

70/15

Rome, 8-5-70

To all Superiors General
 To their delegates for SEDOS
 To all members of the SEDOS groups

This week:

page

AGENDA's: The Executive Committee will be meeting next week to prepare the June Assembly. The Health Services group is also convened to next week to prepare a June meeting.

340

REUNIONS PAR PAYS: Two reports on meeting by French speaking groups;
 CONGO - KINSHASA
 BRAZIL

342

SISTERS IN PARISH WORK: Precious advice from the field. Fr. Horan opens new vista's and shows how they should be kept "open"

350

EDUCATION IN THE MISSIONS: The Group has begun to tackle General Questions posed by FWG of Aachen. It did not find all the answers but it did get into a stimulating discussion.

356

FORMATION; Fr. Verschuur, svd kindly forwarded a list of sessions scheduled for the French speakers: Any additions to this list are welcome.

DIARY: This is a new feature which will help you keep in touch with what is going on.

360

CATECHISTS: A special meeting of all those who took PART IN PREPARING THE DOCUMENTATION of the meeting of the Plenarium. Mgr. J. Van Caewelaert will inform the group on developments.

Time: Monday, May 11, 1970; 16.00

Place: SEDOS Secretariat.

Please also remember the following dates:

HEALTH SERVICES	11-5-70	16.00	Secretariat
CAMEROON	12-5-70	16.00	Secretariat (in French)
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	13-5-70	09.00	Secretariat
EDUCATION	13-5-70	16.00	Secretariat
NEW GUINEA	14-5-70	16.00	Secretariat
Task Force DCU (Credit Unions)	15-5-70	16.00	Secretariat

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin Tonna
 Executive Secretary

HEALTH SERVICES

Announcement

A meeting of the Contact Group for Health Services will be held on Monday, May 11, at 16.00 at the Sedos Secretariat with the following agenda:

1. Minutes of the meeting of March 24, 1970
2. Discussion of the goals and objectives of the Group (for its terms of reference, see agenda of the last meeting)
3. Composition of the larger Group for Health Services in the Missions and its relationship to the UISG
4. The Health Seminar proposed for November 1970
5. Planning for the June meeting: topic, date, place.

SEDOS 70/341

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive Committee of SEDOS will be held on Wednesday, May 13, 1970, at 09.00 at the SEDOS Secretariat with the following Agenda;

1. Minutes
2. Social Communications: --verbal report and proposals by the Chairman, Fr. Y. Perigny, omi.
3. Formation: --verbal report by the Chairman, Fr. F. Sackett, svd.
4. Assembly of Superiors General, 9-6-1970

Agenda: Proposals:

- a. Catechist promotion
- b. relationships of SEDOS with other organizations.

--preparations.

5. Others matters.

Sincerely yours,

Benjamin Tonna
Executive Secretary

REUNION PAR PAYS

CONGO-KINSHASA

Une réunion sur le Congo-Kinshasa a eu lieu le 8 Avril 1970 à 16 H au Secrétariat de SEDOS.

Les membres présents étaient les suivants :

Fr. J. Maertens, CICM; Sr M.C. Schweitzer, SNDN; Fr: A. Verschuur, SVD;
Fr. T. Dooley, PA; Sr J. Gates, SCMM.M; Bro. J. Devadder, CFX;
Sr. E. Ryan, SNDN.

Présents du Secrétariat de SEDOS : Fr. B. Tonna and Mlle Fernandez.A.

I. BUTS GENERAUX DU "PANEL"

- Echange de toutes les expériences recueillies dans les différents Généralats en vue de dresser un inventaire des problèmes socio-économiques, scolaires etc... et organiser les discussions de ces problèmes.
- Se concentrer sur les problèmes de l'avenir du Congo et de la position des Evêques Congolais vis à vis de ces problèmes.

2. BUT IMMEDIAT

- Transmettre nos idées, nos expériences au PWG pour que celui-ci puisse avoir un champ plus grand de renseignements et pouvoir ainsi faire la comparaison avec les positions des autres bureaux comme le BNEC.

3. Réponses aux questions posées par le PWG :

a) Les écoles catholiques privées comprennent 70% des élèves. Le travail est sur le BNEC bien coordonné et dirigé. On a déjà demandé auprès de la Conférence Episcopale une prise de position sur l'avenir de l'enseignement catholique.

- I) Il a été signalé que la Conférence Episcopale et les Associations des Religieux et Religieuses (ASSUMA et USSUMA) du Congo ont étudié ce problème et publié leur position dans les actes de leur conférence. Ces actes sont à la disposition des personnes intéressées dans les Secrétariats de ces organismes.

- 2) Il y a 3 ans, les Evêques ont décidé de créer un secrétariat pastoral au sein du BNEC, précisément afin d'étudier les problèmes pastoraux qui se posent dans les Instituts d'Enseignement. Ce Secrétariat travaille activement à l'animation spirituelle et pastorale des élèves.

Le "panel" de SEDOS estime que, dans le prochain avenir, les Instituts religieux devront continuer leur apostolat dans l'Ecole Catholique, tout en préparant l'Africanisation des cadres de ces écoles.

- 3) La S.C.E.P. a édité un document en Avril 69, demandant de faire des conventions entre les diocèses et les Congrégations religieuses. Ce document a été étudié aussi bien dans les conférences des évêques que de l'ASSUMA. D'ici peu un contrat type sera publié. Toutes les oeuvres d'éducation et les instituts d'enseignement feront l'objet de conventions entre les diocèses et congrégations religieuses.

- b) Le Gouvernement a décidé en 1968 que la scolarité pour les élèves serait gratuite; cela a occasionné une perte de revenus pour l'Eglise qui comptait sur cet argent. Quelles sont les conséquences qu'en subit l'enseignement privé ?

- On ne croit pas que le fait que la scolarité pour les élèves soit devenue gratuite a occasionné une perte de revenus pour l'Eglise. Pour connaître exactement le système, il faudrait demander des renseignements au BNEC. Bien que la scolarité soit gratuite pour tous, l'Etat fixe le nombre d'écoles et de classes ; celles-ci sont alors subventionnées complètement par l'Etat. Pour la construction de nouvelles écoles secondaires et primaires ainsi que pour leur équipement, l'Etat peut accorder des subsides, mais il ne le fait pas toujours et ainsi les responsables de ces Instituts Chrétiens sont parfois obligés de chercher des fonds par eux-mêmes.

- c) Comment les jeunes à la fin de leurs études se comportent-ils en face de l'Eglise, à cause de son influence sur les écoles ?
Le Gouvernement Congolais compte sur l'Eglise pour l'Avenir.
L'Eglise saura-t-elle le satisfaire sans se compromettre par le pouvoir qui est lié à cette tâche ?

- L'attitude des jeunes à la fin de leurs études est favorable vis à vis de l'Eglise si ceux-ci ont déjà trouvé un emploi ; par contre leur attitude est tout à fait défavorable si ces élèves n'ont pas réussi à trouver du travail.

Certains élèves n'ont pas un comportement vraiment chrétien dans leur vie sociale. En plus, on signale l'influence assez négative vis à vis de l'Eglise, du milieu universitaire.

L'Eglise tâchera par ses écoles, de répondre aux attentes, ou aux espoirs du Gouvernement, en continuant à animer le Système Scolaire, mais le manque de personnel religieux risque de la freiner.

Une réflexion a été faite : Il semblerait que l'on s'occupe plus de l'Administration que de la Profondeur, c'est à dire dans un sens : l'animation des écoles. L'Eglise doit envisager son enseignement comme un service rendu au Pays mais pas au Gouvernement actuel.

4. Précision de la méthode de travail des groupes :

- Le Père Maertens, CICM, prépare un résumé du rapport du Comité de la Conférence Episcopale - Session de Décembre 1969 à KINSHASA CONGO, pour la prochaine réunion.
- Le Secrétariat fera circuler le rapport de la réunion.
- Une invitation est faite à tous les membres d'Instituts intéressés par le Congo-K.

5. Questions à étudier par le "panel" :

- a) - Etude de l'ensemble des problèmes pastoraux d'un pays et ne pas se limiter à une enquête sommaire sur les classes et les écoles, les problèmes pastoraux sont beaucoup plus larges.
- b) - Etude du problème de l'intégration des religieux et religieuses autochtones dans les Instituts religieux internationaux.
- c) - Contrat des Evêques avec les missionnaires.
- d) - Revoir le Système de l'Enseignement : Formation des jeunes après le premier cycle - Etudes Secondaires et Universitaires.
- e) - Prévoir la réservation d'un emploi pour les jeunes à la fin de leurs études.
- f) - Campagne de l'Unesco pour l'Education permanente.
- g) - Comment envisager la formation de ceux qui donneront l'Educa-tion Chrétienne dans les écoles primaires et secondaires - l'acquisition des bourses pour des études au Congo.

SEDOS 70/345

- h) - Comment envisager : la formation des responsables des communautés Chrétiennes aussi bien dans les villes qu'à l'extérieur. Il faudra ici des subsides pour construire et équiper les Instituts nécessaires et aussi des bourses d'études pour les candidats.
- i) - Comment aider les missionnaires qui sont chargés de cette formation ...pour les voyages, les sessions, les moyens de communications, feuilles de liaison.

APPENDICE

Il nous a été signalé deux passages du rapport du Comité Permanent des Evêques du Congo - de Janvier 1970 tels qu'on les trouve dans le rapport de l'Assemblée provinciale de l'ASUMA de Février 1970.

- A) Ici et là on a remarqué de la part de certains missionnaires, des initiatives pastorales qui ne cadrent pas avec la législation ecclésiastique ni avec les directives de l'Episcopat. - L'on a relevé en particulier certaines pratiques "aberrantes" dans le domaine de la pastorale des concubinaires prénuptiaux, des divorcés, et dans le domaine de l'intercommunion avec les protestants.

Le Comité Permanent a fait à ce propos les remarques suivantes:

- 1) Quelles que soient les convictions personnelles que les prêtres peuvent avoir en ces matières, ils doivent comprendre que toute action pastorale et même toute diffusion d'opinions théologiques doivent se faire en fonction de la situation propre de l'Eglise particulière à l'édification de laquelle ils sont appelés à travailler. L'édification de l'Eglise particulière ne se fera pas par l'importation intempestive des idées et de la problématique étrangère, mais par des réponses adaptées au cheminement et à la maturation propre à l'Eglise particulière. En ce domaine, plutôt que d'agir en référence à l'attitude et aux décisions d'episcopats d'autres Eglises, les prêtres doivent se conformer à la pastorale tracée par l'episcopat et l'Eglise du Congo et de chaque évêque dans son diocèse.
 - 2) Par ailleurs, le Comité Permanent rappelle que l'opinion d'un ou plusieurs théologiens ne constitue pas la norme d'action de l'Eglise. Dès lors, dans les matières évoquées, si une attitude pastorale d'accueil et de compréhension s'impose, la législation concernant la collation des sacrements reste en vigueur.
 - 3) Les évêques du Congo ne demeurent ni étrangers ni indifférents à la problématique en ces matières. Ils suivent de près l'évolution des études théologiques, mais ils ne peuvent admettre des pratiques aberrantes par rapport à la doctrine traditionnelle de l'Eglise et aux normes édictées pour l'Eglise universelle.
 - 4) Les évêques souhaitent que les missionnaires aient la patience d'attendre, ou mieux de collaborer à l'éclosion d'une expression de foi originale, proprement africaine, plutôt que d'imposer, en matière sacramentale comme en matière liturgique, des solutions importées de l'étranger.
- B) Le Comité Permanent a de même souligné l'importance d'une recherche en profondeur pour arriver à une africanisation authentique de la liturgie. Cette recherche suppose un travail patient et persévérant pour lequel la bonne volonté ne peut suppléer la compétence. Il importe que les missionnaires en ce domaine également soient attentifs à rechercher une insertion authentiques dans l'Eglise locale et s'abstiennent d'importer ici des innovations qui sont peut-être valables pour les Eglises d'Europe mais qui ne se justifient pas ici. Comme le souligne le Rapport du Comité Permanent: "Africaniser la liturgie ne signifie pas d'adopter quelques gestes plus habituels dans un contexte culturel africain, mais créer une liturgie qui incarne le message révélé dans un contexte socio-culturel propre et qui rend de façon expressive et compréhensible le mystère célébré par la communauté chrétienne....."

REUNIONS PAR PAYS

BRESIL

Rapport de la réunion du 22 Avril 1970

- I. La situation actuelle du Brésil est ambigüe et contradictoire ;
il y a de nombreuses tensions entre l'Eglise et l'Etat.

La situation est ambigüe parce que le Gouvernement continue à s'affirmer comme le défenseur des valeurs de la civilisation chrétienne, menacées par le communisme. Les cérémonies officielles ont un cachet religieux et les cérémonies religieuses d'apparat ont toujours un représentant officiel. Il aide financièrement l'Eglise, vient de faire un don grandiose pour achever les travaux de la cathédrale de Brasilia et a invité le Pape pour son inauguration.

Ce Gouvernement continue à être soutenu par un bon nombre de représentants de la Hierarchie , par les prêtres et les chrétiens traditionnels déroutés par l'évolution de l'Eglise et qui trouvent que tout va bien dans le pays.

D'autre part, ce même gouvernement resserre ses pouvoirs dictatoriaux en supprimant les libertés fondamentales, en taxant de subversifs tous ceux qui cherchent la montée du peuple et la justice sociale, usant des méthodes discriminatoires de la prison et de la torture, au nom de la sécurité et de la défense nationale.

La situation est contradictoire parce que, d'une part, l'effort pour le développement sur le plan économique, sanitaire, éducatif, culturel, saute aux yeux par son évidence même et, d'autre part, l'insatisfaction sociale couve sous l'oppression, le peuple apparemment soumis semble être au bout de sa patience, les actions terroristes se multiplient... L'action terrifiante du C.C.C. (Comando Caça Comunista) et du "Esquadrão da Morte" n'arrivent qu'à créer un climat de méfiance et de terreur.

Est-ce un régime normal d'avoir toujours peur et pas de liberté ?

Nombreuses sont les tensions entre l'Eglise et l'Etat. Entre un Etat totalitaire auquel est asservie l'aide statique de l'Eglise et l'Eglise post-conciliaire qui s'ouvre à l'aggiornamento, les tensions étaient inévitables et les "frictions" sont devenues fréquentes.

Il y a une prise de conscience des pauvres, des marginaux, des exploités qui interpellent l'Eglise comme la dernière planche de salut et l'unique force capable de les aider à défendre leurs droits d'hommes et leur dignité de chrétiens.

Prise de conscience aussi des jeunes (50% de la population ont moins de 20 ans) qui se buttent contre l'Eglise-Institution, qui désirent une Eglise moins riche, moins triomphaliste, plus évangélique, plus dégagée du pouvoir économique et des forces de l'oppression, capable de rendre la société plus humaine, devenant ferment dans la pâte, montrant aux hommes le sens de leur vie, voulant et espérant l'engager dans la marche irréversible de l'histoire, pour que cette marche ne se fasse pas sans elle ou contre elle...

Prise de conscience aussi de certains membres de la Hierarchie, devenus les symboles de la lutte pour la justice et les catalyseurs des appels aux changements de structures de base de la société archaïque brésilienne.

Cette Eglise vivante est considérée "subversive" par le Gouvernement Brésilien qui trouve ses interventions dangereuses pour le "maintien de l'ordre établi". Certains religieux, même ne s'étant jamais mêlés de politique, mais fort engagés dans la promotion humaine ou la justice sociale, ont été emprisonnés et même torturés.. Comme dans l'Eglise primitive, comme l'Eglise actuelle d'autres pays totalitaires, l'engagement dans une pastorale de promotion humaine dans l'Eglise brésilienne, peut obliger à passer par la prison et la torture... Vivant son mystère pascal, il y a une merveilleuse poussée de vie dans l'Eglise actuelle du Brésil, là où elle essaie de se mettre du côté des pauvres, de livrer son vrai message, de susciter les communautés ecclésiales de base.

Les forces apostoliques des religieuses donnent leur plein, une fois dégagées des structures dépassées, dans des expériences pilotes pleines d'espérance.

2. Que peuvent faire les Généralats qui ont des Religieux au Brésil ?

- Se documenter pour se rendre compte de la situation et se faire une idée objective de sa complexité. Se rencontrer pour échanger les informations qui doivent être discrètes et anonymes.
 - Soutenir et encourager les religieux dans leurs essais d'engagement dans des formes nouvelles, en leur faisant confiance et en courant les risques avec eux.
- Veiller à leur donner l'approfondissement spirituel, basé sur une théologie renouvelée et la détente psychologique nécessaire à leur équilibre humain menacé par le contexte de fortes tensions.

- Aller sur place pour aider les éléments à voir clair et étudier avec eux les directives de l'Eglise pour l'aggiornamento : Documents du CELAM, du CLAR, Vida Religiosa no Brasil de hoje... et passer à l'action concrète de dégagement pour occuper les postes-clés, là où se jouent l'histoire des hommes et leur salut éternel aussi...

3. Documentation d'actualité en français et italien :

- Le Brésil, le peuple et le pouvoir ... Miguel Arraes. Ed. du Seuil 1969
- Cambão, la face cachée du Brésil .. Francisco Julião. Ed. Maspero 1969
- L'Eglise rebelle d'Amérique Latine.. Alain Ghervaeert. Ed. du Seuil 1969
- L'Amérique Latine par elle même.. Mouv. du Christianisme Social. 1970
20, rue de la Michodière. Paris 2°
- Evangile et révolution sociale .. Antonio Fragoso. Ed. du Cerf 1969
- El Padre Editions Ouvrières 1970
- Une terre pour les hommes .. Philippe Farine. Ed. Centurion 1967
- Documents du C.I.D.O.C.-Cuernavaca . Libreria Paesi Nouvi.
Via Aurora, 35-Roma
- Cristo fra I Generali .. Marcio Moreira Alves. Ed. Mondadori

4(*) Revue avec articles pertinents sur la situation au Brésil :

- Pro Mundi Vita : Le Brésil, une Eglise en rénovation N° 24... 1967
- Parole et Mission ... Editions du Cerf..... N° 48 Jan. 1970
- Documentation Catholique N° 1561 - 19.4.70
- Etudes ... 15, rue Monsieur-Paris 7°..... N° de février 1970
- Terre Entière.. 14, rue St Benoît-Paris 6°
- IDOC International..... Edition du Seuil
- Informations Catholiques Internationales N°350-15.12.69
- Croissance des jeunes nations

- ROCCA
- 5. Session d'étude du 9-16 Août 1970-Centre de la Ste Baume-83-St Zacharie
"Le Brésil, bilan et prospective"(P. Ch. Antoine- -FRANCE-
et J. Boisset)

6. CONCLUSIONS :

- Inviter les membres de nos Généralats rentrant du Brésil, pour actualiser nos connaissances et prendre conscience de la situation réelle et actuelle.
- Inviter des personnes de passage à Rome et connaissant bien le Brésil pour parler aux membres des Généralats de SEDOS.
- Nous réunir de temps en temps pour échanger nos informations.

* (Cette liste gagnerait à être complétée par les indications des lecteurs)

SOME THOUGHTS ON SISTERS IN PARISH WORK

by Hubert Horan

Two distinctions are first necessary. Firstly, the present paper is concerned with Sisters in a narrower understanding of pastoral work, i.e., working in a parish along the lines of Christian ministry: i.e., work which is at least oriented towards the sacraments and religious aims. Pastoral work is not considered here in its broader sense, which at its worst is merely a catch-all word for all those not in education or health. Secondly, there is a need to distinguish between two sorts of reasons for wanting to invest personnel in parish work.

- Is it a question of Sisters whose former work no longer exists, and who after many years in the country want to stay here, and so are looking for some other sort of work to do and hit upon pastoral work as a sort of solution?
- Or is it a question of a specific need on the part of a diocese or parish, which is looking for a Sister or Sisters who can be useful in filling this need?

In short, are we dealing with people who need work so they can stay, or are we dealing with work which is looking for people to do it? The present paper deals with the problem from the latter point of view: what pastoral needs are there that need Sisters to fill them? What points should be borne in mind before starting? What avenues look most promising? What sort of Sister, what sort of work set-up would be most useful?

Practical "cautions" to bear in mind.

1. A pastoral committee, or department, in a Congregation should not become merely a category into which one fits, willy-nilly, all those who don't come easily under other more specific headings. It should not be merely a kind of residual category: which is left after other types of work have met their personnel requirements.
2. In a world where the clergy are requested to become more and more "lay", in the sense of no longer being a caste-separate, recognisable, privileged, specialised in a work no one else can do-it would be a horrid irony if Sisters were to become clericalised. This could easily happen if they, by working in a community, did things for that community that the community could do for itself and created a false state of dependence on themselves. They might then be a crutch, so that when they leave, the Christian community would be in a worse state of dependence and reliance than before they came.

3. In a world where we talk much of "dialogue" and co-responsibility, it would be a tragic irony if Sisters-who now have an occasion not to do so-decided unilaterally among themselves without consulting others, and not just priests where they are going to and what they are going to do and for whom and how.

Priests are, in a manner of speaking, "stuck" with a given pattern of assignments and transfers and organisation of work. Sisters, who would be a novelty in this sort of work, are not-or not yet.

Wouldn't it be better if Sisters talked it over with people as well as priest before deciding to establish a convent or house, or before sending Sisters who have not been asked for by parishioners?

Wouldn't it be better if Sisters palavered their work with a broad cross-section of active Christians, testing reactions, getting ideas?

4. The precise advantage, to my mind, of Sisters in a parish situation is precisely that they are neither priests nor men. We have reached such a state in our work that, practically, most of us are willing to entertain a new approach, even a very new approach, if it is reasonable. The trouble is that our formation is so nearly identical, we priests, that often it can be hard for us to try to see other possibilities. Here, a Sister could be very helpful precisely because of her newness and lack of the same formation we have. It is important, therefore, that she have reasonable independence of life and action.
5. Our resources in personnel and money are limited, and apart from special vocations and charismata, we have to use normal human rules of rational prudence to determine how we budget our lives and work. There are at least three principles which bear on Sisters' being introduced into parish work:
 - a. "All projects are useful, but some projects are more useful than others", to paraphrase Orwell. Some types of maendeleo activities have been shown to be of short-term and very limited value, such as local adult literacy projects and many forms of cookery and sewing classes for rural women. These do not deserve, in the normal run of things, a very high priority in allocating resources. We can, normally, afford to invest heavily only in projects which have a serious likelihood of success. This is not to say other projects are "no good", but that they are less important.

- b. not all the major problems of Tanzania can be solved or even seriously helped by small-scale efforts. It is likely, for instance, that the problems of alienated ex-Std. VII students is a major social problem which must be faced with concerted, large-scale efforts by Government. The Church has neither the people nor the money to deal with this sort of problem on this level, although, of course, Church personnel and money could be diverted to help such massive public efforts.
- c. a key point in judging the "worthwhileness" of small projects is this: are they so designed that results will be available to others and the project will be easily reproducible by others in other localities? Helping organise one outstation is worthwhile, but it is much more worthwhile if the same principles can be put to work so that other people can reproduce the same results in other small outstations. A "one-shot" deal is not normally worth spending much time on. Ideally, we want something that is not just admired, but also imitated.

What are some problems at parish level which need attention?

As an opinion only, I would feel that there are, broadly, three problem areas in many parishes where an effort is badly needed and could bear results. These are:

1. Problems of organisation and structure. The present parish set-up is based on compact European village models, and is cumbersome here in much of the rural world. The problem is to help small primary communities, such as outstations, within parishes to galvanise themselves, collaborate with one another, and decide as many points as possible locally: "self-governing, self-sustaining, self-propagating local Christian communities" (see SERVICE Nos. 2 and 3, 1969).
2. Problems of evangelisation-"propaganda". In many areas of the country, we have still an immense majority of followers of traditional religion-the so-called "pagans".

A major current of present day theology would have us believe that this is normal and we should let it go at that. I feel, personally, that this is a negative approach, and merely rationalises the status quo-makes a virtue out of necessity, much like a military defeat is sometimes called a strategic withdrawal.

At the same time, it is evident that our former approach is no longer attracting many prospective Christians. I feel strongly, and others such as the anthropologist Fr. Shorter-Muganwa feel equally strongly, that it would be possible to work out a way of presenting the Good News in a way which would attract many converts, so that, even in purely human terms, we could hope to have the minimum 20 to 25% Christians in the middle of a scattered population which would assure us a solid base for the future; and this, in turn, leads us to the third area,

3. Christian formation of adults. Both adults who are already fairly (or at least minimally) active as Christians, and adults who want to be Christians, are not adequately formed by our present-day catechumenates, retreats, or homilies, and other methods of formation, in the Christian life.

I say formation, rather than education. This is deliberate, as there is serious reason to believe that education is tied too closely in our minds to our concept of the classroom. A classroom, and formal education generally, are excellent ways of getting across knowledge of facts and techniques. They are not adequate instruments nor satisfactory ways of sharing a vision. They are also alien and inappropriate means of forming adult rural people. Our present methods of Christian formation take a very great part of our time, and produce results which disappoint even experienced and zealous priests and catechists.

Suggestions for best use of Sisters in parish work

1. Don't work in a parish. This requires some explanation. By it I would mean that the Sisters would be best off, and most effective, if they do not make their base at the main parish itself. There are several reasons for this, mainly practical ones.
 - a. Very often, an established parish has a kind of headquarters vacuum around it. Christians in the immediate vicinity are not the most promising, and see enough of the clergy so that they will not be overly enthusiastic about fresh additions to the ranks of parish "headquarters".
 - b. There is a possibility that convent and rectory spend too much time in preliminary activities and planning if they are located right next to each other, not enough time out on long safaris.

- c. The best possibility, normally, for developing a new program is in a fairly large outstation, out of the parish centre's immediate sphere of influence-say, at least five and preferably eight miles away, or more if on a main road. To develop such a centre as a community involves frequent periods of extended residence, preferably overnight.
 - d. Being a bit out of the immediate bailiwick of the Parish Priest, the Sisters would be in a better position to act independently in the good sense. This does not mean pulling "fast ones". It means that the P.P. can afford to let an outstation, which he knows he cannot pay enough attention to, develop in a new way. It means also that the Sisters will not have to worry about having to take into account the parish priest's immediate reaction about very minor decisions. They will also be able to preserve a certain newness of vision which, while it will cause a number of mistakes, may also afford us a major break-through.
2. A new approach tends to get sucked under if it is not-please excuse the word-structured. Sisters who would like to look for new ways to approach old problems are likely to drift, or get pushed, into older patterns such as catechism to school children, parish census, domestic chores, if they do not have a project proposal on paper beforehand. This project statement is changeable and is better not having too many details, but should clearly exclude some activities and indicated both time limits and goals.
 3. It would be wise, especially if there are several teams of Sisters looking for new approaches, to have some sort of ombudsman-a coordinator or shop steward. This person should not be in a position to give orders, but should be in a position to listen to complaints and criticisms on different sides. He (or she) should be experienced in parish work, and knowledgeable in a social science if possible.
 4. If the Sisters involved are, as is more than likely in the beginning, missionaries, it is very important to set up a time limit. If a team of Sisters can not set a new sort of outstation organisation on its feet in a few areas in three years, probably they will not ever succeed. More complex goals might extend the period to five years as a maximum.

5. In a very real sense, one cannot "form" leaders. One can recognise potential leadership in people, and work to give such people a chance to show others what they can do. This is a major task and an important element in our ministry. It is likely that women could give the local leader material more of a chance than could other men, who would less easily let themselves fade into the background. We should be careful, though, to avoid imposing a Western (aggressive, isolated individual, task-orientated) pattern of leadership, which would mean that leaders helped along by us would eventually be rejected by their communities.
6. It is important to remember that experimentation is not just "fooling around", and that we must never make guinea pigs of human beings. Church workers should always let people know what they are doing and why, and keep in mind that they themselves will not suffer much if they make a mistake, but the people in the outstations they attempt to re-structure most certainly will. As C. S. Lewis said, "Christ told us to feed his sheep, not to try experiments on his white mice."

from

Pastoral Orientation Service

N° 2 - 1970 pages 1 - 6

EDUCATION

A meeting of the Education Working Group met on 24th April, 1970 at 4 p.m. at SEDOS.

The following were present:

Sr. L.M. Bankes,	N.D. of N.
Br. A. Carmody,	FSC
Sr. B. Flanagan,	HFB
Sr. J. Gates,	SCMM-M
Sr. M. Keenan,	RSHM
Fr. G. Lautenschlager,	CMM
Sr. C. Rombouts,	ICM
Sr. E. Ryan,	SND-N
Sr. F. Schellemans,	SCMM-T

In accordance with the Agenda (SEDOS 70/294) the group set out to consider the questions posed by PWG Aachen (SEDOS 70/231-239). However, it frequently had to resort to checking the English and French translations with the German original and it was found that there were discrepancies. (The next day, the Secretariat received the PWG translations which were published in the SEDOS Bulletin No. 14 pages 70/331-335).

The following is a summary of the discussions and comments which arose from the study of the PWG questions in SEDOS 70/231-239.

Fr. Tonna prefaced the discussion by informing the group that the PWG asked general questions regarding education, and they would like to have an answer from us based on our experiences. It also sought the opinions of the Generals on education in specific countries. Before starting to discuss the answers to the questions, it was suggested that nationalization was not just an African problem but a world-wide one.

Question 2.

1. Self-sufficiency was the goal in developed countries, but in some developed countries, due to underdeveloped "pockets" as in South Africa, aid might be justified.
2. In these countries like in Moslem countries kindergartens and schools serve to help the Church to contact population.

Should private education be supported for this reason?
(in these countries normally no financial help can be expected of the government).

A description was given to the group of how the missionaries in secondary schools in Pakistan are succeeding in making an impact at this level.

Impact can also be made at the Kindergarten level through contact with the mothers. However, the question remains "how effective is this"? The school represents the presence of the Church, which is felt to be important, even though it is not able to make much headway in making converts.

In economically developed countries like Japan, what is the purpose of having schools? There are two questions here 1) Where people are educationally in need and 2) educationally not in need. But those who are not in need educationally may be in need of Christian education. Here we come up against a question of priorities.

Is there any other and less costly way of making contact with a population than through the schools? What about teaching English to adult students on a private basis? Yes, there are other methods, but none are as good as the schools.

3. Are catholic schools really means of pre-evangelization or do they promote an anti-christian attitude among the students (as they do often in Europe)?

It would be unrealistic to give a global answer. It was true that students educated in Catholic schools in many countries very often, today, turn against the Church and indeed against any faith. However, one must not lose sight of the fact that the opposite is also true.

4. May a mission method rely on private education if nationalization of the schools could deprive the church of these principle means at any time?

Yes, missions do have to rely greatly on the schools. It was felt that even though there was the danger of the Government taking over the schools, the policy is to "serve the people" in spite of this risk. Catholic schools are intrinsically good schools and up-to-date. In developing "pockets" in developed countries it is felt the maintaining of these schools is justified.

5. Would pre-evangelization not be more effective, if catholic teachers were employed with public schools?

Should we support private schools? Cannot the State schools do the same as private schools? The Catholic schools have a dimension which the State schools do not have - namely: the Christian message. Could we work in the State schools? - There was some doubt about this, very difficult situation, especially for lay missionaries. Religion was forbidden by law in some countries in their school curriculum. In a non-Catholic environment the Catholic can do little.

It was mentioned that sometimes we are too tired, overburdened, and bogged down with red tape, to radiate the Christian message as we should.

SEDOS 70/358

Revision of apostolic activities needed to help to rectify this, for often it is only fatigue which is radiated.

In general it was thought that the questions were too general and global. The answers would be in certain circumstances "yes" and in other circumstances "No". Also, some of the questions appeared to gewred to bring a negative answer.

Next meeting to take place: Wednesday 13th May, 1970 at SEDOS at 4 p.m. In the absence of Sr. Keenan, Fr. Lautenschlager will be in the Chair.

DIARY

- May 1 : Fr. B. Tonna conducts a Seminar on the role of the missionary for the Verona refresher course at the FSCJ Generalate.
- May 4 : Fr. V. Fecher at the Secretariat:
- next move for Catechists.
- SVD Self Study.
- May 5 : Fr. Luiz svd, of the Communications Centre of the Indian Bishops calls at the Secretariat. Issues raised:
- Procedure for scholarships in Communication for his training centre.
- The future of Christian Communication in India.
- Fr. H. Mondé at the Secretariat: Agenda of the next Executive Committee.
Meeting on South Africa.
- May 6 : Meeting on Social Communications special guests:
Fr. Luiz of India, Mr. K. Höler of the Catholic Media Council.
- May 8 : Meeting on documentation: pooling of data available at the member Generalates.