

**DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS OF RHETORICAL DEVICES
IN SELECTED ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' PASTORAL LETTERS
IN ONITSHA ECCLESIASTICAL PROVINCE, NIGERIA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The pastoral letter, an open letter addressed by a bishop to members of his diocese for the purpose of promoting faith and good Christian living, constitutes a persuasive religious discourse characterised by numerous rhetorical devices. Previous studies on Christian religious language have concentrated mainly on sermons, liturgy, prayers, theology, scriptures, hymns, and songs to the exclusion of the persuasive power of pastoral letters. This study, therefore, examined themes and rhetorical devices in selected Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province, with a view to determining their persuasive discourse functions.

Aristotelian Rhetoric, which emphasises persuasion through three main rhetorical appeals: logos, pathos, and ethos was adopted as the framework. Data were drawn from 10 pastoral letters of five Roman Catholic bishops in five dioceses (two letters from each) where pastoral letters are published regularly, out of the seven in Onitsha Province. These were Onitsha, Nnewi, Awka, Enugu, and Awgudioceses. The letters, published between 2000 and 2010 and ranging between 20 and 104 pages, were purposively selected based on consistency, thematic preoccupations, and rhetorical content. Data were subjected to discourse analysis.

Four major themes: faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church were identified. There were three categories of rhetorical devices: logos-based (logic), pathos-based (emotions), and ethos-based (character). There were 10 logos-based devices: use of testimonial reference functioning as authority to validate messages; deductive and inductive reasoning appealing to the rationality of the audience; definitions establishing a common ground for arguments; comparison (analogy/metaphor) for explanations to ensure comprehension; nominalisation and passivisation objectifying the validity of ideas; syntactic parallelism and antithesis emphasising ideas for easy grasp; and obligation/necessity modals appealing to the audience's sense of responsibility and moral duty. Eight pathos-based devices were used: Igbo language expressing solidarity with the audience; prayers inspiring them; inclusive pronoun (*we*) creating a feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness; rhetorical questions (RQs) appealing to denominational sentiments; sarcasm, segregation pronoun (*they*), and negative emotion-laden words referring to non-Catholic groups to create distaste for non-Catholic faith; feminine pronoun (*she*) and positive emotion-laden words referring to the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) to keep the audience emotionally attached to it. Finally, seven devices characterised ethos: use of first-

person singular pronoun (*I*), declaratives, and imperatives invoking the authority of the bishops' office; Latinisms showing learnedness; greetings and appreciation expressing goodwill; and exemplary Biblical characters as models of faith, repentance, and love. All the devices in the three categories related to the four themes except RQs, the pronouns *they*, *she*, and emotion-laden words, relating to loyalty. Comparatively, logos-based devices preponderated over pathos- and ethos-based ones reflecting emphasis of the RCC on reason as the basis for faith.

Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province were characterised by a preponderance of logos-based rhetorical devices, and a widespread use of pathos- and ethos-based ones, designed to communicate messages of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty, and persuade the audience to live accordingly. The rhetorical devices, therefore, establish the pastorals as a significant form of persuasive religious discourse.

Keywords: Discourse functions, Rhetorical devices, Roman Catholic bishops, Pastoral letters, Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the Almighty God whose abundant grace made it possible; to my husband and pillar of support, Ikem; and to my precious darlings, D-boy and Mimi.

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CERTIFICATION

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

RCC: Roman Catholic Church

CTC: Call to Conversion

GCTR: God Is Calling us to Reconciliation

WWF: We Walk by Faith

FFF: From Faith to Faith

TML: The Measure of Love

IYHF: If only You Have Faith

RBGN Repent and Believe the Good News

LALG: Living in the Amazing Love of God

LTF: Living the Faith

OEO: Okwukwe Ezi Olu

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

2.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a general introduction to the study. It focuses on the background to the study, statement of the problem, aims and objectives, research questions, scope, significance and data for the study.

1.1 Background to the study

Pastoral letters are open letters addressed by a bishop to members of his diocese. In the Roman Catholic Church, diocesan bishops' pastoral letters fall into three categories: those written as a follow-up to the Pope's encyclicals, those written in response to contemporary social, political or religious issues, and those written at particular ecclesiastical seasons, such as the season of Lent. The bishops, as the custodians of the Roman Catholic faith and as the shepherds of the flocks in their respective dioceses, have the responsibility of teaching faith and morals, and encouraging the faithful to practice and defend them (Can., 749 S.2, 1997). Pastoral letters serve as the medium through which the bishops exercise their teaching authority in the Church. Their teachings are respected as authentic because the bishops are believed to be successors of the apostles (Davis 1982). The pastoral letters are therefore considered as important religious documents in the Roman Catholic Church. The Lenten pastoral letters of the Roman Catholic bishops in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province, Nigeria, which are the focus of this study, are aimed at promoting the Roman Catholic faith and good Christian living among the faithful in the province.

Roman Catholicism is a Christian denomination with distinct characteristics observable in its doctrine, its mode of worship and its practices. Religion facts (2004) observes that, for the first thousand years of Christianity, there was no 'Roman Catholicism' as we know it today, simply because there was no Eastern Orthodoxy or Protestantism to distinguish it. There was only the "one, holy Catholic Church" affirmed by the early creeds, which was the body of Christian believers all over the world, united by common traditions, beliefs, church structure and worship. Catholicism today, as pointed out by Hellwig (1996), is defined in strictly institutional terms, describing those in sacramental communion with Rome, accepting the doctrinal, moral and disciplinary authority of the Roman See. According to Hellwig, the church is now known as the Roman Catholic Church, and to be a Roman Catholic means to be a Christian with unique beliefs, practices and traditions that are distinct from those of other Christians.

McBrien (1994) and Hellwig (1996) identify certain characteristics of Roman Catholicism each of which it shares with one or another Christian church or tradition but which no other church or tradition possesses in the same configuration. These characteristics include: Roman Catholicism's emphasis on the role of reason in the understanding and expression of Christian faith; its reverence for the Scripture as well as the Church Tradition; its deep appreciation of the sacramental principle, that is that God is present in all created things; its view of sin and redemption as corporate issues for the human community; and its universality or catholicity, which makes it accessible to men of all races and cultures. The configuration of the characteristics, McBrien (1994:9) remarks, is expressed in "Catholicism's systematic theology; its body of doctrines; its liturgical life especially the Eucharist; its variety of spiritualities; its religious congregations, and lay apostolate, its official teachings on justice, peace, and human rights; its exercise of collegiality, and its Petrine ministry."

Roman Catholicism is marked by its hierarchical structure, with the Pope at the apex, followed by cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, deacons and laity (Stanford, 2011). Archbishops are heads of ecclesiastical provinces made up of particular churches called dioceses which are in turn headed by bishops. An arch-bishop is both the bishop of his diocese, which constitutes the provincial headquarters, and the arch-bishop of the whole province. The Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha is one of the nine Roman Catholic ecclesiastical provinces in Nigeria, (Other provinces are Lagos, Abuja, Benin, Kaduna, Calabar, Ibadan, Jos, and Owerri.) and one of the oldest (erected on 18th April 1950 along with the Ecclesiastical Province of Lagos). It comprises seven dioceses: Onitsha (the Archdiocese/the provincial headquarters), Nnewi, Awka, Enugu, Awgu, Nsukka and Abakaliki dioceses. Located in the South Eastern region of Nigeria, the province is a predominantly Igbo society, incorporating Anambra, Enugu, and Ebonyi states. The practice of Roman Catholicism in the province is, to a large extent, affected by the culture of the people.

The Igbo community of the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province has a culture that is highly religious. The Igbo traditional religion is hardly separated from the lives of the people. It is a religion in which God, the gods, evil spirits and forces had a very close relationship with the human world. The supreme God called *Chukwu* (great god) or *Chineke* (god, the creator) occupies a unique place in the religious life of the people. He is the creator of all things including the minor divinities (gods), through which he governs the universe. For his overall wellbeing, progress, security, protection from his enemies,

recovery from sickness, man must have constant recourse to the divinities by prayers and sacrifices of different kinds, and must be at peace with them at all times (Ezeanya, 1980).

Okeke (2003:60) observes that in the traditional Igbo society:

Everything was done religiously. From the cradle to the grave and beyond, the traditional culture provided religious rites appropriate for every state and stage of life and for every activity.

With such a cultural background, the Igbo Catholic community of Onitsha province is faced with the challenges of living authentic Christian life. In the face of difficulties such as marital problems, ill-health, lack of material progress, etc., the people always have recourse to their traditional religion. As a result, Christianity and traditional religion constantly clash in almost every facet of the lives of the people.

Like most urban communities in Africa, the Igbo Catholic community of Onitsha province has lost contact with most of the cultural values which the traditional Igbo society is known for. Such values as communal life, dignity of the human person, respect for elders, good character, obedience, honesty, bravery, etc. are on the decline. For example, in the traditional Igbo society a man lived his life, not as an individual but under the pressure of the group: the family, the clan, the village, or the town. As remarked by Edeh (1985), the idea of making sure that everything is in tune with the community of being is always in the background of the thoughts and actions of the people, whether they are thinking or acting as a community or as individuals. Obiechina, (1975) adds that because the principle of communal life is fundamental to the society's very survival and general health it is given validity by being anchored in customary practice and protected by divine and ancestral authority. This communal spirit which the Igbo people are known for has given way to individuality and selfishness such that rather than seek for the common good of the society, there is competition for individual excellence, and this, most of the time, breeds all sorts of anti-Christian behaviour. The self-seeking attitude is not unconnected with emphasis on individuality brought about by Christianity. Nnabuike (1983:232) rightly observes that:

In a society where the group conscience rather than the individual conscience is exalted in almost every sphere of life, to embrace Christianity implies renouncing the traditional religion with its moral, civil and political obligations.

This, to a large extent, is true of the Igbo Catholic community in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha.

Hard work and diligence are the marks of the Igbo Catholic community in Onitsha province. Right from the traditional society up to the present times, Igbo people are known for their industry and determination to succeed. Their quest for achievement especially in terms of material wealth can take them to any length, and this, in most cases, clashes with their religious obligations. However, once they have made the money they are generous in their financial donations to the Church. There are cases of individuals taking charge of gigantic projects in the Church or even building a whole church single-handed. The quest for acquisition of material wealth has made Igbo society a materialistic one. Every activity, event, or occasion is an opportunity to show off wealth. This is evident in the way money is lavishly spent during occasions such as marriage ceremonies, burial ceremonies, title-taking ceremonies, etc. The poor ones are given the impression that without money, these things cannot be done.

These cultural issues which pose challenges to Christian faith, especially the Roman Catholic faith, in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha are reflected in the bishops' Lenten pastoral letters. The pastorals are aimed at promoting the Roman Catholic faith and since the Lenten period is a period when Christians are expected to reflect on their lives as Christians, the bishops through their Lenten pastoral letters provide the faithful with subjects to reflect on for the season. Persuading the faithful to live good Christian lives, especially in the face of social, cultural, religious, and political challenges.

The language of the pastorals is worth studying for a number of reasons. First, language as a means of communication plays an indispensable role in the communication of religious messages. Second, the pastorals are serious documents written in solemn situation; consequently, factors of social situation are bound to influence language use in the letters. Third, the Lenten pastorals constitute an important public discourse with persuasive purpose, and as such are expected to be characterised by rhetorical devices aimed at influencing attitudes and inducing actions. There is, therefore, need to study the Roman Catholic bishop's Lenten Pastorals in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha, as a persuasive religious discourse, prompted by a particular rhetorical situation, and characterised by rhetorical devices aimed at persuasion. Aristotelian Rhetoric becomes handy as a suitable theoretical framework because of its emphasis on persuasion through rhetorical appeals of *ethos*, *pathos* and *logos*. Analysis based on this framework will enable us to establish the pastorals as a significant form of persuasive religious discourse. The study will also underscore the interconnection between rhetoric and religion and contribute to a better understanding of the language of religion.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Previous studies on the language and style of Christian religion have concentrated mainly on sermons, liturgy, prayers, theology, scriptures, and songs to the exclusion of the persuasive power of pastoral letters. Idowu (2007), for example, focuses on cohesion in the language of sermons in Pentecostal and orthodox churches; Aladeyomi (2007) investigates the phonological features that mark electronic media Christian sermons in Nigeria; Odebunmi (2007) investigates language use in Christian and Islamic religious advertisements on radio and television in the South-western Nigeria; Babatunde (1998) carries out a speech act analysis of Evangelical Christian religious sermons; Crystal and Davy (1983) examine liturgical language of contemporary Christianity; Adedeji (2007) is a study of the praise and worship style of the contemporary Nigerian avant garde (charismatic) Church; Mar (1998) demonstrates how the prayers from various Christian groups reveal the differences in the way the adherents relate to God; Pernot (2006) examines two rhetorical forms of religious discourse, prayer and hymn; Keane (1997) is a theological study of religious language, which focuses on the interaction of religious adherents with spiritual and invisible participants in such speech situations as prayers, and other ritualistic practices. Ogunleye and Olagunju (2007) and Babalola (2007) are works on scriptures. The former analyses the thematic structure of Isaiah 49, while the latter investigates structural and syntactic differences in selected verses of three versions of the Holy Bible_ the King James Version (KJV), the New International Version (NIV), and the Revised Standard Version (RSV). Van Neste (2005) on his part examines St. Paul's Pastoral Epistles to determine the boundaries of each discourse unit using cohesive shift analysis. Taiwo (2008) examines the language of some contemporary Christian songs in Pentecostal Churches in South-western Nigeria in order to explore the choices made in the lyrics and identify how they tie with the wider social and cultural structures of the society; while Babajide (2007) is a study of stylistic devices in the Song of Solomon and p'Bitek's Song of Lawino.

While several studies exist on these various forms of Christian religious discourse, not much is found on pastoral letters, a persuasive religious discourse characterised by numerous rhetorical devices. This gap has necessitated our study of rhetorical devices in selected Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province, Nigeria, with a view to determining their persuasive discourse functions. The study is expected to result in the identification of the kind of rhetoric that is specific to the pastoral letters. The rhetorical approach will also provide a better understanding of the pastorals as an instrument of persuasion and moral change.

1.3 Aim and objectives

The aim of this study, therefore, is to examine themes and rhetorical devices in selected Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha, Nigeria, in order to determine their persuasive discourse functions. The study has the following objectives:

- To identify and analyse the major themes of the letters
- To identify and analyse the rhetorical devices in the letters alongside their persuasive discourse functions
- To find out the contextual factors behind the use of the rhetorical devices
- To make generalizations on the language of Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters based on insights from the study.

1.4 Research questions

The following research questions were answered in the course of the study:

- What are the major themes of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Nigeria?
- Which rhetorical devices are deployed for the purpose of persuasion in the letters?
- To what extent is the choice of the rhetorical devices determined by context?
- What generalisations can be made on the language of Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters, based on insights from the study?

1.5 Scope of the study

The study is restricted to themes and the rhetorical devices deployed in the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha to achieve the purpose of promoting the Roman Catholic faith and its practice in the province. It covers ten Lenten pastoral letters written by five Roman Catholic Bishops in five dioceses in Onitsha Ecclesiastical province and published between 2000 and 2010. The dioceses are: the arch-diocese of Onitsha, dioceses of Nnewi, Awka, Enugu, and Awgu.

1.6 Significance of the study

The significance of the study lies in the potential it has to shed light on the persuasive properties of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the *Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha*, which have hitherto remained obscure due to lack of adequate studies on the pastorals. The study would lead to a better understanding of the

letters as an instrument of persuasion and moral change, and establish them as a specific form of persuasive religious discourse. It would also confirm the close connection between rhetoric and religion and provide a deeper insight into the language of religion.

1.7 Data for the study

Data for the study are derived from ten Lenten pastoral letters of five Roman Catholic bishops in five dioceses of the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha. The five dioceses are dioceses of Enugu, Nnewi, Awka, Awgu, and the Arch-diocese of Onitsha. The pastoral letters, which span between 2000 and 2010 and range between 20 and 104 pages, include: *God is calling us to reconciliation* (2001, Enugu), *Okwukwe ezi olu* (2010, Enugu), *Repent and believe the good news* (2008, Awka), *Call to conversion* (2000, Awka), *If only you have faith* (2006, Onitsha), *The measure of love* (2005, Onitsha), *From faith to faith* (2004, Nnewi), *We walk by faith* (2003, Nnewi), *Living in the amazing love of God* (2008, Awgu), and *Living the faith* (2006, Awgu). They were purposively selected based on consistency in publication, thematic preoccupations, and rhetorical content.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has been able to give a brief background to the study, as well as statement of the problem, aim and objectives, research questions, scope, significance, and data for the study. The next chapter dwells on review of literature and theoretical framework.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE/ THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

Here, in this chapter, literature relating to the study, in addition to the theoretical framework, is reviewed. Areas covered in the literature review include the concept of discourse, the Language of Religion, epistolary genre, discourse-stylistics and rhetoric. These are followed by a review of the theoretical framework for the study covering Aristotelian Rhetoric and insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional theory.

2.1 Review of relevant literature

2.1.1 The concept of discourse

Discourse is generally defined as 'language in use' (Woods 2006, Brown and Yule, 1983). It involves the interaction of speaker/writer and listener/reader in a specific situational context, and within a framework of social and cultural conventions (Abrams, 2005). As such discourse has both linguistic and social senses as it points to properties of stretches of language above the level of sentence and understands these stretches of language as a place where socially produced meaning emerges (Kress and Van Leeuwen, 2001). Discourse, therefore, refers to language in use within a particular social context. It includes both spoken and written forms.

Some scholars such as Wisniewski (2006), Salkie (1998), and Allerton (1979) consider discourse to be synonymous with text. However, Bloor and Bloor (2007), Verdonk (2002), and Titscher *et al.* (2000) make a distinction between the two concepts. Bloor and Bloor (2007) conceive of a text as a physical manifestation of discourse. To them, a text is normally used to describe a linguistic record of a communicative event, and this may be an electronic recording or a written text. Brown and Yule (1983) also use text as a technical term to refer to the verbal record of a communicative act whether spoken or written. Verdonk (2002) and Titscher *et al.* (2000) base their own distinction on the seven criteria of textuality proposed by de Beaugrande and Dressler (1981). They are of the view that while text invokes the idea of unity or wholeness in terms of meaning and structure, discourse incorporates this idea as well as other contextual and situational variables, and is therefore wider than, and inclusive of, text. Discourse is conceived of in this study as being synonymous with text.

2.1.1.1 Approaches to the study of discourse

Discourse has been studied from various perspectives. These approaches include Conversational Analysis (C.A.), Critical Discourse Analysis (C.D.A), Ethnography of Communication, Pragmatics, Discourse-Stylistics, Rhetoric, etc. Jorgensen and Phillips (2002:23) point out that, though not all discourse analytical approaches subscribe explicitly to post structuralism, all can agree to the following main points:

- Language is not a reflection of a pre-existing reality.
- Language is structured in patterns or discourses – there is not just one general system of meaning as in Saussurean structuralism but a series of systems or discourses, whereby meanings change from discourse to discourse.
- These discursive patterns are maintained and transformed in discursive practices.
- The maintenance and transformation of the patterns should therefore be explored through analysis of the specific contexts in which language is in action.

Our preoccupation here is with Discourse-Stylistic approach, and this is fully explained in section 2.1.4 below.

2.1.1.2 Discourse functions

The functions performed by discourse are generally classified as expressive, informative, persuasive and social functions in accordance with the focus of language use. Discourse performs expressive functions when the focus is on the language user; that is, the speaker/writer is using language for the purpose of expressing himself. Informative function is performed when the focus is on the message. In that case all forms of explanatory devices are employed to ensure clarity and comprehension of message. Persuasive function is performed in a discourse that is audience-centred. It is aimed at influencing the attitudes and behaviour of the audience. Consequently, all forms of persuasive techniques are deployed to achieve persuasion. Discourse functions socially when attention is on the social context as it affects language use. Though these functions may be performed in a particular discourse in various degrees, the classification is based on the dominant function. The interest of this study is on analyzing the persuasive discourse functions of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha.

2.1.1.3 Discourse and social context

The importance of social context in language use has been emphasised by scholars in sociolinguistics. Works in this area were pioneered by Bronislaw Malinowski, a Professor of Anthropology, who, after his field work on the language and culture of the Trobriand Islanders in the South Pacific, concluded that an utterance makes sense only if it is seen in the context in which it is used, since the meanings of utterances are bound up with the

culture and environment in which the utterances are produced. Malinowski's (1923) idea of 'context of situation' was stressed and elaborated by J.R. Firth (1957) to include:

- a. The relevant features of the participants:
 - persons, personalities
 - The verbal action of the participants
 - The non-verbal action of the participants
- b. The relevant objects
- c. The effects of the verbal actions.

Apart from context of situation, Firth also considers linguistic context as important for describing meaning. The ideas of context of situation and context of culture are taken further by M.A.K. Halliday in his systemic functional theory of language. He classifies social context into context of situation (register) and context of culture (genre). Context of situation refers to all extra-linguistic factors which have some bearing on language use, and its elements which affect linguistic choices in a text include the nature of the audience, the medium, the purpose of communication, etc, while context of culture refers to the socio-cultural background in which language is being used (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

After Malinowski, the relationship between language and context has been emphasised in most sociolinguistic studies. Turner (1973) describes context as various possibilities available to a speaker in which he may express a single idea, and sees situation as a factor that determines the exact word to be used in a context. Similarly, Ebeling (1973) sees context as the situation in which words are spoken. According to him, to take seriously the point of view of the situation in which words are spoken means to be conscious that every statement has its context from which it can be distinguished, but with which it forms a living unity. Consequently, he continues, a statement can often say more than it makes explicit. It can be understood better than would be the case if it were taken at face value.

Hayakawa (1964) is of the view that the context of an utterance determines its meaning, and since no two contexts are exactly the same, no two meanings can be exactly the same. In line with this view, Fromkin and Rodman (1974) state that the context of an utterance may help to disambiguate a statement where polysemous words are used. They give examples with the sentences 'She cannot bear children' and 'give me a file.' The contexts in which each of these utterances is used determine whether the first utterance means 'She cannot tolerate children' or 'She is unable to give birth to children, and whether 'file' in the second utterance means a metal file, cardboard folder or line on a parade

ground. This view of context is in line with the literary theory of 'le mot juste.' Context creates possibilities for interpretation and helps to remove multiple ambiguities that utterances would have had if they had occurred in isolation (Taiwo, 2007).

Bloor and Bloor (2007) opine that language can properly construct meaning when it is part of a wider social event, and that it both needs context and helps to create context. They further state that when we learn language, we not only learn the unspoken rules of conversation but also those that are handed down from one generation to the next, such as concern for appropriate behaviour, which may differ from one social group to another. Bloor and Bloor imply two aspects of a context: linguistic and non-linguistic (social context). Still dwelling on social context, Trudgil (1995) states that just as behaviour is appropriate to an individual, it also needs to be suitable for particular occasions and situations, and such is the case with language which is a social behaviour. According to him, language varies not only according to the social characteristics of the speaker but also according to the social context in which he finds himself. To Bloor and Bloor and Trudgil, appropriateness in the use of language is a function of social context. In other words, social context determines the appropriate language to use in a particular occasion.

The importance of social context in determining appropriate patterns of behaviour, both linguistic and extra linguistic is emphasised by Hymes (1974). According to Hymes, a child learning a language acquires, along with a system of grammar, a system of its use regarding persons, places, purposes other modes of communication,... patterns of the sequential use of language in conversation, address, standard routines. Hence the most important task for sociolinguistic research is identification of 'the rules, patterns, purposes and consequences of language use,' and an account of their interrelations. Hymes (1974) equates communicative competence with appropriateness in language use. To him, linguistic theory should not only be involved with explaining speaker-hearer knowledge of grammaticality, but also with the examination of communicative behaviour in the context of culture (Woods, 2006). Thus Hymes identifies two types of context: grammatical context and context of culture. Hymes (1964) identifies the following as components of a speech event: Setting, Participants, Ends, Acts sequence, Key, Instrument, Norms and Genre.

Setting refers to the specific place and time that a speech event takes place and this can affect the style of speaking. Participants include the speakers, listeners, addressors, hearers or the audience. Ends refer to the purpose and goals for which a speech event has been constituted and this is what distinguishes speech events when they have the same setting and participants. Actsequencerefers to the message form and content, and includes

the issue of topic and topic change. Key involves the tone, manner or spirit with which an event or act is performed. Instrument refers to the channel or mode of transmission of a message which can be verbal or non-verbal. Norms refer to the specific properties which are attached to speaking and also include the interpretation of norms within cultural belief systems. Genre refers to the textual categories in the text.

Each type of speech event carries its own distinctive features and constrains the participants both in what they may say and how they may say it (Boor and Bloor, 2007). Crystal and Davy (1983) identify situational constraints or variables of a speech event as individuality (Dialect, Time), Discourse (Medium, Participation), and Province (Status, Modality, Singularity)

Individuality includes both physical and psychological personal traits which could give rise to phonetic and graphic distinctiveness of any kind. Dialect indicates a speaker's geographic origin (regional dialect) or his location on a linguistically based social scale (social dialect). Time gives exclusively diachronic information as in Modern English, Middle English, or Old English. Discourse refers to the language event or activity and its medium may be speech or writing. Participation indicates whether discourse is monologue or dialogue. Province accounts for the features of language which identify an utterance with those variables in an extra-linguistic context which are defined with reference to the kind of occupational or professional activity being engaged in, for example, public worship, advertisement, etc. Status takes care of such notions as formality, informality, respect, politeness, intimacy, etc. Modality has to do with the specific purpose of an utterance which has led the user to adopt one feature or a set of features rather than another, for example, lecture, reports, essay, etc. Singularity is the evidence of authorship and is continuous and permanent. To Crystal and Davy, these constitute the situation in which language is used, and serve as constraints to language use.

Social context thus comprises context of situation and context of culture. Context of situation (also known as situational context or micro context) is the actual situation, that is, the immediate, usually physical, situation, in which an utterance is produced. It focuses on the various non-linguistic elements involved in the direct production of meanings in a particular instance of communication. On the other hand, the context of culture (also called macro context) refers to the wider situation or context in which the context of situation is embedded. It refers to the social, psychological, and anthropological elements which covertly exert influence on the linguistic choices in a discourse. It includes the traditions,

the institutions, the discourse communities, the historical context and the knowledge base of the participants (Bloor and Bloor, 2007).

2.1.1.4 Register and genre

The idea, in discourse, that linguistic items cannot be understood outside their context of use has led to theories of register and genre, which Eggins and Martins (1997) describe as technical concepts employed to explain the meaning and function of variation between texts. Linguistic variations relating to context of situation are explained by means of register, while those relating to context of culture are explained by means of genre.

2.1.1.4.1 Register

The concept of 'register' is a theoretical explanation of the observation that we use language differently in different situations. It is the name given to a variety of language distinguished according to use (Burton, 1976), "a useful abstraction linking variations of language to variations of social context" (Gregory and Carroll (1978:64). Burton (1976) notes that the category of register is needed when we want to account for what people do with their language. He posits that when we observe language activity in the various contexts in which it takes place, we find differences in the type of language selected as appropriate to the different types of situation. Reinforcing this, Wardaugh (2006) states that no one speaks the same way all the time and people constantly exploit the nuances of the language they speak for a wide variety of purposes. Looking at every instance of language use, therefore, it is hard to find the neat regularity that internal language knowledge-based approach expects (Cook, 1993).

Originally, before Halliday (1978), registers were thought of in terms of their lexical and grammatical characteristics (Butler 1985). Trudgill (1995), for example, who equates register with professional language such as the language of Law, Medicine, Engineering, etc., is of the view that registers are usually characterised solely by vocabulary differences: either by the use of particular words, or by the use of words in particular sense. Wardaugh (2006) also holds a similar view. He views registers as sets of language items associated with discrete occupational or social groups such as surgeons, airline pilots, bank managers, jazz fans, pimps, etc. In the same vein, the notion of register as subject matter characterised by the lexical items used to handle it can be seen in the conception of register by Quirk and Greenbaum (2000). To them, registers are varieties of language according to the subject matter involved in a discourse, and the switch from one register to another by the same

speaker involves nothing more than turning to the particular set of lexical items habitually used for handling the subject in question: Law, Cookery, Engineering, Football, etc.

Halliday (1978) proposes that the defining features of registers are semantic. In his Systemic Functional theory, Halliday sees register as the linguistic consequence of the interacting aspects of context: field, tenor and mode. He considers these as the three contextual variables that specify the register of a particular text. According to him, the *field* refers to what is being talked about, that is, the subject matter of the discourse, the social activity in which language plays a part (and this is most clearly reflected in the lexical items chosen); the *tenor* refers to the participants in the discourse, that is, the people involved in the communication, including significant role relationships between them, such as teacher-student, parent-child, doctor-patient, etc.; and the *mode* refers to how the language is functioning in the interaction, that is, the medium or channel of communication employed by the participants in the discourse, and this may be written or spoken. The three contextual variables, explains Chappelle (1998), are intended to help the linguist to tie linguistic analysis to the relevant contextual variables, and by understanding the semiotic properties of a situation, language users can predict the meanings that are likely to be exchanged and the language likely to be used. Consequently, Halliday and Hasan (1976:23) define register as 'the set of meanings, the configuration of semantic patterns that are typically drawn upon under the specified conditions, along with the words and structures that are used in the realisation of these meanings'. Similarly, Butler (1985) defines register as a set of semantic resources which is activated by a given combination of field, tenor and mode values. According to him, it is not the event or state of affairs being talked about that determines the choice of language selected but the convention that a certain kind of language is appropriate to a certain use. He holds that the crucial criteria of any register are to be found in its grammar and lexis; in the collocation of two or more lexical items, and scantily in the grammatical distinctions. To him, any text is an instance of a particular register.

2.1.1.4.2 Genre

Genre is a theory of the relationship of language to its context of culture. It is viewed by Bloor and Bloor (2007) from three perspectives. Firstly, they see genre as a form of discourse, culturally recognised, which more or less obeys socially agreed structures. According to them, the term is well known in literary and film studies from where it has been borrowed by discourse analysis. They cite examples of literary and linguistic genres as novels, poems, university lectures, biology lab reports, letters, theatre reviews. Secondly,

they see genre as also being sometimes used as a term for social events that use regular linguistic and discourse patterns, such as committee meetings, and thus, to some extent can overlap with the term social practice. Thirdly, Bloor and Bloor (2007) view genre from the point of view of the institutions from which they evolved, and in this sense minutes of meetings, annual reports, business correspondence are associated with business institutions; lectures, seminars, tutorials, textbooks, notes, essays, and examination papers are associated with educational institutions.

Bratcher (online n.d) identifies the various ways in which the term 'genre' has been used in biblical studies. In one sense, he explains, genre refers to larger types of literature that can be recognised by certain general features, such as gospel, apocalyptic, prophecy, wisdom, etc. In another more technical usage, it refers to smaller literary units, such as miracle stories, proverbs, salvation oracles, etc., that could be traced to pre-written oral tradition. In its less technical and more modern sense, genre is a general designation for types of literature that could be identified by shared features and function.

According to Salzman (1998), genre refers to speech acts or events associated with a particular communication situation, and characterised by particular style, form and content. Eginns and Martins (1997) explain that the linguistic definitions of genre draw on the Russian literary theorist Bakhtin's (1986) identification of genres as 'relatively stable types' of interactive utterances, broadening genre to include every day as well as literary genres in both written and spoken modes. They add that different genres are different ways of using language to achieve different culturally established tasks, and texts of different genres are texts which are achieving different purposes in the culture. Thompson (2004) holds a view similar to this. According to him, genre includes the more general idea of what the interactants are doing through language, and how they organise the language event, typically in recognisable stages, in order to achieve that purpose.

Wales (1989) observes that however arbitrary the boundary between one genre and another may appear, what distinguishes them, and what determines how genres are traditionally defined, is usually the set or cluster of structural and stylistic properties that have come to be associated with them, which have come to be dominant in the formalistic sense. He therefore argues that if a genre is a model of writing, it also becomes a model of expectation for the reader, and it is part of our literary competence that we frame a text within a genre from our general knowledge of reading, and so tolerate the death of the hero in a tragedy, but not in a comedy. This is in line with Eginns and Martins (1997:236)

argument that a useful register and genre theory is one that will allow for both textual prediction and contextual deduction. They explain:

Given a description of the context, it should be possible to predict the meanings that will be at risk and the linguistic features likely to be used to encode them. Alternatively, given a text, it should be possible to deduce the context in which it was produced, as the linguistic features selected in a text will encode contextual dimensions, both of its immediate context of production and of its generic identity, what task the text is achieving in the culture.'

This means therefore that, as with register, we become highly conditioned to expect certain conventions within a particular genre, and these determine the way we approach and respond to a text. Genre conventions condition us to see as entirely natural and realistic certain aspects of what we read. They also condition the form (shape and layout), structure (the sequence of ideas), style and content of a particular writing, and make it possible for the reader to expect or anticipate certain things in it.

On the relationship between register and genre, Martin (1997) explains that while register functions on the level of context of situation and connects situation to language, genre functions on the level of context of culture and connects culture to situation. To Martin (1997), therefore, register contextualises language and is in turn contextualised by genre. Thompson (2004), on his part, likens the relationship between register and genre to that between cloth and garment, register being cloth and genre being garment. He submits that a genre deploys the resources of a register (or more than one register) in particular patterns to achieve certain communicative goals.

Since register and genre are important concepts in text-context relationship, an understanding of the two concepts is indispensable in the analysis of a discourse, as language use in a text is bound to be constrained by the register and the genre of such a text, among other contextual factors. An examination of the language of religion as well as epistolary genre is therefore relevant to our rhetorical analysis of Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters.

2.1.2 The language of religion

Religion is a form of meaning construction activity which depends heavily on language to express, inculcate and apply (Bouma, 1992; cited in Bouma and Clyne, 1995). This point is also emphasised by Crystal (online, p.11) when he says that "language plays a

fundamental role in the practical understanding, expression, presentation and furtherance of any set of religious beliefs.” The language of Christian religion is sometimes described as archaic and far removed from current usage. Onuigbo (1996), for example, describes it as being characterised by predominant use of archaic forms such as *resisteth* for *resists*, *beareth* for *bears*, *doeth* for *does*, *wilt* and *shalt* for *will* and *shall*, *ye* and *thou* for *you*, etc. He explains that such archaic forms are used not just to provoke a strong feeling of reverence for the Almighty God, but more importantly to remind the followers of the unchanging nature of God. God is believed to be the same yesterday, today and forever. Disregard for formal syntactic and punctuation rules, the use of initial capital letters in words that represent the supreme deity and in the pronouns referring to him, even in the middle of the sentence in order to show the supreme authority of God, and lack of strict compliance with concord rules are identified as syntactic features of religious language. Onuigbo attributes this freedom in the observation of syntactic rules to the measure of freedom enjoyed by the followers of Christian religion in their mode, place and time of their worship.

Onuigbo’s view of religious language is rather too general. Most of the features he identified are true of some varieties but not true of others. While the use of initial capital letters in words that represent the supreme deity may cut across all varieties of religious language, lack of strict compliance with syntactic rules may not, and this may exist in the older forms of religious language such as the liturgical language.

The language of Christian religion, no doubt, exhibits some common features such as the presence of vocabulary items drawn from the Bible (such as *God*, *Holy Spirit*, *Jesus Christ*, *heaven*, *hell*, *sin*, *repentance*, *salvation*, etc.) as well as the use of biblical quotations (either direct or indirect). Ebeling (1973) rightly points out that throughout its history, Christianity has always regarded itself as dependent upon the Bible as the source and norm of the language of faith, and as such, it is directly and indirectly nourished by the vocabulary of the Bible. The Bible, as the holy book of Christianity is regarded as the authoritative word of God and almost every Christian religious text makes reference to it. The reverence with which Christians hold the holy Bible is captured in the following words from a 2002 edition of the Jehovah’s Witness magazine entitled ‘the Road to Eternal Life: Have you found it?’ (cited in Babalola, 2007:144):

The Bible is a precious gift from God. It explains things that we could otherwise never know. It tells about those who live in the spirit realm. It reveals

God's thoughts, His personality, and His purpose. It tells of His dealings with people over thousands of years. It talks of things that will happen in the future.

Religious language is a variety of language that consists of other varieties within it. This view is buttressed by Crystal (1965, cited in Olaniyan and Oyekola 2007), Brook (1981), Crystal and Davy (1983), and Ogunleye and Olagunju (2007). These sub varieties include the language of liturgy, sermons, theology, scriptures, prayers, songs, etc. The common features of the language of religion, notwithstanding, each variety has some linguistic features that characterise it and make it quite strikingly different from other varieties. According to Crystal and Davy (1983), the features are concentrated in the vocabulary and in certain parts of the grammar. Therefore, uniform description of religious language as conservative does not reflect the actual use in the various religious varieties or genres. Most religious genres follow the general development of the language. Only a few linguistic features are clearly diagnostic of religious language, and a few genres have preserved these features extensively in the religious domain.

Consequent upon the diversity of religious language, Holt (2006) argues for a variationist approach to its study. He stresses the need to investigate religious language from the point of view of its particularities, as well as its generalities, rather than dwelling solely on the generalities. In other words, he submits that a more productive approach to the study of the language of religion is that of investigating the actual instances and varieties of religious language in terms of their actual linguistic characteristics, and broadly modelling language as a kind of constellation of discourse held in balance by two opposing forces: a centrifugal attraction for uniformity and generality, and a peripheral pull for individuation and particularity.

Holt (2006) outlines some major background variables that would clearly affect religious language, with a view to underlining the problematic nature of approaches which view it in simple propositional terms. These variables include: religion itself, level, genre, time, context, mode, and language itself. According to him, the language of religion is bound to display variations reflecting the distinction between 'God language' and 'religious language' (religion), between the authentic language of faith itself and the intellectualised language about such faith language (level), stylistic patterning and purposes of religious language within that broad division of level (genre), the distinction between synchronic and diachronic (time), between heteroglossia and intertextuality (context), between oral, written, or pictorial medium (mode), and the influence of multilingualism (language). The variables

are inexhaustible. There are others such as denomination, spiritual orientation, etc. The need for a variationist approach to the study of religious language is supported by Crystal's (online, pp.11-12) view that "language must be studied in its correct social perspective, as the most flexible and potentially subtle kind of human communicative behaviour." This sociolinguistic view has informed our study of the language of Catholic Bishops' pastoral letters in Onitsha Ecclesiastical province of Nigeria from a discourse-stylistic perspective.

Studies on the language of Christian religion have concentrated mainly on sermons, liturgy, prayers, songs, etc. They include: Crystal and Davy (1983), Adedeji (2007), Pernot (2006), Mar (1998), Keane (1997), Odebunmi (2010), Bouma and Clyne (1995), Taiwo (2005, 2006, 2008), Babajide (2007), Lanteigne (2008), Babatunde (1998), Adeyanju (2008), and Idowu (2007).

Crystal and Davy (1983), following their analysis of the liturgical language of contemporary Christianity, describes liturgical language as being marked by its use of archaism and its ability to go to extreme, and so is very often 'so removed from the language of everyday conversation as to be almost unintelligible, save to an initiated minority.' They attribute this to three main influences: the linguistic originals, a strong concern over speakability, and the need to balance between intelligibility, pronounceability, relative dignity, and formality, a balance between the ordinary and the obscure. This, however, is no longer the case today as there have been changes in recent times in liturgical language. In the Roman Catholic Church, for example, Latin has been replaced by English, Masses are celebrated in the everyday language of the people, and contemporary choruses are sung during liturgical celebrations.

Adedeji (2007) is a study of the praise and worship style of the contemporary Nigerian avant garde (charismatic) Christian church, whose mode of worship was found to differ greatly from that of mainline churches. He observes that the musical style possesses little musical value, even though it occupies a significant and indispensable position in contemporary liturgy of Nigerian Christianity, and suggests that the leaders have basic musical training to enhance quality performance. While Adedeji's observation is true, it should be noted that the essence of such praise and worship songs is not to demonstrate the worshippers' artistry in music but to offer praises to God. The songs should be seen as language performance rather than musical performance.

Pernot (2006) examines two rhetorical forms of religious discourse, prayer and hymn, basing his study on Greco-Roman antiquity, both pagan and Christian. He concludes that each of prayer and hymn has a rhetoric specific to it which is characterised by

structures, arguments, stylistic forms, and an *actio* of its own, and as such can be analysed as a specific form of discourse. Pernot uses this study to buttress his point that religious messages can be analysed in rhetorical terms and that rhetoric itself sometimes shows a religious dimension. This is a bold step in the study of discourse for, even though religion is intrinsically rhetorical, application of a rhetorical approach to religious messages is considered by many to be tantamount to adopting a rationalist attitude and misunderstanding the very basis of religion which is belief in the transcendental. A rhetorical analysis of Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Onitsha province of Nigeria will further demonstrate this point of interconnection between religion and rhetoric.

Mar (1998) demonstrates how language use reveals, expresses and constructs the unique coding orientations of a social group. She demonstrates this by focusing on a variety of prayers, and how the prayers from various Christian groups reveal the differences in the way the adherents relate to God. The study appears not to take cognisance of the current wave of Pentecostalism which has now penetrated even the Mainline churches, leading to more emphasis on inspirational prayers and less emphasis on set ones. In the current dispensation, one wonders whether Christian groups can still be identified by their mode of prayers.

Keane (1997) is similar to Mar (1998) in its focus on prayer by a religious group. As a theological study of religious language, the work focuses on the interaction of religious adherents with spiritual and invisible participants in such speech situations as prayers, and other ritualistic practices. It concludes by showing that the adherents of each specific religious group determine the linguistic and pragmatic properties in religions.

Like Keane (1997), Odebunmi (2010) is also a theological study. It investigates the gender linguistic and discursive resources deployed by Nigerian theological seminary students to orient to gender beliefs. His observation from the study which was based on a sample of two mainline religious institutions--the Nigerian Baptist Theological Seminary, Ogbomoso and the Dominican Institute, Ibadan--was that English usage in the theoreligious context in Nigeria largely complies with the principles of dominance. Gendered language used by seminary students was found to largely reflect the traditional, social and religious roles of men and women in the larger Southwestern Nigerian society. This study is a useful contribution to discourse studies as it has shown that linguistic analysis can tell a lot about a text's positioning on an issue such as gender.

Bouma and Clyne (1995) investigate the content and structure of the language used by three groups of Australian Anglicans. The study reveals distinctive linguistic patterns

common to each group. Four dimensions of linguistic variation were discovered in the analysis of individual responses to questions of meaning: “religious” versus “secular,” “formulaic” versus “individualistic,” “direct” versus “agentless passive,” and “confident” versus “hedging” responses. In Bouma and Clyne’s observation, differences in spiritual orientation were found to be associated with differences in these linguistic patterns while age and gender were not. Each spiritual orientation was associated with a different linguistic type of response. This research points the way to the use of linguistic analysis of religious discourse as a technique for identifying and analysing the different ways groups are religious and for examining the ways in which religious change is occurring. Verbal responses to questions of religion may determine an individual’s spirituality or religiosity at the theoretical level but not at the level of practice. It is a known fact that there is a wide gap between religion and practice. Our study examines the persuasive devices adopted by the Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters in an attempt to bridge the gap between religion and practice in the Onitsha Province.

Taiwo (2005; 2006; and 2008) are studies on the language of religion from the approach of discourse analysis. Taiwo (2005) studies interrogation in Charismatic Christian pulpit discourse. He specifically examines the peculiar use of interrogatives--such as polar interrogatives, wh-interrogatives and rhetorical questions--by charismatic Christian preachers, and concludes that interrogation is not only used by the preachers as a tool for getting information but also to regulate the linguistic behaviour of the congregation in the process of the discourse. Here, emphasis is on the use of interrogatives in oral discourse. In written discourse, however, interrogatives occur as rhetorical questions performing different discourse functions, other than the ones identified in this study.

Similarly, Taiwo (2006) investigates the general pattern of discourse in English-medium Christian pulpit discourse (ECPD). Using as data pulpit messages given by some Christian preachers in denominational and interdenominational services in South-western Nigeria, he focuses on the various ways pulpit preachers in ECPD elicit responses from their congregation. The study reveals three major methods of response elicitation: the use of interrogatives, declaratives, and imperatives. The responses elicited are in form of speech, mental behaviour, and physical action. More spoken responses than mental behaviour and physical action are elicited, and they are in five different forms: conventional answer, response to prayer, repeated statement, gap filling, and corrected statement. Taiwo concludes that despite the fact that the way responses are elicited depends largely on beliefs and practices of any given religious community, the patterns of elicitation identified in this

study are common to ECPD preachers. The conclusion appears to be over generalised, as the patterns of response elicitation identified here are common to ECPD preachers in Pentecostal churches. They are rarely found among preachers in the Mainline Churches, such as the Roman Catholic Church.

Taiwo (2008) examines the language of some contemporary Christian songs in Pentecostal Churches in South-western Nigeria in order to determine the choices made in the lyrics and identify how they tie with the wider social and cultural structures of the society. The study was based on the premise that vocal music is a form of language performance, and that songs are not just sung for the purpose of singing, but have meanings which are rooted in the experience and cultural values of the singer. It reveals that Christian songs in contemporary times do not necessarily convey the intrinsic values of praise worship, as they used to do in the early days of Christianity in Nigeria, but are influenced by the prosperity message coupled with socio-cultural practices. Taiwo's study is an emphasis on the influence of context on language use: the influence of the contemporary socio-cultural context of Nigeria on Christian songs in the Pentecostal churches. His observation is not peculiar to Pentecostal Churches. Such songs cut across other churches.

Babajide's (2007) is stylistic study of Song of Solomon and p'Bitek's Song of Lawino. Babajide analyses the two songs at the graphological, lexical, phonological, syntactic, rhetorical and semantic level, with the conclusion that both songs have in common a lot of stylistic peculiarities, and that the areas of differences between them are attributable to the differences in their authors' dispositions to the subject matter of love. His discussion of rhetorical devices among other stylistic devices in the songs is a useful insight to the present study.

Lanteigne (2008) examines stylistic variation within the religious register. He investigates how different Christian Churches vary in the degree of formality used by priests/ministers in their sermons, as evidenced by left-, center-, and right-branching sentence structure. The data used are transcripts of seven Sunday morning sermons given by Caucasian male priests/ministers in Catholic, Episcopal, United Methodist, Wesleyan Methodist, and Assembly of God Churches in Pennsylvania and Missouri and on a national broadcast. These were analysed in terms of sentence branching structure, and the analysis showed that the more formal the Church setting, the more formal the sentence branching structure. The study gives an insight into language use according to situation. It indicates that different registers are used for different social settings, and that even within registers, there are variations.

Babatunde (1998) does a semantic analysis of evangelical Christian religious speeches, using speech act theory of meaning. His main argument is that behind every Christian religious communication is the speaker's intention to persuade the audience, to modify their attitudes and beliefs towards an intended direction. This is another study that tries to establish the fact that religious messages are intrinsically rhetorical. The insights derived from it will enhance our discussion of the persuasive functions of rhetorical devices in Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province. However, a rhetorical approach would be more suitable to the study than the speech-act theory.

Adeyanju (2008) is a stylo-semantic analysis of the content of the greeting cards sent to members of the Redeemed Christian Church of God by Pastor Adeboye. The study, which is based on Halliday's theory of metafunctions and Adebija's layers of meaning, reveals the cleric's use of rhetorical devices such as personification, parallelism, symbolism, idiom, antithesis, alliteration and assonance in addition to graphological and lexicosemantic devices. The study is found insightful and relevant to ours in its discussion of the rhetorical devices deployed by the cleric. However, it is more literary than linguistic. The literary and the linguistic aspects of the rhetorical devices should have been balanced.

While several linguistic studies exist on different forms of religious discourse, much attention has not been devoted to the study of the language of Catholic bishops' pastoral letters. Related studies are those on the language of the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul. These include Harrison (1921) and Van Neste (2005). Harrison (1921) shows how the language of the Epistles can be used as a key to unlock the old secret of their origin. He uses a mass of linguistic statistics to support his double contention that the Pastorals cannot be attributed to Paul and that they belong to the current speech of the second century. His focus is not on the language of the Epistles per se. He only uses the linguistic evidence to support his view on the question of authorship of the Epistles. Van Neste's (2005) interest is on the language and style of the Epistles. He examines them to determine the boundaries of each discourse unit using cohesive shift analysis. He analyses the cohesion of each unit noting common devices from the ancient epistolary genre, rhetorical devices, lexical and semantic repetition and symmetrical patterns. He focuses on the connections between the units in the letters--connection between contiguous units, semantic chains, and the grouping of units into larger section, thus highlighting the variety of connections across and throughout the letter. Van Neste's study is very much insightful because of its linguistic approach, especially the aspect on rhetorical devices.

Segers (1985) is also related to our study in its concern with pastoral letters in the Roman Catholic Church. However, Segers examines the American Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on War and Peace from a feminist perspective rather than from a linguistic perspective. She looks at the letter from the point of view of a consideration of the role of women in the consultative process that produced the letter, and analyses the content of the letter to assess its impact, where appropriate, on questions of justice and equality of the sexes. She concludes that women's involvement in the letter is minimal. The present study which is a rhetorical analysis of selected Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province of Nigeria is a shift of focus from other forms of religious discourse to pastoral letter which has not received adequate consideration from scholars on the language and style of Christian religion, with the result that the persuasive properties of the letters have not been explored.

2.1.3 Epistolary genre

Epistolary genre refers to the genre of an epistle (an epistle is a composition in prose or verse usually written in form of a letter to a particular person or group of persons). It is a conscious literary form which concerns itself with public matters and with philosophy as well as with religious problems (McLean, 2005). Epistolary genre dates back to Ancient Egypt where epistles were written most often for pedagogical reasons. It was also a major genre of literature among the Greek and particularly the Romans. This is exemplified by the New Testament letters in the holy Bible. Epistolary genre peaked in the 18th century Europe as a popular form of novel writing, originating with Samuel Richardson's *PAMELA (1740)*. However, the potential of the epistolary genre as artistic form and narrative vehicle has been explored by writers of many nationalities and periods. In African literature, for example, Mariama Ba in her novel, *SO LONG A LETTER*, uses the form of a personal intimate letter to present a series of reflections by the central character on her life and experiences as well as those of her family and friends.

Milne (online n.d) identifies construction of an imaginary presence as one of the features of epistolary discourse. According to her, writing a letter signals the absence of the recipient and simultaneously aims to bridge the interpersonal gap between writer and recipient, making the recipient feel as if he or she is actually face- to- face with the writer. She explains that letters, like postcards and electronic mail, are conventionally understood as a technology that allows communication between bodies that are absent from each other, yet the physical absence of one's epistolary partner provides both the impetus and the

‘material’ for a range of strategies, language uses, and technological functions aimed at creating an imagined sense of presence. She further explains that reference to the physical body, to the scene of writing, to the place where the letter is received, or postal technology are often used by letter writers to convey and invoke a sense of immediacy, intimacy and presence. The correspondents strive to collapse the time and distance that separate them. Corroborating this view, MacLean (2005) states that epistolary genre creates a bond of intimacy and sense of collaboration, between reader and author, which is not characteristic of other genres.

Another related epistolary convention identified by Milne (n.d) is one where the materiality of the letter is made to stand for the correspondent’s body. She observes that due to its physical proximity or contact with its author, the letter can work metonymically; a function most obvious in amorous epistolary discourse where the letter is kissed, held, and cried over or adored in place of the lover’s body. In this way the gap between letter writer and reader seems bridged. Paradoxically, therefore, the letter form allows the correspondents to enact an identity and even adopt a persona that may differ from their ‘real’ or lived body and personae.

Patterson (2000) expresses the view that letters are used to maintain and consolidate interpersonal relations and social circle identity. According to him, the aim of continuing epistolary discourse is to lessen the interpersonal distance between writer and addressee by increasing intimacy, and the greater the intimacy, the more affectionate the formulae and names used in the salutations and subscriptions. He also adds that, because letters are poised between a past transaction, face-to-face or epistolary, and a desired future one, the body frequently refers, in the opening, to the previous meeting or letter. Also, just before the close of the letter in the farewell section, a writer will often send greetings to the reader’s family members and/or to other intimate members of the social circle around the writer and the reader. Regarding this sense of epistolary intimacy and confidentiality, epistolary genre becomes an adequate form that will enable the Catholic bishops to achieve their aim of influencing the moral lives of the faith community they are writing to: the Igbo Catholic faithful in Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province.

Altman (1982) identifies, as another feature of epistolary discourse, the presence of a unique ‘I’-‘you’ relationship, which makes it possible for the addressee to reciprocate by initiating his own utterance; the original ‘you’ becomes the ‘I’ of a new utterance. According to him, the ‘I’- ‘you’ relationship in epistolary discourse is essential to the maintenance of epistolary exchange, and it shapes the language used. Altman adds that, like

the diary writer, the writer of an epistolary discourse is anchored in a present time from where he looks towards the past and future events, and also that the temporal aspect of any given epistolary statement is relative to innumerable moments: the actual time that an act described is performed; the moment when it is written down; the respective times that the letter is despatched, received, read or reread.

In numerous instances, the basic formal and functional characteristics of epistolary genre, far from being merely ornamental, significantly influence the way meaning is consciously and unconsciously constructed by the writers and readers of epistolary works. This is likely to be the case with the Catholic bishops' pastoral letters which we are concerned with here.

Existing studies on epistolary religious genre are scanty, compared to studies on other religious genres. In his examination of the genre of the New Testament letters, Bratcher (online n.d), for example, observes that most of the New Testament letters follow the epistolary genre conventions in the Greco-Roman and Jewish tradition. Citing an example with St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, he shows how the letter fits into the following pattern of Greco-Roman letters, which consists of four general elements:

- opening salutation containing writer's name, recipient's name, and a greeting
- a prayer, blessing, or thanksgiving
- the body of the letter
- final greetings and farewell.

He, however, observes that the Greco-Roman letters did not have to follow the form exactly, and that there could be various modifications of the elements according to the purposes of the writer, as in the case of Paul's letter to the Churches in Galatia. According to him, Paul's modification of the general pattern, that is, his omission of the prayer/blessing/thanksgiving section, helps to communicate his distress with the Galatians for their failure to live up to the preaching of the Gospel. Bratcher notes that, in other cases, the omission of features of the letter, as in the case of the Book of Hebrews, James, 2 Peter and 1 John, may be a clue that the writing is not an actual letter but a treatise, a sermon, or some other type of writing cast in the literary structure of a letter, and this is especially true if it lacks the salutation and the final greetings, which are personal elements that one would expect in a true letter.

Of course, the Greco-Roman pattern of letter writing, as seen in the biblical letters, is quite different from that of modern letter writing, which consists of seven instead of four elements, and these include:

- the heading, which may be in form of letter-head or the writer's address
- the date
- the recipient's address, in the case of formal letters
- the opening salutation
- the body of the letter
- the closing salutation
- the signature

Other supplements, such as the attention line, the subject line, the typist's reference, and the enclosure notation, are included in formal letters when the need for them arises.

Similar to Bratcher (n.d) is Smith (2010) which investigates the epistolary form in the Book of Mormon, identifying eight letters extant in the book as follows:

1. Moroni to Ammoron
2. Ammoron to Moroni I
3. Helman I to Moroni I
4. Moroni I to Pahoran I
5. Pahoran I to Moroni I
6. Giddianhi to Lachoneus I
7. Mormon II to Moroni II
8. Mormon II to Moroni II

According to Smith, the most noticeable thing about the first six of these eight letters, which are war epistles, is that despite the possible absence of the formal address due to the narrative context in which they are embedded, they never violate the ancient Hittite-Syrian, Neo-Assyrian, Amarna and Hebrew format in which the superior correspondent is always listed first. Smith further observes that rather than have the superior- inferior sequence always at the formal opening, five of the six letters simply have the superior at the beginning and list the inferior at the close (regardless of sender-recipient order). Also, as observed by Smith, some of the war epistles naturally delete any sort of nice greeting or blessing--even substituting invective or threats, but none of these seems to be the case for letters 7 and 8. Opening greetings, Smith continues, immediately followed by a

remembrance and/or a wish for good health as is characteristic of Hellenistic style, are distinguished in letters 3, 6 and 7. Thanksgiving or blessing form is present only in letter 7, closing greetings in only letters 5 and 7, while a doxology and benediction are present at the close of letters 3, 5 and 8. Smith (2010) further states that, generally, Book of Mormon letters use transition words, such as *And now*, to indicate the beginning and various dimensions of the body of the letter, as is characteristic of Hebrew and Aramaic letters. Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters, however, follow the Greco-Roman conventions just like the New Testament letters.

2.1.4 Discourse-stylistics and rhetoric

Discourse analysis is a discipline that is devoted to the study of the relationship between form and function in verbal communication (Renkema 2004:1). It is an analysis that unites both the linguistic and the social aspects of discourse. It gives prominence to "elaboration of mutual determining relations which exist between language use, communication of beliefs and interaction in social situations" (Van Dijk, 1998:3). Discourse analysts address a wide range of discourse phenomena, from the study of particular patterns of pronunciation, word choice, sentence structure and semantic representation, through the analysis of the structure of speech encounters, to the critical study of language-in-society (Yang, 2009).

Stylistics is a form of discourse study that concentrates on the analysis of the style of discourse. (Style is generally viewed as a specific form for a special content, a choice of specific patterns and a deviation from average language or a kind of norm.). It has the goal of describing the linguistic features of a discourse and their functional significance for its interpretation. Appropriateness of applying stylistic framework to the study of literary discourse has been questioned, and this has generated a controversy leading to a distinction between literary stylistics and linguistic stylistics. According to Odebunmi and Babajide (2007), literary stylistics deals with the appreciation of a literary text in order to determine its literariness considering such literary measures as the use of characterisation, plot, metre, and rhyme; while linguistic stylistics deals with the appreciation of a literary text in order to determine how appropriate the lexical choice is, how suitable the syntactic structure is, how meaning is effectively achieved, and how convenient the marriage of the form, the function and the content is.

Rhetoric is a sub-discipline of discourse-stylistics traditionally concerned with the practice and study of 'good' public speaking and writing with emphasis on the techniques

for gaining compliance. It was taken to be synonymous with persuasive communication, hence the definition of rhetoric by Aristotle as “the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion” (Aristotle,2000). Since then most definitions of rhetoric have concentrated on its persuasive function. For example, De Wet (2010) defines rhetoric as the art of speaking persuasively, while to Ebeling (1973: 140), rhetoric is “the science of speaking well on public matters to convince people of what is right and good.” Rhetoric, according to Gill and Whedbee (1997), is discourse calculated to influence an audience towards some end, a type of instrumental discourse which is in one way or another a vehicle for responding to, reinforcing or altering the understanding of an audience or the social fabric of the community. Herrick (2001) points out that this close association of rhetoric with persuasion has always been at the heart of the conflict over whether rhetoric is a neutral tool for bringing about agreements, or an immoral activity that ends in manipulation and deception. He is of the view that there is more to rhetoric than persuasion.

In the Renaissance period, rhetoric became identified with style (elocution), which in the Classical times was technically one of the five major divisions or canons of rhetoric (Wales 1989). According to Wales, figures of speech, which helped to structure and elaborate an argument and to move emotions, became increasingly identified with the whole art of rhetoric, which was defined simply as the art of speaking well. Stylistic ornamentation was emphasised as the hallmark of rhetoric.

In the contemporary times, the classical view of rhetoric as an intentional oral communication concerned solely with persuasion has changed to include modern forms of rhetoric: written and spoken discourse and less traditional forms of discourse such as sales promotion, courtship, etiquette, education, and works of art (Foss and Griffin, 1992: 338). Rhetoric is seen broadly as a human potentiality to understand human condition (Scott, in Rosenthal, 1985). In the ‘new’ rhetoric, although persuasion is still seen as its basic function, there are other recognised functions of rhetoric. For example, Burke (1969:43) in addition to recognising persuasion as the basic function of rhetoric, adds that “rhetoric is rooted in an essential function of language itself, a function that is wholly realistic and continually born anew: the use of language as a symbolic means of inducing cooperation in beings that by nature respond to symbols.” Burke further expands the scope of rhetoric, positing that the field consists of all that has meaning, since the “naming” of something involves symbolic choices. He states, “Wherever there is persuasion, there is rhetoric. And wherever there is 'meaning,' there is persuasion.” Burke sees that interactions in our contemporary world are, in some ways, “more complicated” than can be understood by

viewing persuasion solely as the explicit, intentional acts which a rhetor directs to a specific, known audience (Quigley online, n.d). Consequently, in *A Rhetoric of Motives* (1969), he selects "identification" as the key term to distinguish his rhetorical perspective from a tradition characterized by the term "persuasion." He argues that for a person to persuade an audience, he has to identify with that audience. Burke's primary interest in "identification" is as an end in itself "as when people earnestly yearn to identify themselves with some group or other" (Burke 1969:203). The focus, in contemporary rhetoric, is on the symbols themselves, not solely on prescriptions and descriptions of their use (Hansen, 1996).

Modern rhetoric was influenced by the elocutionary movement of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, hence its emphasis on delivery as the most important aspect of speaking (De Wet, 2010). According to De Wet, efforts are concentrated on the artistic manipulation of language devices to ensure effective communication. Thus, the way in which something is said is seen to be more important than what is said. In this sense, modern stylistics can be seen as a development of the main branch of rhetorical study, namely, *elocutio*, with its interest in the relationship between form and content, and a concentration on the analysis of characteristic features of expression (Wales 1989).

Renkema (2009:14) describes stylistics and rhetoric together as "the study of the varieties in wording and composition in discourse and the effects on its audience." Distinguishing between the two, de Beaugrande (1994) explains that although both disciplines are obviously dependent on specific selections and their combinations of expression in discourse, there are some antinomies that make them appear distinct. One of them is the fact that rhetoric is a relatively 'Classical' enterprise (dating roughly from the 5th century BC), and 'stylistics' a relatively 'modern' enterprise (dating roughly from the 1930s or 1950s). Another is that rhetoric highlights *purpose* of language use while stylistics highlights *language use*. Thirdly, rhetoric highlights *text receivers* (the audience to be impressed or persuaded), while stylistics highlights *text producers* (a speaker or writer in search of an individual and noteworthy mastery over language). Fourthly, rhetoric is more institutionalized than stylistics. Fifthly, despite its long history of veneration, the term 'rhetoric' is sometimes used pejoratively to indicate excessive elaboration or a substitute for genuine action; in contrast, the usages of 'style' are ameliorative.

It is observed from the foregoing that rhetoric and style are two related aspects of discourse between which one cannot easily draw a dividing line. Both are concerned with message as well as with the effective methods of presentation. However, in rhetoric, the

message-method relationship is highly inseparable. How something is said conveys meaning as much as what is said. Our rhetorical study of Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical province of Onitsha falls within the framework of discourse-stylistics. The aim is not just to describe the claims and arguments within the discourse but to identify and discuss the rhetorical devices deployed by the bishops for the purpose of achieving persuasion in the letters. Recognition will, however, be given to the contemporary emphasis on rhetoric as effective use of language.

2.1.4.1 Functions of rhetoric

The major function of rhetoric is persuasion. Persuasion involves convincing people to accept our claims as true and to act accordingly. It is an attempt to change either the attitude or the behaviour of another person (Verderber, 1990). Hogan (1999:20) defines persuasion as "the ability to induce beliefs and values in other people by influencing their thoughts and actions through specific strategies." According to him, persuaders are able to convince others that by following their set of beliefs or altering their values, their lives would be better. Persuasion is defined by De Wet (2010) as a process of communication in which a communicator succeeds in voluntarily forming, sustaining and changing the attitudes or behaviour of one recipient or a group of recipients in accordance with what the communicator intends by his or her message. De Wet is of the view that although persuasion is often used for dishonest ends, there is no doubt that humans cannot live without persuasion. This, according to him, is because human beings are continually confronted with choices, whether real or fictional, and want to reconcile their minds as to what should be done or is to be done about a given matter. Everyday life requires the ability to influence or persuade others, or even just alter their perceptions or perspectives (Piva, 2011). Persuasion is considered by the Sophists as a magical art. Pernot (2006) notes that the Greek satirist Lucian compares persuasion to an invisible link that holds listeners captive at a distance, chained by their ears to the tongue of the speaker.

Larrazabel and Korta (n.d.) are of the view that persuasive intention in rhetoric is a very stable kind of intention persistent through all the processes of elaboration and performance of a discourse, oriented to a particular type of behaviour on the part of the audience, namely their persuasion in terms of the acceptance of the beliefs and goals expressed by the speaker. Persuasion is achieved in a rhetorical discourse through argument (conclusion supported by reasons), appeals (especially to elicit an emotion), arrangement (ordering of a message to achieve the desired effect on the audience), and aesthetics (form,

beauty and force, achieved through figures of speech such as metaphor, allusion, assonance, rhythm, rhyme, etc.). (Herrick, 2001)

Identifying the ‘great and many functions of rhetoric,’ Piva (2011) observes that throughout the progression of life, individuals use rhetoric to convey emotions, dictate meaning, persuade others, and better their lives and the lives of those around them. He adds, citing Hart & Daughton (2005:7), that great rhetoric – regardless of underlying themes or central aims – successfully expresses one’s thoughts and emotions, and also “draws on our most basic human commonalities and uses simple language with elegance.” Here rhetoric is seen as also performing expressive and aesthetic/poetic functions. Rhetoric is also said to help the listener or reader explore the rhetor’s perspective. Burke (1969) expresses the same idea in different words. In the view of Burke, rhetoric is used by the rhetor to pair situation to the meaning he ascribes to it to make the audience gain understanding and agreement with his understanding of the situation and the audience’s supposed response to it.

Another function of rhetoric pointed out by Piva (2011) is that rhetoric is a cooperative art, because it requires the rhetor and audience to come together in a joint effort. “It cannot be done in solitude... by sharing communication, both rhetors and audiences open themselves up to each other’s influence” (Hart & Daughton, 2005:8 , cited in Piva, 2011). According to Piva, rhetorical discourse uncovers an individual’s internal truths and personal perspectives, and by conveying a message, and communicating one’s knowledge, both the rhetor and the audience learn about their own life, as well as each other’s role in life.

Herrick (2001:7) is of the view that even though persuasion is traditionally an important goal of rhetoric, rhetoric has other goals such as achieving clarity, through the structured use of symbols, awakening our sense of beauty through the aesthetic potential in symbols, or bringing about mutual understanding through the careful management of common meanings attached to symbols. No wonder he defines rhetoric as “the systematic study and intentional practice of effective symbolic expression”, effective meaning “achieving the purposes of the symbol-user, whether that purpose is persuasion, clarity, beauty, or mutual understanding.” Herrick argues that “the art of rhetoric can render symbol use more persuasive, beautiful, memorable, forceful, thoughtful, clear, and thus generally more compelling.”

Hart (1990) identifies other ‘less frequently noticed uses’ of rhetoric as follows:

- **Rhetoric unburdens.** People who make rhetoric do so because they must get something off their chests, because the cause they champion overwhelms their natural reticence.
- **Rhetoric distracts.** A speaker wants to have all, not just some, of our attention. To get that attention, the speaker must so fill up our minds that we forget, temporarily at least, the other ideas, people, and policies usually important to us. Naturally, we do not just give away our attention, so it takes rhetoric at its best to side-track us.
- **Rhetoric enlarges.** In some senses, modern persuaders are like the heralds of old. They move among us singing the siren song of change, asking us to open our worlds a bit and to study a new way of looking at things, to consider a new solution to an old problem (or an old solution to a problem we did not know we had). Rhetoric operates like a kind of intellectual algebra, asking us to equate things we had never before considered equitable.
- **Rhetoric names.** The naming function of rhetoric helps listeners become comfortable with new ideas and provides listeners with an acceptable vocabulary for talking about these ideas.
- **Rhetoric empowers.** Rhetoric permits and encourages flexibility. Flexibility, in turn, provides options: to address one listener or several; to mention an idea or not to mention it at all; to say something this way and not that way; to tell all one knows or only just a bit; to repeat oneself or to vary one's response. Rhetoric encourages flexibility, because it is based on a kind of symbolic Darwinism: (1) speakers who do not adapt to their surroundings quickly become irrelevant; (2) ideas that become frozen soon die for want of social usefulness.

These various functions of rhetoric are made possible through the rhetor's use of rhetorical devices.

2.1.4.2 Rhetorical devices

Rhetorical devices are strategies of language use which enhance effective communication. They are devices used to manipulate language to effectively transmit the speaker's message to a listener. According to Harris (2009), rhetorical devices are aids to writing and their appropriate use adds not just beauty, emphasis and effectiveness to writing but a kind of freedom of thought and expression one never imagined possible. Harris (2009), who defines rhetoric as the art of using language effectively and persuasively, and sees it as involving the writer's purpose, the consideration of audience, the arrangement and

organisation of thought, smoothness, clarity, logic and economy of expression, maintains that since writing is meant to be read by others with minds different from our own, it must be interesting, clear, persuasive, and memorable, so that they will pay attention to, understand, believe and remember the ideas it communicates. To fulfil these requirements successfully, he adds, a work must have an appropriate and clear thesis, sufficient arguments and reasons supporting the thesis, a logical and progressive arrangement, and importantly, an effective style. He identifies three categories of rhetorical devices: those involving emphasis, association, clarification, and focus; those involving physical organisation, transition, and disposition or arrangement; and those involving decoration and variety. He notes that sometimes, a given device will fall into a single category, but more often, the effects of a particular device are multiple.

Dlugan (2008) identifies three types out of the very large number of rhetorical devices, and these are: devices of sound, devices of repetition and devices of meaning. Sound-based devices, according to him, add a poetic melody to speeches making them more pleasurable to listen to, and three of the most common forms are alliteration—repetition of the same sound at the beginning of nearby words; assonance—repetition of the same vowel sound in nearby words; and onomatopoeia—a word which imitates the sound of itself. Devices of repetition of words or ideas are used for emphasis and to achieve cohesion in a text, and the two common forms identified by Dlugan (2008) are anaphora (repetition of a word or phrase at the start of successive clauses or sentences) and epistrophe (repetition of a word or phrase at the end of successive clauses or sentences). Meaning devices identified by Dlugan include personification—giving human qualities to abstract ideas, inanimate objects, plants, or animals; metaphor—a comparison of two seemingly unlike things; and simile—same as metaphor, but using either “like” or “as”. Dlugan (2008) observes that rhetorical devices are used to improve the effectiveness, clarity and enjoyment of writing. He maintains that a speech or writing devoid of rhetorical devices is like a painting void of colour.

Rhetorical devices commonly found in discourse include figures of speech such as metaphor, simile, personification, repetition, parallelism, rhetorical questions, sarcasm, antithesis, allusions, etc., and rhetorical strategies such as the use of proverbs, slogans, idioms, appeal to authorities, logical reasoning, emotive language, etc. Rhetorical devices are used in discourse for the purpose of effective communication of messages or influencing the audience to change attitudes or take a particular course of action.

Studies on rhetorical devices include: McLean (2005), Abioye (2011a), Abioye (2011b), Koncar (2008), and Sztajer (n.d. online). McLean (2005) studies the art of rhetoric

in the writings of Shoghi Effendi, the Guardian of Baha' I Faith. He identifies seven rhetorical modes in the writings: the kerygmatic, imperative, magisterial, and defensive modes, the rhetorics of praise and gratitude, blame, and anxious concern. He also identifies five particular rhetorical techniques in Shoghi Effendi's writings, and these include loving greetings, persuasion by authoritative reason, the rhetorical question, kinetic emotion and caveats. McLean's study offers useful insights that will enable us to identify the rhetorical devices that are specific to the Catholic bishops' pastoral letters.

Abioye (2011a) investigates the pragmatic functions of rhetorical questions in Ehusani's *Nigeria: Years Eaten by Locust*. The study reveals that rhetorical questions were used in the text to perform assertive, declarative, stylistic and social-interactive functions as well as emphasize thematically salient information.

Abioye (2011b) examines metaphor and ideology in Ehusani's truth trilogy—*Fragments of Truth, Petals of Truth, and Flames of Truth*—using Critical Discourse Analysis. She identifies different types of metaphors deployed by the author: journey, hope, biblical and oppression metaphors. She observes that the metaphorical constructions used in the trilogy are not just representations of the social realities in Nigeria, but a critical interrogation of the forces and ideological configurations behind the socio-economic and political harshness being witnessed by the vast majority of Nigerians. Abioye's study provides insight on the social function of metaphor.

Koncar (2008) explores the rhetorical design of contemporary Slovenian sermons, drawing on an analysis of a corpus of sermons. By applying Hasan's concept of register and Cloran's concept of rhetorical units to the genre of sermon, he tries to show how the method of argumentation, which is based on everyday experiences or appeals to human feelings, leads believers towards a Christian lifestyle and faith. Our study is analogous to Koncar's as it will show how Roman Catholic bishops in Onitsha province have used rhetorical devices to persuade the faithful to live good moral lives in consonance with the Catholic faith.

Sztajer (n.d, online) is a study on metaphor. Sztajer examines the role of metaphor in religious discourse. He concludes that, apart from being a means that gives a believer a feeling of participation in sacral reality, which is fundamental for every religion, metaphor forms a frame for religious experience to be fully shaped and comprehensible for religious man. As a structure anchoring experiences not tangible in any other way, metaphor becomes a means of objectivation of religious world.

2.1.5 Rhetoric and religion

Rhetoric and religion are seen to be closely related. The interconnectedness is seen in the communicative role played by language in religion. Since religion is concerned with man's faith in the supernatural power, language use in religion is rhetorical as it tries to make the supernatural understandable to the humans; it thrives on the use of analogy and other rhetorical devices. Furthermore, rhetoric as an artful use of language to change things, is central in proselytizing religions such as Christianity where it is deployed in order to persuade a person to adopt a belief system or change of life.

Burke (1970) and Pernot(2006) base their arguments of the relationship between rhetoric and religion also on the verbal rhetoric of religion. In the views of Burke, "rhetoric is the art of *persuasion*, and religious cosmogonies are designed, in the last analysis, as exceptionally thoroughgoing modes of persuasion" (v). According to him, "theological doctrine is a body of spoken or written *words*. Whatever else it may be, and wholly regardless of whether it be true or false, theology is preeminently *verbal*" (vi).

Similarly, Pernot (2006) holds that the parallel between rhetoric and religion can be found in the fact that religion is intimately linked with words. According to him, the spoken and written word plays an essential role in religion, as language is necessarily used to address the gods or God, to speak about the divine or the sacred, and to express religious feeling or awareness. Pernot further sees the relationship between rhetoric and religion as explainable by the affinities that exist between persuasion and belief. According to him, from the beginning of Greek thinking, a person who is able to persuade others, who is the master of the art of persuasion, holds supernatural and almost magical powers.

On his part, Lewis(2011) argues that the conceptual rhetoric of various religious ideas has *a priori* persuasiveness. He submits that religious concepts are conceptually intuitive and rhetorically appealing because of preexisting cognitive biases in the evolved human mind. According to him, the intuitions and perceptions that human beings experience when sensing and conceiving of our environment, as well as the cultural rhetoric of religion, predispose us to believe gods, souls, afterlives, and other components of religion even though they are objectively unverified. To Lewis, these two aspects of religious concepts combine to make them particularly persuasive.

The interconnection between rhetoric and religion therefore justifies a rhetorical approach to the study of Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha. The letters, which promote the Roman Catholic faith, are aimed at encouraging good Christian living among the faithful, and rhetoric, of course, concerns artful use of language to change things. A rhetorical theory thus provides a unique

analytical framework for the study of the letters so as to show how persuading a person to maintain a belief system or change of life depends on rhetorical strategies, and to highlight the active role of the bishops in moral change and behaviour and in maintaining the survival of a faith. The rhetorical approach will provide a better understanding of the Lenten pastorals and of religious language.

2.2 Theoretical framework

2.2.1 The Aristotelian Rhetoric

Aristotle was a Greek philosopher whose contributions to rhetoric have remained highly influential, such that he is often seen as the father of rhetoric. This reputation is attributable to his interest in teaching public speaking and his view of rhetoric as a branch of Philosophy and as a component of communication (Bloor and Bloor, 2004). Aristotle's views on rhetoric are found in his famous treatise entitled *Rhetoric*. In the three-book treatise, he defines rhetoric, distinguishes among three means of achieving persuasion, identifies three forms of public speech, and gives general insights on speech delivery, style, and arrangement.

2.2.1.1 Definition of rhetoric

Aristotle views rhetoric as an art, a discipline that is concerned solely with persuasion, and whose function is 'not simply to succeed in persuading, but rather to discover the means of coming as near such success as the circumstances of each particular case allow' (Aristotle, 2000). Consequently, he defines rhetoric as 'the faculty of observing in any given case the available means of persuasion' (Aristotle, 2000). This means that rhetoric is not restricted to any particular subject matter, but seeks to discover all means of persuasion on any subject whatsoever.

2.2.1.2 Means of persuasion

The three means of persuasion in public speech, as identified by Aristotle, are *ethos* (persuasion through the speaker's character), *pathos* (persuasion through the audience's emotions), and *logos* (persuasion through reasoned arguments). These are to be provided by the speaker. According to Aristotle, since rhetoric exists to affect the giving of decisions, the orator must not only try to make the argument of his speech demonstrative and worthy of belief; he must also make his own character look right and put his hearers, who are to decide, into the right frame of mind. Aristotle considers these modes of persuasion to be the only true constituents of the art of rhetoric; everything else is merely accessory.

2.2.1.2.1 *Ethos*: persuasion through character

According to Aristotle, persuasion in public speech is achieved by the speaker's personal character when the speech is so spoken as to make the audience think the speaker credible. It works with the principle that people tend to believe good men more readily than others. Aristotle identifies three things which inspire confidence in the speaker's own character, and these are good sense, good moral character, and goodwill. The audience are likely to accept as true what a speaker has to say when they are convinced that the speaker is knowledgeable, trustworthy, and has their best interests at heart. Aristotle cautions that judgement about the character of the speaker is to be based on what he says in the course of his speech and not on information about his character before the speech; 'a preexisting good character cannot be part of the technical means of persuasion.' (Aristotle, 2000)

2.2.1.2.2 *Pathos*: persuasion through emotions

Persuasion in public speech is also achieved by stirring the emotions of the audience so as to put them in a frame of mind to react favourably to the speaker's speech. Aristotle defines emotions as 'all those feelings that so change men as to affect their judgements, and that are also attended by pain or pleasure' (Aristotle, 2000), and these include anger, pity, fear, happiness, kindness, shame, indignation, envy, etc. He remarks that our judgements when we are pleased and friendly are not the same as when we are pained and hostile. The speaker has to arouse emotions because such emotions have the power to modify the judgements of the audience. The goal he wants to achieve determines the emotions he will arouse. Aristotle states that to persuade through emotions the speaker 'should be able to understand the nature of every emotion so as to be able to highlight such characteristics of a case as are likely to provoke such emotions in the audience.' Emotions are to be induced alongside reasoned argument.

2.2.1.2.3 *Logos*: persuasion through reasoned arguments

A third means of achieving persuasion in public speech is through the use of rational arguments to prove a case. Aristotle classifies persuasive arguments into two: arguments through examples (inductive arguments) and arguments through enthymemes (syllogism or deductive arguments). In the case of arguments through examples, the proof of a proposition is based on a number of similar cases, while in the case of enthymemes or deductive arguments, inferences are made from a set of general premises; the premises provide the basis for accepting a conclusion or an inference as valid.

These three modes of persuasion are considered relevant to all the three kinds of public speech though a particular mode may occur more often in one setting than in another. For the speaker to have good command of them, Aristotle says, he should be able to reason logically, understand human character, and understand the emotions.

2.2.1.3 Forms of public speech

Aristotle classifies public speech into three according to three classes of listeners. These are political speech meant for assembly men, forensic speech for the jury, and ceremonial speech for observers. The political or deliberative speech concerns political issues and matters of policy making. It involves weighing evidence for and against a policy or course of action for the well-being of the citizens, and addresses questions of the expedient use of time, money, and other resources. The judicial or forensic speech is the speech that takes place before a court. It borders on questions of justice, and deals with accusation and defence, with emphasis on the evidence supporting the hypothesis. The epideictic or ceremonial speech focuses on ceremonial issues. It deals with issues of virtue and vice, and praise and blame for those who merit them. These three kinds of speech, according to Aristotle, refer to three different kinds of time. The political speaker is concerned with the future, the forensic speaker is concerned with the past, while the ceremonial speaker is concerned with the present. In making any of these speeches, Aristotle states, the speaker must study the means of producing persuasion, the style or language to be used, and the proper arrangement of the various parts of the speech.

2.2.1.4 Delivery, style, and arrangement of speech

Apart from defining rhetoric, identifying modes of persuasion, and classifying public speech, Aristotle also discusses issues of the delivery, style, and arrangement of speeches. He is of the view that 'it is not enough to know what we ought to say; we must also say it as we ought' (Aristotle, 2000). In addition to tackling the question of how persuasion can be produced from the facts themselves, he sees the need for the speaker to attend to the question of how to set the facts out in language, as well as the proper method of delivery. Aristotle defines delivery as 'the right management of the voice to express the various emotions--of speaking loudly, softly, or between the two; of high, low, or intermediate pitch; of the various rhythms that suit various subjects.' (Aristotle, 2000) To him, delivery determines how an audience receives a speech, as 'the way in which a thing is said does affect its intelligibility.'

Aristotle teaches that the style of a speech should be clear, natural, and appropriate to the occasion. Clarity is considered an important matter for comprehension and persuasiveness. It is achieved through the use of the words that are current and ordinary. He advocates appropriate use of metaphor to give a style clearness, charm, and distinction. According to him, metaphors contribute clarity as well as the unfamiliar, surprising effect that avoids banality and tediousness. They also bring about learning in the sense that in order to understand a metaphor, the hearer has to find something common between the metaphor and the thing the metaphor refers to.

According to Aristotle, bad taste in language takes the form of misuse of compound words, employment of strange words, use of long, unseasonable, or frequent epithets, and inappropriate metaphors. He considers correctness of language as the foundation of good style. According to him, style will be made agreeable by a good blending of ordinary and unusual words, by the rhythm, and by the persuasiveness that springs from appropriateness.

On the arrangement of speech, Aristotle considers a speech as having two necessary parts: the Statement which states the case and the Argument which proves it. The Introduction and the Epilogue may or may not be present. If present, the Introduction serves as the beginning of the speech and gives an insight into what is to follow. The Epilogue, where present, summarizes the arguments by which the case has been proved.

Aristotelian rhetorical theory is chosen for this study because of its emphasis on the three modes of persuasion: Ethos, Pathos, and Logos. Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha constitute a religious discourse that is concerned with teaching the Roman Catholic faith and persuading the faithful to live by it. Its function is thus essentially persuasive. It is therefore worthwhile to examine the persuasive functions of the rhetorical devices in the letters within a rhetorical theory that emphasizes modes of persuasion in a discourse. Analysis will reveal those *ethos*-, *pathos*-, and *logos*-based rhetorical devices used by the bishops to achieve persuasion in the letters.

2.2.2 Halliday's systemic functional linguistics

Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics is a sociologically oriented linguistic theory which views language as a social activity, and sees a connection between the social functions of language and the linguistic system (de Beaugrande, 1991). According to Halliday, language has evolved to satisfy human needs, and the way it is organised is functional with respect to those needs (Halliday, 1985). The patterns of language use in a

particular social context are seen to reflect the function that language is performing in that context. In order to demonstrate how the organisation of language is related to its use, Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar models language and social context as semiotic systems in a relationship of realisation, and treats each as functionally diversified along similar lines (Martin, 1997).

Halliday (1985) broadly classifies functions of language into three metafunctions--the ideational, the interpersonal, and the textual--referring to the three different modes of meaning construed by the grammar; and the context of situation into three variables: the field, the tenor, and the mode. The ideational (or representational) function enables a person to express his/her interpretation of the world as he/she experiences it; the interpersonal function enables him/her to interact with others in order to bring about changes in the environment; the textual function enables him/her to organise the message in such a way as to enable representation and interaction to cohere (Downing and Locke, 2006). Halliday argued that the field was generally expressed through the ideational function, the tenor through the interpersonal function and the mode through the textual function (Locke, 2004). In other words, the contextual parameters of field, tenor and mode are claimed to activate choices in the ideational, interpersonal and textual components respectively.

2.2.2.1 Relevance of systemic functional linguistics to rhetoric

Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL) is a theory that views language as being determined by its function in a social context. This functional approach to language study makes SFL a relevant theory for rhetorical analysis which involves analysis of a text from its functional perspective. Through the SFL theory, the analyst is able to show how the rhetorical function of a particular text determines the style of language use in the text; that is, how rhetorical strategies are adopted in a text to achieve the purpose of persuasion.

The relation of rhetoric to the interpersonal metafunction of language which is one of the semantic components of the Systemic Functional theory makes SFL a relevant theory for rhetorical analysis. The interpersonal metafunction is concerned with the interaction between speaker and addressee(s) through which social and speech roles are enacted. In interacting with one another, we enter into a range of interpersonal relationships, choosing among semantic strategies such as cajoling, persuading, enticing, requesting, ordering, suggesting, asserting, insisting, doubting, and so on (Mathiessen and Halliday, 1997). Rhetoric relates to the functional tenor, "a category used to describe what language is being

used for in the situation” (Gregory and Carroll, 1978:53). It shows how the devices of language are used to persuade.

In its emphasis on texts rather than on sentences the SFL is oriented towards rhetoric. It foregrounds text (discourse) as the basic unit of language organized according to the rhetorical context, thus emphasizing function rather than forms, resource rather than rules, and meaningfulness rather than grammaticality (Mathiessen and Halliday, 1997).

In its preoccupation with purpose of language use and its focus on the audience, rhetoric renders itself analyzable through the Systemic Functional theory which is concerned with functional use of language. Also, as a theory of choice, SFG is related to rhetoric which dwells on choice of language for the purpose of persuasion.

2.2.2.2 Aspects of systemic functional linguistics relevant for the study

Aspects of the Systemic Functional Linguistics relevant for the study are form and function and the interpersonal metafunction.

2.2.2.2.1 Form and function

M.A.K Halliday’s Systemic Functional Linguistics incorporates both form and function as two complementary levels of linguistic analysis, showing that the two can hardly be separated from each other. Form refers to the structure of language while function refers to its purpose or use. The forms of Language are its phonological and grammatical elements, while its functions include giving and seeking information, making requests, giving orders or directives, etc. As observed by de Beaugrande (1994), that language is organised into sounds and forms (of words and sentences) and that people use language to do things are two basic facts about language which seldom compete or conflict within the big picture of language adopted by speakers and hearers in everyday life. Yet the study of language has often sought to concentrate on either of these leading to the emergence of two orientations: the ‘formalists’ (those who focus centrally on analysis of linguistic forms) and the ‘functionalists’ (those who focus on analysis of functions of linguistic forms—the communicative situation). Analysis of themes and lexical choices in the bishops’ pastoral letters will be based on form-function relationship in language use as theorised by Systemic Functional Linguistics. It will show how the lexical choices made in the pastorals function to convey themes.

2.2.2.2 The interpersonal metafunction

Interpersonal metafunction is one of the three categories of language functions identified by Halliday (1985), that is, one of the three different modes of meaning construed by grammar. The other two are the ideational and the textual metafunctions. Interpersonal meaning is realised as Mood and modality in the lexicogrammar of the clause. The Mood system of the clause represents the range of grammatical potential or options available to the language user. It offers him choices between indicative mood (declarative and interrogative) and imperative mood through which he enacts basic speech roles or functions such as statements, questions, exclamations, and directives or commands. The indicative is the grammatical category typically used for exchange of information, in contrast to the imperative which grammaticalises our acting on others to get things done by requesting, ordering, and so on (Downing and Locke, 2006). The particular grammatical structures used to perform these speech functions are declarative clauses (for statements and exclamations), interrogative clauses (for questions), and imperative clauses (for commands), though there is no one-to-one relationship between form and function.

The interpersonal metafunction is considered relevant in the rhetorical analysis of Catholic bishops' pastoral letters because the letters constitute a tenor-marked discourse. Persuasion which is the main focus of analysis belongs to the interpersonal metafunction of language. In the view of Gregory and Carroll (1978), any study of language in use must not underestimate the importance of social and expressive functions of language in comparison to its 'cognitive' functions.

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed relevant literatures to show their interconnectedness with the present study. It also examined the tenets of the theories adopted for the study--Aristotelian Rhetoric and Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics--as well as their relevance. In the next chapter, attention will be given to explanation of the different methods and steps adopted in the collection and analysis of data. The chapter will also include presentation of data in tables.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The various methods and steps that were adopted in carrying out this research are presented in this chapter. These are discussed under the headings pilot study and its relevance and the research proper. The latter includes choice of texts for the study, data collection, method of sampling, methods of data analysis, and presentation of data in tables.

3.1 Pilot study and its relevance

Before the present study, a pilot study, entitled *Analysis of stylistic devices in the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Ibadan Ecclesiastical province of Nigeria*, was carried out. The study, which was based on two pastoral letters written by the Catholic bishop of Ekiti diocese, Most Rev. Dr. M.O. Fagun, was expected to serve as an eye-opener to the present study. Analysis of the two letters, *Doing penance* (1994) and *Understanding your faith* (1986), revealed a number of salient features of the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the South-western region of Nigeria. These include:

- Use of graphological devices such as division into headings (to make the texts neat, attractive and readable), capitalisation (for the purpose of foregrounding ideas and as a mark of reverence), and short paragraphs (to enhance readability, comprehension and retention of message).
- Use of nominalization to concretize ideas so that the reader could easily visualise and grasp them.
- Use of lexico-semantic devices such as lexical repetition (to emphasize ideas), pronominal reference and conjunction (to achieve cohesion and coherence and to amplify the comprehension level of the reader), and lexical collocates (to keep the texts in the foreground of Christian theological discourse in general, and the Catholic Church in particular).
- Syntactic devices such as prevalent use of declarative sentences (to instruct the audience on Catholic faith), present tense forms (to make the message realistic and up-to-date, and to give it a sense of immediacy), and complex nominals (to achieve precision).
- Rhetorical devices such as direct address (to achieve solidarity with the audience, and to create warmth and friendliness that enhance acceptance of message), parallel structures (to foreground meaning), metaphor (to create vivid images for

effective communication of the message), and reference to authority (to validate ideas).

The pilot study was highly insightful, as it pointed the direction which the present study took. Insights from the analysis of the use of rhetorical devices motivated the present study on the discourse functions of rhetorical devices in the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters. Also, the problem of lack of adequate data for the study in the Ibadan Ecclesiastical Province in the South-west necessitated a shift of attention to the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province in the South-east.

3.2 Research proper

3.2.1 Choice of texts for the study

The texts chosen for this study are the Lenten pastoral letters of Roman Catholic bishops in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha. These are pastoral letters published annually during the Lenten Season, between February and March, and meant to provide the faithful with subjects to reflect on for the season. The letters are aimed at promoting the Roman Catholic faith in the province and ensuring good Christian living among believers. They are meant either to be read to the congregation or to be read by them, and so much of the relevant information the congregation might need is contained in the texts.

This set of pastoral letters was chosen because of their solemn nature which equally demands seriousness in language use. It will be worthwhile therefore to study language use in such serious documents. Lenten pastoral letters are also chosen because of the regularity in their publication. This makes them readily available for research. It also affords the researcher a wide range of pastorals to choose from. One also finds it possible to study the language of the pastorals over a certain period of time. A third reason for choosing the Lenten pastorals is their rhetorical content. They are characterised by rhetorical devices aimed at influencing attitudes and inducing actions. It will therefore be rewarding to study the letters as a persuasive religious discourse. This justifies a rhetorical approach to the study of the letters and the choice of Aristotelian Rhetoric as the theoretical framework.

3.2.2 Data collection

The problem of data collection experienced in the course of the pilot study made the researcher consider a shift in geographical location of the study from South-western region of the country to the South-eastern region. But even then certain problems were still encountered in the process of collecting data in the new location. Although the Lenten

pastorals are supposed to be published annually every Lenten Season, there was the problem of irregular publication in some dioceses in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha. In the dioceses where the pastorals are published regularly, it was a Herculean task securing published copies, due to the problem of poor record keeping and lack of cooperation from some of those who were in a position to assist. While some of these people made efforts to make some published copies available to the researcher, others were either nonchalant or continued to ask the researcher to come back some other time. In some cases the researcher had to hunt for copies from individual members of a diocese in their respective homes. The problem of collecting data took its toll on the researcher's purse, as she had to embark on several journeys from Ado-Ekiti in the South-west, where she resides to the different dioceses in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province in the South-east, in a hired vehicle with a hired driver, each of the journeys lasting for weeks and requiring lodgings in guest houses. However, through concerted efforts, propelled by the desire to succeed, the researcher was able to collect twenty-six copies of pastoral letters published at different times.

3.2.3 Method of sampling

One critical decision that was made, after collecting available pastoral letters in Onitsha Province, was to draw a representative sample. Since it was practically difficult to study all the collected letters within the scope of this study, a sample was selected through purposive sampling method, a method whereby samples are selected from a population based on certain criteria. Here, the selection was based on consistency in the publication of the pastorals, their thematic preoccupations, and rhetorical content.

Although Catholic bishops in the province of Onitsha write different kinds of pastoral letters, the Lenten pastorals are the most readily available because of the regularity in their publication. Selections were made from the five dioceses where the bishops are consistent in publishing the letters annually. These are the Arch-diocese of Onitsha, the dioceses of Nnewi, Awka, Enugu, Awgu. The dioceses provide the researcher with a wide range of pastorals to choose from. Another consideration was the thematic preoccupation of the letters. Certain themes were found to cut across the pastorals in the province. These are themes of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The researcher thus considers it worthwhile to select the pastorals with themes across the board so as to see how different bishops use language to convey the same message. The third consideration was the rhetorical content of the pastorals. Pastorals with high concentration of rhetorical devices were given preference, so as to have a large data to work with.

To ensure a representative sample, 10 Lenten pastoral letters of five Roman Catholic bishops were selected from five dioceses (two letters from each) out of the seven in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical province. The pastorals, published between 2000 and 2010, range between 20 and 104 pages. The sampled dioceses and the pastoral letters are presented in the table below:

S/N	DIOCESE	PASTORAL LETTER	NO. CHOSEN	YEAR
1.	Arch-diocese of Onitsha	i. If Only You Have Faith ii. The Measure of Love	2	2006 2005
2.	Diocese of Enugu	i. Okwukwe Ezi Olu ii. God is Calling us to Reconciliation	2	2010 2001
3.	Diocese of Awka	i. Repent and Believe the Good News ii. Call to Conversion	2	2008 2000
4.	Diocese of Nnewi	i. From Faith to Faith ii. We Walk by Faith	2	2004 2003
5.	Diocese of Awgu	i. Living in the Amazing Love of God ii. Living the Faith	2	2008 2006

Table 3.1: Sampled Dioceses and Pastoral Letters

For ease of reference, the sampled pastoral letters are abbreviated as follows:

1. Call to Conversion: CTC
2. God Is Calling us to Reconciliation: GCTR
3. We Walk by Faith: WWF
4. From Faith to Faith: FFF
5. The Measure of Love: TML
6. If only You Have Faith: IYHF
7. Repent and Believe the Good News: RBGN
8. Living in the Amazing Love of God: LALG
9. Living the Faith: LTF
10. Okwukwe Ezi Olu: OEO

3.2.4 Methods of data analysis

Quantitative and qualitative methods were adopted in the analysis of data which was done at two levels: the thematic and the rhetorical. The quantitative method involved drawing statistical inferences based on frequency distribution of features, while qualitative method was concerned with describing meaning.

3.2.4.1 Quantitative method

This method was adopted in chapter four in the analysis of the themes of the pastorals in relation to the lexical devices used to convey them. The letters were closely read and the themes of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church were identified. The lexical devices representing the themes were identified and categorised. Through frequency count, their frequency of occurrence was determined and computed in percentages. This was done in order to determine the most recurrent theme in the pastorals, so as to find explanations for the emphasis

3.2.4.2 Qualitative method

Qualitative method of analysis was also employed in the analysis of themes in chapter four, in addition to the quantitative method. Using Halliday's Systemic Functional theory as a descriptive framework with emphasis on form-function relationship in language use, the themes were analysed alongside the lexical choices in order to show their interconnectedness. In chapter five, analysis of rhetorical devices in relation to their persuasive discourse functions in the letters was done using qualitative method. The devices were identified, categorised, and analysed within the framework of Aristotelian Rhetoric. Aristotelian theory was considered relevant because of its preoccupation with persuasion as a product of appeals to ethos (the speaker's/writer's character), pathos (the audience's emotions), and logos (reasoned arguments).

3.2.5 Presentation of data in tables

Data for the study, which consist of the lexical and the rhetorical devices, are presented in the tables below:

3.2.6.1 Lexical Choices and Themes

- **Theme-related Lexical Choices**

Theme-related lexical choices	CTC	GCTR	WWF	FFF	TML	IYHF	RBGN	LALG	LTF	OEO	Total	%
Faith-related	6	14	56	50	5	49	14	13	47	32	286	35.0
Loyalty-related	19	22	36	43	14	13	2	5	14	17	185	22.6
Repentance-related	41	51	16	10	4	3	32	10	9	7	183	22.4
Love-related	3	8	11	7	50	5	11	63	3	2	163	20.0
Total	69	95	119	110	73	70	59	91	73	58	817	100.0

Table 3.2: Distribution of lexical choices relating to themes

Table 3.2 above is a presentation of the major themes of the letters in relation to the lexical choices made in conveying them. Four major themes, namely, faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church were identified. These were conveyed through theme-related lexical choices (theme-related words, antonyms, synonyms, and lexical repetitions). The table shows that faith-related lexical choices constitute the highest frequency of rate 35.0% of the total frequency, which is 817. Lexical choices relating to Loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church are next in high frequency with a frequency rate of 22.6%. The frequency rate of repentance-related lexical choices is 22.4%, while that of love-related lexical choices is 20.0%.

- **Faith-related Lexical Choices**

Faith-related lexical choices	CTC	GCTR	WWF	FFF	TML	IYHF	RBGN	LALG	LTF	OEO	Total	%
Words	6	14	27	22	4	26	10	11	24	15	159	55.6
Paired Synonyms	-	-	11	15	-	10	2	-	11	7	56	19.6
Paired Antonyms	-	-	12	10	1	7	2	2	8	6	48	16.8
Lexical repetitions	-	-	6	3	-	6	-	-	4	4	23	8.0
Total	6	14	56	50	5	49	14	13	47	32	286	100.0

Table 3.3: Distribution of lexical choices relating to the theme of faith

As shown in table 3.3 above, of the total frequency of faith-related lexical choices, which is 286, faith-related words have the highest frequency rate of 55.6%. These are followed by paired synonyms relating to faith, with frequency rate of 19.6%. Faith-related paired antonyms follow with a frequency rate of 16.8%, while lexical repetitions have the lowest frequency rate of 8.0%.

- **Loyalty-related Lexical Choices**

Loyalty-related lexical choices	CTC	GCTR	WWF	FFF	TML	IYHF	RBGN	LALG	LTF	OEO	Total	%
Words	17	19	23	22	14	8	2	2	9	10	126	68.1
Antonyms	1	2	5	9	-	4	-	2	1	3	27	14.6
Lexical repetitions	-	-	5	9	-	-	-	1	3	2	20	10.8
Synonyms	1	1	3	3	-	1	-	-	1	2	12	6.5
Total	19	22	36	43	14	13	2	5	14	17	185	100.0

Table 3.4: Distribution of lexical choices relating to the theme of loyalty to the Catholic Church

Table 3.4 shows frequency distribution of lexical choices relating to the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. Of the total frequency of 185, loyalty-related words constitute 68.1%, followed by loyalty-related antonyms with 14.6%, loyalty-related lexical repetitions, 10.8%, and loyalty-related synonyms 6.5%.

- **Repentance-related Lexical Choices**

Repentance-related lexical choices	CTC	GCTR	WWF	FFF	TML	IYHF	RBGN	LALG	LTF	OEO	Total	%
Words	28	32	12	7	2	3	21	8	6	5	124	67.8
Antonyms	3	5	1	2	2	-	4	1	2	2	22	12.0
Synonyms	5	5	3	1	-	-	3	1	1	-	19	10.4
Lexical repetitions	5	9	-	-	-	-	4	-	-	-	18	9.8
Total	41	51	16	10	4	3	32	10	9	7	183	100.0

Table 3.5: Distribution of lexical choices relating to the theme of repentance

In table 3.5, which shows frequency distribution of repentance-related lexical choices, repentance-related words have the frequency rate of 67.8% of the total frequency of the lexical choices deployed, which is 183. Next in high frequency are repentance-related antonyms, with a frequency rate of 12.0%. These are followed by repentance-related synonyms constituting 10.4%, and then repentance-related lexical repetitions whose frequency rate is 9.8%.

- **Love-related Lexical Choices**

Love-related lexical choices	CTC	GCTR	WWF	FFF	TML	IYHF	RBGN	LALG	LTF	OEO	Total	%
Words	3	6	8	5	19	5	7	19	3	2	77	47.2
Antonyms	-	1	1	2	15	-	3	14	-	-	36	22.1
Synonyms	-	1	2	-	9	-	1	23	-	-	36	22.1
Lexical repetitions	-	-	-	-	7	-	-	7	-	-	14	8.6
Total	3	8	11	7	50	5	11	63	3	2	163	100.0

Table 3.6: Distribution of lexical choices relating to the theme of love

Here, in table 3.6, is frequency distribution of love-related lexical choices, with love-related words constituting the highest frequency rate of 47.2% of the total frequency which is 163. Love-related antonyms and synonyms have uniform frequency rate of 22.1% followed by love-related lexical repetitions which has the lowest frequency rate of 8.6%.

3.2.6.2 Rhetorical Devices and Persuasive Discourse Functions in Relation to Themes

Rhetorical Device	Persuasive Discourse functions	Token	Theme	Text
A.LOGOS-BASED				
1.Testimonial References	Validating messages	<p>Faith in Jesus Christ is a commitment that is to be nurtured so that it can grow...As faith is nurtured, the commitment progressively grows until it reaches the point where the believer lives with Christ, crucified with Him. Paul expresses this well in Galatians 2:20: “And it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me...”</p> <p>The Council Fathers further made it clear that this love has to become a habit, a pattern of life, in fact, a culture when they insisted that this love is not something reserved for important matters, but must be exercised above all in the ordinary circumstances of daily life (Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes, 7 December 1965, No.38).</p> <p>In accordance with Can. 1249, all Christ’s faithful are obliged by divine law, each in his or her own way, to do penance at all times, but especially during Lent.</p> <p>...baptism is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion. It is by baptism that one renounces evil and gains salvation, that is, the forgiveness of all sins and the gift of new life (CCC 1427).</p> <p>It would be a perversion of love to reduce it to sex and its corollaries. Pope Benedict XVI speaks of this reductionist view of love as a “debasement of the human body” (<i>Deus est Caritas</i>,</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p>	<p>(LTF, p.17)</p> <p>(TML, pp.45-46)</p> <p>(CTC pp. 13-14)</p> <p>(CTC, p.7)</p> <p>(LALG, p. 8)</p>

<p>2.Deductive Reasoning</p>	<p>Appealing to the rationality of the audience</p>	<p>5).</p> <p>According to St Ignatius of Antioch, where there is Christ Jesus there is the Catholic Church (Ad Smyrn. 8, 2)</p> <p>Since without faith, we cannot hope to please God and if we have faith we can move mountains, let us always pray Almighty God to give us that faith which shows itself through good works.</p> <p>Since love is basic and fundamental in every activity of our life, it follows that the authenticity of our lives depends on the extent of our love. To the extent we love, to that extent we are Christians, to that extent we are children of God. Love therefore is the measure of our life.</p> <p>Because the people of God, that is, the Church of the Living God is a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people (1Peter 2:9), and because He who called them is holy, they must be holy in all their conduct because it is written, Be holy, I am holy (1Peter 1:15-16).</p> <p>There is no Church of Christ which is not historically built on the foundation of Peter. Peter definitely died but his authority to strengthen the brethren, to feed the flock of Christ, to safeguard the keys of Heaven and to bind and loose in the Church would not have died with him. This authority passed on to his successors...the Bishops of Rome. They have by unbroken tradition inherited the authority of Peter. Thus the Bishop of Rome called the Pope...is the visible symbol of the authenticity of the Church founded by Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church...</p>	<p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(FFF, p.23)</p> <p>(IYHF, p.52)</p> <p>(TML,p.40)</p> <p>(FFF,p.43)</p> <p>(FFF,pp.11-12)</p>
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<p>3. Inductive Reasoning (Examples)</p>	<p>Appealing to the rationality of the audience</p>	<p><i>Your faith has saved you!</i> Many people heard these words from the mouth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Centurion who showed such a faith that was not found in Israel heard: ...The Canaanite woman's faith in Jesus drew the response from the Master.... The woman who had haemorrhage for twelve years and had spent all her money on doctors without getting well put her faith in Jesus...and heard the words...Jesus healed people because of their faith...</p> <p>This endeavour of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a 'contrite heart' drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first (CCC.1427). St Peter's conversion after he had denied his master three times bears witness to this. Jesus' look of infinite mercy drew tears of repentance from Peter and, after the Lord's Resurrection, a three-fold affirmation of love for him.</p> <p>Out of love God created the world (Wis. 11:24)...Even while regretting having made human beings because of their wickedness...God still saved Noah from the flood...Still in pursuit of the desire to relate intimately with human beings, God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. In spite of their infidelity to the terms of the covenant, God remained faithful...God promised to make a new covenant...In Jesus, God took human flesh and dwelt among us...From the above, one sees that God...is like a father who out of love cares for and follows up his children.</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p>	<p>(WWF, p.70)</p> <p>(CTC, p.7)</p> <p>(RBGN, p.12)</p>
<p>4. Definitions</p>	<p>Supporting theses of arguments</p>	<p>The Christian faith is more than a persuasion of the mind to accept or rely on a certain truth. It is primarily a conversion of souls to accept the Spirit of God through Christ, live in the truth of such acceptance and bear fruit of such acceptance in order to convert the world for an ultimate paradise/heaven.</p>	<p>Faith</p>	<p>(OEO, p.6)</p>

5.Compariso n (Analogy)	For explanations	vivid	<p>Holiness does not require some kind of extraordinary existence possible for a few uncommon heroes. Holiness demands the fidelity of each Christian to his/her vocation...Christian holiness contributes to human progress by showing the people of our times the proper scale of values and the supremacy of light over darkness, life over death and eternity over time.</p>	Repentance	(<i>GCTR</i> , p.19)
			<p>Love of neighbour means seeing the image and likeness of God in my fellow human being, seeing him or her with and through the eyes of God. Love of neighbor is recognizing and respecting the uniqueness and otherness of the person of the neighbour as a human being and an image of God. It is in effect seeking and willing the good of the person...</p>	Love	(<i>LALG</i> , pp.37-38)
			<p>Religion is not a question of making God an instrument of satisfying a person's needs. Religion is a person's complete submission to the Truth, to the will of God...the truth is: " For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the all-embracing means of salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained" (Unitatis redintegratio, no.3)</p>	Loyalty	(<i>FFF</i> , p.60)
			<p>An attempt to limit the transformation of the world to only her material conditions is like growing a child without building his mind and spirit upon which real growth and maturity are measured...A man can grow tall and strong enough to lift an iron. He may have the intelligence to construct a machete. But he needs the guidance and power of the spirit to know when, how, and what to use it on. It is the mistake of our present day to dream of a world where God is either forgotten or denied. Living without faith is one of the sins of our materialistic world</p>	Faith	(<i>OEO</i> , p.14)
			<p>However long and detailed our plans for a journey may be, it is</p>	Repentance	(<i>RBGN</i> ,

(Metaphor)	For vivid explanations	<p>only when we step out and embark on it that one can be said to be on a journey. Similarly, repentance is not about wanting and planning to turn back to God but actually making a decision and taking steps to live up to that decision.</p>		p.20)	
		<p>Interestingly, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus appealed to His Father to spare Him from the Cross... God heard His prayer by 'refusing Jesus' wish...and seemingly abandoning His only begotten Son. Like Jesus, the groans and sighs of the sick, the barren, the bereaved, the oppressed, etc., rise up daily asking "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me." But as in the case of Jesus, we see that God never abandons His people...we have the assurance of His Word, that for those who love Him, God turns everything, whether felt as good or evil by human beings, for their good (Rom. 8:28).</p>		Love	<i>(RBGN, p.17)</i>
		<p>He [Esau] surrendered his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage! Later, their father through the ruse of Jacob and their mother gave the blessings of the firstborn to Jacob instead of to Esau. The girls who because of marriage abandon their Catholic faith can be likened to Esau. They sell their birthright and title to eternal salvation for marriage.</p>		Loyalty	<i>(FFF, p. 78)</i>
		<p>Under the difficult and dangerous circumstances, they [the early missionaries] sowed the seed of faith and nurtured it. It germinated, blossomed and bore fruits in our first Christians_ the pioneers of faith in Awgu diocese</p>		Faith	<i>(LTF, p.4).</i>
		<p>There are abundant warnings in the New Testaments against the poisonous weeds of false doctrines and teachings</p> <p>...His Holiness, Pope John Paul II calls us to win the world with the weapons of love</p>		Loyalty	<i>(FFF,p.48)</i>
				<i>(TML,p.11)</i>	

6.Nominalisation	Objectifying the validity of ideas	Our Christians must swim against the prevailing current of moral and spiritual decadence by mounting the noble platform of true Christian living.	Repentance	(GCTR, p.15)
		The present challenge of the Christian faith among our people is no longer mere adherence. The challenge is not just to believe or to be baptised. Majority now profess to be Christians. What remains is to bear fruit, fruit of faith which shows itself in good works of love and hope. The challenge is to deepen our faith, and bear witness to the great treasure which is the gift of faith we have received both individually and collectively.	Faith	(IYHF, pp.27-28)
		The call for ongoing conversion as the indispensable condition for authentic Christian witnessing in our society is very important because we seem to be destroying the very foundation of an ethically correct version of human existence.	Repentance	(GCTR) p.15
		This Lenten Pastoral is an invitation to open ourselves to God who is love and to renew our love commitment at every level of personal and societal life.	Love	LALG, p.48)
7.Passivisation	Objectifying the validity of ideas	Hold on to the Catholic Church, “the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth” (1 Tim. 3:15) and the Ark of Salvation. In the age of confusion and various attractions to cheap practice of religion, this call to fidelity and steadfastness becomes all the more urgent and important.	Loyalty	(FFF, p.82)
		As children of God and more so, as members of God’s family, we are called to walk by faith and live by faith.	Faith	(IYHF, p.20)
		By repentance, we are all invited to change our mentality, our	Repentance	(WWF,

<p>8.Syntactic parallelism</p>	<p>Emphasising ideas for easy grasp</p>	<p>way of thinking and seeing things. There has to be a radical transformation of the whole person to align the person properly in the way of the Lord.</p> <p>On the cross...we see clearly the cost of God's commitment of love to humanity. In like manner, we are challenged to commit ourselves to the good of others even to the point of shedding blood.</p> <p>We are called to embrace and remain faithful to the Catholic and Apostolic Faith handed over once and for all to the Apostles.</p> <p>Indeed we have many fears: we fear evil spirits and evil men; we fear witches and wizards; we fear ghosts and goblins; we fear sorcerers and medicine men; we fear pain, sickness and suffering; we fear childlessness and lack of male children; finally we fear death.</p> <p>Theirs was a community under obedience and willingly learning in trust and belief the teachings of the apostles. Theirs was a community where brotherly love (Philadelphia) thrived. Theirs was a community of prayer, and constant prayer meetings in the temple and in the homes. Theirs was a reverent society living in an awe of the sacredness that was their faith and hope. Theirs was a community of sharing benefits and burdens without deceptive exploitations and lies. Theirs was a community of worship and praise to God for his goodness. Theirs was a community of miracles both by God directly and through them (Acts 2:4-7)</p> <p>There may be no easy solutions to the many problems of life as long as we continue to abhor the virtue of love. There may</p>	<p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p>	<p>p.58)</p> <p>(<i>RBGN</i>, p.27)</p> <p>(<i>WWF</i>, p.36)</p> <p>(<i>LTF</i>, p.33)</p> <p>(<i>OEO</i>,p.10)</p> <p>(<i>TML</i>, pp44-45)</p>
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<p>9.Antithesis</p>	<p>Emphasising ideas for easy grasp</p>	<p>be no end to wars and tumults among the nations; there may be no end to destructions of lives and property; there may be no end to shamelessness, foolishness and ignorance; there may be no end to the culture of impunity; there may be no end to armed robbery and such destructive tendencies, yes, there will be no end to the troubles and cares of our lives until we live lives of love or allow love to influence the principles of our existence.</p> <p>I believe in theHolyCatholic Church. I believe in the Church founded on Peter. I believe in the Church which has remained faithful to the patrimony of Peter. That Church called by the Fathers, the Catholic Church, is the object of my faith.</p> <p>...we walk by faith not by sight. If we have the eyes of faith, we will see miracleswhich happen every minute of the day. But if we have no faith, we may only look for sensuous miracles which we may not see.</p> <p>The mourning meant...is not one caused by bereavement, affliction or loss; but a mourning induced by an awareness of one's infidelity through sin and rejection of God's love and goodness by others.</p> <p>Without love our societies will turn into a nursery for crime and injustice. With love we can evolve human societies and culture, which will be founded on truth, built on justice and enlivened by love.</p> <p>God calls us to peace not to disorder. (1 Cor. 14:33). When the manifestations produce peace and unity, they are from God for God's work...When they produce hatred, dissensions, antagonisms, rivalry, bad temper, quarrels, disagreements,</p>	<p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(FFF, p.28)</p> <p>(IYHF, p33)</p> <p>(RBGN, pp.28-29)</p> <p>(TML,p.42)</p> <p>(FFF, p.73)</p>
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<p>10.Obligation /Necessity modals</p>	<p>Appealing to the audience's sense of responsibility and moral duty</p>	<p>factions, malice, pride, they are not from the Holy Spirit...</p> <p>We need therefore to set our hearts on Christ and to accept him as the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2). It is Christ alone who can heal us of sin; he alone can restore our lives, he alone can give meaning to our existence even when the day is dark and the night cold.</p> <p>We have to be committed to seeking eternal life, knowing that our eternal salvation is the only one thing that is important and necessary: "What then will anyone gain by winning the whole world and forfeiting his life? (Matt, 16:26)</p> <p>For us to love as God really wants us to, God's grace is indispensable. We should pray constantly for this grace in order to counter our selfishness and also withstand the constant negative forces of or corrupt society.</p> <p>The worst thing that can happen to a true believer in Jesus Christ is being cut off from the communion with his or her fellow believers in union with the Successor of Apostle Peter. You must do all in your power to maintain ecclesiastical communion even in your external conduct (see can.209).</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(GCTR, p.13)</p> <p>(WWF, p.59)</p> <p>(TML, p.49)</p> <p>(FFF,p.86)</p>
<p>B.PATHOS-BASED</p> <p>1.Igbo Language</p>	<p>Expressing solidarity with the audience</p>	<p>We are again offered another "forty days and forty nights", crowned with a sacred paschal week to make our society a true household of God, a Church; for such should be the proper character of a true faith: faith that breeds good brands (Okwukwe Ezi Olu)</p> <p>Thus, it is not enough to examine oneself with regard to the first</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p>	<p>(OEO, p.3)</p> <p>(RBGN,</p>

<p>2.Prayers</p>	<p>Inspiring audience</p>	<p>commandment that prohibits the having another god, simply in terms of whether one has ever visited the <i>dibia</i> or native doctor but more in terms of whether the covenantal relationship with God is what defines every other thing that one does.</p> <p>It is important for us to realize that children are God’s gift, not only to the parents but also to the society at large (<i>nwa bu nwa oha</i>)</p> <p>You may think that it is easier to go to other Churches and groups...Ebe onye no, ebe onoro ana-agu ya! (One is attracted to the place where one is not). You have only taste and see that the simmer will wear off and the pretence continues! Oburo etu ugoro si ada n’onu ka osi ato uto...not all that glitters is gold (FFF, p. 79)</p> <p>God our father, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, teach us to cherish the gifts that surround us. Increase our faith in you. And bring our trust to its promised fulfillment in the joy of your kingdom. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen</p> <p>May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Divine Saviour intercede for you all during this period of intensive spiritual renewal.</p> <p>Father, guide us as you guide creation, according to your law of love. May we love one another and come to perfection in the eternal life prepared for us. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. Amen.</p> <p>...Filled with hope and in the communion of all the saints, may</p>	<p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>p.26)</p> <p>(LALG, p.53)</p> <p>(WWF, pp.67-68)</p> <p>(IYHF, p.52)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.38)</p> <p>(TML, pp.49-50)</p> <p>(FFF,</p>
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<p>3.Inclusive pronoun</p>	<p>Creating a feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness</p>	<p>we remain steadfast in the Catholic Church in body and soul until we enter our heavenly home. Amen.</p> <p>When we obey the word of God, we do what God has commanded. It is through obedience that we manifest our faith as well as grow in faith.</p> <p>To be converted, we must change our old ways of doing things by realising that sins repel and take us away from the ultimate purpose of our existence...</p> <p>We live in the amazing love of God when we begin to share our life and what God has given us with our fellow human beings, especially with those who are in most need of our love, care and concern.</p> <p>We must be vigilant so that we are not led astray by people masquerading as apostles!</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>pp.103-104)</p> <p>(IYHF, p.41)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.16)</p> <p>(LALG, p.62)</p> <p>(FFF, p.50)</p>
<p>4.Rhetorical Questions</p>	<p>Appealing to denominational sentiments</p>	<p>Are they really Catholic? Or could we be harbouring non-Catholics among us? Where actually did things go wrong in our journey of faith? Is this the fruit of our faith?</p> <p>How many people take to founding their own ministries or fellowships for the quick money that comes from people's sowing? How many people make wild claims, publicise miracles and invite people to a display of signs and wonders, all designed to catch the unwary and exploit their gullibility?</p> <p>Look at the lives of the "mighty men and women of God"! Are their lives consistent with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Are their lives consistent with the poverty, purity, modesty, simplicity and gentleness of Christ? Are their lives not a sad reproach to the Gospel?...we must be on our guard against the</p>	<p>Loyalty</p> <p>Loyalty</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(OEO,p.16)</p> <p>(FFF, p.66)</p> <p>(FFF, pp.73-74)</p>

		wiles of men and women who hold the outward form of religion but deny the inner power to transform men and women.		
5.Sarcasm	Creating distaste for non-Catholic faith	Who told you that a bird can lay eggs of gold? Who told you that a believer cannot suffer when the Lord in whom he or she believes challenges everyone who wishes to follow him to deny oneself and take up one's cross and follow him? (Mt. 16:24) Who told you that our God wants every believer to be rich when the Lord himself though rich made himself poor and declared "How blessed are you who are poor: the kingdom of God is yours" (Luke 6:20)? Who told you that God must give the believer anything he or she demanded, when St. Paul prayed and pleaded with Lord three times to remove the messenger of Satan who was sent to batter him and prevent him from getting above himself and got the reply: "My grace is enough for you: for power is at full stretch in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:7-9)?	Loyalty	(FFF, p.81)
		The people's craze for instant solution to their problems is satisfied. They are given "holy" water, "holy" oil, "holy" candles, "holy" soap, "holy" cream, "holy" powder in place of the charms or amulets of the traditional <i>dibia</i> .	Loyalty	(WWF, p.19)
		They perform signs and wonders, heal the sick, do mighty work, give children to barren women, find husband for single girls, get visas for Nigerians wanting to "check out," provide immunity against air, water and sexually transmitted diseases in the mighty name of Jesus!	Loyalty	(FFF,p.72)
		The Diviner, of course knows everything. He goes to the spirit world to get the knowledge of hidden things...	Loyalty	(WWF, p.18)
6.Segregation pronoun	Creating distaste for non-	They are renting stores, warehouses and any structure for their activities. Their power is in their power amplifiers with which	Loyalty	(FFF, p.6)

<p>7. Personification of the RCC as Mother</p>	<p>Catholic faith</p> <p>Keeping the audience emotionally attached to the Church</p>	<p>they fill the air with their loud preaching. They ensnare people with smooth and sweet talks. They captivate them with claims of signs and wonders. They mesmerize the gullible with speaking in tongues and visions. Their stock-in-trade is the Bible. They quote it right, left and centre...They engage in home ministry (olu ezinuno), act as Gideonites and prayer warriors, all with the intent to lead the unwary and people with disoriented lives astray</p> <p>The warning of St Peter is clear...These people are like dried up springs. They make proud and statements, use immoral bodily lusts to trap those who are beginning to escape from among people who live in error They promise them freedom while they themselves are slaves of destructive habits...(2 Peter 2:17-20)</p> <p>They are Catholics. They may be priests or lay men or women. They claim to be many things. They set up prayer warriors. They would not listen to the hierarchy. They engage in deceitful activities. They disturb the faith of the people.</p> <p>...In her wisdom, the Church uses these same words of Jesus at the beginning of Lent to present again to us, hersons and daughters, the central challenge of this holy season.</p> <p>Each Lent our Holy Mother Church calls us to repent for our sins and change lives. She calls us to make serious efforts and turn to God completely.</p> <p>It is in this light that we warn against the threat of Pentecostalism and restate that the Catholic Church encourages all her Children to remain under her comforting shade since it is the will of God that all her children should be one sheepfold</p>	<p>Loyalty</p> <p>Loyalty</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(FFF, p.7)</p> <p>(WWF, p.67)</p> <p>(RBGN, p.5)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.36)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.14)</p>
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<p>2.Declaratives</p>	<p>Invoking the authority of the bishops' office</p>	<p>would like to insist that things be done properly and orderly.</p> <p>As a shepherd of this particular Church of Enugu, I call upon our Christians to embrace Christ in a special way during this season of Lent.</p> <p>I, however, call on our Christians as individuals and as communities to open their eyes to the needs of their neighbours and to respond appropriately like the Good Samaritan. (Lk 10:25ff)</p> <p>To protect Catholics from the false teachers, prophets, mighty men and women, ministers, pastors, prayer warriors, and the likes who roam about like roaring lions looking for someone to devour (1Peter 5:9), I call on Catholics: Be firm in your faith! (1Peter 5:9)</p> <p>The Christian faith is a Divine design by God to redeem a fallen humanity in time. It is a fulfillment and actualization of an ancient plan of God to create a people who have greater trust and confidence in Him; and who out of these live, inspire and spread a culture of truth and love that define them as his people to his greater glory..</p> <p>Repentance out of fear of eternal punishment though valuable is not sustainable. True repentance arises from an appreciation of the love and mercy of God, especially as demonstrated on the Cross of Calvary.</p> <p>True love is a virtue. True love involves altruism and self-sacrifice for the benefit of the other. The ultimate other is God Himself. True love finds its origin and fulfillment in God, since God is love</p>	<p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p>	<p>(GCTR, p.33)</p> <p>(LALG, p.58)</p> <p>(FFF, p.7)</p> <p>(OEO, p.6)</p> <p>(RBGN, p.9)</p> <p>(TML, p.12)</p>
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<p>3.Imperatives</p>	<p>Invoking the authority of the bishops' office</p>	<p>...the normal means of salvation remains the Church of Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church. This means that the Catholic Church is the ordinary means of salvation and has all the ordinary means given by Jesus Christ for the sanctification and salvation of men and women.</p> <p>Since faith is a way which we are called to “walk,” let us accept the call of faith by allowing faith to determine our choices and actions. Let every circumstance of our lives...let whatever we do be influenced by our faith in Jesus Christ.</p> <p>Each Lent our Holy Mother Church calls us to repent for our sins and change lives. Do not reject this invitation; harden not your heart. Rise and go back to God your Father. Make a good confession and pray to remain faithful to God in future.</p> <p>During this Lent, let us return to the Father who is waiting for us with open arms to transform us into living and effective signs of his merciful love.</p> <p>Avoid all that! As a Catholic, maintain your faith and your allegiance to that faith.... Be vigilant...Do not allow yourself to be led astray.</p>	<p>Loyalty</p> <p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(FFF, p.56)</p> <p>(IYHF, pp.26-27)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.36)</p> <p>(GCTR, p.38)</p> <p>(FFF, p.87)</p>
<p>4.Latinisms</p>	<p>Showing learnedness</p>	<p>“You see before you the Lord’s servant; let it happen to me to me as you have said” (Luke 1:38) <i>Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum.</i></p> <p>Plenary indulgence can be obtained by performing the following pious acts: (a) adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for at least half-hour; (b) pious execution of <i>Via Crucis</i> (Stations of the Cross); (c) recitation of the Rosary...</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p>	<p>(WWF,p.55)</p> <p>(CTC, p.11)</p>

5.Greetings	Expressing goodwill	<p>Injustice is denying one what is his due, while justice is to give to everyone his due, (<i>instum cuique tribuendi</i>)...when we deprive people of their due, it is not only unjust, but the act makes a nonsense of the love we owe them as children of God.</p>	Love	(TML, p.29)
		<p>Let our faith be anchored in the Catholic Church, the bulwark and mainstay of truth, the Church founded by Peter: Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia; ubi Ecclesia ibi Christus; ubi Christus ibi Deus! (where Peter is, there is the church. Where the church is, there is Christ and where Christ is, there is God!)</p>	Loyalty	(WWF, p.69)
		<p>My dear people of God...the Lenten time gathers us together as Joshua did of old around the altar of the most high for re-questioning and refocusing on our most cherished Christian call. Being Christians, we are a people of faith. We are privileged to acknowledge and believe in God...</p>	Faith	(OEO, p.2)
		<p>My dear people of God, I greet you with joy at the beginning of this holy season of Lent. My joy springs from an anticipation of the redemptive suffering, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and from the hope that this holy season will bear abundant fruits of repentance and faith in each and every one of us.</p>	Repentance	(RBGN, p.5)
		<p>The holy season of Lent affords me another opportunity to address you my beloved brothers and sisters, sons and daughters in the Lord, through this pastoral letter dealing on a great and vital theme of our Christian life and relating to the very identity of God Himself.</p>	Love	(TML, p.2)
<p>I have set myself the task of bringing before you, my dear people of God, the rich menu of the word of God, the teaching</p>	Loyalty	(FFF, p.8)		

<p>6.Appreciation</p>	<p>Expressing goodwill</p>	<p>of the Church and our own experiences about the Church, the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of our Creed.</p> <p>Many Catholics give a lot to support the Church. At Harvest Thanksgiving And Bazaar Sales, many use the opportunity to give generously to God. Even useless things like empty cartons and pieces of paper are bought at incredible prices. I commend the faith of our people.... I use this forum to commend such people to God and ask Him to bless them.</p> <p>I note with joy that reconciliation is taking place between people who were formally enemies; that our people now seek dialogue as a way to peaceful co-existence.</p> <p>As I express our gratitude to God for the recognition given to us as a people and as an integral part of the Church as the pilgrim people of God, I thank all those who have been cooperating with the grace of God to make our Diocese a home of love, a community of love. I thank our priests and religious whose life and vocation are and remain a constant and eloquent testimony and response to God's self-giving love. I also thank our lay people whose life of Christian witness is bearing enduring fruits of joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, etc. (cf. Gal 5:22-23)</p> <p>As a new diocese, we have done pretty well in all sectors...I feel the massive support and encouragement of the priests, seminarians, religious men and women and other consecrated persons, and in a special way, of the lay faithful. We have in unity undertaken the difficult stage of our life as a diocese. Nobody was counting the cost. Everybody was ready to sacrifice gladly for our diocese, the Family of God of Nnewi Diocese. For all these, I thank God.</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Loyalty</p>	<p>(FFF, pp.89-90)</p> <p>(LALG, p.46)</p> <p>(LALG, p.47)</p> <p>(FFF, p.2)</p>
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<p>7.Biblical Characters</p>	<p>As models of faith, repentance, and love</p>	<p>The faith of our fathers encourages us to believe and hang on. Abraham is called our father in faith. He is a model of those who believe in the faithfulness of God who reveals himself and invites men and women to accept him and surrender to his will. The call of Abraham sets the stage for the journey of humanity if faith.</p> <p>Like St. Paul, we are supposed to train hard in the ways of the Lord, of course, not in order to please God seen as a stern examiner, but in generous and loving response to God who “first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19)</p> <p>...in Jesus Christ, the amazing love of God has got a tangible, touchable human face, for in him the love of God has taken flesh.</p> <p>Men and women in all situations can draw inspiration from the faith of Mary and learn how to face life armed with faith which is the shield of spiritual warfare. Besides, she is there to teach us how to pray effectively as she did at the wedding feast at Cana in Galilee. In a special way, she is always with us along our pilgrimage...encouraging us in our faith and interceding for us...with Mary, the Model of Christian faith...we can succeed in fixing our eyes on Jesus Christ...</p>	<p>Faith</p> <p>Repentance</p> <p>Love</p> <p>Faith</p>	<p>(WWF, p.28)</p> <p>(RBGN, p. 19)</p> <p>(LALG, p.22)</p> <p>(WWF, p.56)</p>
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Table 3.7: Rhetorical devices and their persuasive discourse functions in the letters

Table 3.7 shows the three categories of rhetorical devices deployed in the bishops' letters: *logos*-based devices (appealing to logic), *pathos*-based devices (appealing to emotions), and *ethos*-based devices (appealing to character).

3.2.7 Conclusion

We have presented in this chapter the different steps and methods adopted in carrying out this research. The data for the study were also presented in tables. These included the lexical devices used to convey themes as well as the rhetorical devices deployed to achieve persuasion in the letters. Analysis of the themes in relation to lexical forms will be done in chapter four using insights from Halliday's Systemic Functional Linguistics as descriptive frame work. Analysis of the rhetorical devices and their persuasive discourse functions will be done in chapter five based on the Aristotelian Rhetoric, especially the three modes of persuasion: *Ethos*, *Pathos*, and *Ethos*.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF LEXICAL CHOICES AND THEMES IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' PASTORAL LETTERS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents analysis of lexical choices that signify the themes of faith, loyalty to the Roman Catholic, repentance and love, which featured in the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters. Analysis is in line with the objective 1 of the study which is: To identify and analyse the major themes of the letters. It is based on insights from Halliday's model of Systemic Functional Linguistic theory, especially the aspect concerned with form-function correlation in language use.

4.1 Lexical choices for the theme of faith

Theme of faith is one of the major themes conveyed in the bishops' letters. The bishops exhort the audience to have complete trust in God, and shun anything that can distract them from total dependence on God. They express sadness over the fact that many present-day Christians are yet to appreciate the necessity and centrality of faith in the life of a Christian. The bishops consider lack of faith to be the main reason why, in the face of normal problems of life such as sickness, death of a beloved one, violence, betrayals, hunger, childlessness, poverty, delay in marriage, joblessness, etc., Christians run from place to place in search of solutions. They enjoin Christians to have faith and complete trust in God whatever their circumstances because God never fails those who trust in him. The theme of faith is communicated through choice of faith-related words, synonyms, antonyms, and lexical repetitions.

Of the four major themes found in the bishops' letters, the theme of faith has the greatest emphasis with faith-related lexical choices constituting 35.0% of the total number of theme-related lexical choices deployed, which is 817. This shows that the issue of faith is of paramount importance to the bishops.

4.1.1 Words signifying the theme of faith

These are words that collocate with faith. They constitute 55.6% of the total number of faith-related lexical choices deployed, which is 286. The bishops have carefully selected words

relating to faith to communicate to their audience the theme of faith in God. Examples of faith-related words found in the letters are: *belief, trust, church, devout, evangelization, Christian, fidelity, commitment, adherence, magisterium, worship, prayer, sacrament, conviction, loyalty, creed, etc.* By choosing these words, the bishops foreground the theme of faith to enhance its understanding by the faithful. Consider the choice of the words *faith, believe, and trust*, for example, in text 1 below:

Text 1:

...many Christians today are men and women of sight and not of **faith**. They **believe** and **trust** their senses so much so that **faith** has no place in their lives. (*IYHF*, p.21)

In this text, the words *faith, believe, and trust* suggest the theme of faith. *Believe* means to accept something or somebody as true; *trust* means confidence in something or somebody. Trust is borne out of belief in something or somebody. *Faith* incorporates the meaning of both *believe* and *trust*. It means trust, confidence or strong belief in God. The words are brought together to emphasize the theme of faith. The emphasis is intensified by choice of the words *sight* and *senses* which in this context are antonymous to faith. In the context of this text, the bishops express worry over the attitude of the faithful when faced with normal problems of life. They go to any length in search of solutions, even if it means going to places or doing things that are contrary and detrimental to their faith. The faithful are therefore enjoined to remain steadfast in their faith.

Another example of choice of faith-related words to convey the theme of faith is seen in the use of the words *worship, faith, and believe* in text 2 below:

Text 2:

Worship in itself is an act of **faith**: “What we **pray** we **believe** and what we **believe** we **pray**.” (*LTF*, 39)

The word *worship* means to honour God or a god with praise, prayer, hymns, etc. As such it requires *faith* or belief in the existence of God or a god being honoured and his or its ability to receive and appreciate the worship given. The theme of faith is also intensified by the word *pray*. We pray with the belief or faith that we would obtain what we pray for. The text occurs in the context of the bishops’ admonition of the faithful to nourish their faith in God by constant prayer. The quoted words are a translation of the Latin slogan used to support the view

that worship is an act of faith. The words *worship, faith, believe and prayer* are therefore appropriate in foregrounding the theme of faith. One can only worship or pray to a god he or she believes or have faith in.

Also, the words *fidelity, faith and trust* in the text 3 below relate to the theme of faith:

Text 3:

The Old Testament prophets bring out another dimension of **faith** as a life of **trust** and **fidelity** in relationship with God. (*LTF*, P.8)

Fidelity is synonymous with faithfulness, loyalty, or devotion. It means sticking to God, a god or a marriage partner without prostituting with another. In the context of the above text, *fidelity* means faithfulness, loyalty or devotion to the Almighty God. It implies negligence of other gods or objects of worship and total commitment to the one and only God. *Trust* and *faith* in a person or god leads to *fidelity*. By choosing these words, the bishop makes clear to the faithful, the importance of remaining faithful to God and avoiding worship of other gods. The choice is therefore appropriate in projecting the theme of faith in the pastoral letters.

4.1.2 Synonyms

Synonyms are different phonological words which have the same or very similar meanings (Saeed, 2009). Different words which have the same referent are also considered to be synonymous. In the bishops' pastorals, synonyms relating to the theme of faith constitute 19.6% of the total number of faith-related lexical choices deployed. They include *journey-pilgrimage, idolatry-superstitious, believe-adhere, reject-doubt, obligation-task, devotion-reverence, confidence-trust, steadfast-faithful, supernatural-religious, acceptance-acknowledgement, grace-privilege, trust-faith, etc.* In text 4 below, for example, the synonymous pair *confidence* and *trust* are used to foreground the theme of faith:

Text 4:

The man or woman of **faith** has supreme **confidence** and **trust** in God's providence. No matter the situation, the problems and difficulties, the child of God says in **faith**, like Abraham, the Lord will provide (*IYHF*, p.48).

In the above text, the synonyms *faith*, *confidence* and *trust* are used to echo the theme of faith in God. The three words denote firmness and resoluteness in the belief expressed. The last two are a restatement of the meaning denoted by the first. Confidence means trust or belief in a person or thing, while trust is belief or reliance on the truth, goodness, character, power, or ability of someone or something. They are used as qualities or markers of faith, such that a man or a woman of faith will be measured by his or her level of confidence and trust in God. The bishop has deployed the synonyms in order to make clear to the faithful the need for total dependence on God, his power and ability to provide for them in all circumstances. This way they reinforce the theme of faith to facilitate understanding.

Another example of the use of synonyms in the bishops' letters to reiterate the theme of faith in God is seen in text 5 below:

Text 5:

The Christian civilization with all her **greatness** and **grandeur** is a **product** of a **belief** in a being beyond human. It is the **fruit** of a **faith** never based on a person, idea or thing but on **being beyond earthly, a transcendental being, the redeemer of creation, our Lord Jesus Christ.** (*OEO*, p.5)

Here, in this text, the pairs of words used synonymously are *greatness-grandeur*; *product-fruit*; *belief-faith*, as well as the different descriptive phrases used for Jesus Christ. The emphasis of the bishop here is on the productivity of faith in God. The text is found in the context of the bishops' admonition of the faithful to live their lives according to the faith they profess so as to bridge the wide gap between religion and morality in the Nigerian society. Greatness and grandeur, both denoting large size, are used to emphasize the high degree of the civilisation brought about by Christian faith. Product and fruit, which are manufacturing and plant registers, respectively, emphasize result, productivity and fruitfulness. The two synonyms which are also metaphorically used are meant to echo the bishops' message that faith in God must be accompanied by good works. Belief and faith are used synonymously to project the theme of faith in God. The expression, *a being beyond human*, used synonymously with *being beyond earthly, a transcendental being, the redeemer of creation, our Lord Jesus Christ*, serve to emphasize the divinity of the object of faith. In fact it is this divinity that makes Christian

faith productive, one capable of bringing about such enormous civilization. Through the use of these numerous synonyms, the bishops foreground the theme of faith in God and the need for the faithful to live good lives as a testimony of the faith they profess.

Also consider the use of the synonyms *oppression and persecution* and *steadfastly* and *unwavering* in text 6 below:

Text 6:

They [the forefathers in faith] suffered **oppression** and **persecution**. Yet they were **unwavering** in their faith and **steadfastly** bore witness to it through good Christian living. (*LTF*, P.4)

Oppression and *persecution* are used synonymously in the text, and so are *unwavering* and *steadfastly*. The first pair of synonyms belongs to the class of abstract nouns. The words denote suffering inflicted by an external force. Despite this suffering which is supposed to constitute a setback to the faith of the forefathers, they remained resolute. The words *unwavering* and *steadfastly* denote this resoluteness, which is a characteristic feature of real faith in God. They are considered to be synonyms although they belong to different parts of speech: the former is an adjective while the latter is an adverb. The synonyms are used by the bishops to emphasise the strength of faith demonstrated by the early Christians despite numerous oppositions. The bishops are of the view that real faith in God is that which stands the test of time, that which triumphs over challenging circumstances. This is the kind of faith they expect the faithful to demonstrate. This message is effectively communicated through the use of synonyms.

4.1.3 Antonyms

Antonyms are words that have opposite meaning. Palmer (2000) identifies three kinds of opposites as gradable, complementary, and relational opposites. Gradable opposites are seen in terms of degrees of the quality involved, as in *wide/ narrow*, *old/ young*, *big/ small*, etc. Complementary opposites involve items that are complementary to each other, as in *married/ single*, *male/ female*, *alive/ dead*, etc., while relational opposites exhibit the reversal of a relationship between items, as in *buy/ sell*, *lender/ borrower*, *parent/ child*, *give/ receive*, etc. In the bishops' letters, the theme of faith in God is conveyed through the use of antonyms, which constitute 16.8% of the total frequency of faith-related lexical choices deployed. Examples of faith-related antonyms in the letters are *weakness-strength*, *faith-fear*, *faith-sight*, *doubt-hold*,

freedom-slaves, visible-invisible, human-divine, seen-unseen, power-weakness, faith-works, believing-doubting, foundation-starting-point, hearers-doers, etc. Consider text 7 below:

Text 7:

The profession of Simon Peter shows clearly that the light of God's grace transforms human being's **limited** vision to the **higher** vision of God: The revelation of the true identity of Jesus Christ was not by **sight** but by **faith**. (WWF, p.45)

Antonymous relations exist between the adjectives *limited* and *higher* and between the nouns *sight* and *faith*, in the text above. In the context of this text, the bishops admonish the faithful to remain steadfast in their faith in God, as it is only through this that they will be able to understand the plan of God for them.. The text is a Biblical example cited to buttress this message. The antonyms *limited* and *higher* are used to mark the difference between the realm of the divine which is the realm of God, and the realm of reality which is the realm of man. The former is higher while the latter is limited. It is only through faith, which is a grace given by God, that man can attain that higher realm and be able to see beyond the realities around him. Through the contrast brought about by the use of the antonyms the bishop emphasises the need for faith in God. The second pair of antonyms, *sight* and *faith*, is parallel to the first. *Sight* corresponds to *limited* vision while *faith* corresponds to *higher* vision. Revelations from God are received through the eyes of faith, and not through physical sight. The emphasis of the bishop, through the use of these antonyms, is on faith in God. The contrasts enable the faithful to understand the difference between the realm of the divine and of the physical, and the role of faith in linking the two.

The use of antonyms to reflect the theme of faith in God is further seen in text 8 below:

Text 8:

For Paul, faith has in addition to **past** dimensions also **future** ones as the work **begun** by the redeeming **death** and justifying **resurrection** of Jesus will be **consummated** in eternal **life** (LTF, p.20)

Here the antonyms are *past* and *future*, *begun* and *consummated*, and *death, resurrection/life*. These are employed to explain the theme of faith in God. *Past* corresponds to *begun* while *future* corresponds to *will be consummated*. Christ initiated our faith in the past through his death and resurrection just as he is going to end it in future in eternal life. The contrast between

these pairs of antonyms is thus blurred, as it is Christ who connects both our past and future as he is both the author and finisher of our faith. He is the same yesterday, today, and always. The choice of the antonyms is meant to reiterate the theme of faith in God. Also, the antonyms *death* and *resurrection/life* are used to advance the theme of faith. In the context of Christian faith the two antonyms often form a fixed collocation, such that when they are used, the emphasis is no longer on the contrast between them but on what they have jointly come to symbolise in Christianity: faith. The antonyms are therefore appropriate in projecting the theme of faith in God.

A further example of the use of antonyms to portray the theme of faith in God is seen in text 9 below:

Text 9:

Beyond the external verbal profession of faith or ritual religious acts, **faith** has to be expressed in good **works**. St James was very clear on this when he stated that **faith** without good **works** is dead. (*IYHF*, p.29)

In this text, *faith* and *works* are contrasted to reflect the wide gap there is between the lives of the faithful and the faith they profess, and the need to strike a balance between the two. The bishop's message is that faith is useless if it does not reflect in the daily living of the faithful. The bishop is of the view that Christian faith, as a practical faith, cannot be separated from good works and so should reflect in the day-to-day living of the faithful. By contrasting between *faith* and *works*, therefore, the theme of faith is emphasized. This is further intensified by the repetition of the antonyms in the paraphrased quotation from St James in the Holy Bible. The bishop's message of faith is thus foregrounded by the use of antonyms and validated by Biblical quotation.

4.1.4 Lexical repetitions

Lexical repetition is the occurrence of the same lexical item more than once in a text. Apart from serving a cohesive function, it is a strong pointer to the themes of a text. It keeps the reader focused on the topic or idea being repeated. Faith-related lexical repetitions have the lowest frequency rate of 8.0% of the total frequency of faith-related lexical choices in the letters, which is 286. Words, such as *faith*, *believe*, *Church*, *mystery*, *Christianity*, *God*, *cross*, *Christian*, *commitment*, etc., are repeated to keep the theme of faith in the consciousness of the

audience to ensure concentration and understanding. In text 10 for example, the word *commitment* is repeated three times and the word *Christ* two times, to emphasise faith in God:

Text 10:

Faith in Jesus **Christ** which Paul harps upon is not merely an intellectual acceptance of a body of truth, but a total surrender and **commitment** to the person of **Christ**. It is not a **commitment** that is made once and for all. Rather, it is a **commitment** that is to be nurtured so that it can grow.... (LTF, p.17)

Commitment means devotion to something, somebody or a cause. It involves much attention and a sacrifice of both time and resources and so relates to faith. So does the word *Christ* relate to faith. Christ himself is the basis of Christian faith. By hammering on the words, *commitment* and *Christ*, the bishop intends to register the theme of faith in the minds of the faithful, as faith in God is considered to be a very important subject in Christianity. Christianity as a religion which bothers mainly on mysteries requires faith for its acceptance and practice. Repetition of the faith-related words in this text is therefore important in ensuring that this message of faith is made clear to the faithful. The force of the repetition is intensified by the use of related words such as *acceptance* and *surrender*. These emphasize the degree of commitment to Christ expected of the faithful.

Similarly, in the text 11 below, the repetition of the words *cross* and *Christ* is meant to foreground the theme of faith:

Text 11:

Christianity without the **cross** is false. You will never find **Christ** anywhere without his **cross**. (LTF, p.44)

The above text occurs in the context of the bishop's exhortation on the need for the faithful to remain steadfast in their faith, even in the face of challenging circumstances. The word *cross* is repeated two times. *Cross*, as used in the text and in the context of Christianity, is a symbol of sufferings, persecutions or trials. By its repetition, the bishop emphasises the necessity of sufferings and trials in the growth and development of faith in God. The repetition of the word *Christ* is meant to intensify this message. The text is an indirect criticism of the undue emphasis, in most Pentecostal Churches, on prosperity and miracles with the impression

that whoever embraces Christ ceases to suffer or have problems. The bishop through this device of repetition makes it unequivocally clear to the Catholic faithful that suffering is the crucible in which faith is tested, refined and made strong, and that just as Christ and the cross are inseparable, so are Christianity and sufferings or trials. The second sentence is a restatement of the first. This adds to the thematic emphasis achieved through the repetition of the word *cross*.

Another example of the use of lexical repetition to communicate the theme of faith in the bishops' letters is found in text 12 below:

Text 12:

The God we worship is a **mystery**. The Trinity is a **mystery**. The incarnation is a **mystery**. The teaching of Christ is **not according to the wisdom of this world**. The truths we teach are **mysteries, hidden from all eternity**. The death and resurrection of Christ are **mysteries**. The Church is a **mystery**. The Sacraments are **mysteries**. The priesthood is a **mystery**. The Christian life itself is a **mystery**. (WWF, pp.3-4)

Here, the word *mystery*, together with its variant *mysteries*, is repeated eleven times in various forms: six times as a singular noun, three times as a plural noun, and two times as restatements in other words (in sentences 4 and 5). This is a way of emphasising the fundamentality of faith to Christian religion. If everything about the Christian religion—God, the Trinity, the incarnation, the teaching of Christ, the truth taught by the Church, the death and resurrection of Christ, the Church, the Sacraments, the priesthood, and Christian life itself—is all mysteries, then the indispensability of faith in its practice becomes evident. The word *mystery* refers to something that is unfathomable, something, that is, beyond human understanding. It is therefore only through faith that such a thing can be accepted. Both the eleven-time repetition of the word *mystery* and a catalogue of the essentials of Christianity which are all mysteries combine to make the message of faith in God stand out clearly. The faithful are made to see clearly the need for them to live a life of faith. The repetition, apart from emphasising the theme of faith, adds beauty and rhythm to the text.

4.2 Lexical choices for the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church

This is the second major theme found in the bishops' Lenten pastorals. The bishops express worry over the non-Catholic behaviours of some of the faithful and the facility with which a good number of them defect to non-Catholic Churches and groups, abandoning the

Roman Catholic Church which, according to them, is the Ark of Salvation. They are of the view that the Roman Catholic Church has all the ordinary means given by Jesus Christ for the sanctification and salvation of men and women, as it has remained the historical link with Christ and the apostles to whom Christ passed on his work of preaching, teaching, sanctifying and shepherding. The bishops therefore ask the faithful to guard against anything that can threaten their steadfast adherence to the Roman Catholic faith and perseverance in the Roman Catholic Church, as this would endanger their eternal salvation.

The theme of loyalty is communicated through loyalty-related lexical choices such as choice of peculiar Roman Catholic Church words, synonyms, antonyms, and lexical repetitions. These constitute 22.6% of the total frequency of theme-related lexical choices deployed.

4.2.1 Words signifying the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church

These are Roman Catholic Church-related words. They constitute 68.1% of the total frequency of loyalty-related lexical choices, which is 185. They are used to convey the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. Examples include words such as *grotto, rosary, Mass, scapular, medals, crucifix, Eucharist, confessional, saints, celibacy, Mary, statues, images, purgatory, shrines, cults, cardinals, See, pope, indulgence, papal, cathedraticum, Catechumen, sacramental, magisterium, etc.* By making these lexical selections the bishops indicate the Roman Catholic nature of the discourse and demonstrate the theme of loyalty to the Catholic Church. For example, in texts 13 and 14 below, the collocations *Holy Mass* and *Eucharistic Celebration*, as well as the lexical items *Catholic* and *confession* are peculiarly Catholic:

Text 13:

The Holy **Mass** is the same sacrifice of Christ which the Church continues to carry out in memory of Him as Jesus Christ mandated at the Last Supper. (FFF, p.94)

Text 14:

The **Catholic** is bound to the following fundamental religious obligations: active participation in Sunday **Eucharistic Celebration**, receiving Holy Communion and going to **confession** frequently... (FFF, p.89)

The *Holy Mass* in text 13 refers to the Roman Catholic Church liturgical celebration which has the Holy Eucharist at its centre. Hence it is synonymous with *Eucharistic Celebration* in text 14. It is a celebration in which the redeeming sacrifice of Christ on the Cross at Calvary is re-enacted as a sacramental memorial for the living and the dead. The choice of the words is appropriate as it enables the bishop not only to foreground the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith and doctrine, but also to enhance the faith development of the faithful and to carry them along in the discussion. The celebration of the Holy Mass requires maximum faith from the participants.

The Holy Eucharist is believed to contain the abiding presence of Jesus Christ in the form of bread and wine, and the celebration is believed to draw the participants, day by day, into closer union with God and with each other. The choice of the word *Mass* is therefore appropriate in a Catholic discourse of this nature which is aimed at promoting Catholic faith and its practice among the faithful. The collocation *Holy Mass* emphasizes the sacredness of the Eucharistic celebration and its sanctifying power.

Text 15 is another example of the use of Roman Catholic Church-related words to foreground the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church:

Text 15:

Hold tight to the tradition of praying your **rosary**, the compendium of prayers, the way of the Church to Christ through **Mary**... (FFF, p.100)

Here the message centres on loyalty to the Catholic Church. The word *rosary* is appropriately chosen to project the Catholic faith and doctrine and to carry the faithful along in the discussion. Rosary is a series of set prayers recited through a string of beads and addressed to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, asking for her intercession for the faithful before her son. In the Catholic Church, it is believed that the Virgin Mary, as a saint and as the Mother of Jesus Christ, can easily intercede for the faithful to obtain graces for them from her son just as she did for the couple at the wedding in Canaan. Any Catholic faithful, therefore, who prays the rosary in faith, is sure to have his or her prayers answered. No wonder the bishop enjoins the faithful to maintain their loyalty to the Church's practice of praying the rosary. The choice of the word *rosary* is appropriate in a discourse of this nature which is concerned with the promotion of the Catholic faith. The occurrence of the word *Mary* in this context imbues the

word with meanings other than its denotative meaning of the mother of Jesus Christ. It connotes the devotion and reverence often given to her which sometimes attracts criticism from non-Catholic groups.

4.2.2 Antonyms

Antonyms, in addition to loyalty-related words, are also used to convey the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. They constitute 14.6% of the total frequency of loyalty-related lexical forms. Text 16 below is an example of the use of antonyms to convey the theme of loyalty in the bishops' letters:

Text 16:

We must be very careful in these days of explosion of preachers and teachers to know and **hold** tenaciously the **true** doctrines and **reject** the **false** ones being spread with frenzied zeal (*FFF*, p.38)

The antonymous pairs in the above text are *hold* and *reject*, *true* and *false*. To hold something especially a belief, which is the case here, means to stand on it with conviction. What is held onto is usually considered to be the truth by the person holding onto it. On the other hand, to reject something means not to accept or approve of, probably because it is considered not to be genuine. The polarity created here is between the Catholic doctrines and non-Catholic doctrines. The former are to be held onto because they are true, while the latter are to be rejected because they are false. Through the contrasts created by the choice of these antonyms, the bishop foregrounds the theme of loyalty to the Catholic faith. The antonyms occur in the context of the bishop's warning to the faithful against contrary doctrines. These are seen as posing dangers to their Catholic faith.

Furthermore, in text 17, the antonyms *un-Catholic* and *Catholic*, *catholic* and *protestant* are deployed to foreground the theme of loyalty to the Catholic faith:

Text 17:

We are not surprised when we see characters that are **uncatholic** and prayer attitudes that are strange to **Catholic** ways in our parishes today. Unfortunately, these distracted brothers and sisters of ours are often neither

good in their **catholic** doctrines and pieties nor better in the **protestant** prayer cultures. (OEO, p.19)

The antonyms *Catholic-uncatholic* and *catholic-protestant* in text 20 are all adjectives. The first pair of antonyms is used to describe the Roman Catholic faithful whose activities are not according to the ways of the Roman Catholic Church. In other words they are catholic by appellation, but non-Catholic by behaviour. The second pair is a repetition of the first pair of antonyms but with modification. The word *uncatholic* is now specified as *protestant*. Both describe the doctrines and cultures now found in the lives of those faithful, presenting them as neither fully Catholic nor fully protestant. The antonyms are used to portray this dilemma in their character as a mark of disloyalty to the Catholic faith. The faithful are enjoined to shun anti-Catholic behaviours.

Text 18 provides another example of the use of antonyms to develop the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church:

Text 18:

You must keep to what you have been taught and know to be true. You must **follow** the **narrow** way of **the cross** and **ignore** the **expressway** of **quick and total solution to all problems** in your life offered by those who sell Jesus Christ at a discount! (WWF, p.66)

The antonyms deployed here are *follow-ignore*, *narrow-express*, *the cross-quick and total solution to all problems*. The Roman Catholic doctrine is presented as what has been taught and known to be true, the *narrow way of the cross*, which should be embraced. The *narrowway* is an allusion to the Bible where Christ admonishes his listeners to enter through the narrow gate that leads to eternal life. By analogy, the Catholic doctrine is presented as the narrow way that leads to eternal life and so should be followed, even though it may involve suffering and difficulties. Non-Catholic doctrine, believed to be false, is on the other hand presented as an expressway that leads to destruction, and should be ignored, even though it holds some attractions. The essence of these antonyms is to draw a polarity between Catholic faith and non-Catholic faith and emphasize the need to remain loyal to the Catholic faith.

4.2.3 Lexical Repetitions

Lexical items are also repeated in the bishops' letters to communicate the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. They make up 10.8% per cent of the total frequency of loyalty-related lexical choices in the letters. The use of lexical repetitions in relation to the theme of loyalty is exemplified by text 19 below:

Text 19:

...**the Catholic Church** does not teach according to the popular opinion or expectations! **The Catholic Church** teaches and holds strongly to what has been handed on to her by God through Jesus Christ and the Apostles.(FFF, p.91)

In text 19, the noun phrase *the Catholic Church* is repeated two times as the subject of the two sentences in the text, the first sentence being negative and the second positive. The essence of the repetition is to lay emphasis on the Church as the true Church of God, a Church that is of divine origin, whose teachings are handed from God. The Church is presented as unique and superior to other Churches as its teachings are of divine origin, unlike those of other Churches. This may smack of pride, but the intention is to get the faithful to become proud of the Catholic faith and remain loyal to it. The repetition of the phrase *the Catholic Church* conveys this theme of loyalty to the Catholic faith.

Another instance of the use of lexical repetition to foreground the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith is seen in the words *Catholic* and *faith* in text 20:

Text 20:

A **Catholic** who rejects or doubts a **Catholic** doctrine proposed to be believed with divine and **Catholic faith** or teaches a doctrine contrary to the **Catholic faith**, especially a **dogma fidei**, a dogmatic expression of **faith** is endangering his or her communion with the **Catholic** Church through heresy. (WWF, p.33)

Here, *Catholic* is repeated five times. In its first occurrence, it is used as a noun referring to an adherent of the Catholic faith. In its repeated occurrences it is used as an adjective qualifying *doctrine*, *faith*, and *Church*. The essence of the repetition is to emphasize adherence to the Catholic teachings as a necessary part of communion with the Church. In other words, loyalty

to the teachings of the Church is a prerequisite for communion with the Church. Lack of such loyalty incurs the punishment of excommunication from the Church. This is meant to alert the faithful on the danger inherent in non-adherence to the Church's doctrine.

Furthermore, the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith is communicated through the repetition of the word *faith* in text 21:

Text 21:

This is the Church of our **faith**, of the **faith** of the Apostles, of the **faith** of our Fathers, the **faith** of the Holy Catholic Church. (*FFF*, p.17)

Faith is repeated four times in text 21. There is a progression from our faith, through the faith of the Apostles, the faith of our Fathers to the faith of the Holy Catholic Church. It shows that the Catholic faith is an inherited faith, and as such it has a tradition which should be maintained. It is inherited from the Apostles of Jesus Christ and so follows Apostolic tradition. This is the point being made by the bishop through the four-time repetition of the word *faith*. His intention is to convince the faithful of the divine origin of the Catholic Church so as to make them see the Catholic faith as the one and only true faith to identify with.

4.2.4 Synonyms

In addition to the use of lexical repetitions, the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith is also portrayed through the use of synonyms, which constitute 6.5% of the total frequency of lexical choices relating to the theme of loyalty, as can be seen in the text 22:

Text 22:

...in all, the mystery of the Church shines forth for all who **believe**. It is only in **faith** that one identifies the Church of the Creed and **holds on to** it without straying into many attractive bye-ways presented to men and women in our days as the promised land. (*FFF*, p.34)

The words *believe* and *faith*, as well as the expression *hold on to* are in synonymous relations though they belong to different parts of speech. *Believe* is a finite verb, *faith* a noun, and *hold on to* a phrasal verb. The three synonyms denote acceptance, adherence or loyalty to something, in this case, the Roman Catholic Church. The emphasis is on faith as the only way

through which the mystery and the divinity of the Catholic Church are understood. The faith meant here is faith in the Roman Catholic Church. Adherence to any other faith is considered as going astray. Through the synonyms, the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith is communicated.

Text 23 provides another instance of the use of synonyms in the bishops' pastoral letters to express the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church:

Text 23:

A Catholic who **doubts** or **rejects** a Catholic doctrine...or teaches a doctrine contrary to the Catholic faith...is endangering his or her communion with the Catholic Church through heresy. (*FFF*, p.3)

In the context of the above text, *doubts* is synonymous with *rejects*. Both imply unwillingness to accept something. The meaning of one of the synonyms reinforces the meaning of the other. It is doubt about something that leads to its rejection. The synonyms relate to the theme of faith. The bishop uses them to make clear to the faithful the danger or risk inherent in questioning the Catholic doctrine. The word heresy also fortifies the theme of loyalty to the Catholic Church, as it relates to the issue of doubting or rejecting a doctrine one is supposed to uphold. The consequent danger is excommunication from the Catholic Church. The essence of the synonyms is to emphasise the theme of loyalty to the Catholic Church. By framing the sentence as a threat, the bishop intensifies its persuasive force.

Similarly, in text 24, the word *martyrdom* is used synonymously with the phrases *the daily dying to self*, and *the embracing of the cross*.

Text 24:

Faithfulness to the Catholic faith requires, **martyrdom**, **the daily dying to self** in order to give ample space to God in our lives. It requires the **embracing of the cross** (*WWF*, p.68)

The phrase *the daily dying to self* is given as an explanation of the word *martyrdom*, and is placed in apposition to it, while the phrase *the embracing of the cross* is expressed as a semantic equivalent of the idea of martyrdom earlier expressed. The synonyms denote suffering and sacrifice. They are used by the bishops to emphasize the level of commitment to the Roman Catholic faith expected of the faithful. They are expected to be loyal to the Catholic

faith even to the extent of giving their lives for it, just as Jesus Christ gave his life on the cross for humanity. This is a foregrounding of the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

4.3 Lexical choices for the theme of repentance

Theme of repentance is the third major theme in the bishops' letters. The bishops are disturbed by the wide gap between religion and morality in the Nigerian society. They decry the irony that while the society continues to witness proliferation of churches, prayer centres, crusades, night vigils, and other religious activities, there is no corresponding improvement in the moral and spiritual lives of the people. Instead vices such as greed, bribery and corruption, materialism, idolatry, occultism practices, armed robbery, stealing, adulteration of products, and other forms of immoral acts continue to be on the increase. This, the bishops argue, is because Christianity, for some people, has nothing to do with how they live their lives. They submit that it is not enough to observe pious or religious practices but that religion must be rooted in good works. They therefore call on the faithful to repent from their sins and live a life that is in consonance with the faith they profess.

The theme of repentance is conveyed in the bishops' letters through lexical choices such as repentance-related words, antonyms, synonyms, and lexical repetitions. These constitute 22.4% of the total frequency of theme-related lexical choices deployed.

4.3.1 Words signifying the theme of repentance

To communicate the theme of repentance, the bishops have selected lexical items relating to repentance. These constitute 67.8% of the total frequency of repentance related lexical choices deployed, which is 183. Such words include *conversion, reconciliation, forgiveness, sins, indulgence, Lent, purification, atonement, salvation, penance, confessional, renewal holiness, transformation, change, surrender, submission, etc.* This way they keep their message in the constant focus of the faithful thereby ensuring its understanding. Consider the choice of the word *conversion* in text 25:

Text 25:

This story of the prodigal son is the classical story of **conversion**. Any event of **conversion** is a return journey to the Father. (CTC, p.7)

The word *conversion* means change of the form or functions of one thing into another, change from one religion to another, from one currency to another or from one measuring system to another. The functional word here is change; change from one state to another. *Conversion* in the context of the above text is strictly related to repentance. It means a change of focus from the world to God, a change from sinful life to a life of righteousness, a change from bad old ways to new and good ways of life. The word conveys the theme of repentance which is one of the preoccupations of the bishops in their pastoral letters. The story of the prodigal son gives a clue to the meaning of *conversion* in this context. The prodigal son, after squandering his father's wealth through bad life, realises his mistakes and returns to his father asking for forgiveness. *Conversion* is thus a return journey of a sinner to the Merciful and Loving God who is ever willing to accept him back. In this sense, conversion is synonymous with repentance, which is a change of heart, a feeling of remorse for wrong doing. Through the word *conversion* the bishop admonishes the faithful on the importance of holiness of life in securing a peaceful relationship with God and man and in gaining eternal salvation.

Similarly, the words *Lent*, *repent*, *sins*, and *change* are appropriately chosen in text 26 to project the theme of repentance.

Text 26:

:

Each **Lent**, Our Holy Mother Church calls us to **repent** of our **sins** and **change** lives. She calls us to make serious efforts and **turn** to God completely. (*GCTR*, P.36)

Lent is a liturgical season observed by Christians between Ash Wednesday and Easter Sunday to commemorate the forty-day fasting of Jesus Christ as well as his suffering, death and resurrection. In the context of the above text, *Lent* is used to mean a season of repentance, a season when Christians mourn for their sins and make efforts to change from their old sinful life to a new life in Christ. The words *repent*, *sins* and *change* thus relate to this meaning of lent and together they constitute lexical collocates of repentance. The meaning of repentance is restated in the second sentence, as indicated by *turn to God completely*. By choosing these words, the bishop emphasizes the theme of repentance and persuades the faithful to renew their lives.

Again, the word *salvation* in text 27 below projects the theme of repentance:

Text 27:

The danger of losing one's eternal **salvation** is real. Pursuing the promises of temporal well-being, prosperity and material successes being dangled before people, one can lose the precious inheritance which God has kept for those who are faithful. (*FFF*, p.81)

Salvation means rescue from harm or danger. In the Christian religious parlance, salvation is the liberation of man from the influence of sin and its consequences. In the context of the above text, salvation refers to the precious inheritance which God has reserved for those who are faithful to him. To be faithful to God means to live a life that is in accordance with his divine will, a sin-free life, a life of holiness. It is only people who live this way that would inherit eternal salvation. The choice of the word *salvation* in the bishops' letters is therefore significant in projecting the theme of repentance; for without repenting of one's sins, one cannot inherit eternal life, since according to the Scriptures nothing impure shall enter the Kingdom of God. The bishop considers it a point of duty to remind the faithful of the reality of the danger of losing eternal salvation, and that is spending eternity in hell fire. This is aimed at persuading them to repent of their sins.

4.3.2 Antonyms

The theme of repentance is again manifested in the bishops' letters through the use of antonyms, and these make up 12.0% of the total frequency of repentance-related lexical choices, which is 183. Examples of repentance-related antonyms deployed include *evil-salvation*, *forgiveness-sin*, *doctrine-practice*, *repair-damage*, *renounces-gains*, *Christian-unchristian*, *vices-virtues*, *light-darkness*, *life-death*, *eternity-time*, *strength-weakness*, *triumph-despair*, *good-evil*, *ability-inability*, *struggle-success*, *commission-omission*, *spiritual-corporal*, *lose-find*, *folly-wisdom*, *earthly-heavenly*, *perishable-imperishable*, *restless-rest*, *hard-easy*, *rich-poor*, etc. By means of antonyms such as these, the message of repentance and reconciliation is communicated to the faithful, as exemplified by text 28 below:

Text 28:

St. Augustine gives us the reason for this intense longing for God when he wrote that God made us for Himself and

our souls are **restless** until they **rest** in Him. (*RBGN*, p. 21)

The words *restless* and *rest* are antonyms in text 28, which is a quotation from St. Augustine. The bishops have quoted the Saint in order to validate their message that yearning for God is a sure sign and guarantee of repentance. *Restless*, which is an adjective, means without rest, without peace, without comfort; while *rest*, which is a verb, means to have peace and comfort. The former characterises life outside God, while the latter is associated with life in God. We find rest and comfort in our home. When we find ourselves in a place that is not our home, we tend to become restless and uncomfortable, until we go back home. God is our home where our comfort and rest lie. Outside him, we become restless and uncomfortable. The antonyms are thus used by the bishops to make clear to the faithful the consequences of life in God and life outside God and to emphasise the role of repentance in giving rest to the restless soul of man. Through the choice of the antonyms the bishops demonstrate to the faithful that it is only in God, the originator of their lives, that their souls can find rest, hence the need for them to repent of their sins and submit their lives to God. Repentance thus becomes the link from a life of restlessness to a life of rest. The antonyms are thus appropriately deployed to advance the theme of repentance and reconciliation.

Text 29 below is another example of the use of antonyms to express the theme of repentance:

Text 29:

...baptism is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion. It is by baptism that one **renounces evil** and **gains salvation**. (*CTC*, p.7)

Here, *renounces evil* is contrasted with *gains salvation*. These antonyms are lexical collocates of repentance and so are appropriate in projecting the theme of repentance. To renounce means to give up, usually what is not wanted because it is unpleasant, and in this case it is evil that is renounced; while to gain implies to avail oneself of something advantageous, something profitable, and here it is salvation that is gained. While the former is a negative verb that chooses a negative complement, the latter is positive verb which chooses positive complement. The antonyms are used by the bishops to draw a sharp contrast between the old way of life which the faithful are called to give up and the new way of life which they are enjoined to embrace.

The old way of life is associated with evil and so should be abandoned, while the new way of life is associated with salvation and so should be embraced. The ladder through which to move from the old evil way to the new way of salvation is baptism. The message here is on the importance of baptism in spiritual renewal, in repentance and reconciliation with God. The occurrence of the word *conversion* in the co-text strengthens the theme of repentance.

In text 30 below, the theme of repentance is also underscored through contrast between the highlighted pairs of words:

Text 30:

Our Christians must swim against the prevailing current of moral and spiritual decadence by mounting the noble platform of true Christian living. They cannot do this unless they are truly converted. Conversion means a change of the centre of joy from **self** to **God**, from **hatred** to **love**, and from **vices** to **virtues**. (GCTR, P.16)

The antonyms are *self* and *God*, *hatred* and *love*, and *vices* and *virtues*. These antonyms are associated with conversion which implies a change from one state to another, a change from ‘moral and spiritual decadence’ to ‘true Christian living.’ The antonyms are used to mark the wide gap that exists between the opposing states. One state is characterised by self, hatred and vices, the other by God, love and virtues. Conversion thus becomes the means of moving away from the unpleasant state which is the former, to the pleasant state which is the latter. The bishop defines the meaning of conversion by means of these antonyms so as to emphasise the change that is needed in the renewal of life--change from a sinful life to a righteous one. The change expected is from negative attributes which are self-centredness, hatred and vices to positive ones which are God-centeredness, love, and virtues.

4.3.3 Synonyms

Just as synonyms are used to advance the themes of faith and loyalty in the bishops’ letters, they are also used to convey the theme of repentance. Repentance-related synonyms constitute 10.4% of the total frequency of repentance-related lexical choices deployed. Examples are *conversion-repentance*, *sinfulness-foolishness*, *sin-evil*, *holiness-sanctity*, *sinned-turnedaway*, *penance-mortification*, *sin-death*, *authentic-genuine*, *suffering-misery*, *turbulence-*

temptation, gentleness-mildness, misfortunes-setbacks, etc. The use of synonyms to advance the theme of repentance in the letters is exemplified by text 31:

Text 31:

By denying oneself of legitimate pleasures through **fasting** and **abstinence**, one prepares oneself to be able to stand firm in times of **turbulence** and **temptation**. (RBGN, p.24)

Here *fasting* and *abstinence* are used synonymously, and so are *turbulence* and *temptation*. *Fasting* and *abstinence* imply denying oneself of something, usually by way of prayer, while *turbulence* and *temptation* in this context share the meaning of trouble or tribulation. The first pair is presented as a remedy to the situation denoted by the second pair, a situation which is capable of leading one to sin. The two pairs of synonyms are used in the context of the bishop's exhortation of the faithful to engage in fasting and abstinence so as to deepen their relationship with God and derive enough spiritual strength that will enable them to withstand any trial that can shake their faith and lead them to sin. The synonyms are thus appropriately deployed to intensify the theme of repentance.

In text 32 below, we find another example of the use of synonyms to foreground the theme of repentance in the bishops' letters:

Text 32:

The Holy Spirit impels us to develop a sense of sin by **returning** into ourselves and thus see the need to **go back** to the Father's house (Lk. 15:17-20). The call for ongoing **conversion** as the indispensable condition for authentic Christian witnessing in our society is very important because we seem to be destroying the very foundation of an ethically correct version of human existence. (GCTR, p.15)

Here *returning*, which is a gerund and *go back*, which is an infinitive, are used synonymously. They imply a turnabout, a reversal of direction. These qualities are associated with repentance. The need to make a U-turn or to reverse one's direction may be as a result of the fact that one has been on the wrong direction. The wrong direction in this context is sin and the right direction is God. Sin has taken man away from God, which is the right direction. The bishop's call is for a change of direction back to God. He calls on the faithful to make a U-turn in their

lives from sinfulness to righteousness. Since by their sins they have turned away from God, they need to return to God in righteousness. The synonyms are thus jointly synonymous with *conversion*, which, in this context, means a change of life from sinfulness to righteousness. The bishop has used these synonyms therefore to emphasise the theme of repentance and reconciliation with God.

Again, in text 33 below, the theme of repentance is foregrounded through the use of the synonyms *sin* and *evil*:

Text 33:

It is our objective in this pastoral...to promote the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness among us as a Church by addressing the divisions in the presbyterium, in parishes and among the religious...This entails the call for conversion on the part of all because division is only an indicator of the presence of **sin** and **evil** in our hearts. (GCTR, p.6)

The words *sin* and *evil* connote unwanted behaviour. Unwanted behaviour, from the spiritual point of view is termed sin, while from the social point of view, it is termed evil. What is considered to be a sin or an evil is therefore seen as abnormal, spiritually or socially. As such there is need for a change to the expected behaviour. Divisions constitute the unwanted behaviour here which is associated with sin and evil, and the change required is genuine repentance and reconciliation. The synonyms are used in the context of the bishop's statement of his objectives in his pastoral letter, one of which is to promote the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness among the faithful by addressing the division among them. According to the bishop, achieving this particular objective entails calling the faithful to conversion. The bishop has deployed the synonyms for the purpose of emphasizing the negative nature of divisions and the need to get rid of them in the pursuit of genuine repentance. The theme of repentance is further strengthened by its lexical collocates such as *conversion*, *reconciliation*, and *forgiveness*.

4.3.4 Lexical repetitions

As in the case of the theme of faith and loyalty, lexical repetition is also used to convey the theme of repentance. Repentance-related lexical repetitions constitute 9.8% of the total frequency of repentance-related lexical choices deployed. Examples of the words repeated

include: *Lent, conversion, repentance, sins, renewal, Christ, reconciliation, holiness, new, forgiveness, ashes, etc.* In text 34, for example, the word *Christ* is repeated eight times to emphasize the theme of repentance:

Text 34:

Our pastoral plan during this Lenten Season is centred on **Christ** and aims at leading our faithful to know, love and imitate **Christ** so that all may live the life of the Trinity and with **Christ** transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem. It is through fidelity to this that we all can live the life of **Christ**, the life from **Christ**, the life in **Christ**, and the life with **Christ**. This will then enable us to proclaim **Christ**, mould our communities with the hue of Christian heaven, and bring the incisive values of Christianity on all segments of our society and cultures. (GCTR, pp.4-5)

Here, the word *Christ* is repeated eight times. By means of this repetition the bishop emphasises the transforming power of Christ and the need for the faithful to avail themselves of this power by embracing Christ. Christ died to set man free from sins. He has thus delivered man from the shackles of sin and condemnation. Embracing Christ therefore is an acceptance of this freedom and a rejection of sin and its deadly consequences. It will result in the renewal of lives in all ramifications in line with Christian values. The word *Christ* thus connotes repentance, salvation and transformation. The rhythm formed by the repetition makes the message sticky and memorable. The essence of the repetition therefore is to emphasise and foreground the theme of repentance and reconciliation with God, and keep it in the consciousness of the faithful to enhance understanding.

Emphasis on the theme of repentance and reconciliation is also achieved in text 35 through the repetition of the word *reconcile*.

Text 35:

Our history as men and women is a wonderful history of **reconciliation**: the **reconciliation** whereby God as Father, in the blood and cross of his Son made man, **reconciles** the world to himself and thus brings into being a new family of those who have been **reconciled**. (GCTR, p.15)

The word *reconcile* is repeated four times here: two times as nominal and two times as a verb in its simple present tense form and past participle form. To reconcile with a person means to be at peace with him or her usually after a fight or a quarrel. The people involved can reconcile with one another or be reconciled by an external person. Emphasis is on peaceful existence. Reconciliation like repentance brings about renewal of life and relationship. Reconciliation in the context of the above text is between man and God after the Fall of Adam, and is achieved through the death of Jesus Christ. By means of the repetition of the word, the bishop emphasises the need for the faithful to be at peace with God, their creator and with their fellow human beings. This reinforces the theme of repentance and reconciliation. Achieving peace with God and man can only be made possible through genuine repentance.

In text 36 below, the lexical item *new* is repeated three times to foreground the theme of repentance:

Text 36:

This [the Lenten period] is a period of a **new** beginning, a **new** birth, and a **new** spring time in our spiritual life.
(GCTR, P.32)

New implies change from the old ways. Although the new way may sometimes be unpleasant and therefore unacceptable, the new way implied in the above text is pleasant and attractive. This is indicated by choice of the words *birth* and *spring* which denote phenomena that are happily welcomed. The word *new* together with *beginning*, *birth*, and *spring* connote newness and freshness of life. This is what repentance from sins means. By repeating the word *new* in the above text, the bishop emphasises the significance of the Season of Lent as a season of renewal of life, a season of repentance and reconciliation with God, and draws the attention of the faithful to the need for them to renew their lives by repenting of their sins especially during this season of renewal.

4.4 Lexical choices for the theme of love

Theme of love is the fourth major theme in the bishop's Lenten pastoral letters. The bishops express concern over the absence of love in our society which has led to a number of social vices and evils such as greed, injustice, violence, deceitfulness, selfishness, bribery and corruption, abuse of power, lust, nepotism, and sectionalism. They enlighten the faithful on God's unconditional love for man despite man's sinfulness and unworthiness. According to

them, God is a loving father who desires to have an intimate relationship with his children, and this he has demonstrated through the gift of his only son Jesus Christ to humanity. The bishops therefore appeal to the faithful to return God's love by also loving Him, their fellow human beings, as well as the whole creation, unconditionally. They make clear to the faithful that Christians are compelled to live a life of love because Christianity is a religion founded on love.

The theme of love is conveyed in the letters through love-related lexical choices such as love-related words, antonyms, synonyms and lexical repetitions. These constitute 20.0% of the total frequency of theme-related lexical choices in the letters.

4.4.1 Words signifying the theme of love

Just as words are appropriately chosen to convey the themes of faith, loyalty, and repentance, love-related words are chosen by the bishops to convey the message of love to the audience. They constitute 47.2% of the total frequency (163) of love-related lexical forms in the letters, and include words such as *charity, bond, compassion, intimacy, bosom, mercy, agape, friendliness, selflessness, sacrifice, care, tenderness, desires, attachment, fondness, altruism, generosity, almsgiving, self-denial, giving, goodness, affection, etc.* In text 37 below, for example, the words *sacrifice* and *love* reflect the theme of love in the letters:

Text 37:

Christ paid the supreme and selfless **sacrifice** by His blood in order to save man and creation. Hence greater **love** than this no man has, that a man should give his life for his friends (cf. Jn.15:13). (*TML*, p.19)

Sacrifice is the offering of a slaughtered person or animal to God or a god, or the giving up of something valuable for the sake of someone or something else. Love means admiration and care for another. Sacrifice is usually borne out of love. In the context of the above text, the use of the word *sacrifice* shows the degree of love Jesus Christ has for humanity. It means that Jesus offered himself to be slaughtered for the sake of humanity; he gave up his life that we might live. This is love at its peak, the kind that nobody else has ever demonstrated in the history of humanity. The nature of this sacrifice is specified by the use of the adjectives

supreme and *selfless*. The bishop has carefully chosen this word to show the faithful the extent they are expected to go in demonstration of their love for God and man. Christ's example is presented to them as a model. They are thus enjoined to tow the line of this agape love when dealing with others. The choice of the word *sacrifice* is therefore appropriate to foreground the theme of love in the bishops' letters.

Another example of the choice of appropriate word to convey the theme of love in the bishops' letters is the word *charity* in text 38 below:

Text 38:

Although we have to work towards transforming the structures of injustice that make it possible for some people to be poor and needy, we also have to build up structures of **charity** that make it possible for those in need to receive spontaneous and enduring help without tampering with or encroaching on their dignity and sense of self-worth. (*LALG*, p.58)

The word *charity* means reaching out to people in need by way of rendering assistance to them. In text 38 above, the bishop uses the word to refer to an institution or organisation concerned with rendering assistance to the needy. By calling for an establishment of such an institution, the bishop, indirectly calls for a demonstration of love for the less privileged. One is naturally first moved to pity and love before demonstrating this feeling through charity. Charity is therefore an act of love. The choice of the word by the bishop is suitable to convey the theme of love and move the faithful to the desired action.

The word *care* in text 39 below is another example of the bishops' choice of love-related words to convey the theme of love:

Text 39:

God is like a father who out of love **cares** for and **follows up** his children. (*RBGN*, p.12)

The word *care* means giving attention to or showing concern for someone or something. In the context of the text above, it means not just showing attention or concern but also warmth and affection prompted by love. The love of a father for his children is the reason for his care for them; he can go to any length to demonstrate this love. No wonder God, being a loving Father, shows his care for his children by sacrificing his only begotten son for their sake. The act of

caring is therefore a demonstration of genuine love. The choice of the lexical item *care*, intensified by the phrasal verb *follow-up*, is a contribution to the development of the theme of love. It is used by the bishop to make the faithful to react positively to their message of love for God and their neighbour.

4.4.2 Antonyms

As in the case of the portrayal of the themes of faith, loyalty and repentance, the theme of love is also portrayed by the bishops through the use of antonyms. Love-related antonyms constitute 22.1% of the total frequency (163) of love-related lexical choices in the letters. Examples include *hatred-love*, *peace-disorder*, *rich-poor*, *human-divine*, *male-female*, *husband-wife*, *action-definition*, *passion-reason*, *permits-forbids*, *altruistic-fools*, *folly-wisdom*, *earthly-heavenly*, *freedom-enslavement*, *man-woman*, *total-selective*, *Eros-Agape*, *faithful-unfaithful*, *giving-receiving*, *includes-excludes*, *words-deeds*, *joy-sadness*, *virtue-vice*, *young-old*, *sickness-good health*, etc. Text 40 below is an example for illustration:

Text 40:

Love has to do with fidelity. The one who loves binds **himself** or **herself** inextricably to the life and faith of the other: sharing **fortunes** and **misfortunes**, **success** and **failure**, **strength** and **weakness**. (LALG, p.9)

Four pairs of antonyms are deployed in the text above. They are: *himself-herself*, *fortunes-misfortunes*, *success-failure*, and *strength-weakness*. The antonyms are used to emphasize the point that love has to do with fidelity, in all situations, whether pleasant or unpleasant. There is no restriction, whatsoever. This fidelity, which is unconditional, is to be demonstrated to God as well as to one's spouse. The choice of the words *bind* and *sharing* gives an indication of inseparability and oneness between people in love, God's kind of love. The antonyms thus serve to project the theme of love.

Again, in text 41, the antonyms *giving* and *receiving* are used to foreground the theme of love and enhance its understanding.

Text 41:

Love is a single entity that has a **giving** and a **receiving** end. Neither **giving** alone nor **receiving** alone is enough, for love is reciprocal. Our capacity and readiness to **give** or show love should be equalled by our readiness for and

receptivity to love. Only those who are open and **receptive** to love can really **give** love in return. (*LALG*, pp.44-45)

The antonyms deployed here are *giving* and *receiving*. In the first sentence, the words function as participles qualifying the noun *end*. In the second sentence, they are deployed as gerunds functioning as the compound subjects of the main clause of the sentence. Then in the third sentence, the antonyms are repeated as *give* and *receptivity*, the former being a finite verb and the latter a noun. In the last sentence, the antonyms again change forms to *give* and *receptive*, a finite verb and an adjective. The essence of the antonyms and their repetition into various forms is to emphasize the reciprocity of love, to emphasize the fact that love is not a one-sided affair, but something that is given and returned. The Biblical idea that it is more blessed to give than to receive does not seem to apply here. In the view of the bishop both the capacity to give and the capacity to receive love should be equalled. The antonyms are thus used to communicate the theme of love. The six-time repetition of the word *love* adds to the thematic emphasis.

In the same vein, the pairs of antonyms highlighted in text 42 point to the theme of love and enhance its understanding by the faithful:

Text 42:

God loves us unconditionally...in spite of our **sinfulness** or **sanctity** of life, **weakness** or **strength**, **failure** or **success**. (*LALG*, p.21)

The antonymous pairs are *sinfulness-sanctity*, *weakness-strength*, and *failure-success*. Each word in a pair is joined to the other with the coordinating conjunction *or*. The antonyms denote human conditions which the love of God transcends, but which determine human love. *Sinfulness*, *weakness*, and *failure* denote unpleasant conditions, while *sanctity*, *strength*, and *success* denote pleasant ones. Ordinarily, while the positive conditions attract God's love, the negative ones should not. This is where the unconditional love of God comes in, the type the faithful are enjoined to embrace. The synonyms are deployed to stress the fact that God loves humanity despite all odds. It is this unconditional love that made him sacrifice his only son for man despite man's sinfulness. The appeal the bishop is making to the faithful here is that they should respond appropriately to the love of God by also showing unconditional love to one another and the entire creation.

4.4.3 Synonyms

The theme of love is further conveyed through the deployment of synonyms constituting 22.1% of the total frequency (163) of love-related lexical choices. Examples include synonyms such as *sacrifice-suffering*, *collegiality-communion*, *heart-centre*, *honest-sincere*, *peaceful-cordial*, *care-concern*, *charity-generosity*, *familiarity-intimacy*, *emotions-feelings*, *passionate-possessive*, *intimacy-tenderness*, *sacrificial-selfless*, *gentleness-mildness*, *loved-cared for*, *consummate-enveloping*, *total-undivided*, *loving-caring*, *duty-responsibility*, *closer-more intimate*, etc. Consider text 43 below:

Text 43:

In his words and deeds, Jesus demonstrates that what a sick person needs is not **condemnation** and **isolation**, but **attention** and **care**. (LALG, p.21)

Here, the words used synonymously are *attention-care* and *condemnation-isolation*. Attention and care denote love, and so in this context share the meaning of concern, fondness and kind consideration. On the other hand, condemnation and isolation denote lack of love, and its related qualities. By using the love synonyms, the bishop emphasises the need for the faithful to show love to the sick just as Jesus Christ has demonstrated. The beauty of giving attention and care to those who need them is made to shine out through contrast with *condemnation and isolation*. The choice of the opposing synonyms in the context of a message on love intensifies the theme of love.

In text 44 below, we find another example in which the theme of love is conveyed through synonyms:

Text 44:

Prayer is primarily a response to the gratuitous love of God and it nourishes our **familiarity** and **intimacy** with God. (RBGN, p.22)

The words that are synonymous here are *familiarity* and *intimacy*. They are used in the context of the bishop's exhortation of the faithful on the importance of prayer in building a close and intimate relationship with God. The synonyms are thus used to emphasize that intimacy, to specify the depth of the relationship man can establish with God through prayer. To maintain a familiar or intimate relationship with a person is to allow that person entry into one's privacy.

All obstacles or barriers are dismantled, and all secrets are made open. Requests are rarely turned down. These are the benefits the faithful stand to enjoy, if they establish an intimate relationship with God. But the access, the gate, the thoroughfare to all these is prayer. Through the use of the synonyms, the bishop presents his message of love vividly and emphatically to ensure proper understanding by the faithful.

Text 45 below further illustrates the use of synonyms to advance the theme of love:

Text 45:

Negative [societal] pressure is often mounted on virtuous people to be like the rest. This is a great obstacle to love which is **sacrificial** and **selfless**. (TML, p.35)

The synonyms in this text are *sacrificial* and *selfless*. They are used as adjectives to qualify the word *love*, indicating the altruistic and unequalled love demonstrated by Jesus Christ on the cross. The bishop is of the view that negative societal pressure constitutes a great threat to the practice of this kind of love among the faithful in Onitsha Province. He therefore enjoins the faithful to shun all forms of societal pressure and practice Christ-like love in their relationship with one another. The use of the synonyms therefore is for the purpose of emphasising the ideal love that is expected of every Christian as a follower of Christ.

4.4.4 Lexical repetitions

Lexical repetition is one of the reiterative devices through which the theme of love is conveyed in the bishops' letters. Lexical repetitions make up 8.6% of the total frequency (163) of love-related lexical forms in letters. Examples of such words that are repeated include: *love*, *Agape*, *Christ*, *God*, *intimacy*, *Father*, *Christianity*, *care*, *etc.* Text 46 below is an example of the use of lexical repetition to express the theme of love in the letters:

Text 46:

In Jesus, the incarnate expression of divine **love** and mercy, we are taught the centrality of **love** in our lives and our relationship with **God**. Jesus teaches us that **God** is **love** (cf. I Jn.4:8), whoever **loves** is a child of **God** and knows **God** (cf. 1 Jn. 4:7) (TML, p. 10)

Here the word *love* is repeated four times: three times as a noun, and once as a verb to emphasise the theme of love. The word *God* is also repeated four times. By this repetition the message of

love is foregrounded and understanding is enhanced. The message given to the faithful is that Jesus is a symbol of God's love and that they should emulate the kind of love he demonstrated, as such love is important in their lives and in their relationship with God who himself is love. It is only this God-like love symbolised by Jesus Christ that qualifies one to be a child of God and to know God. The hammering on the words *love* and *God* is an emphasis on the divinity of love and its necessity in relationship with God and man. The repetition makes the message sticky and memorable in the minds of the faithful.

The same way, in text 47, the words *intimacy* and *love* are repeated to emphasise the love-relationship between God and man:

Text 47:

...there is an **intimacy** between God and us human beings; an **intimacy** made possible by the **love** that God has poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit which he has given to us (Romans 5:5). Sometimes, the Bible uses the figure of mothers to represent this **intimacy** of **love** and care between God and human beings (Is. 49:14-15) (*RBGN*, p.11).

Intimacy is repeated three times while *love* is repeated two times. This is meant to emphasize the closeness that exists between God and man as a result of God's unconditional love for man. In the first occurrence of the word *intimacy* the faithful are informed of the existence of this closeness; in the second occurrence, the closeness is described, and finally, in the third occurrence, the faithful are told how it is represented in the Bible. Love is presented as the reason for this *intimacy* between God and man. The repetition of the two related words, in addition to their collocation with the word *care*, fortifies the theme of love. The message is validated by two references to the Holy Bible.

Furthermore, the repetition of the words *Christianity* and *love*, in text 48 also signals the theme of love in the bishops' letters:

Text 48:

To understand **Christianity** is to understand the demands of **love**. We may not live in wickedness and still profess **Christianity**. To understand **Christianity** is to do what it teaches and to do...is to **love** (*TML*, p.33).

Christianity is repeated three times here, and the word *love*, two times, to emphasize the point that Christianity is a religion of love. It is equated with love such that understanding its demands is the same as understanding the demands of love. Christianity originates from the love of Christ for man which he demonstrated through his sacrificial death on the cross. The repetition of the words *Christianity* and *love* is thus a device deployed to foreground the theme of love. It makes the bishop's message stand out and clear before the faithful, thus enhancing comprehension. The argument is that, as Christians, the faithful have the obligation to live a life of love, since Christianity is a religion that is founded on love, a religious faith that originates from the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ. It is a religion that brings people together to share things in love. So, the faithful are enjoined to live a life of love and sharing like the early Christians.

4.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the themes of the bishops' letters and the lexical choices made in conveying them were analyzed, using Halliday's Systemic Functional Grammar as a descriptive framework. The analysis revealed four major themes, namely: faith, loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church, repentance, and love. These were conveyed through lexical choices such as theme-related words, antonyms, synonyms, and lexical repetitions.

Frequency count of the lexical choices showed that the frequency of lexical devices relating to the theme of faith was 286 which was 35.0% of the total frequency deployed (817), and this was the highest. Next in high frequency were lexical choices relating to the theme of loyalty whose frequency was 185, that is 22.6% of 817. Repentance-related lexical choices were third in high frequency with a total of 183, which was 22.4% of 817. Finally, love-related lexical devices had the lowest frequency which was 163, that is 20.0% of 817. The high frequency of lexical choices relating to the theme of faith reflected emphasis on the theme of faith, and suggested that the theme was of utmost importance to the bishops. It was also not a coincidence that the theme of loyalty ranked next in emphasis, judging from the number of lexical choices relating to the theme. This is because faith in the Roman Catholic Church draws from Faith in God. This is suggested by the order in which the two occur in the Apostles' Creed.

In the next chapter, attention will be devoted to analysis of rhetorical devices in the bishops' letters alongside their persuasive discourse functions. This will be based on the Aristotelian Rhetoric, specifically the three modes of persuasion: *Ethos*, *Pathos*, and *Logos*.

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CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS OF RHETORICAL DEVICES AND THEIR PERSUASIVE DISCOURSE FUNCTIONS IN THE ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS' PASTORAL LETTERS

5.0 Introduction

This Chapter presents analysis of the rhetorical devices and their persuasive discourse functions in the bishops' Lenten pastorals letters. The analysis is based on the Aristotelian Rhetoric, particularly the three modes of persuasion: *Ethos*, *Pathos*, and *Logos*. It is guided by the second objective of the study which is: To identify and analyse the rhetorical devices in the letters alongside their persuasive discourse functions.

Roman Catholic bishops have deployed three categories of rhetorical devices in their pastoral letters in order to secure audience's compliance with their messages of faith, repentance, love and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. These are *logos*-based devices (appealing to logic), *pathos*-based devices (appealing to emotions), and *ethos*-based devices (appealing to character).

5.1 *Logos*-based devices

Logos-based rhetorical devices are devices that appeal to the audience's sense of reasoning. They are deployed by the bishops in order to persuade the audience to react appropriately to their messages. These include: use of testimonial reference, deductive and inductive reasoning, definitions, comparison (analogy/metaphor), nominalisation, passivisation, syntactic parallelism, antithesis, and obligation/necessity modals.

5.1.1 Testimonial reference validating messages

Testimonial reference is a device of quoting a person or text as an authority to validate the speaker's or writer's claims and to convince the audience of his/her credibility. Its use in a discourse is thus aimed at increasing the speaker's trustworthiness, integrity, and reliability to enhance acceptance of message. It renders him convincing and believable as the audience takes his plans and intentions as accurate and factual (Baseer and Alvi, 2012). In the bishops' pastoral letters, references are made to the holy Bible, the Vatican Council documents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, the Canon Law, the Pope, and the Saints as authorities to validate messages and make the bishops credible to the audience.

5.1.1.1 Reference to the Holy Bible

The bishops' letters reveal copious references to the holy Bible as an authority to validate claims. These are in form of Biblical quotations (direct and paraphrased) and Biblical allusions.

5.1.1.1.1. Biblical quotations

These are quotations drawn from the holy Bible. They include both direct and paraphrased quotations. In the case of direct quotation, materials are taken verbatim from the Bible and so are enclosed in quotation marks; while in the case of paraphrased or indirect quotation, materials from the Bible are rephrased in the speaker's/writer's own words, and he/she can dramatize the delivery of the content of the quotation as he/she sees fit (Ikeida, 2009). Texts 1-4 exemplify the bishops' use of direct and indirect quotations from the Bible to validate their messages.

Text 1:

Faith in Jesus Christ is a commitment that is to be nurtured so that it can grow...As faith is nurtured, the commitment progressively grows until it reaches the point where the believer lives with Christ, crucified with Him. Paul expresses this well in Galatians 2:20: "And it is no longer I who live, but it is Christ who lives in me..." (LTF, p.17)

Text 1, which relates to the theme of faith, contains a direct quotation from the holy Bible, Galatians 2:20. The quotation is enclosed in quotation marks to show that it is the exact words of Paul. Being very much concerned about the issue of faith in the province, the bishop does not just want to risk his message being ignored. So he deploys resources available to him to persuade the audience to accept his messages. He does not just stop at using metaphor to make his message effective. He finds the need to invoke the authority of the holy Bible, the book of faith of Christians which he and the faithful cherish and revere so as to ensure persuasion. The direct quotation from St. Paul's letter to the Galatians thus increases the persuasive force of the bishops' message of faith: the need for the audience to progressively grow in faith. The audience are expected to learn from St. Paul's experience so as to be able to confess similarly.

Text 2 is a paraphrased quotation from the holy Bible. It relates to the theme of love:

Text 2:

...our love for God must express itself in our love for our neighbour, for we cannot claim to love God if we do not love our neighbour (cf. 1 Jn 4:19-21). (*LALG*, p.33)

The quotation here derives from the first book of John to validate the claim that love of God has to be expressed through love of neighbour. The bishop finds the need to appeal to the authority of the holy Bible so as to convince the faithful to show love to their neighbours. Being very much aware that majority of the faithful claim to love God even while they hate their fellow human beings, the bishop decides to make it categorically clear to the faithful that their love for God can only be demonstrated through their love for their fellow human beings. He presents this as an obligation (through the use of the modal auxiliary *must*) which is binding on the faithful, and not as a matter of choice. To make himself authoritative, credible and convincing, he invokes the authority of the holy Bible, by echoing the message of love from the first book of John.

In text 3, reference is made to the holy Bible through direct quotation.

Text 3:

The Lord's invitation is very real: "Repent and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15). (*WWF*, p.24)

In the text above, which is a call to repentance, reference is made to the Gospel according to St. Mark, in form of direct quotation. The text is marked by the presence of quotation marks enclosing the exact words quoted, and then the biblical reference information enclosed in brackets. There is no better way of making this call to repentance appear genuine, believable and mandatory than quoting the exact words of the Lord himself in support of it. Direct quotation increases the level of acceptability of message as it makes it appear authentic and irrefutable. In fact, the bishop presents the call as coming directly from the Lord himself. This is highly persuasive, as the faithful is made to see response to the call as a matter of obedience, urgency and compulsion.

A similar effect is achieved through the use of direct quotation from the Bible in text 4 below:

Text 4:

Hold on to the Catholic Church, “the Church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth,” (1 Tim. 3:15) and the Ark of Salvation. (*FFF*, p.82)

Here, emphasis is on loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The audience are made to understand that the Roman Catholic Church is the only Church that guarantees the salvation of men, and so they need to remain steadfast to it. To make his message authoritative, credible, convincing, and persuasive, the bishop appeals to the authority of the Holy Bible, the first book of Timothy. The quotation shows that the message of the bishop is biblically based. This is an important persuasive factor as the Catholic faithful, now influenced by Pentecostal teachings, are beginning to doubt any message that is not supported by the Scriptures. The question is always: “Where is it in the Bible?” The direct Biblical quotation thus serves to make the bishop’s message convincing and acceptable. By making reference to the authority of the holy Bible, as seen in texts 1-4 above, the bishop makes himself credible and his messages of faith, love, repentance, and loyalty to the Catholic Church convincing and acceptable to the audience.

5.1.1.1.2 Biblical allusions

Another form of reference to the authority of the Holy Bible found in the bishops’ letters is Biblical allusion. Allusion is an implied or indirect reference to a person, event, or thing or to a part of another text, usually without any indication of the source of the allusion. Most allusions are based on shared knowledge of the writer and the audience, such that the audience’s understanding of it is taken for granted. Allusions add cultural value to the text. They also perform the function of widening the scope of reference of the audience. In the bishops’ letters, allusions are made to the Bible for the purpose of making messages convincing and acceptable. This can be seen in text 5:

Text 5:

Let us make use of this period to listen to modern day Jonah and like the Ninevites give up our sinfulness and receive God. (*GCTR*, p. 33)

In text 5 above, which concerns the theme of repentance, an allusion is made to the Old Testament of the holy Bible in the book of Jonah. In the Biblical story of Jonah, God calls Jonah to go and preach to the people of Nineveh so that they would repent of their sins

otherwise destruction would come upon them. Although Jonah tried unsuccessfully to dodge this assignment, he eventually got to Nineveh, preached to the people and they repented. Similarly the bishop calls on the faithful to use the period of Lent to listen to his call for repentance and give up their sins, just as the Ninevites listened to Jonah's call for repentance and gave up their sins. The bishop sees himself as the present day Jonah, and likens the audience to the Ninevites. This allusion is used to persuade the faithful to react positively to the bishop's message of repentance.

Text 6, again, is an instance of Biblical allusion in the letters.

Text 6:

We cannot carry the new wine in an old wine skin!
(WWF, p. 57)

This text also relates to the theme of repentance. It is an allusion to the Holy Bible in the book of Luke (5:33-39), where Jesus gives a parable of the new wine and the old wineskins in relation to his teaching about fasting. He admonishes people not to pour new wine into old wineskins otherwise the skin will burst and the wine will waste. Rather, they should pour fresh wine into new wineskins to keep both in good condition. The bishop has made this allusion in order to advance the theme of repentance and persuade the faithful to make a positive response. He admonishes the faithful to have a complete renewal of life rather than claiming to be Christians while still clinging to their old sinful way of life.

Allusion is also made to the Holy Bible in texts 7 and 8.

Text 7:

We must be on guard against the weed that are being planted with demonic zeal to choke the good seeds. (FFF, p.66)

Text 8:

Indeed, nothing can separate us from God's love- not even our weakness and sinfulness (LALG, p.61)

In text 7, which is in form of a warning and which relates to the theme of loyalty to the Catholic Church, the bishop alludes to the biblical parable of the wheat and the weeds as recorded in the book of Matthew (13: 24-30). Jesus has used this parable to tell the people what the kingdom of heaven would be like. In His explanation (Matthew, 13:36-43), the good seed refers to the people who belong to the Kingdom; the weeds are the people who belong to the

Evil One. But to the bishop, who uses this allusion to create a dichotomy between teachers of Roman Catholic faith and those of non-Catholic faith, the weeds are the false teachings of preachers in non-Catholic Churches while the wheat, that is, the good seed, is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. The bishop warns the Catholic faithful to beware of non-Catholic teachers and their teachings. The allusion is aimed at persuading the faithful to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith.

Text 8 echoes St. Paul's statement that nothing can separate us from the love of God. It is an allusion to the book of Romans (8:38-39) in the Bible. The bishop has used this allusion in order to assure the audience of God's unconditional love for them, despite their weakness and sinfulness. This is aimed at persuading them to return God's love through love for their fellow human beings.

Making reference to the Holy Bible in order to validate teachings is considered to be a strong persuasive device by the bishops. This is because the Bible is the holy book of Christianity and is regarded by Christians as the authoritative word of God. Any reference to it to buttress a point, either directly or indirectly, renders the point indisputable. Who can dispute the Word of God?

5.1.1.2 Reference to the Vatican Council documents

Bishops' letters are also marked by reference to the Vatican Council documents as authority to authenticate messages. The Vatican Council is the highest ruling body in the Roman Catholic Church headed by the Pope. Whatever decision or regulation or teachings made by the Council on behalf of the Church is taken as absolute. The use of such a powerful authority to validate messages constitutes a strong persuasive force. Consider texts 9 and 10 below:

Text 9:

According to the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council, "Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ, would refuse to enter or remain in her could not be saved" (Lumen Gentium no.14). (*FFF*, p.57)

Text 10:

The Council Fathers further made it clear that this love has to become a habit, a pattern of life, in fact, a culture when they insisted that this love is not something reserved for

important matters, but must be exercised above all in the ordinary circumstances of daily life (Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, 7 December 1965, No.38). (*TML*, pp.45-46)

In texts 9 and 10, references are made to two separate documents of the Vatican Council. The quotation in text 9 is a direct one, and is signalled by the adjunct *according to the fathers of the Vatican Council*. It is enclosed in quotation marks. The essence of this reference is to convince the faithful of why they should remain loyal to the Roman Catholic Church: it guarantees their salvation, so says the highest ruling body of the Church. This is convincing. By quoting the exact words of the Council Fathers, the bishop casts away from the minds of the faithful any doubt concerning the authority and the authenticity of this message of loyalty.

Text 10 contains a paraphrased quotation in form of a report from the Council Fathers' document. The aim is to convince the faithful to allow love to rule all aspects of their lives. What the Fathers say in this regard is important for the message to be driven home to the faithful.

5.1.1.3 Reference to the Catechism of the Catholic Church

The bishops in their Lenten pastorals have also made references to the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church (CCC). This is another authoritative document in the Church, an official document containing the teachings of the Church. Appeal to this authority is an important persuasive factor in the bishops' letters, as seen in text 11 which relate to the theme of repentance:

Text 11:

...baptism is the principal place for the first and fundamental conversion. It is by baptism that one renounces evil and gains salvation, that is, the forgiveness of all sins and the gift of new life (CCC 1427). (*CTC*, p.7)

Here, the audience are enjoined to activate the new life they received through baptism. Reference is made to the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church (CCC) in order to convince them to do this. This document is a reference book on the Church teachings and doctrine and as such has the final say on such teachings and doctrine.

Another instance of an appeal to the authority of the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church to validate messages and achieve persuasion is found in text 12:

Text 12

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “To live, grow and persevere in the faith until the end, we must nourish it with the word of God; we must beg the Lord to increase our faith; it must be ‘working through charity’ abounding in hope and rooted in the faith of the Church” (No.162) (*WWF*, p.48)

Direct quotation from the Catechism book is used to buttress the bishop’s message to the audience, which is that they should to make efforts to grow in faith and exercise it in their daily living. The Church has already stipulated in the Catechism book the steps to follow in this regard. By quoting these steps exactly as they are outlined in the Church’s book of Catechism, the bishop is likely to convince the audience of the authenticity of his message and persuade them to comply, especially as it is backed by such an authoritative document.

5.1.1.4 Reference to the Canon Law

The Canon Law is the system of laws and legal principles made and enforced by the hierarchical authorities of the Roman Catholic Church to regulate its external organization and government and to order and direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the Church. Like the other documents of the Church, the Canon Law is highly authoritative and revered in the Church. The content is indisputable. Citing it as an authority to validate messages is a strong persuasive device, as can be seen in texts 13 and 14:

Text 13:

In accordance with Can. 1249, all Christ’s faithful are obliged by divine law, each in his or her own way, to do penance at all times, but especially during Lent. (CTC pp 13-14)

Text 14:

The most fundamental obligation is to maintain one’s Catholic faith even at the risk of death. Besides...there are other obligations which the Catholic is bound to fulfill with the same zeal...(Canon.22,&2) (*FFF*, p.89)

Here in text 13, which is a paraphrased quotation from the Canon Law relating to the subject of repentance, the bishop enjoins the audience to do penance at all times. This is expected to keep

them always at peace with God. To convince them of the authenticity and importance of this message, the bishop appeals to the authority of the Canon Law. The audience have no choice than to abide by what the law of the Church stipulates. The authority of the Canon Law cannot be questioned. Reference to it is a strong persuasive device.

Likewise, in text 14, also a paraphrased quotation from the Canon Law, the authority of the document enhances acceptance of the bishop's message. The emphasis is on the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The audience are made to understand that, although there are other obligations a Catholic faithful is expected to fulfil, loyalty to the Church is the most important obligation which has to be fulfilled even at the cost of one's life. Reference to the Canon Law as the authority behind this message makes the message convincing.

5.1.1.5 Reference to Pope's documents

In addition to making references to the holy Bible, the Vatican Council documents, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and the Code of the Canon Law as authorities to validate messages, the bishops also appeal to the authority of the Pope to ensure acceptance of message. The pope as the Spiritual head of the Roman Catholic Church commands a high authority in the Church, and his documents are revered and held authoritative. This is because of the significance of the Petrine ministry in the Catholic Church. Catholics respect the teachings of the Pope because they believe that he is successor to Peter and is the supreme ruler and teacher of the Church (Davis, 1982). The Supreme Pontiff, the Pope, is believed to be imbued with the fullness of the Christ-given authority. His stand on a particular issue is very important in the Catholic Church, and reference to his documents enables the bishops to convince the faithful to accept their messages. Consider text 15:

Text 15:

It would be a perversion of love to reduce it to sex and its corollaries. Pope Benedict XVI speaks of this reductionist view of love as a "debasement of the human body" (*Deus est Caritas*, 5). (LALG, p. 8)

In the above text, which relates to the theme of love, the bishop's message to the audience is that love should not be reduced to purely sexual relationship between man and woman. To facilitate acceptance of this message, he makes reference to the document of the Pope, as an authority. The reference is in form of direct quotation enclosed in quotation marks, with

reference details in brackets. The directness of the quotation and the authority of its source make the bishop's message appear convincing. According to him, love means much more than just sexual attraction, sexual activity, and sexual satisfaction.

Similarly, in text 16, Papal document is cited to buttress teachings on the Christian faith.

Text 16:

....Pope John Paul II in his address to some pilgrims from Reggio Emilia said "Christianity is a doctrine but it is, above all, a life which is understood to the extent to which it is practised" (Osservatore Romano 17, 1980) (*IYHF*, pp.30-31).

Here reference is made to the document of the Pope to convince the faithful that beyond external verbal profession of faith or ritual religious acts, faith has to be expressed in good works. This message is given at the background of the bishop's observation that in spite of manifest religiosity in Nigeria, Christian impact is minimal in the Nigerian society. The Pope's view on the practicality of Christian faith is needed to convince the Catholic faithful to live in consonance with the faith they profess. As the spiritual leader of the Church, his position on religious issues is highly revered. The teachings of the bishop become more meaningful and acceptable to the faithful when the Pope's stand on the issues discussed is made clear to them.

5.1.1.6 Reference to the saints' documents

Reference to the authority of the Saints is another device employed by the bishops to add authority to their message so as to convince the faithful to accept it. In the Catholic Church the Saints are revered because they are seen as the early Christians who lived exemplary Christian lives and for that were canonized as Saints. They are considered to be the Fathers of the Church, and so their views concerning Catholic doctrine are held in high esteem. The doctrine of the Church is drawn from their teachings because they are seen to be part of the Church history, and as such are powerful testimony to the truth of the Catholic faith (Willis, 2002). Text 17 is an instance of this.

Text 17:

Naturally, God orders us to Himself. As St Augustine of Hippo writes "Our heart is restless until it rests in God" (*GCTR*, p.31)

Here, in text 17, reference is made to the authority of St Augustine of Hippo to drive home the message of repentance. The exact words of the Saint are enclosed in quotation marks and introduced by the adverbial clause *as St. Augustine of Hippo writes*. This direct quotation increases the credibility of the bishop's message, making it authentic, authoritative and convincing.

Also, in text 18, reference is made to the authority of St. Ignatius of Antioch to buttress the message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 18:

According to St. Ignatius of Antioch, where there is Christ Jesus there is the Catholic Church (Ad Smyrn. 8, 2) (FFF, p.23)

The view of St. Ignatius is paraphrased with reference details in brackets. The paraphrased quotation is introduced by the adjunct *according to St Ignatius of Antioch*. It is used to back the bishop's teaching that the Roman Catholic Church is founded by Christ and as such is the only true Church of Christ that guarantees salvation of its members. Reference to the authority of the Saint is meant to convince the faithful to remain loyal to the Catholic Church.

The high preponderance of Testimonial references in the bishops' letters is attributable to the fact that the Catholic Church believes in hierarchy and obedience to authority. Disobedience to hierarchy and authority is considered a serious offence which attracts a penalty of excommunication. Appeals to the authority of the Bible as the holy book of Christianity, the Vatican Council documents, the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, the Canon Law, the Pope as the spiritual head of the Church and the Vicar of Christ, and the Saints as Church Fathers and the pioneers of the Catholic faith, as found in the bishops' letters, are therefore contextually motivated. Also, the preponderance of references to the holy Bible over other forms of reference to authority is not accidental. The Holy Bible is the supreme rule of faith in the Christian religion and is expected to nourish and rule all Christian religious discourse, if such discourse is to have relevance and validity.

5.1.2 Deductive and inductive arguments appealing to the rationality of the audience

Arguments are considered to be an important persuasive tool in a discourse. Green (1980:623) sees argument as the "controlling presence in all sorts of discourse." To Bernard-

Donals (2000) argument is the “why” behind thoughts, opinions, ideas, and knowledge, a result of the speaker or writer questioning or persuading an audience. According to him, the use of rhetorical argument makes the writer view facts from real-world situations, not just from his own perspective, and thus shapes various external factors such as the audience and their possible reactions. He explains that the “rhetorical tradition from Aristotle insisted that while a writer doesn’t need to be an expert in the topic he is arguing, he’d better know enough to be able to hold his own with other non-experts.” Citing O’Neil (1997), Green (2004) observes that, in the compatibilist perspective, reason and rhetoric are compatible and inextricably linked because reason encompasses both the logic of demonstrative argument and the rhetoric of dialectical argument. Both deductive and inductive arguments are deployed by the Roman Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters in order to appeal to the audience’s sense of reasoning and achieve persuasion.

5.1.2.1 Deductive argument

Deductive argument is an argumentative process that entails drawing an inference or conclusion from stated premises with the aim of convincing the audience of the acceptability of a standpoint. The premises are offered as reasons or evidence for accepting the conclusion as valid or true. Deductive reasoning is a strong means of achieving conviction and persuasion in a discourse. In the bishops’ letters, deductive arguments are conveyed by means of causal connectives, which link the premises and conclusion in a way that makes the argument logical, convincing and persuasive. In texts 19-22, arguments on faith, love and repentance are conveyed logically by means of deductive reasoning. They are presented through the use of causal links like *therefore*, *since*, *it follows that*, *thus*, and *because*. In text 19, deductive argument is deployed by the bishop to convince the audience of the need to pray for faith that produces good works:

Text 19:

Since without faith, we cannot hope to please God and if we have faith we can move mountains, **let us** always pray Almighty God to give us that faith which shows itself through good works. (*IYHF*, p.52)

In text 19, the two premises of the argument are introduced by the causal link *since*. They are the reasons presented by the bishop on why the faithful should pray to God for faith that produces

good works. These reasons are expected to convince the faithful to make the desired response. The persuasive effect of the argument is fortified by the bishop's use of the first-person plural imperative *let us*, which creates a sense of immediacy and joint action.

Similarly, in text 20, deductive argument is used to convince the faithful to accept the bishop's message of love.

Text 20:

Since love is basic and fundamental in every activity of our life, **it follows that** the authenticity of our lives depends on the extent of our love. To the extent we love, to that extent we are Christians, to that extent we are children of God. Love **therefore** is the measure of our life. (TML, p.40)

In text 20, the argument is on love. The bishop tries to convince the faithful logically that the authenticity of their lives depends on the extent of their love. This conclusion is restated in the last sentence as *Love therefore is the measure of our life.* (TML, p.40) The first version of the conclusion is introduced by the causal link *it follows that* while the second one is introduced by *therefore*. The conclusion is based on the premises that love is basic and fundamental in every activity of human life and that being Christians and children of God depends on the extent to which people love. The first premise is introduced by the causal link *since*. By giving the reasons why love is indispensable in the lives of human beings, the bishop aims to convince and persuade the faithful to live a life of love.

The message of repentance is convincingly presented, in text 21, through deductive argument.

Text 21:

Because the people of God, that is, the Church of the Living God is a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people (1Peter 2:9), and **because** He who called them is holy, they must be holy in all their conduct **because** it is written, Be holy, I am (1Peter 1:15-16). (FFF, p.43)

Text 21 is a call to holiness. In order to convince the faithful on why they must live a holy life, the bishop again appeals to their sense of reason: they are God's own special people and God who called them is holy and has asked them to be holy just like Him. These reasons given by

the bishop are backed with biblical references. They are not just the bishops' own ideas. This makes the message authoritative, convincing and persuasive.

Finally, in text 22, the message of loyalty is communicated through deductive argument to ensure conviction and persuasion.

Text 22:

There is no Church of Christ which is not historically built on the foundation of Peter. Peter definitely died but his authority to strengthen the brethren, to feed the flock of Christ, to safeguard the keys of Heaven and to bind and loose in the Church would not have died with him. This authority passed on to his successors...the Bishops of Rome. They have by unbroken tradition inherited the authority of Peter. **Thus** the Bishop of Rome called the Pope...is the visible symbol of the authenticity of the Church founded by Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church...(FFF, pp.11-12)

Using deductive reasoning, in text 22 above, the bishops tries to prove that the Roman Catholic Church is the Church founded by Jesus Christ. They base their arguments on two reasons: (1) that every Church of Christ is historically built on the foundation of Peter; (2) that the bishop of Rome who is the Supreme head of the Roman Catholic Church is a successor of Peter. The conclusion therefore is that the Church founded by Christ subsists in the Catholic Church. This sounds logical. The essence of the argument is to make the audience believe that the Roman Catholic Church is the only true Church of Christ, so that they will remain loyal to it.

5.1.2.2 Inductive argument

Inductive argument is argument by means of examples or instances. According to Aristotle, the examples may either be actual past facts or facts invented by the speaker/writer. Text 23 is an instance of the use of inductive argument to achieve persuasion in the bishops' letters

Text 23:

Your faith has saved you! Many people heard these words from the mouth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The Centurion who showed such a faith that was not found in Israel heard:The Canaanite woman's faith in Jesus

drew the response from the Master.... The woman who had haemorrhage for twelve years and had spent all her money on doctors without getting well put her faith in Jesus...and heard the words...Jesus healed people because of their faith(WWF, p.70)...

The above text relates to the theme of faith. It is an inductive argument used by the bishop to convince the audience to remain steadfast in their faith in God. Here, the bishop tries to prove that Jesus heals people because of their faith. He cites examples of incidents in the Bible to support his claim. These include the healing of the Centurion's servant in Matthew 8:13, the Canaanite woman's daughter in Matthew 15:28, and the hemorrhage woman in Mark 5:25-34. These instances are meant to convince the audience to react appropriately to the bishops' message of faith. If they have faith, they too can experience the miracle of God.

Again, in text 24, inductive argument is used to prove to the audience that conversion is not just a human work but the grace of God. St. Peter's case is presented as an example.

Text 24:

This endeavor of conversion is not just a human work. It is the movement of a 'contrite heart' drawn and moved by grace to respond to the merciful love of God who loved us first (CCC.1427). St Peter's conversion after he had denied his master three times bears witness to this. Jesus' look of infinite mercy drew tears of repentance from Peter and, after the Lord's Resurrection, a three-fold affirmation of love for him.(CTC, p.7)

Here, in text 24, the theme is that of repentance. The bishop again uses inductive argument to drive home his point to the audience. The point of argument is that conversion is not a human work but that of the grace of God on a contrite heart. The bishop tries to prove this by citing the case of Peter in the Bible who became remorseful after denying his master three times, and who through the grace of God received forgiveness from him. The essence of this argument is to convince the audience that any event of conversion is a return to journey God. The sinner first has to feel sorry for his/her sins before receiving the grace of forgiveness.

Text 25 is another instance of the use of inductive argument to achieve conviction and persuasion in the bishops' letters.

Text 25:

Out of love God created the world (Wis. 11:24)...Even while regretting having made human beings because of their wickedness...God still saved Noah from the flood...Still in pursuit of the desire to relate intimately with human beings, God made a covenant with Abraham and his descendants. In spite of their infidelity to the terms of the covenant, God remained faithful...God promised to make a new covenant...In Jesus, God took human flesh and dwelt among us...From the above, one sees that God...is like a father who out of love cares for and follows up his children. (RBGN, p.12)

Here, the bishop enumerates instances in the Bible in which God has demonstrated his love for humanity. These include his creation of the world, saving Noah from the flood, his covenant with Abraham and his sons, and his new covenant in Jesus Christ. The argument is meant to convince the audience of God's unconditional love for them, and to persuade them to return this love through love for their fellow human beings.

Deployment of deductive and inductive arguments by Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters is contextually determined. It is attributable to the fact that the Roman Catholic Church respects and emphasizes the role of reason in the understanding and expression of Christian faith. It sees reason as providing grounds of credibility for faith (McBrien, 1994).

5.1.3 Definitions supporting the theses of arguments

A definition is a statement or an explanation of the meaning of a term. It is the setting of the boundaries or specifications of a term to make it distinct from other terms. Definitions constitute an important rhetorical device as they enable the speaker/writer to establish common grounds with the listener/reader for argument. Perelman (1969) describes definitions as human agreements about how words should be used.

Definitions give directions to arguments, as the definer tends to choose the definition that better supports his goal. A term or situation can be defined in different ways depending on the argumentative goals of the speaker/writer. In the view of Schiappa (2003), the act of definition is an act aimed at imposing a particular perception of the world on the recipients of the definition. According to him, when a person accepts a definition, he accepts also the evaluation and perspective it imposes on reality, and the course of actions and decisions it implies.

Definitions are used by the bishops in their pastoral letters as a rhetorical device to support the thesis of their arguments. In text 15, for example, Christian faith is defined in line with the argument of the bishop in the pastoral letter:

Text 26:

The Christian faith is more than a persuasion of the mind to accept or rely on a certain truth. It is primarily a conversion of souls to accept the Spirit of God through Christ, live in the truth of such acceptance and bear fruit of such acceptance in order to convert the world for an ultimate paradise/heaven. (OEO, p.6)

The definition of the Christian faith given here is not denotative. It is rather argumentative as it supports the thesis of the bishop's pastoral letter which is that true faith produces good works. The bishop first presents the existing general definition, which the audience is familiar with, as inadequate, and then gives the one that supports his thesis. The aim of this definition is to influence the existing knowledge and understanding the audience may have about Christian faith, and consequently their attitude to it. The audience are now expected to see Christian faith as both belief and action rather than as belief only. This is a persuasive device aimed at securing compliance with the bishop's message of faith and good works.

The use of definition to support the thesis of the bishops' argument in relation to repentance is seen in text 27:

Text 27:

...holiness does not require some kind of extraordinary existence possible for a few uncommon heroes. Holiness demands the fidelity of each Christian to his/her vocation...Christian holiness contributes to human progress by showing the people of our times the proper scale of values and the supremacy of light over darkness, life over death and eternity over time. (GCTR, p.19)

The concept defined here is *holiness*. The definition is contrary to the established meaning of holiness which the audience is familiar with. Holiness is generally seen to denote sacredness, sanctity, perfection, moral purity or absence of sin or any form of defilement. As such it is considered to be beyond the reach of ordinary man. However, its definition by the bishop takes a different angle. It is defined in terms of fidelity to vocation, human progress, and exemplary

Christian life. These are the qualities the bishop wants the audience to imbibe as they strive towards repentance and holiness. The definition is thus persuasive.

Also, to support the thesis of his argument on love, the bishop adopts a definition of love different from its general denotative meaning, as exemplified by text 28:

Text 28:

Love of neighbor means seeing the image and likeness of God in my fellow human being, seeing him or her with and through the eyes of God. Love of neighbor is recognizing and respecting the uniqueness and otherness of the person of the neighbor as a human being and an image of God. It is, in effect, seeking and willing the good of the person (*LALG*, pp.37-38).

In this text, love of neighbour is defined in terms of the expectations of the bishop from the audience. It is defined in terms of the goal the bishop wants to achieve with the pastoral letter, that is to persuade the audience to allow love to rule their relationship with their fellow human being. In the first sentence, the definition is personalized to make the audience see love as a responsibility, a debt they owe their neighbour. When a person sees the image of God in his fellow human being, he is bound to respect and love him/her. The intention of the bishop is to use this definition to influence the audience's understanding of love for neighbour and elicit the expected response.

In text 29, religion is defined in a way that suits the bishop's purpose, which is, to persuade the audience to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic Church:

Text 29:

Religion is not a question of making God an instrument of satisfying a person's needs. Religion is a person's complete submission to the Truth, to the will of God... the truth is: "For it is through Christ's Catholic Church alone, which is the all-embracing means of salvation, that the fullness of the means of salvation can be obtained" (*Unitatis redintegratio*, no.3) (*FFF*, p.60).

The bishop first refutes the erroneous view of religion as an instrument of meeting one's needs, a conclusion drawn from the way people practise religion. However, his own definition is far from being objective. He tilts it towards his own religious affiliation: the Roman Catholic religion, in order to achieve his persuasive intention on the audience. He defines religion as submission to *theTruth*, and *theTruth*, to him, is the idea that the Catholic Church is the all-embracing means of salvation. The definition is meant to elicit from the audience a favourable attitude towards the Roman Catholic Church, an attitude that will facilitate loyalty. After all, Christians would want to identify with a Church that leads people to salvation.

The foregoing shows that the Roman Catholic bishops have used definitions in their pastoral letters as a rhetorical device to project the thesis of their arguments so as to influence the attitude and actions of their audience.

5.1.4 Comparison for concrete explanations

Comparison involves examining and identifying the similarities and differences that exist between two or more things or phenomena for the purpose of identification, explanation, and emphasis. It is a rhetorical device deployed to ensure proper comprehension, which is a prerequisite to persuasion. A person cannot be persuaded to accept a message he/she does not understand. Two major forms of comparison which are used to facilitate understanding and persuasion in the bishop's letters are analogy and metaphor.

5.1.4.1 Analogy

Analogy is a comparison of two phenomena, which on the surface appear dissimilar, with the aim of establishing a similarity between them and making a point based on that similarity. It is a reasoning process that associates what we do not know with what we already know for the purpose of explanation or clarification. Here, specific qualities of the familiar and understood concept are chosen and then matched with the related qualities of the new concept. Analogical reasoning is based on the principle that people tend to remember things better if they can in some way tie new information to the old information they already know. The bishops are very much aware that the brain has a penchant for analogies, for perceiving relationships. Being aware that familiarity can only be induced by relating the relatively unknown to commonplace incidents and knowledge, Catholic bishops have deployed analogy

in their pastoral letters as one of the rhetorical devices the in order to enhance understanding of messages and achieve conviction and persuasion. Its use in the letters is exemplified by text 30.

Text 30:

An attempt to limit the transformation of the world to only her material conditions is like growing a child without building his mind and spirit upon which real growth and maturity are measured...A man can grow tall and strong enough to lift an iron. He may have the intelligence to construct a machete. But he needs the guidance and power of the spirit to know when, how, and what to use it on. It is the mistake of our present day to dream of a world where God is either forgotten or denied. Living without faith is one of the sins of our materialistic world (*OEO*, p.14)

In the above text, the bishop draws an analogy between transforming the world and growing a child. He uses this analogy to advance argument on the importance of faith in creating a better world. The argument is that just as it is impossible to grow a child without building his mind and spirit upon which real growth and maturity are measured, it is impossible to limit the transformation of the world to only her material conditions. By likening the unfamiliar (transforming the world) to the familiar (growing a child), the bishop gives a concrete explanation of what he means. The analogy enables the audience to have a good grasp of the message of faith. It makes the message concrete and memorable. The device is thus used to facilitate comprehension and understanding of the message of faith to ensure appropriate response.

The use of analogy to explain concretely the message of repentance to ensure comprehension and appropriate response by the audience is illustrated by text 31:

Text 31:

However long and detailed our plans for a journey may be, it is only when we step out and embark on it that one can be said to be on a journey. Similarly, repentance is not about wanting and planning to turn back to God but actually making a decision and taking steps to live up to that decision (*RBGN*, p.20).

The items in comparison in the texts above are journey and repentance. To be able to explain his message of repentance vividly for proper understanding, the bishop likens repentance to a

journey. Just as a journey begins with taking a step towards a destination, repentance begins with taking decision and living by that decision. The essence of the analogy is to make the audience understand the need to take a decision concerning their spiritual lives, the decision of repentance. It concretizes the message of repentance.

The message of love expressed in text 32 is made vivid and understandable through the bishop's use of analogy.

Text 32:

Interestingly, in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus appealed to His Father to spare Him from the Cross... God heard His prayer by 'refusing Jesus' wish... and seemingly abandoning His only begotten Son. Like Jesus, the groans and sighs of the sick, the barren, the bereaved, the oppressed, etc., rise up daily asking "my God, my God, why have you forsaken me." But as in the case of Jesus, we see that God never abandons His people...we have the assurance of His Word, that for those who love Him, God turns everything, whether felt as good or evil by us human beings, for their good (Rom. 8:28). (RBGN, p.17)

The analogy here is between the prayers of Jesus Christ on the Cross and the prayers of people in suffering. Just as God ignores Jesus' prayers to spare him from the sufferings on the Cross which turns out to accomplish salvation for mankind, God sometimes ignores the prayers of his people in suffering, and instead turns their sufferings into blessings. The bishop uses this comparison to justify his argument that God never forsakes his people, even when he appears not to answer their prayers. The comparison relates to the theme of love: God's unconditional love for man.

Also, in text 33, analogy is used to explain concretely ideas relating to the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith, to ensure comprehension by the audience.

Text 33:

He [Esau] surrendered his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage! Later, their father through the ruse of Jacob and their mother gave the blessings of the firstborn to Jacob instead of to Esau. The girls who because of marriage abandon their Catholic faith can be **likened** to Esau. (FFF, p. 78)

Here, some Catholic girls are compared to the Biblical Esau. The attitude of the girls is explained in terms of that of Esau. They are said to abandon their Catholic faith for a non-Catholic faith because of marriage just as Esau forfeited his birth right to his brother Jacob because of a pot of porridge. The analogy, which is drawn from the context of the bishop's exhortation on the defection of the Catholic faithful to non-Catholic Churches, is used by the bishop to advance his argument on loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith, and persuade the audience to remain steadfast in their Catholic faith. Through the analogy he creates a lucid picture of the point he is making to facilitate proper understanding. The well-known Biblical story of Esau and Jacob is used to make a point about the attitude of some Catholic girls.

The bishops have used analogy in their letters as a rhetorical device to drive home their points to the faithful and to persuade them to react positively. Through analogy, they induce familiarity with their message by relating the unknown to commonplace incidents and knowledge. They paint a vivid image of the situation they are trying to describe so that the faithful can visualize it and have a better understanding. Good understanding, of course, is a prerequisite for persuasion. The deployment of analogy in the bishops' letters is occasioned by the desire for concreteness in the abstract field of religion. The bishops are compelled to use analogy to explain concretely their messages of faith, love and repentance so as to ensure effective communication, and subsequently, persuasion.

5.1.4.2 Metaphor

Metaphor as a form of comparison operates by means of analogy. It is a rhetorical device generally seen as the mapping of meaning, or transference of properties, from one concept onto another. It is a tool for representing one entity or event in terms of some other related entity without explicitly stating a likeness (Bloor and Bloor, 2007). Wikberg (2008:34) describes metaphor as "a way of seeing something in terms of something else, a process which involves a linguistic expression referring in an unconventional way to people, animals, things, events, or concepts on the basis of some similarity, correlation, or analogy." Metaphor as a figure that involves a gap between the conventional meaning of words and their occasion-specific use provides us with a means of explaining the unknown in terms of the known. It is therefore a kind of analogical reasoning through which abstractions or descriptions are made concrete and vivid to drive home points. The use of metaphor in rhetoric is for the purpose of explanation or

clarification of an unfamiliar concept based on a familiar one, to ensure understanding which, of course, is a prerequisite for persuasion.

The basic identifying feature of a linguistic metaphor is the occurrence of a lexical item from a domain or semantic field different from that of the topic of the on-going talk, together with a potential transfer or change of meaning from the new semantic field to the on-going topic (Cameron, 2007). Charteris-Black (2005) sees metaphor as having linguistic, pragmatic and cognitive characteristics. Its linguistic characteristic, according to him, is seen in its ability to cause semantic tension either by reification or personification; its pragmatic characteristic is seen in the fact that metaphor is motivated by the underlying purpose of persuading; while its cognitive characteristic is that a metaphor is caused by, and may cause a shift in the conceptual system.

On the uses of metaphor, Jacobs and Heracleous (2004) state that metaphors can help to concretize vague and abstract ideas, can holistically convey a large amount of information, can foster new ways of looking at things, and can facilitate change by providing a bridge from the familiar to the strange. Standard rhetorical functions of metaphor, according to Smith (2007), include: the logos function of providing an analogy that helps communicate the substance of the writer's point; the ethos function of establishing the writer as a credible and intelligent source of information; the pathos function of evoking favourable emotions; and the rhetorical style function of drawing attention and emphasis to the writer's point. Metaphors as ways of thinking and ways of shaping the thoughts of others constitute a persuasive device.

In the bishops' letters, metaphors are used to provide striking vivid images aimed at enhancing the communicative meaning of the discourse and the persuasive effect of the letters. They are used to describe vividly ideas relating to the themes of the letters. Prominent among the metaphors deployed in the letters are those drawn from the semantic fields of planting, journey, war, water, building, light, food, body parts, health and meteorology.

5.1.4.2.1 Metaphor of planting

Planting is concerned with sowing of seeds and harvesting of crops as well as other related activities. In the bishops' letters the ontology of planting is mapped onto abstract ideas in order to make descriptions concrete and vivid. For example, faith is represented as tree, seed,

fruit, soil, and harvest; good works as fruits and flowers; Lent as planting season; a Christian as a reed; love as plant and root; Christian family as flower, etc.

Metaphors in the texts³⁴⁻³⁶ are drawn from the domain of planting. Faith is represented as seed and tree, good works as fruits and flowers, first Christians as fruit, and false doctrines and teachings as poisonous weeds.

Faith as tree/good works as fruits and flowers

Text 34:

...as a **tree**, it [faith]grows yielding **fruits and flowers**of **good works** of love. (IYHF, p.27)

Here, the abstract entity faith is conceptualized as tree; thus it is ascribed with the qualities of a concrete entity tree and these include growing, flowering and fruiting. Good works are conceptualized as fruits and flowers of tree which is faith, thus appearing tangible. The bishop wants the faithful to understand faith as a phenomenon that grows, flowers, and brings forth fruits just as tree does. But in the case of faith, the flowers and fruits are good works of love. The bishop has used this metaphor in order to create a concrete and vivid picture of the kind of faith the faithful are expected to have: practical faith, faith that is expressed in good works. The faith they profess is expected to manifest in the way they live their lives.

Faith as seed, tree/our first Christians as fruits

Text 35:

Under the difficult and dangerous circumstances, they [the early missionaries] **sowed the seed of faith** and nurtured it. It **germinated, blossomed and bore fruits in our first Christians**_ the pioneers of faith in Awgu diocese (*LTF*, p.4).

In text 35, the stages which a seed passes through, right from its planting, through nurturing, up to germination, blossoming and fruition are transferred to faith. The early missionaries are likened to the farmer who sows and nurtures his seed until it grows and bears fruit. The seed corresponds to Christian faith; its growth and bearing of fruits correspond to the development of the faith to maturity. Just as the farmer's seed grows, matures and bears fruit, so did the Christians who received Christian faith from the early missionaries grow, mature and become teachers of faith themselves, as exemplified in the pioneers of faith in Awgu diocese. The

bishop uses this metaphor to concretize the productive activities of the early missionaries among his people, so as to persuade the faithful to do likewise in the spirit of evangelization.

False doctrines and teachings as poisonous weeds

Text 36:

There are abundant warnings in the New Testament against the **poisonous weeds of false doctrines and teachings** (*FFF*, p.48)

In text 36, false doctrines and teachings, that is, the teachings that go contrary to the teaching of the apostles are represented as poisonous weeds. The phrase *poisonous weeds* is a Biblical allusion to Jesus' parable of the wheat and the weeds. Weeds are unwanted plants in the farmer's farm, which are considered dangerous to the crops, more especially when they are poisonous, and so the farmer wastes no time in uprooting them. Similarly, false doctrines and teachings, like poisonous weeds, are considered by the bishop to be dangerous to true doctrine and teaching of the apostles, and so should likewise be uprooted. This metaphor is used by the bishop to make clear to the faithful the danger inherent in accepting non-Catholic doctrines and teachings which they consider to be contrary to the apostolic doctrine and teachings which the Catholic Church upholds.

5.1.4.2.2 Metaphor of journey

Journey means movement from one place to another. Embarking on a journey involves some stages of movement, before one finally gets to one's destination. Our journeys typically have a beginning and an end, a sequence of places on the way, and direction (Saeed, 2009:368). Abioye (2011:44) notes that life involves movement back and forth, is subject to change, and cannot be pinned down at any point in time; "it is full of events and incidents, either palatable or unpalatable." In the bishops' letters the ontology of journey is mapped onto the abstract entities, such that faith is conceptualized as pilgrimage, journey, path; repentance as return journey; life as pilgrimage, road, etc.

In texts 37-39, the features of journey as an activity that involves movement from one place to another are transferred to Conversion and faith. Conversion is conceptualized as journey, faith as pilgrimage and path.

Conversion as a journey

Text 37:

Any event of **conversion** is a **return journey** to the Father. (*CTC*, p.7)

In text 37, conversion is conceptualized as a return journey. A return journey may mean going back to the place from where one started a journey or travel or moving from another place to a place where one belongs. The latter is the case here. The bishop admonishes the faithful to make a return journey to God to whom they rightly belong. Just as journey involves stages of movement so does conversion involve processes, some of which include Lenten observances of prayer, fasting and abstinence, and alms-giving. This journey metaphor is used by the bishop to make the faithful understand the need to participate in the Lenten activities through which they are expected to renew their lives.

Faith as pilgrimage

Text 38:

Mary is the pre-eminent model of a lived faith. She advanced in her **pilgrimage of faith**, from Annunciation to Calvary and then to Pentecost, faithful every step of the way. (*LTF*, p.58)

In text 38, Mary's faith is said to undergo the same stages involved in a journey. Her faith progresses, just as her journey progresses, from Annunciation to Calvary and Pentecost. By the use of this metaphor, the bishop explains clearly the need for faith to grow and develop.

Faith as path

Text 39:

For, one "can never really reach Jesus, except by the **path of faith**, on a journey of which the stages seem to be indicated to us by the Gospel itself..." (*Novo Millennio Inneunte*, no.19). (*WWF*, p.6)

In text 39, which is a direct quotation from Pope's document, faith is conceptualised as path. Path is the road to a destination in a journey. In this metaphor, faith corresponds to path, while Jesus corresponds to the destination. Just as one cannot get to his destination without following the right path, no one can get to Jesus without having faith, as that is the only qualification.

This metaphor is a way of describing vividly to the faithful, the importance of faith in a relationship with Christ.

5.1.4.2.3 Metaphor of war

Metaphors of war are those relating to fight, contest, battle, conflict, etc. These involve the use of weapons, whether physical or non-physical. The bishops use war terminologies in their letters to describe abstract ideas so as to ensure understanding. For example, they represent faith, Bible, and love as weapon; faith as shield and war; devil's machinations as darts; Gospel as army; prayer as battle; etc. Instances of war metaphor are found in the following text 40-42.

In texts 40-42, faith, love and Scripture are represented as weapons, instruments of warfare. Faith is conceptualised as shield, machinations of the devil as darts, love as weapon, Scriptures as double-edged sword.

Faith as shield/machinations of the devil as darts

Text 40:

It is to our advantage if we can imitate Mary, draw inspiration from her and learn how to face life **armed with the shield of faith**, with which we can quench all the flaming **darts** of the evil one (Eph. 6:16). (*IYHF*, p.45)

In text 40, faith is conceptualized as a *shield*, and the machinations of the devil as *flaming darts*. The faithful correspond to soldiers. The faithful are enjoined to learn from Mary how to use faith to counter the evil machinations of the devil and protect themselves from being worn over, just as soldiers use shield to deflect the opponents' weapons and prevent themselves from being harmed during war. (In the Catholic Church, Mary is believed to be a model of faith). This semantic mapping is meant to make the faithful understand the importance of faith in resisting the devil and whatever he stands for. It aims to persuade them to be steadfast in their Catholic faith.

Love as weapon

Text 41:

...His Holiness, Pope John Paul II calls us to win the world with the **weapons of love** (*TML*, p.11)

In text 41 which is a report of Pope's message, love is conceptualized as weapon. The Pope enjoins the Catholic faithful to use love to win souls, just as soldiers use weapon to win wars. By quoting the Pope's message, the bishop brings this call home to the faithful in his diocese. He uses the metaphor to make clear to the faithful the strength there is in love.

Scripture as double-edged sword

Text 42:

It [the Scripture] is a double-edged sword coming out from the mouth of God (Rev. 1:16) (*WWF*, p.48)

In text 42, the abstract entity Scripture is represented as a weapon of war, double-edged sword, which is a concrete entity. Just as the double-edged sword is a powerful instrument of war in the hand of the soldier, which accomplishes victory for him, the word of God is a powerful instrument in the hand of a Christian, which accomplishes victory for him. By this transfer of meaning, the bishop demonstrates vividly to the faithful the strength there is in the word of God.

5.1.4.2.4 Metaphor of water

Water is characterized by its flowing property. Metaphor of water resides in the use of water or water-like substances to conceptualize abstract entities. In the bishops' letters, love is conceptualised as liquid; unity as fluid; faith as fountain of water; God as well-spring; Scripture and Sacred Tradition as water; Christian prayer as water; Catholic Church as fountain of water; moral and spiritual decadence as water current, etc. Examples of these metaphors are found in texts 43-45.

In texts 43-45, The Scripture and the Sacred Tradition are presented as water, faith as fountain, and moral and spiritual decadence as water current.

The Scripture and the Sacred Tradition as water

Text 43:

Both the Scripture and the Sacred Tradition are closely bound together and communicate one with the other as **flowing** from the same **divine wellspring**... (*WWF*, p.32)

In text 43, the metaphor is reflected in the association of the word 'flowing' (which is associated with liquids, usually water, in this case as indicated by the compound word

‘well-spring’) with the Scripture and Sacred Tradition which are abstract entities. The idea of water as a liquid that flows is transferred to the Scripture and the Sacred Tradition. These correspond to water, while well-spring corresponds to God. Just as water flows from the well-spring, both the Scripture and the Sacred Tradition derive from God. The bishop has employed this metaphor in order to explain vividly and forcefully to the faithful the fact that both the Scripture and the Sacred Tradition are sources of divine revelation. This explanation is necessitated by the fact that some Catholics question Church teachings and practices that are not supported by the Scripture.

Faith as fountain

Text 44:

Faith is like...**a fountain**...as **a fountain**, **good works** flow out of it... (IYHF, p.27)

In text 44, faith is represented as fountain, and good works as water. Just as water naturally flows from a fountain, good works naturally proceed from faith. This metaphor is used to make clear to the faithful the point that good works are a natural outcome of faith, so as to persuade them to express their faith in good works.

Moral and spiritual decadence as water current

Text 45:

Our Christians **must swim** against the prevailing **current** of **moral and spiritual decadence** by mounting the noble platform of true Christian living. (GCTR, p.15)

In text 45, moral and spiritual decadence are conceptualised as water current, and true Christian living as noble platform. Just as a ship resists the water current by mounting on the platform for safety, the faithful are enjoined to resist the moral and spiritual decadence in the country by living a true Christian life. The bishop uses this metaphor to make his message clear and understandable.

5.1.4.2.5 Metaphor of building

Building is concerned with construction of houses and other similar structures. It is a gradual process which progresses from one stage to another until it reaches completion. This meaning is transferred to other fields to make their descriptions concrete and clear. For

example, faith is represented as house and foundation; Catholic Church as pillar; truth as house, etc.

Texts 46-48, contain building metaphors. Faith is presented as house and foundation, Church as pillar, truth as building, Christian Catholic lives and communities as house.

Faith as house

Text 46:

Such is the real faith, a **faith built on a rock** which never fell. (*OEO*, p.8)

In text 46, faith is represented in terms of house. Experts in the field of building are of the view that a house built on a rocky foundation is always strong, much stronger than that built on a sandy foundation. By analogy the bishop asks the faithful to build their faith on a rock which never fell. By so doing, he maps the meaning of house onto the concept of faith, such that faith development is seen to undergo the same procedure as that involved in building a house. Just as building a house involves making a strong foundation, gradual process of building, and completion into a full blown house, faith development involves living in Christ, growing in faith in him, and maturing in the faith until salvation is attained. This type of faith which is built on the foundation of Christ and which grows progressively towards salvation is what the bishop considers to be 'real faith.' He uses this metaphor to explain the need for steady growth in faith.

Church as pillar/truth as building

Text 47:

Some critical points that must be accepted as the basis of the new world are the primacy of the spirit over matter;... the necessity of the **Church as the pillar** and mainstay of the truth... (*WWF*, p.58)

In text 47, the Catholic Church is conceptualized as pillar and mainstay, and truth as building. *Pillar* is a building terminology which refers to a vertical structure constructed to serve as a support to the main building. Without the pillar the building may not stand. Therefore, just as the pillar is the carrier of the main building, the Catholic Church is the carrier and supporter of the truth. The bishop uses this metaphor to make the faithful understand clearly that the Catholic Church holds a pride of place in relation to other non-Catholic Churches, as the

custodian of truth and the way to eternal salvation. This is aimed at strengthening their faith in the Catholic Church.

Christian Catholic lives and communities as house/faith as foundation

Text 48:

We need to embrace anew the gospel of Jesus Christ in its radicality and **rebuild our Christian Catholic lives and communities** on the solid **foundation of faith** (WWF, p.24).

Text 48 also contains building metaphor which is expressed through representation of Christian Catholic lives and communities as house, and faith as foundation. Rebuild means to reconstruct, to build again, or to construct again. This idea from the field of building and construction is carried over to the abstract entities *Christian Catholic lives* and *communities*. These are expected to be rebuilt on the solid foundation of faith. Here again, the abstract entity faith is made to receive the attributes of building. It is conceived of as a foundation, the underground structure on which a building is constructed. The bishop uses this metaphor to create a concrete image that will enhance understanding of their message which is that the faithful need to renew their lives and communities based on strong faith.

5.1.4.2.6 Metaphor of light

Light is synonymous with illumination. Certain objects are known to provide illumination. These include the sun, fire, stars, electrical bulb, etc. In the bishops' letters, objects, other than light providing ones are metaphorically represented as giving light. For example, faith is represented as light; hope as lamp; the gospel as light, etc.

Consider texts 49-51 in which Gospel is represented as light, culture as darkness, hope as glimmer, faith as illuminant, and love as light.

Gospel as light/culture as darkness

Text 49:

Every culture must be open to the **light of the Gospel** which penetrating the **culture** reveals "what is the will of God what is good and acceptable and mature" (see Rom. 12:2) (WWF, p.61)

In text 49 above, Gospel is conceptualised as light, and culture as darkness. Light gives illumination making it possible for one to see one's way through darkness. It reveals everything that is hidden. Just as light penetrates darkness and makes everything seen, the Gospel penetrates culture and reveals aspects of it that are bad and those that are in line with the will of God. The metaphor is used by the bishop to make clear and vivid to the faithful the need to determine the relevance or otherwise of certain aspects of their culture based on the Gospel.

Hope as glimmer

Text 50:

Just when there was a **glimmer of hope** that God's promise to him [Abraham] could be fulfilled through his son, Isaac, God tested him further by asking him to sacrifice his son. (*LTF*, p.32)

In text 50, hope is represented as glimmer, a steady glow, which can be rekindled into flame. This meaning is transferred to hope. Just as glimmer suggests the possibility of a flame, hope suggests the possibility of achieving one's desires. Thus, just when Abraham has got a son and was confident that the promise of being the father of nations would be a reality, God asked him to sacrifice the same son to him. The essence of this metaphor is to explain vividly to the faithful the need to persevere in faith despite all odds as God is always faithful to his promise.

Faith as illuminant/love as light

Text 51:

Faith shines out in love when we bear the burdens of our neighbours... (*LTF*, p.41)

In text 51, faith is presented as an illuminant, and love as light. Just as sun is associated with light, faith is associated with love which manifests in bearing the burden of others. The bishop uses this metaphor to describe vividly to the faithful the relationship between faith and love, in order to persuade them to demonstrate their faith through love.

5.1.4.2.7 Metaphor of food

Food refers to ingestible substances which serve to nourish the body. In the bishops' letters, ideas are presented as nourishment or food so as to describe meanings vividly.

In texts 51-53 the metaphor derives from the use of food terminologies to represent abstract entities. The word of God is conceptualized as menu, liturgy as nourishment, and faith as prey.

The word of God as menu

Text 51:

That way **the word of God** [as represented in the Bible and the Christian Tradition] will be a rich **menu**, a **balanced diet** to **nourish** the faith of the people of God (WWF, p.50)

In text 51, the word of God as contained in the Bible and the Sacred Tradition is associated with *rich menu, balanced diet* and *nourish*. It corresponds to food. Thus these words are expected to create in the faithful, a desire for the word of God, just as they create an appetite for food when they are associated with food. By using the food metaphor, the bishop persuades the faithful to accept both the Bible and the Sacred Tradition as sources of divine revelation.

Liturgy as nourishment

Text 52:

The liturgy by its very nature has the power to **nourish** our faith. (LTF, p.39)

In text 52, Liturgy is represented as food, capable of nourishing faith, just as food nourishes the body. Food nourishes living things and makes them grow and develop to maturity. Similarly, liturgy is capable of facilitating growth and development of faith. The essence of this metaphor is to explain clearly to the faithful the importance of participating in liturgy celebration.

Faith as prey

Text 53:

To be totally ignorant of our faith is to leave our **faith prey to danger**. (IYHF, p.41)

In text 53, faith is conceptualized as prey to danger. Prey refers to animals hunted as food by another. If they are not always at an alert, they will constantly lose their lives. In the same way, the faithful would be at the risk of losing their faith if they are ignorant of it. This metaphor is used by the bishop to explain vividly to the faithful the need to grow in the knowledge of faith

through reading of the Bible, Church documents, approved theological books, listening to sermons, attending retreats, etc.

5.1.4.2.8 Metaphor of body parts.

These are metaphors in which parts of the body are used to conceptualize ideas. For example, in the bishops' letters, spirit and faith are conceptualized as eyes, Bible as bone, diocese as heart, Scripture and Tradition as feet, Latin and Eastern Churches as lungs, etc.

In texts 54-56, The Sacred Tradition and the Sacred Scriptures are conceptualized as feet, Latin and Eastern Churches as lungs, and diocese as having heart.

Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scriptures as feet

Text 54:

The Church walks on the **two feet of the Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scriptures.** (*WWF*, p.50)

In text 54, the meaning of feet is transferred to Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scriptures to show their place in the Church. Feet refer to the parts of the body that give standing support to the legs. The Sacred Tradition and the Sacred Scripture are to the Roman Catholic Church what the feet are to a living body. Just as the body moves about by means of the feet, the Roman Catholic Church operates through these sources of divine truth, and just as the body cannot stand balanced and comfortable on one foot, the Church cannot operate fully with only the Scripture or only the Tradition. Both are required to maintain a balance. By using this metaphor, the bishop demonstrates the complementarity of the two as sources of divine revelation.

Latin and Eastern churches as lungs

Text 55:

The reality is that the Catholic Church breathes with **two lungs: Latin and Eastern.** (*FFF*, p.23)

In text 55, Latin and Eastern churches are conceptualized as lungs of the Catholic Church. Lungs are two respiratory organs in animate organisms, which perform their respiratory function in unity. This meaning is mapped onto Latin and Eastern Churches as the two great families of the Roman Catholic Church, united in the one Communion under the Bishop of

Rome. This metaphor is used by the bishop to explain clearly to the faithful the identity of the Roman Catholic Church.

Diocese as having a heart

Text 56:

It is our objective in this pastoral...to promote the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness among us as a Church by addressing the divisions in the presbyterium, in parishes and among the religious and other rough edges that have constituted a deep wound in the **heart of the diocese**.
(GCTR, P.6)

In text 56, diocese is conceptualised as having a heart. Heart, as internal organ of the body, is the centre of life in animate organisms. It is responsible for pumping of blood in the body. Without the heart, there will be no life. By conceptualising diocese as having a heart, the bishop places it in the same position as animate organisms. Just as a wound to the heart constitutes a threat to life, divisions among the members of the diocese, which are conceptualized as deep wound, are a threat to the unity of the diocese.

5.1.4.2.9 Metaphor of health

Metaphors of health are those involving the mapping of the ontology of medicine onto other fields. In the bishops' letters, Sacrament of Reconciliation, for example, is conceptualised as medicine, abuse of power as syndrome, religious indifferentism as virus, fear as disease, etc. The aim is to make concrete and vivid descriptions to ensure proper understanding of message. Instances of these metaphors are found in the texts 57-59 in which health terminologies are used in areas, other than health.

Sacrament of Reconciliation as medicine

Text 57:

In the meantime, the Church will continue her mission of sanctification and one of the potent means is **the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Penance)**, a veritable **medicine** which the Catholic Church has from her Divine Master... (FFF, p.46)

The association of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with medicine, in text 57, is a rhetorical device adopted by the bishop to give concrete and vivid message. The meaning of medicine as

a substance used to cure illness is transferred to the Sacrament of Reconciliation making it correspond to medicine and the penitent to a sick person. Consequently, just as medicine gets rid of sickness in a sick person, the sacrament gets rid of the penitent's sins. The essence of this metaphor is to explain vividly to the faithful the efficacy of this Sacrament in the remission of sins, in order to persuade them to avail themselves of its benefits as they strive towards repentance. In the ideology of the Catholic Church, a person who commits sin is expected to visit a priest to make a confession, and the priest, based on the powers conferred on him by the Church through his ordination, absolves him of his sin.

Fear as disease

Text 58:

It [fear] sometimes paralyzes and renders one useless. Evidently, **fear-syndrome** has almost become a culture in our age (IYHF, p.36).

The metaphor in text 58 derives from the use of the words *paralyzes* and *syndrome*. *Paralyze* is a health terminology associated with disease. To paralyze means to cause loss of muscular function in any part of the body, while *syndrome*, also a health register, refers to a group of symptoms that indicate the presence of a disease. These meanings are carried over to the domain of emotion, such that fear is conceptualized as a disease which paralyzes and renders one useless, and which has its own syndrome, like most diseases. The use of this health metaphor enables the bishop to concretise his message on the negative effect of fear, and to persuade the faithful to desist from fear.

Religious *indifferentism* as virus

Text 59:

...it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep track of the affiliation of some Christians who have contracted the **virus of religious indifferentism** which destroys the very fabric of Christianity, the stability of communion.... (FFF, p.53)

In text 59, religious *indifferentism* is conceptualised as a virus, a disease causing organism. Just as virus infects the victim with a disease and destroys his body cells, religious *indifferentism* which is the problem of Christians who go from church to church in search of solution to their problems, destroys the fabric of Christianity. (Christianity is here conceptualized as cloth). The

metaphor is deployed so as to give a clear picture of the danger posed by religious *indifferentism* in order to persuade the faithful to have a change of attitude.

5.1.4.2.10 Metaphor of meteorology

This involves the use of weather-related terminologies to conceptualize ideas in other fields. In the bishops' letters, Lent is represented as winter, love as atmosphere, and false teachers and prophets as clouds. Consider texts 60-62.

False teachers and prophets as clouds

Text 60:

These **people [false teachers and prophets]** are like dried-up springs, like **clouds** blown along by storm...
(FFF, p.7)

In text 60, *these people* refer to false teachers and prophets earlier mentioned in the discourse. They are represented as *clouds* blown along by storm. *Clouds* is a meteorological terminology referring to a visible mass of particles of dust or smoke in the atmosphere which can easily be blown by storm. This meaning is transferred to false teachers and prophets who are seen as having no substance, as they are not grounded in the truth of the apostolic teachings. The metaphor is used to depict their lack of seriousness and unreliability, to persuade the faithful to beware of them.

Lent as winter

Text 61:

Lent is the winter of Christian life. (CTC, p.5)

In text 61 Lent is represented as winter. Winter is the coldest season of the year, a season which most people consider unpleasant because it is marked with low activities and lacks the warmth associated with summer, and so while they wish away the season of winter, they await expectantly the summer season. This meaning of winter is mapped onto the season of Lent making it correspond to winter. Similarly, the Lenten season is a season of sober reflection, a season of low social activities and high spiritual activities such as fasting, prayer, almsgiving, penitence, a season of suffering so to say, as Christians commemorate the suffering and death of Christ during the season. Lent is a season when Christians are expected to get rid of their sins and other excesses of the flesh. As they go through these spiritual activities they look

forward to the coming of Easter. The essence of the metaphor is to make the faithful understand the seriousness of the season of Lent.

Love as atmosphere

Text 62:

Today, I enjoin you to live in the **atmosphere of love**.
(*TML*, p. 46)

In text 62, *atmosphere* is metaphorically used to mean environment. Just as beautiful and conducive environment makes life enjoyable, so does true love among Christians. The faithful are thus enjoined to live in love for one another.

By deploying metaphors in their pastoral letters, as exemplified above, the bishops are able to communicate the substance of their arguments to the faithful. They are able to make their descriptions concrete, vivid, persuasive, and more memorable. The abundant deployment of metaphors in the letters is a feature of religious discourse. As pointed out by Sztajer (online), religious world is a world that goes beyond human cognitive abilities and which cannot be grasped by means of any kind of cognition available. Metaphor, therefore, forms a frame for religious experience to be fully grasped and comprehensible for religious man. It is the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning. (Lakoff, 1993). The high preponderance of planting metaphors is a foregrounding of the theme of death and regeneration underlying Christian faith. Just as a seed must die before a new plant springs up, a Christian dies with the hope of rising eternally. Also, that journey metaphors are widespread is not accidental too; it is a reflection of the Christian belief that earthly life and activities constitute a journey to eternal life.

5.1.5 Nominalisation and passivisation objectifying the validity of call to action

The grammatical devices of nominalisation and passivisation are used in the bishops' pastoral letters as rhetorical devices to elicit actions from the audience in relation to the bishops' messages of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The verbs involved are mainly verbs of invitation to action such as *call*, *invite*, *challenge*, *etc.* These verbs are repeatedly used in their nominalised and passivised forms. By using them, the bishops objectify the validity of their call to make it indisputable and thus elicit appropriate actions from the audience.

5.1.5.1 Nominalisation

Nominalisation is the realization of process, attribute or circumstance as entity. In other words, it is the derivation of abstract nouns from a verb or any other part of speech. Nominalisation results in the loss of human agency, an increase in lexical density, and the raising of the representation of a situation to a higher level of abstraction, thereby objectifying and depersonalising it (Downing and Locke, 2006). According to Downing and Locke (2006:163), “a nominalisation can give the impression that what it expresses is a recognised piece of information, whose validity is beyond dispute.” The rhetorical device of nominalisation is deployed by the bishops to objectify the validity of their call on the audience for a life of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church, and elicit actions from them. This is exemplified by text 63 below:

Text 63:

The present **challenge** of the Christian faith among our people is no longer mere adherence. The **challenge** is not just to believe or to be baptised. Majority now profess to be Christians....The **challenge** is to deepen our faith, and bear witness to the great treasure which is the gift of faith we have received both individually and collectively. (IYHF, pp.27-28)

Nominalisation occurs in the first, second, and last sentences in the text above, through the use of the nominal *challenge*. The material process *challenge* is realised as the nominal *challenge*. By means of nominalization, the process form becomes depersonalised, thus making the bishop's call to faith objective and indisputable. The bishop presents deepening of faith and bearing witness to it as a challenge, that is, as a task, an obligation, a duty or a responsibility to be carried out by the faithful. They are expected to go beyond mere profession of faith to living out their faith. The use of nominalisation is meant to elicit actions from them in relation to the bishop's message of faith. The bishop's emphasis on the nominal *challenge* (repeated three times) is an indication of the necessity and the urgency of the action expected of the audience.

In like manner, nominalisation is deployed in text 64 to make the bishop's call for repentance objective and indisputable, and thus elicit the expected actions from the audience:

Text 64:

The **call** for on-going conversion as the indispensable condition for authentic Christian witnessing in our society is very important because we seem to be destroying the very foundation of an ethically correct version of human existence.(GCTR) p.15

The word *call* is in its nominalised form. It is derived from the verb *call*. The nominal means demand, appeal, plea or invitation. By it, the bishop's call for conversion and repentance is objectivised. The call is presented as a generally recognised truth which cannot be doubted. It thus becomes the obligation, duty and responsibility of the faithful to comply with the message. Their compliance is taken for granted. Nominalisation is therefore a rhetorical device used by the bishop for the purpose of persuading the audience to live a life of repentance and holiness.

Also, in text 65, nominalisation is used to objectify the validity of the bishop's call for a life of love, and persuade the audience to take appropriate action.

Text 65:

This Lenten Pastoral is an **invitation** to open ourselves to God who is love and to renew our love **commitment** at every level of personal and societal life. (LALG, p.48)

Here, the nominals deployed are *invitation* and *commitment*. *Invitation* is an abstract noun derived from the verb *invite* and is used as a complement of the verb *is*. An invitation means a request, an offer, or a solicitation. The bishop uses the nominal to call the audience to imbibe the love of God and show it to one another. The call is depersonalised and made objective so that the audience will see response to it as a matter of obligation. No room is created for doubt as the call appears to be a divine one. The second nominal *commitment* is derived from the verb *commit*. It functions as the object of the infinitive *to renew*. Commitment here means obligation, duty or allegiance. The audience are called to renew their commitment of love to one another. The use of the nominal *commitment* presupposes that there is already a love commitment, and that what matters is its renewal. This is a persuasive device aimed at eliciting actions of love from the audience.

Similarly, in text 66, the validity of the call for loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church is objectified through nominalisation, to persuade the audience to remain loyal to the Church:

Text 66:

In the age of confusion and various attractions to cheap practice of religion, the **call** to fidelity and steadfastness [to the Roman Catholic Church] becomes all the more urgent and important. (FFF, p.82)

The nominal deployed here is *call* which has the same form as the verb from which it is derived. It functions as the subject of the verb *becomes*. Nominalisation of the verb *call* has the effect of objectifying the bishop's appeal to the audience to remain steadfast to the Roman Catholic faith. It gives the appeal the status of a general truth which cannot be disputed. The presentation of the call as urgent and important intensifies the persuasive force of the nominalisation. The audience are thus made to see compliance as a matter of obligation.

5.1.5.2 Passivisation

Passivization is a grammatical process in which the Affected in an active sentence, rather than the Actor/Agent, conflates with the **subject**. It is the inversion of the Actor-Affected pattern leading to thematization or topicalisation of the Affected, and the weakening of the link between the Actor and process. Passivisation enhances generalisation and depersonalisation through which an author lifts responsibility. Passivization in the bishops' letters is marked by Agent deletion. Emphasis is on the process rather than on causality. It is deployed as a rhetorical device aimed at objectifying the validity of the bishops' call to action to facilitate compliance by the audience. The verbs passivized are those of invitation to action, such as *call*, *challenge*, *invite*, etc. Text 67 below is an example of the use of passivization to objectify the bishops' call to faith so as to elicit appropriate response from the audience:

Text 67:

As children of God and more so, as members of God's family, **we are called** to walk by faith and live by faith. (IYHF, p.20)

The text above is a call to action expressed in the passive voice. The faithful along with the bishop are called to take an action: to walk and live by faith. But the person making the call is not stated. The use of agentless passive makes the call impersonal and objective. It thus appears to be a divine call. The bishop's aim of objectifying the call through passivisation is to make the audience respond to it as a matter of urgency, responsibility and obligation. An appeal to

the audience's religious faith (*as children of God and as members of God's family*) is further meant to lure them to compliance.

Similarly, in text 68, the validity of the bishop's call on the audience to repent from their sins is objectified through the use of agentless passive to facilitate compliance:

Text 68:

By repentance, **we are all invited** to change our mentality, our way of thinking and seeing things. There has to be a radical transformation of the whole person to align the person properly in the way of the Lord. (*WWF*, p.58)

In the text above, the passive form is *we are all invited*. The agent is deleted and the emphasis is on the process, which is the invitation. Through the generalisation and depersonalisation occasioned by the use of the agentless passive, the invitation to repentance is made to appear divine rather than coming from the bishop. As such, the faithful are expected to respond to it as a matter of obligation and urgency. The urgency of the action expected of the audience is indicated by the radicality of the transformation needed.

Text 69 exemplifies the use of passivisation to objectify the validity of the bishop's call to love and persuade the audience to respond appropriately:

Text 69:

On the cross...we see clearly the cost of God's commitment of love to humanity. In like manner, **we are challenged** to commit ourselves to the good of others even to the point of shedding blood. (*RBGN*, p.27)

Agentless passive is also used in text 69 to induce the faithful to take appropriate actions of love. No agent is seen to be throwing the challenge. It thus appears impersonal and objective, and a matter of fact. Expressing love to others, just as Jesus Christ did on the cross, is thus presented as a responsibility, a natural task the faithful have to accomplish without prompting. They are to be ready to make sacrifices, even sacrifice of their lives, for the good of others. Through the use of agentless passive, the bishop makes the call to love appear objective, indisputable and divine, thus inducing the audience to take appropriate action.

Also, through the use of agentless passive the validity of the bishop's call on the faithful to be loyal to the Roman Catholic Church is objectified to persuade the faithful to comply. This is exemplified by text 70.

Text 70:

We are called to embrace and remain faithful to **the Catholic and Apostolic Faith handed over** once and for all to the Apostles. *WWF*, p.36)

Here, the passive forms are *we are called* and *the Catholic and Apostolic Faith handed over*. The agents of the material processes *call* and *hand over* are not indicated. The generalisation and depersonalisation occasioned by this form of passivisation renders bishop's call to loyalty objective and indisputable. It makes the call appear to be coming from above and thus requires urgent response. In the case of the second passive form, it is understood that the agent is Jesus Christ; the Catholic Church has always taught that the Church originates from Christ himself.

5.1.6 Syntactic parallelism emphasising ideas for easy grasp

Grammatical structures are said to exhibit a feature of parallelism when they are initiated by the same lexical items, when they occur in the same paradigm, or when they exhibit a similar syntactic pattern (Yankson, 1987). All the constituents in the same structural position are identical or equivalent in their grammatical and semantic functions. Syntactic parallelism is a form of repetition of parts of sentences to maintain a schematic syntactic pattern, to create rhythm and melody, emphasis, a contrast, to underlie the semantic connection and equality between sentences, and to make an emotional appeal on the audience. It serves the purpose of hammering home a message by placing it at the forefront of the listener's mind. (Yankson, 1987)

Syntactic parallelism is a prominent rhetorical device deployed in the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters. It is used to foreground and emphasise messages of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church to ensure easy grasp by the audience. Examples of the use of syntactic parallelism in the letters are seen in texts 71- 74.

The message of love is foregrounded in text 71 through the use of syntactic parallelism.

Text 71:

There may be no easy solutions to the many problems of life as long as we continue to abhor the virtue of love.

There may be no end to wars and tumults among the nations; **there may be no end to** destructions of lives and property; **there may be no end to** shamelessness, foolishness and ignorance; **there may be no end to** the culture of impunity; **there may be no end to** armed robbery and such destructive tendencies, yes, **there will be no end to** the troubles and cares of our lives until we live lives of love or allow love to influence the principles of our existence. (*TML*, pp44-45)

The parallel syntactic structures in the above text are:

I. Main clauses: *There + Verb + Complement + conditional*

- i. there may be no easy solutions to the many problems of life (as long as we continue to abhor...)
- ii. there may be no end to wars and tumults among the nations (until we live lives of love or...)
- iii. there may be no end to destructions of lives and property (until we live lives of love or ...)
- iv. there may be no end to shamelessness, foolishness and ignorance (until we live lives of love...)
- v. there may be no end to the culture of impunity (until we live lives of love or...)
- vi. there may be no end to armed robbery and such destructive tendencies (until we live lives of...)
- vii. there will be no end to the troubles and cares of our lives (until we live lives of love or...)

II. Conditional clauses: *Adverbial + Subject + Verb + Complement*

- i. as long as we continue to abhor the virtue of love
- ii. until we live lives of love
- iii. (until we) allow love to influence the principles of our existence.

III. Noun phrases

- i. the many problems of life
- ii. wars and tumults among the nations
- iii. destructions of lives and property
- iv. shamelessness, foolishness and ignorance

- v. the culture of impunity
- vi. armed robbery and such destructive tendencies
- viii. the troubles and cares of our lives

In the above parallel structures, the first group, that is, main clauses are initiated by the same lexical items *there may be no end to* and exhibit the same syntactic pattern *there + verb + complement + conditional*. The pattern is repeated seven times. The second group of parallel structures which are *conditional clauses* are initiated by adverb of time and have the same pattern *Adverbial + Subject + Verb + Complement*. The pattern is repeated three times. Then the third group, *noun phrases*, occur in the same paradigm of nominal group and occupy the same syntactic slot as complements. The main clauses express the problems of life that will continue to follow lack of love. The propositions start as probabilities and end as a certainty. The first main clause serves as the thesis; it governs the other clauses which serve as its development. The bishop does not just want to stop at saying *many problems*. He goes further to explore instances of the problems in other clauses for the purpose of foregrounding his message in the minds of the faithful so as to drive home to them the enormity of the problems to which there would be no end without love. The conditional clauses embody the conditions that will either avert the problems or bring them to pass, that is, the presence or absence of love. The noun phrases constitute the problems of life to which the bishops see no end without love. The bishop has deployed these parallel structures for emphasis to ensure proper understanding of his message of love. The six-time repetition of the expression *there may be no end to*, which is a restatement of *there may be no easy solution to*, is aimed at emphasising and foregrounding the consequences of lack of love so as to drive home to the faithful the message of love.

Again, in text 72 below, the idea of fear as the opposite of faith is foregrounded through syntactic parallelism to ensure easy grasp of the message of faith by the audience. Understanding the message is a step towards its acceptance.

Text 72:

Indeed we have many fears: **we fear** evil spirits and evil men; **we fear** witches and wizards; **we fear** ghosts and goblins; **we fear** sorcerers and medicine men; **we fear** pain, sickness and suffering; **we fear** childlessness and lack of male children; finally **we fear** death. (*LTF*, p.33)

In the text above, the parallel structures are:

I. Main clauses: Subject + verb + complement

- i. we fear evil spirits and evil men
- ii. we fear witches and wizards
- iii. we fear ghosts and goblins
- iv. we fear sorcerers and medicine men
- v. we fear pain, sickness and suffering
- vi. we fear childlessness and lack of male children
- vii. (finally) we fear death. (*LTF*, p.33)

II. Noun phrases

- i. evil spirits and evil men
- ii. witches and wizards
- iii. ghosts and goblins
- iv. sorcerers and medicine men
- v. pain, sickness and suffering
- vi. childlessness and lack of male children

In the parallel structures above, the first group are clauses. They are initiated by the same lexical items *we fear*, and exhibit the same syntactic pattern *Subject + verb + complement* which is repeated seven times. These clauses are an elaboration of the *many fears* mentioned in the leading clause *Indeed we have many fears*. The bishop chooses to give instances of these fears in the subsequent clauses so as foreground their enormity and bring the message home to the faithful. The second group of parallel structures are noun phrases. They all belong to the same paradigm of nominal group and occupy the same syntactic slot as complements. They are the objects of the fears themselves and constitute semantic compounds (Yankson, 1987). The essence of the parallel structures is to bring to the consciousness of the faithful the magnitude of their fears which affect their faith as Christians. By this emphasis, the bishop hopes to create a proper understanding of the message of faith to facilitate positive response from the audience.

The message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church is emphasised in text 73 to ensure good understanding which is a prerequisite to persuasion.

Text 73:

I believe in the Holy Catholic Church. **I believe in** the Church founded on Peter. **I believe in** the Church which has remained faithful to the patrimony of Peter. That Church called by the Fathers, the Catholic Church, is the object of my faith. (FFF, p.28)

The above text contains the following parallel structures:

1. Subject +Verb+Complement

- i. I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.
- ii. I believe in the Church founded on Peter.
- iii. I believe in the Church which has remained faithful to the patrimony of Peter.

2. Complement:

- i. the Holy Catholic Church.
- ii. the Church founded on Peter.
- iii. the Church which has remained faithful to the patrimony of Peter.

The first group of parallel structures are sentences with the syntactic pattern Subject +Verb+ Complement, which is repeated three times. They express the bishop's belief in the Roman Catholic Church. The second group are noun phrases which are expressed in different forms, and function as complements. They are the object of the bishop's belief. The bishop foregrounds the theme of loyalty to the Church through these parallel structures. By repeatedly confessing his belief in the Church, he hopes to drive home to his audience this message of loyalty, and persuade them to react appropriately.

In text 74, the theme of Christianity as a practical faith is foregrounded through the use of syntactic parallelism.

Text 74:

Theirs was a community under obedience and willingly learning in trust and belief the teachings of the apostles. **Theirs was a community** where brotherly love (Philadelphia) thrived. **Theirs was a community** of prayer, and constant prayer meetings in the temple and in the homes. **Theirs was a reverent society** living in an awe of the sacredness that was their faith and hope. **Theirs was a community** of sharing benefits and burdens without deceptive exploitations and lies. **Theirs was a community** of worship and praise to God for his goodness. **Theirs**

was a community of miracles both by God directly and through them (Acts 2:4-7) (*OEO*, p.10)

In the text above, the parallel structures are:

I. Subject + Verb + Complement + Adjectival phrase/clause:

- i. Theirs was a community under obedience and ...
- ii. Theirs was a community where brotherly love (Philadelphia) thrived.
- iii. Theirs was a community of prayer and constant prayer meetings.
- iv. Theirs was a reverent society living in an awe of the sacredness ...
- v. Theirs was a community of sharing benefits and burdens ...
- vi. Theirs was a community of worship and praise to God for his goodness....
- vii. Theirs was a community of miracles both by God directly and through them.

II. Noun phrases

- i. Community (six times)
- ii. Society

III. Adjectival phrases/clauses

- i. under obedience and willingly learning in trust and belief the teachings of the apostles
- ii. where brotherly love (Philadelphia) thrived
- iii. of prayer, and constant prayer meetings in the temple and in the homes
- iv. living in an awe of the sacredness that was their faith and hope
- v. of sharing benefits and burdens without deceptive exploitations and lies
- vi. of worship and praise to God for his goodness
- vi. of miracles both by God directly and through them

The first group of parallel structures above are clauses with the pattern ***subject + verb + complement + adjectival phrase/clause***, which is repeated seven times. The second group are noun phrases, repeated six times as *community* and realized once as *society*. The essence of the lexical repetition is to emphasize the communal nature of the group so as to drive home the message to the faithful. The last group of parallel structures are adjectivals which are used to describe the noun phrases bringing out the qualities that make them communal. The text above, which relates to the theme of faith, is drawn from the context in which the bishop exhorts the faithful on the need to live by the faith they profess. He cites an example of the early Christians

whose lives were a demonstration of faith that produces good works. The bishop uses syntactic parallelism as a rhetorical device to get this message across to the faithful. Through the pattern which is highly marked by lexical repetition he creates an enviable picture of the kind of spirituality the early Christians were imbued with in demonstration of their faith in God. This is expected to persuade the faithful to strive to emulate them and live according to the faith they profess.

The analysis above shows that Catholic bishops have exploited the device of syntactic parallelism for rhetorical emphasis aimed at driving their messages home to the faithful. It is a syntactic codification of the ideas the bishops want to highlight. The repeated syntactic structures create a certain rhythm, which not only serves to yield prominence to the themes but also engages the attention of the reader. The preponderance of this device in the bishops' letters is attributable to the rhetorical nature of religious discourse.

5.1.7 Antithesis emphasising ideas for easy grasp

Antithesis is another rhetorical device in the bishops' letters which is aimed at ensuring comprehension and facilitating persuasion. It is a form of syntactic parallelism, as it involves placement of two contrasting meanings or ideas in parallel structures. The aim is to emphasise themes through contrast and draw the audience attention to them. The use of antithesis in the letters is exemplified by texts 75-79. In text 75, emphasis is on the subject of love.

Text 75:

Without love our societies will turn into a nursery for crime and injustice. **With love** we can evolve human societies and culture, which will be founded on truth, built on justice and enlivened by love. (TML, p.42)

In the above text, the contrast is between presence and absence of love, *with love* and *without love*, and between crimes/justice and truth/injustice. *Without love* collocates with crimes and injustice; *with love* collocates with truth and justice. The aim of these contrasts is to emphasise the importance of love in human society. The real emphasis of the bishop lies on the second part of the contrast, and the contrast device is used as a means of drawing the attention of the faithful to the message of the bishop.

Also, in text 76, antithetical contrasts are deployed to foreground the theme of loyalty to facilitate comprehension and persuasion.

Text 76:

God calls us to **peace** not to **disorder**. (1 Cor. 14:33).
When the manifestations produce **peace and unity**, they are from God for God's work...When they produce **hatred, dissensions, antagonisms, rivalry, bad temper, quarrels, disagreements, factions, malice, pride**, they are not from the Holy Spirit... (FFF, p.73)

In text 76, the contrasting ideas set in parallel structures are *peace//disorder; peace and unity//hatred, dissensions, antagonisms, rivalry, bad temper, quarrels, disagreements, factions, malice, pride; from God//not from the Holy Spirit*. Peace and unity collocate with *from God*; while *disorder, hatred, dissensions, antagonisms, rivalry, bad temper, quarrels, disagreements, factions, malice, pride* collocate with *not from the Holy Spirit*. Through these antithetical structures, the bishop emphasises the fact that the Spirit of God produces peace. The antithesis is used in relation to the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The bishop enlightens the faithful on the criteria for discernment, especially in the light of various claims to the possession of the Spirit of God by non-Catholic groups, which tend to lure them away from the Catholic faith.

Furthermore, antithetical contrasts are used in text 77 to drive home to the audience the bishop's message of faith

Text 77:

...we walk by **faith** not by **sight**. If we have the eyes of **faith**, we will **see miracles which happen** every minute of the day. **But** if we have **no faith**, we may only look for sensuous miracles **which we may not see**. (IYHF, p33)

In text 77, the items set in contrast are *faith//sight; eyes of faith//no faith; see//may not see*. *Faith, eyes of faith* and *see* are on one side, while *sight, no faith* and *may not see* are on the other. By setting these contrasting ideas in parallel structures, the bishop markedly highlights the importance of faith among the Christian faithful, and draws the attention of the audience to the need for them to live a life of faith. The antithesis features in the context of the bishop's criticism of the faithful on their incessant quest for miracles, an attitude which poses dangers to their Christian faith.

Antithesis in the bishops' letters also takes the form of negative-positive restatement to emphasise and drive home ideas. Here, an idea is stated twice: first, negatively and then,

positively. In text 78, for example, which is an explanation of one of the beatitudes in Matthew 5:3-10 (*Happy are those who mourn; God will comfort them!*), the bishop uses antithesis to clarify the meaning of the beatitude and emphasise the theme of repentance.

Text 78:

The mourning meant... is **not** one caused by bereavement, affliction or loss; **but** a mourning induced by an awareness of one's infidelity through sin and rejection of God's love and goodness by others. (RBGN, pp.28-29)

Here a contrast is drawn between what mourning is not and what it is, for the purpose of emphasising the actual meaning of mourning intended by the bishop so as to ensure understanding by the audience. As the bishop first excludes what mourning is not, before stating what it is, emphasis is placed on the second part of the contrast, and the attention of the audience is drawn to it. The emphasis is on mourning prompted by guilt of sin.

Similarly, in text 79, a contrast is drawn between love as action and love as definition, through the use of antithesis.

Text 79:

By this Jesus explains that love is an action **not** a definition. (TML, p.23)

The essence of the contrast between love as *action* and love as *definition* is to emphasise the meaning of love intended by the bishop, which is love as *action*. The audience are expected to demonstrate in action their love for their fellow human beings. Love as *definition* is excluded while love as *action* is upheld. The antithesis occurs in the context of the bishop's discussion of love for neighbours. He explains to the faithful that rather than go into the definition of love in response to the question of a lawyer about who is his neighbor, Jesus gives the story of the Good Samaritan to emphasise that love is to be acted out and not to be preached. Antithetical contrast is thus an important rhetorical device used by the bishops to express ideas more emphatically in their pastoral letters to facilitate comprehension and acceptance of message.

5.1.8 Obligation/necessity modals appealing to the audience's sense of responsibility and moral duty

Modal auxiliaries of obligation and necessity are deployed in the bishops' letters as a rhetorical device to appeal to the audience's sense of responsibility and moral duty and induce

persuasion. They include the modals *should*, *must*, *have to*, and *need to*, and are usually deployed at the end of a message or at the end of each pastoral letter in order to make the most powerful possible appeal to the audience. The bishops use them to elicit actions from the audience in relation to the message of the pastoral letter. The use of the modals is an expression of the bishops' power and authority over the faithful. Text 80 below exemplifies the bishops' use of modal auxiliaries to appeal to the audience's sense of obligation so as to elicit actions from them.

Text 80:

We **need** therefore **to** set our hearts on Christ and to accept him as the author and finisher of our faith (Heb. 12:2). It is Christ alone who can heal us of sin; he alone can restore our lives, he alone can give meaning to our existence even when the day is dark and the night cold. (GCTR, p.13)

In the above text, *need to* is a modal auxiliary expressing necessity of action. Setting heart on Christ and accepting him as the author and finisher of faith is an action which the audience are expected to carry out as a matter of necessity. The text is in form of advice aimed at eliciting positive reaction from the audience in relation to the message of faith which has been preached to them. In the first sentence, they are advised to have faith in Christ, while in the second sentence, they are offered convincing reasons why they should do so. The bishop has chosen to emphasise the necessity of the action so as to lure the faithful into compliance with the message of faith.

Similarly, in text 81 below, the modal of obligation *have to* is deployed to get the audience to repent of their sins:

Text 81:

We **have to** be committed to seeking eternal life, knowing that our eternal salvation is the only one thing that is important and necessary: "What then will anyone gain by winning the whole world and forfeiting his life? (Matt, 16:26) (WWF, p.59)

Have to in the above text is a modal auxiliary expressing strong obligation. The obligation is: seeking eternal life. By using the modal, the bishop appeals to the audience's sense of duty. The action of seeking eternal life is presented as a moral responsibility which the audience are

expected to fulfil without being prompted to do so. They are thus made to see it as a natural thing to do. The use of the modal of obligation is meant to persuade them to act according to the message of repentance: to seek eternal life, which is the ultimate goal of Christian life. The persuasive force of the text is intensified by testimonial reference to the Holy Bible.

In text 82, the modal auxiliary *should* is used to appeal to the audience's sense of moral duty to elicit positive response to the bishop's message of love.

Text 82:

For us to love as God really wants us to, God's grace is indispensable. We **should** pray constantly for this grace in order to counter our selfishness and also withstand the constant negative forces of our corrupt society (*TML*, p.49).

The modal *should* in the text above is used to express an obligation expected of a Christian who desires to love as God wishes: the obligation to pray constantly for the grace of God, which is capable of withstanding all obstacles to love. Through the use of the modal, the bishop presents the action of praying for God's grace of love as a duty, a responsibility to be carried out naturally by the audience without any external force. This way, the audience is expected to be lured into compliance. Presenting the obligation as a piece of advice is a more polite way of eliciting actions from them than the use of direct imperatives.

The modal auxiliaries *mustis* employed in text 83 to appeal to the audience's sense of obligation and duty in relation to the message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church faith:

Text 83:

The worst thing that can happen to a true believer in Jesus Christ is being cut off from the communion with his or her fellow believers in union with the Successor of Apostle Peter. You **must** do all in your power to maintain ecclesiastical communion even in your external conduct (see can.209). (*FFF*, p.86)

The obligation expressed through the use of the modal auxiliary *mustis*: maintaining communion of the Catholic Church. The audience are to fulfil this obligation, as a matter of compulsion, not of choice. It is non-negotiable. Breaking from the communion of the Roman Catholic Church, which is considered to be the Ark of Salvation, is a risk to eternal salvation, a risk the audience would not want to take. For the bishop therefore, to gain eternal salvation, one has to be loyal

to the Roman Catholic Church. The use of the obligation modal is aimed at eliciting positive reaction to the bishop's message of loyalty.

By appealing to the audience's sense of obligation through the use of the modals *must*, *need to*, *should*, and *have to*, the bishops direct the faithful towards a goal, not as the bishops' personal demand, but as an obligation determined by the common will for which the bishops are merely a medium of transmission (Oha, 1994).

5.2 Pathos-based devices

Pathos-based rhetorical devices are rhetorical devices aimed at arousing the feelings or emotions of the audience to influence their attitudes and move them to expected action. Pathos-based devices deployed by the bishops in their letters include code switching to Igbo language, use of prayers, inclusive pronoun (*we*), rhetorical questions (RQs), sarcasm, segregation pronoun (*they*), emotion-laden words, and personification of the Roman Catholic Church as mother.

5.2.1 Code switching from English to Igbo to express solidarity with the audience

Code switching is a language contact phenomenon whereby bilinguals or multi-linguals shift from one language to another in a particular speech situation. Gumperz (1982:59) defines it as "the juxtaposition within the same speech exchange of passages of speech belonging to two different grammatical systems or subsystems". Muysken (1995:7), who defines code switching as "the alternate use by bilinguals of two or more languages in the same conversation," distinguishes between intra-sentential (switches within a sentence) and inter-sentential code switching (switches between sentences). Myers-Scotton (1995:2) reserves the term code-mixing for the former, and the term code-switching for the latter. Blom and Gumperz (1972) distinguish between two types of code choice: situational switching and metaphorical switching. The former is code switching occasioned by a change in social setting while the latter is that triggered by changes in topic. They identify participants, setting, and topic as social constraints which affect the code choices of speakers. Bell (1991) considers the audience as the most critical factor that influences a speaker's code choice.

Code switching from English to Igbo language in the bishops' letters is audience motivated. It is a reflection of the sociolinguistic background of the letters which is the Igbo Catholic community of Onitsha Ecclesiastical province, a background which the bishops share

with the audience. The Igbo codes deployed occur as linguistic forms at both intra- and inter-sentential levels, and as Igbo proverbs. They are employed by the bishops as a rhetorical device to express solidarity with the audience.

5.2.1.1 Intra-sentential switches

These are switches within a sentence. Myers-Scotton (1995) refers to such switches as codemixing. Texts 84-86 are instances of intra-sentential switches from English to Igbo for the purpose of expressing solidarity with the audience.

In text 84, the Igbo word *dibia* is chosen to create in the audience a feeling of solidarity with the bishop.

Text 84:

Thus, it is not enough to examine oneself with regard to the first commandment that prohibits the having another god, simply in terms of whether one has ever visited the *dibia* or native doctor but more in terms of whether the covenantal relationship with God is what defines every other thing that one does. (RBGN, p. 26)

In the text above, the bishop switches from English to Igbo. The Igbo word *dibia* and its English translation *native doctor* denote the same idea. The latter is a reinforcement of the former, and both are joined with the coordinating conjunction *or*. The Igbo code arouses cultural feelings and carries other connotations which are lost in the English translation. It connotes idolatry, occult and evil practices. Visiting native doctors is thus considered a sinful practice among the Igbo Catholic Community. The bishop is of the view that the faithful should measure their Christianity in terms of their covenantal relationship with God and not in terms of whether they have ever visited a native doctor or not. By switching from English to the Igbo code, the bishop aims to create a feeling of solidarity and warmth with the audience to facilitate acceptance of message.

The same rhetorical effect of creating a feeling of solidarity is achieved in text 85 through the use of the Igbo phrase *ogwuego*.

Text 85:

People are said to resort to charms for making money (**ogwu ego**), for attracting husbands, for keeping the husbands tied to their wives (*WWF*, p.21)

Here in text 85, the Igbo phrase *ogwu ego*, enclosed in brackets and reinforcing the meaning of its English equivalent *charms for making money*, is purposively chosen to arouse a feeling of togetherness in the audience. The switch is made in the context of the bishop's criticism of the faithful for searching for security, possessions and power in the occult and secret societies. The choice of the Igbo code enables the bishop to communicate other cultural meanings that the English language cannot convey adequately. It also enables them to establish a rapport with the faithful to facilitate acceptance of message.

The switch from English to the Igbo word *oluezinuno* in text 87 also has the rhetorical function of arousing feelings of solidarity and friendliness in the audience.

Text 86:

Itinerant prayer ministers, **oluezinuno**, crusades and vigils not organised by the parish priests or approved priests have been suspended for us to carry out proper discernment (*WWF*, pp.67-68)

The Igbo word *oluezinuno*, which reinforces the meaning of its English equivalent *itinerant prayer ministries* to which it is related by apposition, creates a feeling of unity between the bishop and the audience. A message communicated in the language which both the bishop and the audience cherish is likely to be accepted because of the solidarity and mutual trust created by oneness of language.

5.2.1.2 Inter-sentential switches

Inter-sentential code switching is code switching that occurs between sentences. Texts 87-89 are instances of the use of inter-sentential code switching in the bishops' letters to express solidarity and achieve persuasion.

In text 87, the Igbo code *Okwukwe Ezi Olu* is introduced at the sentential level for the purpose of eliciting a feeling of solidarity.

Text 87:

We are again offered another "forty days and forty nights", crowned with a sacred paschal week to make our society a true household of God, a Church; for such should be the proper character of a true faith: faith that breeds good brands (**Okwukwe Ezi Olu**) (*OEO*, p.3)

The message expressed in this text is that of repentance. The bishop wants the faithful to repent from their sins and live a kind of life that will bring about positive changes in the society, a practical Christian life, in demonstration of their Christian faith. To facilitate understanding and acceptance of this message the bishop switches from the English expression *faith that breeds good brands* to its Igbo equivalent *Okwukwe ezi-olu*, which is given in brackets; the latter reinforces the meaning of the former. The switch to Igbo not only makes the message more understandable but also facilitates its acceptance because of the feeling of solidarity it arouses. A message is, no doubt, better understood and appreciated, and in deed more acceptable, in the real language of the people. By demonstrating that he shares this language with the faithful, the bishop is likely to earn trust, confidence and support from them.

Similarly, in text 88 below, solidarity with the audience is created through inter-sentential code switching to Igbo.

Text 88:

It is difficult to convince the African that a sad event is natural. “**Ogbaro aka**” They are not ordinary natural happenings (WWF, P.17)

Here, the Igbo expression *ogbaro aka*, which reinforces the English equivalent *They are not ordinary happenings*, is purposely chosen to raise the feeling of solidarity in the audience and enlist their support. The native expression encapsulates a typical Igbo man's attitude to any bad or unpleasant thing happening to him or around him. It is never ordinary. Some evil forces or evil persons must be behind it. This attitude derives from the traditional religious belief of Igbo people. The Igbo traditional religion, which is hardly separated from the lives of the people, is a religion in which God, the gods, evil spirits and forces have a very close relationship with the human world. The gods are believed to constantly interfere in the affairs of men. Any little offence against them can attract punishment ranging from different kinds of ailments or diseases, to even death, unless they are appeased through sacrifices. So, to the traditional Igbo man nothing bad happens to anyone ordinarily. Unfortunately this attitude is a setback to growth in the Christian faith, and is of a serious concern to the Catholic bishops. By using this Igbo expression in its original form, the bishops are able to communicate this cultural meaning and the ideology behind it in a way that the English equivalent does not. The choice also

enables them to identify with the faithful and build a rapport and understanding that facilitates acceptance of message.

Text 89 is another exemplification of the use code switching to Igbo, at the inter-sentential level, to achieve solidarity and subsequently, persuasion in the bishops' letters.

Text 89:

It is important for us to realize that children are God's gift, not only to the parents but also to the society at large (*nwa bu nwa oha*) (LALG, p.53)

The Igbo expression *nwa bu nwa oha* enclosed in brackets is a reinforcement of the idea expressed in the preceding sentence, which is that children are God's gift not only to the parents but also to the society at large. The text which relates to the theme of love draws from the context in which the bishop admonishes parents to show love to their children. In addition to communicating more than its preceding English sentence, the choice of the Igbo sentence enables the bishop to identify with the faithful and enlist their cooperation.

Switches from English to Igbo as exemplified above are thus used by the bishops not only to reiterate ideas and communicate deeper meaning that can be best understood by the faithful in their vernacular, but also to create a feeling of solidarity in the audience to facilitate compliance with the message.

5.2.1.3 Igbo proverbs

Proverbs are wise sayings that show in a condensed form the accumulated wisdom and life experiences of a people. They make available ideas and values neatly packed in memorable and easily reproduced forms. Opeibi (2009) describes it as a model of compressed or forceful language. In the Igbo culture, proverbs are very highly valued, so much so that they are regarded as the oil with which words are eaten. They are commonly used as expressions of traditional wisdom and familiarity with Igbo lore. Edeh (1985) observes that Igbo proverbs are innumerable, broad in scope and elasticity, and that there is no experience, sensory or perceptual, that cannot find its legitimate domain of expression in proverbs. In using proverbs, the speaker or writer employs a resource for handling a social situation (Hansen 1996).

The bishops, as Igbo indigenes, have exploited the resource of Igbo proverbs in their pastoral letters, for the purpose of expressing solidarity with the audience to enhance

acceptance of their messages. In text 90, for example, an Igbo proverb is deployed to facilitate compliance with the message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 90:

You must also be careful about men and women who insinuate themselves into families to get influence over silly men and women...**Ukpana okpoko buru nti chiri ya!** (WWF, p. 67)

The Igbo proverb, here, though not translated, literally means: ‘a grasshopper taken by *okpoko* is deaf.’ *Okpoko* is a kind of bird which is known for its loud noise. It is believed that before this bird could get at its victim, the victim must have heard its noise and taken precautions. It is only a deaf grasshopper that can be caught unawares by the *okpoko*. By means of this proverb the bishop appeals to the Igbo traditional wisdom to persuade the audience to heed his warning to beware of identifying themselves with anti-Catholic groups. If the audience have ears, that is, if they are not deaf, they should heed the bishop’s warning; if not, they should be ready to bear the consequences just like the grasshopper which fails to hear the sound of *okpoko*. Through mutual understanding created by the choice of the proverbs, the bishop aims to persuade the audience to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith.

Similarly, Igbo proverb is used in text 91 to make the faithful respond to the call to support the Church financially:

Text 91:

We want to challenge the faith of our Catholics to rise up as responsible members of our Family of God to bear the responsibility of supporting the Church freely according to one’s means. The Igbo adage has it **Oji ego kwaa nne ya, na oburo diokpala gbulu ya!** (FFF, p.90)

The highlighted part of the text is an Igbo proverb. Its meaning is understood from the context as, “whoever has the means should bear the financial responsibility of his dead mother’s burial; after all it is not the first son that killed her.” In the Igbo culture, the financial responsibility of burying a dead father or mother is solely shouldered by the first son (just as he is the one who inherits the father’s property after his father’s death). Sometimes, however, the first son lacks the means to carry out this responsibility, hence this proverb. The proverb is used to buttress the bishop’s point that financial support to the Church should be given in faith according to

one's means and not through flat levies. By using this proverb in its original Igbo form, not translated, the bishop demonstrates his linguistic and cultural solidarity with the faithful, who are made to feel at home with him as their own brother. The use of the proverb also creates in the faithful a sense of admiration for the bishop, who, despite his education and priestly vocation, is still knowledgeable in his people's culture.

The Igbo proverbs in text 92 are found handy by the bishop to enlist the support and cooperation of the audience in relation to the message of loyalty.

Text 92:

You may think that it is easier to go to other Churches and groups... **Ebe onye no, ebe onoro ana-agu ya!** (One is attracted to the place where one is not). You have only to taste and see that the simmer will wear off and the pretence continues! **Oburo etu ugoro si ada n'onu ka osi ato uto...** not all that glitters is gold (FFF, p. 79)

Here, the proverbs are used in the context of the bishop's warning against defection of the faithful to non-Catholic Churches. The literal meaning of the first proverb is given in brackets as 'one is attracted to the place where one is not.' In other words, one always tends to consider a place where he has not been to to be better than the place where he is. The bishop uses this proverb to criticise the attitude of the faithful who always consider non-Catholic Churches to be better than the Catholic Church and so tend to defect from the Catholic faith. The second proverb is an addendum, a complement, to the first one. After supporting his criticism of the faithful's attitude through the use of the first proverb, the bishop now sounds a note of warning to them by means of the second proverb, whose literal translation is 'The taste of bitter kola is not as pleasant as it sounds when it is being eaten.' This meaning is reinforced by the equivalent English proverb *not all that glitters is gold*. The bishop uses the proverb to make it clear to the faithful that things are not always what they appear to be. The non-Catholic Churches which appear attractive to them have some ugly things about them. This warning through the use of proverb serves to persuade the faithful to remain steadfast in the Catholic faith.

The use of Igbo proverbs in the bishops' letters is a way of demonstrating loyalty to the Igbo culture and solidarity with the faithful. It indicates the bishops' attachment to the Igbo

community and its linguistic climate. Through shared socio-cultural beliefs, the bishops are able to persuade the faithful to remain steadfast in the Catholic faith.

5.2.2 Prayers for inspiration

Prayers are deployed by bishops in their pastoral letters as a rhetorical device to inspire the audience into action in relation to the message preached to them, and as a rapport building device to enlist support. The prayers found in the letters are in form of good wishes for the audience and direct address to God. They are usually deployed after each exhortation or at the end of the pastoral letter.

5.2.2.1 Prayers expressed as wishes

Texts 93-95 are examples of prayer expressed as wishes. Text 93 is a prayer for the intercession of the Virgin Mary for the audience during the season of Lent.

Text 93:

May the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of our Divine Saviour intercede for you all during this period of intensive spiritual renewal. (*GCTR*, p.38)

The prayer, which is expressed in the subjunctive mood, relates to the theme of repentance. The bishop prays that the Blessed Virgin Mary intercede for the audience so that they will be able to obtain from God the grace to renew their lives. This brings to the fore the ideology of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the intercession of the Saints. In the Catholic faith, it is believed that those who lived a holy life while on earth are granted eternal life in glory after death, and they live in the presence of God. These Saints, as they are called, can and do make intercessions for the pilgrims on earth. Moreover, the Catholic Church has a deep appreciation of the sacramental principle. As such communication with God is seen not to be direct but mediated by creatures. Consequently, prayers can be offered to God through the intercession of the Saints. The Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Jesus Christ, is one of these saints who intercede for Christians on earth. The bishop's prayer is expected to inspire the audience to repentance.

Text 94 is a prayer for an increase in the faith of the audience.

Text 94:

May Jesus Christ, the Author and Perfecter of our faith give us faith in abundance. (*WWF*, p.71)

The prayer is also in the subjunctive mood. The bishop prays that Jesus Christ, who initiates and perfects faith grant the audience faith in abundance. It is the bishop's earnest desire and wish that the audience have increased faith in God so that they will be able to reap the benefits accruing from that. The essence of the prayer is to inspire the audience to live a life of total dependence on God. This show of concern by the bishop is also capable of endearing him to the audience as a friend worthy of their support and trust.

Similarly, text 95 exemplifies the bishop's use of prayer to inspire the audience to react appropriately to his message.

Text 95:

My prayer is that we may all be enriched in our prayer lives and grow in intimacy with God and with one another. (*RBGN*, p.23)

The prayer here is in the nominalized form. It is introduced by the nominal *prayer* which is derived from the verb *pray*. It is a prayer for the enrichment of the prayer lives of the audience so that they would grow in intimacy with God and man. Apart from the fact that the prayer serves as an inspiration to the audience to react favourably to the bishop's message of love, it may be seen as a rapport-building device capable of creating a friendly climate for acceptance of the bishop's message. This is also shown in texts 96 and 97 which are invocations of blessings on the audience.

Text 96:

May God bless you all. (*TML*, p.4)

Text 97:

May the good Lord bless you all as you prepare for the great feast of Easter, the feast of our HOPE, FAITH and LOVE. (*LTF*, p.64)

The bishop invokes God's blessings upon the audience as a demonstration of his love and concern for them. By this act, he endears himself to the audience as a true shepherd of the flock entrusted into his hands. The audience, who are likely to feel loved and cared for, may wish to return the friendly gesture by giving their support to the bishop.

Through their prayerful wishes, which are a demonstration of love and concern for the audience, the bishops inspire them to action, and as well earn their trust and support.

5.2.2.2 Prayers expressed as a direct address to God

In addition to the prayerful wishes, the bishops have also deployed prayers that are directly addressed to God, so as to inspire the audience to action. The direct prayers are found at the end of the pastoral letters, as a conclusion to the message conveyed. Texts 98-100 exemplify this.

Text 98:

God our father, through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, teach us to cherish the gifts that surround us. Increase our faith in you. And bring our trust to its promised fulfillment in the joy of your kingdom. We make this prayer through Christ our Lord. Amen (IYHF, p.52)

Here, at the end of his message of faith, the bishop prays directly to God on behalf of the audience. He addresses God as *God our Father*, to establish a close relationship that would guarantee an answer to his prayer. He asks for increase in faith, and the bliss of eternal life on behalf of the audience. The prayer is made through the intercession of the Virgin Mary, and through Jesus Christ. By means of the prayer, the audience is expected to receive the inspiration that would enable them to live a life of faith.

The direct prayer in text 99 is for the purpose of securing for the audience the grace to love one another.

Text 99:

Father, guide us as you guide creation, according to your law of love. May we love one another and come to perfection in the eternal life prepared for us. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. Amen. (TML, pp.49-50)

This prayer concludes the bishop's message of love in the pastoral letter. It is deployed for the purpose of drawing for the audience the inspiration to live by the message of love which has been preached to them. The prayer asks for God's guide, the enablement to love one another,

and to gain eternal salvation. The bishop again addresses God as Father, invoking child-father relationship to facilitate answers to the prayer.

Again, text 100 is a direct prayer offered by the bishop at the end of the pastoral letter dealing with the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 100:

Heavenly Father, may our Mother Mary be always near us...Filled with hope and in the communion of all the saints, may we remain steadfast in the Catholic Church in body and soul until we enter our heavenly home. Amen.(FFF, pp.103-104)

The letter above aims to draw inspiration from God, the inspiration that will enable the audience to live by the message of loyalty. On behalf of the audience, the bishop asks for close relationship with Mary, Mother of Jesus, who is also addressed as their own Mother. They also ask for the enablement to remain steadfast in the Catholic Church.

Thus, in their pastoral letters, the bishops do not just stop at presenting their messages and using other rhetorical devices to ensure acceptance and compliance by audience, they also add a spiritual dimension to the devices. Being very much aware of the power of prayer in making all things possible, they introduce prayers at every step of their message and at the end of the pastoral letters to draw inspiration from God to enable the audience to accept and live by the messages they have been given. The use of prayers also tends to create a rapport between the bishops and the audience.

5.2.3 Inclusive pronoun (*we*) creating a Feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness

The inclusive pronoun *we* is a key rhetorical feature in discourse. As observed by Baseer and Alvi (2012), the pronoun produces unity and sense of oneness with the listeners. According to them, it reduces the distance between the speaker and the audience, creating the feeling that the speaker and the audience are not divided entities. This rapport building device thus develops in the audience an unconscious pride and makes them admire and take sides with the speaker. Margolin (2001:249) notes that, in using the inclusive *we*, the speaker seems to acknowledge the existence of a group of people linked by some tie, each of whom sharing with the speaker some beliefs, attitudes, and propensities for action. In the view of Hogan (1999:49), “the more we let people perceive that we are like them in ideology, philosophy, background,

attitudes, etc., the more likely it is we will persuade them.”Thus the pronoun signals communality, solidarity and collectivism, and oneness, and these facilitate persuasion.

The bishops, in their pastoral letters, deploy the inclusive first-person plural pronoun *we* in its subjective, objective and possessive forms to create a feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness. This occurs usually when they are giving exhortations or making appeals. Text 101 is an example of the use of the inclusive pronoun to express the spirit of oneness and togetherness in the pastoral letters.

Text 101:

When **we** obey the word of God, **we** do what God has commanded. It is through obedience that **we** manifest **our** faith as well as grow in faith. (*IYHF*, p.41)

This text is a call to faith, a call to obedience to the word of God. The bishop sees response to the call as a joint responsibility of both the audience and himself. This is suggested by the use of the inclusive pronoun *we*. This “we-attitude” according to Margolin (2001:249), manifests in a “joint commitment by members of the group to act as a body in order to achieve the shared goals...and a readiness to place such shared goals, and their attendant plans and interests, above individual goals.”By sharing in the responsibility of obedience to God, the bishop identifies with the audience as members of the same body of Christ, members of the same family of God, and members of the same Christian community. This identification with the audience facilitates persuasion.

Similarly, in text 102, the bishop uses the inclusive pronoun to enlist compliance with his message of repentance.

Text 102:

To be converted, **we** must change **our** old ways of doing things by realising that sins repel and take **us** away from the ultimate purpose of our existence...

The use of the pronoun *we* in text 102 also suggests a joint action, a joint responsibility, between the bishops and the audience with regard to repentance from sins. The bishop exhorts the audience on the need to repent of their sins. By the use of the inclusive pronoun, he sees the call for repentance as also concerning him, not just the audience alone, after all, the Bible tells

us that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The audience are likely to respond with ease to an obligation which is also binding on their spiritual leader. Apart from indicating a joint action, the use of the pronoun gives the faithful a sense of inclusiveness. It is used by the bishops to identify with the audience and establish a close relationship that will facilitate compliance with his message.

Again, the use of the inclusive pronoun in text 103 is a rhetorical device aimed at enlisting the cooperation of the audience and facilitating acceptance of message of love.

Text 103:

We live in the amazing love of God when **we** begin to share **our** life and what God has given **us** with **our** fellow human beings, especially with those who are in most need of **our** love, care and concern.

In the above text, which conveys the message of love, the bishop uses the inclusive pronoun *we* to create in the audience a feeling of togetherness so as to enlist their support and cooperation in relation to their message of love. The bishop exhorts the audience on what it means to live in the amazing love of God: it means sharing. This is what the bishop achieves through the use of the inclusive pronoun. He shares love, responsibility, and concerns of the diocese with the audience. The inclusive pronoun is thus used to demonstrate that love which the bishop preaches. As he identifies with the audience despite the social gap between them, he humbles himself before them in the manner of Christ. This facilitates trust, confidence, and credibility which enhance acceptance of message. The pronoun suggests a collective action of love for fellow human beings.

In text 104, the bishop's call for loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church is made through the use of the inclusive pronoun *we*.

Text 104:

We must be vigilant so that **we** are not led astray by people masquerading as apostles!

Here the bishop uses the inclusive pronoun *we* to identify and create solidarity with the audience so as to build a strong force against a common enemy: *people masquerading as*

apostles! These are seen to constitute a distraction from the Roman Catholic faith. The audience, as well as the bishop, are to maintain vigilance against these detractors. This *we* attitude facilitates persuasion, as the involvement of the bishop in the responsibility is likely to encourage the audience to respond to the call for loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

From the foregoing, one observes that the inclusive pronoun *we* is an important rhetorical device deployed by the Roman Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters to identify and express solidarity with the audience so as to create a feeling of belonging, collectivism, and oneness. This is expected to facilitate compliance with their messages of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. The deployment of the pronoun is a reflection of the life of humility and communality which the bishops, by their ordination, are called to live. It is also a reflection of the Christian belief that all Christians are united in the body of Christ, that they all belong to the same family of God, and so are supposed to live a life of community of love and peace. The use of the pronoun can also be said to reflect the culture of community characteristic of the traditional Igbo society, and to some extent the Igbo society of today, “where the group conscience rather than the individual conscience is exalted in almost every sphere of life” (Nnabuife, 1983:232). The preponderant of the inclusive pronoun *we* in the bishops’ letters is thus prompted by these contextual factors.

5.2.4 Rhetorical questions appealing to denominational sentiments

A rhetorical question is a question posed without expectation of an answer. It can be seen as a statement expressed in the interrogative form. The question is asked “not to evoke actual reply but to achieve an emphasis stronger than a direct statement (Abrams, 1981:16). Rather than expect an answer, the speaker asks a rhetorical question to make the listener’s brain react in a way that disposes him towards the speaker. Rhetorical questions are also used as a rhetorical device to arouse feelings in the audience to influence his/her attitude or to elicit a desired action. In the bishops’ pastoral letters, rhetorical questions are deployed to perform this persuasive function, as exemplified by text 105.

Text 105:

How many people take to founding their own ministries or fellowships for the quick money that comes from people’s sowing? How many people make wild claims,

publicise miracles and invite people to a display of signs and wonders, all designed to catch the unwary and exploit their gullibility? (WWF, p.66)

Here, the bishop expresses concern over the proliferation of religious groups and ‘false prophets’ who through their activities lure the Roman Catholic faithful away from their faith. He uses rhetorical questions to criticise the leaders of these groups so as to whip up denominational sentiments in the audience, and make them remain loyal to the Roman Catholic Church. His point is that many of these religious leaders claim to be prophets and preachers but are actually motivated by the material profits they make from their gullible followers. This point could easily have been made in declarative sentences if not that the bishop wants to appeal to the denominational sentiments. The ideas presented are strong affirmatives, shrouded in question form. The rhetorical questions are thus employed by the bishop, not only to make his points forcefully and emphatically, but also to arouse in the audience a feeling of dislike for non-Catholic faith and that of loyalty for the Roman Catholic faith.

Text 106 is another instance of the use of rhetorical questions to arouse denominational sentiments.

Text 106:

Look at the lives of the “mighty men and women of God”! Are their lives consistent with the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ? Are their lives consistent with the poverty, purity, modesty, simplicity and gentleness of Christ? Are their lives not a sad reproach to the Gospel?...we must be on our guard against the wiles of men and women who hold the outward form of religion but deny the inner power to transform men and women. (FFF, pp.73-74)

In the text above, three rhetorical questions are deployed to debunk the character of some leaders of non-Catholic groups, who are sarcastically described as *mighty men and women of God*. Their lives are seen to be inconsistent with what they preach and what the Bible teaches. The accusations of hypocrisy levelled against them are strong affirmatives enshrouded in the form of questions. The choice of rhetorical question is not only for the purpose of exposing forcefully the weaknesses of these religious leaders but also for the purpose of arousing in the

audience a feeling of distaste for the leaders and their groups. This is expected to discourage them from defecting from the Roman Catholic Church to these other groups.

Again, in text 107, rhetorical questions are used to portray the teachings of non-Roman Catholic groups as false and contrary to the Scriptures with the intention of making them unappealing to the audience and encouraging loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 107:

Who told you that a bird can lay eggs of gold? Who told you that a believer cannot suffer when the Lord in whom he or she believes challenges everyone who wishes to follow him to deny oneself and take up one's cross and follow him? (Mt. 16:24) Who told you that our God wants every believer to be rich when the Lord himself though rich made himself poor and declared "How blessed are you who are poor: the kingdom of God is yours" (Luke 6:20)? Who told you that God must give the believer anything he or she demanded, when St. Paul prayed and pleaded with Lord three times to remove the messenger of Satan who was sent to batter him and prevent him from getting above himself and got the reply: "My grace is enough for you: for power is at full stretch in weakness" (2 Cor. 12:7-9)? (FFF, p.81)

A series of 'wh-' rhetorical questions are used in the text above to argue against the doctrine of prosperity, miracles, and instant answers to prayers being preached by some Christian leaders, and which lure the Roman Catholic faithful away from their faith. They are statements in form of questions. The bishop has deployed the rhetorical questions not only to make his points clearly and forcefully, but also to appeal to denominational sentiments. The audience is expected to see the Roman Catholic doctrine as the only true doctrine and others as false.

Rhetorical questions are thus employed by the Roman Catholic bishops in their Lenten pastoral letters as a rhetorical device aimed at whipping up denominational sentiments in the audience to encourage loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

5.2.5 Sarcasm creating distaste for non-Catholic faith

Sarcasm is a cutting, often ironic remark intended to wound. On the surface, a sarcastic remark appears to maintain or enhance the face of the recipient, but actually attacks and damages it. In other words, the speaker appears to be polite, but the politeness is insincere as it

is meant to offend or insult. He himself does not believe what he is saying, as his intentions are different. Roman Catholic bishops have used this device in their pastoral letters to criticize the activities of non-Catholic groups which pose threats to the Roman Catholic faith, with the intention to create distaste for non-Catholic faith and persuade the audience to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith. Text 108 exemplifies the persuasive use of sarcasm in the letters.

Text 108:

The people's craze for instant solution to their problems is satisfied. They are given "holy" water, "holy" oil, "holy" candles, "holy" soap, "holy" cream, "holy" powder in place of the charms or amulets of the traditional *dibia*. (WWF, p.19)

Sarcasm in this text is seen in the derogatory use of the word *holy* to apply to every imaginable object. The text is used in the context of the bishop's criticism of the attitude of lack of faith among the faithful who, while pretending to have repugnance for pagan things usually associated with visiting traditional diviners and the native doctors, are willing to patronize spiritualists and faith healers whose activities are in no way different from those of the traditional healers. The difference, according to the bishop, is only in the method of deception employed; holy things are given in place of charms and amulets of the traditional healers, as solutions to the problems of the clients. The bishop uses sarcasm to condemn the activities of these spiritual healers and the gullibility of the Catholic faithful who patronize them, so as to create in the audience a feeling of distaste for non-Catholic faith, and persuade them to be steadfast in the Catholic faith. Through this he demonstrates the extent to which these 'men of God' can go to play on the intelligence of their victims, and the lack of faith manifested by their Catholic victims.

The persuasive use of sarcasm as a rhetorical device is also exemplified by text 109.

Text 109:

They perform signs and wonders, heal the sick, do mighty work, give children to barren women, find husband for single girls, get visas for Nigerians wanting to "check out," provide immunity against air, water and sexually transmitted diseases in the mighty name of Jesus! (FFF, p. 72)

Here, sarcasm resides in the tone of the text and in the near-impossible things that the wonder workers are said to be capable of doing. The bishop enumerates these with tongue in cheek. The sarcasm is directed at the preachers and teachers in non-Catholic Churches, especially the Pentecostal Churches, and the undue emphasis they place on miracles and problem solving. The essence is to render them unattractive to the audience so as to discourage them from patronizing those non-Catholic groups, and persuade them to remain steadfast in the Roman Catholic Church.

Again, in text 110, sarcasm is directed at the traditional diviners to discourage the audience from patronizing them.

Text 110:

The Diviner, of course knows everything. He goes to the spirit world to get the knowledge of hidden things! Or so the people are made to believe! (WWF, P.18)

In this text, sarcastic remarks are made against the traditional diviners and medicine men as well as the Catholic faithful who patronize them. The diviner is presented mockingly as all-knowing and as possessing solution to all the problems of their clients who themselves do not see any sad event in their lives as ordinary. The diviner is capable of going to ‘the spirit world to get knowledge of hidden things.’ The sarcasm is aimed at painting an ugly picture of traditional diviners in the mind of the audience to create distaste for them, and encourage loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith.

Sarcasm is therefore deployed in the Roman Catholic bishops’ pastoral letters as an important rhetorical device aimed at persuading the audience to remain steadfast in the Roman Catholic faith.

5.2.6 Segregation pronoun creating distaste for non-Catholic faith and anti-Catholic activities

While the inclusive pronoun *we* is used in the bishops’ letters as a rhetorical device to create a feeling of belonging, collectivism, and oneness, the segregation pronoun *they*, in its subjective, objective, and possessive forms, is used as a rhetorical device to create polarisation. Oha (1994:265) refers to it as “alienating pronoun.” This is in line with the observation of Ogunsiji (2008:119) that “as they solidarise through language, human beings also use language to segregate, to polarise, to map boundaries.” The pronoun is used by the bishops to segregate

against those other groups of people whose activities pose threats to the Roman Catholic faith. The aim is to create in the audience, a feeling of dislike for them. This is meant to discourage the audience from identifying with them. The use of the segregation pronoun *they* in the letters is exemplified by text 111.

Text 111:

They are renting stores, warehouses and any structure for their activities. **Their** power is in **their** power amplifiers with which **they** fill the air with **their** loud preaching. **They** ensnare people with smooth and sweet talks. **They** captivate them with claims of signs and wonders. **They** mesmerize the gullible with speaking in tongues and visions. **Their** stock-in-trade is the Bible. **They** quote it right, left and centre...**They** engage in home ministry (olu ezinuno), act as Gideonites and prayer warriors, all with the intent to lead the unwary and people with disoriented lives astray (FFF, p.6)

In this text, the pronoun *they* is used to refer to the pastors and preachers of Pentecostal Churches. They are presented as business-minded and profit-oriented rather than as men of God. Linguistic items such as *renting, stores, warehouses, and stock-in-trade*, which relate to the field of business, are used to describe them, in addition to words of negative connotations such as *loud, ensnare, claim, mesmerise*, etc. The aim of the bishop is to present an unpleasant picture of these religious leaders so as to make them unattractive to the audience. The bishop is of the view that Pentecostalism is one of the greatest threats to the Roman Catholic faith in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province. So he employs devices at his disposal to discourage the audience from patronising them. The aim is to ensure continued loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 112 is another instance of the use of segregation pronoun to present a negative picture of non-Catholic preachers and teachers whom the bishop considers to be false prophets.

Text 112:

The warning of St Peter is clear... These people are like dried up springs. **They** make proud and stupid statements, and use immoral bodily lusts to trap those who are just beginning to escape from among people who live in error

They promise them freedom while **they** themselves are slaves of destructive habits...(2 Peter 2:17-20) (FFF, p.7)

The above text is a quotation from the Bible containing St. Peter's warning against false prophets. The segregation pronoun *they* is used by Peter to refer to these prophets to register his disapproval of them. The bishop cites this part of the Bible to support his criticism of those he considers to be false prophets so as discourage the audience from having anything to do with them. They are referred to in negative terms and accused of pride and lusts.

Catholics who are disloyal to the Roman Catholic faith are not spared in this segregation by means of pronouns, as seen in text 113:

Text 113:

They are Catholics. **They** may be priests or lay men or women. **They** claim to be many things. **They** set up prayer warriors. **They** would not listen to the hierarchy. **They** engage in deceitful activities. **They** disturb the faith of the people. (WWF, p.67)

Through the use of the segregation pronoun *they* to refer to the Catholics disloyal to the faith, the bishop registers his disapproval of them, and wants the audience to disapprove of them, too. They are accused of claiming to be many things, setting up prayer warriors, being disobedient to authority, engaging in deceitful activities, and disturbing the faith. These are weighty accusations capable of presenting the accused people as dangerous to the Roman Catholic Church. The essence of painting these people this way is to discourage the audience from joining the anti-faith groups so that they remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith.

As seen from the above, the segregation pronoun *they* is deployed in the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters for the purpose of segregating against the adherents of non-Catholic faith and the Catholic members who are disloyal to the faith to discourage the audience from identifying with them. This, it is hoped, would make them remain loyal to the Roman Catholic Church.

5.2.7 Personification of the RCC as mother for emotional attachment to it

Personification is the attribution of human and animate properties to non-human or inanimate objects. It is signaled by capitalization, the use of pronoun *he* or *she* instead of *it*, and

the use of verbs and adjectives that originally stand for the actions and qualities of people. Personification gives vividness and vitality to descriptions by helping to bring out qualities that would ordinarily not be noticed in certain objects. It reflects the attitude of the author to the thing personified. Kovecses (2002) points out that in personifying non-humans as humans we can begin to understand them a little better. In the bishops' letters, the Roman Catholic Church is personified as mother to keep the audience emotionally attached to it. Feminine pronouns as well as the word mother are used to refer to the Church. This is a rhetorical device targeted at enhancing loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. Its use in the letters is exemplified by texts 114-116. In text 114, the Church is presented as a mother having sons and daughters.

Text 114:

In **her** wisdom, the Church **uses** these same words of Jesus at the beginning of Lent to **present** again to us, **hersons and daughters**, the central challenge of this holy season. (RBGN, p.5)

Here, the non-human entity Church is endowed with the qualities of a human being. It is represented with the feminine pronoun *her* which is reserved for human females, it is said to *use* words just like human beings, it is made to collocate with the verb *present* usually associated with human beings, it is presented as having wisdom, just like human beings, and as having sons and daughters also like human beings. In these five ways the Church is personified in the letters. However the significant aspect of these is the personification of the Church as a mother having sons and daughters. Her sons and daughters are the Roman Catholic faithful. The invocation of this mother-child bond is a rhetorical device designed by the bishop to concretize the abstract entity the Roman Catholic Church, and keep the audience emotionally attached to it, just as a mother is emotionally attached to her children. This is an effective way of persuading the faithful to face the challenge of repentance presented to them by the Church. This mother-child bond is expected to make them comply with the message of repentance presented by the Church, especially when *she* is said to possess wisdom; *she* cannot lead them astray.

In text 115, the Church is also personified as Holy Mother to make an emotional impact on the audience.

Text 115:

Each Lent our Holy **Mother** Church calls us to repent for our sins and change lives. **She** calls us to make serious efforts and turn to God completely.(GCTR, p.36)

The holiness of the Roman Catholic Church puts her in a better position to call her children to repentance so that they would be holy too. It is appropriate that a holy mother should have holy children. The emotional undertone of the call to repentance is expected to not only facilitate response to the call but also to draw the audience close to the Church.

Also, in text 116, the idea of the Roman Catholic Church as a mother who offers protection to her children is implied through the use of the feminine pronouns *she/her*.

Text 116:

The assurance of salvation which one has to hold with divine and Catholic faith is founded on the word of God, and on the conviction of experience. The Catholic Church is indefectible in this assurance of salvation. That is why **she** firmly teaches that anyone who knows that the Catholic Church has been made necessary for salvation but refuses to enter or remain in **her** cannot be saved.(FFF, p.57)

The Church is portrayed as the only means of salvation available to the audience, her children. Whoever rejects her rejects this salvation, just as whoever rejects his/her mother rejects her protection and love. By using female pronouns to refer to the Roman Catholic Church, the bishop hopes to influence the audience emotionally to facilitate loyalty to the Church. Personification of the Roman Catholic Church is thus a rhetorical device aimed at making an emotional appeal on the audience to live sin-free lives and remain loyal to the Church.

5.2.8 Emotion-laden words creating distaste for non-Catholic faith and emotional attachment to the RCC

Words are known to have two main types of meaning: the denotative meaning which is the factual objective meaning of a word and the connotative meaning which is the deeper meaning that a word conveys, and this may arouse either positive or negative emotions. Emotion-laden words are therefore those words whose connotative meanings create a strong emotional response from the audience. This class of words, which is predominant in

advertising, print media, and politics, is also found in the Catholic bishops' pastoral letters. Examples are *flirt, charlatans, pillar, mainstay, truth, bastion, unique, rich sacred, piety, victim, comforting, conjure, peeping, warn, threat, masquerading, false, impostors, rapacious, wolves, self-proclaimed, self-acclaimed, etc.* The bishops have selected these judgemental words for the purpose of making an emotional impact on the faithful, to create distaste for non-Catholic faith and attractions for the Roman Catholic faith. The use of some of these words is exemplified by texts 117-119.

In text 117, the audience is advised and warned against identifying with non-Catholic Churches which are described in negative terms.

Text 117:

Do not be a **victim** of the **self-professed** churches...you may only **endanger** your faith and **destroy** your inner harmony. (*IYHF*, p.33)

In the text above, the words *victim, self-professed, endanger,* and *destroy* all have negative connotations. *Victim* here refers to a person subjected to another's trickery or something bad; *self-professed* means making claims about oneself without the approval of others; *endanger*, which is synonymous with *risk*, means to expose to harm, damage, or destruction; and *destroy* is synonymous with *damage*. Thenon-Catholic Churches are described negatively as *self-professed* and capable of endangering the harmony of people who identify with them. In order not to be their *victim*, the audience is warned against identifying with them. The essence of choosing these negative words is to create a negative impression of these Churches in the minds of the audience to discourage them from patronising the Churches.

Text 118 contains both positive and negative emotion-laden words used to refer to the Roman Catholic Church and the non-Catholic Churches respectively.

Text 118:

The Catholic Church playing its role of being the **pillar** and **mainstay** of the **truth** remains the **bastion** of Christianity against the **corroding** influence of Christians who want to **waterdown** the gospel or to fashion a popular gospel, the gospel that **releases everybody from obligation** and gives them "**Christianity Made Easy**" Just believe! ... (*FFF*, p.91)

The positive words used to refer to the Roman Catholic Church are *pillar, mainstay, truth and bastion*. *Pillar* and *mainstay* are synonymous here and mean strong support; *truth* in this context refers to the genuine doctrine about Christianity; while *bastion* means defender of a principle. On the other hand, the negative words referring to the non-Catholic Churches are *corroding* and *waterdown*, in addition to the sarcastic expressions *release everybody from obligation* and *Christianity Made Easy*. *Corroding* in this context means destructive, and *waterdown* is a phrasal verb which in this context means to reduce the value of something to make it cheap and to attract patronage, hence, the description of the Churches' teachings as Christianity made easy which releases everybody from obligation. This strategy of positive self-presentation and negative other-presentation is meant to create attractions for the Roman Catholic Church and distaste for non-Catholic Churches. The intention is to discourage defection of the audience to the non-Catholic Churches and encourage loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 119 is a warning against the influence of Pentecostalism and a call for loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

Text 119:

...we **warn** against the **threat** of Pentecostalism and restate that the Catholic Church **encourages** all her children to remain under her **comforting** shade since it is the **will of God** that all her children should be one sheepfold under one shepherd. (GCTR, p.14)

The warning is associated with negative words such as *warn* and *threat*. *Warn* means to make someone aware of an impending danger, while *threat* means danger or risk. Pentecostalism is thus portrayed as unpleasant and capable of causing danger, and so should be avoided. The invitation, on the other hand, is associated with positive terms such as *encourage* and *comforting*. *Encourage* means to urge or give support, while *comforting* means warm, protective, loving or caring. The Roman Catholic Church is presented as beneficial, accommodating, and loving, and so should be embraced. Choice of negative words amplifies the bishop's contempt for non-Catholic groups while choice of positive words amplifies his pride in the Roman Catholic Church. These feelings of contempt for non-Catholic faith and

pride in the Roman Catholic faith are exactly what the Roman Catholic bishops intend to arouse in the audience by their choice of emotion-laden words.

5.3 *Ethos*-based devices

Ethos-based rhetorical devices are rhetorical devices aimed at achieving persuasion through appeals to the character of the speaker/writer or to morality in general. *Ethos*-based rhetorical devices deployed by the Roman Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters include use of first-person singular pronoun (*I*), declaratives, imperatives, Latinisms, greetings, appreciation, and exemplary biblical characters.

5.3.1 First-person singular pronoun (*I*) expressing the authority of the bishops' office

Church leaders, as Hogan (1999) rightly observes, possess a great deal of power over their congregations. This is particularly so in the case of Roman Catholic bishops who are believed to be successors of the apostles, and as such, are consecrated to continue the work of Christ on earth. They have been made true and authentic teachers of the faith, pontiffs, and pastors, according to the power and command given by Jesus Christ to the apostles and their successors to teach all nations, to hallow men in truth, and to feed them through the Holy Spirit which has been given to them (Vatican II, 1965b). The authority of their office is therefore considered divine, and whatever stand they take in relation to the Roman Catholic faith is considered authoritative. The Roman Catholic bishops in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha invoke this authority in their pastoral letters through the use of the first-person singular pronoun (*I*) in order to ensure compliance with their message. This is exemplified by texts 120-123:

In text 120, the bishop appeals to his authority as the spiritual leader of the diocese to restrict the excesses of some members who engage in religious activities capable of undermining orderliness in the diocese.

Text 120:

Itinerant prayer ministers, **oluezinuno**, **crusades** and vigils not organised by the parish priests or approved priests have been suspended for us to carry out proper discernment...For the mean time, **I** would not entertain requests for permission for invitation of people from outside the diocese for the above named activities...**I** do

not intend to quench the Spirit but **I** would like to insist that things be done properly and orderly. (WWF, p.68)

Here the bishop exercises the authority of his office through the use of the first-person pronoun *I* with the intention to stop illegal religious activities in the diocese. The activities enumerated in the first sentence in the text are considered illegal if they are not organized by the parish priests or approved priests. The suspension of the activities is expressed through passivisation, thus limiting the bishop's authority. However, in the subsequent sentences, the bishop uses the pronoun of authority to demonstrate that he is actually in charge. The audience are likely to comply with this directive, which is meant to ensure purity of the Roman Catholic faith in the diocese, as non-compliance would surely attract a punishment.

In text 121, the bishop also seeks persuasion through appeal to the authority of his office.

Text 121:

As a shepherd of this particular Church of Enugu, **I** call upon our Christians to embrace Christ in a special way during this season of Lent.

He invokes his authority as *a shepherd of this particular Church of Enugu*. The mention of this phrase is expected to serve as a reminder to the audience in case they have forgotten. The use of the phrase, coupled with the first-person pronoun, makes the call to repentance an authoritative one. A shepherd always has the interest of his flock at heart. He always plays a protective role to them to ensure their safety. Similarly as a shepherd of his diocese, the bishop would not call the audience to an action that is not in their best interest. He has the responsibility of ensuring that they live a holy life and make heaven. The audience have no doubt of the implications of not obeying this call to repentance by such a divinely constituted authority.

Text 122 is a call to love made by the bishop through the use of the first-person singular pronoun to facilitate compliance.

Text 122:

I ... call on our Christians as individuals and as communities to open their eyes to the needs of their neighbours and to respond appropriately like the Good Samaritan. (Lk 10:25ff) (LALG, p.58)

The bishop uses the first-person singular pronoun *I* to express his authority and power as bishop to make the faithful respond appropriately to his message of love. His position as bishop makes him higher in status, more powerful and more knowledgeable than the faithful. These ethical qualities serve to elicit compliance from the faithful in relation to the bishops' appeal to them to show love and charity to the less privileged. The authority and power conferred on the Catholic bishops by their ordination as successors of the apostles give them credibility. Their teachings are taken as divine message, and their directives are always expected to be obeyed by the faithful.

The authority of the bishop's office is invoked in text 123 with the aim of facilitating positive response to the call for loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith.

Text 123:

To protect Catholics from the false teachers, prophets, mighty men and women, ministers, pastors, prayer warriors, and the likes who roam about like roaring lions looking for someone to devour (1Peter 5:9), **I** call on Catholics: Be firm in your faith! (1Peter 5:9) (FFF, p.7)

The bishop, who sees it as part of the responsibility of his office to protect Catholics from losing their faith to some named religious leaders, invokes his authority through the use of first-person singular pronoun, and calls on them to remain firm in their faith. His intervention is very important in this case as a good shepherd because his flock are vulnerable. He needs to protect them from the perceived danger to their faith. As the custodian of the Roman Catholic faith in his dioceses, his call is an authoritative one which needs to be obeyed.

We observe from the foregoing that the first-person singular pronoun is an important rhetorical device deployed in the bishops' letters to invoke the authority of their office and elicit desired response to their message.

5.3.2 Declaratives expressing the bishops' teaching authority

Declarative mood in English is the mood type with the ordering *Subject + Verb*. Although declaratives basically encode statements, they can carry out other functions in a discourse. The use of declaratives by the bishops in their pastoral letters to teach the Roman Catholic doctrine presents them as authoritative and knowledgeable in the Catholic faith, and thus makes their message credible to the audience. It reflects their teaching authority in the Church. In text 124, for example, the bishop, through declarative sentences, explains the meaning of Christian faith to the faithful so that they would understand the need to have faith in God:

Text 124:

The Christian faith is a Divine design by God to redeem a fallen humanity in time. It is a fulfillment and actualization of an ancient plan of God to create a people who have greater trust and confidence in Him; and who out of these live, inspire and spread a culture of truth and love that define them as his people to his greater glory. (OEO, p.6).

The above text contains two declarative sentences, and these function as statements. As information giving sentences, they contain information which is expected to enlighten the faithful on the Christian faith. The faithful are made to understand that it is God's design from the earliest times, from creation, that man depend on and trust him for his greater glory. Having faith in God therefore means living according to the divine will of God for man. The use of declarative as statement ensures that this information is given directly, clearly, authoritatively, and conclusively. The bishop, by his ordination as one of the successors of the apostles, and by his role as the head of his diocese, is a recognized authority in this area of teaching the faithful on the Christian faith. Whatever information he gives to the faithful is considered authoritative.

Similarly, in text 125, the bishop enlightens the faithful on reconciliation, through the use of declarative sentences, to express their teaching authority:

Text 125:

Reconciliation is the result of true conversion and mutual forgiveness of one another. Reconciliation becomes necessary because there has been the break of sin which

creates division between men and women at the personal level and divides men and women among themselves. For reconciliation to be complete, it requires liberation from sin... (*GCTR*, p.16)

All the three sentences in the text above are declarative. They convey authoritative information concerning repentance and reconciliation. Emphasis is on reconciliation as a consequence of repentance. The bishop finds this emphasis important so as to make the audience see the connection between the two acts. He is of course familiar with the fact that many claim to have repented from their sins while still not being on good terms with their fellow human beings. The bishop wishes to keep the audience well informed on the subject, as adequate information will enable understanding and consequently appropriate reaction. By means of the declarative sentences, he demonstrates his teaching authority as one of the successors of the apostles. This adds credibility to his message as the audience are likely to see him as an expert giving them authoritative teaching on the subject of reconciliation.

The use of declarative sentences in text 126 to communicate authoritative information to the audience on the subject of love is an expression of the teaching authority of the bishop.

Text 126:

In effect, loving God means submitting to God's will for us and abandoning ourselves to his care. Because our will does not always coincide with God's will, loving God often challenges and does and should indeed, influence the way we think and act. Our loving response to God's invitation to partake of his life involves the whole gamut of our being... (*LALG*, p.35)

Using declarative sentences, the bishop educates the audience on what it means to love God so as to keep them adequately informed. Adequate information ensures better understanding which is a prerequisite to accepting the bishop's message of love. The bishop teaches that loving God means total submission to God's will. The audience are likely to accept this teaching based on the teaching authority of the bishop.

In his use of declarative sentences in text 127 to teach the Romantic Catholic doctrine, the bishop also reveals his teaching authority in the Church.

Text 127:

...the normal means of salvation remains the Church of Christ which subsists in the Catholic Church. This means that the Catholic Church is the ordinary means of salvation and has all the ordinary means given by Jesus Christ for the sanctification and salvation of men and women. (FFF, p.56)

The two sentences in the above texts are declaratives. Through them the bishop teaches that the Roman Catholic Church is the place where salvation lies, as it *has all the ordinary means given by Jesus Christ for the sanctification and salvation of men and women*. This teaching is aimed at strengthening loyalty to the Church. What then will a Catholic be seeking elsewhere after receiving such authoritative information? The bishop presents himself as all-knowing in the Roman Catholic faith. His credibility is not in doubt, as the audience shares the belief in his divine connection

5.3.3 Imperatives expressing the authority of the bishops' office

Imperatives are grammatical forms that signify exercise of power and authority. They are marked by the presence of the base form of the verb alone without modals, tense or aspect, and with or without overt subject. Imperative sentences are basically used to encode directives which range from orders to encouragement, urgent request, invitation and instructions (Downing and Locke, 2006). They manifest power and authority and create a sense of urgency, importance, necessity, compulsion, exigency, duty or obligation. Imperatives are used by the bishops in their letters, after teaching and exhortation, to give directives such as advice, warnings, and commands so as to elicit desired actions from the audience. The bishops have the social role that confers power on them to give directives to the audience and expect compliance from them. Imperatives are therefore expressions of the authority of the bishops' office, which is invoked to facilitate persuasion. They occur in two forms: second-person imperative and first-person imperative.

5.3.3.1 Second-person imperatives

These are imperatives directed solely at the audience. Majority of the second-person imperatives found in the bishops' letters are without overt subjects, but it is understood that they are directed at the audience. They are deployed as expressions of the bishops' authority to facilitate compliance with messages. In text 128, we find an example of the use of second-person imperatives in the letters to express authority.

Text 128:

Each Lent our Holy Mother Church calls us to repent for our sins and change lives. **Do not reject** this invitation; **harden not** your heart. **Rise** and **go** back to God your Father. **Make** a good confession and **pray** to remain faithful to God in future.(GCTR, p.36)

The text above is a call to repentance. The bishop makes the call through the use of second-person imperatives. These are the highlighted items in the text. They encode advice to the audience in relation to repentance. The advice constitutes various actions they are expected to take as steps towards repentance. These include: not rejecting the call to repentance, which is restated as not hardening their hearts, rising, going back to God, making a good confession, and praying to remain faithful to God. By issuing these pieces of advice, the bishop expresses his authority as a spiritual leader and a good shepherd who has the interest of his flock at heart. This authority is likely to facilitate compliance with the message.

In text 129, the bishop expresses his authority by means of second-person imperatives to make the audience comply with the message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith.

Text 129:

Avoid all that! As a Catholic, maintain your faith and your allegiance to that faith.... Be vigilant...Do not allow yourself to be led astray (*FFF*, p.87).

This text relates to the theme of religious prostitution as an impediment to growth in the Roman Catholic faith. It contains imperatives aimed at eliciting desired actions from the audience. The imperatives all encode directives to the audience to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith. In the first one which is a command fortified by exclamation, the audience are asked to avoid all forms of religious prostitution. The exclamation makes the imperative stronger and more emphatic than others. As such it requires urgent and immediate response from the audience. The bishop is serious about issues that bother on the faith of the believers, especially as it concerns religious prostitution. The second imperative, though without an overt subject, has an appositive, *as a Catholic*, which serves as a reminder to the believers of their obligations as Catholics. This and the other imperatives function as advice to the audience to be vigilant and not to allow themselves to be led astray. The bishop's authority is expressed by the use of these imperatives. The audience are likely to recognise this authority and respond appropriately.

Text 130 is a call to faith, also made through the use second-person imperatives, with the intention to express authority and facilitate acceptance of message.

Text 130:

Be warned! Do not be a victim of the self-professed Churches, evangelical groups, prophets, seers, and deliverers. You may only endanger your faith and destroy your inner harmony (*IYHF*, p.33)

The imperatives above are second-person imperatives. They are without overt subjects though addressed directly to the faithful. They encode warnings to the faithful against non-Catholic Churches or groups which are seen to pose threats to the Roman Catholic faith. The essence of the warnings is to make the faithful take appropriate actions to safeguard their faith. The bishop considers any threat to the Roman Catholic faith a very serious and dangerous one which demands urgent attention. The use of second-person imperatives is thus appropriate to invoke the authority of the bishop's office to ensure immediate response from the audience as regards protecting their Roman Catholic faith.

5.3.3.2 First-person imperatives

First-person imperatives are imperatives, which though directed to the audience, express a joint responsibility of actions with the speaker. They are marked by the presence of the word *let* and the object form of the inclusive pronoun.

In text 131, for example, imperatives are used to express the authority of the bishop's office and elicit action of faith.

Text 131:

Since faith is a way which we are called to "walk," **let us** accept the call of faith by allowing faith to determine our choices and actions. **Let** every circumstance of our lives...**let** whatever we do be influenced by our faith in Jesus Christ. (*IYHF*, pp.26-27)

Sentences in the above texts have the form of an imperative: they are introduced by the word *let*. They are first person imperatives in the sense that the directives are meant not just for the audience but also for the bishop. They are used to direct the audience towards an action, which is: to have faith in God. They indicate joint responsibility of both the bishop and the faithful. Both sides are expected to carry out the action of accepting the call of faith, and allowing every

circumstance of their lives and whatever they do to be influenced by their faith in Jesus Christ. The bishop's inclusion of himself in the imperative is a rhetorical device meant to delimit authority and identify with the audience, to facilitate persuasion.

In the like manner, the bishop delimits his authority in text 132 to lure the audience to repentance.

Text 132

During this Lent, **let us return** to the Father who is waiting for us with open arms to transform us into living and effective signs of his merciful love. (*GCTR*, p.38)

The above first-person imperative is used to express authority and move the audience to repent from their sins. It is in form of invitation to a collaborative action that includes both the bishop and the audience. The expected action is to embrace the love of God which he willingly makes available to all. The fact that God is waiting with open arms to enable them to do this makes the directive an easy one to carry out. The bishop has chosen the first-person directive as a strategy to delimit authority and enlist the cooperation and support of the audience to facilitate compliance with the directives given. By including himself among the people to carry out the desired actions, the bishop creates a sense of duty, obligation and necessity on the part of the audience, thus encouraging them to obey the directives. Who are they not to obey the directives which are also binding on their spiritual leader?

Also in text 133, the message of love is conveyed through first-person imperatives so as to use the authority of the bishop to secure compliance.

Text 133:

Let us ...continue to remember these our brothers and sisters in prayer that they may feel secure in God's caring and encompassing love from which nothing can separate us (cf. Rom 8:39) (*LALG*, p.60)

Here, the bishop calls on the faithful to pray for the sick ones among them. The directive is meant for both the bishop and the audience to comply with. The bishop decides to include himself so as to express solidarity with the audience. He is to act in unison with them, that is, pray with them for the sick ones to be strengthened by the love of God. The message of love is

communicated through the use of the imperatives with the hope of using the bishop's authority to facilitate acceptance.

First-person imperative is also used in text 134 to facilitate acceptance of the message of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith.

Text 134:

Let us be martyrs for our faith, standing for it against all temptations to water it down, to bend it, to accommodate it to the ways of the world and to customs and traditions that are opposed to the Gospel and purity of faith.
(*FFF*,p.68)

The text above relates to the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. It is an imperative deployed to express authority of the bishop's office and facilitate acceptance of the message of loyalty. It is intended to move the audience to the desired action. The imperative suggests a collaborative action that includes both the bishop and the audience. The bishop has chosen this deliberative style as a rhetorical strategy that enables him to carry the audience along in the action to be taken.

Imperatives are thus deployed by the bishops in their pastoral letters as an exercise of authority to facilitate persuasion. However, they sometimes mitigate this authority to express solidarity with the faithful, as seen in their use of the first-person imperatives.

5.3.4 Latinisms showing learnedness

Latin is the original language of the Roman Catholic Church. However, the need to bring the Gospel closer to the people in their own native language has led to the practice of Catholicism in different languages. The current emphasis of the Vatican Council is on adapting Catholicism to the culture of the people. Despite this trend, Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province are marked by use of Latin language. While the presence of Latin serves to contextualise the discourse as Catholic, the use of Latin in the letters is a rhetorical device employed by the bishops to show learnedness; that is, to show off their knowledge of Latin to gain the admiration of the audience and enlist their support. Igbo people themselves, who constitute the audience of the letters, are known for their penchant for foreign things, and this is why they would prefer to have Mass celebrated in Latin rather than in

English or even in their native language. Whether they understand Latin or not is not the question. To the Igbo Catholic faithful, therefore, the use of Latin in a Catholic discourse makes the discourse prestigious and attractive. The bishops are very much aware of this fact and so, occasionally switch to Latin as a rhetorical device to achieve persuasion in their pastoral letters. Switches from English to Latin occur at both intra-sentential and inter-sentential levels. It also manifests in the use of Latin slogans in the letters.

5.3.4.1 Intra-sentential switches to Latin

These are switches from English to Latin occurring within sentences. In texts 135-137 we find instances of such switches. The English equivalents of the Latin expressions are supplied as translations to facilitate comprehension.

Text 135:

Plenary indulgence can be obtained by performing the following pious acts: (a) adoration of the Blessed Sacrament for at least half-hour; (b) pious execution of *Via Crucis* (Stations of the Cross); (c) recitation of the Rosary... (CTC, p.11)

Here, the Latin expression *via crucis* is introduced to show learnedness. Then the English equivalent *Stations of the Cross* is supplied in brackets as a translation to facilitate comprehension. The Latin expression is used in the context of the bishop's discussion of the subject of repentance. *Via crucis*, Stations of the Cross, is identified as one of the ways of obtaining plenary indulgence in the Church. The idea of indulgence relates to the Catholic Church belief concerning remission of sins. It is believed that through the Church's Sacrament of Reconciliation, the priests are empowered to grant forgiveness to sinners after confession (though not without penance), an authority they received from Jesus Christ through Apostle Peter whom Jesus empowered to loose and bind and to forgive sins. Going through the Stations of the Cross is one of the ways of undergoing penance to guarantee remission of sins after confession. The Latin code is chosen not just to mark the discourse as Catholic, but to show off the bishop's knowledge of Latin to impress the audience and enlist admiration and cooperation.

The same rhetorical effect is intended by the bishop in his use of the Latin expression *in Seno Ecclesiae* in text 136.

Text 136:

Authentic Christian faith must be *in Seno Ecclesiae*, in the bosom of the church (WWF, p. 54)

The English expression *in the bosom of the Church* is a translation of the Latin expression *in Seno Ecclesiae* to ensure intelligibility. The translation is placed in apposition to the Latin version, which is used with no other purpose than to elicit admiration, from the audience, of the bishop's knowledge of Latin. The text which relates to the theme of faith is used in the context of the bishop's admonition of the faithful on the need to remain and grow in the Catholic faith.

Text 137 is another instance of the use of Latin in the bishops' letters to show off knowledge and enlist admiration.

Text 137:

Having been assumed into heaven, Mary is no longer on a pilgrimage herself, but continues to be *Stella Maris* ("the star of the sea"), a beacon of light for those of us still on the journey home. (LTF, P.58)

The Latin expression *Stella Maris* is here again introduced as a rhetorical device to enlist admiration, with the English equivalent *the Star of the Sea* supplied in brackets as its translation to enhance comprehension. The expression is used metaphorically to describe the Virgin Mary, Mother of Christ, who is highly honoured in the Roman Catholic Church. Its choice is motivated by the desire to demonstrate knowledge of Latin and enlist the admiration and cooperation of the audience who tend to have a flair for Latin language even when they do not understand it.

5.3.4.2 Inter-sentential switches to Latin

These are switches from English to Latin across sentences, as can be seen in texts 138-140. In text 138, the Latin expression *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum* is used as a translation of the English sentence enclosed in quotation marks.

Text 138:

"You see before you the Lord's servant; let it happen to me as you have said." (Luke 1:38) *Fiat mihi secundum verbum tuum* (WWF, p.55)

This translation is semantically redundant as it does not in any way facilitate intelligibility for an Igbo audience whose second language is English. Understanding of the sentence in its English form is already guaranteed. The Latin translation of the expression, which reflects Mary's humble and unquestioning acceptance of the message of God, from Angel Gabriel, concerning her immaculate conception, is introduced by the bishop just to demonstrate his knowledge of Latin and secure admiration from the audience. The text relates to the theme of faith and Mary is presented as an icon of faith, a model to be emulated by the audience.

Similarly, in text 139, the bishop introduces the Latin expression *Lex credendi, lex orandito* to portray his knowledge of Latin.

Text 139:

Stand firm on Catholic traditions of belief and worship.
“**Lex credendi, lex orandi**”- Faith inspires worship (*FFF*,
P.93)

The text is an imperative, a directive to the audience to remain loyal to the Roman Catholic faith. The Latin expression *Lex credendi, lex orandi* is placed side-by-side its English translation *Faith inspires worship* to ensure intelligibility. It is a popular saying deployed to support the bishop's message of loyalty to the Catholic traditions of beliefs and worship. The choice of Latin code here is meant to secure admiration for the bishop for his knowledge of Latin.

Also, admiration and cooperation are the effects the bishop wishes to achieve by his use of the Latin expression in text 131.

Text 140:

Launch into the deep! **Duc in altum!** (*FFF*, p.6)

The text is a directive to the audience to grow deeper in faith. The English version is placed side-by-side its Latin equivalent which is deployed as translation. But the translation is not meant to enhance comprehension; rather, it is provided as a demonstration of the bishop's knowledge of Latin so as to secure admiration and cooperation from the audience.

5.3.4.3 Latin slogans

A slogan is a short, striking or memorable catchword or phrase used in political, commercial, religious, and other contexts as a repetitive expression of an idea or purpose. It is an attention-grabbing phrase which evokes emotions and ideas and associates them with a

group or a brand. Because they are meant to be remembered and repeated, slogans are usually characterized by alliteration, lexical repetition, allusion, rhymes, puns, hyperbole, etc. Sometimes, to increase their stickiness in the memory, they are set to music in jingles. A slogan has the function of projecting the identity of a group or a brand and implanting it in the minds of people. As pointed out by Beard (2000) slogans are socio-culturally relevant and the total explication of their meaning depends largely on shared knowledge.

The bishops' letters are marked by the use of Roman Catholic Church slogans, written in Latin, to buttress their ideas and display their knowledge of the language. The intention is to secure the admiration of the audience, for the slogans do not in any way contribute to clarity of message. They are particularly used in relation to the theme of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. Texts 141 and 142 exemplify the use of Latin slogans in the letters. In text 141, the slogan *Cum Maria Matre Jesus!* is used to show off the bishop's knowledge of Latin.

Text 132:

Is it surprising that we are not only afloat but also adequately meeting up with our responsibilities? Not at all! We have a Mother who is very near us, indeed who is with us! **Cum Maria Matre Jesus!** With Mary Mother of Jesus! (WWF, p.8)

The slogan, which emphasises the intercessory role of the Virgin Mary as the Mother of Jesus Christ, is translated into English to facilitate intelligibility. The Roman Catholic Church believes that Mary's position as the Mother of Christ gives her the privilege of getting favours from her son on behalf of the believers. Therefore, any prayer made through her is always considered effective. Her intercessory role is witnessed at the marriage ceremony in Cana, as recounted in the Bible, where her son performed his first miracle. It was through the intercession of Mary that Jesus Christ turned water into wine when the couple ran short of wine. In this regard then, with Mary Mother of Christ all things are made possible. The bishop has used this slogan in the context of the testimony on how his diocese got out of a difficult financial problem with the intercession of Mary, Mother of Jesus. The slogan, which is analogous to the popular slogan 'With God all things are possible', is deployed to venerate Mary but the bishop's choice of the Latin equivalent is meant to present himself as knowledgeable in the language.

Another instance of the bishop's use of Latin slogan to show off knowledge is found in text 142.

Text 142:

Let our faith be anchored in the Catholic Church, the bulwark and mainstay of truth, the Church founded by Peter: **Ubi Petrus ibi Ecclesia; ubi Ecclesia ibi Christus; ubi Christus ibi Deus!** (where Peter is, there is the church. Where the church is, there is Christ and where Christ is, there is God!) (WWF, p.69)

Here, the slogan, which is first written in Latin and then immediately translated into English for intelligibility, supports the Church's claim to divine origin and apostolic succession. The Catholic Church teaches that it is founded by Jesus Christ and handed over to Apostle Peter, who is succeeded by the Catholic Pope, while its bishops are the successors of the other apostles of Christ. The Church therefore sees itself as the continuing presence of Jesus Christ on earth, Christ being the invisible head, while the Pope, as the Vicar of Christ, is the visible Head. Consequently, the Catholic Church is considered as a place to be, the only true Church. The bishop chooses the Latin slogan not just to show how well-versed he is in the Roman Catholic faith, but also to demonstrate his knowledge of Latin and increase his reputation before the audience to enhance persuasion.

On the whole, one observes that the use of Latin expressions in the bishops' letters is not just to contextualize the discourse but to display their knowledge of Latin language to enlist the admiration and cooperation of the audience, who themselves are known to fancy foreign things. The ideas denoted by the Latin expressions are already expressed by the bishops in English.

5.3.5 Greetings and appreciation expressing goodwill

Greetings and appreciation are social acts that are used to maintain good social relations between people. They are examples of the social functions of language, and belong to the group of language use that Malinowski refers to as phatic communion. Greetings and appreciation are deployed in the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters as rhetorical devices to express goodwill so as to facilitate positive response to messages.

5.3.5.1 Greetings

Greetings are salutations or compliments extended to a person or group for the purpose of establishing warmth or friendliness. Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters are characterized by loving greetings such as *my beloved brothers and sisters, sons and daughters in the Lord, my dear people of God, my dear brothers and sisters in Christ*, etc. These greetings, which express the bishops' affection for the audience, are usually found at the opening of the letters, and are deployed by the bishops as a rhetorical device aimed at establishing an immediate personal contact with the audience to facilitate acceptance of message. Texts 143-146 exemplify the bishops' use of this device.

Text 143:

My dear people of God...the Lenten time gathers us together as Joshua did of old around the altar of the most high for re-questioning and refocusing on our most cherished Christian call. Being Christians, we are a people of faith. We are privileged to acknowledge and believe in God...(OEO, p.2)

Text 144:

The holy season of Lent affords me another opportunity to address you **my beloved brothers and sisters, sons and daughters in the Lord**, through this pastoral letter dealing on a great and vital theme of our Christian life and relating to the very identity of God Himself. (TML, p.2)

Text 145:

My dear people of God, I greet you with joy at the beginning of this holy season of Lent. My joy springs from an anticipation of the redemptive suffering, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and from the hope that this holy season will bear abundant fruits of repentance and faith in each and every one of us. (RBGN, p.5)

Text 146:

I have set myself the task of bringing before you, **my dear people of God**, the rich menu of the word of God, the teaching of the Church and our own experiences

about the Church, the one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of our Creed. (FFF, p.8)

Texts 143-146 above are the openings of the pastoral letters dealing with the theme of faith, love, repentance, and loyalty, respectively. The pastorals open with the loving greetings *my dear people of God* (texts 143, 145, and 146), and *my beloved brothers and sisters, sons and daughters in the Lord* (144) so as to establish an immediate personal contact with the audience to facilitate acceptance of the message. By calling the audience people of God, the bishops already commit them to be disposed to their message, for the people of God cannot reject the message of God from his messengers. The choice of kinship terminologies *brothers, sisters, sons and daughters*, which are normally used to indicate blood or family relationships, are aimed at creating an intimate interpersonal relationship with the audience so as to build trust and solidarity that would enhance credibility and acceptance of message. The intimacy is strengthened by the use of the endearments, *beloved* and *dear*. The choice of loving greetings in the bishops' letters is therefore a rhetorical device designed to express goodwill and create warmth and friendliness that would facilitate acceptance of their messages of faith, love, repentance and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church.

5.3.5.2 Appreciation

Appreciation is an expression of gratitude or thanks for something done. The bishops have deployed this as a rhetorical device in their pastoral letters to encourage the faithful in their good deeds and to build a friendly relationship with them. This is aimed at enlisting their cooperation and support. The use of appreciation as a rhetorical device in letters is exemplified by texts 147-149. In text 147, the bishop appreciates the audience for their financial support to the Church which he considers to be a demonstration of their faith in God.

Text 147:

Many Catholics give a lot to support the Church. At Harvest Thanksgiving and Bazaar Sales, many use the opportunity to give generously to God. Even useless things like empty cartons and pieces of paper are bought at incredible prices. I commend the faith of our people.... I use this forum to commend such people to God and ask Him to bless them. (FFF, pp.89-90)

By commending this act of faith demonstrated by the audience, the bishop is likely to enlist their cooperation and further support in future. The expression of appreciation will encourage

the audience not only to do more but also to see the bishop as a friend to work with, a friend who recognises and appreciates good deeds. The goodwill thus created is likely to facilitate appropriate response to the bishops' message.

In text 148 also, the bishop uses appreciation as a rhetorical device to express goodwill and facilitate positive response to his message of repentance.

Text 148:

I note with joy that reconciliation is taking place between people who were formally enemies; that our people now seek dialogue as a way to peaceful co-existence. (LALG, p.46)

Here, the bishop expresses happiness that members of his diocese who were formally on bad terms are now making efforts at reconciling with one another. This expression of appreciation demonstrates his love and concern for the audience, and is likely to encourage them not only to work harder in their struggle for repentance and reconciliation, but also to see the bishop as a good shepherd who cares for the spiritual wellbeing of his flock. The fact that it is the bishop himself who witnessed this, not that he is told about it, and that he is happy about this shows the faithful that they are being closely observed. They are likely to feel loved and happy that the bishop has their interest at heart. This will create trust and enhance acceptability of the bishops' messages.

The bishop's appreciation of the love that exists among members of his diocese, in text 149, is a rhetorical device aimed at expressing good will and securing cooperation and support from the audience.

Text 149:

As I express our gratitude to God for the recognition given to us as a people and as an integral part of the Church as the pilgrim people of God, I thank all those who have been cooperating with the grace of God to make our Diocese a home of love, a community of love. I thank our priests and religious whose life and vocation are and remain a constant and eloquent testimony and

response to God's self-giving love. I also thank our lay people whose life of Christian witness is bearing enduring fruits of joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, selfcontrol, etc. (cf. Gal 5:22-23)(*LALG*, p.47)

Here, the bishop expresses gratitude to God, the priests and the religious, and as well as the lay people. Every member of the diocese is appreciated. People feel happy when they are appreciated rather than criticized. They also feel encouraged that their efforts are recognised. This tends to create trust and support for the bishop. Appreciation is thus a good device for building goodwill and enlisting friendliness and support capable of facilitating persuasion.

Apart from appreciating the audience directly for their good deeds, the bishops also appreciate them indirectly by lauding the achievements of their respective dioceses in the previous year. This way, they show that the dioceses are progressing and that the faithful are contributors to the progress, thus expressing their good will towards the faithful. The following texts exemplify the use of this device:

Text 150:

We have continued to increase in number and in commitment to the diocese. In the year 2003, we had 11 new priests... Our Seminarians have increased in number and I hope in quality. St Paul's' Seminary Ukpokor, our minor seminary is being expanded to cater for the Senior Secondary section... Three new parishes have come on stream in the beginning of 2004... This brings the number of our parishes from 47 to 50... (*FFF*, pp.2-3)

Text 151:

We are to be further grateful to God for His superabundant graces on the Archdiocese of Onitsha and Onitsha Ecclesiastical Province. The vocations to the Catholic priesthood, active religious life and monastic life are still on the increase. Services to the poor in parishes and institutions are becoming a welcome culture and devotion to the Eucharistic Lord is spreading to more communities... (*TML*, p.5)

In the above texts, the bishops identify with joy the progress recorded in the dioceses in the previous year. In text 150, it is increase in the number of priests, seminarians and parishes. In text 151, it is increase in the vocations to the Catholic priesthood, active religious life and monastic

life. By lauding these achievements and by using the inclusive pronoun *we* the bishops make the faithful feel a sense of participation and a sense of pride that they are collaborators with the bishops in promoting the growth of their dioceses. The goodwill thus created is likely to enhance support for the bishops.

5.3.6 Biblical characters as models of faith, repentance, and love

Models are excellent examples to be copied or imitated. They are people whose lives serve as inspiration and motivation to others. Some Biblical characters are used in the bishops' pastoral letters as models of faith, repentance and love to inspire the audience to live their lives in emulation of these characters. The use of this rhetorical device by the bishops is exemplified by texts 152-155.

Text 152:

Abraham is called our father in faith. He is a model of those who believe in the faithfulness of God who reveals himself and invites men and women to accept him and surrender to his will. The call of Abraham sets the stage for the journey of humanity in faith. God asked him to leave his land, his father's house and his family for the land which God would show him... And Abraham did as God told him. He trusted God. (WWF, pp.28-29)

In text 152, Abraham is presented as a model of faith. The story of Abraham as told in the Bible is a story of complete and unwavering trust in God. God called him out of his home to live in a strange land, and he obeyed without questioning. Abraham's trust in God earned him a son at the age of almost one hundred years and the titles such as the Father of all nations, the Father of faith, and the Father of blessings. His faith, even to the level of his willingness to sacrifice his only son, is highly overwhelming. He is therefore a good example to inspire Christians to have complete trust in God as one who never disappoints. By presenting him as a model of faith the bishop hopes to persuade the faithful to remain steadfast in their faith in God despite all odds as he will never fail them.

Also, in text 153, Mary, mother of Jesus is presented as an example to be emulated by the faithful.

Text 153:

Mary is the model and teacher of faith since her unshakeable faith in God brought us our Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ. Mary was a human being like any of us, but when the word of God was addressed to her suggesting the humanly impossible, she responded with faith—"I am the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to your word". (Lk 1:38) (*JYHF*, p. 44)

Virgin Mary, as seen in text 153, is another model of faith presented to the faithful by the bishop. Mary's willing and humble acceptance of the message of God from Angel Gabriel, even when she never understood it, is recorded for her as great faith. No wonder the Catholic Church refers to her as the 'Icon of faith,' and gives her special honour in the Church. The bishop, by presenting Mary as a model of faith, aims to persuade the faithful to imitate the kind of unquestioning faith she displayed in her acceptance of God's call on her to be the mother of salvation.

Jesus Christ is presented as a model of love in text 154..

Text 154:

...in Jesus Christ, the amazing love of God has got a tangible, touchable human face, for in him the love of God has taken flesh...his whole words and actions are clear manifestations of God's love. In the Gospels, we read how Jesus went about doing good, i.e. living and showing God's love and care to the people he encountered... (*LALG*, p.20)

Here, Jesus Christ is presented by the bishop as an exemplary character to look up to in terms of love. The bishop wants the audience to emulate him and be inspired by him so that they too can live a life of love. The love demonstrated by Jesus Christ to people, irrespective of their race, religion, tribe, social or moral standing and backgrounds and the ultimate sacrifice of his life for humanity has no precedence. He is therefore presented as a good example to be copied or emulated by the audience in their quest for real Christian love.

In text 155, the bishop presents St. Paul's case as an example of how a Christian should struggle for holiness that leads to eternal life.

Text 155:

He [St. Paul] continues, "I punish my body and bring it under control, to avoid any risk that, having acted as herald for others, I myself may be disqualified" (1 Cor

9:25-27). Like St. Paul, we are supposed to train hard in the ways of the Lord, of course, not in order to please God seen as a stern examiner, but in generous and loving response to God who “first loved us” (1 Jn 4:19) (RBGN, p. 19)

The bishops’ reference to St Paul is meant to encourage the faithful in their struggle for repentance. In the Bible (1 Cor. 9:25-27), St Paul talks of how he strives to subdue the desires of the flesh in order to avoid sins. The bishop wants the faithful to follow St Paul’s example by courageously fighting anything that can lead them to sin. It should be recalled that St Paul, then Saul, was a persecutor of Christ. His radical change from a persecutor of Christ (Saul) to an ambassador of Christ (Paul) is overwhelming and inspiring to Christians who genuinely desire to come back to God despite their sinfulness. If Saul could return to God, any sinner can, no matter the magnitude of his sins. The bishop’s presentation of St Paul as a model of repentance encodes this message to the audience. Use of exemplary Biblical characters as models is an important rhetorical device deployed by the Catholic bishops in their pastoral letters to enhance persuasion.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, we have been able to identify and analyze the rhetorical devices and their persuasive discourse functions in the bishops’ pastoral letters. The analysis, which was based on the Aristotelian Rhetoric, particularly the three modes of persuasion—*logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*—revealed deployment of three categories of rhetorical devices: *logos*-based (logic), *pathos*-based (emotions), and *ethos*-based (character).

Logos-based rhetorical devices included the testimonial reference functioning as authority to validate messages; deductive and inductive reasoning appealing to the rationality of the audience; definitions supporting the theses of arguments; comparison (analogy/metaphor) for concrete explanations to ensure comprehension; nominalisation and passivisation objectifying the validity of ideas; syntactic parallelism and antithesis emphasising ideas for easy grasp; and obligation/necessity modals appealing to the audience’s sense of responsibility and moral duty. *Pathos*-based devices deployed were: code switching to Igbo language to express solidarity with the audience; use of prayers for inspiration; inclusive pronoun (*we*) to create a feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness; rhetorical questions (RQs) to appeal

to denominational sentiments; sarcasm, segregation pronoun (*they*), and negative emotion-laden words to refer to non-Catholic groups to create distaste for non-Catholic faith; personification of the Roman Catholic Church as mother and use of positive emotion-laden words to refer to the Church to keep the audience emotionally attached to it. Finally, devices of ethos deployed were: use of first-person singular pronoun (*I*), declaratives, and imperatives to invoke the authority of the bishops' office; Latinisms to show knowledge and learnedness; greetings and appreciation to express goodwill; and exemplary Biblical characters as models of faith, repentance, and love. Logos-based rhetorical devices were found to preponderate over pathos- and ethos-based ones, thus reflecting emphasis of the Roman Catholic Church on reason as the basis for religious faith.

The next chapter will give a general summary and conclusion of the study, as well as recommendations for further studies.

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CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

In this chapter, a general summary of the study is presented. This is followed by conclusions, and then, recommendations for further studies.

6.1 Summary

This study, which was based on a sample of ten pastoral letters of five Roman Catholic Bishops in five out of the seven dioceses in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha, Nigeria, examined the themes and the rhetorical devices deployed in the pastoral letters, in order to determine their persuasive discourse functions. The following research questions were answered in the course of the study:

- What are the major themes of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Nigeria?
- Which rhetorical devices are deployed for the purpose of persuasion in the letters?
- To what extent is the choice of the rhetorical devices determined by context?
- What generalisations can be made on the language of Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters, based on insights from the study?

6.1.1 The major themes of the bishop's pastoral letters

Analysis of the themes of the letters, which was carried out in Chapter four, using Halliday's Systemic Functional grammar as a descriptive framework, revealed four major themes: faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church. These were conveyed through lexical choices such as theme-related words, antonyms, synonyms, and lexical repetitions.

Frequency count of the lexical choices showed that the frequency of lexical choices relating to the theme of faith was 286 which was 35.0% of the total frequency deployed (817), and this was the highest. Of this number, faith-related words were 159 (55.6%), antonyms 56 (19.6%), synonyms 48 (16.8%), and lexical repetitions 23 (8.0%). Next in high frequency were lexical choices relating to the theme of loyalty whose frequency was 185, that is 22.6% of 817, with loyalty-related words having 126 (68.1%), antonyms 27 (14.6%), lexical repetitions 20 (10.8%), and synonyms 12 (6.5%). Repentance-related lexical choices were third in high

frequency with a total of 183, which was 22.4% of 817, repentance –related words having 124 (67.8%), antonyms 22 (12.0%), synonyms 19 (10.4%), and lexical repetitions 18 (9.8%). Love-related lexical choices had the lowest frequency which is 163, that is 20.0% of 817, with love –related words having 77 (47.2%), antonyms 36 (22.1%), synonyms 36 (22.1%) and lexical repetitions 14 (8.6%).

The high frequency of lexical choices relating to the theme of faith reflected emphasis on the theme of faith, and suggested that the theme was of utmost importance to the bishops. It was also not a coincidence that the theme of loyalty ranked next in emphasis, judging from the number of lexical devices relating to the theme. This is because faith in the Roman Catholic Church draws from Faith in God. This is suggested by the order in which the two appear in the Apostles' Creed.

6.1.2 Rhetorical devices in the Letters and their persuasive discourse functions

Analysis of the rhetorical devices and their persuasive discourse functions in the letters, which was carried out in chapter five based on the Aristotelian Rhetoric, particularly the modes of persuasion, showed the deployment of three categories of rhetorical devices: logos-based devices appealing to logic, pathos-based devices appealing to emotions, and ethos-based devices appealing to character.

Logos-based rhetorical devices included use of testimonial reference functioning as authority to validate messages; deductive and inductive reasoning appealing to the rationality of the audience; definitions supporting the theses of arguments; comparison (analogy/metaphor) for explanations to ensure comprehension; nominalisation and passivisation objectifying the validity of ideas; syntactic parallelism and antithesis emphasising ideas for easy grasp; and obligation/necessity modals appealing to the audience's sense of responsibility and moral duty. Pathos-based devices deployed were: code switching to Igbo language to express solidarity with the audience; use of prayers for inspiration; inclusive pronoun (*we*) to create a feeling of belonging, collectivism and oneness; rhetorical questions (RQs) to appeal to denominational sentiments; sarcasm, segregation pronoun (*they*), and negative emotion-laden words to refer to non-Catholic groups to create distaste for non-Catholic faith; personification of the Roman Catholic Church as mother and use of positive emotion-laden words to refer to the Church to keep the audience emotionally attached to it. Finally,

devices of ethos deployed were: use of first-person singular pronoun (*I*), declaratives, and imperatives to invoke the authority of the bishops' office; Latinismsto show knowledge and learnedness; greetings and appreciation to expressgoodwill; and exemplary Biblical characters as models of faith, repentance, and love. Logos-based rhetorical deviceswere found to preponderate over pathos- and ethos-based ones. This reflected emphasis of the Roman Catholic Church on reason as the basis for religious faith.

6.1.3 Rhetorical devices versus contextual factors

The study revealed that the deployment of the rhetorical devices in the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha was influenced by contextual factors. The presence of logos-based rhetorical devices such as deductive and inductive reasoning, argumentative definitions, and analogy in the letters was a reflection of emphasis of the Roman Catholic Church on reason as the basis for faith. The Church sees reason as providing grounds of credibility for faith (McBrien, 1994).

The high preponderance of Testimonial reference in the letters is attributable to the fact that the Catholic Church believes in hierarchy and obedience to authority. Disobedience to hierarchy and authority is considered a serious offence which attracts a penalty of excommunication. Appeals to the authority of the Bible as the holy book of Christianity, the Vatican Council documents, the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, the Canon Law, the Pope as the spiritual head of the Church and the Vicar of Christ, and the Saints as Church Fathers and the pioneers of the Catholic faith, as found in the bishops' letters, are therefore contextually motivated. Also, the preponderance of references to the holy Bible over other forms of reference to authority is not accidental. The Holy Bible is the supreme rule of faith in the Christian religion and is expected to nourish and rule all Christian religious discourse, if such discourse is to have relevance and validity.

The widespread use of metaphors was an attempt to concretize ideas in the abstract field of religion. As pointed out by Sztajer (online), religious world is a world that goes beyond human cognitive abilities and which cannot be grasped by means of any kind of cognition available. Metaphor, therefore, forms a frame for religious experience to be fully grasped and comprehensible for religious man. It is the main mechanism through which we comprehend abstract concepts and perform abstract reasoning (Lakoff, 1993). The high preponderance of

planting metaphors is a foregrounding of the theme of death and regeneration underlying Christian faith. Just as a seed must die before a new plant springs up, a Christian dies with the hope of rising eternally. Also, that journey metaphors were widespread is not accidental too; it is a reflection of the Christian belief that earthly life and activities constitute a journey to eternal life. The presence of war metaphors was also contextually determined. In the Christian religion, the forces of light and those of darkness are seen to always be at war for the possession of the soul of a Christian. The Christian himself is always struggling against the opposing forces for the kingdom of God. Jesus acknowledged the existence of this war as he handed over the Church to Peter telling him that the powers of darkness would not be able to overcome it.

The use of declaratives and the imperatives was indicative of the authority nature of the discourse. The declarative mood was a reflection of the teaching authority of the bishops, while the imperative mood reflected their governing authority over their dioceses. The use of modals of obligation and necessity of actions as well as passivization and nominalization suggested that the discourse was oriented towards action.

The frequent use of the inclusive pronoun *we* in the letters was a reflection of the life of humility and communality which the bishops, by their ordination, are called to live. Moreover, in Christianity generally, it is believed that all Christians are members of the body of Christ and so are supposed to live unitedly in the love of Christ. The frequent use of the inclusive pronoun also showed that although the bishops are higher than the faithful in social status, they are of equal status before God as they all belong to the same family of God.

That Igbo language featured in an English discourse of this nature was an attempt to reflect the socio-linguistic background of the letters; Igbo is the language of the Onitsha Ecclesiastical province. On the other hand, the use of Latin was meant to reflect the linguistic background of the Roman Catholic Church; Latin still remains the language of the Roman Catholic Church despite the current emphasis on bringing Catholicism closer to the people's culture. The use of both Igbo and Latin reflected the double affiliations of the bishops: their cultural affiliation as Igbo indigenes and their religious affiliation as Catholic bishops.

That syntactic parallelism featured prominently in the bishops' letters was attributable to the rhetorical nature of religious discourse. The use of the device of antithetical contrasts in the letters could be said to be a reflection of the opposition that exists between the Roman

Catholic Church and the non-Catholic Churches, and a suggestion for a balance of views. While the Catholic Church considers itself, in comparison with the non-Catholic Churches, as unique and superior, and as the only true Church founded by Jesus Christ, the non-Catholic Churches are always critical of Catholic doctrine and practices as idolatry.

6.1.4 Generalizations on the language of Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha

Our study of the discourse functions of the rhetorical devices in selected Roman Catholic bishop's' Lenten pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha, Nigeria has shown that the pastorals, which were written for reflections during the period of Lent, constitute a persuasive religious discourse characterised by numerous rhetorical devices. The rhetorical devices function to persuade the audience to reflect on their spiritual lives, along the lines of faith, repentance, love and loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith, in accordance with the mood of the Lenten season, which is known to be a period of commemoration of the sufferings and passion of Jesus Christ for the salvation of man. The language of the letters is thus marked by lexical choices conveying themes of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty, as well as rhetorical devices aimed at achieving persuasion in relation to these themes.

The lexical choices that characterise the language of the letters include use of words relating to the themes, in addition to the use of synonyms, antonyms and lexical repetitions. These lexical devices are deployed in various degrees, reflecting the degree of emphasis given to each theme. The rhetorical devices that mark the language of the pastorals are in three categories: those appealing to logic (logos), those appealing to emotions (pathos), and those appealing to character (ethos). Prominent among the logos-based rhetorical devices are use of testimonial references, deductive and inductive reasoning, theses-based definitions, analogy and metaphors, as well as modals of obligation and necessity. The major pathos-based rhetorical devices are use of Igbo language, prayers, inclusive pronoun (*we*), rhetorical questions, emotion-laden words, and personification of the Roman Catholic Church as mother. Finally the salient ethos-based rhetorical devices are use of first-person singular pronoun (*I*), declaratives and imperatives, Latinisms, greetings and appreciation, and exemplary Biblical characters. The rhetorical devices are all geared towards persuasion to ensure compliance with the themes.

The language of the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha is thus highly persuasive, and the study establishes the letters as a persuasive religious discourse. The study further reveals an interconnection between rhetoric and religion. It has shown that religion as a discipline concerned with expression of a belief system, is closely related to rhetoric which is an instrumental use of language (Gill and Whedbee, 1997). The study has shown that rhetorical concepts can successfully be applied to religion. It has confirmed, as argued by Pernot (2006), that religion has rhetorical nature.

6.2 Conclusion

The study of the Roman Catholic bishops' pastoral letters in the Ecclesiastical Province of Onitsha, Nigeria, has shown that the discourse was crafted according to the principles of the art of rhetoric. It has shown that the pastoral letters constitute a specific form of persuasive religious discourse with a configuration of logos-based, pathos-based, and ethos-based rhetorical devices aimed at achieving persuasion. The letters, which were a response to the decreasing moral situation in the country even as churches and religious activities are on the increase, were so designed for the purpose of communicating messages of faith, repentance, love, and loyalty to the Roman Catholic Church and persuading the audience to live their lives accordingly. The audience were expected to live according to the faith they profess, to make the way they think and act correspond to their deepest values or moral commitments, so as to strike a balance between faith and practice and solve the religious paradox in the country. Emphasis in the letters was thus on faith and good works, and appropriate rhetorical devices were deployed to achieve this.

The study has clearly revealed the rich rhetorical content of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters which had hitherto remained hidden due to lack of adequate studies. It has shown that the language of the letters has been packaged in a way that gives it an identity of its own as a variety of persuasive religious discourse constrained by audience, situation, and subject matter. The significance of the study lies in the potential it has to provide a full understanding of the Lenten pastorals as an instrument of persuasion and moral change. The study is also a confirmation of the close relation that exists between rhetoric and religion, and a useful addition to the existing researches on the language and style of religion.

6.3 Recommendations

In the course of the present study, several areas of future research have been uncovered. For example, it would be interesting to compare the language of the Roman Catholic bishops' Lenten pastoral letters with that of the Pauline Epistles in the Bible, which are the precursors of the bishops' letters. As both are concerned with issues of faith, doctrine and practice, there are bound to be similarities in the use of language in the Epistles and the bishops' pastorals.

Another research potential opened by this study is a comparison of the language of the pastorals in the Roman Catholic Church with that of sermons in the Pentecostal Churches. This will be a useful exercise considering the fact that both forms of religious discourse are aimed at ensuring better Christian living. While there may be similarities in the linguistic devices deployed, there will likely be some striking differences in language use in the two denominations.

Again, the cohesive structure of the bishops' pastoral letters can be explored following the example of Idowu (2007), who examined cohesive devices in selected sermon texts. One may also adopt a pragmatic approach to the study of the pastorals using a speech-act theory to examine the use of the informatives and the directives in the letters. A pragma-rhetoric approach as argued by Larrazabel and Korta (n.d., online) can also be adopted in the study of the bishops' pastoral letters to determine their communicative and persuasive intentions, since the practical aim of the letters is not only to inform and educate the faithful on the Roman Catholic faith, but also to bring about good moral change in their lives. The researcher therefore recommends these as areas of study to be explored by future researchers.

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