‘Episcopal Leadership in the Anglican Church of Kenya: A critique’

Bishop Stephen Njihia Mwangi

OCMS, 2007

ABSTRACT

This thesis is an attempt by the researcher to understand Episcopal authority and leadership in the Anglican Church of Kenya (ACK) through the history of the Kenyan state. It seeks to assess and evaluate Episcopal authority and leadership within the ACK, against the background of pre-colonial (Kikuyu) and colonial (administrator and missionary) leadership in Kenya. Chapter One introduces the project, while Chapters Two and Three discuss pre-colonial leadership in Kenya, especially among the Kikuyu people, and the colonial leadership, both embodied in the settlers, administrators and missionaries, respectively. Chapter Four discusses leadership transition from missionary to African Episcopal leadership. It seeks to find out the legacy passed on by the last missionary Bishop to the first African Bishops. Chapters Five and Six discuss Episcopal leadership, both in the Church and outside the Church in society. While Chapter Five discusses the advocacy role the Bishop in Kenya plays in the Kenyan society, both in the past and now, Chapter Six discusses the prescribed role of a Bishop within the ACK. These two chapters seek to show that the Bishop in Kenya is an acknowledged leader both in the Church or Diocese and in the society within his jurisdiction, thereby giving him a privileged position of authority and power. Chapter Seven critically assesses and evaluates Episcopal leadership and practice within the ACK. In doing this the Chapter seeks to address the question of whether Episcopal authority and leadership practice within the ACK are an importation of practices from the mother Church and the colonial heritage or not. It also seeks to show that Episcopal authority and leadership in the ACK need to be looked at critically for future redress. Chapter Eight attempts to set the future agenda for Episcopal authority and leadership within the ACK, by looking at the three models of leadership, discussed in this thesis, that is, the pre-colonial leadership (the elder), colonial leadership (the colonial ‘African Chief’) and the Biblical model of leadership (servant leadership).