

BEATITUDE AS A TOOL FOR THE EFFECTIVE FORMATION OF THE AUGUSTINIANS IN KENYA

Boniface Owiyo

Tangaza University College, Nairobi, Kenya
bonnieosa@yahoo.com

DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.30520.83203

Abstract

Religious formation plays a crucial role in the Catholic Church. It is crucial in the sense that the people being formed are prepared to take over the leadership of the Church in the years to come. Thus, if the formation is not done properly then the Church will face difficulty shortly. The people being formed have the mandate to continue with the mission of the church. The main purpose of this study, therefore, is to examine the beatitudes in the Gospel of Mathew as a tool for effective formation among the Augustinians in Kenya. The paper explores the possibility of how the understanding of the beatitudes can be used to foster the formation of the Augustinians in Kenya, how can beatitudes promote the community living among the Augustinians, how the beatitudes can be used to strengthen the relationship between formators and formees in the Augustinian Order in Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design to gather an in-depth understanding of the formation process of the Augustinians in Kenya. Targeted populations were the Augustinians, those that are in initial formation and ongoing formation. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents comprised of male and female Augustinians. Qualitative data were analysed using the thematic framework. To understand the formation process of the Augustinian, the researcher postulated that the two models of leadership formation should be used in this study, that is; pre-classical leadership theory and servant leadership theory.

Keywords: Augustinians, formation, beatitudes, formators, formees.

Introduction

The surprising journey of the Christian life is one of wonder and joy, mixed with sorrow and suffering. We choose daily to allow the Lord to begin the transformation of the wounds and brokenness of our lives. This process takes all of us out of our isolation,

where sin and addictions thrive, and into a community of confession and accountability where healing and restoration exist in abundance. The “soil of our hearts” has been tilled well and deep, and the “seeds” of the Lord’s love have sprouted, begun to grow and are ready to bear plentiful fruit. Spiritual formation reaches back to the biblical roots of Christianity and early Church traditions. Different from the classic models of discipleship, formation goes beyond the mainly rational and cognitive models of learning, the gathering of information to impart knowledge and techniques and doctrinal nuances. Spiritual formation is concerned with these matters, of course, but treats them as essential as they relate to matters of character development, soul care, and the shaping of our inner lives by the Holy Spirit in the biblical stories of redemption, renewal, and transformation. Self-awareness, confession, accountability, prayer, and service are all critical aspects of what it means to be formed in Jesus. As the Lord “forms” us, we learn to be continually available to the Holy Spirit in His direction and guidance, and deeply aware of our growing strengths as well as limitations. We become leaders who model humility and serve one another out of devotion to Christ.

At the face value, there is this tendency among formators and formees to look at formation houses as a military camp where a soldier comes and a soldier goes (Cheruparambil, 2018), Gary (2014) explains that sometimes the religious formation houses are not viewed as a place where the candidates come in, so that he/she may be equipped with virtues that can help him or her in her/his future apostolate. For this reason, Ciardi (2001) recommends that it is necessary to create structures that are truly capable of safeguarding the innovative richness of the gospel so that it can be lived and put at the service of all while preserving its quality and goodness what can be termed as “New wine in the new wine skins”.

Formation is complex as such the formees have mastered the art of bending the regulations and guidelines within the system (Kempis & Clare, 1993), they do not respect the formation values and are just eager to finish and go into the ministry(cite). *Formation is a process that is more informative than performative and the result is that certain fragility remains within the individual in both their existential convictions and journey of faith. (New wine in the new wineskins,21)*. It is postulated that when formees go out on pastoral work they are likely to develop pride and forget the already learnt virtue as a result of the pride clericalism may find root in their life, hence, making life difficult for the ordained and others.

Formators are sometimes considered as those who are there to kill the joy of formees by making their life difficult. Clericalism creates situations whereby formation houses are reduced to places where someone just takes orders no, room for negotiation or consultations. They are not humble to listen to the plight of the formees. Being in the

position of a formator gives the attitude of '*I know it all*'. They see formees as people who need strict supervision all the time. Formees have no freedom at all. The formators go against the call to freedom which saint Paul emphasizes in his epistle to the Galatians, "You were called to freedom, brethren" (Gal 5:13).

Pope Francis talks much about this idea of being shepherds who give service to the sheep. Shepherd who is there for the sheep in his book *Joy of the Gospel*: "Today the Church seek to experience a profound missionary renewal, there is a kind of preaching which fall to each of us as a daily responsibility. It has to do with bringing the gospel to the people we meet." (*Evangelii Gaudium* 71). Sometimes, religious men and women after finishing their initial formation, reveal their true character. Their true character sometimes is not compatible with the tenets of religious life. It makes people wonder if really, they were formed. Community living becomes difficult. No wisdom is associated with their character. They go against their master who is Christ, who has called them to this humble vocation. They don't show any characteristics of Christ.

The beatitudes (Mt 5:3-12) are a good programme for disciples of Christ and indeed a tool of formation of Augustinians here in Kenya. The beatitudes add to the formation of Augustinians in Kenya and therefore help them in their mission. The beatitudes give values that a Christian should embrace. "The beatitudes are not specifically concerned with certain particular rules of behaviour. Rather, they speak of basic attitudes and dispositions in life" (*splendour of Truth*, 20).

Beatitudes are, as it was Christian constitution. It is a guiding principle of how a Christian should live. It is a summary of what it means to radiate the image of Christ. The study is about awakening our desire to pursue maturity in Christ, especially through the formation. It is about helping formees draw closer to God because through beatitudes they can discover their goal and purpose in life. It is about getting a balanced formation that would be beneficial to the Church and the person. "A balanced formation ensures that in the future we would not only have young consecrated persons who hold academic titles but also ones who have been formed to identify with the values of a life of *sequela Christi*." (*New wine in the new wineskins*, 23).

Clericalism is a vice that has been in the church. Priesthood is a noble calling which demands that clerics should be servants, humble and down-to-earth people. Sometimes that is not the case. We have clerics who are very proud, and who don't have regard for the lay faithful, fellow clergy, religious women and men. Reflecting on the beatitudes in the Gospel of Mathew (Mt 5:3-12), this study investigates how the beatitude can be used to overcome clericalism in the church basing it on the Augustinians in Kenya. It aims to

promote good working relationships among Augustinians at all levels of formation and those friars who are in leadership positions. Beatitudes give certain values that Christians should have to be effective Christians. The study, therefore, strengthens the already existing Augustinian formation programme. It aims at adding value and strengthening the pillars of the Augustinian formation.

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To examine the relationship between the virtues in beatitudes about the formation of the Augustinians in Kenya.
2. To assess the Augustinian pedagogy concerning the formation of the Augustinians in Kenya
3. To examine the theological implication of beatitudes in formation.

Theoretical framework

To understand the beatitudes and enhancement of the formation of the Augustinian in the study, the researcher postulated the two theories of leadership formation, that is; pre-classical leadership theory and servant leadership theory.

Beatitudes exegesis

In exegesis, the researcher will study verse by verse in the scriptures as chosen for this study, Matthew 5:3-12. The researcher will go into deeper detail about each beatitude to present a clearer understanding of what it is that produces a lifestyle that experiences true blessedness within the kingdom of God.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”.

The main word for poverty that is used in the New Testament is the Greek word, *ptōchós*. Matthew is the only writer in the New Testament that spiritualizes the use of the poor by adding the aspect of “in spirit”. None of the other writers uses this term in such a way.

The poverty referred to here by Jesus is aimed at the inner condition of man’s soul, not the outer materialistic condition of man. Jesus is not promoting poverty, social exploitation, slums or starvation (Boice, 2001:74). Being poor in spirit is the position to understand one’s spiritual bankruptcy. The Kingdom of heaven is given to the poor in spirit, not to a certain race, earned merits or anything materialistic. It is given to the ones that know they have nothing to offer, they can only cry out for mercy and grace (Carson, 1994:132). I differ from the view that some scholars refer to “*poor in spirit*” as referring to the ones who have been poorly endowed by the *pneuma* of God. *Pneuma* is not referring to the spirit of God but to the spirit of man.

We see the first contrast between the teachings of Jesus, with the views of this world. The view of this world would count the rich as blessed or happy, but Jesus contrasts that view by showing that true blessedness is promised to the poor and desperate in spirit.

Hare (1993:36) gives a different perspective on which the poor in spirit when he compares the Matthew account with the one found in Luke. He suggests because of the use of the Greek word used by Luke, *ptōchós*, that Luke refers not only to the poor in spirit but also to the financially or physically poor people. Luke makes it even more explicit in Luke 6:24:

“But woe to you that are rich, for you have received your consolation”.

Matthew adds the words, *in spirit*, whereas Luke only uses the phrase, *the poor*. Matthew places the emphasis not on the materialistic position of either poverty or riches, but rather on the attitude in one’s spirit, the attitude of being poor in spirit and in desperate need of God to make one rich in the inner man (Hare, 1994:36-37). The poor in spirit might refer to people who are poor in spirit because of their possible circumstances of either poverty or being tormented in spirit, vexed in spirit or oppressed in spirit. He views these people as being possibly a group that is without work, without hope and beyond the point of being employed, and therefore being forced to beg. Both Hare and Domarus are pressing a much stronger literal view than a spiritual view on the beatitudes. They propose that most of the beatitudes do not refer to the spiritual condition of the people, but rather to the literal circumstances that they find themselves.

I believe that Jesus was not only referring to the physically poor. If Jesus were only referring to the literal poor, then he would have excluded some people to experience true kingdom happiness. By making it a spiritual statement, nobody is excluded and everyone is included. The rich can also be poor in spirit.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.”

We find a sense of fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy and promise when we read the second beatitude as we compare it with the text in Isaiah 61:1-4:

Many of God’s children have mourned the slowness of God’s justice because of the oppression that have suffered under the oppressors. Although Israel was not devastated during Jesus’ generation, the land was actually quite prosperous, except for those who were burdened with taxes from the rich. The poor were oppressed much heavier than the rich and the poor were often forced to sell a family member to pay their debts (Hare, 1994:38). But now the oppressed are promised the beginning of the end of mourning because the Kingdom has come to

them. The comfort of the great comforter is at hand to comfort those who mourn and also to end the injustice that is plaguing them. God's justice has come to live among them (Hagner, 1993:92).

Boice (2001:75) presents a more spiritual approach that is also in line with his view of the first beatitude. He states that because the first beatitude was referring to spiritual poverty, the second beatitude also must refer to spiritual mourning because of the sin in individuals. If this is correct then the good news is the gospel offers the solution to their mourning. This view is in line with the words of the prophet Isaiah as found in chapter 40:2.

Domeris presents a very literal view as he describes the mourning as the result of the death of relatives of the poor. The poor do not know death in any clinical or clean way as found in the modern-day hospitals found in the western world, but the death of the poor as found in the streets and rubbish dumps of the world causes great mourning to their loved ones. The reality in Jesus' time was an average life expectancy of only 25 years, and seeing people die in the streets was not unrealistic. Be glad when you mourn, because the comfort of the Lord is coming to you.

According to Cheruparambil (2018), we need to mourn for sin in a twofold manner; our sin and the sin of others. He who carries the fire of sin should also carry the water of mourning to quench it. The comfort Jesus promises to the mourner of sin is the forgiveness thereof and the grace to overcome it (Dyson, 1998). The opposite of a heart that mourns is a hardened heart. This condition of a hardened heart is strongly opposed by scripture. We find Ezekiel 36:26 referring to a heart of stone and also need to heed the warning found in Hebrews 3:7,8 which reminds the Christians "*Harden not your hearts*" (Watson n.d.:52). A hardened heart is not a repetitive heart; it is not filled with mourning.

Theological Application of the Beatitudes in Formation

Pope Francis in one of his morning meditations states, "The fullness of the Gospel can only be lived in a joyful heart, in a renewed heart. Make space for the law of the beatitudes, for the joy and freedom that the newness of the gospel brings us." (Pope Francis 5th September 2014). This is an indication that we are called to follow Christ. We should always strive to mould our lives in the footsteps of Christ.

Christ has given us the opportunity and necessary graces to be true and free followers of Him. Beatitudes do not make us slaves rather they give us the freedom to be authentic Christians. Second Vatican Council, Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, states that a radical return to the following of Christ is necessary for the renewal of religious life.

Religious men and women are called to follow Christ with greater freedom and imitate him more closely through the practice of the evangelical counsels, each in his way leading a life dedicated to God. (Perfectae Caritatis, 1).

According to Gary, St. Augustine on his commentary on beatitudes begins with the profound assertion that “anyone who piously and earnestly ponders the Sermon on the Mount—as we read in the Gospel according to Mathew—I believe he will find therein ... the perfect standard of the Christian Life.” (Gary, 2005,12)

Pope Francis in his Apostolic exhortation, Rejoice and be Glad states that the beatitudes go against the wave, of the way things are normally done in the world. “Even if we find Jesus’s message attractive, the world pushes us towards another way of living. The Beatitudes are in no way trite or undemanding, quite the opposite. We can only practise them if the Holy Spirit fill us with the power and frees us from our weakness, our selfishness, our complacency and our pride” (Pope Francis,31).

Pope Benedict XVI in his book Jesus of Nazareth states that the beatitudes are words of promise and the criteria for the discernment of spirits and so they prove to be directions for finding the right path. they are promises resplendent with the new image of the world and of man inaugurated by Jesus, his ‘transformation of values. They express the meaning of discipleship. They become more concrete and real the more completely the disciple dedicates himself to service. It is proclaimed in the life and suffering, and in the mysterious joy, of the disciple who gives himself over completely to following the Lord. The life of the disciple is immersed in communion with Christ. (Pope Benedict XVI, 74)

Formation should be a transformation period whereby someone is moulded into a better person that can live according to the spirituality and charism of a particular congregation. The virtue of humility is necessary for someone to be converted into both mind and heart. The first beatitude can be of help in the conversion of mind and heart. “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3)

Pride is one thing that is causing a lot of problems for some people. It makes you feel that you don’t need others and that you are always right. It makes you look down upon others. This attitude is very dangerous when it is in formation house, whether it is the student or the formator having it. It calls for all to be humble. “The Gospel invites us to peer into the depths of our heart, to see where we find our security in life.” (Pope Francis,31)

It is only through humility that we can be able to docile to formation and transformation. If we want to become more and more like Christ, then we must first learn how to be

humble. Christ-likeness is going to require change on our part. If we are not willing to change then we will not become like Christ.

To be poor in spirit does not mean we are without money, it means we are without self. We have an accurate understanding of who we are, and who God is, and are honest enough to say, "Without God I am nothing." To be poor in spirit is to acknowledge the sovereignty of God and our need for Him.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit." What does it mean? It is depending on, trusting in the providential care of the Lord. It is not that haughty, self-assertive, and self-sufficient disposition that the world so much admires and praises. It is the opposite of that independent and defiant attitude that refuses to bow to God, that determines to brave things out, and that says with Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey His voice?" (Ex. 5:2). To be poor in spirit is to realize that everything I have is a gift from God. I have nothing on my own, am nothing, and can do nothing without the help of the Lord. (A.W. Pink)

Being gentle is another virtue that can help in the conversion of mind and heart. Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:5) In our world sometimes gentleness is always confused with weakness. Some people can just walk over them. It is sometimes seen as a liability, someone who cannot stand what he/ she believes in. he/ she is always seen as someone who is just there to follow rules without questioning. In these beatitudes, Jesus is not talking of beatitude as a sign of weakness but as a sign of strength. Jesus is not telling His followers to be weak and to let others take advantage of them. He is telling them that if they are truly following Him, then they will do so with great restraint and much control. Gentleness is "when we are willing to let the Word bear sway in our souls and become pliable to all its laws and maxims. He is spiritually meek who conforms himself to the mind of God, and does not quarrel with the instructions of the Word, but with the corruptions of his heart." (Thomas Watson)

Meekness here can be compared to a horse. We know that a horse is always a powerful animal which can break and run away from its owner at any time but despite the horse having this power in it, it always chooses to be obedient and submissive to the owner.

Pope Francis in his exhortation, *Rejoice and be Glad*, says that meekness is a strong world in a world where we experience conflict here and there, and enmity is on the rise. Where we look down upon people based on their culture, language, and way of dressing. It is a sign of pride and vanity when think we have the right to dominate others. (Pope Francis,32)

To be gentle is to trust God with our life. We have given up control to Him and now live only for Him. We are a lot like the horse, we may have the power to live however we

want, but we choose to live how God wants. This is very important in our spiritual formation. If we are not fully surrendered to and trusting in God, then we will not allow Him to change us or control us.

In any formation house, the spirit of gentleness is needed. The formees are free and have the power to choose the kind of life they want for themselves but they have to realize that they have left everything for the sake of Christ. They are in formation houses out of the free will and not out of coercion. This should also apply to the formator so that they can respect the formees knowing that they have just chosen to submit themselves to the formation programme but they are not weak.

They have the power to choose what and how they want their life to be but have chosen to be in formation house. This gentleness is an important virtue in the life of formees because it will help them realize that the formators are not just there to make their life difficult but to journey with them in the life they have chosen freely. The letter of Saint Paul to the Romans is urging us to be transformed through renewal of mind and heart. "I urge you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God... Do not conform yourselves to this age but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and pleasing and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2)

Jesus promises to never leave us or forsake us. We know He never goes back on His promises. Our lives need to be characterized by surrender and trust in God. In that gentleness, we will find peace and we will be in a better position to be transformed by God. If someone is meek, he/ she will always avoid evil speaking against others. Also, the spirit of malice will not be in her/ him and he/ she will not be revengeful. In formation houses and our community, we need people who readily forgive one another and soldier on with their religious life. Bitterness should not be part of a religious person.

In the formation houses in the religious life. Prayer life is very essential. If the prayer life is absent in the formation house, then the formation house can be compared to a hostel or a hotel. It is the prayer life that gives the formation house its true character. So, the people in the formation house and all religious should always cherish and love prayers.

Sometimes prayers in the formation house have been seen as a routine. Praying with psalms has become monotonous to some formees. Prayer is just seen as something that has to be fulfilled but it does not connect the person with God. Prayers have been reduced to verbalisation. Our journey to true happiness and wholistic formation cannot be complete without prayer concerning the New Testament precept 'to pray always' (cf Lk 18:1).

Augustine moved up and down in searching for happiness until he came to realize that, it is only in God that we can attain full happiness; all the things he was involved in just gave him the mirage of happiness. It is only after his conversion that truth dawned on him that he had been wasting his time searching for happiness in the wrong places. And in his book the *confessions*, he says, “late have I loved you...”

In the commentary on Psalms 37, 14, Augustine says, “All my desire is before you, O Lord, for our desire is not before human beings, who cannot read our heart. Therefore, let your desire be always before God; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. For your constant desire is your prayer; and if your desire is constant, so is your prayer constant.” So, Augustine is saying that our desire for God should lead us to true prayer.

For us to pray without ceasing we have to love God. Love and desire are of the same family. So, when we desire, we pray and we love too. Our love for God helps us to pray even in the absence of words. Augustine's sermon 80, 7 says, “Desire prays always, even when the tongue is silent. Since you always desire, so you always pray. For when does our prayer sleep? It sleeps only when our desire cools”. So what Augustine is saying is that our desire and love for God lead us more into prayer because of this one way in which we can get in touch with God here on earth. Prayer is about having a steady relationship with God. The beatitude of purity in the heart is very essential in strengthening our relationship with God. it states that ‘Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.’ (Matthew 5:8). Heart purity speaks of holiness and is a work God does in us as we grow in our relationship with Him. It speaks of integrity and sincerity.

Further, a person who is pure in heart is who they say they are. There is no hidden motive or secret life. Heart purity leads to genuine character and an authentic relationship with God. The heart is the organ for seeing God and intellect alone is not enough. (Pope Benedict XVI,93)

This beatitude is about the personal examination, looking into your inner being. It's about living a righteous life. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees on this, “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You cleanse the outside of the cup and dish, but inside they are full of plunder and self-indulgence...woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, you hypocrites. You are like whitewashed tombs, which appear beautiful on the outside, but inside are full of dead men's bones and every kind of filth. Even so, on the outside, you appear righteous, but inside you are filled with hypocrisy and evil doing” (Mathew 23: 25-28). So, we should not be hypocrites, our purity should be wholistic, both inside and outside. A Christian should be characterized by purity of desires, motives, and intents.

Christians should take great care of their hearts, that is to keep them pure, to preserve the heart from being poisoned according to the teaching of Saint Paul to Timothy which

states, 'Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience' (1 Timothy 3:9). This does not mean that the person remains sinless but rather acknowledging the sinfulness and always asking the Lord to keep us away from sin. If we say we are sinless then we are liars, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8).

This purity is a gift from God, we are chosen to be holy and Christ died to wash away our filth. "He has chosen us that we should be holy" (Ephesians 1:4). The heart must be kept pure because it's the chief seat or place of God's residence. He takes up the heart for his lodging (Isaiah 57:15; Ephesians 3:17), therefore it must be pure and holy. The heart sanctifies all a Christian does so it must be must pure. If it's holy, then the body is holy, that includes, the affections, and the duties. 'The altar that makes the gift sacred' (Matthew 23:19). The offerings are sanctified by the heart. The heart must remain pure because a person is defiled by what comes from the heart. "Do you not realize that everything that goes into a person from outside cannot defile, since it enters not the heart but the stomach and passes out into the latrine... but what comes out of a person, that is what defiles. From within people, from their hearts, come evil thoughts, unchastely, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit ...all these evils come from within and they defile." (Mark 7:18-23). Heart purity starts with the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. He forgives us and then He cleanses us from sin. According to Romans 6, we no longer are slaves to sin but slaves to Christ.

This cleansing starts and ends in our hearts. As our hearts are changed, we are changed. If the hearts of religious are changed, then prayer life will be embraced and not seen as a routine but rather something that connects them with God. It is a private conversation with Lord who has called us into this vocation.

The religious person should be bold in holding and preaching the truth. As a disciple of Jesus Christ, you stand for something and someone that goes against the culture and the status quo, and because of that, persecution will happen. Look at this as the litmus test of our life in Christ. If we are different from the world, to the point where they notice, then we must be doing something right.

Several beatitudes can help the religious to be courageous. For instance, "Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." (Matthew 5:10) "The mourning of which the Lord speaks is nonconformity with evil; it is a way of resisting models of behaviour that the individual is pressure to accept because everyone does it" (Pope Benedict XVI,87). The persecution we face will only strengthen and empower us.

It is interesting that in the parts of the world where persecution is the strongest, the church is growing the fastest. It has been said that a faith worth having is a faith worth testing. A very humbling truth in our spiritual journey is that persecution only serves to draw us closer to God.

Thus, in our Christian life, we will face many crosses there is no Christianity without the cross. In the bible, several people experience persecution, for instance, Cain slew Abel. Joseph was persecuted and treated badly by his brothers, and down in Egypt, he was cast into prison for being righteous and saying no to evil. (Gen. 37, 39).

Moses was reviled many times (Ex. 5:21; 14:11; 16:2; 17:2; etc.). Samuel was also rejected (1 Sam. 8:5). Elijah too was despised for standing with the truth and even faced persecution (1 Kings 19:2). Prophet Nehemiah was oppressed and defamed (Neh. 4). The Savior Himself, Jesus Christ, was put to death by the same people he had helped in various ways. Christian life and ministry have always been one long series of bitter and relentless persecutions. The persecutions echo what the letter to the Philippians says, "For to you has been granted, for the sake of Christ, not only to believe in him but also to suffer for him" (Philippians 1:29).

In growing spiritually, we are becoming more and more like Jesus. We cannot neglect the suffering and persecution part of the life of Christ. He endured that pain and came out victorious, and so can we.

Paul realized the importance of this conformity, that for us to conform to the life of Christ, we must also conform to the suffering and death of Christ. We truly must die to ourselves, die to the world, and surrender to Christ. Persecution, while not fun, only makes us more like Christ.

In some of the formation houses, you will see how people live with a lot of grudges. People living in the same house but they don't see eye to eye. There is always a cold war among members. Sometimes sending people on a mission becomes challenging because of the grudges people harbour in themselves. They go against Christ's command of forgiveness. "Therefore, if you bring your gift to the altar, and there recall that your brother has anything against you, leave your gifts there at the altar, go first and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Mathew 5:23-24).

The love of God is expressed in the redeeming act of His son. John the Evangelist writes: "that he loved us and sent his son to be the expiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10). A religious person should always be a person who shows love despite the challenges that he or she may be facing. Any religious community where there is no love is not hospitable. So, we should be inflamed with love as Augustine says in his commentary on Psalms "Just as impure love inflames the soul and brings it to desire those earthly and

perishable goods which make it also perish, plunging it into the abyss, so holy love raises us to heavenly things, inflames it with the desire of eternal good, urges it toward those goods which will neither pass away nor perish, and from the abyss of hell raises it to heaven.

All love has its power nor can love in the soul of the lover be idle...I do not exhort you not to love, only not to love the world to love freely the one who has made the world.” (Augustine Psalms 121.1). Love has a dynamic power to move us toward the direction of our desires. It draws us like a powerful magnet in any way in which our desire is inclined.

Our desire for eternal happiness should be shown in our love. The Epistle of James challenges us on this point asking, how can we show our faith? And what is the proof of our faith if not by the action of love? In other words, what is our identity as Christians? To all Augustine is not giving us new teaching, he is just stressing what is central in our life.

Further, in the formation of houses, there is a need for people who will always strive to bring peace so that the love of Christ may always be shared by all members. If there is no peace love will not be manifested. To be a peacemaker is to not be a pacifist, one who avoids conflict for the sake of peace. Being a peacemaker is to be a reconciler, one who enters a conflict and tries to restore peace.

The goal of peacemaking is not to avoid conflict but to bring the conflict to an end. Jesus is challenging us to not ignore the brokenness we see around us but to engage it, much like Jesus did with us. There was conflict, and brokenness, between us and God until Jesus stepped in and brought healing and redemption to that relationship. We can bring Jesus to broken people and situations. Jesus Christ has brought peace to our lives. He gives us peace amid the storms about peace amid our conflicts. He is the peace between God and us.

Therefore, if we are going to be like Him, we must be the peace that we want to see in the world. We must extend to others what God has extended to us in Christ. Believers have to acknowledge that peace with God is only through our Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 1:19, 20).

In the world we are living in, we like to revenge, no one seems to be for peace. Even if peace is mentioned is just in international forums but no implementation as such. Very few people go out there to promote peace. In Africa peace is not there in some countries, for years there has been war, and in countries such as the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Somalia it's no better. Thus, people who promote peace are not so much famous. They may despise by the world as fanatics, seen as narrow-minded sectarians, and fools.

But the great God owns them as His children even now, distinguishing them by tokens of His peculiar regard and causing His Spirit within them to witness to them that they are sons and daughters of God.

Conclusion and Recommendation

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord” (Luke 4:18-19).

Associating with these sentiments, the study established that there is a need to use Beatitude as a tool for the effective formation of the Augustinians in Kenya because it perfects the Commandments and also it has enormous benefits towards the personal formation. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* puts the Beatitudes in a place of priority “The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus’ preaching since they fulfil the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven. Saint Augustine put it this way: “How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord? Since in seeking you, my God, I seek a happy life, let me seek you so that my soul may live, for my body draws life from my soul and my soul draws life from you”.

The research, therefore, makes the following recommendations:

Beatitude is an indicator of the cultures code of conduct for formee, understanding the culture and ethos helps the formee identify the sense of belonging shared by the individual members or groups within the order of Augustinians as well as their expectations regarding the means of the formation processes.

Beatitudes are revolutionary. They are antithetical to conventional wisdom or common sense in the present culture. The Beatitudes are not mere rhetoric but apply to every area of life, from poverty to one's attitude towards money and things and how to care for those who have less to the relationship on earth, to matter itself and to ecology.

Beatitude as a source of Transformation, Beatitude forms a person's life, as in shaping circumstances, events, or opportunities and this may help to transform the earth into the Kingdom of God. This gives a divine mission to reach out to all others encountered in daily life. The Beatitude apply to the human race which means we all have an equal chance to inherit the kingdom of God. Each one of the beatitudes starts with a “Blessed are” which reminds us as children of God that we are continuously blessed. When we show mercy, the conviction of the Holy Spirit reminds us to show forgiveness, compassion, and love towards the one who has “fallen.”

Beatitude as a Tool for the Effective Formation of The Augustinians In Kenya

Beatitude is instructional. The Beatitudes also have special instructional value. The qualities that exemplified the godly person in the Old Testament are made an eschatological reality. These qualities will accompany the transformation that occurs in the life of each formee as each submits to the operation of kingdom life through the Spirit.

The emphasis is on righteousness that begins with the transformation of the inner life and which will then direct the transformation of the entire person's word, thought, action, and deeds.

Live the Beatitudes. Using beatitude as a tool for formation will assist the formee to live a God-bearing life and be Christ-like in their daily lives. The Beatitudes may seem to be complex or hard to live out but they are also very beautiful in the sense that they describe what it means to live by a set of standards, callings and attitudes that go way beyond the observation of rules or the keeping of the law of the community as such.

Teach the Beatitudes. There is a need to convey the message of Beatitude so that it's heard, understood, and integrated into life. As a way of preparation towards the final commitment of the formees to the Order inculcating the community spirit as decreed by the founder to embrace and live the vows of obedience, poverty and chastity.

Finally, the Beatitudes can be looked at as a kind of ladder. A ladder that leads people closer to God. A ladder that makes people to have a better relationship among themselves. A ladder that reminds people that they are all on a journey to heaven. All these can be achieved by acknowledging that change must start from within and then it moves out to others.

References

- Adams, A. M. (1978). *Effective Leadership for Today's Church*, Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.
- Augustinian. (2019, February 24). *Augustinian Values*. Retrieved from Ten Augustinian Values: Introduction. : <http://agustinongpioy.net/value/values2.html>
- Boulding, M., & John, R. (1993). *The Works of Saint Augustine, A Translation for the 21st Century (Exposition of the Psalms 35-50 III/16)*. New York: New City Press.
- Burleigh, J. (1953). *Augustine Earlier Writings: On True Religion*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press.
- Caradini, J., & Allan, F. (1999). *Augustine Through the Ages, An Encyclopedia*. Michigan: Eerdmans Publishers.
- Catholic Church. (1995). *Catholic Church Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

- Cheruparambil, T. (2018). *Priestly Formation According to Pastores Dabo Vobis, St. Joseph Pontifical Seminary, India*. Retrieved from Cheruparambil Thomas: <http://stt.catholic.ac.kr/data/sttbook/1436491914.pdf>.
- Ciardi, F. (2001). *Spiritual and Theological Growth of the Religious Community*. New York: New City Press.
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Washington DC: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Curia, G. A. (2006). *Basic Elements of Augustinian Pedagogy*. Rome: Roma Pubblicazioni Agostiniane.
- Dogmatic Constitution of the Church, Lumen Gentium, (1965).
- Dubay, T. (1997). *Authenticity: A Biblical Theology of Discernment*. Denville: New Jersey.
- Dyson, R. (1998). *Augustine: The City of God against the Pagans*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- East, T., Dennis, K., Eckert, A. M., & Singer-Towns, B. (2004). *Effective Practice for Dynamic Youth Ministry*. Minnesota: Winona: Saint Mary's Press.
- Flannery, A. (1997). *Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Documents*, Bombay: St. Paul's.
- Gary, N M. (2005). *Love of God and love of neighbour: Augustinian Values and Signs of the*.
- Gary, N. M. (2004). Catholic and Augustinian Heritage Part III: Educational Foundations. *Cracked Pots and Brave Hearts: Augustine on Teaching and Learning*.
- Gary, N. M. (2014). *Encouragement for the journey: Being an Augustinian Educator*, Carlisle: Cumbria.
- Gary, N. M. (2015). *Leveraging Augustinian Dialogue: Global Competence, Augustinian Pedagogy and the Augustinian Educational System/ Movement*.
- John Paul II. (1995). *Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation Ecclesia in Africa*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Kempis, T. A., & Clare, L. F. (1993). *The Imitation of Christ in Four Books*. New York: Catholic Book Publication.
- Allen, J. M. (1997). *The Confessions of St. Augustine: Revision of the Translation of Rev Joseph Mary Lelen*. New Jersey: Catholic Book Publishing Company.
- Liptak, E. (2006). *The Religious Formation*. Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa.
- Marin De San Martin, L. (2013). *The Augustinian, Origins and Spirituality, Institutum Historicum Augustinianum*. Roma.
- Mbiti, S. J. (1969). *African Religions and Philosophy*. Nairobi: East African.
- Merton, T. (New York). *Ascent to the truth, A study of St. John of the Cross*. Burns and Oates.
- Michael, M. (2014). *The climate in the Augustinian School, Villanova College*.
- Mugenda, O. M., & Mugenda, A. G. (1999). *Research Methods: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*. Acts Press: Nairobi.
- Order of Saint Augustine. (1996). *Ration Institutionis Ordinis Sancti Augustini, Plan of the Augustinian Formation*. Roma: Pubblicazioni Agostiniane.
- Order of Sanit Augustine. (2008). *Rule and Constitution Vatican II*. Vatican: Roma Pubblicazioni Agostiniane.
- Pontiff Benedict XVI. (2004). *The African New Testament and Psalms: Encyclical Letter: Spe Salvi of the supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications.

Beatitude as a Tool for the Effective Formation of The Augustinians In Kenya

- Pope Francis. (2014). *Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii Gaudium*.
- Pope Paul II. (1994). *Homily at the Opening Liturgy of the Special Assembly for Africans of the Synod of Bishops*. Sacred Congregation for Institute of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.
- Pope Paul II. (1994). *Priesthood in the Third Millenium*.
- POPE PAUL VI. (1965, October 28). Decree on the Training of Priest, *Optatam Totius*. *Encyclical*.
- POPE PAUL VI, (1965). Decree on the Renewal of Religious Life. *Perfectae Caritatis*.
- Robert, J. (2005). *Harmony: An Augustinian Challenge for Today*, Michigan American Speedy Printing Press.
- Rosnow, R. L., & Robert, R. (2005). *Beginning Behavioural Research: A Conceptual Premier*. Prentice Hall.
- Second Vatican Council. (1965, December 7). Decree on the Ministry and the life of Priest, *Presbyterium Ordinis*. *Presbyterium Ordinis*. Vatican, Rome.
- Somalo, E. C., & Piergiorgio, S. N. (2002, May 19). Directives on Formation in Religious Life, *Potissimum Institutioni* Instruction: Starting Afresh from Christ, A Renewed Commitment to the Consecrated life in the Third Millenium (2nd February 1990). Rome.
- Tuckman, B. M., & Jensen, M. A. (2010). "Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited. *Research & Applications Journal*.
- Ellis, John Tracy. *Essays in Seminary Education*. (1967). Notre Dame, Indiana: Cambridge University Press.
- Woestman William H. (1999). *The Sacrament of Orders and the Clerical State*. Bangalore: Print book Press.
- Jedin, Hubert. (1967). *A History of the Council of Trent*. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons.
- Murphy Charles M. (2006). *Models of Priestly Formation: Past Present, and Future*. New York. A Herder & Herder Book.
- Ratzinger. J, Messori.V. V., (Trans.) Salvatori A., Graham. Harrison. Ratzinger Report: An Exclusive Interview on the State of the Church. Edicione Paoline. Milan.
- Charles M. Murphy. (2006). *Models of Priestly Formation: Past, Present, and Future*. New York. Herder & Herder Book.
- Oakley D, (2017), "Seminary education and formation: the challenges and some ideas about future developments," *International Studies in Catholic Education*, Vol.9, no. 2
- Optatam Totius*, (1966). Decree on the Training of Priests. Bombay: Costello Publishing Company.
- De Ecclesia*. (1965), Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, n.25
- Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, (1970). *Basic Plan for Priestly Formation (Ratio Fundamentalibus Institutionis Sacerdotalis)*,
- Sacred Congregation for Catholic Education, (1975). *On the Teaching of Canon Law to Those Preparing to Be Priests*.
- John P. II. (1996). *The Splendor of Truth: Apostolic Exhortation, Veritatis Splendor*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa.
- John P. II (1995). *I Will Give You Shepherds: Apostolic Exhortation, Pastores Dabo vobis*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC).
- John XIII, (1959). *Sacerdoti Nostri Primordia*, an Encyclical on John Vianney.

- Lukwata, J. et al., (2017). *Assessment of the Ministry of Priests in Eastern Africa: Research Report*. Nairobi. CUEA Press.
- Paul VI, (1976). *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Apostolic Exhortation on Evangelization in the Modern World.
- John P. II (1995). *I Will Give You Shepherds: Apostolic Exhortation, Pastores Dabo vobis*. Nairobi, Kenya: Paulines Publications Africa.
- Dolan T. (2000). *Priests for the Third Millennium*, Huntington: Sunday Visitor Inc
- Rossetti, S., (2005), *The Joy of Priesthood*, Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press.
- Mukiibi, B., (2008). *Rights of Clergy to Remuneration*. Eldoret: AMECEA GABA Publications,
- Magesa Laurenti., (1984) Vol.26. *Seminary Formation and Priestly Pastoral Ministry*. Eldoret: GABA Press.