

## CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

# MUSIC AS A MEANS OF EVANGELIZING THE YOUTHS IN THE CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF OWERRI

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### **Abstract**

The youth are the future of any organization they find themselves in. Therefore every organisation that has the youths in it must not take their presence for granted but must do everything possible to make sure they remain in that organisation. The Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri is an organisation and must strive to keep its youth for the sake of the future. Since the Catholic Church is known for its calm music and the youth of this generation are attracted to hot music, in order for the Catholic Church to make sure they value what they have as well, music is one of the ways to keep the youths and make them value what they have. This is because music is not only about an organized sound but can be used for communication. Evangelism on the other side is not only done when preached but can use other social means. The researcher used some books by other authors to support her work and findings. Music is food for the soul which lifts up the spirit into doing great things. When the youths are evangelized with this food of the spirit, called music, it would help the youth understand the lyrics of the music, appreciate every music whether hot or calm, thereby being close to God, understand the doctrines of the Catholic Church and being useful to themselves and the society. When music is used right to evangelize the youth, all these written above will be achieved, everyone would be happy.

Keywords: Music, Evangelism, Youths and Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri.

### **Introduction**

The issues concerning the youths can never be overemphasised. Every society, as well as every organisation or institution, needs the youth, especially when it comes to their active participation and being the future of any institution they find themselves in. In religious institutions, the youths are highly needed and there is every need for the youths to continue to remain in this institution for the sustenance and validity of the institution. Music has been proven to be one of the means by which the youths can be retained in any religious institution. Music (religious music) can be used to teach them a lot about God with ease, making the things of God more interesting to them.

Sadly, the Catholic Church is mostly perceived to be boring because of its organised way of praise and worship. The researcher being a Catholic has also noticed that some youths of the Catholic Church only come to church when they hear the gospel band playing. They do not want any dulling moment. Some will not go to church on time but will wait to go when it's time for playing the gospel band, singing and dancing. They forget that it is good to participate in all sections of the Holy Mass. This attitude is commonly seen during crusades. Even the people that stopped going to church for a long time attend crusades because they want to see miracles performed as well as enjoy the whole atmosphere and the praise and worship section.

Therefore, there is every need to make these youths understand that music has so many varieties and must not always be hot. They should rather focus on the lyrics of the music to get the message of Christ which is the reason for going to church and not having the notion that if music is not hot then it is not worth listening to. Calm music is very interesting and plays a significant role in uplifting one's spirit. The youth of the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri are used case studies in this study because the parishes in Owerri Archdiocese are in the town where there are more flashy and vibrant Pentecostal churches. This makes it easy for the youths to be more attracted to hot music thereby neglecting the calm and organised music in the Catholic Church, as well as neglecting the messages that come from them. In order to help the youths understand the message of God through music and appreciate every religious music whether calm or hot, this study looks at the concept of music, types of music, the functions of music in every individual life, especially the youth, the concept of evangelism, the concept of the youth, means of using music to evangelize the youths of the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri which is used as a case study and the benefits of having the youths evangelized with music to the church and the society.

### **Concept of Music**

Music has a lot of definitions and concepts from authors. Those definitions and concepts would be looked into; this will enable the readers to understand what music is all about. Music is seen as an organised sound, this is confirmed when Blacking (1973) also saw music as a "humanly organized sound". This simply means that music is ubiquitous and it centres around human activities. A lot of definitions of music hold that music is a communicative activity that conveys to the listener moods, emotions, thoughts, impressions, or philosophical, sexual, or political concepts. According to Tambling (2004), musical language may be used to mean style or genre, while music may be treated as a language without being called such. More so some people see music as a relation between the person listening to it and the behaviour they exhibit. Clifton (1983) music is "a certain reciprocal relation established between a person, his behaviour, and a sounding object". There are many other definitions of music but from the three definitions stated, one can see that music is not only about organised sound but is used as a communicative means as well as a relationship that brings about an experience.

### **Concept of the Youth**

The second concept from the topic of the study to be discussed is the Youth. Many definitions and explanations have been given to this concept. Konopka (1973) says that around the world, these English terms; youth, adolescent, teenager, kid, and young person are interchanged, often meaning the same thing, but they are differentiated. Youth can be referred to as the time of life when one is young. This involves childhood, and the time of life which is neither childhood nor adulthood, but rather somewhere in between.

Youth can also be said to be an influential period in the sense that they are young and are always looking or searching for the best, therefore in the quest to look for the best, they can be influenced. Therefore, defining youth based on the social environment is more accurate because it comprises the qualities of the youth. It is on the position of this discovery through searching that Obiefuna (2004) confirms that "youths are more mature and active than infants and more energetic and creative than the older generation; at the same time, the youth are still at the level of searching for self-discovery, growth, development and meaning in life" (p.59). Still, on the basis of social influence, Tyyskä (2005) confirmed that when defining youth, age-based definitions have not been consistent across cultures or times and that thus it is more accurate to focus on social processes in the transition to adult independence. Obiefuna is equally in support that youth definition should not be entirely based on age nor be determined by biological and physiological changes in the body, but should be basically determined by sociological factors. Here it means

that sociological factors hold the utmost position when defining the youth. However, other authors think differently. Apart from a sociological point of view on the youth, the youth has been defined from the anthropological point of view. According to Obiefuna (2004), for cultural anthropologists, youth is the time during which the human heritage is handed on. This means that the youth is a period of principal socialization, a process by which the principal norms and values are inculcated in humans. Looking at the youth from an anthropological perspective, a youth is identified as undergoing socialization and learning. Because it is assumed that only young people still need socialization, no age is stated here as to when the socialization should stop.

However, every youth definition given by any author is peculiar to the work of the author because the author only gives a definition that suits the study, for easy understanding. Therefore in this work, the youth is said to be those young individuals who are unmarried and physically vibrant people who seek a better lifestyle and are expected to be the future of the society, especially when they get married or take up their different vocations in life.

### **Concept of Evangelism**

Evangelism is another concept that should be discussed. The first known instance of the word “evangelizes” occurred in 420 B.C., when it meant the idea of carrying good news, as when someone brought news of a victory in a battle or an approaching wedding or some other celebratory event. Later the word *euangelion* (in the Greek), or good news, was used when Octavian was made the Roman emperor Augustus in 9 B.C. The noun *euangelion* appears seventy-six times in the New Testament, the verb *euangelizesthai*, to evangelize, fifty-six times, and the noun *euangelistes*, evangelist, three times, (Heck, 2006).

By way of definition, Heck (2006) sees the word evangelism as the activity of speaking the Good News, that is, the Good News of the story of Jesus, His suffering, death, and resurrection with the accompanying message of forgiveness and eternal life through faith in Jesus. For instance, according to Heck, evangelism began at Pentecost day, when Peter preached to those Jews who were gathered in Jerusalem. When people heard this Good News, they could not contain themselves. Evangelism is not only when one preaches, it can also be done by the use of other social means. In support of this, Roswith G., Afe A., Klaus H., (2011), affirm that Evangelism can include preaching or distributing bibles, tracts, newspapers and/or magazines, by the media, street evangelists, etc. Having looked at some definitions of evangelism, one can see that evangelism has to do with distributing the gospel of Jesus Christ to others in ways that will help them understand it.

### **Types of Music**

There are literally thousands of different genres of music. Music in the modern age is incredibly diverse and every genre borrows something from another and then evolves. However, in music, there are Art (classical) music, Avant-garde and experimental music, Popular music, Regional music, Religious music, Traditional folk music and others. Coming down to religious music, every religion has its own type of music which is used to worship its God. Christians also have their own music which can be grouped into two types; include the hymns and modern era music.

### **Hymns**

Christian music has diversified over time, reflecting both its centuries-old roots as well as more contemporary musical styles. Thousands of traditionally-styled songs of praise or worship, called “hymns” (from the Greek word *hymnos* meaning, “song of praise”), were written over hundreds of years. Eventually, these songs were compiled into books called “hymnals”, from which pastors and congregants would read during Christian services a practice that continues in

many churches today. Before the eighteenth century, Christian hymnals were published as standalone texts without accompanying musical scores. The first American hymnal with both text and song was published in 1831. In Europe, the Church of England did not officially allow hymns to be sung until 1820. Originally, hymns were sung by "lining out" the lyrics, meaning, the pastor would sing a line, and then the congregation would repeat it. This was done because, at that time, books were expensive, so it was economical to provide the pastor of a church with one copy from which everyone could sing (Townshend, 1991).

### **Christian Music in the Modern Era**

Modern methods of publication have made hymnals much more accessible to the public today than previously. The practice of "lining out" the lyrics of hymns has therefore largely fallen away, although it continues to be practised in some traditional churches. In the twentieth century, Christian music has developed to reflect the emergence of a diverse array of musical genres including rock, metal, pop, jazz, contemporary, rap, spiritual, country, blues, and gospel. The use of specific genres and styles of music in church services today varies across denominations and according to the personal preference of pastors and church members. As of the late twentieth century, there has been a widespread preference in less traditional churches towards using contemporary music (particularly, "praise and worship" songs, which attempt to preserve the religious intent of hymns but use contemporary lyrics and a more modern musical sound instead) as well as gospel and spiritual music.

### **Functions of Music in every Individual Life**

This study will adopt the work of kc68186, (2017) to state some functions of music. Music is very functional in the life of everyone in the society, these functions include:

1. Entertainment: Entertainment is a huge part of music in society. It is all around us. Gigs in Pubs, music festivals, busking, TV shows like X factor. The entertainment within music in society is one of the parts of the industry that people who are not overly interested in listening to music will still get engaged in, because of the visuals, that is TV screen and live performance. Being involved with these will also have a social benefit to the members of the public; (kc68186, 2017).
2. Communication: There are lots of examples of communication within music in society. There are many encouraging songs which is motivational to people who are listening to them. For example The song from 'The Scripts' called "Hall of Fame" is so motivational, because it narrates a story, how a man who is good for nothing, becomes a champion and a girl who is deaf, becomes a great dancer, as the background of the song, and also it has good lyrics as well; (kc68186, 2017).
3. Religious: Music and religion are closely linked in relationships as complex, diverse, and difficult to define as either term in itself. Religious believers have heard music as the voices of gods and the cacophony of devils, praised it as the purest form of spirituality, and condemned it as the ultimate in sensual depravity; with equal enthusiasm,, they have promoted its use in worship and sought to eradicate it from both religious and secular life. Seldom a neutral phenomenon, music has a high positive or negative value that reflects its near-universal importance in the religious sphere. This importance perhaps is difficult to appreciate for post-industrial-revolution Westerners accustomed to reducing music to the secondary realms of "art," "entertainment," and occasional "religious" music isolated behind sanctuary walls has nonetheless been pervasive. Religious "texts" have been sung, not written, throughout most of human history; and religious behaviour has found musical articulation in almost every religious tradition; (kc68186, 2017).
4. Cult of Celebrity: In Music Society today, the majority of artists rank popularity, fashion and

money above the importance of their music. Every day, more and more artists are getting discovered and welcomed into the music business. Millions of people around the world only dream of a lifestyle similar to stars like Miley Cyrus, Justin Bieber and One Direction; which includes doing the thing they love every single day and getting paid extreme amounts for it. To get their music out there, undiscovered artists will promote themselves via the internet, through friends and family, through street busking and some will even apply to go on televised shows like the X-Factor to get their musical name out there; (kc68186, 2017).

5. Music and politics: The connection between music and politics, particularly political expression in song, has been seen in many cultures. Although music influences political movements and rituals, it is not clear how or to what extent general audiences relate to the music on a political level. Music can express anti-establishment or protest themes, including anti-war songs, but pro-establishment ideas are also represented, for example, in national anthems, patriotic songs, and political campaigns. Many of these types of songs could be described as topical songs. Songs can be used to portray a specific political message. However, there may be barriers to the transmission of such messages; even overtly political songs are often shaped by and referenced by their contemporary political context, making an understanding of the history and events that inspired the music necessary in order to fully comprehend the message. The nature of that message can also be ambiguous because the label "political music" can be applied either to songs that merely observe political subjects, songs that offer a partisan opinion, or songs that go further and advocate for specific political action. Thus a distinction has been made, for example, between the use of music as a tool for raising awareness, and music as advocacy. Furthermore, some forms of music may be deemed political by cultural association, irrespective of political content, as evidenced by the way Western pop/rock bands such as The Beatles were censored by the State in the Eastern Bloc in the 1960s and 1970s while being embraced by younger people as symbolic of social change. This points to the possibilities for the discrepancy between the political intentions of musicians (if any), and reception of their music by wider society. Conversely, there is the possibility of the meaning of deliberate political content being missed by its intended audience, reasons for which could include obscurity or delivery of the message, or audience indifference or antipathy; (kc68186, 2017).

6. Music in Performing arts: Music is an art form that combines pitch, rhythm, and dynamics in order to create sound. It can be performed using a variety of instruments and styles and is divided into genres such as folk, jazz, hip hop, pop, rock, etc. As an art form, music can occur in live or recorded formats and can be planned or improvised. As music is a protean art, it easily co-ordinates with words for songs as physical movements do in dance. Moreover, it has the capability of shaping human behaviours as it impacts our emotions; (kc68186, 2017).

7. Ceremonies: Music takes an important role in most of the ceremonies. people used to convey their feelings through the music played in the ceremonies. The music played during the different parts of the wedding ceremony had always great importance in assuring a nice, joyful and elegant background for the wedding. The music played during a funeral also has great importance in assuring sad, sorrow and the low spirits of the relatives and the people around them; (kc68186, 2017).

8. Dance Music: Dance music is music composed specifically to facilitate or accompany dancing. It can be either a whole musical piece or part of a larger musical arrangement. In terms of performance, the major categories are live dance music and recorded dance music. Modern popular dance music initially emerged from the late 19th century Western ballroom and social dance music. During the early 20th century, ballroom dancing gained popularity among the working class who attended public dance halls. During the 1920s and 1930s dance music became

more popular called the Swing era, and it became more popular in America. After that in the middle of the 1950s – 60s, rock and roll became more popular in dance music. The late 1960s saw the rise of soul and R&B music. The rise of disco in the early 1970s led to dance music becoming popular with the public. By the late 1970s, electronic dance music was developing. This music, made using electronics, is a style of popular music commonly played in dance music nightclubs, radio stations, shows and raves; (kc68186, 2017).

9. Music and Psychology: music is like food to the mind. It calms the mind down, thereby reducing stress and trauma from the mind and body. This happens especially when one pays attention to the lyrics of the music, more importantly, these kinds of music are normally the cool and soft ones, with encouraging and consoling lyrics. One can as well fall asleep while listening to these kinds of music, reducing lots of stress filled problems.

### **Means of Using Music to Evangelize the Youth of the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri**

Having looked at the meaning of music, its types, its functions, as well as evangelism and means of evangelizing to people, the researcher has carved out how music can be used to make the youths of the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri understand the gospel of Christ, in order for them to enjoy and appreciate going to church and putting into practice the things they have learnt. This will also help them not to only follow the sound of the music but to pay attention to the lyrics thereby loving and appreciating every religious song they come across.

#### **These include:**

- 1) Encouraging the Youth to Join the Choir: The youth should be encouraged to join the choir. As those songs are thought and rehearsed, the lyrics of each song is learnt, not only that, they would be committed to the group, thereby appreciating the good news that comes from it. Though some youths may shy away from the choir saying they do not have good choir voices. They should be encouraged to join still because there are always provisions made for training people's voices in the choir.
- 2) Organising Praise and Prayer Seminars for the Youth: The church can organise praise and prayer seminars for the youth where the advantages of singing praises and meditating on them would be thought to the youths. When this happens, the youth would be closer to God, even in their daily activities.
- 3) Organizing Singing Competition/Carols among the Youth from different Archdioceses/Dioceses: This programme should include the choristers from different Catholic Archdiocese / Dioceses as well as members of the clergy. The event, would be characterized by melodious hymns and performances, praising and glorifying God, to afford members of the union the opportunity to fraternize, learn and share more about the Catholic doctrine as well as consolidate the gains made to contribute to the evangelization of the gospel through songs.
- 4) Inviting Top Christian Musicians to Church Activities: This is a great way to bring the youths closer to God. When these top Christian musicians (like Jude Nnam, Mercy Chinwo, Judikayetc.) are invited to some youth praise and worship programmes, they will perform beautifully and may recognise some of the youths with outstanding voices, thereby including them in their music teams and videos. These would not only give the youths the encouragement to love the things of God, but it would help them work on their voices, thereby learning all the songs in the church, in order to be recognised and selected when next those top Christian musicians are invited.

### **Benefits of Evangelizing the Youth with Music**

The benefits of evangelising the youth with music are really much but the researcher would only

give some which are:

- 1) Being Close to God: Listening to religious music and participating in music activities, lifts up the spirit, thereby making them not only religious but spiritual. It helps them to understand the message of Christ and what every Christian is expected to do.
- 2) Identifying their Talents in Music: When these music competitions and carols are carried out, some of the youths would find out that they are actually talented in music and may use this talent to better their lives.
- 3) Becoming Stars / Creating Job Opportunities: When those Christian music celebrities come in contact with the youth, have some of them selected to be featured in their videos, those youths will automatically become stars and they would feed on this opportunity too.
- 4) Reduction of Crimes in the Society: When the mind is occupied with something meaningful the person will not fall into crimes and society will be safe for everyone.
- 5) Grounding them in the Catholic Doctrines: By evangelizing the youth with music in the Catholic Church, they would not only be close to God but will understand the teachings of the Catholic Church where they belong. This will as well help them to be retained in the Catholic Church since they are seen as the future of the Church.

### Conclusion

Music is food for the soul. Being creative with music in evangelizing the youth of the Catholic Archdiocese of Owerri would make the youth remain part of the church, appreciate both hot and calm music because the lyrics would be understood and most importantly they would be drawn closer to God. The church and the society would be happy when the benefits come.

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