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**THE IMPACT OF EUCHARISTIC CELEBRATIONS ON CHRISTIAN
FAITH OF BUTIITI PARISH-IN LIGHT OF *SACROSANCTUM
CONCILIUM* Nos. 7 &11.**

BY

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ABSTRACT

Many Christians in Butiiti parish have exhibited lack of adequate knowledge on the Eucharist in the way they relate with each other. There are observable signs of inconsistency with celebrating and receiving the Eucharist that vis-à-vis the impact created on Christian faith in Butiiti parish. There has been a steady deserting of the catholic faith among the baptised and confirmed Christians, even those who have held positions of leadership in church. The researcher has got a feeling that those defecting from the faith have not properly understood the meaning of the Eucharist. There are also those who abscond from the reception of the Eucharist they too, exhibit an insufficiency in knowledge of the Eucharist for they have a right and obligation to fully participate. As noted by [S.C. 1963 No. 14] that mother church earnestly desires that all the faithful be led to that full, conscious, and active participation in liturgy, which finds its climax in the reception of the Eucharist.

Important to highlight are the mushrooming Pentecostal churches and *Bisaka* cult in Butiiti parish. The numbers of Catholics are steadily dwindling, following the report of Uganda Bureau of Statistics [2016:19], it indicated that the number of Catholics in Uganda has dropped from 41.6% in 2002 to 39.3% in 2014. While the Pentecostal gained ground from 4.7% to 11.1% in the same years.

However, there exists an insufficient awareness on the knowledge of the Eucharist, based on the research finding, many Catholics are not sure and cannot defend explain the teaching on the Eucharist. In spite of the efforts employed in Butiiti parish such as Catechism, (for both old and young), encouraging couples to legalise/ ratify their marriage, pastoral visits to out stations, Christians have not appreciated their faith. It is against this background that the researcher has delved into the study on: *“The Impact of Eucharistic celebration on Christian Faith of Butiiti parish in light of Sacrosanctum Concilium Nos. 7&11.”* This study was guided by the general objective to determine the impact of Eucharistic celebration on Christian faith in order to help Christians better appreciate the sacramental liturgy of the Catholic faith. Three specific objectives were designed in answering the general objective namely; to examine the meaning of the Eucharist, secondly; to explore how the Eucharist is celebrated and thirdly; to discover how Eucharistic celebration helps Christians to express themselves fully to the Lord. These were designed to guide the study. Guided by these, related literature was reviewed and applied to the topic.

A research used a variety of methodologies in obtaining data for the topic. Sampling both Convenience and Stratified was used. Different research tools for collecting data were employed these include: Observation, Questionnaire, Interview, Focus Group Discussions

and Library search. After obtaining a letter of introduction from the Dean of Studies, National Seminary Ggaba, and using the research tools mentioned above, the researcher did the field study in Butiiti parish. The data from the field was analysed and presented using descriptive numbers, tables and figures. The findings were discussed in close union with the literature reviewed.

The study findings reveal a number of factors affecting the reception of the Eucharist for example; few number of priests, low level of training for catechists, lack of involvement of priests and religious in catechism instruction, homilies which are in the theoretical and lack a catechetical touch, lack of preparedness for liturgy (both the Christian community and the minister, among others.

Though the Eucharist has had an impact on some people, who are guided by the Gospel values of charity, peace, cooperation, reconciliation, forgiveness, mercy, towards neighbour, however, majority have not known the value of the Eucharist, especially those who abscond from the Eucharist without convincing reasons. They are such as these who defect the Church. All the above observations and conclusions lead the researcher to recommend that: the Christian community of Butiiti should get involved more in the formation of future priests by establishing a special fund to support vocations from humble families. The formation of catechist would be given priority in the plans for the parish. The preparations for Mass be thoroughly done by both minister and Christians. I would recommend a further study in inculturation for a fruitful and meaningful celebration. I recommend that Christians take initiative in their own spiritual growth, not always wait for parish programs for renewal. Parents too, would take their duty of nurturing their children in the Catholic Church.

The researcher generally concluded that the Eucharist has an important effect on the Christian faith once they consciously receive Christ with hearts well disposed. What the faithful receive by faith and sacrament in the celebration of the Eucharist should have its effects reflected on their ways of life.