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AN ANALYSIS OF THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN A  
CROSS-CULTURAL PRIESTLY CONTEXT: IMPLICATIONS FOR PRIESTLY  
FORMATION [IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY] FOR SERVICE ABROAD  
(469 pp.)

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This dissertation examines the concept of cultural competence in a cross-cultural priestly context and its implications for priestly training for service abroad. The main purpose of this study is to contribute ideas to the development of a new curriculum for young clergy entering the priesthood, particularly in Nigeria, so as to be ready for service abroad. This research recognizes the fact that the issue in cultural competence is not in the paucity of information; rather, with so many important moving parts and components that foster an array and fluidity of interpretations, the challenge is in its focus, attention, implication and application. To this end, this dissertation **(I)** states the problem as a major issue with respect to the current trend in the global redistribution of priests; **(II)** reviews two basic Vatican documents on the training of priests, describes current interest in cultural competence by the church in view of the “The New Evangelization,” and offers definitions and theoretical perspectives on cultural competence in select fields; **(III)** unpacks the concept of *understanding* as an overarching concept in cultural competence discourse; **(IV)** discusses the components of cultural competence; **(V)** attempts to analyze the abilities or capacities associated with cultural competence; and finally **(VI)** addresses some implications of the study, draws conclusions based on the findings and points to

future research by fundamentally suggesting a holistic approach to cultural competence to include, but not limited to, *enculturation*, *acculturation*, and *inculturation*.

The hope is that this study will help in the development of a new curriculum for priestly training that emphasizes the central place of cultural competence. This is important so that young clergy entering the priesthood will be better prepared to minister efficiently and effectively in different cultures, among people of different affiliations and persuasions, and to further the need to be cognizant and respectful of the human condition that defines whole groups and individuals in and within those groups. In view of the changing face of the priesthood and evolving methods of evangelization, this study is not only timely and timeless; it is a necessity, not an option.