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**The impact of poverty on the practice of the catholic faith in Kyamuhunga parish,
Bushenyi District in the light of *lumen fidei***

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ABSTRACT

In Kyamuhunga, many people have sold their pieces of land to the tea factory investors for quick money. The end result is that many families have remained landless and others with little land for agriculture which is the main source of income for the households. This has led to shortage of food, malnutrition, poor standards of living, lack of money and employment since agriculture is the main source of income and employment for the people. Many people both young and old, as a result, go seeking for any type of work for survival. They end up in tea factories where they are over worked and under paid for those who are lucky to be employed. They work for long hours and for all the days of the week in order to earn a little bit more. They work on Sundays when they would be going to church, others have resorted to drinking alcohol daily out of despair, and some other people go to the witch doctors, many others to Pentecostal pastors seeking for immediate solutions to their poor state and lifestyle. There are many cases of idleness, crime, drug abuse by the young people who have dropped out of schools because their families cannot afford the requirements. The spread of HIV/AIDS has gone higher due to many people engaging in risky behaviors because many of them are idle, unemployed, alcoholics due to despair and hopelessness. All these mentioned factors have highly affected the prayer life of the people, their active and full participation in the liturgy and reception of sacraments, their responsibility as Catholics in the parish and indeed the practice of the catholic faith. The church leaders have tried to sensitize the people about the value of land but the government encourages more investments. Many people still sell their land to the investors who are competing in the tea business. As a means of reducing poverty, the church leaders in Kyamuhunga have campaigned against Alcoholism by ordering all catholic families to cut and uproot the type of bananas, “*Embiire*” where the local beer, “*tonto*” is brewed but this has not solved the problem. Therefore in spite of these strategies, the problem of poverty still remains and it still affects the practice of the catholic faith.

Due to this background, a study on the impact of Poverty on the Practice of the Catholic Faith in Kyamuhunga Parish in the Light of *Lumen Fidei* was conceived. Three objectives guided the researcher in the study and they include: To examine the causes of poverty in Kyamuhunga Parish, to show how poverty affects the practice of the Catholic Faith in Kyamuhunga Parish and to suggest possible solutions to the problem of poverty in Kyamuhunga Parish. The general objective is to determine the impact of poverty on the practice of the Catholic faith in

Kyamuhunga parish. Related literature to the study was reviewed and examined by the researcher guided by the objectives. Direct and participatory observation, oral interviews, document review, questionnaires, and focus group discussions were used by the researcher as tools for collecting data. After getting a letter of introduction from the dean of studies National Seminary Ggaba and using the study tools indicated, the researcher carried out the field study in Kyamuhunga Parish, Bushenyi District. Data from the field was presented and analyzed; qualitative data was analyzed thematically while quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics which involved the use of tables, frequencies, percentages, charts and graphs. The study findings were discussed by the researcher comparing them to the reviewed relevant Literature.

The findings revealed that *inadequate formal education* by many people in Kyamuhunga is the prime cause of poverty and almost all other causes of poverty emanate from poor education among the people. The researcher then came out with a conclusion that *Integral Catechesis* and *Holistic Education* will to a large extent solve the problem of poverty and promote the Practice of the Catholic faith. If holistic education is attained, people will have the ability to deal with many other causes of poverty which include: Disease, alcoholism, drug abuse, domestic violence, laziness, ignorance, time wasting, uncontrolled child birth and unemployment. This will greatly promote and increase the practice of faith among the people of Kyamuhunga

From the above observations the researcher recommends that since there is a deep relationship between education and development, the leaders of Kyamuhunga Parish should promote Catholic schools from primary to higher institutions of learning. They should work together with the ministry of education especially in choosing teachers of Catholic schools and institutions. Preferably, the teachers should be staunch Catholics who will promote Catholic education in those schools and institutions and they should also promote integral education. The Pastors of souls in Kyamuhunga Parish should ensure that the faithful are given integral catechesis through home to home visitations and in their homilies. They should organize seminars on human promotion, Chaplains in schools should be well equipped, and parents should be reminded of their roles. The hospital in Kyamuhunga; Comboni hospital should establish a rehabilitation section for Alcoholics and drug addicts. The leaders in charge of *Kolping* society and all other clubs, movements and associations that provide loans at a low interest and have self-help programs should sensitize the people on how to acquire and use the loans, the church leaders should form cooperative unions to practically sensitize people on the value of land.