

RELIGIOUS STUDIES TEXTBOOK

SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION OPTION

YEAR II

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FORWORD

Dear Student-teachers,

Rwanda Education Board is honoured to present the Religious Education textbook for Year II for social studies option. I was designed based on the revised curriculum to support its implementation. The book will help you not only to acquire basic knowledge concerning beliefs and religions in the world but also to develop of skills and appropriate attitudes and values such as empathy, reflective expression, commitment, fairness, self-control, self-esteem, accountability that help you to take well reasoned and sound decisions in everyday life. Furthermore, this book is important tool for effectively implement of Competence-Based curriculum in Pre-primary and Primary schools. Religious Education textbook equips you with competences to meet teaching profession standards that are: teacher as educator, communicator and connector, guide, organizer and facilitator, innovator, researcher and reflective practitioner.

The textbook is made of six units of various religious beliefs and practices in the world. Each unit starts with a key unit competence which represents abilities you are expecting to have by the end of the unit. This competence will be built progressively throughout the unit. The key unit competence is followed by an introductory activity that you are requested to attempt before any other contact with the content under the unit. The unit is then broken down into different subtopics to help you to go step by step. Each subtopic starts with an activity in which you are requested to engage through research, classroom visit, group discussions, presentations, brainstorming, interpretation of illustrations, etc. The content that follows each subtopic is a summary that gives you clear definitions of concepts, explanations to complement what you have acquired through learning activities. At the end of each unit there are assessment tasks/ activities that give you an opportunity to demonstrate the level of achievement of the key unit competence.

You are therefore encouraged to always work out introductory and learning activities before reading the provided content to develop cooperation, communication, critical thinking, innovation, problem solving, and research skills. You are also advised to do research to enrich information provided under each topic.

Enjoy learning Religious Education using your book!

**Dr. NDAYAMBAJE Irenée
Director General**

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Joan Murungi,

Head of Curriculum Teaching and Learning Resources Department

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UNIT 1

INFLUENCE OF RELIGIOUS TEACHING ON THE FORMATION IN LAWS AND VALUES

Key Unit competence: Examine how Abrahamic religious doctrines influence the development of moral values.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 1

Once upon a time, Jesus was invited by a Pharisee to dine at his home. According to Jewish laws, one should perform a certain washing rite before meal. But at that very occasion, the host was amazed to see that Jesus did not observe that law. From that reaction, Jesus took the opportunity to denounce certain attitudes towards laws and implicitly teach about some values. He said to the Pharisee,

“Oh you Pharisees! Although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish (as the law stipulates), inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools!... As to what is within, give alms, and everything will be clean for you. Woe to you Pharisees! You pay tithes (a tenth of individual’s income pledged to the church according to the law in Judaism), but you pay no attention to judgement and to love of God. These you should have done, without overlooking the others.”

As there were some scholars of the law at the table, one of them replied, “Teacher, by saying this you are insulting us too.” And Jesus said, “Woe also to you scholars of the laws! You impose on people burdens hard to carry, but you yourselves do not lift one finger to touch them.” And Jesus left the Pharisee’s house.

See Luke 11:37-47; Matthew 23:1-36.

1. Find out examples of values and laws from the text above and from Jewish culture at large.
2. Assume that what Jesus was denouncing about Pharisees and scholars of laws was true, what would be its consequences in society.
3. What is the place of scholars of laws and Pharisees in the society with regard to laws and values?

1.1. Meaning and sources of values and laws

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.1

Using various resources, research on the meaning of values and laws and their sources.

An African wisdom says, “I am because we are.” In other words, Africans believe that all humans are connected and an individual cannot be truly happy without others, that is, without the community. From this perspective, human life which is nothing but a series of choices and acts is understood as grounded in relationships at different levels and places such as family, society, school, workplace, church, etc. These relationships can be sustained or distorted by one’s acts and behaviors towards those with whom they are in relationship. The question is, “what should guide individuals as they choose their acts so that they may bring about healthy relationships in the community?” Philosophers, educationists and scholars in human sciences, answer to this question by the word “values” and “laws”.

1.1.1. Meaning of values



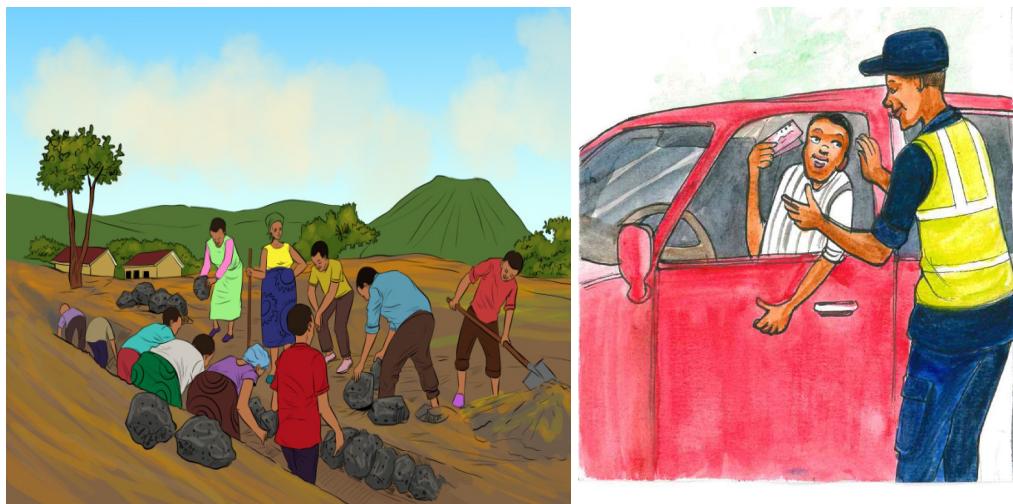
According to Bernard Lonergan, “values are the content of a person’s consciousness in deliberative responsible activity.” This means that, a value is a quality of a reasoned activity freely performed after weighing consequences. In this vein, Friedrich Nietzsche simply interprets “values” as acts of preference. This applies an intellectual development so that the individual can discern and

refer and carry out an act. Thus, values are defined as “a set of behaviors that make up the way of living of the individual and that have a meaning and an appreciation (a value) to fulfill them; and that to be directed towards social equilibrium must be applied to the common good” (Banos-Martinez J. & Arganis-Juarez L., 2013: 2811).

Values are those elements which allow individuals to make reasonable judgment over what is worth of being freely done and avoided. As such, those values are moral and are universally accepted because they are ultimately desirable for the integral development of every human being and the whole human community. They include protection of the environment, love, respect, mercy, solidarity, equality, or those values expressed in scriptures and in the universal declarations for children, for women, and of human rights.

Living according to values requires having the conscience of values which is definitely acquired through moral education in all its forms (traditional, modern, formal, informal, etc.). To Aristotle, the four governing values are: prudence, justice, strength and temperance. For Bertrand Russell, the fundamental values are justice, decency and morality. Many values are viewed in the framework of laws of society such as constitutional documents, regulations and decrees.

1.1.2. Meaning of laws



A human baby is not born on a desert island; it comes on earth through a family, that is already a society. A family is the unit cell of the large and complex social organism. The child must be educated to community life and integrate the civil society at its different levels: Family, Cell, Sector, District, State. As he/she grows, the child must also integrate other societies, religious and cultural: parish, diocese, professional organisation, mosque, sport clubs, etc. The society is an

essential dimension of human life. For the development of this life in society, there is a need of normative rules (laws) for its organisation and conduct. Law in the broad sense of the term is found in all cultures, and human groups. The English word law is usually understood to refer to positive legislation enacted and promulgated by the legitimate authority of the society, whether Church or State (John M. Huels, "Law" in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, p. 588-589).

A certain scholar, Thomas Aquinas, enriches the above definition of term "Law" by stressing its purpose. He writes, "law is an ordinance of reason for the common good, promulgated by one who has care of the community" (*Summa Theologian*, I-II, q. 90, a. c). Thus, good laws are known by their reasonability, purpose and accessibility.

First, the purpose of the law is chiefly to provide for the common good, and this includes the welfare of the all individuals who make up the community, not a private or personal good. Good laws seek to foster the harmonious ordering of society in which individuals' freedoms can flourish (John M. Huels, "Law" in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, p. 589).

Second, to promulgate a law is to make it known to those who it binds. It is properly made and published by the legitimate legislative authority or lawgivers who may be a physical person or a moral person, which is a body or a board passing laws by joint action (John A. Hardon. 1980. *Modern Catholic Dictionary*. Double-Day & Company, INC. Gardern City, New York, p. 311").

Third, to be reasonable, "a law should be consistent, just, observable, enforceable, and useful.

- **Consistency of the law:** when it is neither self-contradictory nor in contradiction with other laws.
- **Justice of the law:** when it respects higher laws and distributes burdens equitably.
- **Observability of the law:** when it does not demand the impossible because it is cruel or too difficult.
- **Enforceability of the law:** when not only the law-abiding but everyone can be expected to keep it because it is supported by appropriate sanctions.
- **Usefulness of the law:** when it serves a valid purpose without needless restriction of human liberty".

In the christian tradition, law is distinguished as divine law and human law. The divine law is distinguished as natural and positive.

- The Natural law

The natural law should not be understood as a blind or fatalistic inclination to what nature may dictate human beings. Otherwise, the latter would have remained naked and live the primitive lifestyle. Humans are rational, free and intelligent beings. As such, they are innovative and creative which means that they interact with others and the nature, and even transform it. It is that interaction with others and the nature that requires a law to govern human activities towards others and nature. This law is called "natural law". The natural law is understood as referring to the respect of the human person as a human person, of his or her body and goods so as to make his or her life more human, better and social. The natural law comprises fundamental laws that promote human dignity, its development in the community, and the common good of that community (TH. Rey-Mermet. 1985. *Croire : Pour une redécouverte de la morale*. Droguet-Ardant. Montréal, p. 92).

- The positive law

The positive law consists of the laws of God revealed in the Scriptures. The founding law of the people of God is the "Decalogue", that is, the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20: 1-17). These commandments give essential directives that should guide and enlighten human relationships, both vertical (with God) and horizontal (with their brothers and sisters). They are valid for every human being in such a way that they provide for them guiding principles to discern and make decisions. The Decalogue and other related laws of the Old Testament have been lead to perfection by Jesus. When he was asked the greatest commandment, he replied, "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

The whole law and prophets depend on these two commandments" (Matthew 22: 37-40). The law of Christ, love of God and neighbor, supersedes egoistic inclinations. Who would like to be killed for example? So, whatever good you wish for yourself, you should wish it for your neighbor. Love as such is the core law. A certain Albert Camus wrote, "If I had to write a book on morality, it would have a hundred pages and ninety-nine would be blank. On the last page I should write: I recognize only one duty, and that is to love" (Albert Camus, *Notebooks 1935-1942*).

- The human law

Human laws exist in one form or another in every social group. They exist because the divine law - natural and positive - is not enough to ensure harmony

in a given community. The living-together requires human laws to concretize and incarnate the divine. Imagine that in a certain country, the road code is replaced by a simple rule like “You shall not kill...” (which is a positive law) or by the famous commandment, “You shall love your neighbour...”. This would not be sufficient to avoid road accidents because human beings are not angels. Rather they think differently, have different mental conditions, have different problems and experiences. Thus, there is always a need of a positive human law to regulate human relationships, behaviors and acts.

All important elements of community life – civil status, school, marriage, property, labor, inheritance, etc.- must be governed by human laws. This brings about civil law (laws that protect the rights of citizens), public law (regulations of relations between individuals and State), penal law which imposes penalties for the conducts prohibited by the State, etc.

In conclusion, every law – divine (natural and positive) or human, civil or religious – every just law comes from God, because it promotes the good, the common good, and God is love, love for all. Laws are not meant to alienate people's freedom and happiness but to prevent from whatever may hinder them. Laws teach loving ourselves and others, share with them and build together harmonious and happy communities.

1.1.3. Relationships between values and laws

The relation between law and value is very complex. Indeed, they are intrinsically different although they both serve the same purpose: to channel human behaviors in society. They both provide people guidelines of what may be done or may be avoided in certain situations. For example, Rwanda has set the last Saturday of every month for a community service called “umuganda” to keep community spaces clean. Before this becomes a policy (a law), cleanliness is a value for Rwandan people. This example help to understand the relationship between values and law in that laws are systems meant to maintain moral values and prevent people from violating them. Therefore, the values of the society cannot be separated from the law; rather, the law reflects somehow these values.

On the other hand, values and laws differ in their respective formation and application.

- A law is applied to the whole community, while values define how individuals prefer to interact with one another.
- A law is published while values do not need be published.

- A law has to be absolutely universal and applicable to every one while values need not to be necessarily universal; they are more personalised.
- A law is enforced while values totally depend on the individual and the choice of the individual regarding his or her interaction with other members of the society.
- Disobeying a law is liable to punishment; not adhering to a value does not.

1.1.4. Sources of values

OK



NO



Values are acquire and learned through experience of doing good things

Values are rooted in human life experiences. These vary from period to period, and a culture to another. Life in the contemporary society has different aspects which can be categorized in four sources of value formation in any modern society. These are : social institutions, organisational values, peers and colleagues, and work and career.

- Social institutions

Human life is based on values and produces them. It is supported by institutions which inculcate those values to individuals. The most important institutions in doing so include family, school, State and religion. For instance, the Rwandan traditional school, "itorero" was the official source of Rwandan values including team spirit, patriotism, mutual respect, accountability, integrity, courage, etc. Social institutions are basically sources of values in that they prescribe for individuals what is good and what is bad, and reward good behaviors and punish bad behaviors.

- Organizational

Organisations, like cooperatives, international and local NGOs, companies, associations and clubs, usually set a number of values which guide their actions

and relationships within themselves. If members of an organisation suscribe to these values, the new comers will easily acquire those values and will be part of their lives.

- **Peers and colleagues**

An individual learns some behaviors from his/her peers and colleagues with whom he/she is associated. A group which is built on values is enhanced by them. Therefore, the individual in a such group tries to follow the group spirit as he/she conforms to the group norms of behaviors.

- **Work and carreer**

Work and carreer create special values that give unity, cohesion and meaning to individuals through the responsibilities they are entrusted with and the experience they gain from their carreer. Therefore, each work will have its own values and persons performing the work will follow those values. For example, farmers may develop special values which are different from teachers' values.

According to Reshaj Mahajan, one's age influences his or her values as different things influence one at different ages (Govt. S.P.M.R College of Commerce Seminar presentation). This happens as following: Age 1-7: parents; Age 8-13: teachers, heroes (sports, TV, Music, ...); Age 14- 20: peers (values because of peers or peers because of values); Age 21+: values are established but they may be tested time to time.

There are others sources from which people and cultures get their values. These include Mass Media, Television, Radio newspapers, books, internet... From this sources people.

1.1.5 Sources of Laws

A) Constitution

A country's Constitution is a set of fundamental ground rules setting out the powers of the different branches of government (i.e. executive, legislative and judicial) and how these entities operate and interrelate. The Constitution may also set out basic principles, such as fundamental freedoms and rights. In Civil Law systems these rules are usually embodied in "Codes".

B) Legislative Enactment (Statute)

Legislation is the second key source of law and usually takes priority over sources of law other than the Constitution. There may be more than one legislative body in a country - central, provincial or state and municipal authorities may each have separate power to legislate. Rules will determine the extent to which and in what areas one legislative body has priority over another.

C) Judicial Decisions

In some countries, judicial decisions are authoritative and develop into a source of law known as “case law”. Case law may extend the application of legislation and is deemed to form part of the law.

D) Treaties

The host country may be subject (or may be about to become subject) to laws made by a regional or world grouping by becoming a signatory to a treaty. Examples are the laws of the European Union, trade treaties, rules of the WTO and bilateral treaties. It is unlikely that a country could easily amend these rules.

In some cases and countries, the following can also serve as sources of Laws

-Writings of legal scholars - in civil law jurisdictions, academic writings interpreting the constitution or legislation have considerable influence on decisions of the courts;

-Edicts from a king/ ruler;

-In the case of certain Islamic countries, “Sharia law” in the form of religious books and edicts from religious groupings

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.1

1. Discuss three points of difference between a value and a law.
2. Give four important persons (figures) from whom values may be acquired.
3. Generally, laws reflect values. Associate the following values with the given laws.

Ex. Cleanliness (value) umuganda

Set of values : Accountability, community, patriotism, life, family

Set of laws: paying taxes, monogamic law, declaring assets, abortion, and irondo.

1.2. Religious Teaching as primary source of values and laws

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.2

Read two passages, one from the Old Testament and another from the New Testament, that account social problems. What values and laws do you think people could learn from the stories?



Religious instruction as a source of values

One of the most important primary sources of values and laws is definitely social institutions including school and religion. In fact, education and religion are supposed to help men and women be more human. One is made more human not by acquiring many university degrees and attending thousands of religious services but by being converted by what he or she learns and experiences through teaching, learning and religious activities. Alternatively, religious education in our homes, at school or in churches should help people either conform to existing values and laws and produce dedication to radical change or foster a capacity for a critical judgement of both existing and potential values and laws. Formation in values and law assimilation is differently organised in every religion according to its experiences, beliefs and practices.

1.2.1. Judaism, law and values

Judaism is the oldest monotheistic religion. It is embedded in Jewish culture. Jews consider themselves as the people of God and they ought to behave as such. Not only beliefs and religious practices, but also moral values and social norms are found in the Torah. This brought about the fact that Jews all over the world are united in the belief in the strength of Torah study. Through studying the Torah, Jews obey to God's command to ensure the transmission of the Torah which includes values and laws to govern their lives, behaviors and activities.

This is then the commandments, the statutes and the ordinances, which the Lord, your God, has commanded that you be taught to observe in the land you are about to cross into to possess, so that you, that is, you, your child, and your grandchild, may fear the Lord, your God, by keeping, as long as you live all his statutes and commandments which I enjoin on you, and thus have long life... Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates (Deuteronomy 6: 1-2. 6-9).

This passage highlights how religious teachings are the primary source of values and laws in Judaism. Religion itself is bound to education and the transmission of knowledge, values, habits, and laws from generations to generations. God, through revelation and religion, himself is a teacher and as a teacher is the role model for fathers. Parents are the first in charge of teaching their children about values and laws as God taught commandments to Moses. Along with God and Moses, Jewish parents, priests, prophets, sages (wisemen) and Scribes (Rabbis) are portrayed as teachers of laws and values in the Torah.

In addition, Jewish children could also learn about God's commandments and the values they reflect in their living environment, from siblings, peers and colleagues, from posters hung on walls, doors and gates. Values such as love, humility, service, covenant, truth and integrity, etc. among friends and neighbours, between parents and children, humanity and God, are understood in Judaism from the experience of God, the Creator, the Savior, the Almighty. Moreover, these values constitute a central factor of happy, healthy and harmonious relationships, bringing much what gives life its meaning and longevity.

1.2.2. Christianity, values and law

Christianity is founded on Jesus' life, teachings, deeds, death and resurrection. Christians believe that all of these elements were oriented to the salvation of humankind in all its departments: social, political, spiritual, cultural, religious, etc. They also believe that Jesus is the son of God sent to reveal his father and implement his saving plan for humankind. Jesus carried out this mission through teachings supported by miracles and eloquent acts. Jesus was known by his contemporaries as the teacher who has authority (Matthew 7:29). From the beginning of his ministry, Jesus preached and said, "Repent" (Matthew 4:17). From this perspective, one can firmly say that Jesus' teachings intend to challenge the existing ways of living, change his followers' behaviors, and lead to a new way of interacting with God and neighbours.

More concretely, Jesus' mission consisted of transforming people's lives in all dimensions through gradually imparting into them values and giving a new meaning of law. For instance, he praised the values of humility through the examples of children (Matthew 19:14); and the integrity of Nathanael (John 1:47). He also recalled that laws are meant not to alienate human lives but for promoting them when he saved the woman caught committing adultery from being stoned according to the law (John 8:7); and when he healed someone on the Sabbath day (Mark 3:1-6). Jesus also denounced Pharisees and scribes for they asked people to do what they don't do. Doing so, he taught that values and laws are efficiently transmitted through living examples of those who are in charge of ensuring its education. These include parents, religious leaders, school teachers, christians in the city and villages.

In addition, Jesus initiated the processes of knowing laws, getting and embracing "christian" values when he said to his disciples, the later apostles,

Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teach them to observe all that I have commanded you (Matthew 28, 18-20).

From this passage, Christians' mission is not only to baptise but also to teach all Jesus has commanded. Jesus' command embraces all aspects of human life since he willed that all people be saved. For this reason, christian religious denominations hold high all dimensions of education to ensure the transfer of Jesus' command. Jerome says that "The word 'command' does not affirm the establishment of a new law, but of a new way of life, just as the new law of Moses established a new way of life (Raymond E. Brown et alii (eds), *The New Jerome Biblical Commentary* (see the Apostolic Commission (28:16-20) (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. Inc., 1968.).

Concretely, laws and values which channel the ways of living of Christians are transmitted and enhanced at different levels of human life. Christian parents are the first educators and witnesses to life of values. The Church Fathers call parents to teach moral values to their children because these make them gentle and sober and to do so when they are still tender (Mvumbi, 2013: 14). In this, parents are supported by christian social institutions such as schools, centers, hospitals, orphanages, charity NGOs, and religious teachings through books, media (TV, Radio, etc.). Child education is central to the christian religion and it insits on the need of value education as the foundation of authentic human person development.

Hence, the concise summary of what we can get from the relationship between Christianity and values and law is the following: Christian wisdom continuously inspires christians to root their human affairs and activities in religious values, and thus, search for the glory of God and the corporal and spiritual well-being of the human person (*Apostolic Constitution, Sapientia Christiana of the Supreme Pontiff*, Pope John Paul II, on Ecclesiastical Universities and Faculties, no.1.).

1.2.3. Islam, Laws and Values

Islam means submission to the will of God; therefore Muslims put primary emphasis on obeying God as prescribed in Islamic law (John L. Esposito. 2011. *What everyone needs to know about Islam*. Oxford University Press. New York. P. 158). The Islamic law, Shari'ah which literally means the 'straight path' governs a Muslim's whole life. In matters of laws, Muslims must therefore know three important things (Jan Thompson, 2005. *A New Approach: Islam*. Hodder: 114):

- *Fard*: what is obligatory; for example, the Five Pillars.
- *Halal*: what is permitted; for example marrying more than one wife.
- *Haram*: what is forbidden; for example to eat any product from the pig.

The main official sources to guide the development of Islamic laws are the Qur'an and the Sunnah (example of Muhammad). The Quranic texts provide moral directives, setting out what Muslims should aspire to as individuals and achieve as a community. The Sunnah of Muhammad (the Prophet's private and public life and his individual and communal activities) illustrates Islamic faith in practice and supplements and explains Quranic principles (John L. Esposito. 2011, p. 159). The Islamic law is arrived at by the common consent (ijma) of Islamic scholars. The common consent or the consensus, originated from Muhammad's reported saying, "My community will never agree on an error." This came to mean that where neither the Qur'an nor the Sunnah give direct rules, the method of analogical reasoning (*qiyas*) was used.

Example

The Qur'an does not say something explicit on abortion. Or, some Muslims are tempted to perform abortion. Is it forbidden or allowed for Muslims to do so? To address this issue, Scholars find a similar issue on which there is some teaching and apply the same principle to the new situation. For example, the killing of infants is forbidden in the Qur'an so now abortion is forbidden.

Islam emphasises on orthopraxy, that is, the correct action. Thus, its teachings and traditions comprise not only legal principles but also associated values that guide Muslims in decision making. The essentials of Islamic law have their foundations in the core teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, and they touch every aspect of human life. (<http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/10256>).

Essentials of Islamic law	Core teachings of the Prophet Muhammad according to Muslim Scholars
Religion	God is pure and does not accept anything unless it is pure and God has commanded the faithful with what he commanded the Prophet.
Life	One should not harm himself or others
Family	A person cannot be a complete believer unless he loves for his brother what he loves for himself
Mind	Action are judged by the intention behind
Wealth	Don't let your focus in this life be to amass worldly gain and God will love you. Don't be concerned with what people have and they will love you.
Justice	Part of a person's good observance of Islam is to leave aside what does not concern him.

Since Islamic faith affects the whole life, including beliefs, behaviors and practices, Muslim parents are conscious of their primary responsibility to set their children off on the right road at birth, and continue to bring them up in the Islamic faith. Children learn gradually about Islamic laws and values through their religion at home and at school.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.2

1. Explain and illustrate with examples the ideas of halal and haram.
2. Describe some ways in which values and laws are taught in Christianity.

1.3. Importance of laws and values in the society

LEARNING ACTIVITY 1.3

Some people may not believe in the importance of teaching and learning about values. What do you think would be their reasons? Are they good reasons? How would you help them to understand the importance of values and laws in society?

Values and laws are understood as regulatory systems of human behaviors and activities in society. They intend to foster the common good and prevent from harmful situations to unity and harmony of a community. Values and laws are therefore important elements of human culture in which individuals' wellbeing and community development are grounded. In other words, integral development of society is possible only when individuals stick to common values and obey to laws.

The laws serve as norms of conducts for citizens. Values are the rules by which we make decisions about right and wrong, should and should not, good and bad. They also tell which are more or less important things to do. Both laws and values are set to promote the common good, that is the welfare of individuals in society. Laws are preventive, protective, and pedagogical. They warn individuals on what is forbidden, protect others' rights and punish criminals so as to re-integrate them in the society. On the other hand, values act more on the individual level stating what is morally right and wrong at the community level. Therefore, laws and values are jointly important for they:

- Provide for proper guidelines and order upon the behavior for all citizen;
- Sustain the equity in the society and prevent from chaos, conflicts, violence, etc.
- Organise life in society. For example, laws and values are used to set education, land, security systems necessary for the development of human life in society.

- Decrease moral decadence that includes cases like crime, married by accident, violence, free sex, bullying, drugs, etc.
- Give ways to solve social problems such as manifestation of violence, social discrimination, family violence, corruption, social injustice, and others that prevent a moral evolution and a social coexistence directed to the common good.
- Help character building and sense of responsibility in young people to the environment and to the community.
- Influence the child's emotional intelligence, that is the child's capacity to control and express his emotions, and to interact judiciously and empathetically with others.
- Increase people's achievement in various areas of life including financially, professionally, academically, socially, etc.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 1.3

Suggest some practical situations in which Muslims and Christians should be able to distinguish themselves by their attitudes, values and laws.

1.4. End Unit Assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 1

1. Explain the meaning of each of the following: a) value; b) law; c) Sharia d) Decalogue
2. What questions would you ask a catholic priest, a pastor and an Imam about their respective lifestyles if you were interviewing them for a magazine?
3. Can you think of any situations in which Muslims should not obey human laws?
4. Why is it important to form young people in religious values?

UNIT 2

SIN AND REPENTANCE IN RELIGIONS

Key Unit competence: Discuss the consequences of sins and the practice of repentance in different religions

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 2

One evening, David was strolling about on the roof of his palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing; she was very beautiful. David inquired about the woman and came to know that she was called Bathsheba, a wife of Uriah, his soldier. Then, David sent messengers and took her to him. He made unlawful sexual intercourse with her. Bathsheba turned to her house but she had become pregnant.

Informed about that “unwanted” pregnancy, he brought Uriah back from the battle and sent him to his own house so as to sleep with his wife. But Uriah refused and remained with David’s servants. On the following day, David invited Uriah to eat and drink with him; and Uriah got drunk. But, in the evening Uriah did not go to sleep in his own house. The next morning, David sent Uriah back to the battle field with a letter instructing to place him where the defenders were strong. The chief-commander did so, and Uriah died.

Once Bathsheba had finished the mourning period, David married her and bore him a son. But the Lord sent the prophet Nathan to David to tell him that he had done what is evil in the sight of the Lord and he will be severely punished for that. Then David say to Nathan, “I have sinned against the Lord.” Nathan answered David: “For his part, the Lord has removed your sin. You shall not die, but since you have utterly rejected the Lord by this deed, the child born to you will surely die.”

See 2 Samuel 11-12:1-14

1. Identify different sins committed in this scenario.
2. Discuss the source and consequences of sin using this scenario.
3. What do you think David would have done to please God after sinning against Him? Explain.

2.1. Sin in the history of religions

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.1

Using internet and library as well as other available resources, find out differences among the following terms: evil, sin, iniquity.

Every human being on earth has the experience of evil. He may have experienced it as a victim or as the author. In both cases, the reality of evil is energetic and destructive. The media constantly report murder, theft, corruption, sexual abuses against young girls, and infidelity among couples among other cases of evil. Though this happens in the sight of both believers and unbelievers, the evil has different connotations depending on the nature of the law set to prevent from it and punish evildoers. Generally, the term evil denotes every condition, circumstance, or act that affect the happiness of peoples, whether physically, emotionally, socially, politically or economically.

When evil occurs in the legal field, it is called a “crime” to denote the open or public violation of the law which a society or state has framed for its own preservation and the protection of its members. But sin differs from “crime” in this respect: it may be in a system which knows no God, but without God there can be no sin” (Upton, C. (1893). Dr. Fairbairn’s “Christ in Modern Theology”. The Jewish Quarterly Review, 6 (1), 152-161). Thus, sin is “a deliberate transgression of the law of God” (John A. Hardon. 1980. Modern Catholic Dictionary. Double-Day & Company, INC. Garden City, New York, p. 507). This means that a sin is committed whenever a person knows that something is contrary to the law of God and then freely does the action anyway. For instance, what a foolish man does cannot be considered as a sin because he does not have the full use of his/her intelligence and free will.

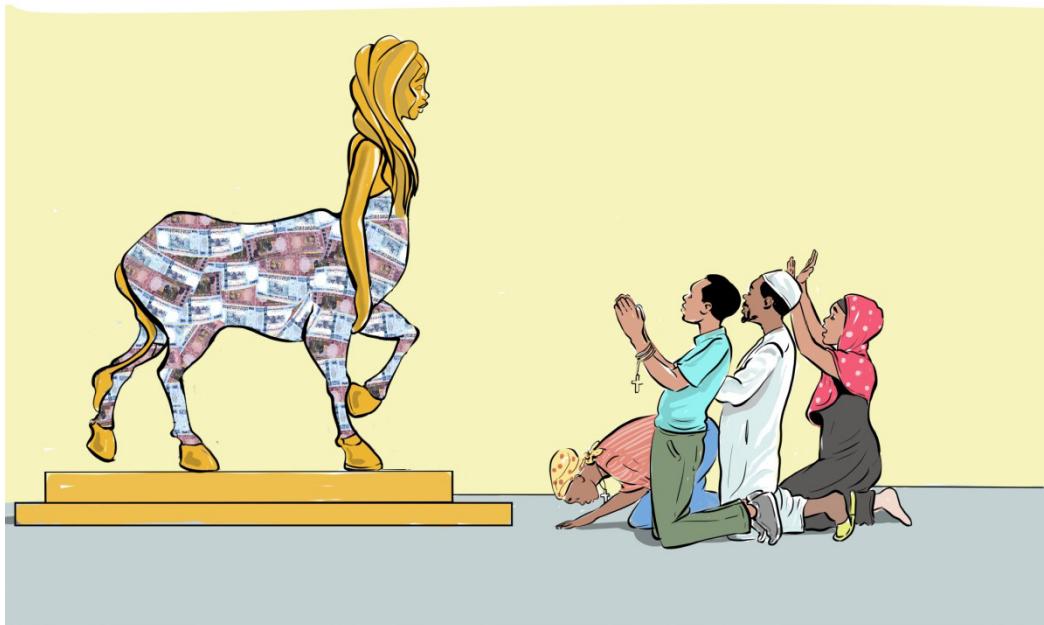
2.1.1. Meaning and nature of sin

Sin is old as humanity. In fact, people from all cultures have been asking themselves about the origin of evil. In response, religions have tried to formulate answers so as to make human life more meaningful. For the Abrahamic religions, the enigma of evil is understood within the context of God’s plan of creation. Its history refers to evil and sin just after creation (Genesis 3).

The plan of creation wells up from the surabondance of God’s love; a love that brings order in the chaos, a love that creates man in God’s likeness, and that settles Adam and Eve in a garden granted with all gifts. At this point, humanity

is at peace with God, other creatures and with themselves until an element of disturbance and discord appears in a sphere originally characterized by harmony and unity. This element is called "sin".

Meaning of sin



Worship of Idols

Sin is a transgression of a divine law, which can be natural or positive. This law exists to guide human behaviors and consequently foster good relationships between God and humanity and within human communities. Hence, sin does not only oppose the divine law but also menaces the health or survival of the relationships of a person and the community to God. Some scholars speak of sin "less as an infraction of law than as betrayal of a relationship with God, of freedom and the lack thereof experienced in turning from God" (Stephen J. Duffy, "Sin" in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, p. 889-890).

Men and women are called to become holy as their Creator is and partake in his happiness. For this, they have been given the law and grace. Holiness and happiness consist in living according to the law and openness to grace. Sin is that which is opposed to God's character, that is, holiness, perfection, love.

– Nature of sin

The Abrahamic Religions believe in God as the Supreme being. His supremacy goes with his perfection in all things including love and holiness. As their

Creator, God calls men and women or wants them to be holy as He is and love each other as he loves them. Thus, holiness is the final goal or mark of humans. Achieving not that goal is “sin”. Sin is sinful because it is unlike God. Religions, specially Abrahamic ones, view sin as the infidelity of the divine initiative of love. Essentially it is infidelity, refusal to enter and aintain covenant with God, though this bond is the source of the happy life, prosperity and sustainable development (Duffy: 892).

In the Scriptures, the word “*het*” which translates sin, signifies “missing the mark” or “failing” and implies action that does not achieve its goal (Stephen J. Duffy, “Sin” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, p. 890). Sin is understood as incompletness for our wrongdoing is a measure of our distance from what we are called to be – People of God for Jews, children of God in Christ for Christians and faithfull servants/followers of God for Muslims.

To become who they are called and vowed to be, believers have been given laws by God. For example, Jews have the Decalogue, Christians have the Law of Christ which is rooted in the Decalogue – love of God and neighbour –and Muslims have the Shariah. These laws are meant to guide human conducts which determine the quality and the health of relationships with God and within the community. In the Scriptures, sin presupposes a relationship secured by these obligations.

Words related to “*pasa*” focus on the relationship and on rupturing contractual ties. Sin connotes here the breach of covenant between God and the chosen people and the dissolution of community (Duffy: 891). Sin as a covenant breach through violation of God’s law is less transgression than personal disloyalty, infidelity to the covenant (*igihango*) that binds humanity and their Creator and Savior. Sin becomes a trouble which implies sorrow, affliction. Concretely, sinners are actually troublemakers for others, in the community and for themselves.

2.1.2. Origin of sin

The root of sin lies in man’s heart. That is why sin is defined as “utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law” (St. Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 22:PL 42,418; St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II,71,6). The question of the origin of sin has been approached in the history of religions. Two approaches are distinguished: the psychological and the historical.

The psychological origin

The psychological origin is the refusal to acknowledge the reality of God (Hosea 2:8; 4:1,6). Sin wells up from the evil heart (Jeremiah 7:24) as a deliberate,

willful act for which humans are accountable (Stephen J. Duffy, "Sin" in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Spirituality*, p. 891).

The historical origin

This approach asks the question of how sin can enter a world governed by God's saving power. The Hebrew Scripture does not provide solution. However, it distinguishes the origin of evil from the origin of creatures. God is absolutely good. Or God created good all that exists. So, creation is good. Therefore, goodness is primordial; and sin came after to corrupt good creation. *Sin enters through the door of human choice.* The Lord God gave them this order: "You are free to eat from any of the trees in the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and evil. From that tree you shall not eat; when you eat from it you shall die" (Gen 2:16–17). Adam and Eve had a choice, and they chose not to obey God.

2.1.3. Redemption from sin

Sin is the main obstacle on the journey to eternal happiness. Or, religions teach that believers have the promise of the eternal happiness. So believers are convinced that evil cannot triumph over good. Rather, they believe that God is as faithful to his promise as Merciful and powerful that he has the remedy for sins. This remedy is called "redemption". Redemption is the only cure for of sin. In the monotheistic Religions – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam - redemption is the saving of the soul from sin and its consequences. It may also be called "deliverance" or "justification" or "remission" or "forgiveness". Salvation is considered to be caused either by the free will and grace of God or by personal efforts through prayer, asceticism, or some combination of the two.

• Redemption in Judaism

Jews believe that God entered into a Covenant with humanity through his chosen people, Israel. This covenant entails just conducts towards God and the neighbour. Jews believe that whenever they violated the covenant, that is they sinned through breaking divine laws, they had to face bitter consequences such as exiles, slaveries, domination by foreigner powers, droughts, etc. In such situations, Israel came to know that they believe in a God who saves from sin and its effects that is, slavery both physical or spiritual.

There are prayers for redemption and there are benedictions in which God is praised as the redeemer of Israel. There are anxious prayers for deliverance from affliction and stress and there are expressions of confident hope and even assurance that redemption will be fulfilled.

The Psalmist sings,

Out of the depths, I call to you, Lord;

Lord, hear my cry!

May your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

If you, Lord, keep accounts of sins,

Lord, who can stand?

But with you is forgiveness

And you are revered (Psalm 130:1-4).



In the Jewish history, redemption may follow repentance of the sinner (Deuteronomy 30:1-3) or precedes it whereby God redeems the people when they are still immersed in sin (Ezekiel 36). Normally, Redemption is both spiritual and physical; it requires and implies change, conversion. As such, redemption is a process. In Judaism, the redemption is characterized by the following process:

- A result from sin but it is initiated by God who intervenes to save his people.
- Redemption is achieved through personal efforts to overcome sin and also through God's interventions.
- Redemptive process come results in the re-establishment of the kingdom of God on earth, that is, harmonious relationships with oneself, God and others.

- **Redemption in Christianity**

In Christianity, redemption is an element of salvation and deliverance from sin. Redemption is purely a grace, and not a merit. This means that one does not do anything for redemption because it is obtained by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for all.

The redemptive process in Christianity is understood from the purpose of creation. God created mankind so that they share in his eternal happiness. There was a state of serenity in the paradise until sin occurs into the society through the disobedience and pride of Adam and Eve. The sin brought about many consequences including death. This sin turned humanity away from the Source of their life. This is the situation that brought in the need for redemption; that is the restoration of the lost union or reconciliation with God. The process of reconciliation engages two parts: God and the sinner.

- God never gives up his sinful children because of their sin; rather he is always waiting for them or searching them as it is stated in the Gospel (Luke 15: 8-32).
 - An individual exercises his/her free will to recover from the fall.
 - One can make a pro-redemptive response by accepting to transform his follies through his repentance. "I shall get up and go to my father and I shall say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you" (Luke 15:18).
 - One can also make a counter-redemptive response by shutting himself to the process like Judas in the Gospel.
 - An individual who repents from his sins is forgiven because God is love, and does not hold bitterness and revenge. On the cross, Jesus cried, "Father, forgive them" (Luke 23:34). In that forgiveness asked by the Just man on the cross, the sinner who repents is accepted, forgiven and restored in life and peace by God (Badru D Kateregga & David W Shenk. 1985. *Islam and Christianity: A Muslim and a Christian in Dialogue*. Daystar. Ibadan).

In short, Christians believe that God frees people from sin and its consequences which include physical enslavements, psychological discrepancies and spiritual blindness. The personal effort is required to make the grace of redemption effective. This effort can be:

- Following the example of Jesus, who was a man like us except sin
- Receiving God's graces through sacraments, rituals and practices such as reading and reflection of the Word of God, ascetic practices, charitable works, selfless service, silence and meditation.

- Striving to love and even loving their enemies;
- Forgiving and forgiving even those who sin against them.
- **Redemption in Islam**

In the Islam, redemption or salvation is understood as referring to the rescue from sin and its consequences. It offers deliverance from fires of hell which is the consequence of sin. Contrary to Christianity, Islam teaches that human beings are born without sin and are naturally inclined to worship God alone (without any intermediaries). To retain this state of sinlessness humankind must only follow God's commandments and strive to live a righteous life. However, Islam recognises that human beings are also given freewill and are thus capable of making mistakes and committing sins; they are even capable of committing great evil. Redemption is therefore required because humankind is imperfect and in need of God's forgiveness and love. And whenever their imperfection leads them to fall in sin, human beings experience the need of redemption of God, the Merciful. In such situation, Muslims are guided as follows,

"And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks God's forgiveness, he will find God Oft Forgiving, Most Merciful." (Quran 4:10)

"And O my people! Ask forgiveness of your Lord and then repent to Him, He will send you (from the sky) abundant rain, and add strength to your strength, so do not turn away as criminals, disbelievers in the Oneness of God." (Quran 11:52)

Muslims believe that sin pushes them away from the mercy of God; however sincere repentance brings a person back to God. Thus, the redemptive process in Islam all consists in repentance and seeking God's forgiveness. In other words, no matter what sins a person may have committed if he resolutely turns to God, seeking forgiveness his salvation is assured.

In the redemptive process, in Islam, the individual plays a central role for he or she is the one to expiate himself his/her sin through repentance, prayers, fasts, sharing wealth with the poor and other charitable works. Although, redemption can be achieved through personal expiation, others may also intercede for their brother or sister.

In short, redemption is achieved through:

- Being of sincere faith and doing virtuous actions according to the Shariah.
- Avoiding actions that would lead to the loss of faith in Allah according to the Shariah.

- Sincere repentance and turning to a merciful God in repentance if any sin is committed.
- Carrying out other good deeds, such as prayer and charity, for redemption.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.1

1. Explain the origin of sin.
2. Describe the redemptive process in Christianity.

2.2. Categories of sins in various religious teachings

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.2

"All sins are equal before God". Discuss this statement .

Every sin despises the commandment of love of God and of the neighbour. However, some sins are bigger than others considering their matter, circumstances, intention of the author and consequences on the relationship with God and others. Categories of sins vary following religions.

2.2.1. Judaism

According to Jewish beliefs, human being are born free of sin. Nevertheless, individuals are endowed with the capacity to choose between good and evil. It is thus the use of that capacity which can bring about sin. A sin is a sin when it strays away from making good, correct choices. Committing transgressions against laws or omitting not to act when a situation calls for it, affects God, the other and oneself. There are three kinds of sin in Judaism:

- **Sin against God:** e.g.: idolatry, making a promise and fail to keep it, etc.
- **Sin against another person:** e.g.: stealing from them, killing, lying, harming, etc.
- **Sin against oneself:** e.g.: addiction, despair, suicide, etc.

2.2.2. Christianity

The Christian tradition distinguishes original sin and actual sin. The latter includes mortal sins and venial sins.

- Original sin

God is good and as such he could not create mankind with the sinful state. This state was characterized by qualities including immortality and the happiness of the paradise all grounded in the union with God. However, mankind was created with the possibility to sin due to the gift of freedom he was endowed with. And, the first humans actually chose to reject God and oppose him through disobedience. The sin they committed was personal at their own level but it was also original sin for the following reasons:

- It was committed by the first humans, that is, the ancestors of all mankind.
- Its consequences – referred to by the term “fall” - namely the mortal and sinful state, would affect both the parents and all subsequent generations.
- Every human sin is of the same nature as the first sin of Adam and Eve.
- The effect of the first sin serves as the best measurements of the evil character of all sin.

The original sin is then described as an infection which propagates itself from father to son through the act of generation, which being an act of organic trouble caused by the sin, is a sin itself and determines the transmission ipso facto of the sin to the new creature.

The original sin is nothing but the sin of the first humans, resulting in the fallen condition into which all are born. It is the “reverse side” of the Good News that Jesus is the Savior of all men that all need salvation and that salvation is offered through Christ (CCC no 389).

- Actual sin

This is simply the violation of the divine law. It consists of evil acts, whether of thought, word or deed. The Bible gives examples of sin: “immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like (Galatians 5: 19-21). The actual sin can be mortal (death-dealing) or venial (slight) sin.

• Mortal sin

The mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God’s law; it turns man away from God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: grave matter, committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.” (CCC 1857). According to Christianity, seven mortal sins are the following, pride, greed, gluttony, lust, sloth, anger and envy.

The grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments: "Do not kill, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother." (Mark 10:19). The gravity of sins is more or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger (CCC 1858).

- **Venial sin**

Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it. One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent. Venial sin weakens charity however it does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently eternal happiness. (CCC 1863).

2.2.3. Islam

In Islam, some sins are more heavier than others; and major and minor sins are identified. The major sins are those which can be punished by the fires of hell at the day of Judgement. For Muslims, for whom the earthly life is just a prelude to life after death, sins are categorized in great sins and little ones. According to Lislam pour les Nuls (2008), sins are ranked in four levels of importance:

- **First level**

The greatest sins are unbelief in God (kufr) and idolatry which consists in associating other things to God, or worshipping many gods. These sins are often considered as unforgivable and can take someone in hell for eternity, or thanks to the grace of God, for long time.

- **Second level**

Sins against life and family. Example: murder, adultery, etc.

- **Third level**

Sins regarding unlawful acquisition of goods. The sins of the second and third levels may take a Muslim in the hell at its first level which is the painful for some times. However, whoever would have shown himself a sincere believer during his lifetime, he will end up being welcomed in heaven.

- **Fourth level**

This category comprises all other remaining sins including alcohol consummation and lying. Though they are also considered as sins, Muslims believe that they impede them from heaven.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.2

Give three examples for each one of the following categories: sins against God, sins against the other and sins against oneself.

2.3. Consequences of Sin

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.3

Some people object to the pervasiveness of some sins like excessive consummation of alcohol, sexual intercourse between unmarried people, etc. although religious teachings are sure that they break relationships with others and God. Find out how every sin is evil and bears consequences.

Sin refers to the transgressions of divine laws. Those laws have been summarized by religious leaders and Prophets namely Jesus as the love of God and neighbours. Love requires a relationship and implies healthy, harmonious, and strong ones. Love brings about life, harmony, unity, joy, trust, respect, and happiness in relationships. Lacking love weakens a relationship and even can rupture it. More concretely, opposing the law of love for God and neighbour turns from God and neighbour and takes away all that they are for us and can give us. Simply, sin consists in opposing love in us for God, for others and even for ourselves.



Consequently, sin corrupts relationships with God and with others and with ourselves. As such, it bears pervasive consequences on vertical (with God) and horizontal relationships (with others).

2.3.1. Consequences of sin on vertical relations

Sin opposes love in us for God. However, God is the source of life and eternal happiness. So, sin distorts life and happiness in God here on earth and in the life to come. The following is an outline of the consequences of sin on vertical relationships:

- The wage of sin is the spiritual death (Genesis 3:8-19; Romans 6:23; Ezekiel 18:20). God is the creator of all that exists. So, all life depends on Him. As sin breaks the vital relationship with the Creator, it causes death for those whose life totally depends on God.
- Sin separates one from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Far away from God, man is unhappy. True happiness, peace and the fullness of life come from God.
- Sin will keep one from going to Heaven (Revelation 21:8). Man has been created to partake in eternal happiness which dwells in God in heaven. When one commits sin, he or she chooses to reject God and his gifts.
- Mankind does not have the full control of nature (weather, rain, sun, etc.) though they are the stewards. When their activities harm nature, they sin against God and consequences follow, through the environmental crisis.
- Human nature cannot do all things by itself. For instance, they may invent medicines, but they are unable to heal. Therefore, human nature needs God's grace without which they may not make some achievements. The refusal of the grace, that is sin, keeps one from not developing.

2.3.2. Horizontal relations

Sin opposes love in us for others. Or we are social beings. In other words human beings achieve their fulfilment in community. Sin restricts one to live as if he or she does not need other to be himself/herself or happy. The following are some consequences of sin on horizontal relationships:

- Sins against the love of the neighbour damages relationships at the interpersonal level and the community level as well. For instance, murder causes a loss of an individual's life but also it affects those whose lives depends on the departed (orphans, widows, etc.)
- Sins affect harmony and unity with the society. For example, theft causes insecurity within communities.

- Sins keep individuals and community from true development because they disturb peace which is the major condition for development. For example, a society with many criminals spends much time and money on settling their cases instead of spending them on development projects like health, education, infrastructures, etc.
- Sin brings other sins. For example, in the case of a murder, people may think of revenge; where goods are unfairly distributed, social injustices such as corruption may multiply.
- Sins make negatively impact human rights. For example, in the case of adultery allows one of the spouses to claim for divorce (Matthew 19:10-12). But this situation not only brings about psychological suffering to both the husband and the wife but also children are affected in a terrible way as a result of the breaking of marriage.
- Etc.

2.3.3. Consequences of sins on oneself

Sin opposes love in us for even ourselves. In fact, sin may result in physical damage to one's body, mind and emotion. Some consequences of sin on oneself are as follow:

- Sin brings about physical, psychological, mental and spiritual sufferings. For example, one may live in a sinful state (like prostitution, killing many people, etc.) for long time and ends up loosing the meaning of life to the extent of madness.
- Sin makes one lose his or her right place in the community. For example, one may have committed sins and he or she will never be entrusted with social responsibility any more.
- Sin brings about lack of self-confidence. In fact, sins definitely lead to guilt and shame even those committed in secrecy.
- Sin causes distrust. When Adam and eve committed sin, their reaction was to hide from each other and from God (Genesis 3:7-8).
- Etc.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.3

"If individuals were enough aware of the consequences of sin, life would be better on earth." Discuss.

2.4. Repentance, Meaning, steps and effects

LEARNING ACTIVITY 2.4

Some people find useless asking forgiveness for sins one is still struggling with. Do you agree with them. Explain your answer.

In almost all religious movements, the realization of sin, that is, a transgression against God, has led followers to always trying to realign with a religiously correct set of moral standards. This process of alignment is called “repentance”, or “penitence” or “penance”.

Repentance is an attitude that motivates believers to resist evil and sin and to undo the harm done by sin. Because of the understanding of God and his laws in religions, repentance is differently understood and practiced in each religious movement.

2.4.1. Meaning of Repentance in Abrahamic Religions

As sin wells up from the evil heart, its cure touches the heart as well. This healing process, called “conversion” generally begins with repentance, that is, the disposition of heart by which one repents of one’s sins and is converted to God (John A. Hardon. 1980. *Modern Catholic Dictionary*. Double-Day & Company, INC. Garden City, New York, p. 413).

- **Repentance in Judaism**

In Judaism, the process of repentance is referred to by two words: “racham” (read nakham), to mean “to regret, to be sorry”, and “schwb” (shoob), to mean “to turn, to return”. The process of repentance itself is called “Teshuvah”, which translates “returning”. It aims at building and maintaining relationships and friendships in time. The fundamental features/conditions of Teshuvah are:

- Self-examination;
- recognition of failures against God’s laws,
- exhibition of a sincere remorse for the breach of good behavior,
- request for forgiveness and reparation as much as possible,
- the quest for self-renewal in such a way to be helpful to another human being.

- **Repentance in Christianity**

Christians are followers of Jesus Christ. The latter began his ministry by calling people to repentance (Matthew 4:17; Marc 6:12). In the New Testament,

repentance is referred to as “metanoia”, which means to change one’s mind. *Repentance is a Change of Mind resulting in a Change of Action.* In Christianity, repentance is understood in connection with the doctrines of creation, original sin and Salvation by Jesus Christ:

- Christians believe that God created the world and established norms to govern it.
- Through the gift of free will, humans transgress those norms.
- Jesus Christ alone has provided redemption from human sinfulness.
- Christian life, therefore, is basically penitential: Christians freely acknowledge their sinfulness and their dependence on Jesus.

Penance or repentance in Christianity is closely related to liturgical celebrations such as the sacrament of penance (or of reconciliation) and other penitential rituals. The fundamental features/conditions of repentance in Christianity are :

- Contrition or sorrow for one’s sin.
- Confession of sins either to the minister (e.g.: a priest) or to the community (public confession as done in some protestant churches).
- Reparation for sins, that is, to undo harm done to and by others. Reparation should be both motivated by justice (what is due to God and God’s punishment of sin) and charity (toward ourselves and others).

- **Repentance in Islam**

Islam means submission to God’s will as it is codified in the Islamic law. These laws are meant to guide relationships between Muslims and God or relationships among people. Repentance is as crucial as obligatory in Islam, because sin is considered as disobedience of divine laws lead away from God. The Arabic word for repentance, is *tawbah*, literally means, to return. Repentance is understood as referring to humans returning to God away from sins while God in return turns to the sinner in acceptance of the repentance. Repentance is defined as “Going back from desire to sin, with the determination of not returning to it, in exaltation of Allah and out of fear of his punishment” (The Great Ottoman Hanafi, al-Bariqa fi Sharh al-Tariqa). The fundamental features/conditions of repentance in Islam are as follows:

- To desist from committing sin/leaving the sin
- To feel sorry for committing sin/remorse over having committed the sin
- To decide not to ever recommit sin again/resolve never to return to the sin If the sin involves a human’s right, a fourth condition is required

- To absolve oneself from such right by making it up to the individual who was wronged by your action/return the rights or property one wrongly took

Repentance in Islam is grounded in the belief that Allah is Merciful; thus, no sin is too great to repent for ... or little for that matter.

In conclusion, genuine repentance touches three dimensions in Judaism, Christianity and Islam:

- **Mind:** repentance changes one's mind (metanoia) and begins to think differently.
- **Heart:** repentance makes one feeling sorrow and begins to feel differently.
- **Body:** repentance turns one's body and begins to do things differently.

2.4.2. Steps of genuine repentance

Repentance is a process that leads the person from the sinful state to the holy state of God. As a process, a certain number of steps must be made so as to feel reconciled with God, others and self. The major stages are : regret, confession and asking forgiveness. In his sermon Hopeful Sorrow (2012), Mae Gbson Wall, identified seven steps of repentance,

- Culpability:** acknowledging to ourselves that not only did we do the thing that was hurtful, but that we are at fault. It doesn't count if it includes the words, "they made me do it."
- Remorse:** feeling bad about what we have done.
- Confession:** bringing the mistakes into the open in acceptance of ourselves as miserable which is very pre-requisite for the self-transformation" of repentance (Psalm 51:3-4).
- Apology:** seeking forgiveness, acknowledging the hurt we have caused and being openly sorry to have done so. It is a plea to accept us as the remorseful person we are now rather than to reject us as the hurtful person we were before." (Psalm 51:7-10).
- Restitution/reparation:** trying to undo the wrong that was done to the extent that it is possible. (Ps 51:13). "To harm someone is to incur a moral debt," says Newman, "and it must be repaid in the same currency." When that is not possible, we must make the best effort we can.
- Soul reckoning:** turning inward to address our harmful behavior at its roots. What caused us to behave this way? We look to the past in order to create a different future. We cannot mend ourselves if we don't first understand what caused us to break.

g. Transformation which encompasses both an inner reorientation and a change in outward behavior. The ultimate test of true transformation is if, in the same circumstance, we can resist repeating our behavior.

2.4.3. Effects of genuine repentance

There is repentance because of sin and its bitter consequences. Sin destroys relationships with God, community, others and with oneself. Without health relationship, life diminishes in the human being to the extent he or she dies. Therefore, repentance aims at bringing about reconciliation as re-establishment of relationships on which the whole life depends. A genuine process of repentance - that is, with a contrite and sincere heart, and religious disposition definitely results in reconciliation with God, community and others and all its fruits.

Some of the fruits of repentance include:

- The restoration of the sinner in God's grace and in his friendship.
- A true spiritual resurrection. Sin is the right way to death. Repentance is that journey from death to life, that is resurrection.
- Restoration of dignity. Humankind has been created in the likeness of God who is good and perfect. Or sin is evil and distorts our dignity. True repentance restores it.
- Blessings of life of the children of God and of the servants of God.
- Peace and serenity of conscience. The consequences of sin are not only spiritual, but also psychological and social. Genuine repentance brings about peace of mind and peace at the world.
- Strong spiritual consolation. Sin is hurtful and desperate. With repentance one recovers hope and creativity.
- Re-establishment of fraternal communion with community.
- Individual and community development. A genuine repentance totally transforms the sinner's mind, and behavior. Transformation and development are correlative concepts.
- Re-insertion in the community and retrieval of human rights
- The happiness of being forgiven (*la joie du pardon*).

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 2.4

Here are four reasons believers might repent from their sins. Decide if each reason is good or bad. Pick out the best reason from the list and explain your answer.

- To please others
- The fear from punishment
- To obey God
- The love of God and others.

2.5. End unit Assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 2

1. "Sin is less an infraction of law than betrayal of a relationship with God." What do you think? Explain your answer.
2. Explain what Judaism understands by redemption.
3. According to Christianity, Jesus died on the cross for our sins so he has earned redemption for sins, what is the point of repentance?
4. Choose one of the possible sin against the neighbour and describe the process of repenting from it.

UNIT 3

THE CONCEPT OF PRAYER IN VARIOUS RELIGIONS

Key Unit Competence: Investigate different forms of prayer in different religious

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 3

Observe the picture below and answer the questions that follow:



- Describe what the man in the picture above is doing.
- What do you think is the purpose and the importance of illustrated activity

3.1. Meaning and necessity/ importance of prayer

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.1

Discuss the meaning of Prayer and its importance to Christians and Muslims.

Christian Teaching on the meaning and the importance/ necessity of Prayer

Prayer can be defined in several ways as follows:

- Prayer can be defined as talking to God.
- It can also be defined as an act of worship that glorifies God and reinforces our need for Him.
- Prayer is the raising of one's mind and heart to God or the requesting of good things from God.
- *Prayer is a form of communication*, a way of talking to God just as we talk to family or friends.

Through living a life of prayer, we respond to Christ's work of salvation and communicate with the very source of and purpose for our existence.

Prayer is a popular focus in sermons and Christian literature. A few important questions guide and clarify the power of prayer in each Christian's life.

Importance/ necessity of Prayer

We are commanded to pray: Multiple times we read that we are to be in continual prayer (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, Philippians 4:6-7, Ephesians 6:18-19). And in Luke, Jesus "spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1)

It gives God the glory: Prayer is a way to serve God (Luke 2:36-38). Through prayer, we have the opportunity to glorify and praise God for all He is and has done (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

It helps us overcome temptations: Jesus tells Peter to pray for strength in overcoming temptation (Matthew 26:41). Also, in Luke 6:12-13, Jesus demonstrates the importance of prayer in making major decisions. Prayer helps us face and overcome all types of struggles.

It brings our requests to God: “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you,” Jesus said in Matthew 7:7. This does not mean that we will be granted anything we ask, but when we ask for things that are in His will, He will give them to us (1 John 5:14-15).

It helps us discern His will: Jesus prayed continually to the Father for guidance. We too can begin to understand His will for us when we stay in communion with Him.

In conclusion we can say, Godliness is born of obedience to Christ. Obedience unlocks the riches of the Christian experience and Prayer is what prompts and nurtures obedience, putting the heart into the proper ‘frame of mind’ to desire obedience. We need the power of prayer for understanding, spiritual growth and unity with God. The prayer does not change God, but it changes the one who offers it.

Islamic Teaching on meaning and importance/ necessity of Prayer

Prayer in Islam refers to the direct communication with Allah. Through prayer, a Muslim connects with his /her Lord. The Arabic word for prayer is “As-Salah” is actually derived from the Arabic word meaning “connection.” The Messenger of Allah said: **“When any one of you stands to pray, he is communicating with his Lord, so let him pay attention to how he speaks to Him.”**

Prayer is the second most important pillar of Islam, and is the most regular compulsory action in a Muslim’s life. We fast just one month a year; we must give Zakah once a year; and Hajj is only once a life time. However, prayer is the one act that must be fulfilled at least five times a day, regardless of the circumstance . In fact, Allah did not even exempt the Muslims from praying during the battle! He says: “Guard strictly your (habit of) prayers... If you fear (an enemy), pray on foot, or riding.” Qur`an 2: 238-9.

Importance/necessity of Prayer in Islam

Shields against evil: Man was created weak and without seeking help from Allah, it will be impossible to refrain from evil. Allah says: “Verily, prayer restrains (oneself) from shameful and unjust deeds...”Qur'an 29:45.

Enriches the soul: Man is forgetful, especially with the our busy lifestyles. Prayer satisfies our spiritual need to be in contact with our Creator. This gives the soul peace and contentment. Allah says, “Without doubt, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find satisfaction.” Qur'an 13:28.

Makes us humble: By realising Allah's greatness and dependence on Him, man is humbled and rids us from pride and arrogance. In the prayer, the Muslim puts the highest part of his body and source of intellect, his head, on to the ground and says, "How perfect is my Lord, The Most High." Humility is one of the qualities which Allah has associated with success. He says, "Successful indeed are the believers, who are humble in their prayers." Qur'an 23:1-2

Washes away sins: Everyone commits sins, however, Allah has provided, in prayer, a way to wipe out those sins. Allah says: "And perform prayer... surely the good deeds remove the evils deeds." Qur'an 11:114

Cures our Problems: Man is surrounded by numerous trials and problems. Once we focus on strengthening our relationship with our Lord, He, who is All-Powerful, will fix our worldly problems. Whoever strengthens their relationship between themselves and Allah, Allah will strengthen their relationship between themselves and the creation. Allah says, "Seek help in patience and prayer." Qur'an 2:153

Unites the Muslims: When the prayer is performed in congregation, it cultivates brotherhood, equality and humility between Muslims. The worshippers stand in rows, shoulder to shoulder, without any distinction of race, nationality, colour, wealth, family or status, and all pray together as one body. This act of unity helps demolish all barriers which stand between men. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "**Prayer in congregation is better than praying alone by twenty-seven degrees.**"

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.1

Write a summary of Christian and Islamic teaching about prayer.

3.2. Types / Purpose of prayers

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.2

Basing on some models of prayer in the Bible and in your own experience, identify some types of prayers.

There are five basic types of prayer according to the Christian teaching as follows:

Blessing and Adoration

Blessing expresses the basic movement of Christian prayer: it is an encounter between God and man. In blessing, God's gift and man's acceptance of it are united in dialogue with each other. The prayer of blessing is man's response to God's gifts: because God blesses, the human heart can in return bless the One who is the source of every blessing.

Adoration is the first attitude of man acknowledging that he is a creature before his Creator. It exalts the greatness of the Lord who made us and the almighty power of the Savior who sets us free from evil. Adoration is homage of the spirit to the King of Glory, respectful silence in the presence of the ever greater God.

Prayer of Petition

By prayer of petition we express awareness of our relationship with God. We are creatures who are not our own beginning, not the masters of adversity, not our own last end. We are sinners who as Christians know that we have turned away from our Father. Our petition is already a turning back to him.

The first movement of the prayer of petition is asking forgiveness, like the tax collector in the parable: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!"(Luke 18:13). It is a prerequisite for righteous and pure prayer. Asking forgiveness is the prerequisite for personal prayer.

Christian petition is centered on the desire and search for the Kingdom to come, in keeping with the teaching of Christ. There is a hierarchy in these petitions: we pray first for the Kingdom, then for what is necessary to welcome it and cooperate with its coming. By prayer every baptized person works for the coming of the Kingdom. When we share in God's saving love, we understand that every need can become the object of petition. Christ, who assumed all things in order to redeem all things, is glorified by what we ask the Father in his name.

Prayer of Intercession

Intercession is a prayer of petition which leads us to pray as Jesus did. He is the one intercessor with the Father on behalf of all men, especially sinners (Romans 8:34). He is able for all time to save those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. The Holy Spirit "himself intercedes for us... and intercedes for the saints according to the will of God."(Romans 8:26-27)

Since Abraham, intercession - asking on behalf of another has been characteristic of a heart attuned to God's mercy. In the age of the Church, Christian intercession participates in Christ's, as an expression of the communion of saints. In intercession, he who prays looks "not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others," even to the point of praying for those who do him harm (Philippians 2:4)

Prayer of Thanksgiving



Thanksgiving characterizes the prayer of the Church which, in celebrating the Eucharist, reveals and becomes more fully what she is. Indeed, in the work of salvation, Christ sets creation free from sin and death to consecrate it a new and make it return to the Father, for his glory.

As in the prayer of petition, every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving. The letters of St. Paul often begin and end with thanksgiving, and the Lord Jesus is always present in it: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you"; "Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving." (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

Prayer of Praise

Praise is the form of prayer which recognizes most immediately that God is God. It lauds God for his own sake and gives him glory, quite beyond what he does, but simply because HE IS. It shares in the blessed happiness of the pure of heart who love God in faith before seeing him in glory. By praise, the Spirit is joined to our spirits to bear witness that we are children of God, (Acts 2:47; 3:9; 4:21; 13:48), testifying to the only Son in whom we are adopted and by whom we glorify the Father. Praise embraces the other forms of prayer and carries them toward him who is its source and goal: the “one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist.” (I Corinthians 8:6)

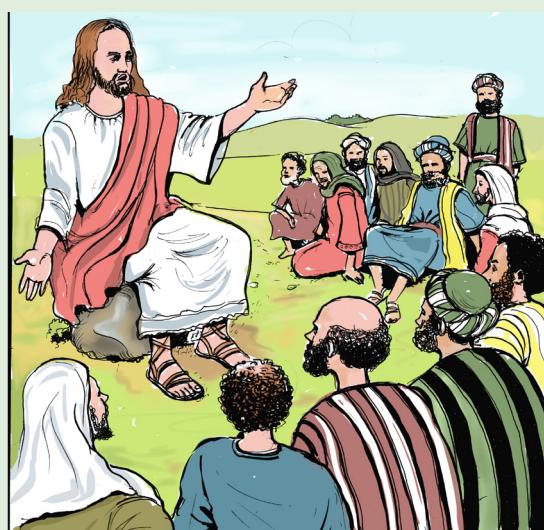
APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.2

Compose the five types of Prayer, considering the important elements in each one.

3.3. The Lord's Prayer

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.3

Observe the picture presented above and answer the following questions:



- a. Who are presented in the picture from the Bible and what were they learning about?
- b. What do you think they are doing?

One of the most frequently prayed prayers among Christians of all denominations is the Our Father. For most Christians, it is one of the first prayers that everyone learns from a young age. One of the main reasons it holds primacy in our faith is that, Jesus himself taught us the prayer. When asked by his disciples about how to pray, Jesus taught his disciples the prayer traditionally known as the “Our Father” or “the Lord’s Prayer.”

Our Father

Who art in heaven

Hallowed be your name

Your kingdom come

Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread

And forgive us our trespasses

As we forgive those trespass against us

Lead us not in temptation

But deliver us from evil. Amen.

(Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4).

Structure of the Our Father

After the initial address to the Father, the prayer itself is composed of seven petitions. There are three “thy-petitions” (thy name, thy kingdom, thy will) followed by four “us-petitions” (give us, forgive us, lead us not and deliver us). Below is the explanation of each Petition.

“Our Father, who at in heaven...

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he did not teach them to pray “My Father,” but rather

“Our Father.” This reminds us that we are God’s sons and daughters together in Christ, not as isolated individuals. It is only as the body of Christ that we can pray to God as Father. When we call God “Father,” it is a reminder for us to live as children in relation with God. In teaching us to call God “Father,” Jesus also

tells us that we have the privilege to call God by the same name he used in his intimate relationship with the Father.

“Hallowed be thy name...”

In the first petition, we are asking that God's name would be “hallowed” or sanctified. Objectively speaking, God's name is already holy, but the prayer is asking that God make his name holy to all people through his works and deeds (Ezekiel 36:22-27).

“Thy kingdom come...”

The second petition has a twofold meaning. First, we are praying for the coming of the kingdom of God here and now in our everyday lives. At the same time, we are also praying for Christ's glorious return at the end of time and the final coming of the reign of God.

“Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...”

The third petition asks God that our will be conformed to his divine will. When Jesus was praying to the Father in the Garden of Gethsemane, he also used the words “thy will be done.” When we pray “thy will be done” we commit ourselves to following Jesus by taking up our cross.

“Give us this day, our daily bread...”

In the fourth petition, “give us” expresses our trust in our heavenly Father. “Our daily bread” refers to our earthly nourishment that is necessary to physically sustain us throughout the day and the Bread of Life (the Word of God and the Body of Christ) that spiritually nourishes us.

“Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us...”

In the fifth petition, we beg for God's mercy for the times that we have fallen short of loving God and loving our neighbor. We acknowledge that the Father's mercy and forgiveness are able to penetrate our hearts to the extent that we are able to forgive our enemies.

“Lead us not into temptation...”

Some people wonder why we would ask God not to lead us into temptation. The letter of St. James clearly says that God does not tempt us with evil (James 1:13). Therefore, in this petition, we are asking that God does not allow us to take the path that leads to sin. We are praying to avoid the near occasion of sin.

“But deliver us from evil...”

This final petition, we are asking God to protect us from evil. The “evil” in this petition is not an abstract evil, but actually “refers to a person, Satan, the Evil One, the angel who opposes God” (CCC, 2851). While we acknowledge the reality of the devil, we place our trust in Christ and his definitive victory over evil on the Cross

“Amen!”

After praying all of these petitions, we end by affirming our belief in all that we have prayed by saying “Amen” or “So be it!”

Some Christians pray, “For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours forever,” immediately at the end of the Our Father. While this line was not included in the prayer recorded by the Gospels, it was included in the didache, a first or second century writing that summarizes much of the teaching of the apostles. Catholics pray this line during the liturgy, but only after a prayer by the priest, in order to honor the tradition while also maintaining the traditional prayer included in the Gospels.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.3

- a. Read the two fashions of the Prayer of Our Father in the two Gospels Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4 and point out the differences.
- b. Apply the seven petitions in composing your own prayer

3.4. Prayer in Psalms

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.4

Write down your favourite Psalm from the Bible and interpret it according to your understanding.

Psalms are composed sacred songs, or of sacred poems found in the Old Testament that were meant to be sung. The book of Psalms contains 150 poems. Traditionally, they were thought to have been written by David, but modern scholars tend to think that they were composed by many different individuals over the course of many years.

The most important way of praying the psalms is to *pray them with Jesus*. Often the Psalms reminded us of Jesus’ life and words and this makes for fruitful

meditation. The Psalms help us to learn to pray with Jesus and like Jesus; they help us to become a person after God's own heart (David) in the midst so many challenges in life.

Jesus quoted from the Psalms numerous times. Clearly he had spent a lot of time praying through the Psalms probably, like other Jews in his day, this is how he learned to pray. Jesus *lived* the Psalms. Often he identified his life experiences in those of the Psalmist.

There are many Messianic prophecies in the Psalms that Jesus lived out, proving that he is God's Messiah. And Jesus fulfilled *all* of the Psalms in the sense that he perfectly completed the righteous and honest life of prayer that they express.

In his humanity Jesus relied on praying the Psalms for comfort, wisdom, and worship in many different experiences. He needed the psalms because he felt all the same basic struggles and temptations that we do.

The most moving example of Jesus praying a Psalm is when he was hanged on the cross, suffering for our sins, and he cried out in a loud voice the heart-broken words of David from Psalm 22:1, "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). This is the only time in the Gospel accounts that Jesus prayed to his Father using the formal and distant name "God." He knew how it felt to be in pain and to cry out for God and yet feel alone. He knew what it was like to long for the Father's love and feel abandoned. He endured his darkest of all Dark Nights of the Soul on the cross for the joy of reconciling us to his Father (Hebrews 12:2).

The Five Types of Psalms

a. Psalms of praise

They generally focus on the nature of God and not on specific things He has done. They tell about God's attributes and encourage the believer to praise Him for his goodness, righteousness, judgment, and wisdom. They often refer to playing music or singing and rejoicing. Examples: Psalms 8;19;29;33;100;103;104;111;147;149 etc.

b. Psalms of Wisdom

They contain teachings and wise advice that are similar to the book of Proverbs, but in the form of a Psalm. These general principles are meant to instruct believers on how to live a Godly life. Examples: Psalms 1;37;49;73;91;112;119;112;127;128;133;139 etc.

c. Royal Psalms

These Psalms express the belief that God does His will and good works through the authority of a king. Sometimes, royal Psalms celebrate the coronation or good works of an earthly king. Other Psalms compare God to an earthly king and even point to the coming of God's Son, Jesus. Examples: Psalms 2;18;20;21;45;72;89;101;132;144 etc.

d. Psalms of Thanksgiving

They offer the believer's praise and thanksgiving for what God has done for him or her. Sometimes this is a specific good that God has granted, but sometimes thanksgiving for God's goodness in general. Examples: Psalms 9;30;34; 40;41;9 2;116;138;65;66;67;68;118;124 etc.

e. Psalms of Lament

They respond to a crisis, grief, or despair. They are intended to move a believer from hurt to joy. This type of Psalm expresses that God is present even when human beings cannot discern His presence in the world due to their own sufferings. Example: Psalms 5;6;7;13;17;22;25;26;28;31;35;36;38;120;130;14 0;141;142;143

Importance of Praying the Psalms

1. Psalms teaches us to pray.

The pattern of the Lord's Prayer is filled out by the Psalms, which expand on and echo its themes. Not all the Psalms are prayers, but they will all shape our prayers in so many ways. The Early Church did this, and we should follow their example (e.g., Eph. 5:19). As a teacher will compose letters or little speeches for his pupils to write to their parents, so by this book he prepares both the language and the mood in which we should address the heavenly Father.

2. Trains us to respond to the riches of Bible truth.

All the wonderful truth of the Bible is poured into the Psalms in such a way that we learn to delight in God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It takes a while to learn from the Psalms how to respond to the whole of the Bible's teaching. But it's worth the effort. If we learn to pray the Psalms, we will have learned to respond in prayer to every facet of biblical truth.

3. Shapes well-rounded people to pray in all of human life

Psalms express every facet of human experience. Just as a child graduates from painting in primary colors to using subtle tones in her art, so a Christian soaked in the Psalms moves from an emotionally childish experience toward a richer and more refined life of the heart.

4. Reorients disordered affections into God's good order

The weakness of human beings provokes a mass of disordered affections. We desire what we ought to detest, and we care little for what we ought deeply to desire. And it matters because our wills choose what we desire; we do what we want. The most necessary work of God in our hearts is to change our desires so that we want what God wants. Only when this begins to happen, will our lives change at the deep level of our hearts.

The Psalms do just this: they shape our affections so that we *love* what God says is right and deeply *desire* the blessings he promises us in the gospel.

5. Sweeten sour emotions

When we are turned in on ourselves in resentment, bitterness, anger, or despair, these emotions become deeply destructive. They give our whole lives a sour taste. The Psalms can take these dark emotions and transform them into something life-giving.

6. Guards us against dangerously individualistic piety

Christianity is not a “me and God” thing; but, more fundamentally, it’s a “we and God” thing where “we” means the church of Jesus Christ in the entire world and every age. When we properly understand the Psalms, we know they make sense only when we remember that we belong and pray, and praise with all Christ’s people.

7. Arouses us to warmth in our relationship with God

Finally, praying the Psalms is God’s remedy to coldness of heart in our walk with Christ. We know that we *ought* to find the truths of the Gospel and the person of Jesus Christ thrilling and heart-warming, but the reality is we sometimes feel so cold, dull and empty of zeal. How are we to be brought out of the spiritual refrigerator and into the oven of fervent love for Christ? The Psalms are a significant part of the provision God has given to us for just this purpose.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.4

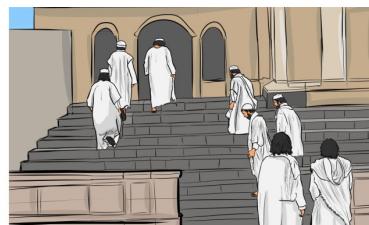
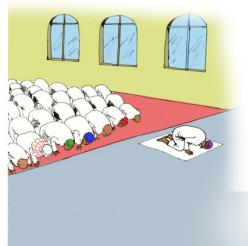
- Compose using your own words, any Psalm among the five types.
- Write down 4 importance for you of using Psalms as your prayer.

3.5. Concept of prayer in different religions

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.5

Observe the different scenes presented in below picture.

Discuss the prayer practices in each religion, as presented and from your own experience.



Prayer is an invocation or act that seeks to activate a rapport with an object of worship through deliberate communication. Prayer can also have the purpose of thanksgiving or praise, and in comparative religion is closely associated with more abstract forms of meditation. Prayer can take a variety of forms: it can be part of a set liturgy or ritual, and it can be performed alone or in groups. Prayer may take the form of a hymn, formal statements, or a spontaneous utterance in the praying person.

Today, most major religions involve prayer in one way or another; some ritualize the act, requiring a strict sequence of actions or placing a restriction on who is permitted to pray, while others teach that prayer may be practiced spontaneously by anyone at any time.

Below is a brief description on the concept of prayer in each of the Abrahamic religions and in other two examples of non-theistic religions.

3.5.1. Judaism

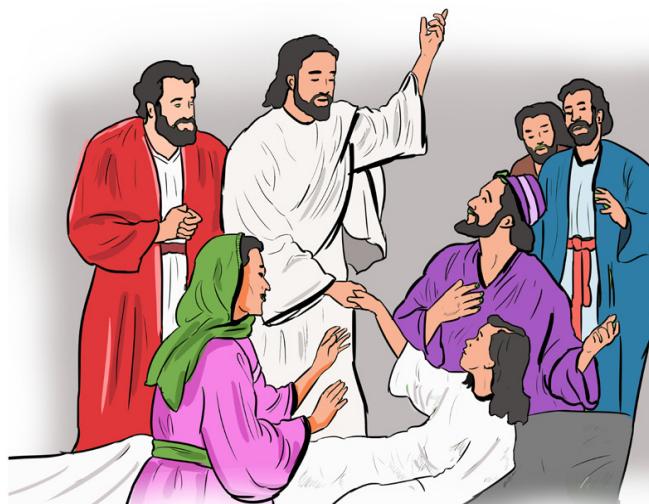
Observant Jews pray three times a day (Shacharit, Mincha, and Ma'ariv) with lengthier prayers on special days, such as the Sabbath and Jewish holidays including Musaf and the reading of the Torah. The Siddur is the prayer book used by Jews all over the world, containing a set order of daily prayers. Jewish prayer is usually described as having two aspects: kavanah (intention) and keva (the ritualistic, structured elements).

The most important Jewish prayers are the Shema Yisrael ("Hear O Israel") and the Amidah ("the standing prayer").

Communal prayer is preferred over solitary prayer, and a quorum of ten adult males (a minyan) is considered a prerequisite for several communal prayers.

There are also many other ritualistic prayers a Jew performs during their day, such as washing before eating bread, washing after one wakes up in the morning, and doing grace after meals.

3.5.2. Christianity



Jesus rose the people from the dead

Christian prayers are quite varied. They can be completely spontaneous, or read entirely from a text, like the Anglican Book of Common Prayer. The most common prayer among Christians is the Lord's Prayer, which according to the gospel accounts (Matthew 6:9–13) is how Jesus taught his disciples to pray.

The Lord's Prayer is a model for prayers of adoration, confession and petition in Christianity. In medieval England, prayers (particularly the Our Father) were frequently used as a measure of time in medical and culinary recipe books.

Christians generally pray to God or to the Father. Some Christians (e.g., Catholics, Orthodox) will also ask the righteous in heaven and "in Christ," such as Virgin Mary or other saints to intercede by praying on their behalf (intercession of saints). Formulaic closures include "through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, through all the ages of ages," and "in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

It is customary among Protestants to end prayers with "In Jesus' name, Amen" or "In the name of Christ, Amen." However, the most commonly used closure in Christianity is simply "Amen" (from a Hebrew adverb used as a statement of affirmation or agreement, usually translated as so be it).

In the Western or Latin Rite of the Roman Catholic Church, probably the most common is the Rosary; In the Eastern Church (the Eastern rites of the Catholic Church and Orthodox Church), the Lord's Prayer.

Roman Catholic tradition includes specific prayers and devotions as acts of reparation which do not involve a petition for a living or deceased beneficiary, but aim to repair the sins of others, e.g. for the repair of the sin of blasphemy performed by others. Other forms of prayer among Catholics would be meditative prayer, contemplative prayer and infused prayer discussed at length by Catholic Saints St. John of the Cross and St. Theresa of Jesus.

3.5.3. Islam



Muslims in prostration in prayer

The Arabic word for prayer is salah. In Islam, there are five daily obligatory prayers that are considered as one of the pillars of the religion. The command to ritual prayer occurs repeatedly in the Quran. The prayer is performed by the person while they are facing the Kaaba in Mecca. There is the “call for prayer” (adhan), where the leader calls for all the followers to stand together for the prayer. The prayer consists of actions such as glorifying and praising God (such as mentioning ‘Allāhu Akbar’ (God is Great) while standing, recitation of chapters of the Qur'an (such as the opening chapter of the book (Al-Fatiha)), bowing down then praising God, prostrating (sujud) then again praising God and it ends with the words: “Peace be with you and God's mercy”. During the prayer, a Muslim cannot talk or do anything else besides pray. Once the prayer is complete, one can offer personal prayers or supplications to God for their needs that are known as dua.

There are many standard invocations in Arabic to be recited at various times (e.g. after the prayer) and for various occasions (e.g. for one's parents) with manners and etiquette such as before eating. Muslims may also say dua in their own words and languages for any issue they wish to communicate with God in the hope that God will answer their prayers. Certain Shi'a sects pray the five daily prayers divided into three separate parts of the day, providing several Hadith as supporting evidence; although according to Shia Islam, it is also permissible to pray five times.

3.5.3. Non-theistic Religion

Non-theistic religion is defined; the prefix “non” to mean simply that the theistic reference does not apply. It is a religion or belief of a commitment to a way of life, to a creative relationship to others, in which metaphysical and theological arguments are set aside. Whether or not God exists may be an interesting question. But the answer to that question if answerable at all, should make no crucial difference in how one ought to live and how to treat others. Examples of non-theistic religions include: Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Janism, Confucianism, etc. Below is a brief explanation of the concept of prayer in some of them

Buddhism

In the earliest Buddhist tradition, prayer plays only an auxiliary role. It is largely a ritual expression of wishes for success in the practice and in helping all beings.

The transfer of merit is an evocation and prayer. Moreover, Duddhas (teacher) are available for intercession as they reside in awoken-fields.

The awoken-field is what is generally known and understood as a mandala. The opening and closing of the ring (Sanskrit: mandala) is an active prayer. An active prayer is a mindful activity, in which mindfulness is not just cultivated but is a common prayer “May the merit of my practice, adorn Buddhas’ Pure Lands, requite the fourfold kindness from above, and relieve the suffering of the three life-journeys below. They universally wish animate beings, Friends, foes, and karmic creditors, all to activate the bodhi mind, and all to be reborn in the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.” The Generation Stage involves prayer elements.

The Tibetan Buddhism tradition emphasizes an instructive and devotional relationship to a guru; this may involve devotional practices known as guru yoga which are congruent with prayer.

Pure Land Buddhism emphasizes the recitation by devotees of prayer-like mantras, a practice often called Nembutsu. On one level it is said that reciting these mantras can ensure rebirth into good land after bodily dissolution. On another, the practice is a form of meditation aimed at achieving realization.

But beyond all these practices the Buddha emphasized the primacy of individual practice and experience. He said that supplication to gods or deities was not necessary. Nevertheless, today many lay people in East Asian countries pray to the Buddha in ways that resemble, asking for intervention and offering devotion.

Hinduism

Hinduism has incorporated many kinds of prayer (Sanskrit: prārthanā), from fire-based rituals to philosophical music. While chanting involves recitation of timeless verses or verses with timings and notations, dhyana involves deep meditation (however short or long) on the preferred deity/God. Again the object to which prayers are offered could be a person's referred as devtas, trinity or incarnation of either devtas or trinity or simply plain formless meditation as practiced by the ancient sages. These prayers can be directed to fulfilling personal needs or deep spiritual enlightenment, and also for the benefit of others. Ritual invocation was part and parcel of the Vedic religion and as such permeated their sacred texts. Indeed, the highest sacred texts of the Hindus, the Vedas, are a large collection of mantras and prayer rituals.

Classical Hinduism came to focus on extolling a single supreme force, Brahman, that is made manifest in several lower forms as the familiar gods of the Hindu pantheon. Hindus in India have numerous devotional movements. Hindus may pray to the highest absolute God Brahman, or more commonly to its three manifestations, a creator god called Brahma, a preserver god called Vishnu and a destroyer god (so that the creation cycle can start afresh) Shiva, and at the next level to Vishnu's avatars (earthly appearances) Rama and Krishna or to many other male or female deities. Typically, Hindus pray with their hands (the palms) joined together. The hand gesture is similar to the popular Indian greeting (Namaste).

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.5

- Identify some similarities in all the three Abrahamic religion on their concept on prayer.
- Give two lessons that you can learn about prayer from the Non-theistic religions

3.6. Special Prayers

LEARNING ACTIVITY 3.6

Read the following scenario and answer the question:

In the family of Kalisa there were many challenges of sick members, death of one of his children and conflicts with his immediate neighbour. Kalisa and familymembers are members of Seventh Day Adventists .They decided to seek advice and help from their pastor on what to do in this hard situation.

Question:

Suppose you were the pastor, discuss about the advice you would give to this family.

Special prayers are prayers used in of special moments and with specific intentions. When believers face hard or challenging moments like; serious sickness, war, death of a family member, financial crisis, family misunderstanding, unemployment issues, etc, they turn to God for help by offering these situations to God for his intervention. Not only in hard moments but also in joyful moments. When believers succeed in life for example; pass an exam, get a job, get married, get a child, achieve what they desired etc, also turn to God with gratitude hearts and offer special prayers of thanksgiving and praise to God.

Special prayers play an important role in lives of believers. They strengthen the faith of the believer, console, unite people to God and also to others especially when they pray together, give courage and fortitude in bearing life problems with courage, help one to trust fully in God, etc. They can be offered individually or communally.

Examples of special prayers

Prayer for family

Prayer to pass an examination

Prayer for friends

Prayer for relationship

Prayer for best friend

Prayer to find a good wife/ husband

Strengthening relationships prayers

Prayer for husband and wife

Prayers to save a marriage

Prayers for reconciliation

Prayers for family peace

Musician's prayer

Footballer's prayer

Prayers for nurses

Prayer to get a child

Military prayers

Prayer for teachers

Farmer's prayers

Prayer to get healing

Prayer for peace in the country

Prayer to get a job

Prayer for work problems

Prayer for stress at work

Samples of Special Prayers

Prayer For Asking God's Forgiveness

Oh Lord, in the helplessness and fear that I feel in this time of sickness, I glimpse your agony in the garden. Help me recall the times in my life when lack of caring, moodiness, and selfishness ruled my behavior instead of your gentle commandment of love.

I know Lord, and I am deeply sorry, that my acts of unkindness and selfishness are the very clouds of darkness that keep us apart. They are indeed my part of your loneliness and despair in the garden.

My Lord and my God, only your great love and my sincere sorrow can wash away my sins and bring me back to the glorious light of your love.

I am truly sorry for my sins, Lord, and will try never to sin again. I ask your forgiveness and pray for your strength.

Prayer In Time of Difficulty

When the trials and temptations of this world press heavily upon my heart, walk beside me and I shall fear no evil.

Have mercy on me, Lord, and hear my prayer.

I desire most sincerely to come closer and closer to you in my daily life especially when I suffer. Give me insight into this mystery of suffering.

Prayer In Time of Confusion

Scripture: John 11:3. "Lord, the one you love is ill."

When Martha and Mary sent you this message, they didn't know what you were going to do, but they simply hoped and trusted. I offer their words as my own prayer, Lord, turning to you and trusting in your love. Lord Jesus, help my unbelief and quiet my fear. Thank you, Jesus!

A Prayer For Peace

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Identify a need either in your family or your school or your country, then write down a special prayer for that intention.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 3.6

Identify a need either in your family or your school or your country, then write down a special prayer for that intention.

3.7. End Unit Assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 3

8. Define the following terms:
 - a. Prayer
 - b. Non-theistic religions.
 - c. Psalms
 - d. Special prayers
5. Give 5 Importance of prayers in Islam.
6. Explain 4 types of prayer.
7. Write down a brief description of the 7 petitions in the Lord's prayer.
8. What are the 5 types of Psalms?
9. Describe the prayer practices in Hinduism.

UNIT 4

MAJOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS

Key Unit competence: Analyze and prevent current social problems basing on positive values imbedded in religious teachings.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 4

After describing the image below, find all possible social problems that you can link to it and the consequences that they can cause in the society.



4.1. Meaning of a social problem

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.1

Observe the pictures below, think and explain what social problems they are portraying.



A problem: is a situation that is unsatisfactory and causes difficulties for people. It is a matter or situation regarded as unwelcome or harmful and needing to be dealt with and overcome. A problem needs attention and measures or strategies to solve it or to prevent it.

Depending on the subject or the person or community affected by a problem the following are some examples of problems:

- **Impersonal problems:** Eg. shortage of money;
- **Personal problems:** Eg. Emotional or health problems;
- **Interpersonal problems:** such as disagreements with other people; and
- **Community and wider societal problems:** Eg. Crime, unemployment.

A social problem: A social problem is any condition or behavior that has negative consequences for large numbers of people and that is generally recognized as a condition or behavior that needs to be addressed both nationally and internationally. It is a problem which is created by the people of society and it is a condition that at least some people in a community view as being undesirable. In fact, the term "social problem" is usually taken to refer to social conditions that disrupt or damage society crime, racism, and the like. A *social problem* is normally a term used to describe *problems* with a particular area or group of people in the world. *Social problems* often involve *problems* that affect the real world. It also affects how people react to certain situations. According to Nelissen, N., there is a social problem "when an influential group is of opinion that a particular social situation where it is part of, is contrary to or threatening for its values and that this situation can be improved or changed by collective action".

Although a huge amount of papers were written on social problem, there is no universal definition of social problem. However, in academic literature, many of the authors have already agreed, to some extent, on the nature of social problems. They included the requirement that the public or some segment of the public must perceive the condition as problem before we can justly say that a social problem exists (Lauer, 1976: p. 125). In other words, social problems exist when there is certain objective condition and people/public define it problematic. In fact, social problems exist when people think they are. If there is no perception of a particular social problem as problematic, then it does not exist. Nevertheless, the issue of social problems is not problematic itself. Therefore, when defining a social problem, not only experts should intervene, but also and above all the public's views must be taken into consideration.

Common characteristics of social problems

The following are characteristics of social problems:

- Harmful effects to individuals and society (large number of people)
- Their extent and seriousness call for international attention
- Recognized by police makers, lay citizens and other segment of the society
- Deviated from the normal or ideal situation or behaviour
- Caused by factors that are social in origin
- Social problems are linked
- They affect all sections of the society
- Need collective approach for their solution
- They affected all society.

Social problems vary from a society to another and change from time to time as they are addressed. Some social problems are universally recognized.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.1

1. Identify social problems in Rwandan society and why do you think are problems?
2. Why is it difficult to come up with universal meaning of a social problem?

4.2. Major social problems in the society and Rwandan in particular

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.2

In groups, after describing the picture below, find out 10 major social problems that harm the society as global challenges. Rank them according to their severity.

4.2.1. Major social problems in the society

Whenever the people of a certain society are deprived from their basic rights, then social problems arise. Major causes affect the societies globally and they have various causes. Some of them include:

- **Global warming/Climate change**

Global warming or climate change is a phenomenon of climatic changes characterised by general increase of average temperature which modifies the weather balance and ecosystems for a long time. The causes of climate changes are many but scientists have underlined human activities being the mother cause for climate change as they destroy ozone layers which protects the earth from ultraviolet light. These activities include Fuel fossils, mining and industrial activities with emission of harmful gases in the air. They include also deforestation, overconsumption and intensive farming. The impact of climate change is observable and felt through the occurrence of weather events such as natural calamities such as frequent and intense droughts and storms becoming, changing rainfall patterns as well as weather-related economic loss events have tripled societies across the globe. Generally many societies are experiencing the consequences of climate change this calls for international attention and preventive measures.

In order to fight against, climate changes some measures and strategies are proposed. They include but not limited to:

Sustainable use of energy. This is a call for all societies to do away with the machines that releases gases in the agriculture, transportation, and industries. There are some machines which are environment friendly and which release less or no gas in the atmosphere. For example electric cars, motors and machines with less gas emission are encouraged to be used.

Recycling: waste management is very important in finding solution to the climate change problem.

Afforestation and reforestation: This is the effort to plant new trees and replant trees where trees have been harvested. This will help in stabilizing the climate.

Biodiversity protection: This is putting in place policies and politics that promotes and sustains biodiversity and ecosystems in the world. Countries should take serious measures to protect flora and fauna.

- **Poverty**

Poverty means lacking of basic needs like clothing, shelter, food, health facilities. Poverty refers to limited resources and low standard of living which cannot fulfill the basic human needs. Poverty is a major social problem because in many societies in the world a large number of the population is living in poverty.

Poverty is caused by many factors but they differ from one society to another. These causes include: Lack of education and mindset, high birth rate in comparison to the low income, unequal distribution of income in the country, inadequate agricultural systems, corruption in the society, political and economic instability among others. Poverty has many consequences in the society such as family conflicts, deaths, diseases, lack of education for children, domestic abuse, parental issues, unemployment, drug abuse etc.

- Many countries have put in place measures as solutions to poverty. These measures differ from one society to another. These include:
 - Sustainable development goals and long term planning
 - Free education for all (primary, Secondary and tertiary policy)
 - Control birth rate and family planning
 - Microfinance schemes should be initiated for starting small business
 - Social protection policies for the vulnerable groups
 - Transparency and accountability in government spending and earning
 - Eradication of corruption and embezzlement
 - Reforms in Agricultural system
 - Putting in place efficient health facilities accessible to all.

- **Safety and security**

Security and safety challenges are growing day and night in today's world. Challenges such as, cyber-crime, terrorism, and environmental disasters impact the lives of millions across the globe. These issues also rank high on the

agenda of politicians, international organizations and businesses if the people are to reach sustainable development. They also feature prominently in the public conscience and in governmental policies across the globe.

In this interconnected world where advanced technologies are linking all people in the world, security challenges are becoming increasingly complex. Some people take the advantage of these technologies to kidnap, perform terrorism and human trafficking activities or do other cyber-crimes in their diversity. Hence facilitated by developments as globalization and the spread of networked and hyper-connected technologies, new safety and security challenges arise and impact local, national, regional and international levels, which dramatically increases their complexity and scale. Eg. Hackers are stealing money from banks all over the world. As such, solutions to contemporary security challenges require a wide array of actors operating on multiple levels of governance. Train may people in matters of cyber-security and also understand clearly dynamics of Technologies.

- **Lack of education**

Education is a basic human right. But many children in many societies in the world still do not have the opportunity to learn or acquire basic education.

In many societies, children of school age in many countries face many barriers to accessing an education in proper way. Some barriers to education include lack of school materials, family problems, long distance from home to school far, students do not master the language of instruction, gender roles and inequality, child labor the teachers at the school do not have adequate materials to help children learn effectively among other causes. The world's most vulnerable children from disadvantaged communities, including young girls and children with disabilities are targeted.

However, increasing access to education can improve the overall health and longevity of a society, grow economies, and even combat climate change.

- **Unemployment**

Unemployment is a term referring to individuals who are employable and seeking a job but are unable to find a job. Furthermore, it is those people in the workforce or pool of people who are available for work that does not have a job. Usually measured by the unemployment rate, which is dividing the number of unemployed people by the total number of people in the workforce. Getting employed is considered as a prerequisite to a productive, socially recognized and complete realization of human labour; Getting a job is an existential basis upon which people build their financial and social security and confirms

their integral social status. Unemployment is caused by many factors such as corruption and nepotism, financial crisis, global recession, education that is not matching with job market demand, decline of industrialization, occupation mobility, robotics employments, poverty,....

The unemployment is a serious issue and has negative consequences to individuals and societies hence its impact can be felt by both the workers and the national economy and can create a ripple effect. Unemployed people suffer financial difficulties that lead to emotional destruction. When it happens, consumer spending, which is one of an economy's key drivers of growth, goes down, leading to a recession or even a depression when left unaddressed. It causes lowered purchasing power, which, in turn, causes lowered profits for businesses and leads to budget cuts and workforce reduction.

- **Food and Water security**

According to the World Food Summit of 1996, food security as existing when all people , at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet dietary needs for a productive and healthy life. food insecurity as a state in which “consistent access to adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources at times during the year.” By contrast, food security can be defined as all people at all times having access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. By contrast, food security can be defined as all people at all times having access to sufficient, safe, nutritious food to maintain a healthy and active life. Typically, food security encompasses both physical and economic access to food that meets people's dietary needs as well as their food preferences.

While the government officials are still struggling to restore water supplies, families across the world are struggling to access other essentials, including food. Water is key to food security. Crops and livestock need water to grow. Agriculture requires large quantities of water for irrigation and of good quality for various production processes. All societies need clean water for drinking but also they need water for agricultural activities. Hence scarcity of water leads to family and food insecurity. Water and food are equally important to human life.

Food insecurity occurs due to a multitude of factors. Sometimes, people go hungry when there is enough food to go around but it is not distributed equally. This situation can occur due to issues such as poverty, discrimination, corrupt governances, and civil war. In some cases, even if food is available, people do not have the money to buy it. In other instances, unsustainable farming practices can cause a reduction in soil fertility, inhibiting a farm from producing enough food. Water and land factor conditions can also have a major impact on food

security. For example, regions of eastern Africa and the Middle East contain a significant amount of arid, very dry land, prone to prolonged droughts, making it nearly impossible to farm. Other geographic constraints might arise from loss of farmland due to urban growth, industry, or a natural disaster or human-caused environmental disturbance.

Reasons for water scarcity are similar, as the two issues are often related, but factor conditions, or geographic predispositions are often at the root of the problem. Rain and snow fall in some places on earth and not others. Mountainous areas form watersheds which determine where rainwater and snowmelt run, and as a result, many arid regions frequently face drought conditions. Additionally, in many areas, people use water faster than it can be replenished by the water cycle. Another threat to water supplies is climate change, which is expected to impact rainfall, snowfall, and weather temperature patterns. The intensity of droughts and floods is also predicted to increase.

Some solution to food and water are proposed: Ensuring a greener and more sustainable food production. These are needed to improve crop harvest. There is also a need to implement irrigation strategies in mountainous regions and in the desert regions. Use of drainage of water and maximum use of water should be promoted. Land use and water management policies should be put in place. There is a need to improve crop protection, reduce post harvest loses and create more sustainable livestock. Lastly there is a need to improve the value chain (production, post-harvest handling, processing, retailing, consumption to distribution and trade, efficient water and food recycling strategies can be addressed).

- **War, violence and conflicts**

War, conflicts and violences are problems that many societies in the world experience. For many years ago, use of military force is seen as a way of showing power, supremacy for some countries. The causes are many but the reality is that war, conflict and violence in various forms has caused enormous problems such as death, casualties, famine, migrations, homelessness for a good number of people, poverty, economic decline among others. War, conflicts and violence are preventable if the political leaders take collective measures. The use of non violence methods approaches to conflicts, mediations, arbitrations, justice are positive weapon to end war, conflicts and violence.

Other social problems include drug abuse and alcohol, child labour, gender based violence and sexual abuse, racial discrimination, gender inequality, corruption, abortion, diseases among others.

Conclusion

Social problems have enormous and various effect on the society and individuals. The major effect is that the harmony in the society is disturbed and can never be stable. Hence there is always hostility, dissatisfaction and suspicion. They also result in large-scale social dissatisfaction and create suffering and misery. They create problems of serious magnitude, which is disadvantageous to the whole society. There is a need for collective measures and international cooperation in dealing and solving social problems. All social problems need collaborative effort in finding solutions since affect each and every society. There should be political will, effort, responsible and accountable leadership through elaboration of sustainable policies and programs that are geared to eradicate and solve all issues that affect common good, justice and wellbeing of the population; and these are a big hindrance to sustainable development.

4.2.2. Major social problems in Rwandan society

Rwanda as a country that has faced a tragedy and shadows of genocide against Tutsi in 1994 has made remarkable effort in fighting social problems more especially those that are linked with Genocide. After genocide problems were enormous, but the government of Unity has made tremendous progress in addressing issues pertaining to the wellbeing of the citizens.

Despite the effort made: the following problems are still persisting and need strategies to solve them. These include:

- Poverty:**

Though a big number of citizens graduated from serious poverty, poverty attracts attention of leaders so that Rwandans live well.

- Unemployment**

The unemployment is experienced in Rwanda. This is seen when there are limited employment offers and a huge number of graduates attend hoping to get jobs.

- Malnutrition**

There are still registered cases of malnutrition across the country, in almost every District. This is due to the ignorance of parents, mentality about balanced diet.

- Drug abuse**

There are some cases of young people who involve themselves in drug abuse.

- **Gender based violences**

Cases of sexual abuse, gender based violence, death (spouses killing one another, family conflicts are still persisting and need adequate attention. This also is seen in the number of pregnant young girls increasing (under the age of 18)

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.2

Observe the picture below and answer to the following questions:

1. Explain how these social problems are particularly harmful to the Rwandan Youth.
2. In group works, rank them according to their severity.

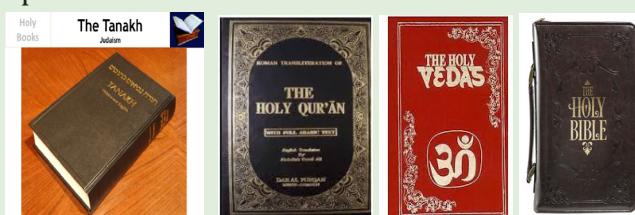


4.3. Religious teaching on social life on how to solve major problem

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.3

Observe the books below and answer the following questions:

1. What do they have in common?
2. Which religion do each of these books belong to?
3. Discuss the role of those respective religions in dealing with social problems.



4.3.1. Judaism

Social teaching of Judaism is summed up in the following concepts:

- **Justice**

Justice, justice shall you pursue. (Deuteronomy 16: 20). The pursuit of a just society is one of the most fundamental concepts of Judaism. The prevalence of injustice in today's world makes all the more urgent Judaism's emphasis on the importance of actively seeking a just society. Jewish teachings urge people to pursue justice at all costs in fact people should not wait for the right opportunity to come along, the right time and place, but instead are called to be actively seek opportunities to practice justice. Some verses stress about it.

- "To do righteousness and justice is preferred by God above sacrifice" (Proverbs 21:3).
- "Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute" (Psalms 82:3).
- "Learn to do well—seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow.... Zion shall be redeemed with justice, and they who return to her with righteousness." (Isaiah 1:17, 27)
- "The Lord of Hosts shall be exalted in justice, The Holy God shows Himself holy in righteousness." (Isaiah 5:16)

"And I will betroth you unto Me forever; And, I will betroth you unto Me in righteousness, justice, loving kindness, and compassion. And I will betroth you unto Me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord." (Hosea 2:21-22).

- **Giving charity**

Jewish social teaching encourages help the poor and hungry and to support communal purposes and institutions, Judaism places great stress on the giving of money as an act of righteousness (*tzedakah*). In Jewish tradition giving charity is an act of fulfilling the commandment to the fellow human being who has equal status before God.

Although Jewish tradition recognizes that the sharing of our resources is also an act of love (as the Torah states, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), it emphasizes that this act of sharing is an act of justice. This is to teach us that Jews are obligated to provide people who are in need with our love and concern. They are human beings created in the Divine image, who have a place and a purpose within God's creation..Failure to give charity is equivalent to idolatry. The following verses concern about giving charity to the needy.

- “And if your brother becomes impoverished, and his means fail in your proximity; then you shall strengthen him;... Take no interest of him or increase... You shall not give him your money upon interest...” Leviticus 25:35-37
- Every third year of the sabbatical cycle, the needy are to receive the tithe for the poor (one tenth of one's income) (Deuteronomy 14:28, 26:12).
- “If there shall be among you a needy person, one of your brethren, within any of your gates, in your land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not harden your heart, nor shut your hand from your needy brother; but you shall surely open your hand unto him, and shall surely lend him sufficient for his need in that which he wants.” Deuteronomy 15:7-8.

- **Poverty**

Judaism places emphasis on justice and charity and kindness to the poor because of the great difficulties poor people face. Judaism believes that poverty is destructive to the human personality and negatively shapes a person's life experiences: “The ruin of the poor is their poverty” (Proverbs 10:15). It does not encourage an ascetic life. In fact, insufficiency of basic necessities does not ease the path toward holiness, except perhaps for very spiritual individuals. In many cases the opposite is true; poverty can lead to the breaking of a person's spirit. This is one reason that

Failure to treat the poor properly is a desecration of God: “The person who mocks the poor blasphemes his Maker” (Proverbs 17:5).

The Jewish tradition sees God as siding with the poor and oppressed. He intervened in Egypt on behalf of poor, oppressed slaves. His prophets constantly castigated those who oppressed the needy. Two proverbs reinforce this message. A negative formulation is in Proverbs 14:31: “He who oppresses a poor man insults his Maker.”

- **Compassion**

The Jewish social teaching stress on compassion finds expression in many groups and activities. Again it stresses compassion for animals. There are many laws in the Torah which mandate kindness to animals. A farmer is commanded not to muzzle his ox when he threshes corn (Deuteronomy 25:4) and not to plow with an ox and an ass together (Deuteronomy 22:10), since the weaker animal would not be able to keep up with the stronger one. Animals must be allowed to rest on the Sabbath Day (Exodus 20:10, 23:12), a teaching so important that it is part of the Ten Commandments. A person is commanded to feed his animals

before sitting down to his own meal. The Psalmist emphasizes God's concern for animals, for "His tender mercies are over all His creatures" (Psalm 145:9).

In summary Jewish social teaching encourages establishment of systems and conditions consistent with the basic values of justice, compassion, kindness, the sacredness of every life, the imitation of God's attributes, love of neighbors, consideration of the stranger, compassion for animals, and the highest of business ethics. The faithful practice of these values is important solution to social problems that are devastating the societies in the world.

The Society for Humanistic Judaism affirms human responsibility:

- We seek solutions to human conflicts that respect the freedom, dignity, and self-esteem of every human being. We make ethical decisions based on our assessment of the consequences of our actions.
- We believe that it is human beings who have the responsibility for solving human problems. We are committed, in the enduring Jewish tradition of support for social action and social progress, to community service and actions for social justice. We each take responsibility for our own behavior, and all of us take collective responsibility for the state of our world.

4.3.2. Christianity

The contribution of the churches to the solution of social problems may be classified under three heads: Social thought, social action and social work. **Social thought** is the totality of person's thought about his relationships and obligations to his fellow people. Church teaching about the social ideal and church judgements on existing conditions in the light of this ideal belong to this category. **Social action** is "organized effort to change social and economic institutions". The churches practice social action either by influencing legislation and administrative procedure or by educating individuals to better standards of social conduct. Finally, **social work**, which includes both case and group work, is the process of "adjusting an individual's relationship with other persons and with his wider social and economic environment. Here belongs the work of churches with the poor, the aged, the handicapped, the delinquent, and other types of socially inadequate persons as well as their work with recreational groups.

Yet the challenge for evangelicals is to not pick and choose how we see and address the problems of our world based on our own experiences and upbringings. We'll probably still land in different places and draw different conclusions, but we must let Scripture bear weight on every matter of our day.

Even where it doesn't explicitly address current events and issues, the Bible still speaks to these matters, giving us clear and consistent wisdom, themes and principles, as well as an overarching story and a perfect example in Jesus Christ, from which we develop ideas and instincts that help us live faithfully. With this biblical framework, particularly as it helps us understand humanity and sin, the Church has seen the need to attack abortion from every possible angle, from changing hearts to changing laws, and we must take that same approach to all the issues our world faces today.

We know Jesus didn't come to merely redeem souls; He came to redeem the world, individuals and institutions. We know that's true for abortion and we need to be honest that it's also true for racial injustice, gun violence and other potent problems in our world. Even though it will press and push us in some uncomfortable, uneasy ways, we must open our mouths to admit ignorance and relinquish the things we've made idols of in our lives. We must be willing to acknowledge the complexity of brokenness and the creativity God has given His people in being agents of change in the world from every angle.

The Christian social teaching a rich treasure of wisdom about building a just society and living lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society. The social teachings is published in the official documents and communicated to Christians and people of good will who are concerned with social order and common good. The following are seven important themes of christian social teaching:

Life and Dignity of the Human Person The Christian doctrine teaches that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This beliefs the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. Leaders of Christians considers that human life is under direct attack in the form of abortion and euthanasia. The value of human life is being threatened and the use of the death penalty is morally wrong. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks is always wrong. Christians calls for avoiding war and find peaceful means to solve conflicts. Christians believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Family and community

The person is not only sacred but also social. How the society is organized in economics and politics, in law and policy directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not

undermined. Christians believe that people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

- **Roles and responsibilities**

The Christian social doctrine tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

- **Protection of the poor and the vulnerable**

The Christian social doctrines put more stress on the protection of the poor and the vulnerable members in the society such as children women and disabled people. These vulnerable people should be deserve protection always. Matthew 25:31-46

- **Dignity of work and rights of the workers**

Christian doctrine holds that the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages.

- **Solidarity**

Christian social teaching holds that humanity is one despite national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brothers and sisters keepers, wherever they may be. Love for our neighbor has a global dimension. People should love one another as children of the same father. At the same time the core of the virtue of solidarity.

- **Care for the creation**

Christian doctrine calls everybody to respect for the Creator by virtue of being steward of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.

The following are also some examples of Biblical verses showing direction or special concern in line with major social problems.

- Chronic Poverty : Dt 15:4, Proverbs 26:15; 26:14;21:25; 20:4;13:4;10:26;12:24
- Anti social behavior (sexual behavior, sexual orientation, etc) Prostitution, sexual intercourse between blood relatives: Leviticus 20:11-21; 15:6-18; Co 5:1-3, Lk 3:19-20; Mt 14:3-12), Pr 7:1-27, 1Co 6:19-20.
- Drugs and alcohol: Imigani 20:1
- Gender based violence and sexual abuse (Rape, Early pregnancy, Female genital mutilation, etc.: 2 Samuel 13:1-32
- Illiteracy and Quality education: Dt 6:4-9; Yohana 21:15-17; Dt 4: 6
- Child labor: Lk 9:47-48; 18:17, Yohana 21:15-18.
- Leadership gap, etc.: 1Pi2:13, Exodus 18:21-25
- Female foeticide, Infanticide : Exodus 18:20, Mt 5:21
- Unemployment: Dt 15:4
- Gender inequality: Gn 1:26-27, 1Peter3: 1-7
- War and Terrorism: Romans 12:18
- Changing family: 1Peter3: 1-7

The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion and sympathy are just like one body. When one of the limbs suffers, the whole body responds to it with wakefulness and fever.”

4.3.3. Islam

The Islamic Religion believes that Qur'anic injunctions and prophetic teachings, can solve the current global problems. For Muslims, Qur'anic injunctions and prophetic teachings lead people to the right path of God, and command the rules and regulations governing individual relations with God as well as with fellow-Muslims and non-Muslims.

They also believe that the divine nature of Islam makes it a religion that offers genuine solutions to such problems as social unrest, political instabilities, poverty and destitution, prostitution, homicide, killing, drug addiction, alcoholism, family break-up, juvenile delinquency, suicides, Aids, and the like. Islam is not only a religion, but also a complete code of life. All facets of life, public and private, are covered under the realm of Islamic Law.

For example, Adultery, fornication and other promiscuous sex practices are punishable in Islam, because they are indeed serious crimes which affect the entire society. The Aids problem, which is reaching pandemic proportions, is due largely to sexual permissiveness. Thus, the divine punishment (hudud) for

these social ills is certainly a contribution for the good of the entire humanity. Although, the Aids problem is currently affecting largely those indulging in sexual promiscuity, many innocent individuals, including doctors, nurses and children, have been victimised by this social carnage.

Islam teaches us some basic values, commitments and principles that are universal because they also contained and form the basis of the fundamental teachings of most religions and faiths. These go further and are included in our own traditional and cultural value systems and upbringing. Islamic social teachings affirms that everyone has responsibility to fulfill the commands of the Almighty. And this responsibility applies equally to all people regardless of race, colour or creed, male and female, leaders and the led, wealthy and the needy, literate and the illiterate. All people are all equal in front of the laws and regulations. What is allowed is for all people and what is forbidden, is so upon all people.

Islamic social teaching encourages to be aware of the duty that people owe to other human beings beginning with parents, relatives, neighbours and going on to the community at large and our interaction with them. Islam teachings requires us to maintain cordial relations with each other and to render all help and support to those who may be in any form of hardship, difficulty or distress. Great reward awaits those who help their fellow humans who are weak, disadvantaged and suffer any hardship.

Islam teaches that everyone has a responsibility and is accountable for his responsibility. Therefore in life each one has general responsibilities in their particular field, profession, business, family etc. According to the circumstances we find ourselves in. Everyone is rewarded for their contribution towards promoting virtue and goodness within community and for the positive development of mankind in general. With this Islamic teaching promotes social well being and encourage universal responsibility towards creation and fellow humans.

4.3.4. Non theistic social teaching

A nontheist is someone who does not believe in God or gods. According to the construction of the words, *atheist* and *nontheist* mean exactly the same thing. Theists believe in God. The prefixes *a-* and *non-* are both negators; therefore, *a-theists* and *non-theists* share disbelief in God. Theistic religions hold a belief in God or in multiple gods; nontheistic or transtheistic religions do not. The following are examples of some non theistic social teachings:

- **Buddhism**

Buddhist teaching is a kind of a humanism that it rejoices in the possibility of a true freedom as something inherent in human nature. For Buddhism, the ultimate freedom is to achieve full release from the root causes of all suffering: greed, hatred and delusion, which clearly are also the root causes of all social evils. Their grossest forms are those which are harmful to others. To weaken, and finally eliminate them in oneself, and, as far as possible, in society, is the basis of Buddhist ethics. And here Buddhist social action has its place. According to Buddhist social teaching there is much gross, objective suffering in the world (dukkha-dukkha), and much of this arises from poverty, war, oppression and other social conditions. We cling to our good fortune and struggle at all costs to escape from our bad fortune.

This struggle may not be so desperate in certain countries which enjoy a high material standard of living spread relatively evenly throughout the population.

Thus, from the experience of social conditions there arises both physical and psychological suffering. But more fundamental still is that profound sense of unease, of anxiety or angst,

The secular humanistic activist sets himself the endless task of satisfying that desire, and perhaps hopes to end social suffering by constructing utopias. The Buddhist, on the other hand, is concerned ultimately with the transformation of desire.

The Buddhist social way is, with its compassion, its equanimity, its tolerance, its concern for self-reliance and individual responsibility, the most promising of all the models for the new society which are an offer. They summarize their teaching in the following terms:

- Help people to overcome ego-centeredness, through co-operation with others, in place of either subordination and exploitation or the consequent sense of "righteous" struggle against all things.
- Offer to each a freedom which is conditional only upon the freedom and dignity of others, so that individuals may develop a self-reliant responsibility rather than being the conditioned animals of institutions and ideologies.
- The good society will concern itself primarily with the material and social conditions for personal growth, and only secondarily and dependently with material production

- **Confucianism**

Confucianism is a system of thought developed from the teachings of Confucius and his disciples. The teachings are centered on the good conduct, practical wisdom and spiritual relationships. Confucius' teachings influence many societies' attitudes towards life, set of patterns of living and standards of social life. Confucianism's social teaching was on class distinctions and obedience to one's superior, meeting the needs and desires of the ruling class. He emphasized that every person should have a role in society: the emperor should well manage the state, officials should be loyal to the emperor, a son should obey his father, and a wife should obey her husband, and so on and so forth.

Confucius's thinking suggests ways of harmoniously organizing and reforming society in which justice is conceived both as a principle of government, a principle of social conduct and one of the essential virtues, or a 'moral sense' that everyone must possess, while, in practice, Confucian justice will put forward the imperatives of retributive justice.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.3

1. Give the difference between a theistic friend and a nontheistic Quaker, and explain how their values can help in dealing with social problems in their communities.
2. If the role of the church in addressing social problems can be seen under 3 axes, namely social thought, social action and social work; provide a clear example on each level of the church intervention.
3. Based on an example, show how Islam religion engage in solving the major social problems in the world.

4.4. Strategies to solve social problems in Rwanda

LEARNING ACTIVITY 4.4

The pictures below represent some measures taken by the government of Rwanda to overcome social problems of its population. After analysing them, find out the possible main measures corresponding to these pictures.



Rwanda has a special and relevant asset of having only one language: Rwandans (Abanyarwanda) one nation, one state, one people, one culture, and one language. This unity is a powerful tool that contributes significantly to the big process of solving social problems.

The effort of Rwanda to fight against social problems and other evils can be seen in the achievement so far made through the vision 2020, EDPR I, and in four aspects of the country such as Economic transformation, social welfare, good governance and Justice. Rwanda has decided to put in place home grown solutions to fight against some social problems. These home grown solutions include *Vision Umurenge Program*, *Akarima k'igikoni*, *Akagoroba k'ababyebyi*, *Gacaca court*, *Umuganda*, and *imihigo* (performance contracts).

The following effort and strategies to social problems are outlined in the areas where they were made and in National strategy for Transformation Phase I and vision 2050.

- **Economic Transformation**
 - Create more new jobs decent and productive jobs to mitigate the unemployment and accelerate economy .
 - Accelerate sustainable urbanization and ensure that all Rwandans are

living in secure and decent houses and places.

- Establish Rwanda as a globally competitive knowledge-based economy.
 - Promote industrialization and attain a structural shift in the export base to high-value goods and services with the aim of growing exports by 17% annually.
 - Increase domestic savings and position Rwanda as a hub for financial services to promote investments.
 - Modernise and increase the productivity of agriculture and livestock.
 - Promote sustainable management of the environment and natural resources to transition Rwanda towards a Green Economy
- **Social transformation**
 - Promote resilience to shocks and enhance graduation from Poverty and extreme Poverty through improving and scaling up core and complementary social protection programs.
 - Eradicate Malnutrition through enhanced prevention and management of all forms of malnutrition.
 - Enhance the Demographic Dividend through ensuring access to quality health for all. Focus will be on improving health care services at all levels, strengthening financial sustainability of the health sector, and enhancing capacity of health workforce.
 - Enhance the Demographic Dividend through Improved access to quality education. Focus will be on strategic investments in all levels of education (pre-primary, basic and tertiary), and improved teachers' welfare.
 - Move Towards a Modern Rwandan Household through ensuring universal access to affordable and adequate infrastructure and services.
 - **Leadership/governance transformation**
 - Reinforce Rwandan culture and values as a foundation for peace and unity.
 - Ensure safety and security of citizens and property.
 - Strengthen diplomatic and International cooperation to accelerate Rwanda and Africa's development.
 - Strengthen justice, law and order.
 - Strengthen capacity, service delivery and accountability of public institutions.
 - Increase citizens' participation and engagement in development.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 4.4

1. Explain how the fact that Rwandans have one language and culture is a powerful tool in addressing their social problems they have in common.
2. Write down any 5 traditional mechanisms used by the government of Rwanda in dealing with the social problems of its population.
3. Discuss in group works the impact of UMUGANDA in building unity of Rwandans and sustainable development.

4.5. End Unit Assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 4

1. Write down 10 Major social problems and find out 10 corresponding biblical verses which deal with those issues.
2. Which strategies the Government of Rwanda has engaged in the process to overcome the social problems of its population.
3. Define the following terms: Problem, Social problem, Judaism, Non theistic religion.
4. Provide one example on each of the types of Social Problems in relation to their causative factors.
5. Which are the characteristics of social problems?

UNIT 5

RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL FESTIVALS IN RWANDA AND THEIR IMPORTANCE

Key Unit competence: Value the religious and cultural feasts in Rwanda

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 5

Observe the pictures below and discuss on the questions below:



1. What is the significance of presents?
2. When do people give and receive presents?
3. Find any four religious and cultural festivals in which people can give and receive presents.

5.1. Festivals and celebrations in Rwanda

A festival is a gathering of people to celebrate something. It is an event or community gathering, usually staged by a community, which centers on some theme, sometimes on some unique aspect of the community. It can also refer to a particular day or group of days when people in a country have a holiday so that they can celebrate something. **Celebration** is the formal performance of a solemn rite, naming of a newly born baby. Festivals and celebrations give a sense of enjoyment, unity, relaxation and offer the time needed to bond with other people.

The culture of Rwanda is a very diversified and it has a unified state since pre-colonial times unlike many countries in Africa. Rwanda has a very rich culture,

one she has stayed true to amidst modernity and the ever changing world. **One of the ways to transmit this culture to new generations is through the celebration of different festivals and celebrations.** The Rwandan saying “Utaganiriye na se ntamenya icyo sekuru yasize avuze” which is loosely translated as “Whoever doesn’t talk to the father, will not know what the grandfather said”, highlights the importance of communication of tradition or accounts about knowledge in the past, handed down from generation to generation.

Examples of Festivals and Celebrations in Rwanda are:

January 1, which is **New Year's Day** followed by January 2, which is extends the New Year Holiday in Rwanda.

February 1, is **National Heroes Day**. It is set aside to honour those who gave their lives in service of their country.

On April 7, the country memorializes victims of the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. Named the **Genocide Memorial Day**, it also marks the beginning of the national mourning period.

May 1 is Labour Day, not only in Rwanda, but in many countries around the world. It is set aside to celebrate those who contribute their skills, knowledge and time in form of work. The day originated from the Labour Union Movement which advocated for eight-hour work days so that workers would use the rest of the time for relaxation and recreation.

July 1 is Independence Day, which is the celebration of the end of the Belgian colonial rule which resulted in Rwanda becoming a self-governing nation.

July 4 is Liberation Day and is set aside to celebrate the day Rwanda Patriotic Front brought to an end the 1994 Genocide against the Tutsi. It marks the end of the mourning period.



Umuganura celebration is marked with exchanging ideas and sharing the harvest

First Friday of the month of August is Umuganura. Umuganura is celebrated in a bid to promote the Rwandan culture of valuing and celebrating achievements and crop yields from the country's soil. Umuganura is a day of Thanksgiving – to appreciate the year's achievements.

In ancient Rwanda, Umuganura was one of the most important ceremonies feted by Rwandans at the beginning of every harvest season. The festivities were an occasion to celebrate the country's achievements in terms of harvest both at the kingdom and family levels. Today, Umuganura has a broader meaning: it has evolved to become a national festival to celebrate the country's achievements in line with its vision for a more cohesive, united, peaceful and prosperous future. It is also an opportunity to think of new ways to attain sustainable development. Umuganura festival, at the national level, is marked by processions and march-pasts, parades and fashion shows, as well as a set of traditional games.

The Gorilla Naming Ceremony (Kwita Izina)



Kwita Izina is a naming ceremony for mountain gorilla infants born in the past year and is based on a traditional Rwandan naming ceremony for humans. The ceremony and related special conservation activities are organized by the Rwandan government, which operates the national parks where mountain gorillas live. It is a country-wide event where baby gorillas are introduced to the local communities, formally named and celebrated. The event is extremely popular, with gala balls held in honor of the ceremony throughout the country, and in recent times an increasing number of conservationists and celebrities have supported the celebration, and the strong importance it places on respecting, appreciating and monitoring wild animals.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.1

1. Explain the importance of Umuganura according to Rwandan tradition.
2. Compare the two ways of choosing a spouse “choice by parents and choice by boy or girl himself/herself.
3. Analyse the social, economic and spiritual aspects of wedding ceremonies.
4. Where is cerebrated the ceremony of naming baby gorillas?

5.2. Religious festivals in Rwanda

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.2

Discuss the major Religious feasts celebrated by Christian Churches and Muslims in Rwanda then give their meaning.

Religious festival is a time of special importance marked by adherents to that religion. Religious festivals are commonly celebrated on recurring cycles in a calendar of the year. In Rwanda, we have some important religious feasts of both Christians and Muslim. They include the following:

Major Christian Feasts celebrated in Rwanda

- **Easter Sunday**

An Easter Sunday is celebrated to recall and show respect, remembering the resurrection of Jesus Christ. As believed, Jesus Christ had raised from death to life. The Good Friday that is believed to be the day on this Jesus was crucified, always falls before the Easter. It is one of the most important day for the Christians and celebrations in the form of music, ringing bells in the Churches, lighting candles are common to account. There is an official holiday on Easter Monday in Rwanda as extension of Easter celebration for Christians.

- **Christmas day**

December 25 is an international religious public holiday. It is celebrated by Christians around the world to mark the birth of Jesus Christ, their Saviour and on whom Christianity is based on. This is most popular day for Christians. It is one such Christian festival that is celebrated with joy by non-Christians as well, around the globe. People celebrate it by decorating their homes and Christmas tree with lights, different kinds of food is prepared, people gather in order to celebrate and give gifts to one-another.

- **The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary into Heaven**

On August 15, Catholics around the world, including Rwanda, celebrate Assumption Day. It is based on the belief that upon death, the Virgin Mary was assumed into heaven.

Other Christian feasts celebrated in the Christian churches include:

- Epiphany
- Pentecost
- Ascension

Patron Saints Days: Christians celebrate the feasts days for their patron saints. For Catholics, according to the calendar of saints, they celebrate their saints' day.

- **Major Islamic Feasts celebrated in Rwanda**

There are either 29 or 30 days in each month, but they are not in order. It is also called as Muslim calendar or Hijri calendar. Islamic festivals or the holidays are celebrated according to Islamic calendar. The two great Islamic festivals are: **Eid al-Fitr** and **Eid al-Adha**, and are among Rwandan public holidays. Muslims have two major religious observances each year, Ramadan and the Hajj, and several holidays connected with each one. Islamic Holidays and Observances are:

- **Eid ul-Adha**

It is an Islamic festival to commemorate the willingness of Ibrahim (also known as Abraham) to follow Allah's (God's) command to sacrifice his son. Muslims around the world observe this event as Festival of Sacrifice.

- **Eid ul-Fitr**

It is a very important festival in the Islamic calendar and was started by the Prophet Muhammad himself. It is also known as 'The Feast of Breaking the Fast' and is celebrated by Muslims worldwide to mark the end of Ramadan, the end of Muslim Month of Fasting (Ramadan). ...

However, there are other Islamic feasts apart from the two main ones mentioned above:

- **Al-Hijra:** It is the Islamic New Year, is the first day of the month of Muharram. It marks the Hijra (or Hegira) in 622 CE when the Prophet Muhammad moved from Mecca to Medina, and set up the first Islamic state. The Muslim calendar counts dates from the Hijra, that is why Muslim dates have the suffix A.H Islamic New Year. Marks the end of Mohammad's journey from Mecca to Medina.
- **Prophet's Birthday:** It is a Celebration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad on 22nd April each year.

5.3. Family festivals

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.3

Observe the image below and discuss on the importance of family festivals



A family is basic unity of the society and the foundation of the society. The family was divinely instituted by God from the beginning ,thus it is sacred . In the book of Genesis we learn that Adam the first man was given a wife and they were later blessed with children. Saint Paul ,in the New Testament teaches that ,each man should have his own wife and each wife should have her own husband as a remedy against immorality. (I Corinthians 7:2-5). Children are not a must, although they are viewed as a gift and blessing from God. In a family children are supposed to obey their parents because this is what pleases God. The role of the parents in the education of their children is very crucial to the kind of future they will have. The home is the first school for every child and the parents are the first educators as they lay a lasting foundation on all aspect of child's life ,like: spiritual development; the book of Proverbs advises parents to teach child how he/she should live and he/she will remember it all his life. (Proverbs 22:6).

Parent should therefore, bring up their children in the fear and knowledge of God. Another duty is to ensure that their children are brought up knowing the religious traditions of their faith and should be encouraged to love their faith and to grow in it. It is at home a child learns what is right and wrong, good and bad. They are also taught positive values and other virtues such as being loyal, kind, loving, cheerful, helpful, honest and caring. It is in the family that children learn to love and tolerate one another.

Elders' narrations were crucial as they would advise, teach and correct the young generation and show them the right direction. Today, parents do not have any time for their children and this pushes children to be addicted to films, among other things. Children lack guidance and that's why sometimes they grow up to be rude.

In Rwanda we have several family celebrations that have a cultural significance. They include the following:

- **The naming ceremony**

Child naming in Rwanda is a tradition that stems back to the ancestral period when our grandparents were building our country. Until today, the child is named by the father, clan members, friends and other well wishers. It is traditionally called 'Kwita Izina' which is translated as 'Child naming'.

The ceremony starts with prayers to put the whole function in the hands of the Almighty, and to request the Most High to bless the family in order to get as many children as possible.

The participants and guests propose names from which one to be given to the child is chosen. In reality, the idea of proposing as many names as possible is a mere formality. The father reserves the right of naming his child, though from the many proposed names, one may be chosen. The child can be named after the grandfather, great grandfather, a nationalist or any hero. However, the father can as well name the child after a great and heroic person within his lineage, such as his brother, sister or aunt.

After the child has been named, there is cheering and applause which is traditionally known as Impundu literally meaning congratulations. This is done by women present at the party. The child naming ceremony is supposed to take place in the evening. Cultural teachings are carried out by the elders to teach the younger generation about the importance of such traditional values, and to remind them to maintain such cultural events like child naming.

Towards the end of the function, a local beer known as agashinguracumu is served; the type of beer which is the last to be served in honour of the child and visitors, and after the master of ceremony says that the function is over.

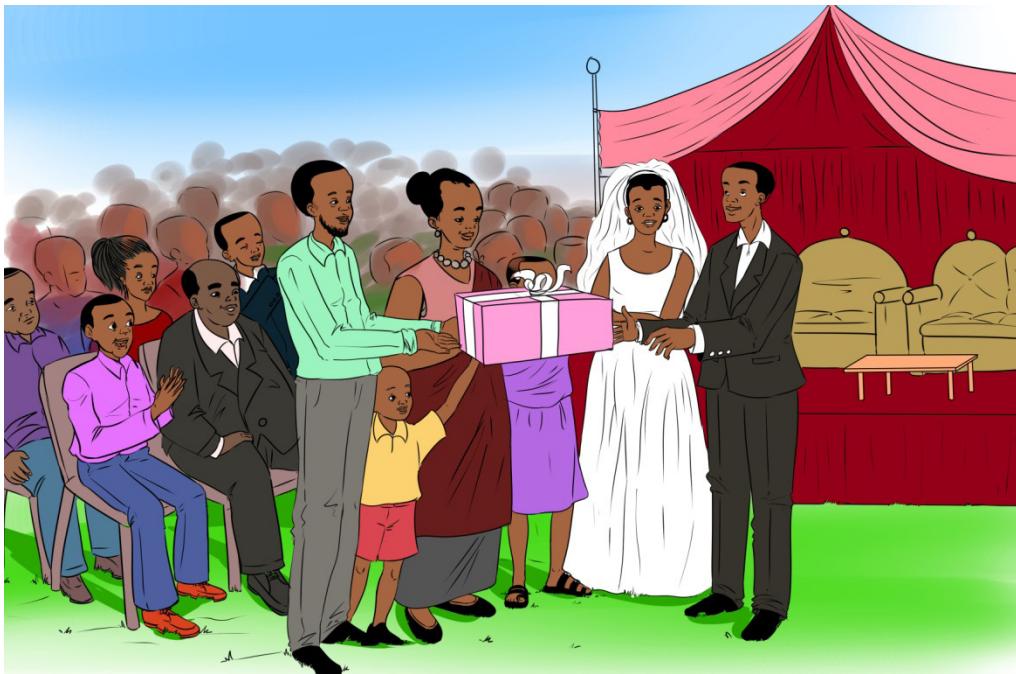
However, some inside family members stay to extend the celebrations till late²³⁴ chatting, and partying. This is followed by accompanying the visitors leaving for their homes; this is done by the father and mother of the child.

After the whole ceremony, the child can be taken outside the home; taking the baby outside before the naming ceremony is taboo in Rwanda.

- **Birthday celebrations**

This refers to the anniversary of the day on which someone is born or the date on which someone is born or something is created. Birthday in Rwanda depend on the families. Some families regard birthday celebrations as very important while others they do not celebrate. However, it is considered as a family feast because it is celebration of the most precious gift of life to the family.

- Marriage in Rwandan culture



Exchange of gifts in marriage is a sign of support to new family.

Marriage has always been a very important cultural institution in Rwanda. Prior to and after the wedding ceremony there are a number of traditional practices that take place. The nature of these practices have changed over time, with several ceremonies being combined to take place over a shorter period, however many elements remain as they were hundreds of years ago. These traditional marriage practices include:

Kuranga: Young man pointing out a young lady as a potential bride for him. This is known as Kuranga which translates directly as, 'to announce'.

Gufata Irembo: Following the research, the bachelor's father would go 'gufata irembo', literally, 'to take the gate'. This was when the father of the potential groom, or a special envoy selected by the family, would visit the girl's father to declare the intention of his son to marry their daughter.

Gusaba and Gukwa: is the Kinyarwanda verb 'to ask' and giving dowry .It is the ceremony where the Umuranga officially requests for the daughter as a bride. The Gusaba is a battle often involving traditional tongue-twisters as well as riddles and pranks from the girl's side. During this stage, the dowry (inkwano) is also given.

Gutebutsa: After the Gusaba and Gukwa, the families would meet again to discuss the date of the wedding – this was known as Gutebutsa. In modern times, this is often done privately between the bride, groom and their immediate families without involving as many parties. Traditionally, before her wedding day, a bride would spend several weeks in seclusion being cared for by one of her aunts. During this time her aunt would give her advice on how to take care of her future family.

The Wedding Day: On the day of the wedding, a bride would be seated in a traditional carrier known as ingobyi. The ingobyi would have two handles which would be placed on the shoulders of two strong men who would carry her to the groom.

Gutwikurura: The final ceremony is known as Gutwikurura. The wife's family would visit her at her new home and bring a number of items to help her settle in. Prior to this, the wife would not have been seen in public and would have completely refrained from any work.

- **Burial ceremony in Rwanda**

When someone dies, there is a mourning period before the burial takes place. The mourning period length depends on the family's preferences. During this time, mourners pay their respects to the deceased. They build a remembrance fire to sit around sharing stories about the deceased.

Ceremonies with music and dancing typically play a major role in Rwandan celebrations, but not for a Rwandan funeral. They grieve their loss in silence rather than with a celebration of life with music and dancing. Depending on the deceased's religion, they read scriptures at the service, which also may take place graveside. The casket also may be open or closed, depending on personal preference.

For the burial, they choose one family member to prepare and dress the body for the burial. Then, they give this person a special gift. After the graveside ceremony and burial, there is a ceremonial hand washing. Even well after the funeral, mourners visit the gravesite on special days or whenever they wish to visit. However there are other family celebrations practiced by some families in Rwanda that can help strengthen their family ties, include:

A Family Day gives family members and their children a chance to celebrate the meaning of being a family and to spend quality time with their loved ones by participating in fun activities together. Life without celebrations it's not life, grab every opportunity to celebrate your life. It is very important to be happy in life. Celebrations allow you to relax and unwind in the midst of our busy lives, and it is also important to celebrate cultural festivals.

A family ritual: is a set of behaviors that are repeatable and symbolically meaningful. Family rituals provide families with a sense of identity and belonging. They often stir up strong emotions and are frequently reminisced about and discussed within the family. Family rituals also provide a sense of continuity across generations. In other words, they are a way of transmitting family values, history, and culture from one generation to the next. Another term for family rituals is family traditions. Example of family rituals are holiday traditions, such as those surrounding Christmas, New Year, Umuganura, gathering for dinner with extended family etc. Some families may also have a ritual for every member's birthday.

Celebrations of sacraments at home: After receiving in Church Sacraments of Baptism celebrations, Matrimony (marriage), Eucharist and confirmation etc, many families extend the celebration in their homes.

Anniversaries: These are feasts of commemoration of a good event that happened in the family and people sit together to thank God for protection through the past years and invoking for God's protection in coming days. Some anniversaries regard marriage, consecrated life, studies.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.3

1. Make a research on actual situation of family celebrations.
2. Discuss the impacts of not celebrating festivals in the family
3. Debate about this sentence : "*Life without celebrations it's not life.*"
4. On one page explain how is good to gathering for dinner with extended family

5.4. Importance of festivals in shaping Rwandan legacy, cultural and national identity

LEARNING ACTIVITY 5.4

Basing on this image , suggest any four importance of festivals in shaping Rwanda legacy,cultural and national identity.



Every festival and celebration in Rwanda, has its own meaning and related beautifully to life and brings in lots of happiness, color and prosperity to our lives. Some of the importance of festivals and celebrations include:

- Keeps us closer to our religion and tradition for example ;Family and religious feasts.
- Promotes harmony, unity and peace in the among people.
- They carry the message of the past generations to the present and future.
- We get to know about different religious practices and beliefs and appreciate each religion.
- Helps to preserve our culture and heritage, for example through the festival of Umuganura.
- Celebrations also remind us of important days, or a great time in the year and give us an opportunity to celebrate and cherish those moments. For example, our Independence Day,. Another important celebration is New Year's Day when people all over the world celebrate the first day of the New Year. This day remind them that one year has passed and the new one is coming with brand-new things.

- It has also been noted that festivals promote charity and feeling of giving out and helping poor. It is during the time of festivals that we all also contribute our hand towards the weaker sections that do not have enough sources. This is the basis of every religion. Even in the Muslim religion charity is promoted during the month of fasting and everyone makes room for charity during the holy month and in Christianity, during Christmas celebrations and Lenten season people give away gifts to poor thus promoting sense of sharing.
- Gives a unique opportunity to gather and spend time with family, friends and community.
- Stress relieving from a hectic work season because it provides us a time to break out from normal routine and have a colourful time, thus breaking the monotony of life
- Gathering of family members and friends for the festivals strengthens family love and unity.
- Since a lot of our festivals involve special offerings being prepared and offered to poor, it also brings happiness for them.
- The cultural exchange of views and celebrations between people.
- Build social relations and social communication which leads to unity among the people.
- Attracts tourist to the country, thus contributing to economic development of Rwanda.

Conclusion

Festivals and celebrations play an important role in the cultural development of an individual as well as provide us with healthy rejuvenation. Our festivities also bring us closer to our religion and also help us to understand the culture of others. Celebrating festivals from diverse religions also promotes communal harmony and also leads to effective socialization. We also get a time out of our normal routine and provide us with a refreshing change from routine. It is very important to know about your culture and past, festivals in one way or the other help to teach us about our past and civilization. For an individual festival is not just a day off in Rwanda, but is a lot more than that in our culture, hence we should enjoy our festivities to the fullest and should also try to understand the deep thought behind celebrating it and the message that every festival gives us.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 5.4

Discuss some important values that can be acquired by the young people through the festivals and celebrations in Rwanda.

5.5. End Unit assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 5

1. Discuss the term festival.
2. List any four festivals and celebrations in Rwanda culture
3. How is important to celebrating family festivals?
4. Why do religions celebrating the following festivals
 - a. Easter
 - b. Eid-il-fitr
5. Explain the importance of festivals in shaping Rwanda Legacy,cultural and national identity.
6. Propose the strategies for keeping the traditional culture of celebrating family festivals like:child naming,marriage,gathering for dinner.

UNIT 6

JUSTICE AND PEACE

Key Unit competence: Assess the global and local efforts in the promotion of peace and justice

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY 6

Using various resources research on the meaning of peace and justice as well as their interdependence in the well being of individuals and society



Respect and socializing with others in happiness is the sign of peace

Inner peace refers to a state of being mentally and spiritually at peace, with enough knowledge and understanding to keep oneself strong in the face of discord or stress. Being “at peace” is considered by many to be healthy and the opposite of being stressed or anxious. It is important not only while things move smoothly, but especially, in times of trouble, difficulties or danger. Then

it counts most. A state of inner peace eliminates anxieties, fears and worries. It also removes negative thoughts, stress, lack of satisfaction and unhappiness.

The teachings from catechism of catholic church number 2302 says “ By recalling the commandment, “You shall not kill,” our Lord asked for peace of heart and denounced murderous anger and hatred as immoral. Anger is a desire for revenge. “To desire vengeance in order to do evil to someone who should be punished is illicit,” but it is praiseworthy to impose restitution “to correct vices and maintain justice.”⁹⁴ If anger reaches the point of a deliberate desire to kill or seriously wound a neighbor, it is gravely against charity ; it is a mortal sin. the Lord says, “Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment.”Mt 5:44-45. One Islamic interpretation is that individual personal peace is attained by utterly submitting to Allah.

6.1. Relationship between peace, law and Justice

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.1

1. According to you what is the most important among laws, justice and peace”? Justify
2. What is the link between the three mentioned concepts

Laws : Are sets of rules that are made to ensure that the community functions effectively.The main aim of all laws is to protect people,property,healty and security.

If there were no laws or rules our society would break down.Laws sometimes strict our freedom and may be irritative. People need to know acceptable and non-acceptable behaviours. The law according to the Muslim faith and as interpreted from the Koran, Islamic law is controlled, ruled and regulated by the Islamic religion; it is a theocracy. Islamic law purports to regulate all public and private behavior including personal hygiene, diet, sexual conduct, and child rearing.

Islamic law represents one of the world’s great legal systems. Like Judaic law, which influenced western legal systems, Islamic law originated as an important part of the religion. Sharia, an Arabic word meaning “the right path,” refers to traditional Islamic law.Laws are important in a democratic nation.citizen are expected to obey the laws failure to which they are punished. Law is a rule of conduct enacted by competent authority for the sake of the common good.

The moral law presupposes the rational order, established among creatures for their good and to serve their final end, by the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator. All law finds its first and ultimate truth in the eternal law. Law is declared and established by reason as a participation in the providence of the living God, Creator and Redeemer of all.

Justice: Justice can be defined as administration of rightful dealings in fair manner according to agreed standards. Where there is justice ,there is peace and harmony among the people. Luck of justice brings chaos and mistrusts. Justice also allows for all people in country to receive fair treatment from the authority regardless of their social status. According to Islam , Justice is a central theme in the *Qur'an*, dictating the traditions of law and how should put into practice. There are two ways in which justice operates: in a legal sense and in a divine sense. Regarding justice in the legal sense, the *Qur'an* tells Muslims not only how to conduct themselves, but is also highly important regarding relationships with other people. It states what the various punishments for certain crimes should be along with the justification behind this reasoning.

Furthermore, the *Qur'an* brings across the idea that anyone who propagates the message of justice and acts accordingly will be justly rewarded with their place in jannah. Social justice can be obtained only in respecting the transcendent dignity of man. The person represents the ultimate end of society, which is ordered to him: What is at stake is the dignity of the human person, whose defense and promotion have been entrusted to us by the Creator, and to whom the men and women at every moment of history are strictly and responsibly in debt.

Peace: Respect for and development of human life require peace. Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is “the tranquility of order.” Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity. Without peace, the destructive tendencies of our species will continue to inch us closer to catastrophe. Justice and Peace Education is education that cultivates awareness, concern and behaviors that lead to just and peaceful conditions, structures and relationships. The Arabic word salaam (سلام) (“peace”) originates from the same root as the word Islam. The ideal society according to the *Qur'an* is Dar as-Salam, literally, “the house of peace” of which it intones: And Allah invites to the ‘abode of peace’ and guides whom He pleases into the right path. Then, Law, Peace and justice are essential for preservation of harmony and protection of people. It is a way of thinking and acting which

promotes nonviolent solutions to everyday problems and thereby contributes to a civil society

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.1

1. Define the terms below :
 - a. Sharia is theocracy
 - b. Dal as -salam
3. Why does any nation set laws for its citizens?
4. What are the indicators of a peaceful community?
5. Explain the importance of justice to increase peace.

6.2. Condition for sustainable peace

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.2

1. Conduct a research about different initiatives for sustaining peace in Rwanda
2. Analyse the involvement of both men and women in peace building activities.



Non violence Clubs in schools plays important part in the promotion of peace

The “sustaining peace”, emphasize the important role of men, women, young people and civil society. The sustainability of peace depends directly on the consistency of women’s engagement in peace processes, politics, governance, institution-building, rule of law, the security sector, and economic recovery. To sustain both peace and sustainable development, women must be equal and

strategic leaders, drivers, and engines in various areas and at different decision-making levels.

The *Peace* and Security Initiative consists of three elements as follows: - Promoting long-term *conditions* for development and security; Long-term *conditions* for ensuring *peace* and security require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised. Justice is practiced in any area when all people are treated in the same way without any discrimination. It is also seen in administration of punishment. Justice is a state of being right and fair as already explained earlier. In the Old Testament, with the intention of restoring justice, God punished the Israelites when they failed to keep the social demand of the law. God used punishment to purify the nation of Israel.

For example:

- King David was condemned by Prophet Nathan for abusing his office and practising injustice. The king unjustly took Bathsheba for himself and arranged to have her husband, Uriah, killed at the front line of the battle. He had committed double crime of adultery and murder.
- King Solomon demonstrated his belief in justice when he made a wise ruling involving two women who were arguing over the ownership of a child. Iking 3:16-28.

Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. They are the basis of the moral legitimacy of every authority: by flouting them, or refusing to recognize them in its positive legislation, a society undermines its own moral legitimacy. If it does not respect them, authority can rely only on force or violence to obtain obedience from its subjects.

Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that "everyone should look upon his neighbor (without any exception) as 'another self' above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity." ^{GS 27}

Created in the image of the one God and equally endowed with rational souls, all men have the same nature and the same origin. Redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, all are called to participate in the same divine beatitude: all therefore enjoy an equal dignity. "Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace."^{IS 9:5}

By the blood of his Cross, "in his own person he killed the hostility,"^{Ep 2:16} he reconciled men with God and made his Church the sacrament of the unity of the human race and of its union with God. "He is our peace."^{Ep2"14} He has declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers."^{Mt 5:9}

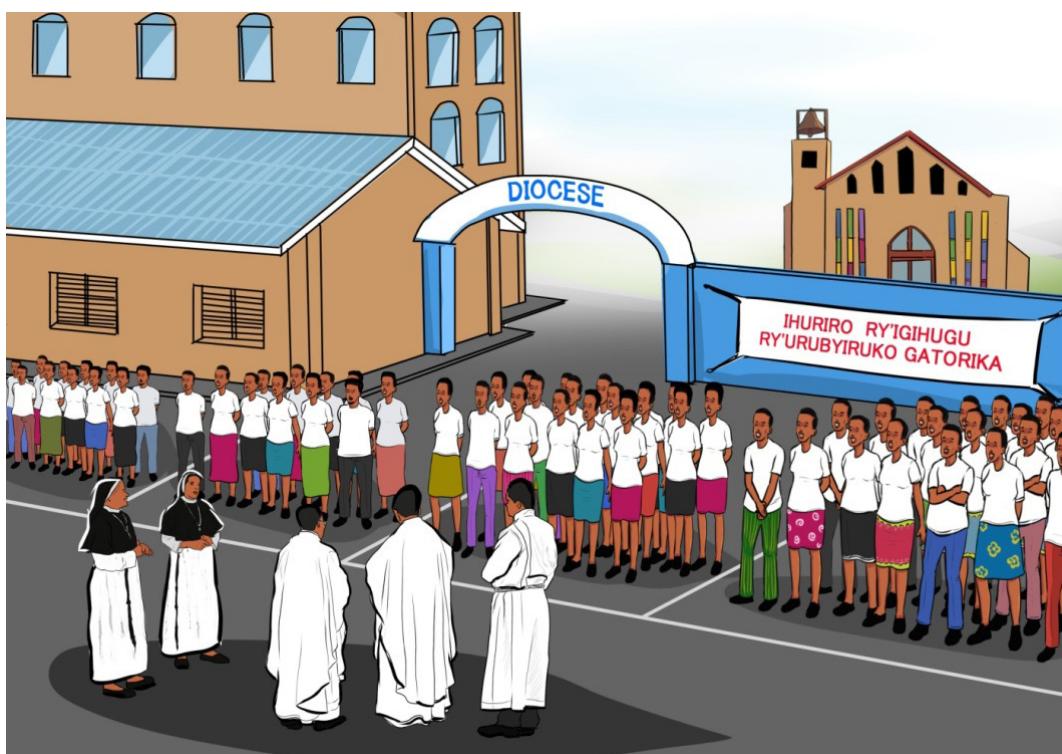
APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.2

1. How did Jesus Christ reconcile the men with God ?
2. Basing on biblical example explain how did God practice justice to purify His nation
3. What does it mean the dignity of human person?
4. Summarise the story of David and Uriah's wife in terms of justice

6.3. Human dignity, right and freedom

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.3

1. Distinguish the three terms dignity,right and freedom.
2. When a freedom can be considered as abusive ?



God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions. "God willed that man should be 'left in the hand of his own counsel,' so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him. "Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts.²⁷

Freedom is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and goodness; it attains its perfection when directed toward God, our beatitude. As long as freedom has not bound itself definitively to its ultimate good which is God, there is the possibility of *choosing between good and evil*, and thus of growing in perfection or of failing and sinning. This freedom characterizes properly human acts. It is the basis of praise or blame, merit or reproach. The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just.

The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to "the slavery of sin. "Freedom makes man *responsible* for his acts to the extent that they are voluntary. Progress in virtue, knowledge of the good, and asceticism enhance the mastery of the will over its acts. *Imputability* and responsibility for an action can be diminished or even nullified by ignorance, inadvertence, duress, fear, habit, inordinate attachments, and other psychological or social factors. Every act directly willed is imputable to its author: Thus the Lord asked Eve after the sin in the garden: "What is this that you have done?" He asked Cain the same question. The prophet Nathan questioned David in the same way after he committed adultery with the wife of Uriah and had him murdered. An action can be indirectly voluntary when it results from negligence regarding something one should have known or done: for example, an accident arising from ignorance of traffic laws.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.3

1. Explain how man is the most valued creature in the world?
2. Discuss the reason of having freedom
3. What is the fundamental source of human right?

6.4. Good governance, democracy, rule and law access to justice as indicators to peace and justice

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.4

1. What can we appreciate in umuganda organisation?
2. Find the indicators of good governance in Rwanda .



Good governance refers to the common good of all people either as groups or individuals. Good governance wishes and intends to remain at the service of the human being at every level in order to attain the good of all people and of the whole person (Catechism of the Catholic Church No. 165). . Good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows the rule of law. Good governance is responsive to the present and future needs of the organization, exercises prudence in policy-setting and decision-making, and that the best interests of all stakeholders are taken into account.

- **Rule of Law**

Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced by an impartial regulatory body, for the full protection of stakeholders.

- **Transparency**

Transparency means that information should be provided in easily understandable forms and media; that it should be freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by governance policies and practices, as well as the outcomes resulting therefrom; and that any decisions taken and their enforcement are in compliance with established rules and regulations.

- **Responsiveness**

Good governance requires that organizations and their processes are designed to serve the best interests of stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe.

- **Consensus Oriented**

Good governance requires consultation to understand the different interests of stakeholders in order to reach a broad consensus of what is in the best interest of the entire stakeholder group and how this can be achieved in a sustainable and prudent manner.

- **Equity and Inclusiveness**

The organization that provides the opportunity for its stakeholders to maintain, enhance, or generally improve their well-being provides the most compelling message regarding its reason for existence and value to society.

- **Effectiveness and Efficiency**

Good governance means that the processes implemented by the organization to produce favorable results meet the needs of its stakeholders, while making the best use of resources – human, technological, financial, natural and environmental – at its disposal.

- **Accountability**

Accountability is a key tenet of good governance. Who is accountable for what should be documented in policy statements. In general, an organization is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions as well as the applicable rules of law.

- **Participation**

Participation by both men and women, either directly or through legitimate representatives, is a key cornerstone of good governance. Participation needs to be informed and organized, including freedom of expression and assiduous concern for the best interests of the organization and society in general.

- **Decentralisation**

Since the year 2000, Rwanda embarked on the process of decentralization with the aim of involving citizens, considered as main actors in poverty reduction and economic growth. The type of decentralization adopted by Rwanda was built on a number of its cultural practices. With the intent of building a citizen centered governance, various programs to empower local populations were implemented. The expected results was to have citizens who are able to manage their Social-economic development process through participation in the identification of their priorities, implementation of development projects as well as holding accountable local authorities

Democracy is a system of government by the whole population or all the eligible members of a state, typically through elected representatives. Direct democracy or pure democracy is a form of democracy in which people decide on policy initiatives directly. This differs from the majority of currently established democracies, which are representative democracies. Democracy is not something we get without effort. We must always fight for democracy, otherwise we lose it.....” Paul Auster

Acquiring democracy is a slow and long process. It is not acquired at once; it is built over several generations. All the stakeholders, particularly the politicians, the civil society, and the people in general, have a role to play every day over a long period.

Since its independence, the political speeches of the Rwandan politicians and the international community insist on the need to set up an appropriate democratic system to solve governance problems in Rwanda. Half a century has gone by without any noticeable satisfactory improvement of the situation. All the regimes claimed always that they were democratic. Here, one could wonder if there are many types of democracies...

USAID recognizes that long-term, sustainable development is closely linked to sound democratic governance and the protection of human rights. We view the democracy, human rights, and governance sector not in isolation but as a critical framework in which all aspects of development must advance together.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.4

1. Give and explain briefly the 8 majors of good governance
2. What is a decentralisation ?
3. How does a country get a democracy?
4. Differentiate democracy from independence.

6.5. Role of religious and government in promoting peace and justice in society

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.5

1. Present the government activities in promoting peace and justice in society
2. Explain how religious institutions intervene in promoting peace and justice in society.



- **Role of religious institutions**

All three of the Abrahamic faiths contain strong warrants for peacemaking. There are past cases of mediation and peacemaking by religious leaders and institutions. For example, the World Council of Churches and the All Africa Conference of Churches mediated the short-lived 1972 peace agreement in Sudan. In South Africa, various churches were at the vanguard of the struggle against apartheid and the peaceful transition. The most dramatic and most frequently cited case is the successful mediation the Rome-based Community of Sant'Egidio achieved to help end the civil war in Mozambique in 1992.

Repeatedly citing these cases as the main points of reference distorts the reality of religious peacemaking. Most of the cases of religious or faith-based peacemaking are less dramatic in their outcomes. Also, religious peacemaking is becoming much more common, and the number of cases cited is growing at an increasing pace.

The field of religious peacemaking is also maturing. Douglas Johnston, president of the International Center on Religion and Diplomacy, has identified conditions in several conflict situations that lend themselves to faith-based intervention:

- religion is a significant factor in the identity of one or both parts to the conflict;
- religious leaders on both sides of the dispute can be mobilized to facilitate peace, etc. Johnston also identifies the attributes that religious leaders and institutions can offer in promoting peace and reconciliation, including:
 - credibility as a trusted institution;
 - a respected set of values;
 - moral warrants for opposing injustice on the part of governments;
 - unique leverage for promoting reconciliation among conflicting parties, including an ability to rehumanize situations that have become dehumanized over the course of protracted conflict;
 - a capability to mobilize community, nation, and international support for a peace process;
 - an ability to follow through locally in the wake of a political settlement; and
 - a sense of calling that often inspires perseverance in the face of major, otherwise debilitating, obstacles.

“Bringing the spiritual dimension into the peacemaking process can create access to the more deep-seated, affective base of the parties’ behavior, enabling them to examine critically their own attitudes and actions. People’s conflict behavior is often based on more emotional considerations and thus may not be changed simply by rational negotiation processes and subsequent agreements. Religious resources are contained in the four main elements of which religions consist. Two critical elements in religious life that are centrally important to peacemaking are empathy and compassion, and the value of tapping into these attributes is readily apparent in effective religious peacemaking. This Peace-works builds upon and goes well beyond the book, Interfaith Dialogue and Peace building, which presented general principles to guide effective interfaith dialogue as well as profiles of some of the leading organizations in the field.

Though all employ religious approaches are used to solve problems and enhance justice and peace. The Kashmir case uses interfaith dialogue. The Israel/Palestine project describes an effort to develop a religious track to peace as a complement to diplomatic/secular negotiations. The Iraq example describes the establishment and operation of the Iraqi Institute of Peace to promote interfaith community in that strife-torn country. The Nigeria cases describe training religious leaders in peacemaking, and mediating between Muslims and Christians successfully in Plateau State to end bloody conflict. The Sudan case describes both religious peacemaking between two ethnic groups in Southern Sudan and a project to improve Christian/Muslim relations in Southern Sudan. Lastly, the Macedonia peace describes efforts to establish an interfaith council to promote peace among Macedonia's faith and ethnic communities.

- **Role of government**

Governments spend a lot of money to contain violence. In 2015, some \$1.7 trillion was spent on defense by governments worldwide . While the primary responsibility for the provision of security and justice services lies with governments, those functions may carry a heavy fiscal burden as they often make up significant portions of national budgets. Yet little work has been undertaken on the composition of security sector budgets, or on the processes by which they are planned and managed.

In an effort to address this issue, the World Bank Group and the United Nations embarked on a three-year partnership that led to the publication of a new report titled *Securing Development: Public Finance and the Security Sector*. It is a sourcebook providing guidance to governments and development practitioners on how to use a tool called "Public Expenditure Review (PER)" adapted to examine the financing of security and criminal justice institutions. *Securing Development* aims to help policymakers and development practitioners navigate a critically important but very sensitive area of public policy.

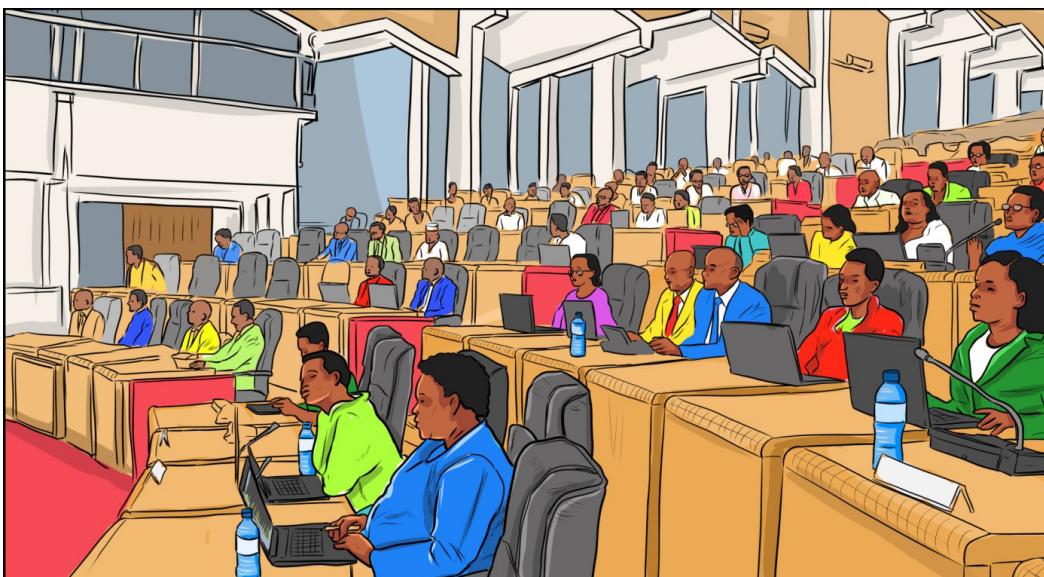
APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.5

1. Give any four concrete examples of religious interventions in peace building in Rwanda and in the world.
2. Examine the role of the government

6.6. Effort of Rwanda to promote peace and justice

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.6

1. Describe the problems faced to Rwanda post genocide against Tutsi in 1994
2. Show the effort different institutions of Rwandan have done for rebuilding the Rwanda society.



Chamber of Members of Parliaments and Senators discussing on important issues

During the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, up to more than one million people perished and as many as 250,000 women were raped, leaving the country's population traumatized, its infrastructure decimated, and sending shock waves through the international community. Post-genocide Rwandan leaders made tremendous efforts to rebuild the social fabric which was destroyed during the terrible genocide against Tutsi in 1994.

Effort was marked in establishing strong leadership on all scales marked by coordination, cooperation and collaboration. The top leadership established had a great role of restoring unity among Rwandans shaken by Genocide atrocities, Reconstructing the country social, politically and economically as well as ensuring that leadership is responsible and accountable for their duties and actions.

The following are examples of established institutions that were in charge of restoring peace and Justice after Genocide against Tutsi in 1994:

- **National Unity and Reconciliation Commission**

To coordinate efforts of reconciliation the government established the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC) in 1999. The NURC is a permanent body, protected by the constitution with a mandate to promote national unity and reconciliation in post-genocide Rwanda. Rwanda has embarked on an ambitious justice and reconciliation process with the ultimate aim of all Rwandans once again living side by side in peace. The reconciliation process in Rwanda focuses on reconstructing the Rwandan identity, as well as balancing justice, truth and peace and security in the country. Different measures have been taken by the Rwandan government towards achieving the goal of perpetrators and victims living side by side in peace. For example, the Constitution now states that all Rwandans share equal rights. And laws have been passed to fight discrimination and divisive genocide ideology. Primary responsibility for reconciliation efforts in Rwanda rests with the National Unity and Reconciliation Commission. Its main activities in the area of reconciliation are as follows:

Ingando: A programme of peace education in solidarity camps. The program aims to clarify Rwandan history and the origins of division amongst the population, promote patriotism and fight genocide ideology hence restoring peace and Justice.

Research :The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission has published a number of studies investigating the causes of conflicts in Rwanda and how to mitigate and resolve them. It continue to conduct research on the status of peace, unity and reconciliation process among Rwandans.

Seminars: Training of grassroots leaders, political party leaders, youth and women in trauma counseling, conflict mitigation and resolution, and early warning systems. **National summits :**Since 2000, several national summits have been organized on topics related to justice, good governance, human rights, national security and national history.

- **Establishment and reinforcement of justice institutions**

In the years following the genocide, more than 120,000 people were detained and accused of bearing criminal responsibility for their participation in the killings. To deal with such an overwhelming number of perpetrators, a judicial response was pursued on three levels: the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, the national court system of Rwanda, and the Gacaca courts. The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) was established by the United Nations Security Council on 8 November 1994. The Tribunal had a mandate to prosecute persons bearing great responsibility for genocide and other serious

violations of international humanitarian law committed in Rwanda between 1 January and 31 December 1994. However, though completed its activities, there are some cases of perpetrators of Genocides whose judicial cases are not solved as well as perpetrators who are not yet detained to face Justice. Justice institution include, Rwanda Correctional Service, Minijust,...

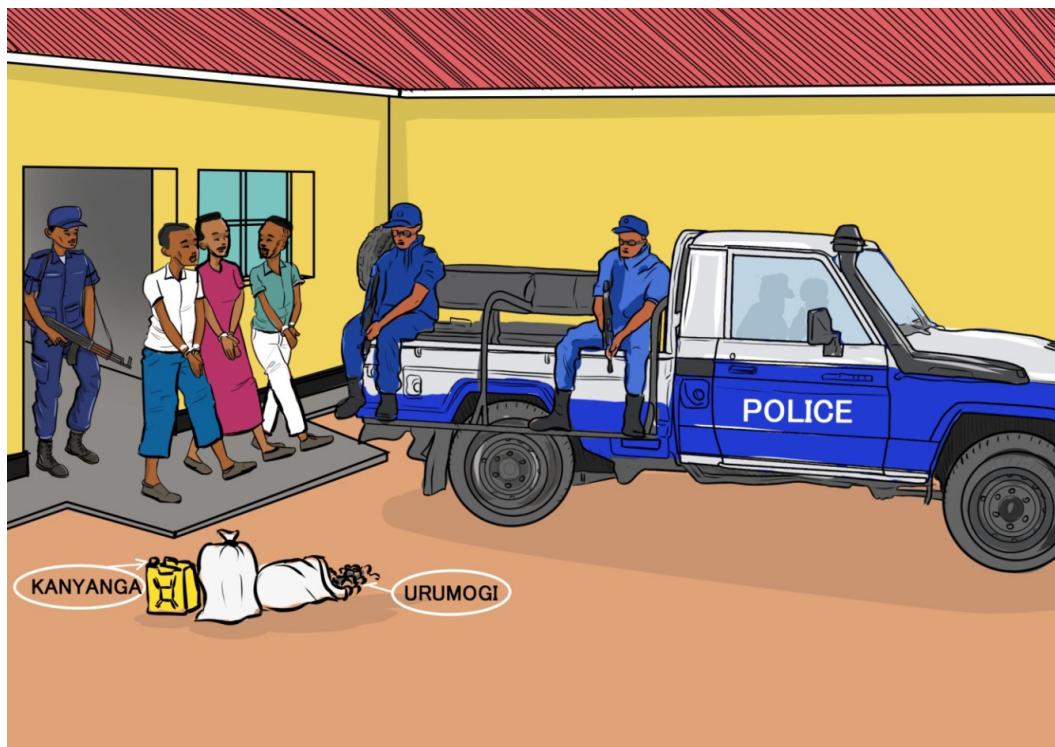
- **Itorero ry'Igihugu:**

Established in 2007, the Itorero programme's objective is to promote Rwandan values and cultivate leaders who strive for the development of the community. There are various programs that are intended to ensure that Rwandan youth of various age and districts possess the required values of a good Citizen.

6.7. Conditions for sustainable peace

LEARNING ACTIVITY 6.7

1. Discuss and clarify about a society in which there is free drugs circulation without laws for punishing their traders.



For sustaining peace it is very necessary to ensure public and individual wellbeing

Justice and Peace Education is also called, *Sustaining peace* should be broadly understood as a goal and a process with activities aimed at the prevention of conflict, underpinned by the people-centred approach of the 2030 Agenda for *Sustainable Development* and grounded in international human rights laws and standards. The *Peace and Security Initiative* consists of three elements as follows: - Promoting long-term *conditions* for development and security; Long-term *conditions* for ensuring *peace* and security in Africa require policy measures to address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised.

6.8. End unit assessment

END UNIT ASSESSMENT 6

1. Explain briefly the following terms :
 - a. Inner peace
 - b. Theocracy
 - c. Transparency
 - d. Equity and inclusiveness
 - e. Accountability
2. Analyse the impact of Ingando and Itorero as tools of unity and reconciliation in Rwanda
3. Suggest any three results from gacaca court after genocide against Tutsi.
4. What are the achievements of National Unity and Reconciliation Commission from the beginning up now.
5. What is the contribution of the qur'an in justice?
6. Give at least one example from the Bible to justify the justice of God
7. What is the doctrinal meaning of justice?
8. What did God promise to the peacemakers according to Mt 5,9
9. Justice, laws and peace are complementary. Justify briefly this assertion.

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