

# SPECIFICITIES OF THE AWAKENING OR FIFOHAZANA WITHIN THE MALAGASY LUTHERAN CHURCH

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## ABSTRACT

*The Lutheran World Federation announces that the Malagasy Lutheran Church is the largest growing Lutheran Church in the world. There are around 3,000,000 Lutheran believers in Madagascar. This is mainly due to Fifohazana. It is said that there is a church that appears every month in Madagascar. This Fifohazana was founded by the Holy Spirit and this God who was led the Leaders says: "Raïamandreny" in Malagasy. They have been given a special vocation to preach the gospel and to perform signs and miracles by means of the Word of God, prayer, and deliverance. In addition, they were called by the Lord to share his message for individuals, which actually means a prophetic message. This is why they have been recognized by the Church organization as Spokespersons for the Lord. Then the Holy Spirit leads them to do the work of delivering people from idolatry, encourages them and leads them to become baptized as Christians. The Fifohazana has the Shepherds "Mpiandry" who are Christians convinced to exercise the ministry of preaching and bear witness to the kingdom of God. These shepherds and the Servants of God work together, to preach the Gospel in their area of activity, throughout the country of Madagascar and around the world, according to "Matthew 28: 19-20, Mark 16:15. The overall purpose of this specific Awakening is to bring about the deep relationship in Jesus. Epistemologically, ongoing work such as evangelization, exhortation, healing, charity, education, development can relate to various activities such as agriculture, animal husbandry, construction, crafts, family and household education, health maintenance, training. As the apostle Paul said: "There are various operations, but the same God who works all in all" 1 Cor. 12/6 "*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

It is a question of explaining the importance and the usefulness of this search topic, especially in the face of increasingly pressing and growing needs, particularly from the masses popular. There are many reasons: to face the shocks of the internal difficulties arising from the poverty of the country and also of the increasingly aggravated harmful consequences of the health and economic situation of the world order. The genesis of Fifohazana was marked by the great event of Pentecost at the origin of the appearance of the Christian Church, according to Acts chapters 1 and 2. On the historical level: the spiritual awakening in Madagascar was initiated and developed by the "Raïamandreny", leaders of the four Awakening Centers called "Fifohazana Tobilehibe Efatra": Soatanàna (1895-1900), Manolotrony (1910-1971), Ankaramalaza (1941-1998), Farihimena (1946-1947).

The fifohazana<sup>1</sup>broadened the Malagasy Christian faith while building on practical theology in the Malagasy Lutheran Church. Currently, the movement is being asked to renew its Fifohazana projects based on the theology of mission which now shows a consensus. : the mission of God<sup>2</sup>. To ensure its relevance, we will do an in-depth analysis of Fifohazana or the Awakening in Madagascar<sup>3</sup>.

In the light of the theological orientations offered by this mission of God based on the activity of Fifohazana in the heart of the Malagasy church, we suggest to build a contextualization project based on several theories concerning the mission, the activities of Fifohazana and its practices. Finally, the practice of revival or

fifohazana in the church could well constitute an important basis for the definition of a current missionary project in the Malagasy Lutheran Church.

Establish the general inventory to allow the Observation of the gap between the original Fifohazana transmitted by the Raiamandreny and the Experience and Practice of current Fifohazana: the facts and trends, points of agreement and disagreement.

The qualitative method is made of the investigation specific to the awakening or Fifohazana. It is a question of imposing the data on a framework of predefined questions. This method presents and requires the systematic approach that is applied to carry out the project of this theme.

The specificity of the Revival within the Lutheran Church in Madagascar will be carried out by scientific analysis based on the main works and theological texts. They were produced on these notions. Care should be taken to read them chronologically, from the oldest to the most recent. We will try to identify the main contents of these works which, on the one hand, seem to better define these notions and, on the other hand, make them a critical and distanced presentation.<sup>4</sup>

Ultimately, the purpose of this theme is to state what Fifohazana can say together today about the nature and mission of the Church. Thus, we are going to study to what extent it seems possible to overcome the divisions which still separate them on certain questions.

We will try in all objectivity to bring out the elements that formed the basis of the change in the activities of fifohazana within the Malagasy Lutheran Church. We will examine the main elements that install the architecture of biblical fifohazana. By having recourse to biblical theology and the notion of fifohazana or revelation in Madagascar, we will see how all the sacred documents reflect the fact that fifohazana is the divine activities to develop phlegmatically against the non-Christian life in this country. We will try to provide some avenues for theological reflection to support the idea of Fifohazana against other cultures. Special attention will be given to the notion of context. After having established it within the evolution of Fifohazana, we define the concept, we will try to understand the reluctance shown by certain evangelical revelations. To do this, we already know that at the heart of the context there are important hermeneutical and epistemological questions to be asked. After analysis, we will put forward the Malagasy Lutheran Church as a place of the context.

We will install what, in the opinion, composes the elements of Fifohazana which need to be highlighted not without having previously established and that it is unthinkable to dissociate the Gospel and the kingdom of God.<sup>5</sup> By taking into account the multiple orientations that the Gospel of the kingdom can take and the quest of the Malagasy population which is oriented according to the spiritual which gives meaning to life.

### **Age of Fifohazana in Madagascar**

It is true that at a time when Fifohazana was experiencing phenomenal growth around the 1940s and 2000s in Madagascar, there was little need to question the understanding of the classic revelation of the foundations of mission. However, as the growth in the number of churches from 1946-47<sup>6</sup> slowed down considerably, we were pushed by the circumstances to reflect on the meaning of the mission and the presence of Fifohazana within Malagasy society. The continuous resumption of readings of biblical and theological texts has led to questioning certain foundations of a theology of mission. Who were: Is soul salvation the only reason for the existence of mission in the Lutheran Church? Is the planting of local churches the ultimate goal of the mission? To what extent does the text of Matthew 28,18-20 represent the central text of the mission in the church or outside the church?<sup>7</sup>

Like the heterogeneous nature of the Fifohazana movement, it is difficult to clearly define what the Churches rely on to build their idea of the mission through the activities of Fifohazana in Madagascar. Despite the fact that the Fifohazana movement has an important voice on the issue of mission, the Lutheran Synodal Conference, Churches and "Toby Fifohazana" appear to have been unaware of the development of practical discussions of Fifohazana activities. . As a result, it has not implemented the guidelines identified in the Conference. After asking some evangelical leaders who attended this Conference, whether the Churches in general were following the Malagasy deliberations, we were surprised to learn that most of the<sup>8</sup>

### **Camp life**

The Camp is the work center of the Awakening. There are two types of camps: Tobilehibe (Grand Camp) and Camp. The Raiamandreny and the missionaries live in the Tobilehibe. There the Missionaries and Shepherds (Mpiandry) learn the teachings. The camp, on the other hand, is the result of the preaching of the gospel by missionaries and shepherds. Everyone who comes to the camp has a reason. There are many causes for which people go to camp; however, the heart of the journey is the search for Jesus. The Holy Spirit leads the people to the camp. There is a special house for people who ask for personal prayer or have problems. At the same time, all parenting activities are based on prayer, as well as work and encouragement.<sup>9</sup>

People who live in the camp do sacred service: Caring for people who come to seek comfort for their illness, or engage in missionary work, or perform exorcisms and Fifohazana worship. Work and encouragement is done every day, including morning and afternoon. Those in the camp study the scriptures led by the Raiamandreny

and the Pastor. We teach: - Repentance (Mat.4: 17 / Mar.1: 15 / Act.17: 30) - Faith (Jn14: 12 / Heb.11: 1/2 Cor.5: 7 / Mar.11 : 20-24) - New commandments (Jn.13: 34-35) - Humility (Mat.18: 3-4) - Religion (Luke 21: 36 / Col.3: 17) - Peace (Jn.15 ; 17) - Patience (Luke 21:19) - Holiness (Exd. 19: 2/1 Pier. 1:16).<sup>10</sup>

### **Fifohazana activities.**

The activities of Fifohazana are not only the integrating principle for the life of the Church. Sometimes they don't relate to all of the other activities. Like worship, Sunday school, prayer meetings, youth groups, it is considered by the Churches as a mission to those around them as another stage of the Church.<sup>11</sup> The place of revival activities in Madagascar is determined by leaders who, too often, place much more importance on the life of the Church than on the mission. Usually the mission, as it has been throughout the past centuries, is to send or support other people.<sup>12</sup>

Contrary to the interest that pastors take in the renewal of church models and more particularly in the form of worship, the movement has paid very little attention to examining the theological axes and presuppositions that underlie its practice. diakonia. Guided by pragmatism, churches are mostly content to seek new methods of evangelism so that they can adapt the message. The movement continues, with great human and financial efforts, to advance the Gospel with confidence. Indeed, the theological foundations of the mission need not be questioned.

### **Fifohazana events and Practices**

This is how the coordination and encouragement of work work. The Leader assigns the song of the Beginning. When the song is over, the Leader prays. Let's move on to the next step: free time is when the Leader assigns a song so that in a verse a person prays or reads the word of God. The leader plays a song before the sermon and when it is finished proceeds to the sermon. There are usually two sermons between songs. At important times, the organization of the Grand Camp is as follows: Some conduct a Bible teaching or discourse, followed by a sermon between statements and documents. Afterwards, the Leader assigns a song to enter the sermon. When the sermon is over, we will go through work and encouragement.<sup>13</sup>

The Fifohazana makes daily organizations. He focuses on the task of cleaning up the Toby. There are also joint agricultural and commercial activities which will be used to develop all the activities of the camp. All of these activities are preceded by prayer and are based on what the scriptures say.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1. Interaction between Fifohazana and the church**

The quest for the visible unity of the Churches does not take place in a vacuum; this unity is sought by the Fifohazana being in specific and varied situations. Consequently, a single text cannot state everything there is to say about the Church. Fifohazana invites churches from different parts of the world to make their own contribution, inspired by their concrete regional situation. This, with the aim that their parishes and their members are able to directly address themes which, until now, have necessarily been presented in a very general way. The Commission particularly encourages a reflection that is based on real events in the life and witness of Fifohazana in different parts of the world in order to better understand the characteristics, both particular and universal, of the Church.<sup>14</sup>

This is especially important from the point of view of mission, which is one of the guiding themes of this study. Fifohazana is not an abstraction: it is something that is experienced in response to the grace of God. The latter sends his Church to present a faithful witness in the real and concrete situations of each society. If human misery is universal, it takes different forms. For some, it is a priority to fight against evil, but for others, it is above all important to find a language which makes it possible to express spiritual reality in apparently materialistic cultures. For some, the main context of Fifohazana is war, poverty and injustice; for others, it is relations with other religions. For some, the distress is spiritual; for others, it is material. For all these reasons, this text tries to take into account the diversity of contexts. At the same time, he wants to offer the churches a number of common ecclesiological perspectives which could encourage practical reflection at the local level. Therefore, to serve the unity of Christians in diverse environments.<sup>15</sup>

### **2.2. Fifohazana and the Trinitarian God**

The Fifohazana gift of God: creation of the Word and of the Holy Spirit (creatura Verbi and creatura Spiritus). The fifohazana is called into existence by God, who "loved the world so much that he gave his Son, his only one, so that everyone who believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life" (Jn 3 , 16) and who sent the Holy Spirit to guide these believers to the whole truth, reminding them of all that Jesus taught (cf. Jn 14,26). In this sense, Fifohazana is the creation of the Word of God and of the Holy Spirit. He belongs to God and cannot exist either by himself or for himself. By its very nature, the mission of the fifohazana is missionary, called and sent to

serve, an instrument of the Word and the Spirit and a witness to the Kingdom of God. The center and foundation of Fifohazana is the Word of God. This Word has manifested itself in different ways in history. "It is the Word of God made flesh: Jesus Christ, incarnate, crucified and risen. Then, it is also the Word spoken in the history of God, addressed to the people of God and presented in the Scriptures: the Old and the New Testament, which testify of Jesus Christ. Third, it is the word heard and proclaimed in the preaching, testimony and action of the Church".

The Fifohazana is one of the branches of the communion of those who, by their encounter with the Word, live in a personal relationship with God. He speaks and elicits a confident response from them; it is the communion of the faithful. This is the common vocation of all Christians, whose perfect example is given to us by Mary's confident response to the angel of the Annunciation: "I am the servant of the Lord. Let everything happen for me as you told me!" (Lk 1.38). This is why Mary is often considered as the symbol of the Church and of every Christian, called by Jesus to be "[his] brother, [his] sister and [his] mother" when he does the will of the Father who is in heaven (cf. Mt 12.50). The fifohazana is therefore the creation of the Word of God (*creatura Verbi*), of the Gospel, a living voice which creates it and nourishes it from century to century. This divine word is heard through the Scriptures. The Church bears witness to this Word incarnate in Jesus Christ and proclaims it in preaching, the sacraments and service (cf. Mt 28,19-20; Lk 1,2; Ac 1,8; 1 Cor 15,1-11). Faith aroused by the Word of God results from the action of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor 12,3). According to Scripture, the Word and the Holy Spirit are inseparable. As a communion of the faithful, the Church is therefore also the creation of the Holy Spirit (*creatura Spiritus*). In the same way that, in the life of Christ, the Holy Spirit was at work from the conception of Jesus and even in the paschal mystery. Therefore, even now he remains the Spirit of the Risen Lord, thus, in the life of Fifohazana, the Spirit shapes Christ in each of the believers and in the community they constitute. The Spirit incorporates human beings into the body of Christ through faith and baptism. He gives them life and strength as they constitute the body of Christ, nourished and strengthened in the Eucharist, and guides them towards the full fulfillment of their vocation. The creation of the Word and the Spirit of God, Fifohazana is an apostolic saint.<sup>16</sup>

These essential attributes of Fifohazana derive from his dependence on God, and they illustrate this dependence. It is indivisible because God is the unique creator and redeemer (cf. Jn 17,11; Eph 4,1-6) who binds Fifohazana to him through the Word and the Spirit and who makes it a foretaste and a instrument of the redemption of all created reality. Fifohazana is holy because God is the Holy (cf. Isa 6,3; Lev 11,44-45) who sent his Son Jesus Christ to overcome all impiety and to call human beings to become merciful like his Father (cf. Lk 6,36): he sanctifies the life of Fifohazana by his word of forgiveness in the Holy Spirit and he makes it his own, the body of Christ (Eph 5,26-27). Fifohazana is Catholic because God is the fullness of life who "wants all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim 2,4) and who, through the Word and the Spirit, makes his people the place and the instrument of his saving and vivifying presence, the community "in which, at all times, the Holy Spirit makes believers participate in the life and salvation of Christ, regardless of their sex, their race or their social position". He is apostolic because the Word of God, sent by the Father, creates and brings to life Fifohazana. the Holy Spirit makes believers participate in the life and salvation of Christ, regardless of their sex, race or social position". He is apostolic because the Word of God, sent by the Father, creates and brings to life Fifohazana. the Holy Spirit makes believers participate in the life and salvation of Christ, regardless of their sex, race or social position". He is apostolic because the Word of God, sent by the Father, creates and brings to life Fifohazana.

This Word of God is communicated to us through the Gospel in which the apostles bore witness as a priority and in a normative manner (cf. Eph 2,20; Rv 21,14). They make of the communion of the faithful a community which lives in the succession of apostolic truth, expressed over the centuries in faith and life, and which assumes responsibility for this succession. Fifohazana is not simply the sum of individual believers in communion with God; neither is it, essentially, the collection of individual believers in fellowship with one another. The Fifohazana is their common participation in the life of God (2 P 1,4) who, as a Trinity, is the source and the heart of all communion. In this sense, Fifohazana is therefore both a divine and a human reality.

### **2.3. Dinstitutional dimension of Fifohazana and the work of the Holy Spirit**

The Fifohazana agrees in thinking that God creates the Fifohazana and binds it to him through the Holy Spirit by means of the Gospel, a living voice, proclaimed in preaching and in the sacraments. However, their convictions differ on certain points: (a) whether the preaching by Fifohazana is the means or simply the witnesses of the activity of the Spirit through the divine Word, which results in an immediate interior action on the hearts of believers.<sup>17</sup>

The Almighty God, who calls the Fifohazana into existence and unites it to him by his Word and his Holy Spirit, is the Trinitarian God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The Fifohazana relates to each of these divine "persons" in a particular way. These relationships highlight different dimensions of Fifohazana's life.

While the Fifohazana contains many perspectives applicable to the nature and mission of the Church, the Scriptures do not, however, offer a systematic ecclesiology. The biblical conception that inspires this text is based on the common belief that Scripture is normative. Thus, Fifohazana forms a privileged source, unique in its kind, for understanding the nature and mission of the Church. In the rest of our reflections, we must always refer to the teaching of the Bible and remain in agreement with it. The different elements that we find there are the modes of affirmation of the faith of the first communities, testimonies relating to their worship and to their practice of the obedience of the disciple, indications relating to the different roles (people who have a service function and those who assume responsibilities). Finally, we can also put forward the images and metaphors which serve to express the nature of the community, the elements which help us to develop a biblical conception of the Church. In addition, history offers us a treasure trove of resources which should also be exploited. The Spirit who inspired early communities is the same Spirit who, at all times and in all places, guides the disciples of Jesus who strive to be faithful to the gospel. This is what we mean when we talk about the living tradition of Fifohazana. the elements which help us to develop a biblical conception of the Church. In addition, history offers us a treasure trove of resources which should also be exploited. The Spirit who inspired early communities is the same Spirit who, at all times and in all places, guides the disciples of Jesus who strive to be faithful to the gospel. This is what we mean when we talk about the living tradition of Fifohazana.<sup>18</sup>

To understand Fifohazana, it is absolutely essential to recognize the great diversity of perspectives on the nature and mission of the Church found in the various books of the New Testament and in the interpretation given to them in course of history. Diversity appears not as an accidental element in the life of the Christian community, but as an aspect of its catholicity. What is more as a quality which reflects the fact that, in his design, the Father wanted the history of salvation in Christ to be its incarnation. In this sense, diversity is a gift made by God to the Church.<sup>19</sup> It should be noted, on the one hand, that various passages of the New Testament use the plural Churches to emphasize that there is a great diversity of local Churches (cf. Acts 15,41; Rom 16,16; 1 Cor 4, 17; 7, 17; 11, 16; 16.1 and 19; 2 Co 8.1; Ga 1.2; 1 Th 2.14). However, this in no way calls into question the conviction that the body of Christ is one (Eph 4,4); on the other hand, there is also a great diversity in the ecclesiological themes and perspectives approached by this or that book of the New Testament. The fact that the unique canon of the New Testament contains such a plurality testifies that unity and diversity are not mutually exclusive. In fact, the text which speaks of the unique body and its various members (cf. 1 Cor 12-14) makes it clear that there can be no unity without an appropriate coordination of the various gifts of the Triune God.

#### **2.4. Fifohazana and the Bible**

To do justice to the various biblical conceptions of the nature and mission of Fifohazana, different approaches need to be taken. We have chosen to comment more specifically on four - "people of God", "body of Christ", "temple of the Holy Spirit", which together illuminate the New Testament vision of Fifohazana in relation to the Triune God. A truly coherent approach to the Fifohazana mystery requires resorting to all biblical images and notions (in addition to the four mentioned. These are "vine", "flock", "bride", "house" and "community of the 'alliance'"), which make an essential contribution to our understanding. These images balance and compensate each other for their limits. As each comes from a particular cultural context, they point to both gaps and possibilities. The present text intends to refer to Scripture as a whole, without opposing one passage to another, but by trying to do justice to the whole of the biblical testimony.

### **3. RESULTS**

#### **3.1. Fifohazana in human life**

Thus, embodying in his life the mystery of salvation and the transfiguration of humanity, Le Fifohazana participates in the mission of Christ. The latter consists in reconciling all things with God and with one another through Christ (cf. 2 Cor 5,18-21; Rom 8,18-25). By its worship (leitourgia), its service (diakonia) and its proclamation (kerygma) functions which include that of steward of creation, the Fifohazana participates in the reality of the Kingdom of God and announces its coming. In the power of the Holy Spirit, the Fifohazana testifies to the divine mission in which the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world.

In the exercise of its mission, the Fifohazana cannot be authentically itself without bearing witness (martyria) of the will of God, which is to save and transform the world. That is why she immediately began to preach the Word, to bear witness to the mighty deeds of God and to invite each person to repent (metanoia) and to be baptized (cf. Acts 2,37-38), as well as to the abundant life given to those who follow Jesus (cf. Jn 10,10). Likewise, Christ's mission was both to preach the Word of God and to show concern for those who suffer and

are in need. The apostolic Church, in her mission, has associated diakonia from the outset with the proclamation of the Word, the call to repentance, faith and baptism.<sup>20</sup>

Fifohazana sees this as an essential dimension of its identity. In this way, the Fifohazana is the sign of the new humanity that God wants. This humanity participates in it and anticipates it, at the same time as it serves to proclaim the grace of God in the realities and miseries of human life, until Christ returns in his glory (cf. Mt 25, 31). Since suffering is inherent in the condition of servant that Christ assumed, it is evident, as the writings of the New Testament say, that the way of the cross is inherent in the testimony of Fifohazana. Whether at the individual or community level, and this witness can even go as far as martyrdom (cf. Mt 10,16-33; 16,24-28).

### 3.2. Fifohazana and the vocation

The Fifohazana has the vocation and the mission to share the sufferings of all by pleading the cause of the poor, the destitute and the excluded and by showing them its concern. It also involves critically analyzing unjust structures, denouncing them and working for their transformation. The Fifohazana is called to proclaim the words of hope and comfort of the Gospel through its works of compassion and mercy (Lk 4,18-19). This faithful witness can cause Christians to suffer personally in the name of the gospel. Confronted with fractures in human relations,<sup>21</sup> the Fifohazana is called to heal, to reconcile and to be the instrument which God uses to bring reconciliation where there is division and hatred (cf. 2 Cor 5,18-21).

He is also called, with all human beings of good will, to watch over the integrity of God's creation by condemning its abusive exploitation and destruction and, with God, to work for the restoration of the broken relations between humanity and creation. In the power of the Holy Spirit, the Fifohazana is called to faithfully proclaim the teaching of Christ in its entirety and to share with all, throughout the world, the Good News of the Kingdom, that is to say the wholeness of apostolic faith, life and witness. This is how the Fifohazana faithfully seeks to proclaim and live the love of God for all and to accomplish the mission of Christ for the salvation and transformation of the world, to the glory of God.

God restores and enriches communion with humanity, giving it eternal life in the Trinitarian being of God. Through redeemed humanity, the entire universe is destined to achieve restoration and salvation. This divine plan finds its fulfillment in the new heaven and the new earth (cf. Rev 21,1), in the holy Kingdom of God.

The Fifohazana is a sign and instrument of the intention of God's plan for the world. Already part of the love and life of God, the Church is a prophetic sign which refers, beyond itself, to the goal of all creation: the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is for this reason that Jesus said of his disciples that they were "the salt of the earth", "the light of the world" and the "city on a hill" (Mt 5,13-16).

Conscious of the saving presence of God in the world, the Fifohazana already praises and glorifies the Trinitarian God by the celebration and the quality of disciple of Christ. And this one is at the service of his plan. But she does not do it just for herself: she praises and thanks God, on behalf of all, for the grace he gives and for his forgiveness of sins.

To recognize that the nature of Fifohazana is mystery (cf. Eph 1: 9-10; 5:32), it is to affirm the transcendent character of its reality given by God. Namely, that she is unique, holy, Catholic and apostolic. We will never be able to grasp the Church in a clear and univocal way in its only visible appearance. This is why we must always consider and judge, for good or for evil, the visible institutional structures of the Church in the light of the divine gifts of salvation in Christ, celebrated in the liturgy (cf. Heb 12,18-24).

As an instrument of God's plan, the Fifohazana is the community of those who are called by God and sent as disciples of Christ to proclaim the Good News in word and deed so that the world may believe (cf. Lk 24,46) - 49). He thus makes present "the deep goodness of our God" (Lk 1,78) throughout history. Sent as disciples of Christ, the members of God's people are to witness and participate in his work of reconciliation, healing and transformation of creation. The integrity of Fifohazana, instrument of God, is at stake in the testimony given by the proclamation and by concrete actions accomplished in union with all people of good will in the service of justice, peace and the integrity of creation.

### 3.3. Fifohazana and the sacraments

Although the whole Church is in agreement in considering the Fifohazana as a sign and an instrument, some express this conception of the reality of Fifohazana in sacramental terms; others consider that Fifohazana is in no way contradictory with the sacrament. Those who equate Fifohazana with an instrument do so because they see the Church as an effective sign of what God wants for the world. Namely, the communion of all human beings with each other and with the Triune God, the joy for which he created the world, despite the sinful state of Christians.

These are the means of salvation by which Christ nourishes the Fifohazana, and not the acts by which Fifohazana is realized or actualized; the use of the term "sacrament" to speak of the Church obscures the fact that for them

the Church is a sign and instrument of God's plan and intention, but that she is so as a communion who, while being holy, continues to be under the sway of sin.

#### **4. INTERPRETATION AND SUGGESTION**

##### **4.1. Fifohazana and Christian Life**

By calling Abraham, God chose a holy people for himself. The prophets frequently recall this election and this vocation: "I will be their God and they will be my people" (Jr 31,33; Ez 37,27; Hos 2,23, passages echoed by 2 Cor 6,16 and He 8, 10). By the Word (*dabhar*) and the Spirit (*rû'ah*), God formed a nation among all "to be his servant" in order to save them all (cf. Isa 49,1-6). Israel's election marked a defining moment in the realization of the plan of salvation. The covenant between God and his people included many things, for example the Torah, the land and common worship, but also the call to act righteously and speak the truth. At the same time, the covenant is also a relation of communion (cf. Hos 2; Ez 16) and a free gift, a dynamic impulse to communion, which can be found throughout<sup>22</sup>

In light of Jesus' ministry, teaching, death and resurrection, and the sending of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the Christian community believes that God sent his Son so that every person can be in communion with others. Thus, God manifests his gift to the whole world. There is an authentically new element in the covenant inaugurated by Christ. Nevertheless, as she is "the Israel of God" (Ga 6:16), the Church remains in a relationship, in a mysterious way, with the Jewish people, like a branch grafted on the root of an olive tree (cf. Rom 11,11-36).

The *fifohazana* and the Christian life are linked. *Cerstes*, only those who are "awakened" have this way of life since they are the witnesses of the kingdom of God. We can say that the *Fifohazana* are those people who carry out the will of God. For this, they evangelize and carry out the will of God to save those who believe in Him.

##### **4.2. Fifohazana and the Body of Christ**

According to God's design, those who were "far away" were "made near by the blood of Christ. It is he who is our peace" (Eph 2: 13-14). "He killed the hatred" between Jews and pagans, reconciling them "both with God in one body, by means of the cross" (Eph 2:16). This body is the body of Christ, which is the Church (cf. Eph 1,23). Christ is the eternal head of his body, at the same time as, through the presence of the Spirit, he is the one who gives it life. He who purifies and sanctifies the body (cf. Eph 5,26) is also the one in whom, "together we are one body" (Rom 12,5; cf. 1 Cor 12,12). The New Testament image of the body of Christ has these two dimensions, one expressed in 1 Corinthians and Romans, the other developed in Ephesians.

##### **4.3. Fifohazana as Temple of the Holy Spirit**

The constitutive relationship between The *Fifohazana* and the Holy Spirit is present in all the testimony of the Church. If we do not find there an explicit image to express this relation, we have a striking illustration of it in the account of the descent of the tongues of fire on the disciples gathered on the morning of Pentecost (cf. Acts 2,1 -4). In the New Testament, the images which best give an idea of this relationship are those of the "temple" and the "house"; in fact, the relationship between Spirit and *Fifohazana* is that of inhabitation, of the gift of life from within. The Holy Spirit vivifies the community to such an extent that it becomes the announcer and the instrument of the general transformation of the entire cosmos to which creation aspires (cf. Rom 8,22-23), of the new heaven and of the new earth (cf. Rev 21,1). 23. Built on the foundations of the apostles and prophets, the Church is the house of God, a holy temple where the Spirit lives and works. By the power of the Holy Spirit, believers gradually build "a holy temple in the Lord" (Eph 2,21), a "house inhabited by the Spirit" (1 P 2,5). Filled with the Holy Spirit, they bear witness (cf. Acts 1,8), pray, love, work and serve in the power of the Spirit, leading a life worthy of their vocation, attentive to "keep the unity of the spirit by the bond of peace" (Eph 4,1-3). 5). Filled with the Holy Spirit, they bear witness (cf. Acts 1,8), pray, love, work and serve in the power of the Spirit, leading a life worthy of their vocation, attentive to "keep the unity of the spirit by the bond of peace" (Eph 4,1-3). 5). Filled with the Holy Spirit, they bear witness (cf. Acts 1,8), pray, love, work and serve in the power of the Spirit, leading a life worthy of their vocation, attentive to "keep the unity of the spirit by the bond of peace" (Eph 4,1-3).

##### **4.4. Fifohazana and Coonium / Communion**

The biblical concept of "koinonia" has taken on paramount importance in the search for a common conception of the nature of *Fifohazana* and its visible unity. The term "koinonia" (communion, participation, fellowship, community of sharing) is used to describe *Fifohazana* not only in the New Testament, but also later in the Fathers and in the writings of the Reformation.<sup>23</sup> Although the term generally fell into disuse thereafter, it is

revived today and considered to be pivotal in understanding the nature and mission of the Church. Its semantic richness also makes it a useful instrument for appreciating the various degrees and forms of communion which Fifohazana has already reached. God's relationship to mankind and all of creation is a fundamental theme of the Scriptures. In the creation account, man and woman are created in the image of God, with within them a capacity and aspiration inherent in their very being - to fellowship with God, with one another, and with love. creation of which they are the stewards (cf. Gn 1-2).

Thus, all of creation finds its integrity in koinonia with God. Communion is rooted in the very order of creation and is realized in part in the natural relationships that are forged in the family and kinship, the tribe and the people. At the heart of the Old Testament is the special relationship - the covenant established by God - between God and the chosen people (cf. Ex 19,4-6; Hos 2,18-23). God's plan in creation is distorted by man's sin, his weakness, his disobedience to the will of God and his rebellion against him (cf. Gen 3-4; Rom 1,18-3,20). Sin alters the relationship between God, human beings and the created order. But God remains faithful despite the sin and wanderings of his people. The

The biblical images of which we have just spoken, as well as others such as "the flock" (Jn 10,16), "the vine" (Is 5; Jn 15), "the bride" (Rev 21,2; Eph 5,25-32), "the house" (Heb 3,1-6), "a new covenant" (Heb 8,8-13) and "the holy city, the new Jerusalem" (Rev 21,2) evoke the nature and the quality of the relationship between God and his people, between the members of this people and with the created order. The term koinonia expresses the reality to which these images refer. The verbal root from which comes the name koinonia which means "to have something in common", "to share", "to participate", "to have part in", "to act together" or "to be bound by a contract involving both sides. 'other the obligation to be accountable'.

The word "koinonia" appears in important passages, notably in the accounts of the Lord's Supper (cf. 1 Cor 10,16), of Paul's reconciliation with Peter, James and John (cf. Gal 2,9) and of collection for the poor (cf. Rom 15,26 and 2 Cor 8,3-4), or again to describe the life and witness of the Church (Acts 2,42-45). Through the death and resurrection of Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, Christians come into communion with God and with one another in the life and love of God: "What we have seen and heard, we announce it to you too, so that you too may be in communion with us. And our communion is communion with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn 1,3).<sup>24</sup> The Good News is the offer made to all of the free gift from birth to life in communion with God and thus with one another (cf. 1 Tim 2: 4; 2 P 2: 9 ).

To speak of the relationship of believers (cf. Gal 2:20) with their Lord, Paul says that they are "in Christ" (2 Cor 5:17); and of Christ he says he lives in the believer because the Holy Spirit dwells in him. It is only by means of the divine gift of grace through Jesus Christ that a deep and lasting communion is made possible; through faith and baptism, people participate in the mystery of Christ's death, entombment and resurrection (cf. Phil 3,10-11).

United in Christ by the Holy Spirit, they thus join with all who are "in Christ": they are part of the communion - of the new community of the Risen Lord. Koinonia is also participation in the crucified and risen Christ. Sharing the sufferings and hopes of humanity is also part of Fifohazana's mission. This new life of communion is expressed by visible and tangible signs: receiving and communicating the faith of the apostles, breaking and sharing the Eucharistic bread, praying with one another, for one another and for the needs of the world, to be servants of one another in love, to participate in the joys and sorrows of one another, to help each other materially, to proclaim the Good News and to be witnesses to it in the mission,

The communion of Fifohazana is made up, not of independent individuals, but of people in community who all contribute to its development. Fifohazana exists for the glory and praise of God, to work for the reconciliation of humanity in obedience to Christ's command. God wants the whole of creation to participate in communion in Christ, realized in the Church (cf. Eph 1,10). As communion, the Church is an instrument of God's ultimate plan (cf. Rom 8,19-21; Col 1,18-20). Fifohazana's mission. God's plan is to reunite all creation under the lordship of Christ (cf. Eph 1,10) and to bring humanity and all of creation into communion. Reflection of the communion of the three divine persons, The Fifohazana is the instrument which God uses to accomplish this purpose.<sup>25</sup>

Fifohazana's mission is to serve the purpose of God; in this sense, it is a gift made to the world, so that all may believe (cf. John 17,21). The doctrines of Fifohazana, which recognize Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, are called to proclaim the Gospel in word and deed. They should address those who have not heard, as well as those who no longer live in accordance with the Gospel, the Good News of the reign of God. They are called to live its values and to be a foretaste of this reign in the world. In this sense, the mission is part of the very essence of Fifohazana: it necessarily and fundamentally derives from the affirmation of the apostolicity of Fifohazana, which is inseparable from its three other attributes: unity, holiness and catholicity. These four attributes refer both to the nature of the very essence of God and to the concrete requirements of authentic mission<sup>11</sup>. If either of these attributes is weakened in the life of the Church, the mission of the Church is compromised.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Fifohazana is among activities in The Lutheran Church of Madagascar. In principle, Fifohazana is based on the conduct of specific Leaders, who have received the particular vocation to preach the Gospel and to carry out



apostilles and miracles by means of the Word of God, Prayer and Deliverance. In addition, they were called by the Lord to share his message for individuals, which actually means a prophetic message. This is why they have been recognized by the Church organization as Spokespersons for the Lord.

The Holy Spirit leads them to do the work of delivering people from idolatry, encourages them, and leads them to become baptized as Christians.

- The Fifohazana orders Shepherds (Mpiandry) who are convinced Christians to exercise the ministry of preaching and bear witness to the kingdom of God

- Missionaries and Servants of God work together to preach the Gospel in their area of activity, throughout the country of Madagascar and throughout the world, according to Matthew 28: 19-20, Mark 16:15.

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