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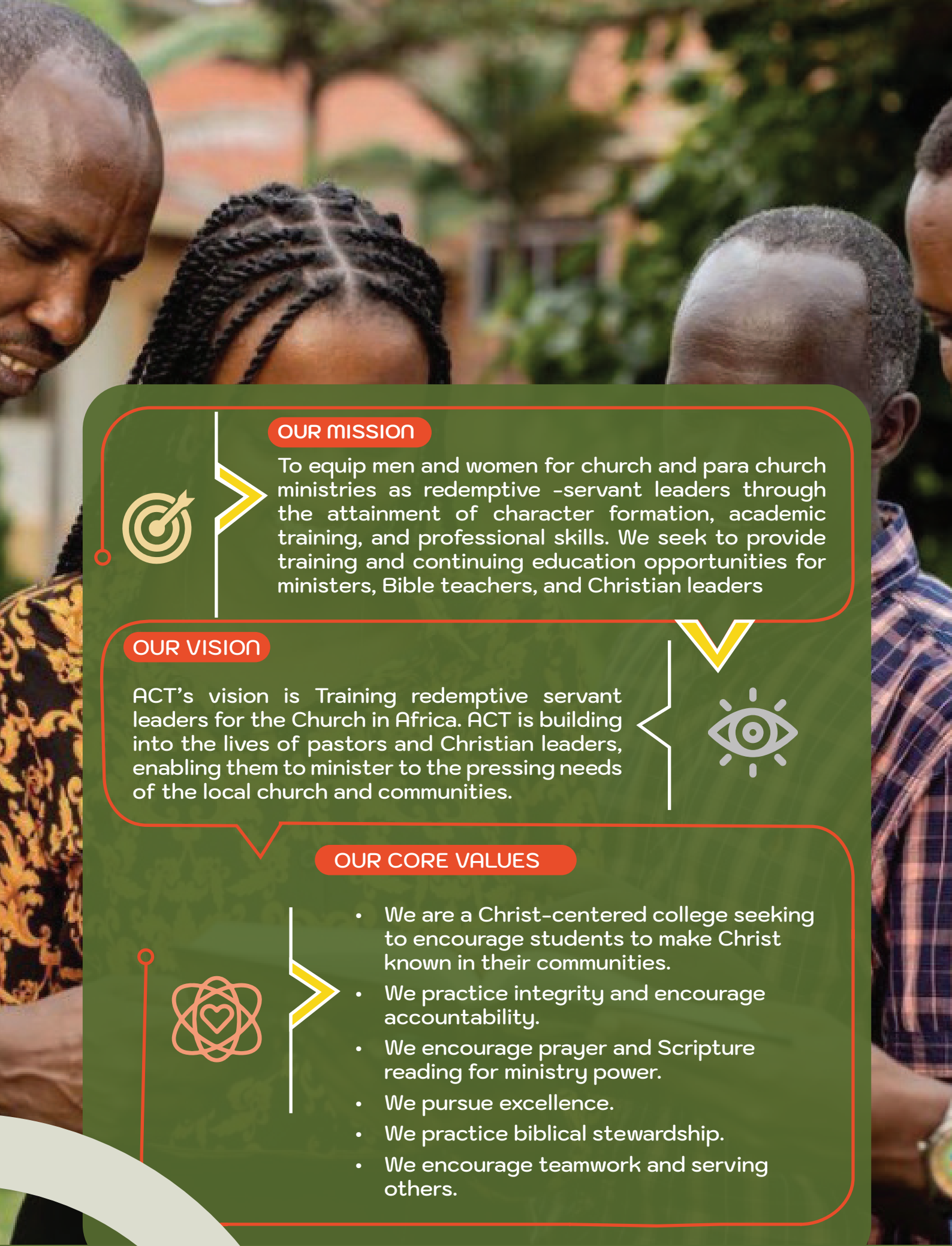
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OUR MISSION



To equip men and women for church and para church ministries as redemptive -servant leaders through the attainment of character formation, academic training, and professional skills. We seek to provide training and continuing education opportunities for ministers, Bible teachers, and Christian leaders

OUR VISION

ACT's vision is Training redemptive servant leaders for the Church in Africa. ACT is building into the lives of pastors and Christian leaders, enabling them to minister to the pressing needs of the local church and communities.



OUR CORE VALUES



- We are a Christ-centered college seeking to encourage students to make Christ known in their communities.
- We practice integrity and encourage accountability.
- We encourage prayer and Scripture reading for ministry power.
- We pursue excellence.
- We practice biblical stewardship.
- We encourage teamwork and serving others.

POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA (PGD) IN THEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

PGD Program is designed to engage students in an advanced postgraduate learning in Theology and Leadership. Targets graduates from other disciplines in ministry or have the desire to get involved in ministry but who lack theological and Leadership training.

Targets graduates from other disciplines in ministry or have the desire to get involved in ministry but who lack theological and Leadership training.

PGDTL is geared towards restoration of sound doctrine in the Church and enable ministers serve God beyond the walls of sanctuary into communities and general leadership

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- ▲ Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ with a sense of calling or already in ministry
- ▲ Bachelor's degree from a recognized institution of Higher learning
- ▲ Pastoral, former teacher, and a friend recommendation letter
- ▲ Non-refundable application fees of 25,000 Rwf

BACHELOR OF ARTS (HONS) IN THEOLOGY AND LEADERSHIP

PROGRAM BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

BATL Program is designed to engage students in an advanced high learning in Theology, Leadership. The general purpose of Africa College of Theology BA (Hons) program is to create ministers who are knowledgeable in the Word of God and with character, vision, and passion for the restoration of sound doctrine in the Church, but also for the expansion of the Kingdom of God beyond the walls of sanctuary into communities and general leadership. This program is designed to engage aspiring ministers and Christian leaders in high level academic activates and promote professionalism within the Church and ministry activities in Rwanda. On completing the program, our students will be fully equipped and highly educated to fully serve their communities in the Church and in ministry with a sound Christian doctrine and world class knowledge of theology.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- ▲ Have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ with a sense of calling or already in ministry.
- ▲ Advanced level Certificate of Education (A' Level) with a minimum of two principal passes.
- ▲ Pastoral, former teacher, and a friend recommendation letter.
- ▲ Non-refundable application fees of 25,000 Rwf.

Redemptive Servant Leadership: The Cornerstone of Africa College of Theology's Mission



(By Rev. Dr. Charles B. Mugisha, The Chancellor of ACT)

At the heart of Africa College of Theology (ACT), lies a foundation cemented in faith and a mission that transcends conventional academic pursuits. ACT was birthed from a vision to empower leaders who would not only excel in their respective fields but also serve with a redemptive purpose grounded in work of Christ at the cross.

As we celebrate this graduation, it is crucial to reflect on the essence of ACT's core mission: *to equip men and women for church and para church ministries as redemptive servant leaders through the attainment of character formation, academic training, and professional skills.*

Developing redemptive servant leaders with character is a transformative process that involves nurturing individuals to embody qualities of empathy, integrity, and selflessness. This approach focuses on cultivating competent leaders who prioritize the well-being of others, seek to uplift their communities, and are committed to ethical decision-making. By emphasizing the redemptive aspect, the focus is on personal growth, resilience, and the ability to learn from failures; while servant leadership underscores the importance of serving others before oneself. This holistic approach to leadership development not only shapes individuals with strong moral character, but also equips them with the ability to inspire, mentor, and positively influence those around them.

Redemptive servant leadership is a model that combines the Christian call for redemption with the selfless service of leadership. It rejects the traditional leadership paradigms that focus on power and authority; but rather redemptive servant leadership has its focus on leading by example, uplifting others, and prioritizing the greater good. At ACT, this model is not merely theoretical; it is the lived experience of every student, educator, and staff member.

The inception of ACT was a leap of faith, a testimony to the power of a vision driven by divine inspiration. From a handful of students to a thriving institution, ACT's growth mirrors the parable of the mustard seed, revealing the potential of faith-based initiatives to flourish beyond expectations. The College's journey has been a testament to the faith of its founders, who believed that education infused with Christian principles could transform lives and communities.

In classrooms, chapels, and community service projects, ACT instills in its students the tenets of redemptive servant leadership. The curriculum is designed not just to inform but to transform; challenging students to align their vocation with a higher calling. Graduates are equipped to become agents of change, embodying the redemptive love of Christ in their professional and personal lives.

The mission of ACT goes beyond imparting knowledge; it is about nurturing wisdom, character, and a commitment to service. It recognizes the complexities of leading in a diverse and often divided world. Therefore, the College emphasizes reconciliation, peacebuilding, and the restoration of communities as hallmarks of servant leadership. This redemptive edge sets apart ACT graduates as leaders who don't just navigate the world but strive to renew it.

As we reflect on the significance of the graduation ceremony, it is more than a celebration of academic achievement. It is a reaffirmation of our commitment to the foundational mission of ACT. Every cap and gown are a reminder of the mantle of responsibility that our graduates carry forward – to lead, serve, and redeem.

The impact of ACT is witnessed in the stories of our alumni. They are leaders in business, education, government, and ministry, actively demonstrating that servant leadership infused with faith is not only viable but vital for the future of our continent and beyond.

In conclusion, the Africa College of Theology stands as a beacon of hope and a testament to the transformative power of redemptive servant leadership. As our graduates step into the world, they carry the legacy of ACT's mission, ready to serve and lead in a manner that heals, unites, and elevates those they touch. It is this sacred undertaking that continues to drive the vision of ACT, as we forge ahead, anchored in faith, and propelled by the conviction that true leadership is about serving others in the redemptive love of Christ.

Dr. Gerald's Golden Rules

1. Humility is the first qualification for a Servant Leader.
2. Pick students carefully, and then believe in them until they succeed.
3. Dream big, pray big and plan carefully for the future.
4. Discipleship is the main purpose of a good education.
5. Model every virtue that you want in your students.
6. Trust God for everything, while you work hard at being faithful.
7. Select teachers who love students more than they love their course material.
8. Be willing to do anything to provide for the students.
9. Anything worth doing is worth doing well down to the smallest detail.
10. Education is the key for doing any job to the best of your ability.
11. Have a two table office: one for work and one for people who are the reason for your work.
12. Be generous with your finances and your time.
13. Know the language of the people you serve.
14. Be a student of God's Word your whole life.
15. Encourage every team member around you all the time.
16. Love God above all else.
17. Always greet others with a smile. Let the joy in you come out with a smile.
18. Preach the gospel & Scripture with words and with your life.



Late Dr. Gerald Sseruwagi served as the first principal at Africa College of Theology in 2013-2014. His legacy is well remembered by the students through the Golden rules above

ACT Principal



Dr. Gerald Sseruwagi
2013- 2014



Rev. Obed Rubayiza
Interim Principal :
2014- 2015



Mr. Johnson Karamuzi
Director
2016 - 2021



Mr. Manase Ogola
Interim Principal
2022



Prof. Nathan H Chiroma
Principal
2023 - Present

Why We Prioritize Raising Redemptive Servant Leadership



Prof. Nathan Chiroma – Principal

Growing redemptive servant leaders is important for the holistic transformation of both the individual and the community at large. Our goal as a Christian college is to put a strong emphasis on producing leaders who are not just capable and imaginative but also driven by the ideas of servant leadership and redemption that will lead to holistic transformation. Here are some key significant reasons why at ACT we prioritize raising redemptive servant leaders:

Ethical Leadership: Redemptive servant leaders prioritize ethical considerations and moral values. They are committed to making choices that are just, compassionate, and aligned with the greater good. This ethical foundation helps build trust among followers and fosters a positive organizational culture.

Service-Oriented Approach: Redemptive servant leaders focus on serving others rather than being served. They prioritize the needs of their teams, stakeholders, and the community. This approach creates a sense of purpose and fosters a culture of collaboration and support.

Personal Transformation: The term “redemptive” suggests the idea of redemption and transformation. Redemptive servant leaders recognize the potential for personal growth and transformation in themselves and others. This emphasis on continuous improvement contributes to the development of resilient and adaptable leaders.

Social Responsibility: Redemptive servant leaders understand their responsibility to contribute positively to society. They actively seek opportunities to address social issues, uplift communities, and make a lasting impact beyond their immediate organizational or professional spheres.

Building Stronger Communities: By nurturing redemptive servant leaders, there is a ripple effect on the communities they serve. These leaders are more likely to engage in community development initiatives, creating environments that support the well-being and prosperity of the broader population.

Inspiration and Motivation: Redemptive servant leaders inspire and motivate others through their actions and words. By exemplifying qualities such as humility, empathy, and resilience, they create a culture where individuals are inspired to excel and contribute their best efforts.

To sum up, developing redemptive servant leaders is important for advancing moral leadership, service-oriented strategies, social and personal development, and the sustainability and well-being of communities and organizations. Our goal at Africa College of Theology is to serve as the preeminent hub for producing redemptive servant leaders who will uplift both the church and society at large. Come on this life-changing adventure with us!

Redemptive Servant Leaders Ministering the Eternal Truth



Dr Michael Biryabarema Chairman, the
Board of Africa College of Theology

1. INTRODUCTION

Truth implies knowledge and words that bring about what is real, complete, authentic, and eternal. The word of God, as revealed in the scripture is the perfect truth. It is unchangeable and, hence has an eternal dimension. This word of God, which represents His revelation to people, must be delivered with a sense of awe and humility. It should be delivered prayerfully and with divinely provided eloquence.

Africa College of Theology (ACT) as an institution of learning exists to raise redemptive servant leaders. When leaders honor God's word by allowing themselves to be

influenced by it, when they honestly implement policies that have roots in it, they are proving themselves as redemptive servant leaders. Redemptive servant leaders have a high sense of justice, empathy, selflessness, fairness, and hope – desiring to do what is redemptively right and true. These are the people that ACT is committed to training.

2. THE SEARCH OF TRUTH IN THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

One contemporary issue that gives ACT its relevance is the pursuit of truth. It is common knowledge that society claims to have entered the “era” of postmodernism. In postmodernism, truth is assumed to be relative and is equal to community agreement. The truth is said to be whatever a community agrees upon as the truth. Human reason is rated higher than revelation. Morality is what the powerful or the influential or the society decides it to be. Truth is taken to be that which can be verified scientifically. In other words, revelation is being challenged as the ultimate truth.

It is not the objective of this article to argue for or against the new philosophies that are antagonistic to divine revelation, or the prevailing ideas of the so-called modern and postmodern eras. Suffice it to say that those who have tasted the reality of revelation know that all the dissenting voices are based on total ignorance of the divine and on the prejudice of not truthfully inspecting the other types of knowledge outside their academic professions. Different societies over centuries have tried to silence and at worst extinguish the concept of the revealed truth. However, those proponents have long gone and forgotten but the word of revelation is

still standing strong today. I have known Christ for more than forty years now and I have been a professor of geology for about twenty-five years now. I am convinced the revealed word is the hope of humanity and there is absolutely no contradiction between science and faith, better perceived by those who have truly experienced the two worlds. It is gratifying to have young people graduating in the disciplines of ministering the eternal truth in this generation.

The stubbornness of faith refusing to die in the face of advancing scientific thought was correctly expressed by Alfred North Whitehead (1925) in the following statement: “In the seventeenth century, the doctrine of the motion of the earth was condemned by a Catholic tribunal. A hundred years ago, the extension of time demanded by geological science distressed religious people, both the Protestant and Catholic. And to-day the doctrine of evolution of living things is equally a stumbling block. These are only a few instances illustrating a general fact”. In that paper, Whitehead also said that ‘religion is the one element in human experience which persistently shows an upward trend. It fades and then recurs. But when it renews its force it recurs with an added richness and purity of content. The fact of the religious vision, and its history of persistent expansion, is our one ground for optimism. Apart from it, human life is a flash of occasional enjoyments lighting up a mass of pain and misery, a bagatelle of transient experience’. This description of the mysteriousness of religion that never fades and to which man always turns to find solace is very revealing. Religion in its purest form is God Himself and is always the same loving God even to those who get exhausted with their flight away from Him and eventually determine to return. GOD’S WORD WILL NEVER PASS AWAY.

3. THE SURE FUTURE OF THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Institutions like the Africa College of Theology have the mission to continue providing insights into God's word – the word that will never pass away. Such institutions keep propagating the divine truth which has the power to convict even the most ardent of its critics.

The divine message has eternal value and will always be the hope the world falls back to when it gets exhausted from pursuing errors. I am perfectly certain that God's word can never be extinguished. It is like a seed staying alive in dry conditions but which springs to life when people begin to hunger for God again and water it with tears of repentance. I feel greatly privileged to be associated with such institutions that propagate the eternal truths.

4. AFRICA COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY (ACT) SERVICE DELIVERY

The vision of AFRICA COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY (ACT) is to “**train redemptive servant leaders for the church and society**”. Its programs are geared towards the restoration of sound doctrine in the Church to enable ministers to serve God beyond the walls of the sanctuaries. The programs are tailor-made to serve communities and to train leaders. The college covers subjects like Biblical Leadership, The Art of Preaching (effective and inspired scriptural information delivery), Marriage and Family, Strategic Leadership and Management, Redemptive Leadership and Organizational Skills and others.

ACT is simply built on the foundation of God's word, which is the eternal truth. The approach of leadership training based on the foundations of truth, on how to deliver the truth effectively, and on how to adapt it to the basic needs of society makes ACT very relevant to society. To achieve this, the college is committed to sourcing the best faculty, partnering with similar institutions and ministries globally, and obtaining accreditation from reputable accrediting institutions. Currently, the college is accredited by both the Higher Education Council (HEC-Rwanda) and the Association of Christian Theological Education in Africa (ACTEA). I am certain that ACT will continue to improve and expand quality service delivery, and through this will be able to produce redemptive servant leaders who can minister the eternal truth of God's word.

Redemptive Servant Leadership: Living out the Story

Anna Kyomugisha Katagwa,
Academic Registrar

Redemption is an expression of mercy; it offers hope and a second chance so that people can live and try again after experiencing failure and sorrow. Ultimately redemption is the story of how God gives humanity a hope and second chance after the Fall. It is the story of our Christian life. Being a Christian is a story of the redemption of our souls.

Each redeemed soul has a unique story about redemption. In Psalms 107:2, the redeemed are encouraged to tell their story. Therefore, redemption is a story that every child of God is obligated to tell and live out. For believers in Jesus Christ, redemption is a joyful, eternal song because Christ's work on the cross saved them from agony. However, we often take redemption for granted, forgetting that it's crucial to the Christian faith and the hope of the church.

For leaders, redemption should be the lens through which we serve others. Reflecting on Christ's redeeming work on the cross helps us extend mercy easily. Jesus is our redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30), and he redeemed us from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13). In 1 Peter 1:18-19, Peter reminds believers that they were not redeemed by perishable things but by the precious blood of Jesus. In Luke 7, Jesus comments on the sinful woman who poured expensive perfume on him, saying, *"Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little"*. All the redeemed are like the sinful woman in Luke 7, with a story of how we have been forgiven. Stemming from the story of how they have been forgiven, leaders should show much love to Jesus Christ and those they serve, putting a high value on them.

At Africa College of Theology, we emphasize redemptive servant leadership, which we believe is a leadership model rooted in the life and ministry of Christ. Jesus Christ demonstrated this style of leadership when he challenged his disciples in Mark 9:35, saying, *"If anyone wants to be first, he shall be last of all and servant of all."* Paul also emphasized this mindset in Philippians 2, saying, *"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus."* At Africa College of Theology, we strive to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and adopt this servant leadership approach in all our endeavors, as exemplified by Christ in the grand story of redemption.

Al Gini says in her book *10 Virtues of Outstanding Leaders*, "Leaders rule us, run things, and wield power. Therefore, we must be careful about whom we choose to lead us. Because whom we choose is what we will be. If character is destiny, the destiny our leaders forge will be our own". What Gini's statement helps us to understand is that leaders are powerful. Leaders who have learned to live out the story of redemption help forge a great destiny for the people. This is because a redemptive leader is aware of his or her redemption and knows that they are servants first and leaders second in their hearts. Redemptive leaders examine Christ, who is the epitome of servanthood and redemption. Everything they do is rooted in Christ, and this is an essential part of how they live out their story of redemption.

STEWARDSHIP OF A REDEMP-TIVE SERVANT LEADER



Mr. Celestin Bahizi, Deputy
Principal – Administration &
Finance

As well-trained redemptive servant leaders, you, our graduates are expected to employ the skills acquired from your training, especially in Legal Compliance and Accounting class and be good stewards of God's resources. The challenge of the church today is not so much the lack of money, but rather it is the lack of proper planning, recording, and accountability (Jack A. Henry, 1994). Many church leaders think that accounting and accountability of church resources (Money) is for business entities; whereas many others have been given a wrong perception of money in terms of financial controls, they think it is not right, it is distrusting the people of God that have been entrusted with church finances, hence

they regard money and financial stewardship principles as subjects that should be outside the church. But the Bible says, "Be sure you know the condition of your flocks, give careful attention to your herds" Prov. 27:23 (NIV). It is next to impossible to be sure of the condition of the flock unless proper control and accountability systems are put in place, therefore it is imperative for you the trained redemptive servant leaders to be good stewards of God's resources and flock, and to provide controls and accountability systems for church resources.

Financial management, financial controls, and accountability practices are very crucial in the life of a servant leader. Such practices ensure efficiency in resource mobilization, and effective use of resources, enhance trust in the leadership of the organization, and promote transparency, and as a result, all lead to a healthy church. (Prentice Beth, 1980) in her research "Church Accounting" states that systems of accounting in most churches are inadequate." She continues to say that, "Lack of proper financial control for church resources leads to church deficiency."

God expects us not to cause deficiencies in the church, He expects us to take good care of the resources entrusted to

us, to be good stewards. This, therefore, in this concept, includes the church, and church resources entrusted to us as church leaders. According to Genesis 1:26-28, God created a man in his likeness, entrusted him with the creation, and gave him a mandate to take dominion over it. A man was commanded to be fruitful and multiply and not misuse what God created. The multiplication and productivity effect are a stewardship concept. Good stewardship is simply exercising the God-given authority and leadership over His creation, reflecting God's image in us by caring, offering good maintenance, protection, and safeguarding, and adding value to His creation.

The church generally exists on the account of trust; hence, believers give to the church in their expression of worship to God and they do so trusting that their giving will be used well. It is, therefore, important for servant leaders in the church to have financial controls and accountability practices. As stewards of God, and servant leaders trained at Africa College of Theology, you need to be faithful and accountable in managing God's resources and portray a good image of what ACT is to the church and the community.

Raising Redemptive Servant Leaders Through Quality Education



Dr. Wole Adegbile – Director, Quality Assurance, Africa College of Theology

Theological education is critical for shaping a country's religious landscape and the general well-being of its citizens. Furthermore, it is becoming widely known in theological circles that, among other continents, Africa is emerging as the center of gravity for Christianity. African churches have seen a significant increase in the number of lives turning to Christ. Bringing this closer home, the Fifth Population and Housing Census shows that Rwanda's population is more than 90% Christian. With so many Christ followers, the question becomes whether there are enough well-trained leaders to shepherd them. The statistics show otherwise. According to a 2015 survey, barely 5% of African pastors had theological training. Africa's lack of skilled pastors has several consequences. One of the consequences is a lack of appropriate discipleship, in which individuals just profess Christianity verbally but not in practice. Another example is leadership abuse in churches, as we just experienced in Kenya, an East African country, when a preacher indoctrinated church members into fasting till death.

All these realities point to the imminent need for quality theological education in Africa. The Rwandan government is therefore commended for taking an exemplary step of making theological education mandatory for all pastors, hoping that other African nations will follow suit.

Africa College of Theology (ACT) has positioned itself to be a crucial part of what God is doing in Africa by committing itself to training redemptive servant leaders through the attainment of character formation, academic training, and professional skills. One way by which the institution seeks to achieve this vision is through quality education.

As a theological institution, ACT has embraced a steadfast commitment to delivering quality education that aligns with the expectations of its stakeholders and, most significantly, with its divine calling. Since our accreditation by the Higher Education Council (HEC) three years ago, we have been unwavering in our dedication to meeting and surpassing the expectations of our founders, promoters, regulatory bodies, the government of Rwanda, and the church of Christ.

In our pursuit of excellence, we have undertaken focused activities that are geared toward the attainment of our mission and vision, with a specific focus on accountability, faculty quality, robust quality assurance, and active student engagement.

Because of our undying commitment to raising redemptive servant leaders, we have ensured the delivery of quality education in the following areas:

Quality of Programs and Modules: We are dedicated to delivering high-quality academic programs and modules that align with international standards and cater to the needs of our students.

Quality of Academic Staff: We place a premium on recruiting and retaining highly

qualified faculty members who possess both expertise and dedication to provide exceptional education and mentorship.

Quality of Teaching and Learning Experience: We cultivate an environment that fosters effective teaching and learning methodologies, ensuring that our students have access to engaging and enriching educational experiences.

Quality in Student Assessment: We employ rigorous and fair assessment methods to accurately evaluate our students' knowledge and skills, providing meaningful feedback and supporting their academic growth.

Quality in Support Services: We offer comprehensive support services, including counseling, career guidance, and academic assistance, to ensure the holistic development and success of our students.

Quality of Resources and Facilities: We continuously invest in state-of-the-art resources and facilities to create a conducive learning environment that enhances the educational journey of our students. One of these are our virtual rooms and Learning Management System (LMS) which enrich teaching and learning experiences in the virtual and online spaces.

Quality of Research: We actively encourage and support research activities among our faculty and students, fostering a culture of intellectual curiosity and knowledge advancement within our institution. Our faculty and students are supported to publish academic works in peer-reviewed journals and present papers in academic conferences.

Through our unwavering commitment and concerted efforts in these areas, we remain dedicated to upholding higher standards in raising redemptive servant leaders who will positively impact society and fulfill their divine calling. As we ensure quality education, we believe that ACT has found its proper place in raising leaders for the growing body of Christ in Africa and being part of the holistic growth of Rwanda, Africa, and the world at large.

We believe that the words of Ecclesiastes 10:9, "Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might" (NKJV), also speak about commitment to quality. We, therefore, purpose to play our role well as we seek to raise redemptive servant leaders for the body of Christ in Africa and beyond.

Redemptive Servant Leadership: A Cornerstone at Africa College of Theology



Rev Fred Isaac Kaatagwa, Executive Director,
Africa New Life Ministries, Rwanda

First and foremost, I would like to sincerely congratulate each one of our graduates. Congratulations on your well-deserved accomplishment and milestone! Your perseverance and faith in God have carried you to this point. With the same sincerity, I offer deep appreciation to the faculty and staff of ACT who have diligently and extraordinarily served God through this institution. Your sense of ownership has made this institution flourish. Serving as the Executive Director of Africa New Life Ministries, the mother institution of ACT, has granted me a great opportunity to observe the life-changing impact of servant leadership—a legacy imparted by our highly regarded president, Rev. Dr. Charles Mugisha—and upheld by our principals and leaders at the Africa College of Theology. The genesis of the greatness of the ACT dates to the impactful years of the late Dr. Gerald Sseruwagi who served as our institution's first principal. As the embodiment of servant leadership, Dr. Gerald created an atmosphere in which every member of the ACT community was appreciated and valued. He not only preached the virtues of servant leadership, but he embodied them in a way that spoke to the ACT's core values. The values of humility, empathy, and sincere care that still stand strong at ACT serve as a testament to his selfless legacy that has continued to live on in the ACT community.

One thing stands true for ACT: Servant Leadership! This is more than just a concept that is learned; it is a living princi-

ple that is deeply rooted in the very core of our educational institution. We emphasize the significant influence leaders can have when they put the needs of others above their own. ACT being a transformational place not only for our staff and faculty but to our students, parallels to a family that pursues spiritual growth together, believes in teamwork, and gives everyone who joins the community a sense of belonging.

Many things attest to the greatness of the Africa College of Theology. However, Redemptive servant leadership at ACT stands out because it goes beyond theory and is visible in the classrooms, corridors, and social spaces. I have had opportunities to teach some courses at ACT and I have seen firsthand the transformative potential of this leadership philosophy. ACT does not only ensure the academic training of the students, but it also nurtures and directs them on a journey of self-discovery, encouraging them to reach their full potential and actively contribute to society. We have different ministries in which our students get involved during their time at ACT: Hospital evangelism ministry, School outreach ministry, and our weekly vibrant student's chapel. All of these enable our students to put into the practice the theory learned in class.

One of the students, who is also graduating this year, once said "I never knew I had to invest in the knowledge of God to such an extent, but I now recognize that the time I spent learning and thoroughly comprehending Redemptive Servant Leadership was the gap between what God called me to do a few years ago and accomplishing it. And I have no doubt that God will use me to have a significant impact on the people around me."

In addition to servant leadership, the ACT leadership paradigm includes the concept of redemptive leadership. Redemptive leadership, as practiced and exemplified by our Lord Jesus Christ throughout his time here on earth emphasizes the possibility of personal and collective transformation. This leadership style acknowledges people's flaws and strives for constructive transformation through mentorship, advice, and a commitment to the community's general well-being.

The redemptive leadership model recognizes that everyone has the potential for growth and positive transformation. It establishes an environment in which mistakes are considered as chances for learning and progress rather than a basis for condemnation. This approach, along with servant leadership develops a peaceful and empowered environment at ACT resulting in an educational experience that extends beyond academics.

Africa College of Theology, with its emphasis on redemptive servant leadership and under the leadership of men and women who exemplify this form of leadership, has become a beacon of excellence and a testament to the transformative power of leadership rooted in humility and compassion. As we celebrate the achievements of our graduates, we also honor the legacy of our founding leaders whose principles continue to shape the character and course of this institution.

Finally, the merging of servant and redemptive leadership at the Africa College of Theology has given rise to a unique and mindful environment in which individuals are not only educated but also empowered to lead with integrity, compassion, and a desire for positive change. As we look ahead, these leadership principles will continue to serve as the foundation of the ACT, inspiring and directing future generations.

THE TRENDS OF A REDEMPITIVE LEADER



Rev. Chispine Katiyi Banda, Chaplain & Dean of Students

A redemptive leader involves embracing the concept of redemption, which implies the restoration and transformation of people and situations for the better. As a leader, your primary focus is not only just on achieving success but also on facilitating the growth, development, and well-being of those you lead.

Embrace the Concept of Redemption. Redemptive leadership is founded on the belief that both persons and circumstances possess the capacity for favorable metamorphosis. Based on the text, it is apparent that the objective of Christ's mission was to modify the state of mankind. *"At the opportune moment, when we lacked power, Christ selflessly offered himself as a sacrifice for those who do not adhere to religious beliefs"* (Romans 5:6).

This concept is around recognizing the inherent potential in individuals and the possibilities for positive change in any given cir-

cumstance. Redemptive leadership fosters personal development by prompting individuals to introspect on their errors and foster a forgiving atmosphere that permits opportunities for redemption.

Redemptive leadership acknowledges the significance of forgiveness and opportunities for personal growth and improvement. Effective leaders in this framework comprehend that individuals are prone to making errors and facing setbacks, and they are prepared to provide assistance and motivation to aid individuals in learning from their experiences and progressing constructively. During Jesus' teachings on forgiveness, he instructed his students to forgive on a repeated basis, specifically seventy-seven times. *"I assure you, not merely seven times, but rather seventy-seven times."* (Matthew 18:22) Jesus underscores the concept of forgiveness and affording individuals opportunities for redemption with this statement.

Leaders cultivate an atmosphere of clemency and opportunities for redemption, which fosters a sense of security for individuals to go into new endeavors and derive lessons from their mistakes, free from the apprehension of harsh repercussions. This method not only fosters personal development but also nurtures a feeling of confidence and commitment among team members, resulting in enhanced efficiency and overall achievement.

Foster empathy and comprehension. Redemptive leaders possess an awareness and comprehension of the hardships and obstacles encountered by their team members. Their goal is to sympathize with their experiences and display a sincere comprehension of their predicament. Jesus exhibited redemptive leadership through his ministry. Upon witnessing the multitude, Jesus felt a deep sense of empathy towards them, since

they were being mistreated and vulnerable, like sheep without guidance from a shepherd (Matthew 9:35, English Standard Version).

This capacity for empathy cultivates a setting in which individuals have a sense of worth and assistance, nurturing a culture characterized by trust and cooperation. Redemptive leaders establish a profound connection with their team members by fostering empathy and understanding. This relationship enables them to effectively handle any difficulties or concerns that may occur, ultimately resulting in enhanced performance and general happiness within the team. Moreover, this compassionate approach fosters transparent communication and motivates team members to freely express their thoughts and viewpoints without apprehension of being evaluated or criticized.

Display Integrity and Transparency. Redemptive leaders exhibit a resolute dedication to truthfulness and forthrightness. They demonstrate a strong commitment to ethical behavior and open communication, working hard to build trust and credibility with their colleagues. In 1 Samuel 12:3-5, King Samuel exemplifies the characteristics of redemptive leadership by asserting his innocence and integrity as a leader while addressing the Israelites. He proclaimed: *"Here I stand."* Bear witness against me in the face of the Lord and his chosen one. Whose ox have I confiscated? Whose donkey did

I confiscate? Whom have I deceived? Who is the person I have oppressed? From whom have I received a bribe to get me to close my eyes? If I have committed any of these actions, I will rectify the situation. The individuals asserted that he had not engaged in deceit or exploitation toward them, and Samuel reaffirmed his dedication to moral and equitable governance.

This struggle highlighted his unwavering commitment to truly serving the people. Redemptive leaders establish a vital basis of trust via the demonstration of integrity, which is essential for inspiring and guiding others toward positive change. Redemptive leaders exhibit an unwavering commitment to transparency by their persistent practice of behaving and making judgments with utmost honesty and openness.

They prioritize honest and inclusive communication, ensuring that their team members are well-informed and actively engaged in the decision-making process. This approach fosters a climate of trust and collaboration, where every member is valued and empowered to make significant contributions towards the team's success.

Facilitate Advancement and Progress. An essential element of being a redemptive leader is dedicating resources to the advancement and progress of your team members. This entails offering prospects for education, proficiency enhancement, and individual advance-

ment. Redemptive leaders are dedicated to facilitating the realization of individuals' complete capabilities and attaining personal and professional advancement. Apostle Paul played a vital role in mentoring and providing guidance to Timothy and Titus, who were becoming leaders in the nascent Christian church, to help them achieve their maximum capabilities.

This is evident in the bond that Paul shared with them, as shown in the statement *"This charge I entrust to you, my son Timothy"* (1 Timothy 1:8). *"To Titus, my genuine offspring in our shared belief"* (Titus 1:4). Redemptive leaders recognize that by promoting growth and advancement, they are not only helping their team members but also enhancing the overall performance of the firm. Redemptive leaders foster a culture of ongoing enhancement and enable their team members to embrace fresh challenges and increased responsibilities by investing in their team's development. The trend of the redemptive leader entails the act of encouraging and motivating people to achieve their utmost capabilities. Redemptive leaders exemplify their values, exhibit fervor and dedication, and motivate their team members to adopt a mentality of progress and potential.

They possess a comprehension of the significance of acknowledging and commemorating the accomplishments of their team members. Additionally, they offer

direction and assistance to aid them in surmounting difficulties and barriers. Redemptive leaders cultivate a constructive and empowering work atmosphere, instilling a strong sense of purpose and motivation that inspires their team to achieve outstanding results.

Exemplify Resilience and Perseverance. Redemptive leaders exhibit the ability to bounce back from challenges and actively promote the quality of persisting despite difficulties. As expressed by Paul, *"We are experiencing significant challenges from all directions, but we are not completely overwhelmed; we are confused and uncertain, but we have not lost all hope; we are being mistreated and oppressed, but we are not left alone; we are being defeated and knocked down, but we are not completely ruined. We constantly bear within our physical selves the crucifixion of Jesus, for the resurrection and vitality of Jesus to be shown in our bodies"*.

The reference is to the Bible verse 2 Corinthians 4:8-11. Redemptive leaders comprehend that setbacks and challenges are an intrinsic aspect of the process toward achieving positive transformation. They exemplify the mentality and actions required to surmount barriers and persist in progressing. These leaders motivate people to view problems as chances for development and education, cultivating a culture of adaptability inside their enterprises. Through the act of

sharing personal narratives of triumphing over challenges, they inspire a feeling of optimism and resolve in the individuals they guide, motivating them to persist despite formidable situations.

Highlight Servant Leadership. Redemptive leaders exemplify the tenets of servant leadership, placing the needs of their team members as a top priority and actively striving to facilitate their achievements. Jesus, in his role as the Son of Man, came not to receive service, but to provide service and sacrifice his life as a ransom for many. The reference is to Mark 10:45.

Redemptive leaders are committed to providing service to others, enabling team members, and fostering possibilities for both individual and group success. These leaders comprehend that prioritizing the needs of their team members may cultivate a culture characterized by trust, cooperation, and development. They engage in active listening to address their team members' issues and ideas, while offering advice and support to facilitate their maximum growth.

Embrace Hope and Vision. Succeeding as a transformative leader necessitates leading with a sense of optimism and a clear vision. Redemptive leaders effectively communicate a captivating vision for the future, giving a feeling of hope, intention, and potential. They motivate people to have faith in the capacity for favorable alteration and metamorphosis.

Redemptive leaders inspire and motivate others by vividly illustrating a compelling vision of what the future may hold.

This vision fosters a common understanding of goals and ignites a collective determination to achieve achievement. They see that hope and vision are not only theoretical ideas but potent instruments that may mobilize teams and organizations toward their objectives. These leaders cultivate a conducive climate for innovation and progress, inspiring individuals to exert their utmost efforts towards a more promising future. Jeremiah conveys a divine word to the Israelites who have been banished to Babylon. *"I am aware of the intentions I have for you,"* proclaims the Lord, intentions that include your success and well-being, intentions that provide you optimism and a promising future. Subsequently, you will summon me and approach me in supplication, and I will attentively to your entreaties.

In conclusion, redemptive leaders are characterized by a deep commitment to the growth, development, and well-being of others. They embrace the concept of redemption, leading with empathy and integrity, and fostering a culture of growth and positivity, redemptive leaders create environments where individuals and teams can truly thrive. Ultimately, redemptive leadership is about inspiring, supporting, and guiding others toward positive transformation and the fulfillment of their potential.

THE IT /E-LEARNING: AN INTEGRAL PART OF REDEMPITIVE SERVANT LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Lyliane Nyirarukundo - E-Learning Director

In today's rapidly evolving world, technology plays a crucial role in the lives of many people. At ACT, we recognize that technology provides a platform for individuals to access a wealth of knowledge and resources, enabling them to develop the necessary skills and competencies required for effective leadership. It is our goal that all of our students have access to digital or physical resources that enable them to accommodate their busy schedules while balancing their leadership commitments with educational pursuits.

Africa College of Theology provides various technological facilities to assist our students. Our learning facilities, including computer labs, smart classrooms, printing offices, and an online learning platform, play a significant role in enabling our students to engage in self-paced learning and access educational materials at their convenience. Printing office materials include access to printers, scanners, and copiers, allowing students to easily print out important documents or make copies of study materials. Additionally, our online learning platform provides a vast array of resources such as e-books, interactive tutorials, and multimedia content that can be accessed anytime and anywhere. By providing access to technology, we aim to empower our students to stay connected and engaged in their leadership roles, whether it be through virtual meetings or online collaboration platforms.

We understand that technology not only enhances their learning experience but also equips them with the tools needed to navigate an increasingly digital world.

These technological facilities not only support our students' academic endeavors but also foster their digital literacy skills, preparing them for success in the modern workforce.

With these technological resources in place, we strive to empower our students to become redemptive servant leaders who can navigate the digital landscape confidently and effectively while serving the kingdom of God in Rwanda and globally. Additionally, our IT support team is readily available to assist students with any technical issues they may encounter, ensuring a seamless learning experience. It is our hope that the skills acquired by our students at ACT will be scaled up to more people as they serve them redemptively.

Championing the Cause of Theological Education

Manase Ogola, Deputy Principal – Academic Affairs

Today, Africa has become a major hub of theology and Christianity. With the high growth of Christianity in the continent, there is a call for qualified personnel in the work of the church, and para-church organizations thereby making theological education indispensable. Africa College of Theology is championing this cause as a premium College in Africa that trains redemptive servant leaders.

The college currently has two active accredited programs: Bachelor of Arts in Theology and Leadership, and Post Graduate Diploma in Theology and Leadership. These programs have been designed to engage aspiring ministers and Christian leaders in high-level academic activities and promote professionalism within the Church and ministry activities in Africa. Upon completion of the program, our students will be fully equipped and highly educated to fully serve their communities in the Church and ministry with a sound Christian doctrine and world-class knowledge of theology and leadership. Our program also prepares students to be flexible and innovative in their field of ministry, develop a lifestyle of a redemptive servant leader,

and exhibit an attitude of teachability and commitment to life-long learning.

With the blended learning mode, our students are able to attend their theoretical classes while doing practical ministry at the same time in the field. Such a blend enables students to engage both in the theoretical and practical elements of their subjects and how it applies to issues in their community.

Our students are from different countries that include: Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Kenya, Uganda, USA, Liberia, Angola, Liberia, Gambia, and Nigeria.

The college also offers professional short courses that include Christian Counselling, Leadership Principles for Global Impact, and Transformational Youth Ministry.

As we celebrate our first graduation, we are so overjoyed to see the fruitful labor over the years. To our graduands: You are going out to the world, which expects a lot from you. You will face challenges, but be faithful to your cause. We have trained you to be redemptive servant leaders, ready to serve the world. Go out and serve! As you struggle to find your place in the society, you might stumble and fall, but always have the courage to stand up and try again with dignity.

For your success is our pride!



CELEBRATING THE POWER OF PERSISTENCE IN ACHIEVING REDEMPITIVE SERVANT LEADERSHIP

CPA Isaa Ntambara, Finance Manager

A very big and warm congratulation to the graduating class of 2024! It was a tough journey but you proved to be tougher. With a character of continued resilience and high level of commitment powered by the Holy Spirit you maintained, redemptively (sacrificially), the focus to attain the pinnacle of your success. As redemptive servant leaders, you have been fully equipped and commissioned to the world. Evidently, we note that you have demonstrated a high level of resilience, depicted while at Africa college of theology (ACT) in learning and adapting to the dynamics of the college through the challenging moments such as COVID 19.

As we celebrate you today, we are reminded that you are called to be and possess the character of a redemptive servant leader in your leadership journey. You can only be able to do this, as you keep your eyes focused onto the leadership style of the Author of the redemptive servant leadership paradigm, the Lord Jesus Christ himself. In John 13:4-5, Jesus introduces something completely new to His disciples that they had never seen or heard of, while at a meal. This changes the disciples' perspective to leadership completely – the servant leadership paradigm. This, Jesus does by intentionally choosing to wash the feet of all the disciples. Strive to be a leader that is humble and who will always seek to draw out the best in his/her followers; encouraging, sharing, and willing to care for redemptive change; and doing so in times of need. This exemplary leadership is worth emulating and adopting.



You have been equipped with all knowledge and understanding pertaining to foundational theology and leadership. We have no doubt that you will be able to deliver to people of God as redemptive servant leaders. However, you will not have to wait until the people come to you for service, we see Jesus sending His disciples to the world to preach and baptizing in His name those who believe in Him (Mk 16:15-16). This is also an opportunity to share redemptive knowledge to those that serve in the community of Rwanda and beyond.

For an emphasis, I would gladly remark that, you put to effective use every aspect of redemptive servant leadership you have acquired at Africa College of Theology. Perhaps I see this in Jethro-Moses model of relationship. Jethro demonstrated an articulate example of a wise and seasoned observant servant leader who was able to advise Moses to come down from a lofty “big-man” perspective of leadership, to that of a delegative servant leader. And that this would also be a two-way transactional (shared) approach of give and take. In this we see Moses depicting a humble (servant) attitude and accepted to learn from his father-in-law (Jethro). To this end, as redemptive servant leaders, you will always be expected to advise and also allow to be advised so that your leadership journey will be empathetic, therapeutic, dynamic, smooth, and effective.

Further still, we note Joseph’s model of leadership, in which Joseph who had been betrayed by his own brothers, by the grace of God, becomes second in command only to the king in a country (Egypt) that wasn’t his. He had depicted a very good example of what a redemptive servant leader ought to be. This should teach you in your leadership life that you will often encounter issues that sabotage the good intentions you, or others, as leader(s) have. However, a heart that forgives, that seeks the best in people, that provides hope in bad situations, is a redemptive heart. Taking this dimension to leadership will take you far and give God the glory.

Finally, as Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:12, “*Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses*”. By doing that you will be good, redemptive servant leaders and, therefore, good ambassadors of Jesus Christ.

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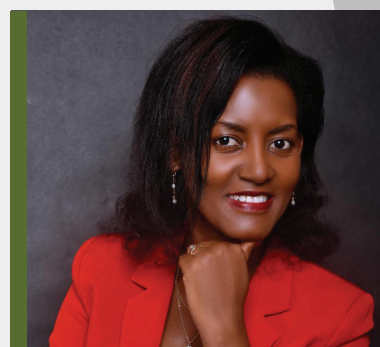
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Ps. Chripine Katyi Banda
College Chaplain

THE ROLE OF ACT LIBRARY IN DEVELOPING REDEMPTIVE SERVANT LEADERS

Ms. Ingabire Immaculate, Librarian

Graduation is understood to be an event that symbolizes the finishing of an educational journey, or course of study at a university or an educational institution. Cambridge Dictionary defines it as “The ceremony at which you are officially said to have finished.” It marks the end of students’ current academic journey at ACT, prompting reflection on years of hard work, growth, and cherished memories. Our learners have spent many hours in the library doing research and equipping themselves with the knowledge that has enabled them to be raised into redemptive servant leaders who mirror virtues such as justice, faith, hope, and love for humanity.

In supporting the mission and vision of ACT, the library continues to provide quality services by giving needful information resources. Such resources have equipped our students, faculty, re-

searchers, and the academic community at large to pursue the quest of becoming redemptive servant leaders. These resources include both print and electronic resources. Moreover, the library has invested in various systems such as Library Thing, which enables students to access library holdings from the comfort of their homes. Students are also able to remotely access electronic databases such as JSTOR that contain peer-reviewed journal articles in all subject areas.

With the growth of information communication technology, the library continues to explore electronic resources and software that complement traditional physical resources. Such software includes Logos, a Bible software which is a vast library of resources, including commentary, dictionaries, and other reference works. Theology students and scholars have benefited from this resource.

The library also provides a conducive learning environment that is critical in modeling redemptive servant leaders that resonate with the saying that ‘leaders must be readers’ and “a day spent without a reading book is a day wasted.” This implies that our library users can interact with thousands of resources that expose them to the wisdom of various writers and lead them to cultivate such virtues as kindness, humility as well as faithfulness.

The library is proud to have contributed to the development of redemptive servant leaders who will create workplace environments and ministries that are peaceful, focused, enjoyable, trusting, and thriving in the transformation of society. We all have a reason to say a big ‘thank you’ to the Almighty God as we celebrate the achievements, and aspirations of today’s graduands and the excitement of new beginnings. Together, we are embarking on a transformative path filled with endless possibilities.

REDEMPTIVE SERVANT LEADERSHIP, A NEW PARADIGM OF LEADERSHIP STYLE

John Baptist Nsabimana, President, Students Council, 2022 - 2023

In his explanation of what leadership is all about John Maxwell writes, “Leadership is influence. That is it. Nothing more; nothing less”. Maxwell’s views on leadership and his prolific writing have not inhibited countless others from sharing their views of leadership as well. While varying views and definitions exist, there is overwhelming agreement on one premise: everyone has a measure of influence and, in turn, is a leader in some form or fashion.

After decades of leadership talks, scholars have failed to come up with a common definition for leadership. Because of such factors as growing global influences and generational differences, leadership will continue to have different meanings for different people. The bottom line is that leadership is a complex concept for which a determined definition may long be in flux.

We, ACT graduands, are grateful to God and to ACT leadership. At ACT, we were introduced to the concept of Redemptive Servant Leadership and we are graduating convinced that indeed

redemptive leadership introduces a different paradigm of leadership. While most popular models promote the idea of “how to do leadership” Redemptive Servant Leadership promotes the concept of “how to become a leader”. It shows how leaders develop beyond external stages of leadership competencies to internal stages that are critical to leadership growth and creditability.

ACT has helped us to understand clearly and practically that Redemptive Servant Leadership involves a process of growth in the life of the leader, a process that unleashes meaningful life from one’s painful past, the bad, the good, and the ugly; failures in one’s life story, the high points, low points, turning points and memories. It involves the process of redeeming individuals from memories of grief, suffering, and trauma, so that, by divine mercy offered by Jesus Christ the Chief Redeemer of mankind, they can embrace a hopeful future despite their past.

The Redemptive Servant Leadership concept refers to the five stages of the de-

velopmental progression of a leader. This progression includes the competency stage, the principle stage, the character stage, the transformation stage, and the redemptive stage. For a leader to attain the redemptive stage she/he must have undergone many crises and come out victoriously and proclaim the same message as Paul: Nothing can separate me from the love of God! (Romans 8:35-39).

During the redemptive stage of a leader’s journey, she/he has learned many lessons by experience and is able to see the good in the lives of people, instead of just identifying their sin and failure. Through this, redemptive leaders can offer forgiveness and channel the lives of other leaders around them to help them fulfill their God-given potential and destiny.

The opposite of redemption is fall. People who don’t practice redemptive leadership end up modeling fallen leadership. The contrast is stark. When we practice fallen leadership, we seek to “lord it over” those who follow us. Nevertheless, re-

demptive leadership serves those we lead. Fallen leadership focuses on control and power. Redemptive leadership pursues authority through humility. At home or at work, when we lead with humility, we reflect our Savior's redemptive leadership.

Leading redemptively requires a worldview that sees the Creation as fallen, and recognizes not only the need for its redemption but the command and authority granted to engage as redemptive agents. The redemptive leader views authority as a God-given responsibility that is inseparable from image-bearing and required to be carried out with humility and love. And this is what we have acquired from ACT and we are resolved to practice

Somehow, and to some extent, all of us graduating students, during our years of ministry and study at ACT, have experienced this developmental progression of Redemptive Servant Leadership. We have been tried and tested, we have experienced ups and downs, and we have realized that God's intention for our lives as leaders is to transform our story into a redemptive servant leadership experience, whereby our leadership actions and decisions are shaped by what the loving God has taken us through.

As graduating students who are setting out for ministries, the developmental progression of our leadership making has taught (and will teach) us to look and fix our eyes on Jesus the perfecter

of our faith. During our stay at ACT, we have learned that God uses all the events of our lives, both positive and negative, to forge in us our redemptive influence for his Kingdom. If the gospel holds any power at all, it does so, because God works powerfully in and through our weaknesses.



A STORY OF RESILIENCE: DISABILITY IS NOT INABILITY



Victor Zinda, Graduating Students

My name is Victor Zinda. I am a minister at Eglise Vivante, Kabuga. I am also a husband to one wife and a father to four children. I used to be part of a Bible training program Pastor Charles Mugisha, the founder of Africa College of Theology (ACT), was conducting for ministers of the Gospel in 2004. Since my exposure to theological education through that program, I have always had a heart for studying theology. In 2021, when I heard that

ACT had been accredited by the Higher Education Council (HEC), I quickly ran for the opportunity and joined the college. Now I am graduating with a Post-Graduate Diploma in Theology and Leadership. I give God praise for his servants and this unique experience.

When I started my studies at ACT, I had many responsibilities on my shoulders as a husband, father, employee, minister, and student. I had to juggle between all these

responsibilities at the same time and without failing to carry out my duties in any of them. I was stretched financially, mentally, and even socially.

Meanwhile, three years before (specifically in 2018) I joined ACT, my daughter was involved in a car accident and was in a state of coma for months. The accident caused serious damage to her nerves so she could neither speak nor move. We took her for treatment in

many places including Rwanda, India, and then in Kenya.

My daughter's accident and her subsequent illness brought us to financial, psychological, and emotional exhaustion. We were stretched in many ways. Amid all these, as a family, we remained connected to God and put our trust in him. At some point, my wife moved with our daughter to Nairobi, Kenya, so she could receive further treatments. I remained in Rwanda alone with the rest of the family. Words cannot describe how tough it was for me and my family. But we thank God for his grace. During all these times of trial, it got to a point where I could no longer have enough income to sustain the family, pay for my child's treatment, and pay for the school fees. Also, I need to mention that I have been physically challenged since I was 1 year old. Combining this with the fact that my wife is away posed a difficult challenge.

With my wife away, it became my duty to ensure that domestic activities were carried out. Considering my physical disability, managing myself and the home was very tough, especially at the beginning. I realized I needed to work harder to ensure that duties at work, ministry, family, and school were well attended and none of them suffered. School as-

signments were particularly a lot, but I understand that they are part of the price for quality education. As I continued with my studies, I was faced with the option of quitting College or continuing without paying fees. But I knew God wanted me to continue. So, I did.

Praise be to God, who would never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5). He worked through ACT administration to enable me to continue with college. First, they allowed me to pay my fees in a bearable installment. And later when an opportunity arose, the administration recommended me for a full scholarship. I was so overjoyed.

Another challenge to my study at ACT, when my wife was in Nairobi, was transportation. Being physically challenged, I couldn't drive myself. Before she left for Nairobi, she would drop me off at the College but once she left it meant I had no one to drop me off again. But miraculously, God blessed us with a brother in the Lord (whom God used my family to mentor spiritually). He volunteered to drop me off at the College all through the time I needed to attend classes.

I thank God for all he has done for me – my family, my work, and my daughter for all the time I have been at

ACT. I am also grateful for the community of ACT. The hospitality shown by both lecturers and students usually uplifted my spirit. The College facilities provided an inclusive environment. All public places at the College are easily accessible for everyone including people with disabilities.

Despite the various challenges I faced, and despite being physically disabled, it certainly did not discourage me from pursuing further studies. Neither did my disability become an excuse for not doing class assignments or attending lectures. Because I know disability is not inability. Regardless of any physical disability I may have, the Spirit of the Lord works powerfully in me to accomplish his good purpose. I trust God that my testimony will be an encouragement to every challenged person out there who puts all their trust in God and steps out with courage and unceasing hope. For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations (Psalms 100:5). Amen.

A STORY OF RESILIENCE: I EVER THOUGHT THIS DAY WOULD NEVER COME

Alphonsine Byusa, Graduating Student

My name is Alphonsine Byusa, graduating with a Bachelor of Arts in Theology and Leadership at Africa College of Theology. I first joined the Africa College of Theology (ACT) in 2015. Although a lot of things were going on in my life during that time, I had a strong passion for helping other people. I knew the only way I could help them was by showing them the way of God. So, I started my bachelor's degree in theology at ACT. Some of my friends laughed and mocked me because they could not see what kind of career I was going to build by studying Theology. And to be honest, neither did I. However, I had faith in that voice that spoke my heart about doing theology. I knew being at ACT was the right direction God wanted me to take.

When I started my studies, I had no stable financial support. This meant that there were days when I would come to the College on foot. I would sometimes trek from Kacyiru to Remera before I could connect to campus by transport. My parents being in old age did not have

enough to support me financially, but I thank God I have some minimal support from them and other family members.

There were times when my family could not support me with tuition fees, nevertheless, I got financial provisions from places I did not imagine. Looking back today, it is hard to explain how I have made it through to the end of my studies. I just know I was there in 2015 as a new student, and now I am here in 2024 as a graduating student. I believe that God himself was the one who stood with me all through the journey.

Apart from financial challenges, I also had a big challenge with the English language. It was so tough for me at the beginning. But I thank God for all the English modules we took during my studies and the continuous use of the Language Centre at ACT. The Centre was coordinated by Rev Ben Oyeye. Through all these available means and support, I was able to improve my use of the English language.

My biggest challenge had to do with me having to stop studying at ACT at some point. When I joined ACT in 2015, the College was operating with an accreditation from a foreign accrediting body. In 2018, it was closed to undergo accreditation with the Higher Education Council (HEC) of Rwanda. By the time ACT reopened in 2021, HEC had instructed that all the students who do not have at least two Principal Passes in their high school education should not be allowed to enroll in the College.

Sadly, I did not have this entry requirement by HEC. The only alternative for me was to stop studying at ACT. I left the College immediately to redo my high school examination in July of that year. I initially felt discouraged. In the end, I sat for the exam, the results came in December 2021, and I passed. So, in December 2021 I rejoined ACT, starting afresh as a new student. It has been nine years since I first joined Africa College of Theology, and now I am graduating. There were times when I felt as if this day would never come.

But finally, it's here. God has been faithful and kind to me in many ways. Praise be to him!

Looking back at all this, I give God glory. I am not in any way the same person I used to be before joining ACT nine years ago. I am more grounded, bolder, wiser, and stronger than ever before! Truly, "the righteous person may have many trou-

bles, but the Lord delivers him from them all" (Psalms 34:19 NIV). So, I would like to sincerely thank all the faculty and students of ACT for their love, prayers, and support. They were always there for me during my weakest moments. I pray that this culture of love continues at ACT. I have been a beneficiary of this loving spirit and I believe it is a crucial element that made the College unique in its bid to train redemptive servant leaders for Christ. Bless the Lord!