

CATHOLIC YOUTH OF AFRICA RESPONDING TO THE ISSUE OF YOUTH EVANGELISATION

“Taking Ownership of Prayer as Africans”

By: Fr Victor Phalana

SPIRITUALITY is the encounter with God in real life and action. It is a never-ending interpersonal process that enables a person to perceive, interpret, and interact with all reality in a realistic and reverential way. (Dominic Maruca, Human Development, spring 1981,p.19)

Spirituality is the style of a person's response to the grace of Christ before the challenge of everyday life, in a given historical and cultural environment. (The Desert and City, Gannon and Taub, p.10).

Spirituality is a prayer elevated to a lifestyle. (Doris Donnelly from Princeton Theological)

Spirituality is the way a person understands his/her ethically and religiously committed existence and the way he/she acts and reacts habitually to this understanding. (Sir Jeremy Mall)

I personally see spirituality as a process of growing and maturing in the divine. It has to do with living the experience and the presence of the divine in one's daily life. It is actually the encounter with God in real life and action. It is the mode of living, a way of living our Christian life in African traditional values, and it includes the religious experience of the one who encounters the divine.

Spirituality is a technique or ability to cultivate awareness of the presence of the divine and to deepen that awareness. It involves communicating with the divine, being able to contact, listen and report to the divine.

AFRICA is not a homogeneous society. It embodies different cultures, perspectives and languages. It still has strong traditional culture, but now it has an urban-subculture, an “educated sub-culture” and many other sub-cultures, it has been affected by colonialism and some of the world religions like Islam and Christianity. This makes it difficult to speak about, and to do justice to this issue, we must talk about the spirituality of African Christianity. What we have to do, is to try and identify common African values which have survived the colonial onslaught. Inculturation has to do with the incorporation of the Christian message in the culture and situation in which African people live. African spirituality takes into consideration the African experience of life and of the divine. We reflect on how Africans experience God, how they understand God, how they respond to God and how they live their experience in their daily lives. Our focus will be on how African Christians live their Christian faith and African values, and how they apply and communicate this experience to the world.

