Catholic-centred. This is particularly evident of characters who were grouped as men and women...
of God. It also found out that the characterisation of some family members brought out only social issues that any Christian may face but devoid of evangelical messages.

Nevertheless the three sampled plays achieve resolutions by way of reconciliation of characters. Fr. Makarios reconciles with Mr. Hazel in the play Fr. Makarios, Damela reconciles with her husband and Mr. Mathews vows to love his wife Megi unconditionally in the play The Tabletas. In the play Friends of our Lives, baba Jasmine expresses his remorse and accepts Jasmine back into the family. Mama Jasmine also expresses her contriteness and begs for forgiveness from Jasmine. Thus, all the antagonistic forces are annihilated at the altar of reconciliation. The characters soften their hearts, turn around and extend a hand of peace to the characters they were fighting.

This action of softening the heart is a mark of Christianity that qualifies the plays as religious theatre where the plot revolves around religious teachings and is resolved by means of reconciliation hence assuring hope.

This chapter therefore, concludes that by their utterances and stage actions characters were key in informing the study on the theme of reconciliation which does not necessarily mean evangelization but good neighbourliness. The next chapter examines how these utterances and actions form a language of evangelization and theatre.
CHAPTER FOUR
LANGUAGE AS A CONVEYOR OF CATHOLIC EVANGELIZATION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter delves into the language used in the sampled plays and its significance in the driving forward the evangelistic message and purpose. To achieve this, the chapter looks at language as a functional tool in the context of linguistic functions as defined and outlined by Janner (2000) and Holmes (2014) in reference to the functions of language as classified by Roman Jakobson who delineates the functions of language into; pleasure function, referential function, phatic function, directive function and expressive function, based on a concise survey of the constitutive factors in any speech event, in any act of verbal communication (Janner, P. 353). The study selects only three functions of language as enumerated by Roman Jakobson and discusses them in the light of the plays. These are poetic, expressive and reflexive functions. These three were considered to be closely linked to the study particularly in light of the religious theatre and performance theories.

The chapter therefore, relays its arguments on the framework of these linguistic functions and draws its analysis on the performance ideals of the language, as well as the evangelical output thereof, based on the resulting theatre communication and the coded evangelical symbols. While the performance theory helps the chapter to delineate the performance language used in the plays including but not limited to dialogues, monologues and soliloquys, and lastly comic relief, the religious theatre theory helps the study analyse use of Catholic centred codes and symbols in the sampled plays from Nakuru Diocese, Homabay Diocese and St. Peters Kapsabet Parish.
4.2 Pleasure or poetic Function of Language

The pleasure function also referred to as the poetic or aesthetic function is associated with the communication of the message. This is because it is usually aimed at bringing out the features of a text. Within the realm of performance studies, the pleasure function is derived by way of those identifiable and idiosyncratic features and aspects of performance style that include inter alia comic relief, metaphor, simile, and irony. This section restricts itself to aspects of aesthetic function that are richly found in the plays selected for analysis. These are comic relief and symbols, two elements that are richly poignant in the dialogues of the sampled plays.

4.2.1 Comic Relief

Comic relief is a line or scene or action meant to bring down tension in a play performance particularly to the audience. It is meant to elicit humour after a tense moment or action in a performance. For example an utterance like the one below elicits humour not because of itself but its context.

Stop holding me like a crocodile, you will break my waist and start complaining.

These words uttered by Matthews while engaged in a physical struggle with his wife Megi when he is punishing his children and she tries to stop him are stylistic in rendition. The humour in this statement is that it has sexual connotation. What he means is that he needs to be fit to perform his conjugal duties. Sex, according to the Catholic Church, makes sacramental marriage complete. Marriage is a sacrament and all sacraments have signs. The way the sacrament is carried out is through the couple
getting married before a priest. Each spouse is the medium through which each half of the union receives grace; the vows that they say at marriage are binding. The sign of marital unity, as has been the custom of many cultures and is a very ancient sign, is sexual intercourse. A marriage is not made whole (consummated) until the couple has sexual intercourse. Sex is a uniting action in which the couple unite themselves to each other with God (in marriage, not fornication). The gift of sex also has another natural function and that is to reproduce. The sexual organs make up our reproductive system.

The two primary purposes of sexual intercourse in God's design is to unite the couple and to create more people. God gave us the gift of sex to participate in his Creation. To use the sexual organs in a manner that is not ordered towards unity of a married couple or creating further life is wrongly ordered or disordered. Another gift of sexual intercourse is pleasure. The role of pleasure in sex is a well-debated topic. However, pleasure is a part of the sex act for many possible reasons. The pleasure in sexual intercourse helps create the unity. Also it may be that since the pain of childbearing is so great we have a moment of pleasure to help ease that. Whatever the reason we know it exists. That Megi holding on to Matthews on his waist is ridiculously tickling.

There are also instances of humour in the play by Nakuru Diocese. While hoisted shoulder high, being ejected from the church after a show of defiance, Hazel screams his lungs out, 'Fr. Makarios has stopped being a priest to a security guard.'

This is stylistic language which reveals the humorous side of the dad to Fr. Makarios. He is clear in his mind how priests should carry themselves. To him is scandalous that the priest, his son for that matter is behaving like that. His understanding is that priests
should be compassionate. That Fr. Makarios is lifting him shoulder high is a thing he cannot comprehend and he suggests in jest that there could be a possibility that the good priest has rescinded his priesthood calling and taken on a new career as a security guard.

I think there comes a time when the devil does not respond to prayers only.

This is stylistic language since it goes beyond its literal meaning. He is saying that there are situations that need more than just prayers. It echoes a Benedictine motto, *Ora Et Labora* or "pray and labour" which according to Linda M. Maloney (2006), refers to the Christian monastic practice of working and praying, generally associated with its use in the Rule of Saint Benedict. The phrase expresses the need to balance prayer and work in monastic settings and has been used in many religious communities from the middle Ages onwards. In the context of the play therefore, though relevant, the statement is used in jest and the slapstick action that accompanies it, is used to amuse and evoke laughter.

Lastly, when Damela is given a gift by her husband, Mathews commends that he would have added a blouse on top of the *leso* and this elicits a reprimand from his wife who comments, "...pretender, how many have you ever bought me." Here Megi is revealing inner truths that the audience may not have known about Mathews who has never given his wife a gift thereby making the words by his hollow.

4.2.2 Symbols

Brockett & Ball (2004) define a symbol as, "an object, event, or image that, although meaningful in itself, also suggests a concept or set of relationships" (p.43). Performance theory regards symbols as those representations of actions not just on stage but also of
off the stage. They mainstream and lay more emphasis on the power of a performance to represent something bigger and abstract that goes beyond the stage of performance (Schechner, 2002). This representation is manifested in the symbolic time that the performance exists in and symbolic reality that it creates. Thus symbols in performance theory are defined as ‘word-likeness’ (Schechner 2002; p. 69). What this means is that symbols are expressive signs that aid communication by what they reference. In performance studies, they are key in enhancing visual communication as they give visual meaning to utterances or objects. In the selected plays, several utterances contain various symbolic meanings which hack back to the expressive function of language.

In profound pain the girl in, *Friends of Our Lives* explains her predicament symbolically by saying that, ‘They plucked my flower.’ The connotation of the foregoing piece of dialogue is that she was raped by the thugs. The flower in this case is refers to her womanhood and sexuality and the plucking action is thus used to refer to the violent indulgence with her sexually which differs from picking the flower.

There is also the use of symbols in the play *The Tabletas* by Homa Bay Diocese. In reference to Leah’s opinion about Junior and his resemblance to Titi, Megi says that, "I need an innocent answer". In her words she refers to her daughter as a synonym to innocence. By the innocent reference, she reveals to the audience that Leah is the ideal child, honest, truthful and unpolluted by the goings on of the world around her. Innocence is therefore, used symbolically to refer to the character traits and also the profile that Leah presents as a character in the play.
Matthews’ supplication about his children is a symbolic comparison to the biblical parable of the prodigal son, to describe the children. After unending incidences of mischief, starting with the stealing of his tablet, which in time graduates to incest and running away from home, Matthews is a defeated man. He prays referring to his children as prodigal in reference to the parable in the Bible about the son who demanded for his inheritance and went away from home only to come back after a lot of suffering. He complains to his wife as can be seen in the following excerpt;

Leah: I have been living with thieves, Tablets thieves that converted themselves into prodigal sons and daughters. Oh Adhiambo You will bring more trouble.

Matthews: God have Mercy on me Mathews. I have an heir with me, a prodigal son and a prodigal daughter.

This symbol not only marks the biblical reference but also signals the opportunity for future reconciliation and repentance.

Another symbol reveals itself in the reference to pregnancy that Adhiambo carries. While addressing the pregnant Adhiambo and after the revelation that it is a product of incest with her brother Titi, Matthews says that, "You will abort the tablet." The tablet is used to refer to the foetus growing in Adhiambo, since it is arguably the product of the stolen tablet. The symbol helps to elucidate that the tablet had a direct bearing to the events that lead towards Adhiambo getting pregnant, in view of the content it was carrying. Matthews also likens the killing of Titi to abortion and thus the statement of aborting the tablet and the father.

In the Nakuru Diocese play, the backdrop scenery is composed of a divided mitre. While this may mean that there is a division that needs to be reunited, one wonders
what this division is all about. The opening sequence of the play offers a glimpse to the division. There is a penance sacrament that has to administer and therefore, the division can be found in this act of penance. As noted elsewhere in this study, penance is a process that has three parts hinged on the individual, the liturgical process and the social process. The individual process is marked by a penitent realizing his or her sin and willingly and freely going for confession. The liturgical process is marked by an engagement between the minister and the penitent where the penitent again freely and willingly discloses the nature of his or her sins to the minister and the minister administering absolution. Absolution involves pronouncement of forgiveness of sin, direction not to sin again and the core of penance which is a prayer to recite and an action to be done. This action to be done is a social process which involves possibly reconciliation with an individual or society and restitution.

Fr. Makarios has not been reconciled with his father which means his act of penance has not been completed. This incompletion is symbolized by the divided mitre. However, as the play hurtles towards conclusion, a mitre wearer, the Nuncio comes to reconcile them hence bridging the two parts that had been divided at the beginning of the play.

4.2.3 Sounds and Songs

While this study has discussed sound as part of production design in chapter two, there is still need to go further and discuss sound and an expressive element of performance language. Here the discussion is specific to sounds and songs that relate to the way of evangelization.
Songs are used in the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru Diocese to break monotony and to give the play an aesthetic appeal. The two songs that stand out are the Gregorian chants, the Luhya song welcoming the first born and the Luhya song admonishing an impostor who pretends to be the owner of a home when he is just a servant (*Mukangala*).

**4.2.4.1 Gregorian Chants**

Gregorian chants which dominate the play right from the diegetic music of Ave Maria to the singing of responses by the reverend sisters mark the play as distinctively Catholic centred. Gregorian chants which are a mark of the Catholic Church. In the Roman Empire that the Catholic Church was founded Latin was the lingua franca. To date, all official documents of the Catholic Church are in Latin and until recently all masses were conducted in Latin even here in Kenya. Chanting was usually for mass and the psalms. It is a monastic mark since monks recite the psalms as a form of prayer. Therefore, the distinctive feature of the liturgical worship of the Catholic Church has been Latin language. By exploiting this feature, the play *Fr. Makarios* draws attention to the issues that it is addressing in the play while aesthetically embellishing the play.

**4.2.4.2 Luhya Songs**

While the songs in the Luhya language are meant to ground the play within a Luhya setting (as also noted by Luhya names like Nakhumicha), they serve the purpose of also aesthetically breaking the monotony the dialogue on the serious issues that have led Fr. Makarios to deny his own father the sacrament of penance.
4.2.4.3 The Ringing Bells

The ringing bells are purely Catholic in nature since they signify a moment of prayer. The traditional Catholic practice has bells ringing at 3am, 6 am, 9 am, noon, 3pm and 6pm. Another use of the bells is to break news. Insistent ringing of the bells has a communication function which are either of liturgical nature (prayer) or social nature (breaking news). For example at the election of a pope, and once white smoke starts bellowing from the Sistine chapel, bells ring continuously to announce that a new pope has been elected.

The traditional use of bells in the Catholic Church dates back to 15th century where it was used as means of summoning monks to worship. Its use was expanded further when in the 17th century it was used to call faithfuls to Holy Mass. Its use grew even more when in the 18th century, it was introduced during requiem mass. Earlier on in the 9th century, the ringing of Bells had been introduced as an item in holy mass to announce consecration; a moment when bread and wine is transformed into body and blood of Jesus Christ. The present use of the ringing of bells draws synergy from this 9th Century purpose of calling the congregation to attention announcing that Jesus Christ has come down. Mass being the highest prayer of the Catholic Church, the ringing of bells has continued to be used today to announce such critical moments of prayer.

In the play *Fr. Makarios*, bells ring continuously during the scuffle to have penance by Hazel, biological father to Fr. Makarios. We can postulate that it is probably to remind Christians of penance which is a moment of spiritual growth. Additionally, it might be
construed as a reminder to the audience of their own need for moments of absolution within the evangelistic realm.

It can therefore, be concluded that the expressive function of language has been realised by means of comic relief, specific songs and sounds as well as symbolic utterances.

### 4.3 The Reflexive Function of Language

In performance studies this is a function in which a character/performer makes utterances of him or herself as the object/subject of an act (What is Reflexive function of language, n.d). This function therefore, serves to convey information as an instrument of an action, maintain social relationships like in greetings, act as a marker of community, as an instrument of cognitive and conceptual development as a way of influencing thinking and lastly as an art form. Therefore, a performance is given prominence not by itself but by the performers who seize the moment to communicate to the audience through reference to themselves. The performer becomes not just the carrier of the message but the message itself.

This study has earlier noted Schechner’s (1985) edict that a performance is ‘a restored behaviour.’ Performances in everyday life and artistic life consist of “a recombination of a number of already behaved behaviours” (Schechner, 1985; 28). In the logic of restored behaviour, performance is but a repetition of some original. This is a key discussion because it enables this study re-anchor the reflexive function of language into the performance space. The performance aesthetics that have been discussed in the
previous subsection have marked the theatre codes and referenced to the process of theatre that transcends every day non-theatrical activities.

These enactments and theatre activities come to the service of the Catholic evangelization as shown in the way the two exclusively refer to each other. The characterization and the symbolisms that are unique to the Catholic Church as referenced in theatre reflect on the ability of the two to co-exist. In this sense, the theatre stage has become an extension of the Catholic pulpit in restoring the behaviour of the drama of the liturgy.

In the sense of restored behaviour, theatre performance is symbolic and reflexive (Schechner, 2003). This presupposes that a performance is likely to be understood or enjoyed by those who understand its codes. For example, a Catholic performance will therefore, be fully understood if Catholic codes are also appreciated and reflected upon by the audience. Accordingly, Schechner (2003) asserts that, “Reflexivity in theatre goes hand in hand with audience participation” (p.131). This explains why this research found it necessary to appraise literature on the Catholic Church and to observe the rendition of the plays on the day of performance. In respect to the audience, this study describes how performers on stage, as recipients of symbols, reacted to those messages. Alter (1990) says that performances reflects those models of social behaviour that prevail in a given society. This uniqueness draws from the material the place and nuances of interactivity. These assertions gave impetus to this study to triangulate theatre space, Catholic evangelization and the society that the former two reflect.
4.3.1 Social Pressure as Impetus to Catholic Evangelization

The three plays selected for analysis are all anchored in social contexts. They self-reference themselves to the society that bears them. In the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru diocese, the painful family past of the lead protagonist, Fr. Makarios haunts him in the present that prevents him from undertaking his priestly duties. The family thus provides the social background upon which the interplay of his human frailties (of holding a grudge for too long) is played.

But what is this self-reflecting social context? The play reveals this through key utterances by characters. The first is that ‘A man is not a man without a wife” and therefore, by taking the vocation of priesthood, Fr. Makarios will lose his manhood. The second utterance is a man is known to be a man because he has sons’ meaning that Hazel will only be pronounced a man if his wife sires him a son for purposes of generational perpetuation and inheritance. Therefore, having a son gives a man his manhood and social standing.

Hazel, the biological father to Fr. Makarios, wants his wife Rosa Nakhumicha to bear him a son since his seven (7) daughters are simply and pejoratively abbreviated as nothing going on (NGO). This are some to the redundant traditions that the modern church is grappling with yet they are deeply engrained within the patriarchy that is entrenched in the society. In a way the play celebrates the role and sacrifices women have to make to ensure that the church functions as it should. For example, when Hazel disowns his son Makarios for his decision to join priesthood, it is his mother (Rosa Nakhumicha) who pays the price since she is also thrown out of her 15 year old
marriage. She gives him the love of a mother through guidance and sacrifice (of her own marriage) so that her son can go through the vocation of her choice. And once a priest, she visits him every Christmas eve. Rosa is celebrated thus as a resilient woman whose resilience allowed the Catholic Church to have one more priest to lead the flock. Thus, she fights for her space in history and in the church. Additionally women seem to be forced to fight for their space in religion. When Mr. Hazel causes chaos in the church, it takes the effort of one reverent sister to beat and subdue him to allow the functions of the church to go on.

4.3.2 Marriage as a social Influence to Reflexivity

Marriage seems to exert immense pressure on couples in the play Friends of our Lives by St. Peters Kapsabet parish. This is seen in the way issues relating to marriage are given prominence. In the wake of an impending separation, Mama Jasmine and Baba Jasmine engage in a conversation that provides a reflexive window in regard to their marriage as can be seen in the following excerpt.

Mama Jasmine: Do you remember our wedding?
Baba Jasmine: Yes it was Fr. James who presided.

This is a couple who had wedded in the church and the question and the subsequent answer is supposed to remind both of them that their marital bond is permanent. The focal point of any wedding ceremony is the exchange of vows. The vows are not simply a ritual that defines the relationship of two people in love. They are much more. They are a sacred pact through which the spouses embrace each other and, together, embrace Christ as their partner. The pledge they make is unbreakable because through their
union with Christ they participate in the unbreakable pact between God and humanity: the covenant that was sealed in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

A permanent commitment is an inherent attribute of the marital relationship. All couples who marry want their marriage to last a lifetime. Waite & Gallagher (2000), the authors of *The Case for Marriage*, write: “Having a partner who is committed for better or for worse, in sickness and in health, makes people happier and healthier.” The presence of an irrevocable commitment contributes to the happiness of the spouses.

Life in marriage in the contemporary society is difficult as many couples find it hard to keep their promises. Christian sociologists like Williams, J. & Williams, M. (2007) record that many young people have grown up experiencing the pain of divorce. While wanting to marry, they find it hard to believe that marriages can last a lifetime and so they are afraid to commit. One of the benefits of a sacramental marriage within the understanding of the Catholic Church is the power of God’s grace, which helps spouses keep their commitment and find happiness together. Social scientists are finding that couples who recognize God’s presence in their relationship are most satisfied in their marriages and are least likely to put their children, families and friends through the pain of a divorce (Waite & Gallagher, 2000).

### 4.3.3 The Humanity of Men and Women of Cloth

When reverend sister declares that “there comes a time when the devil does not respond to prayer alone in the play by Nakuru Diocese, she is referring to the Catholic edict of *Ora et labora* a Latin statement to mean prayer and work. The inner meaning this
statement is that prayer alone cannot solve social problems. Physical endowment is sometimes required. The physical work required in the play is the subduing of Mr. Hazel who has become a nuisance to the proper function of the church by his obstinate insistence on confessing. To the sister, this insistence has departed from a family problem to a liturgical interference and therefore, she is not fighting the father to the priest but restoring normalcy at the church for the liturgical worship to go on. In a way, she (and her boss, mother superior) are trying to obey their vow of obedience to a higher cause of prayer and service to the church by throwing out a stubborn man who is blocking their way.

Secondly, when she declares she was bad news before she joined the convent, she reemphasises the power of the convent to convert and transform. Religious formation, it seems, plays a role of transforming social misfits into men and women who can are obedient to the call of the church. However, much as she has reformed, she is able to summon her old self to handle a stubborn obstinate man and restore normalcy.

Lastly, the play is hinged on the human frailties of Fr. Makarios who has not reconciled himself with his past. A priest is expected to reconcile with all his pasts before he becomes one. The eight days window before ordination in which a would be priest takes a mandatory retreat is supposed to enable him to freely enter the covenant of service the church by way of the three vows. Whatever the sin, there should be no reason for him to deny his own father the sacrament of penance and to absolve him. One is discouraged from using priesthood as a source of refugee for any sought of social malaise. The question then that begs an answer is why did Fr. Makarios accept priesthood if he had
not come to terms with his past? The answer can be found in the words of Keyari (2018) when he notes that there is a difference between forgiveness and reconciliation.

I can forgive but it takes two to reconcile; forgiveness is an interior discipline of mind, heart and soul, while reconciliation is an outward process and may require more time and patience, because of all moving pieces; forgiveness, however, is a necessary stage of reconciliation (p.34).

Keyari (2018) seems to suggest that while forgiveness is an individual process, reconciliation is a group process. Fr. Makarios may have forgiven his father but he has never reconciled with him. Thus, he is caught in-between the act of penance himself since penance is only complete when one forgives and reconciles as Mabvuto (2015) says penance should offer satisfaction by the sinner because it is until we reach harmony with ourselves and with God through forgiveness as well as with others through reconciliation and with ourselves that we the sacrament of penance fulfils its purpose. While Fr. Makarios had reached harmony with himself and with God through forgiveness, he had not reached harmony with Hazel his father through reconciliation. Therefore, his own act and process of penance is delayed until the Nuncio reconciles him to his family. This reconciliation perhaps provides the denouement of the play.

4.3.4 Other forms of the reflexive function

The other forms of reflexive function in which the language of performance refers to its own codes can be discussed within the ambit of codes of religion within the plays and how they bring out Catholic evangelization. The use of Catholic symbols and Catholic terminologies helps elucidate these codes.
The Catholic Church has distinct codes which it keeps referring to and which are not present or at least minimally present in other religions. These include symbols, like the vestments (Alb, stall, chasuble, mitre, cincture, cassock, saprice, and amice) vessels (chalice and ciborium, cruets, Patten, thurible and the thurible boat), crosses, and bells, icons of the crucified Jesus and saints and Blessed Virgin Mary. Additionally the Catholic Church also has key distinctive terminologies that are either not found or minimally found in other religions. These include terms like Nuncio, mother superior, catechist, seminarian, Father to mean priest is largely Catholic, nuns (largely sisters), small Christian community, Pope, sacrament, institution of penance, celebration of mass, Eucharist, confirmation, ordination, sign of the cross, place of blessed virgin Mary, among others. The use of such symbols and terminologies in a play production therefore, sets such a performance a part as Catholic centred.

Some of the distinctively Catholic marks include the referral to sacraments of baptism, confirmation and First Holy Communion by Mr. Hazel, the singing of Ave Maria in the Gregorian chant as non-diegetic music, the singing of choral Gregorian chants by the reverend sisters, The reference to the Christmas carols by the reverent sister, the confession box and the sacrament of penance, reference and presence of Catholic ordained characters like the Nuncio, the bishop, priest and sisters and lastly, presence of a catechist and reference to Christians who want to take the sacrament of confession among others.

The play *Fr. Makarios* uses a flashback mode as a way of advancing the plot. The play starts at the confession box and goes back to tell the story that led to Fr. Makarios
hating the man believed to be his biological father. It reveals a priest who is still in turmoil since he has not come to terms with his past because he doesn’t know it.

4.4 Expressive function of Language

When writing about the expressive function and how it can be analysed in a performance related study, Thorlacius (2015) argues that one can look at how the sender of a message packages it through the tone, the attitude and the emotions of the words to the character receiving the words or whom the words are intended for. She further argues that the sender or the speaker is implied in the words uttered and therefore, reveals his or her character traits with what she calls a ‘performance installation.’ Thus utterances are the stable of the expressive function particularly in performance. On the totality of its deployment, she writes, “the expressive function is thus speaker’s attitude and emotions as they appear in the product itself. Regardless of the sender’s conscious or unconscious intentions” (p.102).

This study adopts her definition and suggestion of deployment of the utterances of characters as expressing their emotions and attitudes in a performance. It thus analyses how key characters in the selected plays reveal or express their emotions and attitudes by their utterances.

4.4.1 Expressive utterances by characters in the play Fr. Makarios

“I confess to Almighty God.” These are the beginning words of the Catholic prayer of the act of contrition in which a Catholic faithful confesses his or her sins. In the play,
these words are used Mr. Hazel when he enters the confessional box and they offer information that the man is a Catholic faithful. They in fact reveal his attitude of penance of his former life and hurtful actions he committed in the past.

“I am a Catholic, baptized, confirmed and entitled to the sacrament.” These are words also uttered by Mr. Hazel and they offer information about his religious identity. He is a true Catholic who has received the three initiation sacraments that is Baptism, confirmation and Eucharist. They serve to express his urgent need for confession since he feels he has greatly sinned yet the priest is denying him a sacrament he qualifies to receive.

“Rev. Sister, is it canonical for a priest to deny a Christian confession.” Uttered by Mr. Hazel, this language offers information about the identity of the women as Religious Sisters.

“Father please don’t shout the Nuncio is here.” Uttered by Mother Superior when addressing Fr. Makarios, this language offers information about the presence of a senior church leader. It also identifies the character in the name of the Nuncio, who is popes’ representative in any country.

“It is normally wrong to keep the Nuncio waiting.” Like the previous one, this words are uttered by Mother Superior to Fr. Makarios to inspire the action of obedience to the vow of obedience. Her statement addresses heart of religion life; that is obedience. Mother superior is reminding the priest that he has a moral obligation to obey his superior. He needs to go and see the Nuncio.
“It is a long story. I remember …” Fr. Makarios uses these words to offer information about his discomfort to offer penance to Mr. Hazel. This kind of language gives historical information that seems to have precipitated the present problem between the two thus the Priest is not comfortable of administering the sacrament of Penance to Mr. Hazel. As a priest, this reveals his weakness in catechetical knowledge about how to administer sacraments. Fr Makarios is becoming personal to his dad thus forgetting that he has a duty of serving his flock historical problems not with-standing.

“Before I joined the convent I was bad news.” These are words uttered by Reverend Sister Joyce and they are meant to offer information about her past. She demonstrates how she used to manhandle men and thoroughly beat them when they crossed her path. With this words, she insinuates that religious formation has reformed her to a docile sister serving the community. In essence, she threatens to unleash her past nasty character traits in defence of the priest and the Holy ground. This can also reveal the truth about conversion. That religion truly changes people.

The Reverend Sister Joyce, tells Hazel to stop screaming, informing him that he is standing on holy grounds. This language from mother superior offers information about the identity of the location. It is a chapel. It also offers information on how Christians should behave in a house of worship.

The incessant reminders by the catechist to Fr. Makarios that the Christians are waiting to confess, and the queue is very long, offer information about the people’s faith. People who receive the sacrament of confession are not ordinary sinners or default Christians, but are people who understand their faith well. This also seems as if it is the day for
confession or an office day for the parish. In addition the repetitive references to Fr. Makarios that the day is the Christmas eve, and the Christmas carols practice, further reveals what time of the year it is. Traditionally Catholic faithful confess in their numbers before the start of the Holy season like Easter and mass.

4.4.2 Expressive utterances by characters in the play The Tabletas.

In the play by Homa Bay Diocese, a number of statements and dialogue excerpts offer themselves to the expressive function of language.

“Adhiambo my daughter I want to ask you a question in the absence of your mother because I know her madness” This statement uttered by Mr. Mathews gives a preview of the opinion that he holds of his wife Megi. It further reinforces the idea of how disjointed the marriage is to the extent of the husband bad mouthing his wife to their children without twitching or feeling uncomfortable about it. It should be expected that the couple should not let their children be privy to their conflicts or their opinions on each other weaknesses or evil behaviour. This then, goes ahead to show us how not to run a marriage. It is Adhiambo’s concern for privacy that introduces the next idea, when she requests that,

Adhiambo: Can you let Titi go.”

Mathews: No, Titi is the heir of this family. When the time comes for me to salute my ancestors he will inherit everything including this situation. He is the right place so please talk.

Adhiambo senses that the father wants to ask a very private or perhaps uncomfortable question, a fact also betrayed by his comment on her mother’s “madness”, which means she would not be comfortable with the question. She therefore, feels that it would be
prudent to be left alone to address the issue. Their father assertion of Titi’s position in the family provides a window to the idea that Mathews holds not only on marriage but also on gender roles and relations.

After Titi runs away from home, revolting the questioning from their mother about their reasons and intentions of stealing their father’s tablet, Titi meets Leah on his way and their conversation reveals that she has information about their misdemeanor. Titi tries to trick her thus.

Titi: I will buy for you chocolate.
Leah: I will not take.
Titi: I will buy for you Pancakes and samosas.
Leah: I do not want.
Titi: Leah then I will buy for you ice cream.
Leah: Ice cream?
Titi: Yes!
Leah: You are kidding Titi, where are you going to get the money
Titi: I promise you will get it tomorrow.

This dialogue excerpts reveals a sly Titi attempting to corrupt his younger sister by shutting her up from speaking the truth by bribing her with candy and snacks and for a moment, he almost confuses the naïve and innocent Leah with his tempting enticements. She however, refuses his advances and he resorts to threats. This scene offers a glimpse into the life of a Christian who faces temptations that threaten to sway her off his feet of righteousness.

In refusing to accept a divorce from Mathew, Megi declares that "Marriage is for a life time." This is expressive language that offers information about the nature of marriage. She insists that her marriage to Mathew is for a life time and indissoluble and therefore, he cannot get rid of her easily. It expresses the value she attaches on the marriage and
therefore, her willingness to fight for it and consequently her family. This utterance is in tandem with the Catholic declaration of the indissolubility of marriage.

In a tone betraying worry and concern Megi asks her children,

> What are you trying to access in your father’s tablet? Adhiambo, ever since you started stealing your father’s tablet, your character has changed.

Her words are expressive and their text offers information that a negative behaviour change has been noted in her children making the audience understand better why they were being punished. The subtext however, expresses the worry of a concerned mother with a unique diplomatic way of parenting by seeking to listen to, and talk to her children.

### 4.5 Conclusion

In line with the demand of the first objective of this study, this chapter examined the deployment of both Catholic and theatre language to function as agents of Catholic evangelization. It appraised the six linguistic functions of language as outlined by Roman Jakobson. Then it selected three of the six functions that were found to be relevant to this study and employed them in analysing the selected plays. The chapter concludes that both Catholic and performance-specific languages have been deployed in attaining theatre spaces that speaks of evangelization both from Catholic and social perspectives. The next chapter summaries the key finding, draws conclusions and makes recommendations.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter summarizes the key findings of this study, and from these findings draw conclusions as well as make recommendations on policy and further research.

5.1 Summary of Findings

This study set out to determine the theme of Catholic evangelization in the selected plays. It proceeds on a key assumption that since the plays were heavily sponsored and performed within a Catholic festival, they were religious in nature, adhered to Catholic centredness and conveyed evangelization.

On the question of production design, the study found that sets were designed as transient and transportable since the productions are conceived in the knowledge that they will not be performed in fixed or proper theatres. It therefore, found out that most of the plays had components of set design that were in tandem with this conception. Flats were mostly used in which scenic views were painted to create an atmosphere of the real location of the play. However, most of them failed to convey the message of evangelization as there were disconnects between the thematic concerns addressed and the multiplicity of meanings displayed on the backdrops.

On Sound design, the study found out that music and various other sound effects were deployed mostly to embellish the productions. The chapter also appraised the sound design in the plays selected for analysis. Using music and sound effects, the chapter concludes that again there is failure to tie the sound design as a production design
element to serve the purpose of evangelization to the youth. There is an exception though since the performance in the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru Diocese uses music to enhance church scenes thereby remotely enhancing actions that reflect efforts to evangelize.

In the third chapter which was on characterizations as an agent of Catholic evangelization in the plays, the study found out that only the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru Diocese had characters whose roles were hinged on Catholic evangelization as well as making the plays Catholic centred. Catholic centredness was particularly evident by characters who were grouped as men and women of God in the play *Fr. Makarios* Nakuru Diocese. In the other plays, the characters were simply relieving social pressures that can face any Christian family. However, the characterisation was devoid of evangelical messages. Nevertheless the three sampled plays achieve resolutions by way of reconciliation of characters. Fr. Makarios reconciles with Mr. Hazel in the play *Fr. Makarios* by Nakuru diocese, Damela reconciles with her husband and Mr. Mathews vows to love his wife Megi unconditionally in the play *The Tabletas* by Homabay Diocese. In the play *Friends of Our Lives* by St. Peters Kapsabet Parish of Eldoret Diocese, baba Jasmine expresses his remorse and accepts Jasmine back into the family. Mama Jasmine also expresses her contriteness and begs for forgiveness from Jasmine. Thus, all the antagonistic forces are annihilated at the altar of reconciliation. The characters soften their hearts, turn around and extend a hand of peace to the characters they were fighting. This action of softening the heart is a mark of Christianity that qualifies the plays as religious theatre where the plot revolves around religious teachings and is resolved by means of reconciliation hence assuring hope.
In line with the demand of the first objective of the study appraised the six linguistic functions of language as outlined by Roman Jakobson. Then it selected three of the six functions that were found to be relevant to this study and employed them in analysing the selected plays. It was found out that three functions were key to this study which were expressive, poetic and reflexive functions. Expressive functions analysed utterances by characters to express the emotions and attitudes. Poetic functions revealed the aesthetic nature of the utterances as well as incidents in scenes, reflexive function was found to explore the nature of the performances as religious and social centred performances.

5.2 Conclusions

On production design the study concludes that there was a failure to tie the sound design as a production design element to serve the purpose of evangelization to the youth. There is an exception though since the performance by Nakuru Diocese uses music to enhance church scenes thereby remotely enhancing actions that reflect efforts to evangelize.

On characterization, the study concludes that by their utterances and stage actions characters were key in informing the study on the theme of reconciliation which does not necessarily mean evangelization but good neighbourliness.

On the use of language for evangelization the study concludes that both Catholic and performance-specific languages have been deployed in attaining theatre spaces that speaks of evangelization both from Catholic and social perspectives.
5.3 Recommendations.

The study recommends that scriptwriters, directors and Parisian and diocesan youth chaplains to be taken through two training courses for them to be able to address the issues of youth and Catholic evangelization using theatre. These are courses on art in Catholicism as well as the rubrics of theatre. Such trainings will equip them with knowledge and skills of handling issues of Catholic centred characterization, use of language as an agent of evangelization as well as how to tailor their production designs to communicate messages of evangelization.

On the question of further research, the research acknowledges that it was limited in terms of scope. Therefore, it recommends that more research to be conducted on the other genres of performance at the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festivals. It also recommends more research on other aspects of the play genre including plot and structure as well as the use of technology.
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Appendices  
Appendix 1: Observation Guide  
This is the observation schedule that will guide the researcher and assistant researchers in collecting data during the actual live performances.

A. Genre
1. Is it a bibliodrama or a secular play with Christian message or a secular message with secular moral or ethical conclusion?
2. Which theme is the play addressing?

B. Characterization for evangelization
1. Who are the characters and what type of characters are they?
2. Are there any Catholic church figures in the characters e.g. catechists, acolytes, priests, bishops, pope, nuns, lay servants, churchgoers etc
3. What moral or social ideas do they stand for?
4. What or who do they represent?

C. Production design for evangelization
1. How is the stage set arranged (in terms of elements of balance, rhythm and unity)?
2. What is the production design in terms of scenic view?
3. Are there props that are Catholic centred e.g. the cross, the holy rosary, the chalice, the bread etc
4. What stage sets are used. How do they carry Catholic allusions in them?
5. What costumes are the characters putting on? Do they resemble any of the Catholic Church vestments and for what purposes e.g. the cassock, the nuns attire, the monks etc

D. The language of evangelization
1. Are there allusions to Catholic organization e.g. parishes, diocese etc., Catholic movements like Marian sisters, Opus Dei, Missionaries etc.
2. Is the language Catholic centred? Does it have allusions to the Catholic Church e.g. reference to the place of the Virgin Mary, prayer of the rosary, need for continuous salvation, sacraments, body of Christ etc.

3. What words are used to ignite in the audience the need to spread what they have learnt?

4. What memorable statements are used to excite Catholic evangelization?

5. Are their symbolic used of words? What do they symbolize?

6. Are their metaphorical or euphemistic words? What do they seem to hide?

7. How have the words from the bible been rephrased, used, paraphrased or reused to make meaning of Catholic centredness?

8. How is fictional art representative of the religious and socio economic state of the society?
Appendix 2: Interview Guide
This is the guide that the researcher used to interview the directors and scriptwriters of
the plays that were selected for analysis.

Introduction
Hello my name is Fr. Charles Kinyua and I am a graduate student of Kenyatta
University taking a Master of Arts degree course in Theatre Arts. I am studying the
plays presented at the Kenya National Catholic Drama and Music Festivals. I am
interviewing the directors and scriptwriters in order to find out how their plays
communicate Catholic evangelization. I therefore, request to interview you for purposes
of my research.

A. Theme
What issue of concern did you set out to address in the play?

B. Characterization for evangelization
1. How did you make your characters relate to issues that concern the
   Catholic church
2. What Catholic personalities informed your choice of your main
   characters

C. Production design for evangelization
1. How did you arrange the stage (in terms of elements of balance, rhythm and
   unity)?
2. Did you have any Catholic centred props e.g. the cross, the holy rosary, the
   chalice, the bread etc. How did you deploy them?
3. What costumes did you choose to use and why?
4. Do they resemble any of the Catholic Church vestments and for what purposes
   e.g. the cassock, the nuns attire, the monks etc
D. The language of evangelization

1. Did you allude to Catholic organization or institutions e.g. parishes, diocese etc., Catholic movements like Marian sisters, Opus Dei, Missionaries etc.

2. Is the language Catholic centred? Does it have allusions to the Catholic Church e.g. reference to the place of the Virgin Mary, prayer of the rosary, need for continuous salvation, sacraments, body of Christ etc.

3. What memorable statements did you use to excite Catholic evangelization?

4. Did you use any symbolic words? What do they symbolize?

5. How did you use fictional art to represent the religious and socio economic state of the society?
Appendix 3: Permission To Carry Out Research

KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS
GENERAL SECRETARIAT

Our Ref:  
Your Ref:

Rev. Fr. Charles M. Kinyua
DIRECTOR
WAUMINI RADIO
P.O. Box 1373 00606
NAIROBI

Dear Fr. Charles,

RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH DURING THE 2015 KENYA NATIONAL CATHOLIC DRAMA AND MUSIC FESTIVALS TO BE HELD IN EMBU DIOCESE ON THE 7TH DECEMBER.

Greetings from the National Catholic Youth Chaplains, Nairobi.

In collaboration with Radio Waumini in evangelizing the Catholic youth in a digital world,

I write in response to your request to carry out research during the 2015 edition of the Catholic Youth Drama Festivals on behalf of the National Youth Office.

The National Youth Chaplaincy approved your request on condition that you use the data you will collect strictly for research purposes.

We will be happy to share in the knowledge you will generate once the research is completed.

I wish you God's Blessings in
Yours in Christ

Rev. Fr. Cosmos Mwangi Mutesa
National Youth Chaplain
KENYA CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS