

The Role of Weppa - Wanno Christian Women in Conversion: A Catholic Approach

By

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Abstract

During the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ women were relegated to the background in the Jewish community. This was due largely to the Jewish culture and traditions which did not reckon with women. However, Jesus tried to break the cultural barrier by associating and defending women when necessary. We recall his encounter with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, his relationship with Mary and Martha and we must note that women were the first to visit his tomb on the third day after his burial only to find it empty. Also, the fact that at his resurrection he revealed himself to Mary Magdalene while the disciples were still hiding for fear of the Jews. These and many other instances of Jesus' relationship with women demonstrate that women are not to be undermined in the mission of Christian conversion in our contemporary world. Just like in the days of Jesus' ministry among the Jews, the Weppa – Wanno women today like in many African societies are often relegated to the background by some Weppa – Wanno culture and traditions which hold that women are only to be seen and not heard. This paper seeks to explore the role of Weppa – Wanno (a clan in Etsako East Local Government Area of Edo State, Nigeria) Christian women in conversion from the Roman Catholic perspective. The research methodology employed in this work includes the historical, evaluative and comparative approaches.