

CLINICAL SPIRITUAL INTERVENTION FOR THE IGBO IMMIGRANTS  
IN THE WESTCHESTER COUNTY OF NEW YORK.

By

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## Dedication

To all the Igbo immigrants in the United States of America.

To all who live and struggle to keep their native culture in the foreign land.

To other nationals who want to keep the faith-tradition from their homeland.

## Acknowledgments

First of all, I am very grateful to God almighty whose grace has made it possible for me to undertake my doctoral study successfully. I want to express my profound joy to my nuclear and extended families for their unflinching moral support to me since I left home for further studies. My appreciation goes also to my local ordinary, the Most Reverend Hilary Paul Okeke, the Catholic bishop of Nnewi Diocese in Nigeria. I thank him immensely for granting me the opportunity to do my studies in the United States of America. I treasure greatly the academic atmosphere in the Hebrew Union College New York Campus, the talents of the members of Doctor of Ministry Faculty. In a very special way, I thank the Program Director, the Reverend Ann M. Akers for her dedication and insights toward the D.Min program. I wish to express a similar gratitude to my project mentors – the Reverend M. Dickson and the Reverend Douglass B. Clark whose advice and suggestions contributed vastly to the success of this project. I can't express my gratitude enough for my course mates. The unique academic atmosphere and camaraderie we enjoyed in the class have helped me to turn out a better person after our two years of doctoral program. My deepest thanks go to the Very Rev. Monsignor Howard W. Calkins, my spiritual adviser and an amazing friend. The last, but not the least are members of the Sacred Heart Catholic Church Mount Vernon, New York. Indeed, your encouragements inspired me to leap this height in my in pastoral learning. May God bless and reward each one of you abundantly for your good will and financial support.

## Introduction

I remember as a kid in the mid sixties, how people's compound walls in Igbo land were painted and artistically designed and decorated with religious symbols. Towns and villages have path ways that lead to shrines where people frequently gather to pray and solicit for blessings and protection from the gods of the land. Besides, Christian church buildings and mission schools are located in the nooks and crannies of most towns for education and worship. Ivorgba Ande rightly observes that Christian education and faith wield notable influences on the land by "creating new communities of those converted, moving the people out of the heathen environment to a Christian homogeneous community. Mission Stations were built, making 'Mission House' the most important building. The next most important building was the school. The schools were generally boarding facilities supervised by the missionary educationist or his wife. The Mission compound stood in stark contrast to the surrounding community"(Paper presentation by Nigeria Interfaith Youth Forum on 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2006). As it is, the espousal of faith and culture has formed the basis of Igbo cultural worldview. In fact, religion and faith have become a coping mechanism for the Igbo person. It is nearly impossible for an Igbo person to live without practicing his or her faith from culture or practicing culture through his or her faith. For the tribesmen and women, association with Christianity offers an attractive way of life and privileges such as education, medical services and industrial training. The Igbo society understands that motivation for education is something that had originally come with the missionary activities - evangelism. The incentive for education has helped to boost both religious reliance and western

civilization in the society. It has continued to facilitate the spread of western way of life among the people, encouraging migration to foreign countries. It is not an overstatement to say that faith has generally played an irreplaceable role in nurturing emotional resilience. Thus, I see some value in encouraging the emotional strength of about fifteen Igbo immigrant families (with more than thirty family members) who reside in the Westchester county of New York. Forming a faith community similar to the one they left behind in their homeland - with regular spiritual activities for them - will be a step in the right direction.

Thinking of how I may render effective and long lasting pastoral spiritual help for the immigrants, I have thought about designing a project that will help them explore their emotional problems, and encourage their spiritual aspirations. In planning on how to achieve the dream, some hypothetical questions that come to my mind include: has any project been designed to address pastoral and spiritual issues of the Igbo immigrants in the Westchester County? How will my project best address the emotional and spiritual needs of the people? How many participants will I recruit for the project research? How will they be selected? How many sessions will the group cover? What clinical and theological principles will underline the entire project? How will the project support the existing pastoral care ministry? I intend to use these questions as a guide to my thoughts in developing the five chapters of this project.

The first chapter will be limited to definitions and explanations of the major themes that will guide the entire project framework, with particular reference to the

specific needs of the people. Additionally, part of this chapter will explore how the project will be relevant in the pastoral care ministry. The second chapter will highlight some religious and counseling principles, and the ways the application of such principles may be helpful to the people. Chapter three will demonstrate an approach to be adopted in the project as it relates to formation of a research group. Chapter four will review the results of the method (the anticipated and unanticipated outcomes), areas of commonality and dissonance. It will take into account the implications of the anticipated and unanticipated results. The fifth chapter will clarify the clinical and religious principles discussed in the second chapter. This final chapter will also try to project how the framework may impact wider pastoral care ministry.

## CHAPTER ONE

### DEFINITIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

#### 1: 1. TERMS AND CONCEPTS

Clinical: The word clinic is originally from the Greek word '*klinein*', which means 'to slope', 'to lean on' or 'to recline'. The noun *kline* stands for 'couch' or 'bed' that people recline on. *klinikos* on the other hand implies 'sloping'. Its Latin equivalence is *clinicus* (Wikipedia.org). Initially the word 'clinic' was used to refer to someone who receives baptism on a sick bed. With the passage of time, it came to be used for professionals and providers of health therapy for the sick: mental health assistants, pastoral

counselors and spiritual caregivers. In the modern times the usage of the word has extended to medical and health programs, skill acquisition and therapeutic interventions.

Spirit: The word spirit has Latin derivation, 'spiritus'- breath. Biblically, it connects the idea of creation - the animating or vital principle of life. The book of Genesis for instance, portrays that God breathed the spirit of life into the first man (Adam). In this context, "Breath ... is the indrawing of the unmanifest into the manifest, which in the absence of a distinction between breath and spirit implies that the latter is the animating principle sustaining human existence, the reality behind appearances, a reality that is not restricted by the body and that leaves it at death to return whence it comes, just as the outbreath appears to return to a nonmaterial dimension" (Fontana, 2003, p. 11). Human spirit is divinely originated and cannot survive without this vital force that envelopes and enlivens it. On this backdrop, spirituality signifies "a dimension seen as permeating the psychical world and creating other levels of being accessed in mystical experience in the afterlife. It further implies that men and women are more than their physical bodies, and that human life carries meaning and should be lived in accordance with this meaning" (Fontana, 2003, pp. 11-12). In the search for meaning, human soul makes a sort of spiritual transition. Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) used the term 'interior castle' to delineate how the soul journeys toward perfection.

The 'Interior Castle': The first Castle or Mansion (the stage of grace) is when the soul is yet attracted to earthly things and is in the danger of falling from its spiritual desires.

The next Castle is the stage of meditations. This is the stage for Practice of Prayers. It is warmer than the first stage. In this particular mansion, the soul frequently experiences difficulties and thus, needs longer period of self discipline to help it be more focused in order not to abandon the effort. At this stage, the soul transitions from ascetic to mystical life such that in the third castle it reaches the standard of virtue, and able to perform acts of charity. In the fourth castle, the soul embraces constant silence and remains essentially in an intimate union with God. The perfection of the soul at this stage is due to divine love which unites it to God as its highest good. In the fifth castle '*Incipient union*', the soul realizes that God is present in such a way that when it turns in on itself it cannot doubt that it is in God and God is in it. "St. Teresa explains how far the soul can prepare itself to receive what is essentially a gift from God. She also describes the psychological conditions of this state , in which for the first time, the faculties of the soul are 'asleep'. It is of short duration, but while it lasts, the soul is completely possessed by God." (Peers, 2008, P. 11). The soul then begins to gain more and more dominion of God who floods it with His light and consolations. The sixth castle introduces the soul to a "mystical espousal" i.e., the highest point of the mystical life at which the soul constantly undergoes trials and pain. In the last castle the soul is favored with an extraordinary mystical phenomenal rapture, 'the light of divine visions'. Though the soul journeys through the different stages of the interior castle, it still needs spiritual guidance.

Spiritual Intervention: According to Hunter (2004), “spiritual intervention is guided by intuitive insights into spiritual and psychological processes, liturgical aspects (that) ... provide conditions favorable for spiritual growth”(P. 1210). Spiritual intervention includes educating and helping an individual to follow some outlined spiritual guidelines. The interventionist makes a spiritual journey with the individual who requires spiritual assistance, and with the intention of realizing a positive outcome. In the process, the interventionist may sometimes concentrate on the belief system of the individual. Sometimes the individual is encouraged to engage in religious practices consistent with his or her beliefs, such as prayer, meditation, reading spiritual books, ritual, forgiveness and service. Sometimes the emphasis is on ritual or corporate worship and observance. Spirituality considered from this perspective is a desire to enter more deeply into a life of divine grace. The intervention sometimes takes the individuals to a level of consciousness beyond normal human experience.

#### The Igbo People And Philosophy of Life:

The term, ‘Igbo’ or ‘Ndigbo’ is interchangeably used. It refers to the people of South east of Nigeria in West Africa. The pronunciation of the assonance ‘gb’ is difficult to foreigners. Ultimately, the term ‘Ibo’ is easier and an alternative for the foreigners. Some English authors anglicize ‘Igbo’ in their writings, replacing the term with such words like: ‘Iboe, Ebo, Eboans, or Heebos’ (Paul, 2000, p. 58). Similarly, some of the Igbo slaves brought to the United States in the 1500s were called *Ibos* and *Eboes*, while others were simply referred to as ‘bites’ to denote the Bight of Biafra as the place of their origin in the continent of Africa ([wikipedia.org/wiki/igboAmerica](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/igboAmerica)). In the modern

times, Igbo people have mostly been referred to as '*Ndigbo*'. An important point to note here is that "While the term 'Igbo' particularly denotes the language or the people of South east of Nigeria, *Ndigbo* on the other hand means the people of Igbo ancestry" (Chukwu, 2011, p. 29). Above all, the uniqueness of the Igbo is characteristically portrayed by their philosophy of interpersonal spirit.

The Igbo person's life is wired by the conviction that God has made all for the goodness of all. This belief undergirds the vast unbroken bond of interrelatedness enjoyed both by the living and 'the dead' (the ancestors). The Igbo ontology is well delineated by the phrase, 'I am, because others are' or simply, I exist for the goodness of others. Mbiti (1990) captures this idea vividly by observing, "Only in terms of other people does the individual become conscious of his own being, his duties, privileges and responsibilities toward himself and toward others. When he suffers, he does not suffer alone but with the corporate group; when he rejoices, he rejoices not alone but with his kinsmen, his neighbors and his relatives whether dead or living, when he gets married, he is not alone neither does the wife 'belong' to him alone so also the children belong to the corporate body of the kinsmen even if they bear their father's or mother's name. Whatever happens to the whole group happens to the individual. The individual can only say: I am, because we are: and since we are, therefore I am" (p. 106). By the same token, Igbo philosophy and culture is intertwined in a strong religious strand. Thus, Chukwu (2011) argues that the Igbo people believe in a complex spider web-like universe in which all beings are linked together. For the Igbo, there is a continuous interaction of all beings, visible and invisible.

## 1:2: THE BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEMS

The problems of the immigrants are linked to the migration history of the Igbo people and their belief system. Apart from the migrations through the slave trading in the 1400s, the Igbo people initiated another kind of migration to countries beyond their region in the late fifties. The elites among them moved mainly to the United Kingdom for the Western education and knowledge. Initially they had hoped to return once they discovered their dreams. According to the African Population and Health Research Center on the migrations by Nigerians, after the Nigeria's independence in 1960, highly skilled individuals began to migrate to the United Kingdom. A large number of them moved to the United States for studies. When the political tensions engulfed Nigeria in the late 1970s and 1980s, the country's economy depreciated, contributing further to the stream of emigrations out of the country. Most of the migrants intended to stay abroad for a short period and come back. They continued to stay in the foreign land as the economy never improved. Afoloyan and Colleagues (1978) specify the number of the people who left the country within a particular period. According to their records, 30,000 Nigerian graduates from the UK's higher institutions were living outside Africa with 2,000 of them living in the United States. The issue of migration rather than abate continues to scale high since then, with both negative and positive impacts on the people. By 1984 the Nigerian population living in the United States had increased to 10,000. Many of them were highly skilled. Migration as much as it has led to better life for many has equally left others at crossroads. Although the immigrants may be far from homeland, yet they retain beliefs and practices they carried from their homeland. Some

of such beliefs have to do with the fears relating to ancestral influences. Thus, some of the immigrants are convinced that evil machinations are behind their lack of success.

Belief system: The issues of faith and morals are fundamentally linked to people's belief system. They configure the manner by which people think and live their lives. Griffith and Griffith (2003) note that, "Spirituality comes into being as one's commitment to relatedness – to other people, the environment, one's God or the numinous, one's heritage, one's body – becomes the paramount concern that organizes understanding and action" (pp. 219-20). As I noted in the introductory part of this project, religion, faith and morals are deeply ingrained in the Igbo culture. Okere B. (2012) has it that even before the arrival of Christianity, "religion was their life, and formed part of their identity as a people.... (p. 288). Thus, it is normal for every Igbo person to live in conformity with the norms and morals of the land in order not to offend the gods, and to have peace and progress. Whether in their native land or in a foreign land, the Igbo person believes that the universe is of two tiers: the visible and the invisible or the sacred and profane. Both worlds complement one another in a mutual way. They impact humans both positively and negatively.

Ancestral Influences: For the Igbo, part of the invisible world is dominated by the ancestors. These were once members of the family and who still extend their patronage over the family they left behind. The ancestors had lived an impeccable life while in the visible world, and "they died at a good old age and received the rite of passage, were rightly buried by their community, Umunna" (Azorji, 1976, p. 177). The ancestors are the

role models for the living. “They represent another section of the same community in the spirit world and the concern of the living is equally their own concern” (Ejizu C., 1976, p. 177; cited by Okere, 2012, p. 237). All these have strong psychological effects on how life is perceived and lived by the people. For instance, in March 2011, an Igbo immigrant and applicant (Ilegbunwa) pleaded guilty to a false statement in aiding and abetting and one count of fraud in the second degree. He had engaged in an elaborate fraudulent plan to help another person obtain illegal status through a marriage contract based on a false address for residency preference. He was then apprehended and treated according to law. He later completed his probation in 2012. While he was still under probation, his family in Nigeria consulted with the soothsayers in his town to know what might have gone wrong with him. The answer given to the family was that his ancestors were not pleased with his life style. Sacrifices were recommended to be offered in order to appease the anger of his ancestors. In the meantime, Igbo immigrants in the Westchester county and beyond believe that the young man’s attitudes are unacceptable both to humans and his ancestors. Some of them hold that unless he travels back to his village to reconcile with the ancestors who may not have approved of his living in a foreign country, he may repeatedly be visited by misfortunes.

Evil Machinations: Ndigbo have the concept that the invisible world is inhabited by bad spirits - the spirits of evil people who had lived a reckless and harmful life. As humans, they did awful things, died unrepentant and are rejected in the land of the dead for their evil deeds. The living share the belief that these evil spirits roam about in the physical world with evil intents to harm the living. The impenitent heart of such persons

is observable in the following dialogue between an Irish Catholic Priest (Fr. Shanahan) working in Igbo land, and a murderer condemned to death as cited by Uchendu (1965) in his book. "The murderer: 'If I accept baptism, Fr., will it prevent me from meeting my enemy in the next life?' Father: 'Well, no, you will probably meet him in one way or the other.' The murderer: 'Then baptize me by all means, and as soon as I do meet him, I'll knock his head off a second time' (Jordan, 1934:137). The murderer accepts baptism, not because he believes that it would cleanse his sins, but because of the reassurance that baptism is not meant to prevent a face to face meeting with his enemy" (p. 12). The fear nursed by the living is that the impenitent at the time of their death still have the power to inflict harm on the living. Such harm they feel is inevitable in the event of the living staying far from God.

### 1.3: THE SPECIFIC NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED

My interactions with most Igbo immigrants in the Westchester county of New York, convince me that they are concerned with spiritual issues, which bother on how they can cope with fears they have from religious beliefs, and how to minimize the guilt from the inability to maintain their faith and religious demands. These significantly affect the way they socialize and live their lives. According to Griffith & Griffith (2003), in trying "to work out a relationship with his or her God, a religious person can bring into proper focus other relationships" (p.17). Relationships revolve around intra and interpersonal respects that are based on trust and self confidence. A popular Igbo maxim puts it succinctly, '*Chi onye na edu onye*'. This implies that a person's '*Chi*' (at the basis of which lies self confidence and resilient spirit) guides and regulates the person's optimism. This

is rightly so when an individual is in good relationship with God and neighbor. When a person's actions are based on morbid behaviors or on chronic fear and anxiety, it is suspected that the person is at odds with his Chi. Referring to the urgency with which this kind of issue is attained, one of the immigrants (Amaefule) recounts, "In my village, the family and social affiliates will be concerned and will be eager to know whether the 'chi' of an individual with disordered behaviors functions properly. His family will take steps to redirect him through consultations with fortune tellers and native priests. The effort is geared toward ascertaining what kind of rituals need to be performed to help the person emotionally and otherwise." In line with this assertion, I see the need to give an attention to the spiritual and emotional problems of the immigrants. Therefore, I want to use this project as a means of encouraging their coping system (Chi). This will equally mean exploring the root cause of their fears and guilt.

#### 1.4: THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROJECT TO MINISTRY IN A WIDER CONTEXT

The project intends to bring pastoral, social and cultural significance through formulation of group based activities that will involve majority of the immigrants. This is to help them relate their feelings in a positive way, and discern the purpose of life through prayer, mediation, dialogue and sacraments. It will mean, as Long (2006) points out, encouraging 'the desire to participate in the ministry nurtured in a variety of ways, and service programs (cited by Ebuziem, 2011, p. 204). In this way, the project will be an aid to self affirmation and determination, and will offer a unique opportunity for people to pay attention to important issues of their lives. The word determination is particularly significant in this context. It implies that the ministry will help the people embrace the

kind of religiosity and spirituality that has been part of their lives. The core thing about this will be, planning and executing, gathering information about people's needs, their desires, strengths and shortfalls; calibrating realistic goals and actions that can be measured over a period of time in order to know the rate of progress. It will require scheduling time for a periodic evaluation or assessment of the progress that has been made and to celebrate the achieved goals.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

This literature review is based on theological principles expressed in the church's social teachings on human desire for holiness as well as on biblical revelations on migrations.

#### 2.1: THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

i. The Desire For God: The first thing that strikes me about the spiritual concerns of the immigrants is their desire for God, and the fact that God does not abandon his creatures who seek Him. The people's eagerness for spirituality of life testifies to the fact that God freely created humans to be part of God and share God's divinity. As God's creatures, these people are physical extension of God's image. The great theologian Thomas Merton (1962) underscores this idea by saying that unless we discover the deep self, which is hidden in God, we will never really know ourselves as persons. In the same line

of thought, Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that, 'The desire for God is written in man's heart, because man is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw man to himself' (CCC-355). No wonder Weiner (2000) maintains that human beings are "the face of God in disguise, the hidden treasure" (p. 25). Human beings are bearers of the pricey treasure in the earthen vessels according to St. Paul (2 Cor. 4:7). The desire for holiness expressed by the immigrants is a desire for innocence. It is also a manifestation of their hunger for renewal and purity.

The Catholic Bishops Conference of Philippines in 1994 stated that the desire for innocence is nothing other than desire for holiness and good relationship with God, hence, an "encounter through which human personality has been formed" (p. 46). It is spiritual longing that reawakens God's spirit in humans. Pope John II in his Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation encourages innocence and purity of life. He argues that such a life enables people to shine in God's grace, dialogue with one another in trust, creating solidarity and warmth in their relationships. According to him, 'the courage and the serenity with which so many...lead their lives when they are shown acceptance and love bears eloquent witness to what gives authentic value to life and makes it even in difficult conditions something precious for them and for others' (JP II,1995, #63). The innocence of life configures humans to the divine attributes of love, compassion, dignity, peacefulness and happiness.

The Vatican II document '*Gaudium et Spes*', shares the view that, 'The dignity of man rests above all on the fact that he is called to communion with God. This invitation

to converse with God is addressed to man as soon as he comes into being. For if man exists, it is because God has created him through love, and through love continues to hold him in existence. He cannot live fully according to the truth unless he freely acknowledges that love and entrusts himself to his creator” (GS #19:1). The desire for holiness significantly relates to human imperfection. For though they are made in the image and likeness of God, humans wage constant spiritual battles with internal and external forces of evil, which relieve them of God’s grace. The question then is what do spiritual battles entail.

ii: Spiritual Battle: Spiritual battle is something internal, because it is rooted in human thoughts and actions that lead to evil. It is also external, because it is sometimes teleological and beyond human control. In either case the consequence is grave – resulting in physical or psychological pain. St. Paul thinks that human beings are always at war with “principalities and dark powers, the supernatural forces of evil that govern this world” (Ephesians 6:12). Evil forces are characterized in social teachings of the church from moral, metaphysical, physical and social point of views.

Moral evil is the result of actions that are unethical and unacceptable in the eyes of humans. Any human act that yields devilish results is morally reprehensible. For instance, willful taking of human life by physical means, by termination or by inducing of fetus in the womb (except in a case of ectopic pregnancy that endangers the life of the mother) is considered morally evil by the Church. Similarly, the action of the young Igbo immigrant, (Ilegbunwa) mentioned earlier in this project could be considered immoral

by all standards. This is because his action is unethical and has potential effects that could impact the social order. Cooper (2007) believes that 'what makes a person evil is doing evil, because evil is not a state in which we are born. By engaging in more and more destructive acts, people can become 'hardened' to their own evil' (p. 117). The idea of being morally good revolves on the belief that God in whose image humans are made is 'omnipotent and good' (St. Augustine C.G., III, xvii, cxliv). Thomas Aquinas would argue that "God's essence is nothing but all Goodness' (St. Thomas Aquinas, 'On the Power of God'. Translated by the Dominican Fathers 1952). The desire for goodness is thus, a desire for contentment.

Social evil on the other hand involves a situation in which members of a system are victimized through injustice or oppressive acts. Through social evil human beings cooperate with a social system that subjugates and dehumanizes their fellow human beings. Cooper (2007) identifies oppression of others by a section of people as social evil and enemy of freedom. Social evil encourages inequality among people. It leads to persistent anxiety, insecurity and fear. Metaphysical evil manifests in reciprocity and limitations that are often seen in the natural world. In metaphysical evil, natural objects are prevented from attaining their full ideal and perfection whether by constant pressure of physical condition and/or by sudden catastrophes. The consequences of metaphysical evil are multiple; animals and plants are exposed to dangers resulting from such metaphysical and natural hazards. People are forced to flee and seek for greater safety. Other organisms are 'variously influenced by climate and natural causes'

(Catholic Encyclopedia). The holy book has the record of migrations by humans most of who flee their lands seeking for better condition of living.

### iii: Migrations (Scriptural Overtures)

Old Testament: The Book of Genesis (12:5-9; 12:20) shows that Abraham (at the age of 75) migrated from Ur of Chaldean (the modern Iraq) with his wife Sarah and nephew Lot. He “traveled 500 miles to Haran (now southeast Turkey) and stayed there until his father's death.” He equally sojourned in Egypt and later was forced to leave due to misfortunes that his sojourn in the land had brought upon the house of Pharaoh. He later moved four hundred miles south to the land of Canaan where he lived the rest of his life.

The book of Genesis (46:6; 49:29) has also the account of Jacob’s migration to Egypt together with his entire family. Jacob and all his descendants (with him took their livestock and their goods, which they had acquired in the land of Canaan, and) went to Egypt. Jacob lived in Egypt for seventeen years before his death. His children and their descendants lived there for many years after his death.

The book of Daniel (1:1-6) tells the story of Judah’s exilic migration to Babylon (605 BC). In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah, Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and besieged it. He brought desolation upon the land; captured it and plundered the sacred temple vessels. He put them in the treasure house of Babylonia god. Daniel and other youths were taken along as captives. The king, Nebuchadnezzar changed Daniel’s name to Belteshazzar, and those of his companions

Hananiah (Shadrach), Mishael (Meshach) and Azariah (Abednego) to denigrate their identity. He tortured the people with the intent to break their spirit.

New Testament: The gospel of Luke (15:11-32) has the story of a young prodigal son who left his land for a foreign country. The young man impudently demanded from his father: 'Give me my share of the estate'. So the father divided his properties and gave him his own estate. Some days later, he gathered all his belongings and started off for a distant land where he squandered his wealth in loose living. Having spent everything, he was hard pressed when a severe famine broke out in that land. He fed on the food reserved for the pigs; he had no good means for survival. He then came back to his senses and returned to his father pleading for forgiveness, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "His father said to the servants, 'Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet .... Let us have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' He had a huge party to welcome back his son.

These biblical accounts portray migrations by people of different times in the biblical history. Something significant about all the migrations that have been cited is the fact that even in the worse conditions of life, God does not abandon his creatures.

## 2.2: CLINICAL THEORIES AND PRINCIPLES

The clinical theories that I find valuable in addressing the emotional issues of the immigrants concerned in this project include: Psychodynamic principles (Sigmund Freud); Internal Family Systems Model (IFS) (Richard Schwartz); Family Systems Theory (Murray Bowen) and Existential Theoretical Principles (Viktor Frankl and others).

### 2.2.i: Psychodynamic Principles Of Freud

Freud theorized that an infant goes through psychosexual stages of development. Each stage is typified by diverse sexual gratifications and the ways of achieving such gratifications. When any stage is not well developed, the infant is 'fixated' and manifests certain traits as the result in adult life. The first stage is *Oral*, which extends from birth to first 15 months of the life of the infant. Within the period, the psychic energy is limited to the mouth. Only the id is present at this stage. The infant seeks immediate gratification through its mouth, feeding and crying, sucking at the mother's breasts for pleasure. Tyson and Tyson delineate this idea concisely, "Sucking and feeding experiences, provide the ... mother-infant interactions, and as memory around traces of pleasurable sensations come to form, they are organized around such experiences. During pleasure sucking, the entire attention of the infant is concentrated on this rhythmic activity, and he frequently combines it with robbing some part of his body – an earlobe or genitals, for example" (1990, p. 52). The mouth at this stage of the life of the baby is significantly the center of everything. Fixation in the oral stage manifests in

smoking, over eating or thumb sucking. The personality traits are impatience, passivity, greed, dependence and preoccupation with giving and taking.

The next stage is the *Anal* stage -1 to 3 years of life of the infant. It is the stage at which the child learns to assert self-independence and personal power, and to express negative feelings of rage and aggression. The infant shifts the center of energy from mouth to anus. Pleasure in passing faeces and urines, sometimes leads to conflicts with the parents. Fixation in the stage manifests in adult life as obstinacy or hot temper. The traits associated with the stage include negligence of strict toilet regulation and sometimes pleasure in individuals defecating on the floor (Corey, 2001).

The next stage is *Phallic*, from 3 to 6 years of the infant's life. According to this principle, phallic stage is the period of emotional conflicts for the infant. The child seeks gratification through genitalia with curiosity on other people's bodies, and begins to develop attraction for a particular parent. If male, the infant gets attracted to his mother and becomes jealous of his father. The child's feeling is that the father may castrate him for being attracted to the mother if he finds out. If female, the child develops attraction for her father for '*penis envy*', (Freud "On the Sexual Theories of Children"1908, PFL 7, p. 195-6). In other words, the female-child nurses the feeling that she does not have penis and that her mother cannot provide her with one.

The Oedipus Complex: Phallic stage for male is 'Oedipus Complex' and for female, 'Electra Complex'. A notable thing about the oedipal conflict is that at the stage, the sexual feeling becomes repressed. The infant loves the object of his aggression. Freud

surmised that the conflicts of this stage are resolved by 'castration anxiety' because the child fears a physical punishment by his father whom he identifies as envious of him for his love towards the mother. In this circumstance, the objects that are both desired and feared are given up. They are replaced with identifications that are formative in the child's later sex role. Corey (2001) would argue that the Oedipus or Electra Complex leads to introjections of parental values, i.e., internal code or the infant's formation of 'superego' - the sense of right and wrong for the infant. This equally marks the formation of the child's 'conscience' -- internalization of parental values. The breach of this internal code, (social prohibitions) attracts unpleasant feelings of fear and guilt in the infant. Positive resolution of Oedipal/ Electra conflict leads to the child's solid development and concrete gender role.

The next is the *Latency* stage. This covers from 6 to 12 years of life. It is the age of socialization when the child's sexual interests are replaced by social activities with peers; being preoccupied with hobbies, sports, and formation of friendships with members of his or her gender. Major disturbance of Latency is narcissism and obsession with thoughts about self. *Genital* stage (12-18 years of life) is the stage of puberty and re-emergence of the earlier drives. According to Corey (2001), the child expresses sexual energy in a totally different way. The child invests energy in a responsible manner by getting involved in a lasting loving relationship through friendships; it is the stage of preparation for a life's career. Disturbance of the genital stage for the child is manifestation of too much libidinal energy. The child may not be mature enough to shift attention away from his or her body.

Freud's Ego And the Id Principles (1923): In developing a topographical model of the mind, Freud hypothesized that an important part of the infant is the nervous system. In a child, it is little more than that of any animal. Freud called this an id. The id operates with the pleasure principle. The infant is pure id. It only knows that it wants it and that it wants it now. During the first year of the infant's life, there is little consciousness. Within the period some of the "it" becomes "I," while some of the id becomes ego. The ego relates to realities by means of its consciousness. It searches for objects to satisfy the wishes that id creates to represent the baby's needs. Boeree (2009) believes that the id has two kinds of biological instincts /drives: 'Eros' and 'Thanatos'. Eros is an instinct of life that helps the individual to survive while Thanatos is a death instinct responsible for aggression. This pleasure principle works in a way that the Eros always instigates the energy directed toward the self like eating, drinking and other pleasurable acts without restraint. On the other hand, Thanatos is responsible for self energy directed toward others by way of aggression or violence.

The ego, unlike the id, works with reality principle or reason. It always 'struggles with the id to curtail its excesses'(Gay, 1989, p.11). It keeps track of the rewards and punishments in the world of the child. The Superego operates on moral principle. It dictates the things to be avoided and strategies to be taken. It motivates the child to behave in a socially responsible and acceptable manner. Though superego develops in the Phallic stage of the child's life, in some cases, it is never completed, thus, does not function well until about the seventh year of the child.

Freud's Conscious And Unconscious Minds (1915): Freud's psychodynamic principles are equally concerned with conscious and unconscious activities of the mind. The conscious mind according to Freud is sentient, i.e., the conscious mind is aware of present perceptions, memories, fantasies and feelings. Part of the conscious mind in Freud's theory is preconscious. This means that it has 'available memory' or anything that can easily be brought into conscious (Freud, S. The Unconscious. SE, 14: 159-204). The preconscious mind contains the things in one's memories that can easily be brought back to mind. Another layer of the mind is the unconscious. This contains all the things not easily available to the sentient mind. Many things (the drives or instincts) associated with trauma have their origins in the unconscious mind. They are stored in this part of mind, simply because one can't bear to look at them. Notwithstanding that people are unaware of the things stored in the unconscious mind or sometimes are in denial of them, yet those things are available and in disguised form in the mind.

Freud's Guilt Principle: Freud surmises that guilt is the result of a struggle between the ego and the superego. Fear generates from an unconscious heightened sense of guilt the result of which is the loss of happiness. With these principles he rejects the role of God as punisher in times of illness or the one that rewards in times of wellness.

Freud's Dream Interpretation: Freud (1900) considers dreams a 'royal road to the unconscious'. In dreams, the ego defenses are lowered so that some of the repressed materials come through to awareness, though in a distorted form. For Freud, dreams perform important functions for the unconscious mind. According to Freud, dreams

have two contents, 'manifest and latent', and are wish fulfillment that emanates from the subconscious mind(Freud, The unconscious. SE, 14: 159-204). The manifest content masks the true wishes and desires of the dreamer revealed in the latent content. Dreams therefore serve as valuable clues to how the unconscious mind operates. Freud interprets dreams as wishful-fulfillment.

#### 2:2.ii: Internal Family Systems Model(IFS)

The IFS Model maintains that it is the nature of the mind to subdivide into an indeterminate number of 'subpersonalities' (or parts). Everyone has a 'Self,' that can lead the individual's internal system. Parts according to the IFS Model theory are managers, exiles and firefighters. The IFS theoretical viewpoint is that non extreme intention of each part is something positive for the individual, and there are no 'bad' parts. Thus, the goal of IFS therapy is not to eliminate parts, but to help them find their non extreme roles. As people develop, the parts not only develop but form a complex system of interaction among themselves. The workability of a system can be applied to the internal family system. When the system is reorganized the parts can change rapidly. Changes in the internal system will affect changes in the external system and vice versa. Supporting this theoretical viewpoint, Earley J. (2009) argues, "IFS has what you might call a spiritual perspective, not because it subscribes to any religion or spiritual practice in particular, but because it embodies spiritual qualities such as love, wisdom, and connectedness" (p. 7). The assumption is that both internal and external

levels are sum total of the system, hence, should be assessed. The goal therefore is to coordinate good balance and harmony within the system in order to elevate the Self to be effective leader in the system. When the Self is in the lead, the parts will not only provide impute to the Self, but will as well respect the leadership and decision of the Self.

Parts And Subparts: The parts are like living organisms in a human body. They are protectors and have subparts that interact in a complex fashion among themselves. They have memories that dictate the needs that people have. The protectors have subdivisions that govern people's mannerisms. They are for instance: managers (that play a protective role and control the ways a person interacts with the external world). The other parts, the exiles (are hard experiences of life like anxiety, fear, trauma or helplessness); firefighters (include unhealthy activities with regard to excessive drinking, eating, drugging, etc.) are subparts that try to prevent the exiles from experiencing pain. Firefighters perform activities to make an individual feel better. Generally the protectors try to keep individuals safe and functional. They get on people's way by criticizing how people feel or perceive their appearance. For instance, when a person is chronically hurt, humiliated, frightened or shamed, the protectors retain the memories and sensations from such experiences.

Coalescence and conflict among the parts: Parts coalesce with one another in performing their activities, and sometimes they polarize each other in an attempt to protect themselves. For example, managers and firefighters may team up to suppress

exiles in an effort to soothe pain. Exiles may want to express pain, while firefighters at the same time may attempt to divert the attention of exiles from doing so. Similarly, a part may resort to eating indiscriminately while at the same time polarizes itself by trying to cut down the level of food it consumes. Parts constantly engage themselves in an extreme way. For instance, “each part is convinced that it must take an extreme stand in order to deal with destructive actions of another part”(Earley J., 2012, p. 2). The part that is mostly silent but very active is the ‘Self’. It never yields to the other parts irrespective of the type of trauma or difficulty being experienced or expressed by the protectors.

The Internal Family System theory does not believe that people in therapy have come with a disease to be cured. It rather recognizes the clients as people with emotional problems, but also have the resources to deal with their problems. IFS empowers such people to take charge of their emotional wellbeing through the discovery of ‘Self’, which is always within to lead an individual to wholeness. Schwartz (2001) believes that once an individual is ‘Self led’, he or she will be open to confident, self assuring and easily adapt with others' company.

### 2:2.iii: The Existential Theory.

The proponents of this theory Viktor E. Frankl (1905-1997), Rollo May (1909 –1994) etc. advocate the idea that human beings make choices because they are capable of self-awareness. Human beings are finite, but have an unlimited time to do what they want with their lives. People have the potential to take action; inaction is a timely decision. For the existential theory, the purpose of life is the ability to recognize a range of alternatives in any condition that life brings along. People have the freedom to choose their actions and can create their own destiny. With self determination and a good measure of optimism, life's purpose is achieved. The theory postulates that the greater the awareness of self, the greater the possibility for freedom. Every life has a purpose. Authentic living is realized when someone finds the meaning and principle of life. The point of life is basically about freedom and responsibility, meaningful relationships, search for life goals. People continue to recreate themselves as long as they are alive. Hence, the significance of personhood never stops until one's life is over.

Shallowness of life: The focal point of the Existential Theory is authentic existence. The theorists argue that human beings poses the potential to elevate themselves from shallowness of life. They believe that human life is transitional and in the process evolving and becoming. For the existentialists, the quality of life is improved through practice of spirituality, freedom and responsibility. They believe that it is a worthy thing to constantly examine one's life through repetition of the questions: 'who am I? How have I been? Where am I going?' (Corey, 2001, p. 145). The theory encourages people in for psychotherapy to deemphasize aloneness of life. It maintains that people who

merely pass through life, run the risk of nursing the feeling of lack of control about their lives. People should avoid alienation from others or relying solely on others for importance. Humans are created as beings among their fellows, yet they are not to seek their own importance through people around them, because realization of true self is the sole of authentic existence. Authentic existence increases the capacity of a happy living. Rollo May, an existentialist theorist argues that the “fear of loneliness may not be shown by anxiety as such, but by subtle thoughts which pop up to remind us, when we discover we were not invited to so and so party, or that someone else likes us even if the person in question doesn’t or to tell us that we were successful or popular in such and such other time in the past” (2009, p. 17). The sense of isolation is encouraged when one recognizes that one cannot depend on oneself but on anyone else. Similarly, Corey (2001) believes that individuals who have existential problems can improve their level of existence by changing their mindset. Only individuals can decide how they can authentically live their lives.

#### 2.2.iv: Family Systems Theory.

The Family Systems theory maintains that every member in a family has a role to play and the rules to respect. Family is a system in which each member as part of the system is involved in the emotional dance that goes on within. Members of the same family respond to each other according to their roles. “People would move together, move apart, move together move apart like an accordion” (Kerr and Bowen, 1988, p. 8). Within the family system, patterns develop according to behaviors of the people in it, making members respond in predictable ways. The current behaviors of the people

within any family system predict the behavior of the people who had been part of the system in the past, especially with the aid of a well drawn family-genogram.

Family Genogram, is unique and schematic in painting the picture of family members and their relationship to one another. It portrays different generations that have lived in the family, their ages, dates of marriage, death, and geographical locations. “What makes the genogram more than a static portrait of family’s history is the inclusion of relationship conflicts, cutoffs, and triangles” (Kerr and Bowen, 1988, p. 132). With a family genogram, events of the past generations of any family could be explored. Family genogram helps to provide a framework for exploration of emotional boundaries, so that people could be convinced that their current circumstances genetically or culturally linked are repetitions of what already started in the family many generations back. Systemic thinking provides a link between visible and invisible forces that help determine human existence (Smith, 2004). Family systems theory argues that in family systems, thoughts are well coordinated towards emotional reciprocity that involves ‘*habitus*’ (Pierre Boudieu, 1977, p. 72) - mode of operation that mediates between individuals/culture and the structures of daily living. The theory is Systematic and culturally rooted. It enables individuals cope with one another in an unforeseen and ever changing situations.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHOD AND TECHNIQUES

#### 3.1: RESEARCH METHODS

In planning for this research work, I had thought about which research method (quantitative or quantitative) would best showcase my ideas and the facts about the Igbo immigrants of my study. I settled for qualitative research method, because it involves a process that is beneficial and/or therapeutic, especially when it is intended for the emotional wellbeing of the group members. Qualitative research method uses the following group process: consensus group, focus group, nominal group or search conference.

Certain factors make a group process very vibrant. Yalom's (2005) enumerates some features responsible for a group dynamism: universality – feeling of having problems similar to others, not alone; altruism– helping and supporting others; instillation of hope -- encouragement that recovery is possible; guidance-- nurturing support and assistance; imparting information - teaching about problem and recovery. Other factors are, developing social skills – learning new ways to talk about feelings, observations and concerns; cohesion – feeling of belonging to the group, valuing the group; catharsis – release of emotional tension; existential factors - life and death are realities; imitative behavior - modeling another's manners and recovery skills; corrective - recapitulation of family of origin issues indentifying and changing the dysfunctional patterns or roles one played in primary family.

With these features in mind, I plan to use focus group in developing this project. I hope to encourage the group members to freely share their emotions, receive and give feedbacks among themselves. I intend to participate actively in the group, by making my own contributions on issues that may come up. In doing this, I want to give the participants the confidence to relax and positively share their own opinions. I believe that giving my personal views will inspire positive feelings and camaraderie in the group. Besides, I see my active participation as a way of identifying with the feelings in the group since I am from the same homeland with the immigrants.

### 3.2: FOCUS GROUP AND THE GOALS

One of the goals of focus group is “to uncover and illuminate what things mean to people’ (McLeod, 2003, p. 73). And in line with the view of VandeCreek et al (1994), “qualitative research invites ... emphatic listening skills to the lived experience of those who we ask to participate with us as co-researchers in a research venture. The technique is fundamentally engaging to the people, enabling them share their experiences in the best possible way” (p. 71). Thus, my plan is to sit with people, listen and dialogue with them in order to get necessary information. My earlier phone conversations with some of the immigrants convinced me about their interest in having some sort of forum to share their problems. With this technique I want to collect the data that will be both definable and analyzable. My main objective in collecting the data will be ‘*how*’ to prove to the public that my findings involve the facts that are required to be known, and that my findings are ‘*worth*’ people’s interests. In addition, I want to

show with this method that '*where*' my research findings took place does exist and is locatable.

This type of research group appears beneficial to me. I believe it will allow members of the group to meet as long as the research lasts. Moreover, it will enable them to share their perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes to the best of their knowledge. Besides, it will allow people to bring insights into lived experiences. I agree with Barnett (2002) that a research group should comprise of people with enough knowledge in socio-religious issues, who can explain how stories, ideas, attitudes, and experiences function within a certain cultural setting, especially within an ethnographic study. Thus, I am convinced that a 'focus group is valuable for exploring how point of views are constructed and expressed' (Barbour and Kitzinger 1999). I intend to facilitate the group with techniques that are useful for group process. The techniques include, reflecting, clarifying, summarizing, interpreting and questioning.

### 3.3: RECRUITMENT OF MEMBERS

I intend to recruit the members by sending out flyers to the churches (in Yonkers, New Rochelle, Mount Vernon and White Plains). These are the communities that I believe may have Igbo immigrants). With the flyers well circulated within these areas, I would have reached a wider audience. I will thereafter conduct an interview for those who may be interested in participating in the group. I intend to use the interview to explain certain things about the project; why individuals are needed as well as the intended purpose of the research group. With information well circulated, I expect a good

number for the interview. I plan to recruit not more than 12 participants. I want to limit the number to twelve, because I share the view that 'focus group should consist of 4-12 members if the group is homogeneous, and 6-12 if it is heterogeneous' (Brown, 1999, p. 109). I equally feel that such a number is very advantageous, as I hope it will minimize rowdiness in the group and help the members freely express their views and to be heard. I hope to use some survey (sampling) questions to verify facts.

### 3:4: DATA COLLECTION

Transcription: I have plans to use audio tape recorder to transcribe the data immediately after the group discussions. In this way, I hope to articulate the information to be collected from the group. I will play the recorded information repeatedly after the group meetings to adequately process the data before transcription. This method will be helpful in recapturing the major issues raised previously in the group.

Coding Procedure: After every session, I will try to code relevant themes. And as more themes develop, I will assign a working definition to each code. I expect that some information will occur as expected and certain factors never expected may equally come up. In the process the already used codes will be altered, renamed or be expunged from the data.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### ANALYSIS OF THE TOOLS

#### 4.1: THE ENROLMENT OF THE PROJECT GROUP MEMBERS

I began the process of recruitment by sending out flyers to some churches within the county. The twelve people selected to form the group were: five married women (Onuoha Z., Nwako T., Ezuma P., Ikediora N., Uba B.); four unmarried ladies (Enemchi V., Chuks R., Uchendu C., Nworga A.); two married men (Echi H., Okafor D.), and an unmarried young man, Chike J. The people were knowledgeable and able to express themselves distinctively. Though they spoke the same language, they had slight differences in dialect. The people were unfamiliar with one another. They were from different Igbo states in Nigeria. I requested for their authorization to have their names published in this project.

#### 4.2: MODALITIES FOR THE GROUP

Members were informed about the following points with regard to our meetings.

- (i) The group would last for eight consecutive weeks.
- (ii) Every session would be held on Saturday, after the 5pm Mass in the parish hall. Each session would last at most for two and half hours.
- (iii) English and Igbo languages would be used for discussions.
- (iv) Every member would endeavor to be present in all the sessions or call ahead of time to notify the group.

(v) Issues discussed in the group would not extend beyond the place of meeting.

Prior to my first meeting with the group, I had made calls to remind the members about the time and venue of the meeting. I planned the group to last for eight consecutive sessions. The last two sessions were to be for discussions on personal issues. During the first meeting, members were giving a consent form to sign. All were treated to light refreshments in snacks, tea and coffee. I promised to give them a ride at the end of the meetings. After the introduction, I reiterated the general purpose of the group.

The first fifteen minutes of each session were used for social and light refreshments. This was followed by ten minutes of meditation begun with the hymn: 'Be Still My Soul' by Katrina von Schlegel. The wordings of the hymn were spiritually uplifting: 'Be still, my soul the Lord is on thy side. Bear patiently the cross of grief or pain; Leave to thy God to order and provide. In every change He faithfully will remain. Be still, my soul thy best, thy heavenly friend, through thorny ways leads to a joyful end.' The hymn was followed by a brief scripture reading.

The first meeting with the group was on February 15, 2014 from 6. 30pm - 9pm. The topic of our discussion was: 'What is your reason for leaving your homeland for the United States of America?' Our second meeting was held on February 22, 2014. The theme of our discussion was: 'How do you feel living far away from your homeland; and what things do you find most difficult in your new environment?' The third meeting was held on March 1, 2014. The topic discussed by the group was: 'How have you been

coping with the issues you think are not meaningful to your faith and religion?’ The fourth meeting was on March 8, 2014. The topic of our discussion was: ‘Are there particular rituals or practices that help you to deal with life’s obstacles; what is your level of involvement in the faith based community near you?’

The fifth meeting was held on March 15, 2014. The topic discussed was: ‘What is it that you fear most at the current stage of your life; where do you think you need help most?’ The sixth session was held on March 22, 2014. The topic of our discussion was: ‘How often do you travel home since you have been in the United States?’ The seventh session was on March 29, 2014. This session was used to discuss pressing personal issues of the group members. They had earlier been given papers to write what they would like to share in the group. The unattended cases were deferred to April 5, 2014, the last day of the group.

#### 4.3. ATTENDANCE

From the beginning of the group, members are well informed about why they have been invited to participate in the research discussions. All through the meetings, people are constantly reminded about the importance of sitting through all the sessions. The emphasis is that if one misses a session, one may miss some essential points and facts that have been previously discussed. Hence, group members are convinced and showed positive response in their attendance and participation. The roll call sheet below demonstrates the positive attendance by the group through the eight weeks of our meetings.

### Roll Call Sheet

	Date	2/15/2014	2/22/2014	3/1/2014	3/8/2014	3/15/2014	3/22/2014	3/29/2014	4/5/2014
Names	Sessions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Chike J.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Chuks		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Echi H.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enemchi V.		✓	T	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Ezuma P.		✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
Ikediora N.		✓	S	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nwako T.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Nworga A.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Okafor D.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Onuoha Z.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Uba B		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
Uchendu C.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

### Key

✓	X	S	T
Present	Excused	Sick	Travel

The attendance was almost hundred percent. During the second, fifth and sixth sessions we had some unavoidable excuses by some group members. In the second week of our meeting, the group was notified that a member 'D' had lost a relative and had travelled out of the state to attend to the funeral. Members were equally told that another group member had been sick and hospitalized within the period. During the fifth and sixth sessions we had two excuses due to the inability of the members concerned to get permissions from work.

#### 4.4 THE TECHNIQUES USED IN THE GROUP

Reflecting: The guiding principles for the group stipulated that everyone's opinion counted. Members tried to express their feelings without fears and with openness. In all, people reflected and responded positively to the ideas that came up in the discussions.

Clarifying: This technique was very helpful in clarifying opinions. For instance, while the group was discussing issues, someone asked the person who was sharing at the time, 'what made you stay with your boyfriend in spite of the abuses you were experiencing from him?' The person replied: "I stayed because I loved him, even though I was angry at his attitudes. I mean, I felt for him and wished he would change and appreciate me the way he used to." Thinking through the response, I tried to validate the response by using clarifying technique. I said to the hearing of all in the group: 'You were dealing with love and anger at the same time, and both feelings didn't seem to agree!' The person acknowledged the clarification immediately by saying, 'you are correct!'

Summarizing: This technique was mostly used at the beginning of the sessions - to update the members on what were previously discussed or in the middle of a session to determine where the group would proceed next. I repeated the major themes discussed. I asked members of the group to choose words or phrases that best represented their feelings in summarizing the group discussions toward the end of every session. Some of the words that came up were: 'Love', 'courage', 'comforting', 'less tensed', 'happier', 'calmer', 'relaxed', 'bravery', 'less perturbed', 'less depressed', 'happiness', 'confidence', 'compassion', 'positive', 'carefulness', 'merciful' and 'kindness.'

Interpreting: As an issue was on the floor, a group member chuckled. Looking toward him, I said, 'you chuckled a short while ago, what might your giggle tell us about the issue that is being discussed?' He alleged, 'The issue reminds me about what is currently going on in my family.' Other members of the group were amazed how the technique had helped in getting some information from the member who had chuckled.

Questioning: This technique was used in probing further the feelings and ideas being discussed. With questioning technique I was able to verify impulses at will during the discussions. Some of the questioning sentences I used were: 'How does this land for you?' 'What things do you imagine happening to you when you feel isolated?' 'What is it like for you to hear members of the church community talk that way?' 'What do you feel when you are depressed?' 'Tell me how you are coping with the feeling of the bereavement?' The technique was helpful for the flow of emotions.

#### 4.5 GROUP SHARING

Certain emotional elements (anger, depressive anxiety, fear, guilt, lack of self trust, shame, etc.) made the group sharing very poignant. The following cases came up in the group sharing. The names of the individuals involved in the cases have been eliminated to protect their identity.

Case #1: H, had been upset with his diseased younger brother concerning what he did when he was alive. According to H, 'I brought my younger brother to the United States as a teenager. I paid his tuitions from high school through college. I helped him to secure a job. Sadly, he travelled to our country and committed suicide. He disappointed everyone in my family. He left behind two children he had out of wedlock. He had tested HIV positive and didn't want to face the ordeal of the virus. The most disgraceful thing is the shame he brought to my family by taking his life. It's been five years he died, but it is still hard for me to forgive him or forget about the issue'.

Case #2: A, was despondent for her inability to keep up with the level of faith she used to have. As a younger person she had been regular with Sunday Holy Mass attendance. She belonged to pious organizations in her church at the time. When she moved into her current area in Westchester about three years ago, she had registered with a church community that she thought would help her faith grow. Her enthusiasm has dwindled, because she has been far from the pious activities that use to encourage her spiritually. A, had been inactive in the church due to the perceived aggression and unvoiced discriminatory attitudes of some members of her church community.

Case #3: P, was apprehensive about the things that had happened in her family. According to her, 'My husband (Chuks) has developed embarrassing attitudes since he lost his job six months ago. Every little thing sets him off. He apologized initially about this odd behavior, especially when I brought it to his awareness. I stopped calling his attention to his attitudes as I noticed that it made him unhappy and more defensive. He says he is disappointed with God who allowed this to happen to him. He no longer shows interest in eating, praying or going out together with me. It saddens me more that he now does the things he had abhorred - gambling, smoking, drinking and overeating. He does not seem to be perturbed that his attitude has affected our relationship lately. I am concerned that he may end up an addict. I need everyone's prayer for my family'.

Case #4: T, lived in her brother's apartment for one and half years after she arrived in the United States. When she moved away from her brother, she fell in love with a man with whom she later moved in to live together. In T's words: 'It was crazy the things I did for love. After our civil marriage, the man's attitude toward me changed completely. I had moved in with him because he had promised to help me get a Green Card. I got pregnant soon after we moved in, and aborted the pregnancy because he had insisted that he was not ready for a baby. He was a Christian and did not belong to any religion. He tried to convince me that God isn't as good as being portrayed by religions. In my second pregnancy, he still insisted that I went for another abortion. I objected to that, because I had felt terrible after my first abortion. I have had nightmares; in most of them the ghost of a baby kept yelling at me, 'Help me! Help me!' My problem since I left the man has been the guilt and the issue of trust with men.'

Case # 5: C, had worked as a customer assistant in a 'Food and Drug Store'. She had been in the job close to ten years. She shared the following with the group: 'I have been experiencing low level of energy at work. I sense that this probably has to do with my shift to a new position at my job. Besides, I have often had bizarre and odd kind of feelings in which I have noticed myself leaving my body while at work. The stress associated with this has been very traumatic. I have sometimes tried alcoholic drink to soothe the related anxiety. Some of my coworkers advised me to see a counselor, but no one in my family supports the idea. I feel reluctant toward this idea as well, because I personally believe in God's intervention through miracles in this issue. My mother agrees with me. She has suggested that I take it to God in prayer. She also thinks that requesting for Holy Masses or seeing a priest for a spiritual guidance will solve the problem.'

Case #6: This particular case was discussed with me in private. The owner of the case gave me the permission to use it in the project. She also requested that her identity be protected. For this reason I have used Y for her and B for my name in our dialogue.

#### Verbatim

Y: "My stepfather abused me sexually severally when I was a kid. I was always angry and afraid of him. I hated to stay in the family in order to avoid him. I became an athlete in my high school and was very much involved in the school activities. I had many boyfriends at the time though one of them was closest to me. I became promiscuous, sleeping around with most of them. I have been married for more than six years now. I

have two beautiful kids and a very lovely and responsible husband. With my marriage, I vowed to change my former way of life. I have maintained it because my husband has been close to me and our children in a very supportive way. But I have had an issue that has been tormenting my life. There is this inner voice that keeps saying to me all the time, 'you are a liar', 'you are fake', 'you are a worthless person'".

B: Y, I am hearing a number of things from what you are sharing: abused as a kid, a hard working person, a friendly personality, guilt, shame, and a tormenting inner voice. I wonder how it will land for you if I break it so that we deal with it one by one. Let me know if it is okay for you that we begin with this issue of the persisting 'inner voice'?

Y: 'Right, go ahead!'

B: I want to know if you hear the inner voice right now, and what is it saying to you?

Y: 'It is saying to me, 'you are worthless.'"

B: Tell me how that feels for you.

Y: (*Y paused for a while*) 'It's overwhelming. I don't like hearing that.'

B: Is it possible for you to ask the voice to listen to you?

Y: (*Y closed her eyes and paused again*) 'It's not listening; just unable to stop.'

B: Okay. Is there anything else you feel the voice wants you to know about it?

Y: (*Y took a deep breath*) 'I feel that it wants my love for suffering on my behalf.'

B: And what's your response to that?

Y: 'Maybe, to listen to it and appreciate it.'

B: Is it possible to let the voice know how much you appreciate its help?

Y: 'I am not sure I know how I can do that, because I don't like what the voice is saying.'

B: The only way to do that is to listen and to acknowledge the voice as you said a short while ago. Just calm down, listen to it. It will cooperate with you. Can you do that?

Y: (*Y closed eyes briefly, then said*) 'I can't even express in words how much I appreciate the voice.'

B: Tell me how it is responding now.

Y: 'It is just softening.'

B: Any time it comes up, give it an attention, find out what it wants. It will begin to blend with you and possibly help you regain the leadership of yourself.

Y: (*Nodding her head Y said to me*) 'Thanks a lot. The discussion really helped.'

#### 4.6: SPIRITUAL ASSESSMENT

I conducted a sampling survey at the beginning and on the last day with members of the group to know their feelings. Figures 1 to 5 below represent various results from the group. I selected the survey questions with some modifications from the book: 'Spiritual Assessment Handbook For Helping Professionals' by David R. Hodge (2003, pp. 21 & 43).

I gave out the following three questions to model the opinions of the immigrants.

Select from the following the answer that appeals to you most.

1. What is the most important thing in your life?

(a) Health (b) Wisdom (c) Faith.

2. What things occupy your attention during most hours of the day?

(a) Religion (b) Friends (c) Job

Age	Wisdom	Religion	Friends	Faith	Health	Job
20-50	3	5	6	4	3	7
51-70	4	5	3	4	1	2
71 & above	2	6	1	4	0	0

Figure 1. The results from Questions 1 & 2 above which were given out to the immigrants.

3. How would you rate your emotional feeling in dealing with people who have no faith in God or in any religion? (a) Disappointed (a) Sad (c) Worried

Age	20-50 years	51-70 years	71 & above years
Feelings	14 Worried	5 Sad	8disappointed

Figure 2. The results of the Question 3- given to the immigrants.

The following sampling questions (1-4) were given to the group members on the first day of my meeting with them.

Choose from answers a - e in answering questions 1-3.

(a) Strongly agree (b) Agree (c) Disagree (d) Strongly disagree (e) Neutral

1. Faith or spirituality plays a vital role in my life as a person.

2. When involved in depressive anxiety I turn to God and religion.

3. I don't draw spiritual strength from my Christian community due to unwarranted discrimination against certain people.

Participants: 12	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Neutral
	8	3	1	0	0

Figure 3: The results of the sampling questions to the group members.

4. What is the biggest stressor you are currently dealing with?

(a) Guilt (b) Sadness (c) Depressed anxiety

Participants: 12 group members	Age	Feelings
	20-50	5 Guilt
	51-70	3 Sadness
	71 & above	4 Depressed anxiety

Figure 4. The results of Question 4 above.

The following questions were given to the group members on the last day of the group as a follow up to what was given to them at the beginning of the group.

1. How would you rate your feelings after the eight weeks of the group?

(a) Somehow depressed (b) Still guilty (c) Still sad (d) Very optimistic (e) Neutral

Age bracket	12 percipients	Somehow Depressed	still guilty	Still sad	Very optimistic	Neutral
20-50	7	0	0	0	6	0
51-70	3	0	1	0	2	0
71 & above	2	1	0	0	2	0

Figure 5: The results of the above evaluation question.

2. Forming a group that will meet and pray periodically will be helpful to the Igbo immigrants both emotionally and spiritually.

(a) True (b) Somehow true (c) Not sure

12 participants	True	Somehow true	Not sure
	9	2	1

Figure 6. The outcome of the survey conducted among the group members on the last day of the group.

#### 4.7: MEDITATIONS IN THE GROUP SESSIONS

The group members reacted in the following ways on the readings and meditations I used in facilitating the sessions. Chike's response was, 'The meditation was very uplifting for me'. According to Mrs. Chuks, 'It made me feel that God is still on my side.' Mr. Echi said, 'It made me think of how to be patient with whatever hard situation that comes my way.' Enemchi's own reaction was, 'With the mediations I felt that God is still my provider.' Ikediora observed, 'I felt that my cross of pain unites me with the cross of Christ.' Nwako acknowledged, 'I felt that God is with me in whatever situation I find myself.' Nworga's own reply was, 'It made me feel that no matter what happens that I have to be faithful to God's will.' According to Okafor, 'I felt I have to be calm and still in order to find God's will in every turbulent situation in my life.' Onuha on her part testified, 'It helped me to know that no matter what happens in life that God is always the best friend I can have.' Uba's own answer was, 'It intensified my belief that the thorny ways could lead to a joyful end.' Uchendu said, 'the meditation strengthened my hope for the future'.

The Ritual For The Group Closure: I had earlier thought about how to bring a closure for the group in a symbolic manner. After the first session, the members came to an agreement that every person was to write whatever they thought might have negatively impacted their relationship with God. The members were then given clean sheets to write how they would want to move on with their lives. During the closing ceremony, people's intentions were collected and put in a receptacle at the center of the circle formed by the group. Psalm 50 was recited as the intentions were burnt. We proceeded thereafter to the front of the venue for the meetings to bury the ashes. As I dug a hole to bury the ashes, all lifted their hands in prayer. The people recited part of Psalm 141 which says, 'Let my prayer rise before you like incense; may the lifting of my hands be like the evening sacrifice.' After that the ashes were buried. The members then said aloud the entreaty that I had composed and given out to them: 'The ever present omnipotent God, your healing hand extends to the ends of the earth. You have planned all things in your loving compassion, that even the tragedies of our sinfulness cannot frustrate your plans. Forgive any sins we may have committed in the past that may still hold us from moving forward. As we come to the end of this group, help us to embrace your will. Give peace to our souls; enable us to extend compassion to people we meet every day of our lives. Amen.'

The ceremony wrapped up with the lighting and handing of candle light to everyone who had participated in the group. Members were reminded that the light was meant to inflame their zeal and to rekindle their will-power. They were also told that they were to go out to continue to shine brightly anywhere they might find themselves. Along with

the giving of the candle light was presentation of the Holy Bible as a memento for their participation and contributions in the group. With the final blessing given by me, and with a loud 'Amen' by all, the group was formally brought to a close. All departed the venue with joy.

#### 4.8: UNANTICIPATED ISSUES THAT SHOWED UP IN THE FINAL OUTCOMES

At the beginning of this project, I had planned the issues to be discussed. However, I had no premonitions on the issues that might come up in developing the project. Unanticipated issues (common-identity, health, hospitalization, dream / ghost, grief and loss) developed. The issue of common identity came up as the group discussed the reasons why people leave their home country for other lands, especially the United States of America. A group member hinted on how disappointed she had been when Ilegbunwa (the Igbo immigrant) who had been arrested and charged for felony. Some members were in support of the idea, thus, alluded to the difficulty the incident had brought to them. They argued that since the incident, it had been hard for them to truly identify with their Igbo nationality, especially when they found themselves in the midst of the people of other nationalities.

Besides, the issue of health evolved when the group was informed about the hospitalization of a member. Similarly, bereavement issue came up when the group was informed about the demise of a relation of a group member. Another unanticipated issue was grief for the loss of an unborn baby. As a member of the group shared her pains for losing an unborn baby, the group was in some sort of pain. With these information a feeling of sadness was palpable in the group. Feeling of affections was

spontaneously shown to the members concerned in the following words: 'Take heart', 'be strong', 'we will keep you in prayer', 'we love you', 'we 're with you in your pain', 'have hope', 'have faith', 'believe in yourself'.

The group further expressed emotional support tangibly towards the individuals. A 'Get well Card' was presented to the person who had been hospitalized, and a 'Sympathy Card' was given to the individual who had been bereaved. The sympathy card reads: 'There is a tender touch of the Lord extended to us at the time of Loss. It is a touch that wipes our tears, soothes our grief, and comforts our sorrows. It s a touch that tenderly applies the healing oil of His Spirit and gently draws us under the shelter of His wing'. In the center of the card was written, 'Please know that you are in our hearts. Your family will be remembered in our prayers.' The get-well card to the person who had been hospitalized reads, 'May God give you the healing of the mind and body. May you find help and strength in those you love. Recover quick.' Both cards were endorsed by the group members.

## CHAPTER FIVE

## 5.1a IMPLICATIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES DISCUSSED IN CHAPTER 2.

The Desire for God: The craving for God as I observed among the immigrants is in line with the thoughts of Psalmist: “If I go down to the place of the dead, You are there. If I ride the morning winds to the farthest oceans, even there Your hand will guide me, Your strength will hold me” (139:7-10). At times longing after something dear to heart leads to some sort of anxiety. Indeed, some of the immigrants appear distressed in their desire for God. No wonder Pruyser (1976) argues that “troubled persons are understandably upset about the ratio of goodwill and ill-will that comes their way... (their) typical question is: why me? What have I done to deserve this?” (p. 64). When not patient enough, the question leads to despondency and lack of trust in God or in oneself. This seems to be the case for some of the immigrants. Others even in the midst of their anxiety and confusion believe that there is God. This form of understanding leads to some gleams of hope for them.

Aligning With What Lies Within Self: Human agency is not destroyed by the trials of life, but stimulated by the divine. A higher sanctity involves a conformity to the divine - that which lies within. I believe that the spiritual adversity that some of the immigrants are going through will ultimately lead them to a new way of life. They only need to be patient. Thus, they are reminded that spiritual adversity always “humbles, makes (people) more human ... connects people to their essential nature, both sacred and profane. When they go through its passages, they plumb the depths of their humanity. They become intimate with what lies inside – the wild and untamed, the soiled and

unredeemed. They stare into the sockets of their pain and glimpse the naked truth of who they are. All this, people bring with them into a new life. It ushers them into a new humanity" (Steege, 2010, p.170). When viewed from this perspective, adversity is then seen as part of human nature. As such, it will help the immigrants come to terms with greater awareness of themselves.

Anger, Shame And Consequences: Scripture reveals the presence of anger and envy in man as the consequences of disobedience from the time of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:1-10; 4:1-10). According to the scripture, Cain took Abel's life for anger and jealousy. God frowned at the fratricide asking him, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand." In the case number one cited in the chapter four of this project, H's younger brother had taken his own life for the reasons of anger and shame. The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith does not mince words in affirming that, "*Human life is sacred* because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the owner of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being" (Donum Vitae #5,1987). Besides, the Book of Old Testament has the strongest terms about spilling human blood. It warns, "And for your lifeblood I will surely demand an accounting. I will demand an accounting from every animal. And from each human being, too, I will demand an accounting for the life of another human being" (Genesis 9:5). Additionally, the prohibition on destruction of human life is well

specified in the fifth commandment: "Thou shall not slay the innocent and the righteous" (Exodus 23:7). The deliberate murder of the innocent is contrary to the dignity of human being, to the golden rule, and to the sanctity of the Creator. The law that forbids it is universally accepted. It obliges everyone always and everywhere.

In the group discussions, members of the group are reminded that the covenant between God and mankind is interwoven with God's gift of love. I equally reminded the immigrants that God's mercy and compassion is the same in every generation. I let them know that when anyone attempts to take away another's life; when anyone nurses some guilt about destruction of life, that the best way to move forward is to forgive oneself. The person may consult with a spiritual interventionist, arrange with a priest for a private confession, and then continues to trust in God's grace. In going through such steps, one's wounded self will begin to heal.

#### 5.1b: THEOLOGICAL AND SPIRITUAL RESOURCES AS COPING TOOLS

i. Lessons from the forebears: Life's vicissitudes are no less for the immigrants than they were for Abraham, Jacob and Daniel whose migrations and related problems we saw earlier on. Each of them pulled together some resources to excel in tough situations. The immigrants are encouraged to learn from the resilient spirit of the forebears. They are also reminded about the resources in their disposal that can help them succeed in their own difficulties. They are advised to resort to sharing folk tales and cultural myths (as used in their homeland). Folklores have often been found helpful. Through such folklores people relay powerful messages on how the past, present and future

complement each other. Besides, the immigrants are encouraged to support their spirituality with readings (from the Bible and other spiritual books), to listen to sacred songs and hymns, (in CDS, DVDs) and to engage themselves with socio cultural activities where possible.

ii. Pathway To Spiritual Confidence: I try to convince members of the group to cherish and nurture inner calmness. With calmness they can enjoy inner peace and holy presence of God while in their homes, at work or in the church. I purposely choose the meditational hymn 'Be Still My Soul' to begin every group session. This is meant to help people remain calm in the course of our group discussions. Besides, short scripture passages are specifically introduced to address their various spiritual and emotional needs: anger, fear, guilt, shame, impatience and lack of trust. For instance, the gospel of John (16:33) is read to help them be courageous in the face of trials. Zephaniah (3:20) – is read to remind them that as God was ready to lead the people from exile to the promised land, in the same way God is ready to lead they themselves to spirit filled life. The book of Joel (2:26-27) is read to encourage them not to be afraid, but to be glad and rejoice in the Lord. The book of prophet Isaiah (54:4) is read to help them trust in God and overcome disappointments in life. Galatians (4:4) helps to persuade them to rejoice in the Lord. Psalm (121:1-2) suggests for them to look upon the Lord from whom their help will always come. These texts though brief are spiritually uplifting. By using the readings I had intended to enable them regain their spiritual energy through calmness, and to adopt the following virtues as Schwartz R. (2001) recommends: clarity, curiosity, compassion, confidence, courage, creativity and connectedness.

iii. The 'Onye Aghana Nwanne Ya' Ideology: This entails cultural practices by which the immigrants have been brought up. Such practices will help to sustain the camaraderie that already exists among the people. They will also boost people's enthusiasm, because in the homeland, such have always sustained people's optimism to life. They are the hallmark of Igbo spirit that enable people do things in common: live, sing and dance together as new life is conceived or born, while they do their works, when they attend funerals and are in prayer. The ideology is so phenomenal and embedded in the heart of Africa. Haskins summarizes it as that which energizes Africans into action through "talking drums, male and female drums, that makes even the dead want to start moving... (helps people) make up impromptu songs to celebrate everything and anything from victory in battle, to a religious procession" (2002, pp. 47-48). Its healing effect is strongest when people trust themselves, and when they are tightly bonded. When the spirit of '*onye ana nwanne ya*' is well practiced by the immigrants, there will be less fear and more cooperation and trust.

## 5.2: IMPLICATIONS OF CLINICAL PRINCIPLES DISCUSSED IN THE CHAPTER 2

### a) Freud's Psychodynamic Principles:

My interactions with the members of the group confirm certain issues predicted in the clinical principles discussed in the chapter two of this project. Through Sigmund Freud's theoretical application, I am able to relate to some unconscious emotional elements (anger, resentment, fear, guilt, bitterness or despair) showed by members of the group. As Freud pointed out in his psychosexual theory, the internalization of parental values is

responsible for the sense of right and wrong in people. The violation of this internal code (the 'dos' and 'don'ts' or social prohibitions) leads to unpleasant feelings of bitterness, anger, fear and guilt. The fears associated with some of the cases discussed in the group are as the result of the struggle between id and ego. I imagine such fears as consequences of religious and societal imprinting. In the third case shared by P in the group, her husband Chuks is manifesting some sort of fixation in the oral stage of his psychosexual development by overeating. He also shows signs of death and pleasure principle through his actions. I envisage traces of 'Eros' in his resorting to smoking and drinking as a way of soothing his jobless condition, and his angst in the situation as a sign of death instinct 'Thanatos' in him.

In the number five case discussed by T in the group, her regular nightmares in which a baby yells for help are not unconnected with the trauma from the loss of her baby. In his interpretation of dreams, Freud had argued that two components were essentially involved: 'manifest and latent contents'. This idea is also shared by some researchers like Kelly Bulkeley (1994 & 2001), Bernard Welt and Philip King (2011). Thus, Modern research continuously proves that dreams contain fundamentally meaningful information. Friedman & Schustack, (2012) believe that appropriate interpretations of these two layers can facilitate assistance in understanding, whether, when, and how unconscious processes are truly relevant to daily life. The abortion incident had been stored in T's memory. Her nightmares are therefore reaching out from the subconscious mind. From Freud's analytic perspective on dreams, I think that T has not properly dealt with the fears associated with the hard incident of losing her baby. This could be

inferred from her refusal to go for second abortion. T does not hide her feelings in verbalizing her fears, 'I felt terrible after my earlier abortion'. The baby yelling after T in the dreams is her wishful thinking that she had never done the abortion.

b) Guilt And Shame (Allusions)

Guilt and Shame are existential problems that are common to human beings. They are emotional feelings which are complementary to each other. Guilt is emotional drive used to describe an experience of self-blame or self-remorse. According to Martin Buber (1957), the 'self' exists as guilt towards self when it does not assume responsibility of the full acceptance of self. Buber makes a distinction between existential guilt – that which involves a violation of a relationship - and the feeling of guilt – that which is the fear of punishment or loss of love through the breaking of taboos. Similarly, shame is emotional issue that people find troubling in their relationships. "Although people often do not recognize it in themselves, shame is an underlying drive for many of the things they do and say and for many patterns they develop in relationships. Understanding more about shame and its role in one's life is the beginning of being able to face and overcome it. Facing it is often a crucial component to change an inner peace" (Silin, 2015). According to H.B. Lewis, "Shame and guilt are feelings associated with being negatively evaluated either by the self or others because one has failed to meet standards and norms regarding what is good, right appropriate, and desirable (1974, pp. 29-50). Sometimes cultural believes or 'dos' and 'don'ts' can encourage guilt and shame in people. These inferences offer a unique glimpse of how the two elements play some

roles in the lives of the individuals involved in this project. There is no doubt that some of the issues that came up in the group discussions have to do with guilt and shame.

In the case that H presents to the group by H about his younger brother, he lists sadness, suicide, disappointment, tainted family name, getting children out of wedlock and 'HIV' as the things that had encouraged the rift between him and his brother. The issues are guilt and shame related, thus, responsible for H's disillusionment toward his brother. In the same backdrop, his young brother's inability to get over the guilt and shame of his reckless life led to his taking his own life. I imagine that H's eagerness to discuss this case with the group is a way of his dealing with the related shame and guilt. They are audibly visible in his utterance about his stand in the case: "It's been five years he died, but it is still hard for me to forgive him or forget about the issue".

The complementary roles the two elements play to each other is perceivable in the forth case that came up in the group. Just as Martin Buber observed, 'existential guilt' can occur in a relationship, especially when there is a violation in the relationship. In the case referred to, the abuses T suffered from her husband led to the guilt of accepting the man in the first place. It triggered the shame that followed from her broken relationship. In the same way, T, held the shame of being abused by the man she trusted, which led to the guilt she felt about what might happen to him if she had abandoned him. Guilt and shame are basically the reason for T's deep mistrust for men.

Guilt and shame could be repressed and expressed by way of anger. This shows up in the third case discussed in the group. After P's husband (Chuks) lost his job, the

shame associated with the loss is repressed, but manifests in his subtle anger towards God. It is expressed in his alienation from doing the things he use to do together with his wife. Apparently, his initial apology to his wife is an expression of the guilt he feels for offending his wife.

All this implies that guilt and shame are emotional issues that people find hard to deal with. The simple expression, “I could have died of embarrassment is testimony to its power; at some level, people are afraid that the pain of it really will kill them. In order to deal with it, or even recognize it, people need to feel that they are in a psychologically safe place. They may need help and encouragement to begin to examine it and the experiences which led to it” (‘Shame: The Emotion that Runs Us and Ruins Relationships’, 2015). Finding a counselor to help address chronic guilt or shame is always a good thing. The immigrants are urged to consider it an option to involve a therapist or pastoral counselor when dealing with the issues of guilt and shame.

#### c) Internal Family Systems Model (IFS)

As I hear the members of the group talk (about their impatience, withdrawing from others, or the pain of loss), I understand better the Schwartz’s argument that everyone has ‘parts’ that yearn to be heard. Schwartz maintains that “deep within us are lurking memories and feelings that could overwhelm us, making us feel horrible, impeding our ability to function making us act impulsively, changing the way we relate to people, and making us vulnerable to being hurt again” (2001, p. 2). In Y’s case (in the verbatim above), I imagined her being engaged in some sort of internal war. I could sense a

humiliated child-part triggering her past as she struggles to move on with her life. This part constantly shows up by way of pessimism. Though very embarrassing, yet the part is not Y's enemy, but her protector. In my discussions with her, I tried to help her access her true 'Self' so as to blend with the 'protector'. The strategy seemingly worked, because toward the end of our dialogue she appeared a different person. When I asked how she felt about the inner voice that constantly troubled her, in a calm and very relaxed voice, she acknowledged how grateful she was to the voice for trying to protect her. She said she felt sorry that the voice was working so hard to help her.

Thinking through what actually transpired in our dialogue, I will say that I feel glad to hear her admit that the dialogue was helpful. I am glad especially, because she accepted to work with the part that gets on her way. As I noted early in the chapter two, the positive thing about using this clinical intervention is to see that the 'Self' knows a particular protector, discover its positive intent, then develops a trusting relationship with it. It is only by doing so that the protector will start to trust the 'Self' and allows it to create internal harmony under its guidance.

#### d) Existential Theory –The Vacuum

The Existential theoretical principles apply well in the number five case discussed earlier in the chapter two. In the vignette, T, was in the dilemma of taking a decision to move out of her brother's apartment and finding a place to stay once she was out of the apartment. She trusted and relied on her boyfriend to the detriment of her happiness. As the principles of the Existential theory reveal, people merely pass through life when they indulge in seeking importance in the people around them. I acknowledge T's

courage to bring her problem to the group, because sharing her had experiences helped her to understand her mistakes and how such had created 'existential vacuum' (Frankl Viktor, 1959) in her life, and she can avoid such situations should they repeat again. I am personally glad that T testified before the group members that discussing her case gave her some hope and confidence. I applaud T's endurance in her problem and for sharing her experiences with the group. Her effort supports the claim that "There is nothing that would effectively help one to survive even the worse conditions as the knowledge that there is still a meaning in one's life' (Frankl, 2006, pp. 103-4). T still sees meaningfulness in life irrespective of her disappointments.

e) The Family System's Theory (Genogram)

For Murray Bowen, people who are biologically or emotionally related tend to respond to one another in certain emotional patterns. This view appears to underline the issues in the case #3. From the content of the case, P's husband is dealing with an emotional issue that effects P herself. P is afraid that her husband may end up alcoholic or drug addict. Though the case is discussed by the group in the absence of P's husband, my plan is to involve P's husband in future discussions on the issue. Part of my strategy will be to use family genogram as a tool. This will help me to find out how the past generations of his family have contributed to his present problems. It will equally enable me to get valuable information about the various generations of his family in terms of the dates that certain events might have taken place in the lives of such generations. His family genogram will include his nuclear and the extended family members, what kind of relationships that existed among them, whether the generational lines were well

differentiated or fused, and whether they had emotional reactivity that might have led to distancing, separations and cutoffs among them, and whether there were critical conflicts among the members in the family.

### 5.3 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THIS PROJECT TO THE MINISTRY IN A WIDER CONTEXT

This project is originally intended to complement pastoral ministries in various ways, especially among the Igbo immigrants (in the Westchester county), and other immigrants from Africa and elsewhere who live in the United States of America and beyond. This project is thus designed to:

(a) Encourage the Igbo People Towards Counseling Therapy: Lee Wander observes that "Unlike any other ethnic group that migrated to the United States, most African Americans had ancestors who were brought to the country against their will, as slaves" (1990, p. 74). This observation reiterates the fact that the over four hundred years of slavery not only casts a long shadow of dehumanization, but mistrust that runs deep in the psyche and soul of the people of Africa and the entire black race. The legacy of slavery and realities of the present day racism and discrimination in the United States of America has equally encouraged lack of trust and/ or negative attitudes the Igbo (Africans) have towards professional counseling. Due to these reasons, there has been an apparent sense of apathy by the Igbo persons who rather than leverage the fruits of professional counseling, have often times shown preference for Christian prayer ministries, consultation with catholic priests, ministers of Christian churches or even

spiritualists for emotional spiritual help. The number five vignette in the chapter four of this project substantiates this claim. In my discussions with the group, I purposely involve various clinical principles to sensitize the people on the importance of professional counseling. There is no doubt that my meetings with the group serve as a wakeup call for those of them who still entertain doubts about involving themselves in counseling relationships.

(b) Come Together: I use the eight weeks of my meetings with the group as a preview for future gathering of the rest of the Igbo immigrants in the Westchester county. I believe that coming together will provide attachment and sense of security, or social integration and friendship for them. I also think that the attempt will nurture positive sense of worth and encourage reliable alliance and dependable assistance among the people. I see this project as something that will help all the Igbo immigrants not only in the Westchester county to have a sustainable group to hold themselves together from time to time; pray and worship in the native manner they have been brought up. Hodge observes that, 'togetherness is associated with levels of empowerment, realization of personal strengths, coping ability, self confidence, lovability, and sense of belonging' (2003, p. 24). In such a gathering, the priests of the Igbo extraction will be on hand to assist in ministering the sacraments (confessions and Holy Eucharist) to the people.

(c) Seek Higher Aspiration To Holiness Through Organized Retreats: This project advocates for an authentic spirituality through group retreats. Through organized retreats, people will be inspired to pursue happiness and holiness for better state of mind. The fruits of such endeavors will uniquely encourage love, tolerance and forgiveness. The second Vatican council already calls for holiness of life through retreats by saying, let all of them see that they direct their affections rightly, lest they be hindered in their pursuit of perfect love by the use of worldly things and by an adherence to riches which is contrary to the spirit of evangelical poverty, following the apostles advice (LG #41).

#### 5.4 IMPLICATIONS OF THE PROJECT FOR FUTURE MINISTRY

This project has 2 point plans for future ministry: Spiritual vitality and Praxis oriented ministry.

(a) Spiritual Vitality Through Seven Sacraments: Since most Christian denominations, especially the Catholic Church believe in the seven Sacraments: Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Holy Orders, Anointing of the Sick and Matrimony, this project is inclined toward spiritual vitality for people as part of future ministry. The project hopes to integrate both clinical and sacramental aspects in bringing succor to the people. Let me take a brief moment to expatiate on this.

The essence of the sacrament of Baptism is for regeneration and inclusion of an individual as a member in the family of God, the Church. In the context of future ministry of this project, Baptism will imply using clinical and spiritual principles to assist

individuals. In a wider sense, it means restoration of 'human dignity'; enabling people to be in touch with their true sense of self.

The sacrament of Confirmation in the same context will signify 'the will power': restoration of confidence, and empowerment of individuals. Individuals will be encouraged to make good decisions and choices in the present, trusting themselves as they embrace the future with great optimism.

The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist will imbue people with 'passion and strength'. It will endow people with the zeal for emotional freedom, peace and holy longing. The essence of this is to instill the feeling of calmness and liberation from fear that one lives far from God. It will encourage and strengthen people's relationship with God and themselves.

The Sacrament of Penance will mean 'passion for holiness'. Penance in this context will encourage people to develop the zeal to reconcile with the part of self that is emotionally wounded. It will encourage reawakening of 'divine passion' in people's heart. The sacrament of the Holy Orders will mean zest for true empathy '*cumpassio*'; encouraging people to reach out to others and be there for others; showing love to them both in good and in painful moments of their lives regardless of one's own difficulties.

The Holy anointing will mean 'self healing', identifying with part of Self which is yearning for emotional wholeness. It will also mean the eagerness to discover ways that could lead someone from spiritual dryness to spiritual wellness.

The Sacrament of matrimony will mean 'passion for sanctity of life'. The project will use this to encourage people to identify with what gives meaning to human life (appreciation of the meaning that life holds) even in its most discomforting situations; greater awareness to do the things that will promote a healthy living.

(b) Praxis Oriented Ministry: With the feedbacks I got from the members of the group, I started thinking about praxis oriented ministry. By praxis oriented ministry, I mean, bringing help that people need in a vital concrete manner. The ministry will require using theoretical principles to elicit hidden agendas from people, i.e., sharing with people 'what has been dismissed, hopes and shame alike' (Dittes, 1999, p. 57). In this type of ministry, the facilitator will have some commitments with the people in order to feel deeply with each individual, helping them arrive at the best possible life's options. Praxis oriented ministry in this context is slightly different from the togetherness forum I discussed above.

The difference in the two is that while the former will bring people together to pray, the later will enable the leader or the facilitator to be emotionally engaged with the people and be close to their feelings. The essence of this ministry is to meet everyone where they are in their problems; connect with their doubts, fears, frustrations, and be able to explore what each person brings to the table and share hard experiences in a positive way.

## EVALUATION AND CONCLUSION

I noted at the beginning of this project that no one has conducted a research of this nature on the Igbo immigrants in the Westchester county of New York. I equally indicated that my interest on the subject matter had been aroused by a number of factors: the phone calls I had received from most of the immigrants itching to discuss their spiritual problems; and secondly, their constant request for prayers in this regard. For these reasons, I had thought that the best way to deal with some of the problems they had raised would be to conduct a research in order to know what issues underline such problems, and to find ways to address the issues. I was convinced that designing a handy project of this nature would be difficult.

My initial fears were how to form a feasible research group, and where to get a nice venue to hold the group. Thus, I was overwhelmed by conflicting minds. As Corey and Corey (2006) observe, "Those who are just beginning groups typically ask themselves, will I be able to get group started? How? What techniques should I use? What if I like some people more than others? What if I make mistakes? Can I cause some serious psychological harm? Should I share my anxiety with the group?" (p. 27) and etc. Besides, I was preoccupied with how I would arrange the venue if I got one; how would the sessions unfold, and would I get enough information that I needed to make the project worthwhile. Getting the church hall as a venue for eight consecutive weeks was not going to be easy. In my parish of residence, to make use of the parish hall, one would be required to pay a handsome amount of money. Nonetheless, my dialogue with the pastor of the church on the intended project was very helpful. I was

able to get him to waive a reasonable amount of money for me to use the hall for that lengthy period.

I was equally concerned about how to fund the project. I later readjusted few things in my budget about the project. I had plans to lift the participants who would need a ride back to their destinations after sessions, and was lucky that four group members came with their own cars and helped in this regard. Contrary to my fears about how the members of the group might react to each other, people were eager to listen and tolerated one another. Group members were ready to assist in whichever ways they were needed. The first people to enter the meeting place helped in cleaning and arranging the seats. Others volunteered in getting some snacks and beverages that we used for refreshments.

The group was pleasant and cohesive. Members were unified. In general, group members tried to be open and be influenced by other members. Some showed more enthusiasm to listen to others and were more accepting of others. Some members testified that they experienced relief from tension in the group. Other members were readily available to help out with the spontaneous prayers during the meditation in the sessions. Still, some were eager to influence others by actively participating in the discussions. All this supports Yalom's claim that a process group is cohesive due to 'certain factors supporting its attainment' (2005, p. 68). There was no anxious presence during the discussions except for reserved kind of mood that prevailed in the first and

second sessions. By the third session, the majority of the group members was already relaxed.

The survey questions that I used in the project were based on substantive assessment model of Elizabeth McSherry, sampled by Fittchett (2002, p. 40). The model appealed to me because it fits into the narratives of this project. It is based on three point approach – ‘*what*’, ‘*when*’ and ‘*how*’- what mattered to an individual, when and how it mattered to the person. The individual cases shared in the group were sensitive and poignant. I relished the adduced clinical and religious principles in facilitating the discussions in the group.

The reader may probably observe that some issues that came up in the group like health, dream, forgiveness, ghost, dissociation were not given a maximum consideration in the project. The reason is that they were not the main focus of this project. They were unanticipated issues that came up in the process of developing the project. Thus, they had been omitted to be gradually expanded in the future ministry of this work as the project continues to unfold. The project had tried to address the specific needs that the people have, by attenuating fears and guilt from clinical religious lenses. In helping the people deal with the issue of guilt and shame they were encouraged to seek for the assistance of therapists and or pastoral counselors. They are reminded to bear in mind that “they are not bad, or unlovable, or that what happened is not their fault. Healing begins when they can come to see that they are acceptable and loveable. Sometimes what one has to do is take a leap of faith and believe that someone

does care about them” (Silin, 2015). Similarly, the project elicited and mollified feelings. It suggested a number of ways to help reenergize people’s resilient spirit (*‘chi’*) as has been underscored in the first chapter of the project. In doing this, the project has tried to blend both theory and practice. With all this, I believe that the project may have achieved to some extent its desired objectives.

Above and beyond, I felt that some theological and clinical themes that developed in the project such as powerlessness and loss (and my personal experiences as an immigrant from Igbo land) are important, hence, have been given an immediate attention in the enlisted addendum below. Similarly, certain measures that I took since the end of the research group have been included as well in the appendix section of this project.

#### ADDENDUM

##### (A) Powerlessness and Loss

I see these themes as dominant theological issues, hence, have decided to give them a brief attention in this part of the project. Powerlessness is related to anxiety that the people have. It is a contributing factor to the fears that people entertain with regard to the uncertainty of the future. As members of the group share their ideas, I start to feel that no matter the level of human wisdom, skills or knowledge, human beings still remain powerless in some ways. Some of the immigrants leave the impression that their world is crumbling apart, and nothing seems to making sense any more. These are signs of how overwhelmed and helpless they feel. Larry Wilson (2012) once observed that,

powerlessness brings upon individuals an overwhelming pain that sometimes the feeling is that there is no way out.

Working closely with the research group, I felt the anxieties of the people and shared their feelings. Pondering on the idea of powerlessness, I ask myself if there is any way powerlessness can be empowered. As I noted earlier in this project, Christian faith upholds that humans are God's body, and God is their soul. God made humans in His own image and allowed His Son –Jesus Christ - to die for their sakes. For inexplicable reasons, God always identifies closely with individuals in their powerlessness, that their ordeal becomes that of God. God replaces people's despondency with hopefulness.

The immigrants demonstrate their faith in God. As Christians, they share the belief that Jesus Christ manifested by his death the sublimity of love in suffering, and that through his suffering and death, Jesus invites all who suffer to emulate him. John Paul II once stated, Jesus Christ had asked his disciples: 'Follow me! and I will give you rest'. This has become an invitation for humans to surrender their powerlessness to God who comforts and reinvigorates them. Thus, 'man finds in suffering peace and joy' (Salvifici Doloris, 1984, #27). The paradox here is that powerlessness empowers when people succumb to the 'Greater Presence', the divine light, the vital principle of life. In this theological leaning lies the fact that one has to accept that being powerless is ok. Only with resignation to God's will in moments of powerlessness will these people freely enjoy the moments as they come.

I noted in the chapter four that the issue of loss appeared critical for members of the group. The bereavement of someone related to a group member is a reminder that death is not far from anyone. The phenomenon of death “upsets our illusion that we live in an orderly world. If we can find someone or something to blame, we can continue to avoid the fact that life is uncertain and precarious” (Wicks p. 560). Kennedy and Sara Charles (1977) would argue that the glories of human beings are measured in the impact of their loss. One going through the trauma of loss may try to push the possibility of it to the far edge of consciousness, only to rehearse it in small ways all the time. The effects of loss often show up in minutes but significant fashions like, misunderstandings, rejections, postponement, defeats so personal that we hardly admit them to ourselves. The trauma that death brings leads to pain. People grieve or mourn due to the bond and affinity of love between them and the dead. As it is, faith plays a vital role in the loss and grief. Even in loss and grief, one who mourns, believes in continuous interaction with the dead. Hence, “For the person of faith, grieving is a process in which a belief system significantly challenged or altered by loss is restored.” (Mitchell and Anderson, 1983, pp. 96-7). As believers in Christ, the research group members were reminded that although death may bring a devastating emotional stress, that Christ is with them. Death, therefore, leads to resurrection and eternal happiness. I reminded the group (that when faced by powerlessness, and when life appears meaningless due to loss and grief) not to ask why do we suffer, but who suffers with us? It is only by asking a good question in moments like that they will realize how close God is with and for them.

## (B) My Experiences As An Immigrant

I grew up as an Igbo person in the Eastern part of Nigeria - in an environment in which things get done commonly by the citizenry. People are affiliated to various social-cultural groups and have common bond in many respects. Religion and morals form the basis of life. It is virtually a taboo for someone not to be attached to one socio-cultural religious group or another. For instance, at the age of eight, I was an altar-boy. I belonged to other church organizations too. Young men and women get so much help from socio-cultural and religious groups. The activities of the organizations in which I enlisted were so helpful in nurturing my emotional spiritual wellbeing growing into an adult.

In the foreign land, the socio cultural groups are almost nonexistent. Where they exist, they project other obstacles which make it tricky for a foreigner to cope with. The system of life tends to focus more on individual's effort rather than group's. Surface this to say, "U.S. culture and society is based on the concept of individualism and that competition between individuals for status, recognition, achievement, and so forth, forms the basis for western tradition. Individualism, autonomy and the ability to become your own person are perceived as healthy and desirable goals" (Sue and Sue, 1999, pp 62-63). My observation as an immigrant in the U.S. is that extended family values are not so much encouraged. Language or manner of verbal expression is entirely different. There is a sharp distinction in the way of dressing, food culture, and weather conditions.

In the home land, cultural giving is homogenous, but in the foreign land, most things are multifaceted and multicultural. The system appeared confusing and uncomfortable for me initially, especially in terms of relating with people and in understanding the way things were done. I remember vividly how I had been asked by my pastor to celebrate Holy Masses for the people on Sundays and weekdays. No sooner did I begin to do the Masses than things took a dramatic change. Members of the parish were not in tune with my accent. People did not hide their feelings in making remarks about it. I was disappointed. I had to enroll in the accent reduction program even as I struggled to keep up with time in doing class assignments for my master's degree.

Indeed, my early years of stay in the US was filled with emotional trauma. This collaborates Mongabay's observation about immigration and culture shock. "What previously seemed exciting, new and challenging is now merely frustrating. I feel isolated and become withdrawn from life around me, start to seek security in the familiar food from home, even what I never particularly enjoyed, becomes a focus" ('Overcoming Culture Shock in the United States', 2015). To stay above the fray, I joined the Igbo group in the nearby county, which gather to celebrate Holy Mass and do certain things in the native way every once in a while. My affiliation with the group not only boosted my confidence, but gave me an opportunity to socialize and integrate more with common folks. My initial experiences though very frustrating turned out to

be blessings in disguise. They became positive strengths for me in terms of listening and helping other immigrants both from my home land and other places.

## APPENDIX

### (A) PRAYER SERVICE

On May 4, 2014, I organized a prayer service for the Igbo immigrants. I intended to use the program to find how the immigrants would respond to the issue of forming for them a sustainable group. It was a two hour prayer program. I invited three Igbo priests from a nearby county to come and assist me. At the beginning of the service, the pastor of the parish met and welcomed the people in the church. I subsequently introduced the service with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament (the Catholic tradition of encouraging the faithful to stay and pray in silence before the consecrated host exposed in a monstrance placed at the center of the altar). Some people chose to sit while others knelt down during the adoration. Hymns were sung intermittently in English and in the native language. Tunes were accompanied with local drums and other native instruments. The adoration was followed by 'Stations of the Cross' in the church. People had private confessions with the priests. Holy Mass was celebrated after the confessions (the sacrament of Penance). On the whole, it was edifying. 56 people were in attendance. Some non Igbo immigrants within the county (and from other parts of Africa) participated in the event. There was a unanimous decision by the participants to continue the prayer service. Third Sunday of the month, 5pm, was accepted by all.

(B)THE FLYERS

Invitation To Participate In A Project

Igbo Immigrants living in the Westchester County of New York are invited to be

Part of a research group that will last from

February to April 2014.

The interview for the interested individuals will hold on Monday Feb. 10, 2014.

Time: 4 pm.

Venue: Sacred Heart Church Hall at 115 South 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Mt. Vernon, New York.

Please Note:

- (a) People have the freedom not to participate in the project group. It is therefore not mandatory for anyone.
- (b) People will be at liberty to share or not to share in the intended outcome.
- (c) The project will be based on emotional experiences and spiritual difficulties Igbo immigrants in the Westchester county think they have.

(Please help to extend this information to every Igbo immigrant in the County).

Thanks in advance.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Rev. Father Benjamin Uzuegbunam.

(C) SAMPLING QUESTIONS USED FOR THE PROJECT

The following (three) questions were given to the Igbo immigrants in the  
Westchester County to model their opinions.

i Name ----- (Optional)

ii. Please mark your age bracket with an X from the following:

20 - 50 years [ ] 51-70 years [ ] 71 years and above [ ].

Answer these three questions by selecting from the following the answer that appeals  
to you most.

What is the most important thing in your life?

1. What is the most important thing in your life?

(a) Health (b) Wisdom (c) Faith

2. What things occupy your attention during most hours of the day?

(a) Religion (b) Friends (c) Job

3. How would you rate your emotional feeling in dealing with people who have  
no faith in God or in any religion?

(a) Angry (a) Sad (c) Worried

(This section was given to the project group members at the first meeting  
of the group to sample their opinions).

Choose one of the following in answering questions 1-3:

(a) Strongly agree (b) Agree (c) Disagree (d) Strongly disagree (e) Neutral

1. Faith or spirituality plays a vital role in my life as a person.
2. When involved in a depressive anxiety I turn to God and religion.
3. I don't get spiritual strength from my Christian community due to unwarranted discrimination against certain people.
4. What is the biggest stressor you are dealing with now?  
(a) Guilt, (b) Sadness (c) Depressed anxiety.

(This section was given to the project group members at the last meeting  
to sample their opinions).

1. How would you rate your feelings after the eight weeks of the group?  
(a) Depressed (b) Guilty (c) Still sad (d) Very optimistic (e) Neutral
2. Forming a group that will meet and pray periodically will be helpful to the Igbo immigrants both emotionally and spiritually.  
(a) True (b) Somehow true (c) Not sure.

(D) THE PROGRAM FOR PRAYER SERVICE

The Program For Prayer Service Conducted For The Igbo Immigrants In

Westchester County At Sacred Heart Catholic Church,

Mt. Vernon, New York On May 4, 2014.

Time 5.00 P. M

(1) Arrival of people at the venue for the prayer event:

(a) Private prayers in the church

(b) Meditational tunes

(2) Welcoming and introduction of the program by the Pastor of the church

(3) Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

(4) Conversation with the Lord in silence

(5) More Tunes with instruments

(6) Scriptural Rosary and the Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary

(8) Stations of the Cross

(9) Individual Confessions(Sacrament of Penance)

(11) Celebration of Holy Eucharist (The Holy Mass)

(12) Burning of the petitions

(13) Final blessing

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