

# **RELIGIOUS STUDIES TEXTBOOK**

**STUDENT TEACHER'S BOOK**

FOR TTC

## **YEAR 3**

**SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION**

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## FORWORD

Dear Student-teachers,

Rwanda Education Board is honoured to present the Religious Education textbook for Year III for Social Studies Education Option. It was designed based on the revised curriculum to support its implementation. The book will help you not only to acquire basic knowledge concerning beliefs and religions in the world but also to develop skills and appropriate attitudes and values such as empathy, reflective expression, commitment, fairness, self-control, self-esteem, accountability that help you to take well reasoned and sound decisions in everyday life. Furthermore, this book is important tool for effectively implement the Competence-Based Curriculum in Pre-primary and Primary schools. Religious Education textbook equips you with competences to meet teaching profession standards that are: teacher as educator, communicator and connector, guide, organizer and facilitator, innovator, researcher and reflective practitioner.

The textbook is made of four units of various religious beliefs and practices in the world. Each unit starts with a key unit competence which represents abilities you are expecting to have by the end of the unit. This competence will be built progressively throughout the unit. The key unit competence is followed by an introductory activity that you are requested to attempt before any other contact with the content under the unit. The unit is then broken down into different subtopics to help you to go step by step. Each subtopic starts with an activity in which you are requested to engage through research, classroom visit, group discussions, presentations, brainstorming, interpretation of illustrations, etc. The content that follows each subtopic is a summary that gives you clear definitions of concepts, explanations to complement what you have acquired through learning activities. At the end of each unit there are assessment tasks/ activities that give you an opportunity to demonstrate the level of achievement of the key unit competence.

You are therefore encouraged to always work out introductory and learning activities before reading the provided content to develop cooperation, communication, critical thinking, innovation, problem solving, and research skills. You are also advised to do research to enrich information provided under each topic.

Enjoy learning Religious Education using your book!

**Dr. NDAYAMBAJE Irénée**  
**Director General of REB**

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to sincerely extend my special appreciation to the people who played a major role in development of this Religious Education Textbook for Social studies Education option. It would not have been successful without the participation of different education stakeholders that I would like to express my deep gratitude.

My thanks first go to the Rwanda Education Board staffs who were involved in the conception and writing of this Religious Education Textbook. I wish to extend my appreciation to teachers from secondary to university level whose efforts during conception were much valuable.

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**Joan MURUNGI,**  
**Head of Curriculum Teaching and Learning Resources Department**

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# UNIT 1

## RELIGIOUS TEACHING OF NON-THEISTIC AND POLYTHEISTIC BELIEFS

### Key Unit competence:

Appraise the moral and social values from the teachings of non-theistic beliefs.



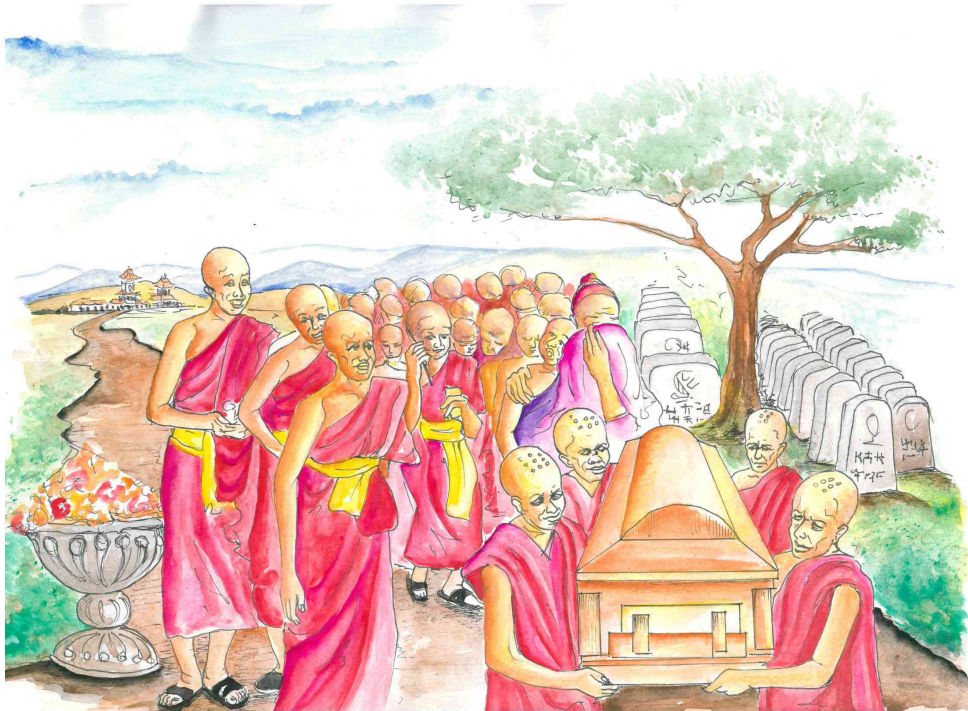
### Introductory activity 1

Read the case study below which describes an event in the life of Gandhi, a follower of one of the Asian religions:

Children loved visiting Gandhi. A little boy who was there one day, was greatly distressed to see the way Gandhi was dressed. Such a great man yet he doesn't even wear a shirt, he wondered. "Why don't you wear a kurta, Gandhi?" the little boy couldn't help asking finally. "Where's the money, son?" Gandhi asked gently. "I am very poor. I can't afford a kurta." The boy's heart was filled with pity. "My mother sews well", he said. "She makes all my clothes. I'll ask her to sew a Kurta for you." "How many Kurtas can your mother make?" Gandhi asked. "How many do you need?" asked the boy. "One, two, three.... she'll make as many as you want." Gandhi thought for a moment. Then he said, "But I am not alone, son. It wouldn't be right for me to be the only one to wear a kurta." "How many Kurtas do you need?" the boy persisted. "I'll ask my mother to make as many as you want. Just tell me how many you need." "I have a very large family, son. I have forty crore brothers and sisters," Gandhi explained. "Till every one of them has a kurta, how can I wear one? Tell me, can your mother make kurtas for all of them? At this question the boy became very thoughtful. Forty crore brothers and sisters! Gandhi was right. Till every one of them had a kurta to wear how could he wear one himself? After all the whole nation was Gandhi's family, and he was the head of that family. He was their friend, their companion. What use would one kurta be to him? Source: Uma Shankar Joshi, Inspiring Stories from Gandhi's Life on <https://www.mkgandhi.org/students/story.htm>

1. What lessons do you think the people could learn from this story?
2. How can an example set so long ago still be relevant today?

## 1.1 Buddhism



### Learning activity 1.1



1. Describe the image above.
2. Find as many as possible problems which can be associated to the image.
3. Find as many as possible questions human beings can ask themselves about the image and answers they try to give themselves.

### 1.1.1 Origin of Buddhism

Buddhism was founded as a way to end suffering. Its founder, Siddarta Gautama, began his search in response to suffering; he wanted to find a way to live a life of happiness, wisdom, compassion, joy and equanimity. It is worth of noting that these values are taught about only in theistic religions, such as Christianity and Islam; non-theistic religions, including Buddhism also hold them. In fact, Buddhism does not centre around the veneration of one person, human or divine. Buddha, from which the term “Buddhism” derives, is not a god, nor a god-sent mediator; he is not even considered as someone who can



act as a savior or redeemer for others. Buddhism traces its origins to India in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Before the Common Era/Before Christian Era) and the experience of the man, called Siddharta Gautama, who came to be called the Buddha.

### The founder: Birth and context of growth

Siddharta was born in about 560 BCE in a village called Lumbini, near the modern border between India and Nepal. As is common with the founder of a religion, all sorts of legends have grown up around Siddhartha's birth. However, there is today no doubt that the 'historical' Buddha, founder of Buddhism, actually lived. He was born of King Shuddhodanna and Queen Maya, his wife. The Buddhist literature says that it had once been prophesied to Siddhartha's parents that their son would become either a great ruler or a homeless itinerant (homeless/vagrant/wanderer). In order to protect Siddharta from the second and ensure the first, his father brought him up as a prince in the greatest luxury and splendid and sheltered him from pain or ugliness so that he would not experience suffering. The prince also married a girl called Gopa or Yashodara and had a unique son, whom he called Rahula, which means 'chain', for in the midst of all this luxury he felt as if he were in chains. Life gave him no satisfaction, and at 29 years of age he decided to leave and become homeless (R. Pierce Beaver et alii, *The World's Religions*, Lion Publishing, Oxford, 1992, p. 223).

### The founder: journeys and experiences

When Siddharta decided leave his family and riches, he opened himself up to the great awakening through four journeys. The latter allowed him to experience life's realities in a way which he had never known before. On the three first journeys, he saw the suffering of the world in three forms: a frail **old man**, a very **sick man** racked with pain (**a sick man**), and a **dead man** whose body was escorted by weeping mourners. To the question of the meaning of sorrow, poverty and misery he had just seen, Siddharta was answered that suffering is merely the common fate of all mankind; deeply troubled, he returned back to his family. However, he has become aware of human suffering.

On his fourth journey, Siddharta met a traveling and mendicant monk, though contended and joyful. This journey was decisive; it showed him that all life's pleasures and attractions are vain and worthless. From that standpoint, he began to seek for true knowledge (R. Pierce Beaver et alii, *The World's Religions*, Lion Publishing, Oxford, 1992, p. 224).

## From Hinduism to Buddhism (Enlightenment)

When Siddharta left his home for good (on the fourth journey), it was an attempt to find the true knowledge, the truth by which people are set free from suffering and death. He sought this truth through Hinduism for a while, living the homeless life as a proper method for earnest seekers after spiritual truth and reality. He took instruction from teachers, undertook yoga exercises, and lived in extreme self-denial and discipline until he lived the point of starvation. However, he did not fully accept Hinduism because its rigid practices were not bringing about the way out of suffering and death.



*A Buddhist under a mango tree meditating*

In fact, at the age of 35, Siddharta came to realise that death would bring him no closer to true knowledge, and that severe ascetism was not the right way to set people free from the cycle of death and rebirths. He had realised that external treatments were no use; what was needed was wisdom to understand reality and compassion to overcome greed for life. Henceforth, he abandoned his strict life-style and resolved to direct all his energies to achieving holiness by meditation. He entered a deep mediation beneath a fig-tree, which came to be called 'the tree of enlightenment' or *bodhi*-tree. He sat for 49 days of meditation after which he believed he finally reached enlightenment as he has come to understand causes and cure of suffering (David B. Kopel. 2007., "Self-defense in Asian Religions" in *Liberty University Law Review*, Vol. 2: 79, p.120). His enlightenment had three stages:

- **First stage:** he saw his previous lives passed before him.
- **Second stage:** he saw with a supernatural insight the cycle of birth, death and rebirth and recognized the laws that governs it.
- **Third stage:** the four holy truths were revealed to him: the knowledge of suffering, the source of suffering, the removal of suffering and the way to the removal of suffering.

It is only after these three stages that, Siddharta Gautama became known as "Buddha". Buddha is a title of honour meaning "the Enlightened One", "the Awakened One". This title became attached to his name in much the same way that the title 'Christ' became attached to the name of Jesus. At this level, he was in a state of complete redemption and could have entered *nirvana*, the Buddhist heaven, at once.

### **Beginning, growth and expansion of Buddhism**

All the events of Siddharta Gautama's life – luxurious life, being locked within palace walls, journeys and awareness of suffering, fasting and meditation, etc. – lead him to enlightenment which provided the basic inspiration upon which Buddhism religion and all '*Sangha*' (the Buddhist communities) have been built.

After his experience of enlightenment, Buddha (Siddharta Gautama) travelled about India for about 44 years, living as a beggar-monk and teaching monks, disciples, and laypeople. He quickly won disciples who followed him into the homeless life and missionary service. The way of life of this first Buddhist community may be characterized as meditative, mendicant and missionary. They were in effect a missionary order fully devoted to proclaiming the liberating truth of *dharma* (Teaching of Buddhism/law/Path) and *nirvana*.

The *Liberty University Law Review* (2007) states, “Siddharta taught for nearly five decades, until about 486 B.C. when he died of food poisoning” (Vol. 2: 79, p. 120) but his followers spread Buddhism from India throughout most of Asia. Eventually, it came to North America and Europe, where it has grown tremendously in the past century. Today, at least six or seven percent of the people on the five continents of the earth follow Buddhism and their number keeps increasing.

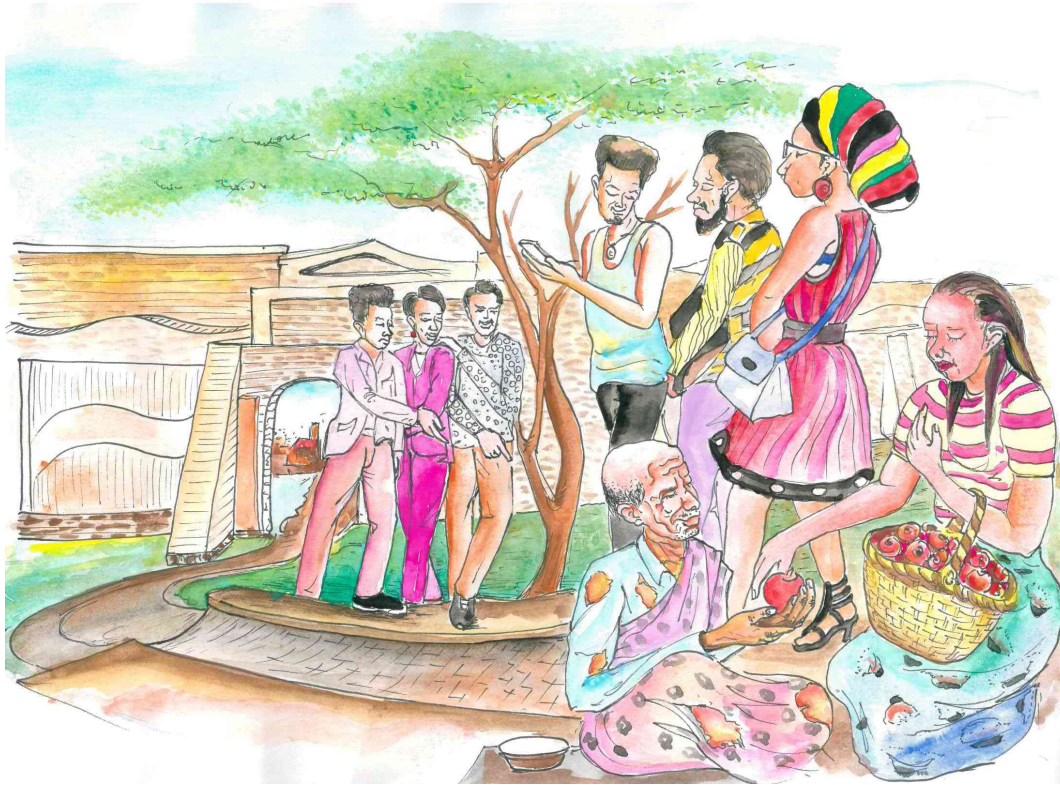
### 1.1.2 Fundamental teachings and Practices of Buddhism

#### A. Fundamental Teachings of Buddhism

The term “Dharma” is used to describe the teachings of Buddhism. The primary source of the Buddhist teachings is the Sutras, that is, the Buddha’s teachings. Note that the Sutras are many sacred texts which are not compiled in one single sacred book like the Bible. The Sutras are the spoken word of the Buddha; which were recorded after his death. The Tripitaka (literally “Three Baskets”) is a substantial collection of the Buddha’s teachings, and is one of the central sacred texts for Buddhists. The Buddhist scriptures are guides for enlightenment, not a legal code like the Qur’an or the Torah.

Buddhism focuses not so much on a set of doctrines as a course of action. It often is explained not as something one believes but as something one does in order to develop both **wisdom** and **compassion**.

- **Wisdom** is to directly see and interpret for oneself and to keep an open mind; to listen to other opinions; to be truthful and reasonable; to have an analytical and objective thinking; always being ready to change one’s beliefs when facts or truth that contradicts them are presented to us.
- **Compassion** is both an attitude and an action. It involves feeling the pain of someone in distress as if it is our own and strive to eliminate or lessen it. Compassion is manifested through the qualities of sharing, readiness to give comfort, showing concern and caring; having a kind heart, being generous and helpful to fellow beings; and respecting all lives while being mindful of one’s actions and words.



In fact, Buddhism is concerned with alleviating suffering through right living and mental, moral and spiritual discipline. In Buddhism, suffering results from three poisons. These are: **craving** (a powerful desire for something), **hatred** and **ignorance** (State of Washington Department of Corrections. 2013. *Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices*. p.15). One is saved from these poisons through a deep understanding of the Four Noble Truths and diligent practice of the Eightfold Path and of the Ten Precepts. There are four key concepts to understand the Buddhist teachings and beliefs.

### Key concepts in Buddhism

#### - Anicca

Anicca (impermanence) is easily observable, everything changes. People grow old and die, seasons change. It is not possible to keep anything static.

#### - Dukkha

Dukkha (suffering) is not the same as pain, sorrow, loss or anything we usually think of as suffering. It refers instead to the discontent we feel when we experience pain, sorrow, loss and so on. Things rarely are exactly to our liking, and when they are, they do not stay that way, since everything is impermanent.

### - Anatta

Anatta (no-self) does not mean our body and sense of self are not real. It means that the ideas we have about them are not the whole picture. This is explained by the fact that the parts of the universe, including human beings, and their individual components are completely interdependent on everything else.

### - Karma or Kamma

Karma is the Buddhist law of **cause** and **effect**. Every action causes some result, which in turn causes some action, which again causes a result. Good actions give to good consequences and evil ones to evil. In the last case, liberation from karma is possible by a reorientation of life.

### - Nirvana

Nirvana is the end of suffering, the goal of Buddhist practice.

### The Four Noble Truths

1. All existence involves suffering (dukkha). Dukkha is universal.
2. Suffering is caused by desire.
3. Suffering can be eliminated by eliminating desire.
4. The eightfold path is the means to eliminate suffering.

### The eightfold path (Middle Way) consists of :

1. Right view/understanding/knowledge: a recognition of the Four Noble Truths.
2. **Right resolve/thoughts/intention:** having a mental attitude of goodwill, peacebleness, keeping far from oneself all sensual desire, hate and malice.
3. **Right speech:** lying, useless chatter and gossip are outlawed, instead speech must be wise, truthfull and directed towards reconciliation.
4. **Right conduct/actions:** embraces all moral behavior. Murder, stealing and adultery are especially prohibited.
5. **Right livelihood/living:** one's way of earning a living must not be harmful to others.
6. **Right effort:** evil impulses must be prevented and ones fostered, so that the individual can develop noble thoughts, words and deeds.
7. **Right mindfulness/awareness:** careful consideration, not giving in to

the dictates of desire in thought, speech, action and emotion.

- 8. Right concentration/meditation** :which frees the holy man from all that holds him back in the quest.

**Note:**

1. The path is usually divided by Buddhist practitioners into three sections: the **wisdom/insight section (1-2)**; the **morality section (3-5)**; the **mental development/spiritual discipline (6-8)**.
2. 4 Noble Truths & 8 Fold Path are the **core beliefs** of Buddhism.
3. Understood the Four Noble Truths + follow the 8 Fold Path = enlightenment & nirvana.
4. Far from any strictness or rigidity, the Eightfold Path is the middle way between a life of self-pleasure and a life of self-denial. The path offers a demanding life-style that is both practical and balanced.
5. Buddhist teachings are rafts; they should be changed or discarded when the truth is reached (Andrew Harvey. 2002. "Foreword", in *Dhammapada* Annotated & Explained xii).

**Precepts**

Buddhist moral understanding is not very different from that of other faiths. The precepts describe the life and actions of a fully enlightened Buddha. It is worth noting that in Buddhism, the precepts are taken in a formal ceremony, again and again, because we continue to make mistakes, they are not easy. The ten cardinal precepts in Buddhism are:

1. Not to kill, but to cherish all life.
2. Not to take what is not given, but to respect the things of others.
3. Not to misuse sexuality, but to be caring and responsible.
4. Not to lie, but to speak the truth.
5. Not to cause others to use substances that confuse the mind, nor to do so oneself, but to keep the mind clear.
6. Not to speak of the misdeeds of others, but to be understanding and sympathetic.
7. Not to praise myself nor disparage others, but to overcome my own shortcomings.
8. Not to withhold spiritual or material aid, but to give them freely where needed.

9. Not to indulge in anger, but to exercise control.
10. Not to revile the Three Treasures: **Buddha, Dharma**, and **Sangha** but to cherish and uphold them.

**Note:**

6. In many Buddhist traditions, the Ten Cardinal Precepts are compressed into first five precepts. The precepts 6-10, in essence, are all encompassed within the fundamental principles expressed in the first five precepts.
7. The tenth precept means to regard all living beings equally, recognizing that all are inherently equal and worthy of respect. Cherishing yourself is equally important to cherishing and upholding the *Sangha*, supporting the people you practice with and all those around you (Princeton Buddhist Students Group, *Buddhism Religious Basics* on <http://www.princeton.edu/~buddhism/old/basics.pdf>)

## B. Religious Practices of Buddhism

With the lack of a centralized Buddhist authority and the huge cultural differences that have been added in over the years, Buddhism can look like it is many faiths, not just one. Nevertheless, Buddhism is divided into two main movements: **Theravada Buddhism** (traditional), the strict and narrow teaching of the ancients, and **Mahayana Buddhism**, more liberal and open to a wider range of ideas (Wulf Metz, "One Goal, Many Paths", in *The World's Religions*, Lion Publishing plc, Oxford, 1992, p.237). Therefore, there are great variations in what is considered to be essential to individual or group practice. However, there are common - or particular to some sects - practices and observances. These include:

### 8. Meditation

Form of prayer, silent meditation is practiced to cultivate mindfulness and attentiveness to the present moment. Meditation is ideally practiced at all times it is not just in a quiet room free from distractions, but while working, washing dishes, running, walking, cleaning, etc. However, regular silent meditation helps to calm and focus the mind and gives strength to apply to daily life.

### 9. Chanting

Form of prayer, sutras (the teachings of the Buddha) are recited by chanting; chants are done in different languages depending on the country. Chants are commonly translated so that people know what they are saying. Often, chanting services are dedicated to those who are suffering, sick, hungry, or otherwise experiencing pain.



## 10. Metta

Another Buddhist practice is metta meditation: loving-kindness meditation, in which loving thoughts are directed first to one's self, then to a benefactor, then to a friend, a neutral person, and finally to an "enemy" (someone we have difficulty with) and then to all living beings.

## 11. Dietary

As in the differences in holidays, different Buddhist communities follow dietary practices based on cultural origin and geographical conditions. For instance, in the West, lay Buddhist practitioners often choose to follow a vegetarian diet, and should be allowed this option. Generally, monks in the monastery are expected to be vegetarian.

## 12. Days, Holidays and festivals

According to *Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices* (2013), Buddhist faith and practice require no work proscription days and fast days. Moreover, Buddhists celebrate several ceremonies and holidays throughout the year. While these may vary according to different lineages or traditions and the dates may change, here are the essential holidays:

- **Vesak:** The Buddha's birth, generally recognized as April 8;
- **The Buddha's Enlightenment:** December 8;
- **The Buddha's Death:** February 13 (again, dates may vary according to tradition). The Buddha's Parinirvana is an extremely important ceremony, and is not regarded as a negative day in Buddhism but rather, was a time of great serenity and joy for the Buddha.
- **Jukai:** Jukai is the formal ceremony of entering the Buddha's Way, or becoming a Buddhist. Jukai consists of a repentance ceremony, chanting, taking the three refuges (in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha), three general resolutions (to avoid evil, to do good and to liberate all sentient beings), and the ten cardinal precepts, stated below.

Buddhists also have ceremonies for the New Year, a Hungry Ghost Ceremony (for those beings who, due to their greed, cannot eat food or drink unless it is offered to them), and Ceremonies of Aid (for ending world hunger, for world peace, and other causes).

## 13. Burial practices

Prayer, incense burning, and chanting take place at intervals following death, those intervals being determined by the tradition. In most Buddhist traditions

cremation is the preferred method of disposal of the remains, as a new vessel will be used for the next incarnation. But cremation or burial should wait until the body has been at repose for a bit, to allow the consciousness time to leave the body (State of Washington Department of Corrections. 2013. *Handbook of Religious Beliefs and Practices*. p.18-19).



### Application activity 1.1

1. Find and write down three key causes of suffering according to Buddhist teachings.
2. Explain the importance of the Four Noble Truths for Buddhists.
3. Buddhism is a non-theistic religion. What the Buddhist prayer is meant for?
4. Buddhist monks are expected to follow a vegetarian diet. Imagine what would be the benefits of this practice if 80 % of your contemporaries could take the example of Buddhist monks with regard to dietary customs?

## 1.2 Confucianism

### Learning activity 1.2



#### Case Study:

Confucius (551-479) is remembered by Chinese of all levels of life for various reasons. One noticeable is his approach to education. He stimulated his students to think by posing question. He also maintained that the molding of the personality was of prime importance in education, and everything else followed from this. Thus, if the tales told after him have any truth in them, he tailored his methods to each student's needs.

His teaching style was more in the way of informal conversations than formal classes (...). Altogether at one time or another some 3000 young men came to study under him. The 72 who were the brightest and spent the most time with him came to be known as his disciples (...). Most devoted among them was Zi Lu, by nature rather brash and very courageous but lacking in tactics. Confucius warned him more than once to use caution.

One story goes that Zi Lu asked Confucius, “If you were to lead an army, who would you take to the battlefield?” Confucius’ reply was: “I would certainly not take anyone who dreamed of killing a tiger bareheaded. Neither would I take anyone who behaved rashly and wanted to cross a river without any preparation. I would take with someone cool-headed and prudent”

Source: *Stories about Confucius* on <http://www.dankalia.com/literature/kungfutz/chn050.htm>

1. What the current education systems could learn from the above scenario?
2. Do you agree with Confucius on the answer he gave his disciple? Explain your answer.

Confucianism is looked on by some as a mere philosophy, or simply as a guide for social and political life, and not as a religion. Nevertheless, Confucianism is ranked among world’s religions. One of the reasons (not only one) for calling Confucianism a religious tradition is the importance of the term “Heaven” (tian). “Heaven” has a range of meanings – such as the realm of the heavenly bodies (sun, moon, planets, stars), the realm of gods and ancestors - but Confucians understand Heaven to be the absolute reality, the ultimate moral authority, and the source of human virtue and the explanation for whatever is beyond human control, for example events that we might attribute either to chance or to necessity, such as the family one is born into or the fact that we must all die (Adler 2012, p. 4). In many respects Heaven is a functional equivalent of the Biblical god. So, even though the Confucian “god” (heaven) is impersonal and does not speak to people, Confucianism is approached in this unit from the religious perspective.

### **1.2.1 Origin of Confucianism**

Confucianism is traced back to the thoughts expressed by a certain Confucius in the 6<sup>th</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> Before Common Era (BCE). The latter lived about from 551 to 479 BCE in the State of Lu (now Shandong or Shantung). After his professional experience along with the Prince of Lu and travels around China, he founded his own school so as to provide students with the teachings of the ancients.

In fact, Confucianism existed even before Confucius. In fact, it should not be traced back to the ideas or experiences of an individual as it is for Buddhism, Islam or Christianity, but to moral, ethical, social, intellectual, political, religious teachings of the ancestors. Confucius himself considered as a transmitter who knowingly tried to re-visit and value the old in order to attain the new. Confucius

was strongly convinced that the past holds the roots of the present and future life. This conviction led Confucius to the love of the history and culture and nourished the desire to understand why certain life forms and institutions, such as reverence for ancestors, human-centred religious practices, and mourning ceremonies, had survived for centuries. In fact, it is this sense of history and the awareness of the importance of culture in finding out sustainable solutions to the humanity's deepest needs that inspire Confucius to establish a school. The mission of his school was nothing else but ensuring the continuity of the cultural values and social norms.

It was while he was teaching that he started to write. His write included,

- The Book of Odes (poetry)
- The Book of Documents (poetry)
- The Book of Changes (treatises on divination)
- The Spring and Autumn Annals (History of Lu)

None of these works outlined Confucius' philosophy. Rather his thoughts are found from second-hand writings which became the major sources of the Confucian thought. These include: Analects (the most reliable source of Confucianism); Mencius; Great learning and Mean. Through these texts, Confucianism became the official state religion of China from the second century right up to the present day.

Note

Confucianism is essentially based on mutual respect and kindness towards others. It was developed to bring peace and stability in society. It was founded before the birth of Confucius and developed through his later life.

## ***1.2.2 Fundamental teachings and Practices of Confucianism***

### **A. Fundamental Teachings of Confucianism**

Confucianism is more concerned with social fulfillment than with spiritual fulfillment and afterlife as it is in Hinduism for example. This influences the Confucian teachings, ethics and practices. Emphasis is put less on rituals, deities or the divine than on relationships, duties, values and virtues.

In fact, Confucius did not give his followers a god or gods to be worshiped. This is not because the Confucianism is not against worship but because it essentially believes that social duties are more important. The focus is on the

following three elements:

- **Ethical behavior**
- **Good governance**
- **Social responsibility**

Thus, Confucianism isn't a creed; it also has no many of the conventions and doctrines of a religion. Also, there are neither monks nor priests or religious leaders.



*The parents giving advice to their children on how to take the right way*

Li is the term to describe Confucian rites and good manners. It refers to the respect to all facets that support good social order. The followers of Confucianism believe that when Li is observed (respect) everything runs smoothly and in its right place. Relationships and virtues are important for a healthy social order and harmony.

**The fundamental relationships in Li are:**

- Father over son;
- Older brother over the younger;
- Husband over wife;
- Ruler over subject;
- Friend is equal to friend.

Relationships are important in Confucianism. They exist at the different levels: family, school, local community, the state and kingdom. Confucius taught that virtue was essential for balancing people and society. He gave out five main relationship principles/virtues:

- **Love within the family (Hsiao):** Examples include love of parents for their children and of children for their parents.
- **Loyalty to the state (Chung):** According to Confucius, broken political institutions are attributed this to unworthy people being in positions of power. He believed rulers were expected to learn self-discipline and lead through example.
- **Righteousness or duty (Yi)** in an ordered society.
- **Honesty and trustworthiness (Xin):** Confucius believed that people were responsible for their actions and treatment of other people.
- **Benevolence and humaneness (Jen) towards others:** It is the highest Confucian virtue and can also be translated as love. This is the goal for which individuals should strive.

These virtues/principles allow an individual to respect the position that s/he has in all relationships. Due honor must be given to those people above and below oneself. This makes for good social order.

### **B. Practices and rituals in Confucianism**

- The respect of elders and ancestors is the most important and is practiced at home, at temples and at the graves of relatives. A common practice includes ancestral tablets and shrines dedicated to deceased elders.
- A Confucian practice shows veneration for the departed through:
  - Visiting their graves at least once a year and cleaning the tombs and adding fresh soil to the surface of the graves;
  - Placing favorite foods and wine of the departed on their graves and burning incense;
  - Kneeling before the dead to show respect.



*Most of other Confucian practices are organized around the main stages of life if every human being: birth, marriage and death.*

#### • **Birth rituals**

- A certain number of birth rituals center on the spirit of the fetus. These are designed to protect an expectant mother.
- The mother is given a special diet and is allowed rest for a month after delivery.
- The mother's family supplies all the items required by the baby on the first, fourth and twelfth monthly anniversaries of the birth.
- Etc.

#### • **Marriage rituals** are conducted in six stages:

- 1) **The proposal:** It can be accepted or rejected.
- 2) **The engagement.** It is manifested through the announcement of the wedding day.
- 3) **The dowry.**
- 4) **Procession:** The groom visits the bride's home and brings her back to his house. The procession is accompanied by a great deal of singing and drum beating.
- 5) **The marriage ceremony and reception:** The couple recite their vows,

toast each other with wine, and then take center stage at a banquet.

**6) The morning after the ceremony:** The bride serves breakfast to the groom's parents, who then reciprocate. This marks the completion of the marriage.

#### • Death rituals

- At the time of death, the relatives cry loudly. This is a way of informing the neighbors. The family begins mourning.
- Mourners bring incense and money to offset the cost of the funeral. Food and significant objects of the deceased are placed in the coffin.
- A Buddhist, Christian, or Taoist priest performs the burial ceremony. Liturgies are performed on the seventh, ninth, and forty-ninth days after the burial.
- Confucianism celebrates different holidays and festivals. These include:
  - The birthday of Confucius, every 28th of September. Celebrations last 10 days;
  - The Chinese New Year, which is on 31st of January;
  - Qing ming. They go to their ancestors' graves and give them offerings;
  - Chongmyo Taeje. It is celebrated on the 1st Sunday in May to honor the kings and queens of the Yi dynasty;
  - Etc.



#### Application activity 1.2

1. Think about the place of history and culture studies in the life of a young man/woman. 'I can't spend my time reading a history book because I have no time to spoil. I need to read about science and technology'. What do you think Confucius would say about this?
2. "Education breeds confidence. Confidence breeds hope. Hope breeds peace" Confucius. Discuss this statement and suggest some practical ways parents, teachers and leaders may be able to help children become peacebuilders and peacemakers in the future.
3. Appreciate each stage of marriage rituals in Confucianism.



## 1.3 Hinduism

### Learning activity 1.3



#### Case study: Gandhi on Hinduism

Gandhi 'believed that every individual is born with definite hereditary tendencies, in a cultural and physical environment and is therefore, capable of development in a particular way. It is futile and unnecessary to ignore the religious heritage with which an individual is born'. In spite of his extensive reading on different religions, his interactions with people from all faiths and his perception of the virtues associated with different religions, Gandhi acknowledged that Hinduism would suit him the best. Though this religion had its own crippling practices and pre-conceived notions, it is the essential ethical virtues and principles as cited in various texts like the Upanishads, Vedas and The Gita that pacified Gandhi the most. A certain author called Datta further states that 'the presence of God in all beings, the love of all creatures, the ethics of self-discipline, and selfless service, leading to liberation' appealed to Gandhi. Gandhi considered Hinduism as not an exclusive religion; he opined that 'there is room for the worship of all prophets of the world in it. It is not a missionary religion.

Hinduism tells everyone to worship God according to faith or dharma, and so lives at peace with all religions'. Gandhi was deeply impressed by its assimilative characteristic and its profound stress on the unity of all beings, which is fundamentally moralistic and spiritualistic in essence. The absolute oneness of all beings and omnipresence of God, in animate and inanimate beings as well represents its universalistic nature. Its insistence on *Ahimsa* towards respect for all living beings, including animals, made a profound impact on Gandhi.

Source: *Gandhi's view on religion* on <http://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/19468/1/Unit-8.pdf> November 4th, 2019

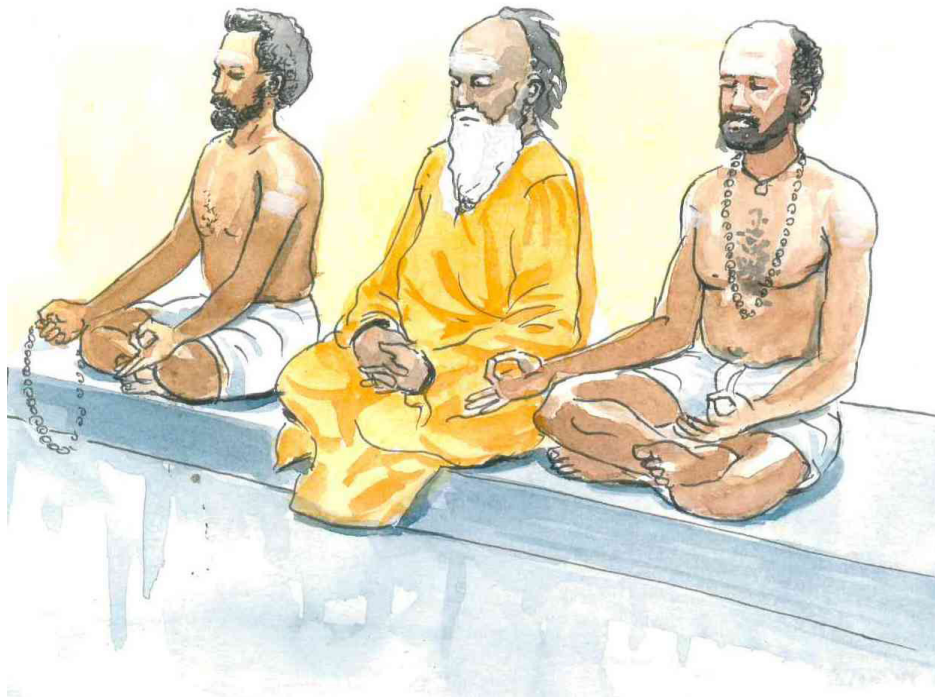
- 1) Choose correct answers among the following statements. Gandhi didn't choose to become a Christian or a Muslims because:
  - a) He hate other religions than Hinduism
  - b) One is born with a religious heritage
  - c) There is no religions but Hinduism
  - d) Hindu teachings suit him the best

- e) Islam and Christianity are monotheistic religions
- 2) What are the appropriate term to mean:
  - a) The presence of God in all beings?
  - b) Belief in many gods?

### **1.3.1 Origins of Hinduism**

Hinduism is the religious tradition of Hindus, that is, the peoples of India or Indians. Indians themselves prefer to call their religious tradition “*sanatana dharma*”, which means ‘eternal religion’ or ‘eternal truth’. By this denomination, Indians indicate the “givenness” or revelatory character of the beliefs that underpin their ways of life. On the other hand, Hinduism should not be understood as a belief system in the sense of Islam and Christianity because it has no historical founder (comparable to Buddha), no prophet (comparable to Muhammad) and no set creed (comparable to the Nicene Creed). The Indians understand Hinduism more as culture than a creed (Radhakrishnan, former President of India). Understood from this perspective, Hinduism is an umbrella which embraces a wide diversity of beliefs. These beliefs existed hundreds of years before the current era. It is worth of noting that the term, ‘Hinduism’ didn’t exist until the late eighteenth/early nineteenth century, when the British coined it to categorize the religious traditions they were encountering in colonial India (Largen 2013, p. 14).

Scholars agree that Hinduism is the oldest living major religious tradition. Indeed, there is no firm date of origin of Hinduism. However, between the year 1500 and 1200 Before Christ (BC) the Aryan (literally ‘noble’) peoples invaded India from the northwest bringing their language and tradition, influencing the older religions, ideas and practices.



*Hindu in Yogic position mediating*

Although, the older Hindu religion seems to have included yoga, renunciation and purification rites – all of which, continue to mark the ‘holy men’ of India – the Aryans appear to have been dominant. For instance, they had an important class of priest who composed hymns to their gods for use at sacrifices. Over the years these hymns were committed to memory and remarkably preserved until in later centuries 1,028 of them were enshrined in writing in the *Rig Veda*, the world’s oldest living religious literature and Hinduism’s most sacred book (State of Washington Department of Correction, p. 36). So Hinduism as we know it today is the mix of the Aryan religion and the beliefs, and practices of the numerous races, ethnic groups and cultures of the Indian sub-continent. This means that there are almost as many versions of Hinduism as there are villages or groups of Hindus.

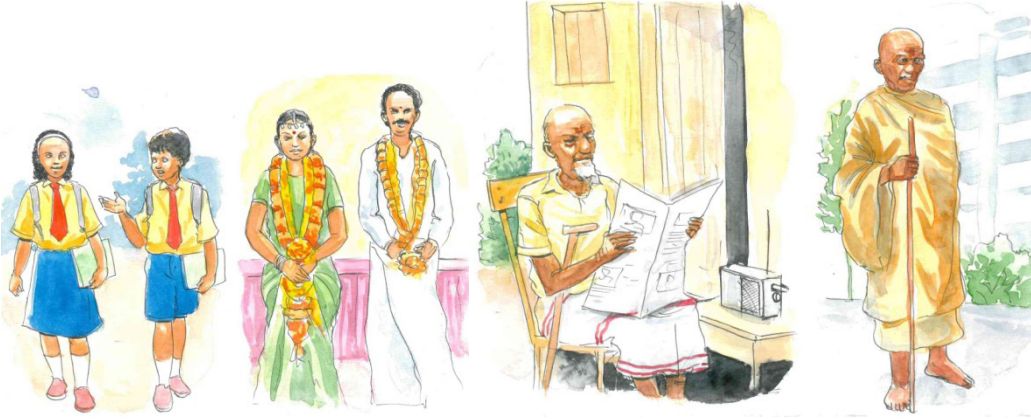
Hinduism has been growing and spreading in time and space. From the 7th century Anno Domini (AD) Hindu culture and religion exercised a widespread influence throughout south-east Asia, taking in modern-day countries of Thailand, Laos and Vietnam as well as many of the islands of Indonesia. (Hammer 1992, p. 174). Today, Hinduism is the third largest religion in the world, behind Christianity and Islam. The majority of Hindus are located in India at 95 percent (Muesse 2011, p. 6). and Nepal. Hinduism is indeed the religion of most Indians and consequently Hinduism exists wherever Indians are to be found in all continents, including Africa.

## 1.3.2 Fundamental teachings and practices of Hinduism

### A. Fundamental teachings of Hinduism

Contrary to all other major world religions, Hinduism has no basic confessional statements, unifying doctrines, or creed. The Supreme Court of India once declared: “In distinction from followers of other religions, one does not believe in a specific set of theological or philosophical conceptions.” Hinduism is more a “way of life” than a belief system. In other words, Hinduism is more about how one conducts one’s life than about what one holds to be true. That is, Hinduism is more about “**orthopraxis**,” right actions, than “**orthodoxy**,” right beliefs. If what makes one a Christian is one’s belief in Jesus Christ (and, correspondingly, baptism), what makes one a Hindu is being born and raised in a Hindu family and living one’s life in accordance with specific religious beliefs and teachings. Although, Hindu beliefs and teachings may vary from geographic and cultural contexts to others, some features can be identified to Hindu Religion. These features include:

- Hinduism is a **theistic religion**, but it can be difficult to determine whether it is a polytheistic or even monotheistic religion. On one hand, 33 gods are identified in Hinduism (polytheism). On the other hand, Hindus are monotheists at heart. They believe in one High God, whom they refer to as Brahman, ‘the absolute’, ‘the One’- the origin, the cause and the basis of all existence. Neutral and impersonal, Brahman is manifested through lesser gods through whose aid he rules over the world.
- **Reincarnation**: Hindus believe that at the death the soul always passes from one body into another body until released from the continuous wheel of rebirth.
- The principle of **karma** (actions): Hindus believe that a person’s moral actions have unavoidable and automatic effects on one’s fortunes in this life and condition of rebirth in the next (the law of cause and effect: good actions are bears good fruits, vice versa).
- **The four orders or stages of life:**
  1. **The life of the student**: school years - grow and learn
  2. **The life of the householder**: marriage, family and career
  3. **The life of the retired**: one is removed from the ordinary demands of family, community and society.
  4. **The life of the ascetic**: one abandons world to seek spiritual things.



*Four stages of life according to Hindu*

▪ **The four purposes of life**

1. **Dharma**: fulfill moral, social and religious duties;
2. **Artha** : attain financial and worldly success;
3. **Kama** : satisfy desires (sexuality, enjoyment) and drives in moderation;
4. **Moksha** : attain freedom from reincarnation.

This is the great goal for the Hindu. **Moksha** speaks of 'release' – deliverance, emancipation, calm and, all in on, salvation.

This goal of salvation is attained through three paths:

**a. Path of works and action**

We live in the world, where there is work to be done and there are obligations to be met. Our status in society involves duty. It is through action that man attains freedom from action.

**b. Path of knowledge or philosophy**

Hindus believe that it is ignorance that ties a person to the round of birth-death-rebirth (reincarnation). Release would be attained as knowledge replaces ignorance, when reality is properly understood and illusory rejected. This would involve yoga and ascetic practices.

**c. Path of devotion to God or love**

It is in commitment to God that we accept the leap from the temporal to the eternal, the realm of the Ultimate and absolute reality, Brahman.

### ▪ **Ten Commandments**

1. Do not harm (Ahimsa);
2. Do not lie (Satya);
3. Do not steal (Asteya);
4. Do not overindulge (Brahmacharya);
5. Do not be greedy (Aparigraha);
6. To be clean (Saucha);
7. Be content (Santosha);
8. Be self-disciplined (Tapas);
9. Study (Svadhyaya);
10. Surrender to God (Ishvara Pranidhana)

### **Note**

- Hinduism emphasizes on tolerating the different beliefs of others, respecting the pluriformity of truth, and recognizing diversity of belief and practice. In this sense, Hindus say, “Truth is one; sages call it by different names.” This attitude towards religious beliefs, and truth made Hinduism one of the more open-minded religions whereby peaceful coexistence among religious traditions and theories is highly favorable. Hinduism teaches other religions that unity (not uniformity) in diversity is possible.
- Hindus and other Asian religions (including Buddhism) believe in reincarnation. Reincarnation is also called “transmigration”. It refers to the “Hindu” understanding of life. Life is thought as a flow through which many existences occur: from birth to death, and then on to rebirth to death, and so on. Reincarnation refers to the cycle of rebirths; it indicates an unending round of existences which were influenced by the deeds each individual performed (karma).

### **B. Religious practices of Hinduism**

Hinduism is a way of life. It is a path of duty to be followed within a divinely ordered society. The basic unit of society is the family. The individual is reminded that he is part of a family. Hindu families mark an individual's life at every stage by domestic rituals. These rites are performed by a Hindu priest, either at home or at a temple. Birth, initiation, marriage and death (each has a ritual, as well as rites of daily worship and annual festivals). Some of these practices are understood and explained as follow:

- After birth, there are practices for the naming of a child, the child's first haircut, and the initiation to enter the first stage/order of life. From then on

the man will wear the sacred thread which passes over his left shoulder and under his right arm.

Marriage is a foundational practice in Hinduism. The wedding ceremony is one of the most solemn and complicated rites in Hinduism. Arranged marriages still are common in India. Marriage ensures not only the continuity of the family but also the welfare of its dead members in the other world. As an institution, marriage is, in practice, obligatory: divorce is rare, as is not having children and staying single.

- After death, Hindus organize the funeral. Cremation is the norm for Hindus, although certain categories of people, including sadhus and young children, typically are not cremated. Before cremation, the dead body is anointed at home, and wrapped in layers of colorful cloth. He or she is accompanied by chanting, singing, and drums. The body is submerged there, and certain rites are performed.
- There are dozens upon dozens of Hindu festivals. They mark specific seasons, specific events in the lives of the different gods and goddesses, and specific concerns of life—wealth, health, fertility, etc. Examples of festivals: Divali, the festival of lights that falls somewhere in October or November; Holi, that inaugurates the coming of spring, in February/ March; etc.
- Hindus are lacto vegetarians who use no eggs, no meat of any kind, no onions, and no garlic. Milk or dairy products can be used.



### Application activity 1.3

1. If one is a Hindu by being from Indians, what implications should be expected?
2. Give the four purposes of life according to Hinduism.
3. Appreciate the Hindu attitude toward truth.

## 1.4 End Unit Assessment



### End Unit assessment 1

1. **Complete the text below:**

Buddhism was founded by a certain man called..... He was born about ..... in ..... He lived in a ..... life until he undertook ..... (number) journeys. On his journeys, he saw ..... through three forms:.....; ..... ; and ..... Then he began to seek for ..... . so as to set people free from ..... and ..... .... After missing it in Buddhism, he opted to seat beneath a mango tree for ..... and he finally reached .....

2. Imagine any situation in which people are grievously facing suffering and then draw from Buddhist religion practical ways to help them overcome it.
3. “In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of.” (Confucius). Discuss at length.
4. “I came to the conclusion long ago that all religions were true and that also that all had some error in them, and while I hold by my own religion, I should hold other religions as dear as Hinduism. So we can only pray, if we were Hindus, not that a Christian should become a Hindu; but our innermost prayer should be that a Hindu should become a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, and a Christian a better Christian” (Gandhi).

Draw from this statement values and attitudes that could help religions and people coexist peacefully.



# UNIT 2

## VALUES AND COMMITMENT TO RELIGIOUS TEACHINGS

### Key Unit competence:

Practice values and commitment to religious teaching in his or her daily life



### Introductory activity 2

“We, the People, recognize that we have responsibilities as well as rights; that our destinies are bound together; that a freedom which only asks what’s in it for me, a freedom without a commitment to others, a freedom without love or charity or patriotism, is unworthy of our founding ideals, and those who died in their defence.”

Source: Barack Obama, Former President of the USA on <https://www.brainyquote.com/topics/commitment-quotes> December 5th, 2019

1. Imagine what would be the consequences of a freedom without a commitment to others in your community.
2. Give examples of the founding ideals of your country and some names of those who died in their defense.

### 2.1 Commitment: Discipleship and Stewardship

#### Learning activity 2.1



Using internet and, dictionaries and encyclopedia in the library, find definitions of the following terms: Commitment, discipleship and stewardship.

A religion binds its followers to beliefs in someone or something in which or whom they put complete trust or confidence. Alternately, a believer is someone who commits his entire life to a strong belief in the teachings of a religion, or its founder or its prophets and saints, based on spiritual conviction or experiences. This commitment goes beyond a firm decision and an explicit promise to live according to the embraced beliefs; commitment is rather the state or quality of being fully dedicated to the will of God/gods, his or their representatives or to a spiritual cause. In religion, commitment implies both discipleship and stewardship.

Firstly, commitment consists in following someone else's will instead of his or hers. This is appropriate to the disciples and/servants with regard to their masters. In Christianity, discipleship is simply adherence because through baptism they dedicate themselves to give everything up and follow Jesus' teachings and principles (Matthew 19: 27). This applies even to Muslims, for Islam, their religion means 'submission to the will of God'. As such, Muslims are followers of God of peace, compassion, love, justice, and all divine attributes. The idea of discipleship exists also in oriental religions, namely Hinduism, whereby there is this relation of discipleship between individuals or communities and 'gurus'. The latter are considered as personal religious teachers and spiritual guides.



*The family on cleanliness services*

In the sense that commitment implies discipleship, disciples actively imitate both the life and teaching of the master to the extent that they become living copies of their respective masters. For instance, Christians as disciples are called to be and behave like other 'Christs'. If Jesus Christ was a friend to the little ones (sinners, the poor, the sick, the marginalized, etc.), his disciples, should strive to care for little ones. In Matthew 7:21, Jesus warned that discipleship is not about saying to Him 'Lord, Lord' to enter the Kingdom of God; what matters in discipleship is rather doing his will and his will is nothing but loving God and the neighbour.

Secondly, commitment entails **discipleship**, and discipleship involves **stewardship**. In fact, disciples concretely do the will of their masters through specific missions they are entrusted to. The commitment to this mission is called '**stewardship**' in the sense that it expresses disciples obedience regarding the execution of the mission God/gods/divine or spiritual representatives has/have placed under their control. This mission can be administration of affairs, management of resources or leadership of people and community. Stewardship is the commitment of one's self and possession to God's service, recognizing that we do not have the right of control over our prosperity or ourselves. A steward is a man/woman who recognizes that all he/she has, including his/her own life, is given and consequently accountable to the giver.

In the religious world, believers are good disciples by being good stewards, that is, by protecting people and the planet and by living their faith in relationship with all creation (National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions – Reflections of the US Catholic Bishops*. Washington, D.C.: United States Catholic Conference, 1998, p.6). The parable of talents (Matthew 25:14-30) is an eloquent example of commitment which results in both discipleship/servanthood and stewardship. It narrates a man who called his servants before he goes on a journey and entrusted his possession to them. Some fructified their master's talents; these were called good and faithful servants/stewards and they were rewarded to share their master's joy. Others buried their master's talent; these were called wicked and lazy servants and were severely punished. From this story, four principles of stewardship are drawn:

#### **a) Principle of ownership**

Some religious beliefs, especially theistic religions, teach that man was created to work and work is the stewardship of all of the creation that God has given him (Genesis 2:15; Galatians 6:4-5). God as the source of all that exists, he owns everything while humans are simply managers or administrators on his behalf. The Bible says, 'No one can receive anything except what has been given him from heaven (John 3:27) and, 'Look the heaven, even the highest

heavens, belong to the Lord, your God, as well as the earth and everything on it' (Deuteronomy 10:14).

### **b) Principle of responsibility**

Believers acknowledge that nothing really belong to them; and God owns everything. Consequently, they're responsible of how they treat God's creation (including human beings, rivers, soil, air, animals, forests, lakes and oceans, etc.) and what they do with it. In short, owners have rights; stewards have responsibilities. Example: "Be fertile and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it..." (Genesis 1: 28-31).

### **c) Principle of accountability**

A steward is called to give an account of how he/she has managed what the master has given him/her. In other words, stewards should be as active and caring as behave righteously abehave their masters affairs or possessions because the day evaluation and judgement awaits for them (Matthew 25:14).

### **d) Principle of reward**

Faithful stewards who do their master's will can expect to be rewarded. In the New Testament, a steward is rewarded by his master, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. Since you were faithful in small matters, I will give you great responsibilities. Come share your master's joy' (Matthew 25:21). In some religious tradition, the principle of reward does not require God/god's intervention; rather it follows the karmic law, the law of cause and effect. In both cases, gratitude and recognition are helpful in value education; they also are against the culture of impunity.



### **Application activity 2.1**

"I am not the my neighbour's keeper". Why do you think that this statement is not true?

## 2.2 Important values associated to commitment

### Learning activity 2.2



For each of the following situations, list the two most important practices, that you feel must absolutely be performed:

1. An increasing number of street children.
2. Someone lends you his house to live in for 12 months.
3. You are considering investing your heritage in a drug company.

### 2.2.1 Sharing with the poor

The poor have a special place in religious teachings. Are poor those who lack material means to meet basic human needs. These needs include nutritious food and safe drinking water and basic health care, home and unemployment, etc. The presence of material poverty on earth is evident today: 20% of the population in the developed nations consume 86% of the world's goods. (Michael Pennock, *Catholic Social teaching. Learning and living social justice*. Ave Maria Press, Indiana, 2007, p. 148). Consequently hunger, diseases, unhealth living conditions, drug addiction, prostitution, unwanted pregnancies, robbery, food insecurity, etc. are flagrant in the developing countries.



## Sharing with the poor is a duty to believers

In a world undermined by poverty, the great measure of the believers' response, indeed a test of the love for their God/god or fidelity to the religious teachings they have committed to, is what they do for the poor. The Sacred Scriptures say, "If a brother of a sister has nothing to wear and has no food for the day, and one of you says to them, 'Go in peace, keep warm, and eat well,' but you do not give them the necessities of the body, what good is it? So also faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead" (James 2:15-17).

There is a sense that sharing with the poor can be considered as stewardship. Saint John Chrysostom explains, "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs" (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n° 2446). In the same way, Confucius warns leaders (stewards of public goods): "In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of". This is simply an appeal to meet our responsibilities truthfully and genuinely.

### 2.2.2 Love of God and neighbour

The common value among religious beliefs is 'Love of God, and love of the neighbour'. Practically, every faith has its way of manifesting the love for God. In fact, love is as active as expressive and the most important way to express the love for God is discipleship or servanthood. For example, Abraham was able to sacrifice his son Isaac as this was the will of the God (Genesis 22) he had vowed to serve, to follow and worship. In the same vein, Jesus has given an outstanding example of love for God and for humanity. He says, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). Thus, genuine love demands sacrifice and sacrifice without love is useless. This is why the love for God is connected with the love for neighbour because "If anyone says, 'I love God,' but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen. This is the commandment we have received from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:20-21).

The commandment to love the neighbour is stressed in various faiths, the measure of this love being the love for oneself. They formulate it as follow:

- **Judaism:** "You shall love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord" (Leviticus 19:18).
- **Christianity:** "Do to others whatever you would have them do to you (Matthew 7:12)

- **Islam:** «As you would have people do to you, do to them; and what you dislike to be done to you, don't do to them.” Kitab al-Kafi, vol. 2, p. 146.
- **Hinduism:** “If the entire Dharma can be said in a few words, then it is—that which is unfavorable to us, do not do that to others.” (*Padmapuraana, shrushti* 19/357–358).
- **Buddhism:** “Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful.” (*Udanavarga* 5:18).
- **Taoism:** “Regard your neighbour's gain as your own gain, and your neighbor's loss as your own loss.” T'ai Shang Kan Ying P'ien
- **Confucianism:** “What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others” (Confucius).

Loving others as oneself has become to known as the 'Golden rule'. If the love for oneself is prior to the love for the neighbour, one needs to respect and care for himself or herself. This includes eating healthy diets, keeping himself or herself fit, respecting his or her body through avoiding impurity. The love for oneself is not only enjoying life but also cultivating the virtue of self-control. The latter is, “one mark of a mature person; it applies to the control of the language, physical treatment for others and the appetites of the body” (John B. Wirthlin). As such, the love for oneself and for the neighbour binds all humans as far as they will need to live peacefully in society. It entails the values of equity and justice.

Concretely, the love of neighbour involves respect of others' rights and the responsibility to protect those rights. Muhammad said that the life, property and honor of one are sacred to another (Diana Hayden, *Religious Studies A: Islam*, Nelson Thornes, UK, 2009, p. 94). In Genesis, when God asks Cain after Abel, his brother, whom he had just killed, he answered: “I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?” (Genesis 4:9). This shows that everyone is in charge of his neighbor's life, wellbeing and happiness. In other words, a believer and even a non-believer should respect the property of others (stealing them or damaging them not), their feelings and privacy, and treat them with good manners to show that they recognize that they are as important as himself or herself.



### Application Activity: 2.2

1. Define “material poverty”.
2. “People do not have neither kill each other nor be hundy”. Why is this statement true?

## 2.3 People who performed good works in Rwanda and in the world

### Learning activity 2.3



“Father MUNYANEZA J. Bosco refused to leave around 10,000 people who had sought refuge to him during the Genocide against the Tutsis in 1994, when the interahamwe asked him to leave them so that he could be spared. He said that he had to take care of sheep that God entrusted to him, that he could not leave them, but look after them till the owner receives them. The interahamwe killed him at the spot.”

NURC, *Abarinzi b'Igihango*, August 2018, p.52

1. Why did Father Munyaneza get in trouble with interahamwe until death?
2. What does this extract reveal about Father Munyaneza J. Bosco's true character?

### 2.3.1 Abarinzi b'Igihango (Friendship pact)

In 1994, Rwanda passed through one of the most atrocious genocides of the world history. It has been recognized as the Genocide against Tutsis in 1994. Rwandans have been united before in the light of their cultural and religious values. It is scandalous that the 1994 Genocide against Tutsis was perpetrated by Rwandans against their fellow rwandan Tutsi and some perpetrators, if not all, belonged to one of the religious denominations that existed in Rwanda. However, some of Rwandans, motivated by their religious convictions or not, did outstanding deeds of humanity during the Genocide and their exemples in saving and protecting lives have to be recognized and imitated. Those brave men and women were recognized as “Abarinzi b'Igihango”.





*Abarinzi b'Igihango did heroic acts during Genocide against Tutsi in 1994*

According to Rwandan history, an “Umurinzi w'Igihango” is any Rwandan citizen or foreigner who abode by the Rwandan values such as patriotism, integrity, truth, humility, tolerance, impartiality, fairness and who fights against segregation and genocide ideology and genocide (Unity Club, *Ndi Umunyarwanda*, 2016, p 13). The National Unity and Reconciliation Commission (NURC), *Abarinzi b'Igihango in Rwanda*, August 2018, presented several success stories on Abarinzi b'Igihango, among wich three examples are here proposed as examples woth of commitment, discipleship and stewardship :

- **Munyakazi Ramadhan (+)**

Munyakayanza Ramadhan helped some Tutsis to cross Muhazi Lake to former Giti Commune which was safe. Unfortunately, his secret was revealed and he learnt that he was wanted because he had betrayed the Hutus. When he learnt that he was wanted, he took his family to Giti and joined the Tutsi refugees. When he arrived there, his best friend also called Munyakazi that he had helped to cross before told him that his children were hiding in his neighbour's house.

They returned to collect the children and it was risky because the situation had become worse and the shores were thoroughly patrolled. They crossed in the night to look for those children. They found them and when they were trying to evacuate them they fell into killers' ambush. They were thrown alive into a latrine

and big stones were thrown over them until they died. He was killed when he was trying to help another group of Tutsis to cross. He was betrayed by his younger brother who was interahamwe. He didn't ask anyone to pay him for that assistance and he sacrificed his life for others. Note that Munyakazi Ramadhan was not afraid of extremists; he used to condemn their practices and told them that all persons are equal.

#### - **Father Marius Dion Gilles**

He is a Canadian and a Dominican Priest. He hid people during the Genocide against the Tutsis in 1994 and he provided them with food and medical care. In fact, Father Dion refused to leave endangered Rwandans while his co-friars:brothers (natives and foreigners) were with him were evacuated because of the insecurity which was in the country. He opted to remain with people who came to seek refuge in the convent at the St Dominic Priory. He risked his life because most of the times interahamwe attacked the convent and he used to be in constant dispute with them trying to convince them that there were no people inside or give them some money and they would go back. When the Rwandan Patriotic Army(RPA) captured Kacyiru, they found more than 30 people in the convent. On 11 April 1994, they were taken to King Faysal Hospital.

After the Genocide, he kept assisting indigent people by providing them with food and clothes. Father Marius Dion had been inspired by religious values of brotherly love. This is the source of his kindness during those hard times that required an outstanding courage. He sacrificed his own life for people who were hunted because of their ethnic group.

#### - **Pastor Renzaho Sostène (+)**

Renzaho Sostène, a Pastor in Anglican Church, was known as a fair and honest person even before the Genocide against the Tutsi in 1994. He was sent to preach in Ruhanga Parish because there were fierce tensions. When he arrived there, he managed to bring together all the Christians and tensions decreased. He visited all persons without distinction in that way that at the break out of the Genocide there were no longer factions. During the genocide, interahamwe ordered him to separate Tutsi Christians from Hutus so that they could kill the Tutsis and he refused. Then, interahamwe humiliated him by cutting parts of his body till he died. However, before the attack, the Bishop had sent a driver twice to evacuate him and his family but he refused to leave the sheep that God entrusted to him. About 15,000 people were killed at Ruhanga Church and the Renzaho's wife was killed at home with other people who were hiding there. Testimonies about him assert that he was a real Pastor (steward) and his teaching targeted the unity of Rwandans while there were ethnic division and segregation in the whole country.

### **2.3.2 Martin Luther King**

An American Christian minister, Martin Luther King, he was a civil rights activist in the 1950 and 1960. He was born in Atlanta, on January 15, 1929. He studied sociology and got a doctor's degree in Theology from Boston University. Martin's father was a preacher which inspired Martin to pursue the ministry as a pastor. Martin is known for being a civil rights leader. In fact he led non-violent protests to fight for the rights of all people including African Americans. He hoped that America and the world could become a colorblind society where race could not impact a person's civil rights. His first major civil right action took place when a black called Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a bus to a white man and she was arrested and spent the night in jail. Martin reacted to that injustice and racist attitude by helping to organize a Montgomery Bus Boycott, which was a boycott of the public transportation system in Montgomery. The boycott lasted for over a year and it was very tense at times. Martin was arrested and his house was bombed. In the end however, Martin prevailed and segregation on the Montgomery buses came to an end.

Martin led other important civil rights actions such the famous "March on Washington" in 1963. Attended by over 250,000 people, this march intended to show the importance of civil rights legislation. More concretely, it aimed to abolish segregation in public schools, to accomplish protection from police abuses, and to get laws passed to prevent discrimination in employment. It is at this march where Martin gave his well-known inspiration speech, entitled "I have a Dream". The march on Washington was a great success because the Civil Rights Act was passed the following year. Because of his commitment to the promotion of human rights using non-violence, Martin was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964. His persistent engagement to the cause of ending discrimination among human beings was persistent to the extent that he was even assassinated on April 4, 1968 in Memphis; he was shot dead while standing on the balcony of his hotel by James Earl Ray.

### **2.3.3 Wangari Maathai**

She was born on 1<sup>st</sup> April 1940 in Nyeri (Kenya). As a child, she already valued her classroom education, and was always at the top of her class. She studied in the USA and Germany and earned degrees in biology, German, and anatomy, becoming the first East African woman to get a PhD. When returned to Kenya, she was upset by the problems that plagued her country. These problems included: overpopulation, recklessly cutting down trees, poverty, unemployment, and malnutrition, etc. And Wangari believed the root cause was environmental destruction. As forest were being destroyed for profit, rural communities suffered and Wangari knew the women suffered the most. So she went to the root of the

problem literally. To empower local women and help restore the environment, she started the Green Belt Movement, which taught rural Kenyan women to nurture and then plant trees to replace the one being cut down. Together they created tree nurseries, and the women earned money doing this work, gained job skills, and helped the environment.



*Planting trees in collaboration with women was a major activity of Wangari*

Wangari began with a few women planting trees, and by 2004 more than 30 million trees had been planted by hundreds of women. She also encouraged people to register to vote, to speak out for their rights and the environment, and to press for political reform.

Wangari was indeed a leading advocate for peace, environment sustainability, and democracy. She received many international awards from organisations that recognized these efforts. In 2004, she became the first environmentalist, and the first African woman, to win the Nobel Peace Prize. The Nobel committee praised her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace". Note that her own government saw her actions differently; on several occasions she was arrested, beaten, and even put in jail because she was seen as a threat to the men in power. Though she passed on from cancer in 2011, Wangari's legacy lives on.



### Application activity 2.3

List three practices you can engage in to:

1. Promote civil rights.
2. Protect environmen.
3. Prevent from social injustices.

## 2.4 End unit Assessment



### End unit assessment 2

1. How commitment to religious teachings and values contribute to fostering peace and harmony in human society?
2. List as many as possible practices to promote environmental stewardship.
3. Prior to taking the office, the President of the Republic of Rwanda must takes the following oath: "I, ..... do solemnly swear to Rwanda that I will: remain loyal to the Republic of Rwanda; observe and defend the Constitution and other laws; diligently fulfil responsibilities entrusted to me; preserve peace and national sovereignty; consolidate national unity; never use the powers conferred upon me for personal interests; strive for the interests of all Rwandans. Should I fail to honour this oath, may I be subjected to the rigours of the law. So help me God."The Rwandan Constitution, Art. 102.

Appreciate the idea of commitment hidden in this presidential oath in the light of discipleship and the four principles of stewardship.

# UNIT 3

## MARRIAGE CELEBRATIONS IN RWANDAN CULTURE AND IN DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

### Key Unit competence:

Appreciate the importance of human sexuality and family in God plan



### Introductory activity 3

Umutoni and Migambi are finalist students at Peace School. They intend to pursue their studies in the same university and shape her professional life. As they are friends for long time, they are also worried about marriage and their future family. If you are a classmate of them, what would you advise them? Discuss with your neighbour the purpose of marriage. Which qualities and conditions would you like in your partner? Why ?

### 3.1 The meaning and the purpose of human sexuality

#### Learning activity 3.1



- (1) Describe the picture. What does sexuality mean?
- (2) Research on the attitudes to sexuality among the religious beliefs.

### 3.1.1 Meaning of human sexuality

The question of sexuality carries a multidimensional character according to its effects and influence on human life. The attempt to define 'sexuality' leads to the analysis of the areas there, as well as their fields of application and limitations. The purpose of the study of sexuality leads to the comparison of overlapping concepts such as sexual interaction, marriage, gender and related issues.

- **Sex:** characteristics of the human being, and other living things, according to the basis of their reproductive functions. Everybody can be referred as male or female. The concept 'sex' may also refer to sexual intercourse.
- **Gender:** gender refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men, such as norms, roles and relationships between group of men and women. Different societies have different views on the roles that are specific to men or women. The attitudes on various roles, clothing styles and behaviour are influenced rather by the family interaction, peers, education, mass media, cultural beliefs and family norms.
- **Sexuality:** the sexuality bears a broader and multidimensional aspect of the human life. The Resource Centre for Adolescent Pregnancy prevention defines sexuality as "the expression of who you are as a human being, your femaleness or maleness". While sex is attributed at the birth according to the human physiology, sexuality evolves from the combination of various influences. The sexuality is experienced and expressed in thoughts, imaginations, desires, beliefs, attitudes, values, behaviours, practices, roles and relationships. Sexuality is influenced by the interaction of biological, psychological, social, economic, political, cultural, ethical, legal, historical, religious and spiritual factors (WHO 2006, p. 5).



*Taking care of the children is the responsibility of both parents*

In some societies, for instance, rearing a child is ascribed to the women while in other societies it is the duty of men. Thus, gender and role attribution cannot be absolute nor over-generalised since the culture is dynamic and diverse.

### **3.1.2 Purpose of human sexuality in various religions**

There two types of religion: Abrahmic(theistic ) and Non-Abrahamic(theistic and non theistic ) religions.



### a) **Abrahamic religion**

The sexuality bears a universal aspect. The concept of sexuality is addressed in various religions and its physical and spiritual effects. Mostly Abrahamic religions consider the sexuality as a gift from God hence giving reason to the respectful reflection of moral principles.

**Judaism:** the comprehension of sexual life in Judaism exceeds the physiological feature. The Hebrew word translating 'sex' also means knowledge. Thus, sex involves a thinking act that requires responsibility and commitment, sex is more than physical encounter. The sexual behaviour and activity are restricted to the context of marriage. Several rules and regulations highlight the sexuality the conditions, restrictions and prohibitions:

- The sexuality is willed and created by God for the purpose of procreation (Genesis 1: 26-27), companionship (Genesis 2: 18), intimacy, comfort (Ecclesiastes 4: 9-12) and physical pleasure. Sexuality reinforces the marital bond between husband and wife.
- Both sexes, male and female, were created in the image of God (Genesis 1: 26-27). Each gender brings unique and complementary qualities to sexuality and relationships.
- Some sexual practices are considered as immoral acts and therefore prohibited: adultery, incestuous acts, sex with a menstruating woman, bestiality (sex with animal) and other various sexual acts (Leviticus 18: 1-23; 20: 9-21).

Example of prohibition:

"You shall not uncover the nakedness of your mother's sister, for that is to make naked ones relative; they shall bear their sin; they shall die childless. If a man takes his brother's wife, it is impurity. He has uncovered his brother's nakedness; they shall be childless (Leviticus 20: 19-21).

The transgression of the above rules bears both social and spiritual consequences: dishonest, shame and spiritual impurity hence breaking the family and social integrity.

**Christianity:** the Christianity has maintained the value of sexuality according to the Jewish legacy. However, it developed more protective mechanisms and set boundaries of the sexual desire. The teachings from the New Testament denounce the immoral thought at the as equally to sinful act. The sexuality expression constitutes an important part of the worship. Inversely, the sexual immorality, impurity, evil desire, and covetousness are compared to idolatry" (Colossians 3:5). Thus, the scriptures warn against human beings lest that they do not fall under the undesirable impulsions. The Sermon on the Mount declares

it clearly: “you have heard that it was said, ‘you shall not commit adultery’. But I tell you that everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart (Matthew 5: 27-28). This statement might be the interpretation of the 10<sup>th</sup> commandment from Decalogue. It is a reminder that the sin starts with coveting the neighbour’s wife which may indulge in sexual desire. Nevertheless, coveting extends to more objects. Coveting is one amongst the roots of the sin (James 4: 1-3).

Thus, the youth is warned to flee from any temptation that may lead to foolishness or illegal acts:

“So, flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart” (2 Timothy 2: 22).

“Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his body” (1 Corinthians 6:18).

**Islam:** Islam upholds the view of the sexuality as the gift from God and restricts the sexual relationship between man and woman. The main end of sexuality is the procreation and rearing children, although its expression of sexuality may lead to further benefits. The sexual acts practised in the lawful norms may lead to potential benefits including fulfilment, enjoyment, trust, pleasure and feeling of love. However, these benefits are supplementary and cannot justify the end in them. In this regard, the Qur’an advises the unmarried persons other modesty ways to prevent sexual intercourse:

Whoever among you can marry, should marry because it helps to lower his gaze and guard his modesty (i.e. his private part from committing illegal sexual intercourse); and whoever is not able to marry should fast, as fasting diminishes his sexual desire” (Sahih al-Bukhari 5066).

The sexual intercourse outside marriage is discouraged. Chastity is encouraged: “Let those who find not the wherewithal for marriage keep themselves chaste until God gives them the means (Qur’an 24: 23). Adultery is considered as abomination and evil (Qur’an 17: 32).

#### **b) Non-Abrahamic religions:**

The view on sexuality and sexual relation is shared among non-Abrahamic religions such as Buddhism, Hinduism and Sikhism, etc. These considerations recognize the social and religious value of sexuality. The sexual relation is reserved to the marital duty. In Hinduism, the sexual act is exclusively accepted in the context of marriage. Any sex before the marriage or the age of twenty-five is likely to interfere the intellectual development. The Sikhism views chastity

as important and believes the divine spark from almighty God is present in the divine body so that everyone is to keep clean and pure. The Buddhism teaching although acknowledge the sexual act for couple but recommends the chastity. The sexual urge is considered amongst the sources of suffering along with other cravings.



### Application activity 3.1

- (1) Compare the concepts of sex, sexuality and gender.
- (2) Discuss the purpose of sexuality and values to be maintained.
- (3) Compare the various religious restrictions of human sexuality.

## 3.2 Human sexuality theories

### Learning activity 3.2



- (1) Research on theories on human sexuality and discuss their assumptions.
- (2) Explain the steps and elements influencing the human sexuality

Theories of human sexuality consist of the analysis of various beliefs, rules as well as assumptions guiding the consideration of sexuality. These theories are examined regarding the psychosocial and spiritual contribution to wellness of the society.

The sexuality raises diversified understanding and interpretation in both religious and psychosocial consideration.

Here are some of the sexuality theories:

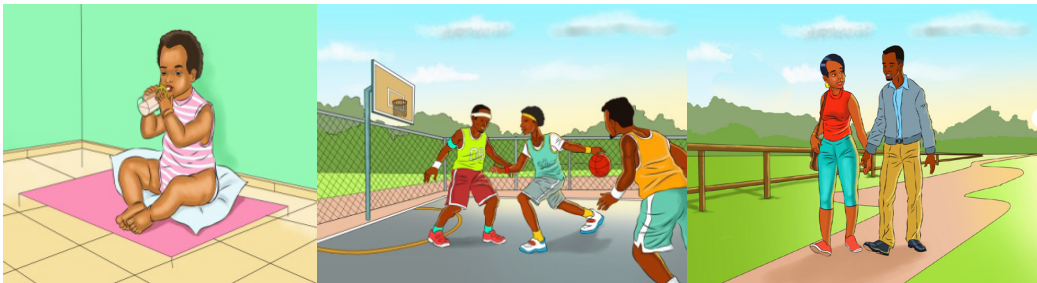
The religious comprehension finds the sexuality and sexual desire as positive or negative.

The pessimistic view considers the sexual desire as negative and morally wrong. The sexual activity is considered a threat to another person by reducing him or her to an instrument. Both parties engaged in the sexual activity lose their self-control, an important character of human being. This view considers the celibacy as an ideal spiritual state. On the other hand, the optimistic view considers

the sexuality as a natural mechanism that joins people together, both sexually and non-sexually. Sexual activity is thought to generate pleasure, gratitude and affection that are significant to deepen the human relationship. The pragmatic and prudential use an evaluative approach to analyse the dangers of sex. Sexual activities can be physically and psychologically risky, dangerous and harmful. They are susceptible to the damage of the body tissues, transmission of several diseases and/or result in unwanted pregnancy. They may also lead to the negative feeling such as anger, guilt, regret, pain and discomfort (Soble 2009).

On the psychosocial aspect, studies have shown the various conditions from which the sexuality evolves and the subsequent behaviour. The human sexuality is understood in the interplay with various emotions, feelings and behaviour actions.

- **Evolutionary perspective:** human sexuality to the sole physiological traits. The theory sees the gender and psychological differences as the result of biological reflection. Sexual personality is considered the effect of defence mechanism and environmental influences.
- **Psychological theory:** it was developed by Sigmund Freud. The theory discourses the sexuality and behaviour from the concepts of id, ego and super ego on one side and erogenous zones associated each of five stages of the psychosexual development: oral (birth to 1 year), anal (1-3 years), phallic (3-6 years), latency (6 years-puberty) and genital (puberty-death). The erogenous zone is meant by an area of the human body with higher sensitivity to sexuality thought, relaxation or provocation.



*Energy of sexual ambition may be regulated by unconscious instinct for satisfaction*

Erogenous zones change gradually from the period of infancy to adulthood. During these stages the energy of sexual ambition (libido) may be regulated by unconscious instinct for satisfaction (id), the sense of self-efficacy (ego) as well as the moral ethical standards and laws (super ego). This approach is also intended to be medical. In his psychoanalysis approach, Sigmund proposes that one should reflect on his/her feeling thus making the unconscious conscious (Gans 2019 July 24).

- **Sociological perspective:** this theory believes the society to be the main agent in shaping the human sexuality through and its social institutions. The social institutions such as family, religion, education and media, etc. affect social norms such that appropriate behaviour depends on the culture. The physical pleasure or disclosure and sexuality are associated with the kinship system, power structure and beliefs of society. For instance, the culture defines rules and set up the permissible behaviour and prohibitions.
- **Learning theory:** The learning theory upholds the motivation as the major determinant of the human behaviour. The sexuality is defined by a system of reward and punishment.



### Application activity: 3.2

- (1) Evaluate the theories on sexuality, what are their strengths and weaknesses?
- (2) Discuss the relationship between sexuality and society.

## 3.3 Marriage according to teaching of different religions

### Learning activity 3.3



Research on the various teachings and practices of marriage in different religions.

The marriage is fundamental in any society as the basis of the human family. Every society and culture define the practices of marriage, as well as the laws regulating the home in this case the relationship of couples, family duties, laws and obligations as well as restrictions.

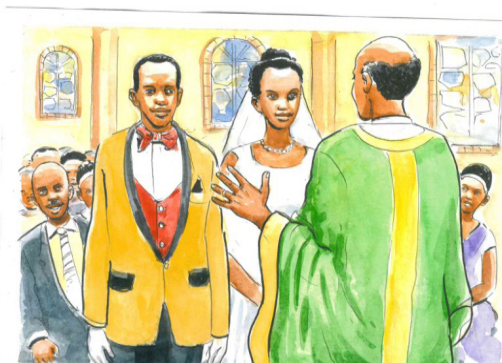
**The Judaism** recognises a sacred character of marriage. The marriage is considered the covenant entailing obligations of procreation; educate children the 'shema' (Deuteronomy 6: 4) and ethical practices.

The practice of marriage requires the mutual consent of both parties. Before the ceremony the bridegroom signs the document (ketubah) pledging himself to the bride. However, the document might be also signed by their respective parents or other relatives in the presence of at least two witnesses from both bride and bridegroom families. After the reading of the conditions stipulated in the promise, the ceremony ends by the breaking the glass under the bridegroom's foot. This symbolic act is thought by some to represent the idea that even times

of great joy need to be balanced by moments of serious reflection. Others see it as a reminder of the destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, a theme which reappears in Hebrew prayers (Harley 1992: 306). The marriage entails rights and duties of the parties: enjoy life together (Ecclesiastes 9: 9), bring happiness to the wife (Deuteronomy 24: 5) the provision of food and other home duties (Proverbs 31: 10-31).

**Christianity:** Marriage is considered as an unbreakable union of the man and woman (Genesis 1: 26-28; 2: 24). The husband and wife are believed to remain together until the death departs them. The purpose of marriage includes the procreation, but not limited to, the procreation, mutual delight. The bride and bridegroom pledge to love and care for each other 'in sickness and health'. The marriage is deemed sacred, involving the careful consideration (Hebrew 13: 4; 1 Corinthians 6: 19-20). The fulfilment of marital duties is mandatory for both spouses and in a mutual consent (1 Corinthians 7: 3-5). Celibacy is also encouraged to the same extent with the marriage (Mathew 19: 1 Corinthians 7: 1).

The divorce is discouraged (Mathew 19: 4-11). Though, the sexual infidelity is regarded as the reason that may cause the divorce in some conditions. "But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for marital unfaithfulness, causes her to become adulteress and anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5: 32).



*Religious celebration of marriage is administered by a religious Minister*

The celebration of the marriage is declared by a priest or minister after the mutual consent of spouses. Most of the time, civil marriage takes place before.

## Islam

The Islamic law recognizes the marriage as a contract between two individuals. The marriage intends to bind together. The marriage is acceptable when two individuals feel ready financially and emotionally to do so. The governing force

of marriage is love (30: 21) and decisions are to be taken according to the mutual consent. The sexual act is intended for the reproduction. Though the sexual urge is considered natural, free sex is not accepted. Spouses are guaranteed the rights to enjoy each other and to inherit from each other as well as the confirmation of the lineage of their children.

The mutual consent, the dower, the witnesses and prenuptial contract are the preliminary conditions of the marriage. After that the contract is signed, the marriage is legitimatised. The celebration of wedding will take various forms according to the culture.

The divorce takes two forms either through the repudiation (talaq) or mutual consent by returning the dower. The dower differs from dowry since the former remains the property of the bride rather than her family. But the malicious life is not supported (2:231).

#### **Some restrictions in Islam:**

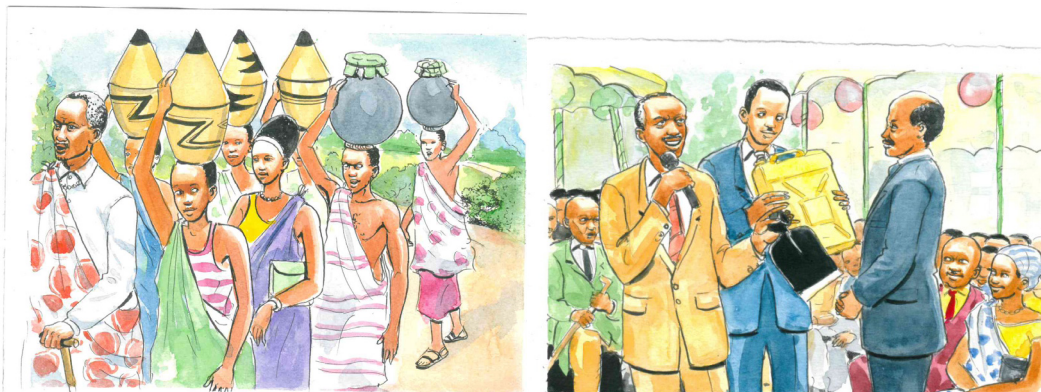
- Polygamy is accepted in some conditions when man is able to take care of his wives physically, financially, intellectually, morally. But polyandry is strictly prohibited;
- Homosexuality is forbidden;
- Sexual intercourse outside marriage, or before marriage, is forbidden;
- Marriage is permissible at the age of maturity (puberty): i.e. menstruation, voice changing, wet dreams. A forced marriage is forbidden, without consent of partners;
- Interfaith marriage is allowed in case a man is to marry a Jewish or Christian woman;
- Adulterous men are not allowed to marry chaste women and vice versa;
- The dower is given to the bride rather than her father;
- Contraception is allowed if pregnancy may endanger the woman's life.



#### **Application activity: 3.3**

- (1) Explain the practice of marriage in Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- (2) Discuss the steps and requirements leading to marriage.

### 3.4 Marriage celebration in Rwandan culture



*Marriage celebration in Rwandan culture*

#### Learning Activity 3.4



- (1) Identify the steps during the celebrations of marriage in Rwandan culture and activities performed in each step.
- (2) Prepare a sketch of the marriage in the context of Rwandan culture.

The Rwandan traditional culture, the marriage shows a remarkable moment of joy in the bridegroom and bride families. The traditional marriage traces many years back and was held in the family of the bridegroom family. Although some modifications are coming into effect, the traditional wedding rituals keep the social value that should not be overlooked.

The marriage constitutes the basis for family. It intends the procreation, raising children and establishing kinship systems. Rwandans used to believe that being single especially among women was considered strange and unacceptable.

The steps of traditional marriage include the following:

**1. Courtship:** preliminaries relation which culminates into marriage under traditional laws and customs. The procedures of courtship involve negotiation for the dowry price, and it is carried-out by the spokesman from both families. The courtship is the most important for the future bride and groom to know each other.

**2. Introduction ceremony:** During this ceremony the bride introduces her future husband to her parents, relatives and friends. The families are required to have a spokesman to represent them. The spokesman takes the role of the final emissary of the day of the introduction. He plays an



important role in showing that he has the tradition and experience in responding the challenging question from the other side's spokesman. Originally, the spokesman had to be a member of the man's family to speak on behalf of the man's side. Today, few people remember prominently the cultural requirements and tongue-twisting of old at these ceremonies, many people now offer the service at a fee. During the introduction ceremony, a Rwandan man is required to pay dowry in form of a cow or money before the solemnization of the marriage. Bride price carries the purpose of validating and legitimizing the relationship between a man and woman. Traditionally, in case of divorce the dowry could be returned. The payment of dowry is a still common practice in Rwanda.

**3. Wedding:** In Rwandan custom, marriage is solemnly held at the residence of the groom's father. The ceremony is the joyful moment characterized by folklore dress, dance, and promises to take care of the bride and to meet all the expected responsibilities. The bride is formally introduced to the family of the groom.

**4. Seclusion:** After the reception party, some of the guests drive to the couple's new home for the seclusion ceremony. Traditionally, after marriage the newlywed wife stays isolated for an undetermined amount of time. At the end of this period of seclusion, a ceremony is organized by the family and friends to visit her and bring her several items to stock in her home. The husband is expected to furnish the home completely and new wife is expected to bring household goods which include the wedding presents.

Additionally, the evening after the wedding at their new home the couple respects other rituals that have evolved over the years. Word is that in the past, wedding guests waited while the couple consummated the marriage to find out if the woman was a virgin. Other rituals include: the groom's aunt is cutting a piece of the bride's hair to symbolize that she belongs to him. Also, a young bridesmaid is also given to the bride as a symbolic little sister to help her out for a few days.

The Rwandan marriage knows the three parts: **traditional introduction ceremony, a civil ceremony and religious church ceremony.** It is a means of keeping relations between the two families alive and strong. Basing on the traditions, parents played a huge role in assisting their daughter or son in selecting a marital partner or giving in approval to the relationship. The involvement of parents and relatives emanated from their willingness to provide security and peaceful homes for their children. They used to carry out a background check on the family of the prospective bride or groom before establishing contacts. Marriage is considered the most basic social institution in Rwanda. Unlike in the past; most couples today select their own mates, though approval of the family is expected (Newtimes Reporter January 21, 2011).



### Application activity 3.4

- (1) Explain the steps of marriage according to the Rwandan tradition.
- (2) Compare the traditional and modern marriage in Rwanda.

## 3.5 Rights and duties of spouses

### Learning Activity 3.5



Read the following passages from the Jewish marriage law (ishut), Bible and Qur'an and discuss duties of spouses:

- Thus the sages laid down that a man shall honor his wife more than his own self and shall love her as he loves himself, and shall constantly seek to benefit her according to his means; that he shall not unduly impose his authority on her and shall speak gently with her; that he shall be neither sad nor irritable. Similarly they laid down that a wife shall honor her husband exceedingly and shall accept his authority and abide by his wishes in all her activities..." (marriage law code Ishut 15:19–20).

"Whoever is our friend, expresses his kindness to his spouse more" (Bihar al-Anwar, vol 103, p 226).

"However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife that she respects her husband" (Ephesians 5:33).

- Looking out for each other's interests in all things (1Corinthians 7:33-34);
- Praying for each other (1Peter 3:7).

**Islam** also considers the view of shared and specific duties and responsibilities among spouses.

- Shared duties:** care for the need of the family, mutual responsibility, treat each other with kindness, and fulfil the other sexual needs.
- Duties of the husband:** the husband owes to his wife the dower, support, kind and proper treatment, marital relations, privacy, justice between multiples wives (in case of polygamous husband), to be taught of her religion, defence of her honour.

- c) **Duties of the wife:** value the husband authority, obedience, marital relations protect the property, praise the efforts of the husband, request permission in some matters (leaving home, voluntary fasting), etc.



### Application activity 3.5

- (1) Explain the duties of the spouses in a) Judaism b) Christianity c) Islam
- (2) Compare the religious and the civil code of laws about rights and duties of spouses.

## 3.6 Different kinds of marriage and their effects on society and human rights

### Learning Activity 3.6



The monogamy remains the only form of marriage in Rwanda. However other societies recognize also in some circumstances the polygamy and polyandry.

- (1) What factors favoring or defavoring each type of marriage?
- (2) Discuss effects of each of these types of marriage: monogamy, polygamy, polyandry.
- (3) Research from religious scriptures the consequences of these above types of marriage.

The marriage takes different forms according to the societies and cultures including monogamy, polygamy and polyandry.

**Monogamy** consists of the engagement of one man with one woman.

**Polygamy** was commonly practiced in the ancient Israel. Several patriarchs were polygamous such Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, David, Solomon. However, an explicit notice was prescribed against which kings were not to take many wives (Deuteronomy 17:17). The consequences were various among others the rivalry between women, the diversion against the Lord, hatred and wars between the descendants of the same lineage. Further effects include the abuse of power from the husband, jealousy and rivalry; woman is reduced to the neglected status, affects children. Polygamy does not allow the principle of equality.

**Polyandry** is the umbrella term for one woman maintaining sexual access to more than one man. In the societies where it is known, it may take various forms: fraternal polyandry where a woman is married to two or more brothers; associated polyandry where a woman marries two or more men separately when one woman is married to one man, but has sex with other men in addition to her husband (Benedict 2017, p. 3). Polyandry is known to lead to severe health issues. It may lead to sterility and extinction of the population of the society. It is prohibited amongst Abrahamic religions.



### Application activity 3.6

- (1) Explain the consequences of polygamy to the society.
- (2) Discuss the consequences of polyandry and polygamy.

## 3.7 Issues associated with marriage and families

### Learning Activity 3.7



Outline issues associated with marriage and families. Supplement your findings by the research on internet and library and present your findings.

The marriage and family face a wide range of pressures and challenges that bear a serious effect on the social life. These evolve from the concerns of the life of couples in their household, the parental responsibilities and problems rooting from the social progress and change. They include:

1. The struggle raising and education of children;
2. Difficulty agreeing on decisions;
3. The support of extended family; etc.
4. The lack of convenient consensus is likely to lead, but not limited;
5. Emotional depression;
6. Divorce and separation, etc

The attempt to address the issues associated with marriage approach and mechanism to sexuality education that are likely to address both health and psychosocial issues. They may include the sexuality rights and education, gender

equity, techniques of birth control, use of contraceptives, contractual marriage, etc. However, there is a debate among the cultural and religious beliefs on the appropriate approach to marriage issue. Thus, as Kösternberger (2017) notes, it is important to analyse the root cause of the failure of marriage and return to the religious teachings.



### Application activity 3.7

- (1) Outline the marriage issues, their causes, their consequences to human society and the remedy to address them.
- (2) Discuss the requirements for sexuality health, rights and education.

## 3.8 End unit assessment



### End unit Assessment 3:

- (1) Discuss the purpose of sexuality and find-out the sexuality issues.
- (2) Evaluate the theories on sexuality and propose the assumptions.
- (3) Find-out the social and spiritual significance of the marriage practices in Rwandan tradition, Judaism, Christianity and Islam.
- (4) Discuss the requirements of sexuality health, right and education.
- (5) Find-out the similarities and differences between the religious and the civil code of laws about rights and duties of spouses.
- (6) Identify problems faced by families in the Rwandan society and propose the solutions.

# UNIT 4

## RELIGION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

### Key Unit competence:

Analyse the impact of science and technology on religious belief



### Introductory activity

#### Introductory activity 4

The progress of science and technology makes a great impression on how the future will look like. However, some people hold a pessimistic think that the world is rather declining than developing; science and technology are leading the world to the its ruin.

- (1) Discuss your point of view about the uses of science and technology and their impact on moral and religious life.
- (2) Compare technologies that were used in the traditional Rwanda with the modern society. Do you think there is a considerable development of science and technology in Rwanda? Why?

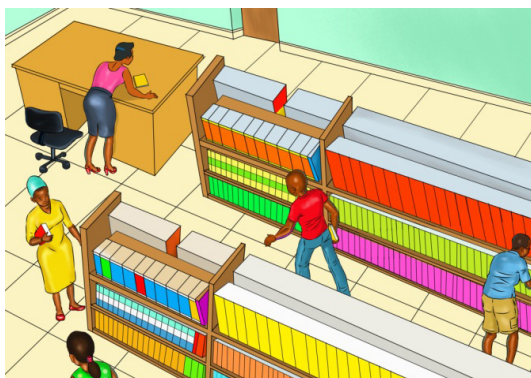
## 4.1. Meaning of science and technology

### Learning activity 4.1



In the family of Juru, children are encouraged to study sciences because they think they will find more opportunities. However, they are unhappy for one of their children who tells them that he is not interested with sciences. From his early age Ngenzi is fun with musics, and he has a dream to become a famous singer.

- (1) What is your understanding on science? How does it differ from technology ?
- (2) Research from various dictionaries and other books, the meaning of science and technology.



### ***Research and discovery are important for technological advancement***

The examination of the influence of science and technology on religious life demands a careful consideration. The study of both domains shows at the same time a relation of dependence and interdependence. Thus, an attend to find the meaning may reveal their resemblance and difference.

The word 'science' implies at the same time the knowledge and the means to acquire the knowledge. It may also refer to the domain of study, a matter of investigation, observation or experiment. The application of science is common in everyday life aspects including health, transport, ecosystem, etc.

Technology refers to the application of knowledge in order to solve a specific problem. The etymology of the concept shows the interdependence between science and technology. From two words; 'techno'- meaning application, art or skills and 'logy' simply meaning science and/ or learning. Technology refers to

the methods, techniques, tools and devices created and used by man to solve different problems (Younes & Al-Zoubi 2015:82). It may also denote the efforts and actions aiming at rendering the work easier and productive towards a better life.

The science deals with the production of knowledge while technology applies the knowledge to solve problems. Equally, science may search for understanding the accuracy of technology in use so that it can generate theories for future developments (Kiyiki & Kiyiki 2007, pp. 47-48). Science is concerned with how and why things happen while technology focuses on making things happen (Waddell 2013).

Religion comprises a set of **beliefs** and **worship** practices in reverence to a Supreme Being or deity. These beliefs and worship are transmitted into a socio-cultural system of a given society implying a system of values, behaviours, norms and moral ethics, etc. The religious life permits to hold a worldview. The relationship between religion and science depends on the uses of science in the spread of religious values to the large number of people and large space. Another consideration may involve the value that religion accords to science and technology. Religion defines norms and values to be maintained in the society like courage, commitment, promptness. Thus, science and technology are supported and vulgarised by a religious viewpoint. The relationship may be independence, contact and union (Stanford Encyclopaedia Philosophy 2017). Generally, science and religion find the common interest in the study of the created world.



#### Application activity 4.1

- (1) Find-out the relationship and difference between science and technology.
- (2) What is the link between science, technology and religious life?



## 4.2 Controversy on scientific and technological advancement on human life and religious teachings

### Learning activity 4.2



Mugisha is a bright and pious student in his class. His parents want him to study sciences. Doing sciences, they believe, will open their son to more opportunities. However, one of his classmates tells him that deepening sciences would lead to the denial of belief in God and religion.

- (1) What advice would you give to Mugisha, his parents and his classmates?
- (2) Do you think science and technology can solve all the human problems? Debate with supportive or contrasting arguments.

The science and technology have a great impact on the religious cannot be overlooked. However, the views differ regarding the contribution of science and technology in various domains of human life. On the other hand, their pressure imposed on the human behaviour is deemed to lead to decline of the society (Younes & Al-Zoubi 2015: 82). Thus, the impact science and technology on moral life opens to a great debate. Despite the countless opportunities offered by technology in various domains, views differ regarding the side consequences of science and technology.

The progress of development could not be possible without the contribution of science and technology. For instance, the modern life acknowledges the importance of technology in facilitating communication and rendering the world like one village. The development of the techniques of information has reduced the distances, save time and effort in terms of access to information and completion the transactions.

However, the moderate view considers also the effects of the new technologies as leading to the decrease of the social and family ties. The religious fundamentalist belief denies any compromise between science, technology and religion. This view considers the modern technologies as abomination of Satan and that they have contributed to the deterioration of values and lack of ethics while others see it as a constructive means that we should take advantages of them (Younes & Al-Zoubi 2015, p. 84).

There is a debate however concerning the complementarily and mutual interdependency between science, technology and religious life. Nevertheless, the abusive utilisation of the technology is said to lead to harmful and inhuman

actions. For instance, the fabrication of nuclear weapons, artificial products, abortion, etc. has the negative effect on the human life and the natural creation. Thus, the controversy is to assess the relationship between religion, science and technology. Does religion contribute to science and technology and vice-versa? Should religion be distinct from science and technology like two different masters that one cannot serve at the same time (Matthew 6: 24; Luke 20: 25)? How science and technology may serve better for the religious and moral life? And inversely, how can religion promote the science and technological advancement?



Swierstra (2017) notes three theories regarding the relationship religion, science and technology: descriptive, normative and voluntarism.

- The descriptive shows technology as working independently irrespective of the human influence.
- Inversely, the normative emphasizes the human choice to use technologies in positive or negative way. Technologies are considered neutre objects that can be manipulated by the human intention. As in the following illustration: "If someone kills another person using a hammer, one does not blame the hammer or its designer, only its user".
- The voluntarism combines both descriptive and normative; it seeks the social factors in the technology use and development (pp 8-11).

The question remains to assess the potentials of science and technology as well as the doubt on their side effects. Thus, the religious should evaluate their position in relation to the progress of science and technology and their destructive power on the human society. Linda (998: 384) notes the challenge of believers in the era with growing technology along with evolving autocratic. The author calls Christians to denounce the misuses of technology: speak against the abortion, the manipulation of life, behaviour and death'. They have also to act as peacemakers and overcome oppressive ideologies by the faith in the world where the technology is subjected to manipulations unethical purposes.



### Application activity 4.2

- 1) Discuss the controversy on scientific and technological advancement on human life and religious teachings.
- 2) Prepare an action against the misuse of science and technology. This might be a campaign, a sketch, performance, action to alleviate the negative effects of science and technology.
  - a) Identify the activities and steps you are likely to follow.
  - b) Outlines the materials to be used during the performance.
  - c) Perform an activity

## 4.3. Consequences of science and technology of information on social and moral life

### Learning activity 4.3



Nowaday, people hold different opinion on the science and technology. While the optimistic believe the world is becoming better, others worry that the world is becoming worse and moral values are depraving. Outline the negative effects of science and technology on social and moral life.



The development of science and technology has its side effect on natural, social and moral life that cannot be overlooked. These vary from individual to the community life. The inventory from Mohammad Bani Younes and Samer Al-Zoubi shows numerous negative impacts of the use of modern technology including:

1. The formation of personal beliefs social isolation;
2. Reduction in the family ties between the family and society members;
3. Inactivity;
4. Obesity;
5. Lack of desire to work different kinetic activities;
6. Waste of time in things that are not useful;
7. Increase in the rate of violence especially in children because of watching violent programs, high crime rate because of spreading video clips presenting all kinds of these crimes and ways of committing them and
8. The spread of lies and rumours causing distraction and loss of trust in such information (2015, pp 82-83). etc

The excessive use of the new technology is susceptible to endanger the youth. The more people spend time on social media and chatting may **reduce the concentration on tasks**, which affects their future development. Aharon Hersh Fried and Chaim E. Fried (2019) note the effects of technology on the consciousness/awareness, interpersonal relations and communication, our respect for privacy, and our sensitivity to truth and not hurting others. Technology affects considerably the conscientiousness, concentration, awareness and attention as the four basic areas that are affected in using technology. The social media impose a hurry life hence resulting into the lack of the nice of language. In addition, the uncontrolled diffusion of information sometimes constitutes a threat against the human privacy, leading to the vulnerability. Thus, educating to the conscious use of science and technology becomes a necessity for constructive purpose (Younes & Al-Zoubi 2015, p. 83).



### Application activity 4.3

- (1) Discuss the effects of science and technology on the moral and religious life.
- (2) Suggest the ethical ways to deal with the negative effects of the extensive use of science and technology.

## 4.4 Importance of science and technology to Religion

### Learning activity 4.4



In Kamana's village, there are pious people who want to expand their religion in neighboring villages and other countries. However, they do not value the contribution of science and technology. They believe their forefathers have been successful with their stronger commitment and the faith in God alone. The leader from local government asks you to convince them that technology will help them better in expanding their religion.

Explain how you will carry-out this activity and the related methodology.

The impact of science and technology on humankind has been transformative on many levels. In particular, the birth of the Internet and its use by society has changed the way people communicate, learn and understand the world.

Alongside the consumer aspect of technology, the advances in science and technology have also made great changes in various aspects of life. The mastery of the technological tools becomes the essential of basic literacy.

Technology is crucial to religious life as positive religious belief is central to the development of technology in any society. Religion is a philosophical thought that directs the human response, motivation and adequate choices to deal with challenges. Science and technology evolve from the religious foundation as means adopted by a given society. Thus, religion and technology find a coincidence and mutual facilitation. Although the challenges of technology are mostly observed in the use of media, smart phone, the benefits of technology in promoting religious life remain fundamental. The use of the internet, social media, smart phones, apps and cloud phone system essential tools for religious organizations. They enable members of the congregation access to sacred scriptures (Bible, Qur'an) and sources or information necessary for the strengthening of the faithful through the electronic system (Alleman 2018).

Another consideration bases on the historical view on reciprocal influence of religion and science/technology. The foundation of the religious communities such as monasteries was based on both religious and science development. The schools started from monasteries, one among the community life was the link the prayer with work and vice-versa. The work is considered as a form of worship, and thus technology finds roots in efforts attempting the improvement of work (Austine 2019). The religious scriptures show the relevance of the science as fundamental value along with other virtues. For instance, the appeal from Peter calls at the diligent search of science: "Now for this very reason also, apply all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love" (2 Peter 1: 5-7).



#### Application activity 4.4

- (1) Discuss the contributions of science and technology in the promotion of moral, social and religious life.
- (2) Find-out from various scriptures (Bible, Qur'an, great quotes from Buddhism, etc.) the appreciation of science and technology. Write a dissertation.

## 4.5 End Unit Assessment



### End Unit assessment 4

- (1) Discuss the relationship between science and technology and their contribution in the promotion of the moral life.
- (2) Discuss the controversy on scientific and technological advancement on human life and religious teachings.
- (3) Propose ethical ways to deal with the influences of the modern science and technology of information.

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