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CONTENTS:

PAGE:

| | |
|---|-----|
| 1. KINSHASA - TEN YEARS OF LAY MINISTRIES Daniël Delanote, CICM | 207 |
| 2. THE LAITY IN THE CHURCHES OF ASIA Marcella Zago, OMI | 210 |
| 3. DIRECTIONS IN MISSION Luise Ahrens, M.M. | 214 |
| 4. REVERSING AFIRCA'S DECLINE Lester R. Brown and Edward C. Wolf | 222 |
| 5. ECUMENISM: A MISSION OF THE CHURCH Pope John Paul II | 231 |
| 6. CRITERIA FOR JUSTICE MINISTRIES Maryknoll Sisters | 232 |

In this issue: The development of the lay pastors (bakambi) has not been easy since their inception ten years ago in Zaire. Now their place in the local Church is established alongside the co-pastors, pastoral assistants (fifty women religious) and pastoral animators in an innovative approach to lay ministries by Cardinal Malula the Archbishop of Kinshasa.

If the Church is to become a challenging sign and an adequate instrument of salvation in Asia, she must involve the laity. They are an integral part of her and she cannot be missionary in Asia without them. Fr. Zago's comments on the witness of the laity in a overwhelmingly Hindu, Buddhist and Muslim society is relevant in the preparation for next year's Synod on the laity.

"What I liked best" said the little girl to the Sister who had arranged an outing for them in an urban slum in Santiago, "was that you put your arm around me when we walked back to the bus".

Luise Ahrens' reflection on the anecdote is that we are asked as missionaries, literally and figuratively, to put our arms around the poor of the world. She singles out three key mission trends which will engage us until well into the next century: accompanying the poor, continuing the struggle for justice and engaging in inter-religious dialogue. Why do we do it? Like St. Paul, she says, because the love of God impels us, because we too are impelled to share this God of love and joy and justice.

There is an abridged excerpt from a study: The State of the World, 1986, by Lester Brown and Edward Wolf. We include it as a first contribution to provide some guidance to SEDOS Members on the causes of world poverty asked for at last year's Annual General Meeting of SEDOS. World poverty and population are intimately connected with each other and with the struggle for justice. The present excerpt deals with these problems with particular reference to Africa.

Finally there are also some useful criteria for those involved or becoming involved in ministries concerned with the promotion of justice.

NEWS: Many SEDOS members will be holding their General Chapter during the summer. We send our good wishes to the Paris Foreign Mission Society and to the Congregation of the Holy Spirit both of whom have already begun their Chapters and to Our Lady of Sion, the Missionaries of Africa, the Comboni Sisters, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and the Dominicans who will be holding theirs in the near future.

Fr. Rudy Romano CSSR. Sadly there is still no news of Rudy's whereabouts. "Disappeared" on 11th July, 1985 it was hoped that after the fall of Marcos there would be information on his fate. So far there is none.

South Africa: Dominican priests and sisters, Oblates, a White Father and a Redemptorist, many seminarians are among those who have been arrested in South Africa recently. Some have been released; many are still under arrest.

Mozambique: Comboni and Consolata Sisters kidnapped by guerrillas have still not been released although radio and T.V. interviews have been arranged recently with some of them.

World Religions for Peace - SEDOS will hold a one-day Seminar on October 21st 1986 on this topic in preparation for the Assisi prayer meeting for Peace on October 29th. The Seminar will include an inter-religious prayer session including Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim, Jewish and Christian religions.

SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar) is looking for a religious (Sister, Brother, Priest) to work in the capacity of administrative officer and bilingual translator under the direction of the Secretary General. Job description and further details available at SEDOS Secretariat or the Jesuit Refugee Service, Rome.

Anno 2001 - Modelli per Una Chiesa Universale by Walbert Buhlman OFMCap is now available. (Edizione Dehoniane Napoli).

PRO MUNDI VITA will mark the 25th anniversary of its foundation with a week long Symposium in Lomé on The Laity and the Dynamic of Faith, 15th September to 21st September 1986. Keynote speakers and Workshop leaders are lay women and men from different continents.

WE WISH ALL OUR READERS HAPPY SUMMER HOLIDAYS

The next issue of SEDOS Bulletin will appear on Sept.15

KINSHASA
TEN YEARS OF LAY MINISTRIES

(Fr. Delanote has accompanied the lay pastors (bakambi) from their beginning in 1975. The local Church of Kinshasa celebrated the tenth anniversary of their existence in September, 1985. On that occasion the Commission for lay ministries of the Archdiocese of Kinshasa published two pamphlets: Les ministères laïcs à Kinshasa, with an introduction by the auxiliary bishop Msgr. T. Tshibangu Tshishiku and, Rôle et fonctions du mokambi (responsable laïc) de paroisse; rôle et fonctions de l'assistant(e) paroissial(e) et de l'animateur pastoral, with a preface by Cardinal Malula, Archbishop of Kinshasa. The bakambi were officially recognised on this occasion.)

22 September, 1985 was truly a day full of significance for our local Church of Kinshasa and for the Church of Zaire, a day which made history in the Church of our country. It was a high day for all the laity who are officially charged with a church office in our diocese, and for many others.

Celebration in the Cathedral: On this day we celebrated the tenth anniversary of the existence of lay ministries in our diocese, and the church document "Task and Mission of the Lay Pastors (bakambi de paroisse) in the Diocese of Kinshasa" was officially promulgated by our bishop, Cardinal Malula. This occurred during the solemn celebration of the Eucharist in the cathedral "Our Lady of Zaire", led by the three bishops of Kinshasa in the presence of Monsignor Rézeau of the papal nunciature. All the priests, they number about fifty, who work with a lay pastor or lay assistant were present to participate in this happening and to concelebrate the Eucharist. Also present were the sixteen lay pastors (bakambi de paroisse), the nine lay co-pastors (bakambi de paroisse), (pastoral assistants) and the seven pastoral animators, accompanied, of course, by their wives and children. In addition we had the fifty women religious who hold the office of pastoral assistant.

Numerous delegations came from the many parishes where the lay ministers are working, - by bus, by truck, or even on foot, with a flag at their head. I had not dared dream that it would be such a beautiful feast. The very ample cathedral was full as an egg, as only happens on the very great feast days of Christmas and Easter. It was delightful to experience how these people live their joy in a festive Eucharistic celebration according to their own Zairean rite.

Why Lay Ministers? In his homily the Cardinal explained what drove him to carry through this innovation, what brought him to entrust very broad responsibilities to a trained laity, even in the framework of the pastoral guidance of the Christian communities.

- a) For the bishop, it is "a sign", a call directed to all the baptized to take up to the full, their responsibility as members of the one people of God on earth so that our world and our community be renewed in the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of love and justice.
- b) Further, this renewal is in accord with the pastoral concern of our bishop, to transform the Christian community in Kinshasa into an authentic Black African Church: a church with its own face, a Church that is ever more integrated in the world of today and in the present day African society of our capital city, Kinshasa.
- c) Finally, the institution of lay ministries is a response to the crying shortage of priests. The diocese of Kinshasa comprises more than 3,000,000 inhabitants of which more than 50% are baptized Catholics. It has 75 parishes and 30 sub-parishes. This diocese, one of the largest in the world, has only 150 priests involved in pastoral work. Without the collaboration of numerous lay people holding church offices, our Christian communities would lack indispensable pastoral guidance.

All of this was said in French in a well-prepared homily. Then the bishop continued in Lingala, in a more spontaneous way, to tell how he sees the Church of Kinshasa in the future and what role the laity have to assume to bring about this picture of the Church. The words of Cardinal Malula were clear and encouraging for the future, a support and confirmation for so many lay people who dedicated themselves to the pastoral work for so many years in our diocese. A jubilant crowd, such as one witnesses only in Africa, gave testimony to their agreement.

Ten years of Development: It was in 1975 that the Cardinal entrusted eight parishes of his diocese to lay people who had been trained in view of this. That was the beginning, the first church office to be entrusted in our diocese to non-priests. In the year 1978 a second church office was established, the office of lay co-pastor (male or female pastoral assistant). Finally the office of pastoral animator was added. The pastoral animator is charged with a church function at the level of the diocese or in a certain sector of pastoral service (e.g. service to the sick).

All of this sprang spontaneously from the pastoral needs of the diocese. It has grown, not from deep theological reflection, but because there was no other way: it was absolutely necessary to find new ways of pastoral work in order to keep supporting the rapidly growing christian communities of Kinshasa. It was an intuition of our bishop that he dared to tread new paths, to call into being a new form of pastoral guidance that was not at all foreseen in the Canon Law at that time. Our bishop has always given complete trust and unconditional support to those priests who risked the experiment with him and who took the necessary initiative to continue with him along this new untrodden way.

A Basic Document for the Future: Ten years have passed, a period of searching and experimenting, a time of reflection, of deepening and making needed

adjustments. In the diocese a special commission was set up, charged with studying the experiment. It took several years to accomplish this, with the help of many people: theologians, jurists, priests in the pastoral work and also lay pastoral collaborators. The theological basis was further determined and thoroughly examined, the task of the priest as moderator of the pastoral work was further outlined and all was formulated according to the guidelines of the new Canon Law. The basic document was thus achieved: "The task and Mission of the Lay Ministers in the Church of Kinshasa". This document was officially presented by Msgr. Tshibangu as the guide to the organisation of lay ministries in the local church of Kinshasa for the coming years. The words of the bishop were clear and convincing, tranquil and deeply weighed. The bishop, who has a decree in Theology spoke with full authority.

And so the end has come to a period of searching and of sometimes painful disagreement. Now we can calmly go on with the work following clearly written guidelines, confirmed by the highest church authorities in our diocese. The basic document was absolutely necessary, for our work was too often labeled as superficial faddishness.

A Family Celebration: The mass and the ceremony lasted about three hours - not a minute too much for anyone. After that came a very happy family get-together in the Nganda Center, a great festival with a meal for more than two hundred invited guests. Again they were all there: the lay ministers with their families, the pastoral assistant sisters, the very distinguished invited guests and then a few others who slipped in through the back door at the last minute. Even the latter belonged there...according to the African mentality, these are the guests sent by the Lord, precisely those whom we had not thought of when the official invitations were sent out.

Finally, the Cardinal spoke a last word. With deep meaning and full conviction he expressed his thanks to the "missionaries...for without them and their long years of very patient involvement none of this could have come about".

Ref. Chronica CICM, Rome, December 1985
Via San Giovanni Eudes, 95; Rome.

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THE LAITY IN THE CHURCHES
OF ASIA

Marcella Zago, O.M.I.

(This excerpt is taken from the 1986 Correspondence Course on Missionary Formation organised by the Pontifical Missionary Union International Secretariat in Rome. The text is slightly abbreviated).

POST-CONSILIAIR DEVELOPMENTS

In the twenty years of the post-conciliar period, there has been a remarkable progress of the laity. A new way of living Christianity is emerging and hence, for the laity, a new way of finding themselves and of becoming involved. The basic Christian communities, the various and numerous ministries entrusted to the laity, commitment to human development and justice, openness to other religions, and hence, dialogue, are the most significant and promising novelties.

On the Asian level, there have been significant events:

In 1977, an Asian colloquium was organized in Hong Kong under the auspices of the FABC on ministries in the Church. In this Congress, at which were present representatives of all the countries except those under a Communist regime, three basic exigencies emerged: basic Christian communities; local ministries or the laity's involvement in the life and mission of the Church; Asianization or inculturation.

The second meeting was organized in Hong Kong in December, 1983 by the Pontifical Council for the Laity. 15 Bishops, 10 priests and 70 lay people participated in it. Representatives from Burma, Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and continental China were absent. The theme of this meeting was: The Laity in the life and mission of the Church in Asian society. Its view on national and continental situations was very rich. Integral formation was acknowledged as the major need to enable the laity carry out their mission in the Church and in society. Along with the need to deepen their own Christian identity the meeting brought out the need to be a leaven in the respective societies, to bear witness to the faith, to be involved in inter-religious dialogue and to defend human and religious rights.

The third type of meetings on the laity is under the direct responsibility of the FABC and is carried out at the regional level. These meetings are called BILA (Bishops' Institute for Lay Apostolate). The first concerned the Chinese current, and was held at Changua, Taiwan, in November 1984. In their final declaration, the participants

admitted that:

"Despite some inspiring examples of lay involvement in the Church in East Asia, we have come to the clear realization that there is a big gap between the vision of the Church as the people of God, promulgated by Vatican II almost 20 years ago, and the actual situation existing in our Church today. Dialogue, sharing, co-responsibility are words that we use regularly, but now we clearly see that the vast majority of our laity do not share in dialogue with their clergy, nor do they share the responsibility for the work of the Church with their clergy in a partnership of brotherhood.

In some situations this gap between the vision of Vatican II and the reality as we live it may be due to the passivity of the laity who tend to leave the "leading" to the clergy. In other situations it may be due to an unwillingness on the part of the clergy to share responsibility. However, it has been our discovery that this gap is due more to a lack of a real understanding of the dialogue and shared responsibility that Vatican II is asking us to work towards".

Two other BILA meetings have been planned for Southern Asia and the Asian sub-continent respectively. These regional meetings will open the way for the Fourth General Assembly of the FABC, which will be held in Tokyo in September 1986 and whose theme will be: THE LAITY IN THE LIFE AND MISSION OF THE CHURCH IN ASIA. Thus the Asian Church is preparing very seriously for the Synod of 1987 on the laity.

CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES FOR AN ASIAN LAITY

In my opinion, an authentic Asian laity must answer to three types of challenges: some of them are connected with the fact that Asian Christians are living as a minority in the midst of other organized and flourishing religions; others concern the internal life of the Church, and finally, others are connected with the special mission of the Church in Asia.

Except in the Philippines, and now partly in Korea also, Christianity is a crushing minority, quite different from all the other continents. This minority context in which Christianity has never been of any sociological importance, presents special problems and demands. In the past, a minority status was not so acute because Christians could live in homogeneous groups, in a ghetto state. Now however, social integration has become necessary due to internal migration, urbanization, secularization and social communications. In Bangkok, Tokyo, Jakarta and New Delhi, Christians are living in the midst of a huge mass of Buddhists, Muslims and Hindus. Thus even in the province's cities and villages, they form at most 2% of the population in a society that has no Christian points of reference. The survival of Christians in such situations is conditioned by a continuous deepening of their own identity and by a relationship of dialogue with the people of other faiths.

Identity and Dialogue: Christians, therefore, must not only be continually rooted in their faith and Christian

experience, but must also understand it in relation to the others. For example, it does not suffice for them to believe in God; they must understand the reason why and in what sense they believe in one God who is personal and trinitarian. Otherwise their faith will not have the apologetical basis to resist and to be witnessed to in a Hindu, Buddhist, Muslim environment.

There is a continuous and profound interaction between the deepening of one's own identity and a dialogical comparison with other religions. The positive response to this challenge can pave the way for an authentic inculturation of the Church and for an evangelization of culture.

In countries with a Communist regime, the same challenge continues even though it has special characteristics. In such a case, either all religions are in a minority situation as seems to be the case, in China, or the Christian, co-exists with a religion of the majority and an ideology for which propaganda is made in all kinds of ways, as happens in the Peoples' Democratic Republic of Indonesia.

Integration of the Laity: The laity live in this melting-pot in a special way in their employment and daily contacts. For them, the above control is a must, or else they lose their faith. Hence one can understand the importance of the family and of the community for mutual support and for an authentic discernment.

For the Church to become a challenging sign and an adequate instrument of salvation in Asia, she must involve the laity, she must make them feel that they form an integral part of her life and structure. She can find the thrust and the means of witnessing and dialogue only through the internal integration of the laity. This certainly needs a new kind of relationship between the clergy and the laity, as BILA has indicated, but above all, a common commitment to holiness that renders the Church transparent and challenging. Sharing of responsibility, and hence, a multiplication and diversification of ministries, are also necessary.

However, the Church may not remain satisfied with just putting her house in order, by creating a warm environment where she is comfortable and even grows spiritually, protected from external storms. She is, by her very nature, missionary both within her own culture and geographical situation and outside of both. This missionary nature is perhaps the basic problem for various Asian Churches which remain static and closed in upon themselves in spite of the considerable number of priests and religious. It is realized through witness, dialogue, evangelization, inculturation, human development, commitment to justice, and in contact, in service, in gift, in presence, in active sharing with the persons and the Church's external realities. Now this is possible only if the entire Church in which the laity forms the majority, is engaged.

Mission in this sense cannot be left or entrusted only to the clergy and the religious, or limited to some extraordinary activity. For example, dialogue is brought about not only in specialized meetings of recognized specialists or representatives, but also and especially

in ordinary life encounters. Inculturation takes place not only at the liturgical or catechetical level, but in all social contacts as well as through literature and art. In these, the laity plays an irreplaceable role. Lay people are active Christians not only by becoming involved within and in favour of the ecclesial community, but also and especially by infusing a Christian spirit in all that they do and are. Only in this way, can Christianity become a leaven and a ferment, salt and light, even if it is a minority.

Missionary Native: Just as the Church must be particular and universal, so too must her mission be carried out within and outside her culture. Because of her missionary nature also, every Church must be particular and universal. It is interesting to note that the missions of Asia have become young Churches, recognized juridically with the establishment of dioceses and Episcopal Conferences, and they have become, within a short time also, missionary Churches taking part in foreign missions, creating appropriate institutions and sending missionaries to other parts of the world. India, Korea and the Philippines have specific institutes for foreign missionaries. Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Japan also have priests, religious and laity who work among other peoples and in other continents. The laity can play a role in this type of mission also. The Philippines, since several years, has a programme for lay missionaries who work not only in other regions of the country but also in Africa (Tanzania) and in Latin America (Venezuela). Japanese lay people are working in Canada among the Eskimos. Some Chinese from Hong Kong have worked in Africa. The foreign missionary commitment of the Asian Churches could give an internal missionary thrust and could dispel prejudices about the mission itself. The presence of the laity in these initiatives could help, not only the mission, but the laity too.

CONCLUSION

The Church cannot live without the laity. They are an integral part of her. She cannot renew herself without them. She cannot be missionary, especially in Asia, without them. Their formation, as has emerged from the specialized meetings at the national and continental levels, is a priority. However it is not a question of a merely abstract and doctrinal formation, but of an integral formation which takes into account concrete challenges of the laity in Asia.

Nor is it a question of a formation directed only to them. It is the whole Church that is called to conversion, to a new vision and a new awareness of herself. She is called above all to be radically converted to Christ, to live out together the following of Christ, in order to be a sign and sacrament of salvation, salt and light of the world, ferment and leaven in society, a drawing force even though numerically a minority.

Ref. PMU; International Secretariat,
Via di Propaganda 1-C, 00187 Roma.

DIRECTIONS IN MISSION

Luise Ahrens, M.M.

(Cardinal Josef Tomko, Prefect of the Congregation for Evangelisation of Peoples and Sister Luise Ahrens, President of Maryknoll Sisters Central Governing Board, were the two key-note speakers at the Quinquennial meeting of the USA Diocesan Directors of the Society for the Propagation of the Faith, held in New York on April 22, 1986. This is a slightly abridged version of Sister Ahrens' talk, based on the Mission Vision of her Congregation elaborated at their General Chapter in 1984).

The topic of this afternoon's talk is the future of mission. In some ways, talking about the future is a safe topic--most of us will not be around to say who was right and who was wrong! But the flowers of our future are seeded in our present and the words of Jesus call us to task when he says:

*"You can look at the earth and sky and predict the weather.
Why, then, don't you know the meaning of this present time?"*

(Luke 12.56, Mt. 16,3)

There are very many issues that will shape the task of mission in the future; we cannot deal with all of them this afternoon. Some of these crucial issues are the following:

China: The complex issue of the church and China will call forth all the sensitivity and courage of Church leaders and missionary personnel. Maryknoll was founded for China and there are presently two priests and three sisters working in China. We do not know yet what our role will be in this land of one billion people.

Ecumenism - and the scandal of division among the followers of Christ.
I will attend an ecumenical meeting in Nanjing, China in early May. An ecumenical mission consultation is being jointly planned by the USCMA and NCC = Divided Christians: Common Witness.
We are making efforts toward unity in mission but these are only a start.

Economic and Military: Impact of the U.S. on developing areas of the world, the areas in which we are in mission.

Clerical Questions: What is the role of a missionary-priest in a country like Nepal with an almost non-existent local Church or within an increasingly nationalistic local clergy or in the institutional Church in the 3rd world?

How will we resolve the sometimes creative, sometimes destructive,

tensions present in the establishment, growth and autonomy of particular churches?

Urbanization and its effects on mission/ministry trends. "Old" mission was predominantly rural.

Laity: What is their role, as we look to the future in areas where a priest can only come two or three times a year? What does it mean for mission when we see more applications for the Maryknoll Lay Mission Program than they can accept?

Women: This question presses in from every direction. We experience it here in the U.S., and the 3rd world is not exempt from this movement of women seeking their rightful place in the Church and the world.

But, aside from all of these very serious and important issues I have chosen the three trends in mission which, in my view, represent the future of mission in the 1990's:

- To accompany the poor
- To continue the struggle for justice
- To engage in inter-religious dialogue

Each of these mission trends presents significant challenges to us as collaborators in mission. In each trend, there are signs of hope that call us forth, and engage our hearts and minds with joy in the Mission of Jesus.

ACCOMPANYING THE POOR

A brief story illustrates the heart of this mission trend and shows us vividly how we can walk with the poor in ways that build solidarity and love. One of our Sisters in Chile received a gift of money from a sponsor who wanted it to be used for poor children. She decided to use it for a picnic and planned something for all the youngsters in her neighbourhood, an urban slum in Santiago. She got a bus to take children and mothers to a park where there is a swimming pool and swings and slides. She also bought balloons, ice cream and hotdogs--the works! The day was a great success--the kids had never seen a pool, used a slide or tasted a hot dog. That evening, after their return, the sister asked one of the children--"What did you like best about today", feeling sure it would be the pool or the ice cream, or even the flattened balloons that the child still held. Her response was startling and clear: "What I liked best was that you put your arm around me when we walked back to the bus". We are asked, as missionaries, literally and figuratively to put our arms around the poor of the world.

The challenges that surface as we look at this trend in mission are many, but today we will explore first two interlocking challenges to a Church which is committed to reaching out to the poor and to continuing the Mission of Jesus.

1. The picture of the Church itself: For many years, and most obviously since the age of colonial expansion in which the word "mission" was born, the Church has been for the most part, a church of the wealthy. This fact forced the Church to manifest itself in two dominant forms.

First, the Church was seen as the bringer of packaged schooling, health care and social services. In that period of history we were not able to receive. We dealt with poverty by taking steps to wipe out its manifestations. We often missed seeing the hearts of the people who came to us as we reached out to heal their wounds, educated their minds, and in the biblical and Quranic sense, "take care of the widows and orphans".

A good friend in Indonesia, a Muslim professor, asked us one day in a precious moment of dialogue why we thought anyone would become a Christian as, he said, "Christians are nurses, social workers and teachers and not interested in the things of God". He did not see in our desire to do good the missionaries' interest in the spiritual and the transcendent; the incarnational aspects of our missionary approach were not for him visibly grounded in the worship and praise of God. We dealt with the effects of poverty in that period but because we did not question the structures that sustained it, we became ourselves a part of the problem.

The other, more dangerous, form of our Church as wealthy, was its alliance with the powerful. Missioners and Colonial people were often the only educated people in whole areas of the 3rd world, or at least educated in the ways of 19th century Europe and North America. The alliance often became without intent an unholy alliance, dominating, subjugating and exploiting peoples and even nations.

To address this challenge, I see more and more missioners reaching out to the poor, to the abject, to the marginated. They reach out in friendship, live among the poor, are evangelized by them by a daily sharing of their lives. The questions, risks and anguish of the poor are shaping the lives and ministry of missioners. One cannot be evangelized by the poor if one does not know the poor, spend time among them and in some way, share their lot. I suspect it was this truth that led the Asian Bishops Conference Committee on Dialogue which met in Thailand in November, 1985, to insist on a week of immersion in the life of the poor. The Bishops stated in their closing Document: "Exposure brought us closer to the stark reality of poverty, but by immersion we sought to experience reality from the perspective of the poor themselves". (FABC/BIRA VII Document of Proceedings).

For us as missioners, this is a hopeful sign. It speaks clearly of the need for us to explore with hearts and minds the lessons of thirty years of Jesus' life, a life spent among the poor, in silence, in work and in prayer. Jesus shared that life in order to become one with the people, to walk that particular journey of family and friendship. This dimension of Jesus' mission and of our mission is speaking to us in a new way.

2. The Life of the Poor: Another kind of challenge that has quite recently presented itself is the fact that in many places in the world where missioners work, goods are available,

albeit expensive. It's a lot easier to live poor, without consumer goods, where there are not any. Our sisters in the refugee camp in the Sudan, those in Bangladesh and in Tanzania are in that situation without options. But most of us are now faced with choices; do we truly ally our lives with the poor or do we simply read about them and lament over pictures on the 7 O'clock news and gasp at statistics that shock us? The hope in me that responds to this challenge is the fact that most of our sisters are living among the people, sharing their water or their lack of it, their food or their lack of it, their sanitation services or their lack of them. Missioners are called to this radicality and are responding.

I read with great interest Aloysius Pieris' argument for poverty as a spiritual antidote against the "mammon" of the West. The goal of life, he feels, cannot be Western technocracy; and the Asian perspective of life, what he calls a "monastic" dimension, has been for some time, lacking from the whole Church. The poor of the East will teach us, he says, "a spiritual discipline of simplicity and poverty for God's sake and for humanity's sake in God". (International Rev. of Miss. Jan. '84). The missionary must approach the poor with shoes off, in a stance of mutuality and respect, in order to be invited to accompany them, to share in their journey. Only in this way will we be representatives of a Church in mission, a Church that would be recognized by Jesus Christ, the poor, holy carpenter of Nazareth.

CONTINUING THE STRUGGLE FOR JUSTICE

The second trend in mission is already a reality and that reality will continue. Missioners in the Third World and you who are in mission in the United States will continue the struggle for justice. The Vatican Council spoke clearly to the integrity of work for justice and evangelization; Populorum Progressio reiterated this call. Evangelii Nuntiandi in many of its articles speaks resoundingly of the duty of the Church "to proclaim the liberation of millions of human beings, many of whom are her own children, the duty of assisting the birth of this liberation, of giving witness to it, of ensuring that it is complete". (En #30). The Extraordinary Synod of 1985 affirmed once again the preferential option of the Church for the poor and her commitment to human promotion. (Cf Document of the Synod #6). The latest document on liberation, issued just a few weeks ago, speaks to the dignity of persons and the role of the Church in safeguarding that dignity. It reiterates for the Church a "love of preference for the poor".

The challenge that I see in this mission trend is a complex one. We need to struggle together to unify the eschatological and the incarnational dimension of life and mission. On any given day, we can open the newspaper and be faced with a Church leader or a Church member or a Church group either acting or speaking for the cause of justice as he, she or they understand it. The challenge is not in the need to struggle for justice, we all admit that need, but it is in the interpretation of what this means in specific places and times.

Examples are legion: the leadership of Cardinal Sin in the Philippines; the case of an ordinary minister within a Christian community seeking land reform; the Sanctuary Movement; the Holy Father's public support for Labour Union Solidarity; the U.S. Bishops' public opposition to U.S. military aid to Central America; we can name any variety of examples of participation in the struggle for justice. But as people of God and as bearers of the Gospel, we must discuss, discern and pray over the nature and the mode of our commitment to justice.

The Church herself, in each country of the world, and at the level of central leadership, must make case studies, analyze them in accord with Gospel principles, and strategize for justice. I am sure all of you are familiar with the speech of Dom Helder Camara in which he says: "When we help the poor we are called saints; when we ask why they are poor, we are called communists". We, Church people and missionaries, must continue to clarify the many and complex aspects of this struggle, and we must do it together.

There are many signs of hope in this trend. One of the most encouraging signs to me is to see so many missionaries engaged in the ministry of empowerment of the poor. An example will clarify what I mean by empowerment and will also demonstrate the question posed above.

In Indonesia, some of us began a very simple, community-based health program. An area, selected for a poor health record, chose leaders to become health promoters, with much ado about badges, uniforms, door signs, etc. They had a course of simple health care: wash your hands before cooking, move the well away from the latrine, learn to identify the worst of the local diseases etc. It was amazing to see the response of the people to empowerment. They met once a week to talk about health problems; vaccination programs were begun, pre-natal courses started, well-baby clinics were established... The next phase, however, was, "What can we do about the garbage in the area?" The city trucks did not collect in our urban slum and this caused disease. The question arose - "Why didn't trucks come to our area? Shouldn't they?" A delegation was sent to the mayor to ask and the pressure of numbers worked. The people felt their power and they were enfranchised as members of the body politic. Now they are working together for piped-in water.

The question is: is this action for justice? Political action? We need to discern. If we claim to be Gospel people and we ignore the justice questions, we are not better than the Pharisees who proclaimed their holiness and demonstrated their wickedness. But, on the other hand, if we do not base our spirituality on, and our action for justice on Gospel principles, and are swept into a purely socio-political struggle, we are no longer disciples engaged in the full Mission of Jesus. We could be philanthropists or humanists, but we are not missionaries or disciples of Jesus.

ENGAGING IN INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

The last mission trend is perhaps the most "home-ly" issue - inter religious dialogue. Perhaps some of you feel that missionaries have no role if the goal of mission is not to baptize. We need to

look at this question very deeply and seriously. Cardinal Josef Tomko, the Prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, said in February, 1986 in an interview in FIDES:

"I believe we are still at the beginning of a long way. Mutual knowledge and reciprocal respect are to be developed and deepened. But the world has need of God. The great religions, including Christianity, have a common mission to fulfill: that of keeping alive the sense of God and of the sacred on which depends authentic respect for men and women who are creatures of God."

(Fides 19 Feb. '86 No. 3402 n/87)

The first challenges we need to deal with are the theological questions. The obvious questions surfaced with the assertion of the Vatican Council that salvation outside the Church is possible: How then do we understand the uniqueness of the salvific action which comes to us through Christ from God and the Church?

The challenge of dialogue at the level of lived experience is for me the most crucial issue for Roman Catholic Mission in this decade. I went to Indonesia as part of Maryknoll's first venture into the world of Islam. Indonesia is the 5th largest country in the world with 165 million people and will surpass the U.S. and Soviet Union by the end of this century; 90% of the people are Muslim, making it the largest Muslim population in the world. I had no special training for this reality, except a PhD in English Literature and a Bishop who encouraged us to work in the Government institutions and to live among Muslim poor. We asked ourselves, as you are no doubt asking: What is mission here? We are forbidden by law to proselytize so what does our presence here mean? I learned, very slowly, what it means to be engaged in inter-religious dialogue.

Most people who are involved in dialogue with the great religions of the world, all of which originated in Asia, understand dialogue in many different ways. Levels of dialogue vary in meaning from scholar to scholar but most of them generally accept three modes of dialogue: of word, of collaboration, and of life.

Dialogue of word is that in which scholars meet and exchange views on particular points of religious belief and dogma. Missioners would have to devote their lives to this field to get enough language, culture and theological training to enter into dialogue of the word. My hope in this realm is that professors, theologians and those in theological schools will continue to examine the questions which arise and constantly share with us their wisdom; and that this will be done with encouragement from local bishops and the Congregations in Rome whose task this is.

Dialogue of life and of collaboration are the levels of dialogue which are closer to our own life and experience. We arrived in Bandung, Indonesia in 1972 and settled, after consultation with the Muslim head of our area, into a small house in an urban slum with little clear direction about the nature of our mission task there.

First, we entered into a dialogue of life, sharing with our neighbours who we were; most had never seen a foreigner or a Christian, let alone lived closely with a group of foreign, Christian women. Everything we did was matter for neighbourhood discussion and evaluation: The funniest for them was on our first Christmas when we brought a tree into our house and crowned the folly by putting lights and toys on it! We shared all. To this day we rejoice in weddings and circumcisions. We mourn our dead together. We belong there.

Two stories sum up the missiological directions our lives have taken there in the dialogue of life. Dahyan was a ten year old who lived next door to us in Bandung, Indonesia. Since our walls are contiguous, we live quite closely and share a great deal; Dahyan was a special friend of mine. One morning, as I was praying in my room, his head appeared in the open window frame. "What are you doing?" "Praying", I responded. "I'll come too" he said quickly. I heard the water splash, as all Muslims wash before they pray, and Dahyan appeared with his rolled up prayer mat.

He sat beside me on the floor. I had on my wall that wonderful picture from Chartres Cathedral, the creation of Adam. Adam and God are clearly in a warm loving relationship in the picture. "Who's that", he asked. "Adam and God." For a Muslim, Adam is a very clear figure, loved and revered in the Qu'ran. But Muslims do not image God in a representational way. Dahyan stared at the picture for a long time. And then he said: "Sister, I fast for 28 days every year, sometimes more; I pray five times each day; and when I can, I give alms for poor children (and this family has sixteen children and the father sells cloth from door to door) but, Sister, I don't think my God loves me the way your God loves Adam."

For me, for all Christian missionaries, we have to share the consummate joy that is ours in a God who has, in Jesus, come to be one of us, who has entered into a relationship of friendship with us. Our lives, our enthusiasm for life, our rhythms of prayer shout this joy to our people.

The second story is one of symbol. I taught a group of young engineers in the appropriate technology section of the most prestigious educational institute in Indonesia. I had been in Indonesia for about 2 years and was wearing a simple cross. About one-half hour into the class, one of the men stopped me and said: "I cannot concentrate, Dr. Ahrens, on what you are talking about with the symbol of hatred and conquest in front of me. Your people killed thousands of my people under that sign." For us Christians, the cross speaks of life, suffering, death and resurrection, - the Paschal mystery that bears life and redemption. To Jan, it speaks of hatred, violence and injustice. But the road of dialogue was opened and we talked long and seriously about what the sign was to me, to him. History for him is close; to me, the Crusades are a distant date in a history book. He spoke his anger and hurt; I spoke my sorrow at violence and death, and we both could speak of other current situations where fanaticism on both sides is creating war and mistrust. So in this way we missionaries in Indonesia learned to use our occasions to speak, to dialogue at the depths of our experience, rooted first in trust and friendship.

Dialogue of collaboration has also been a missionary tool for us. As we work in the neighbourhood for a clean-area award from the Government, or to raise money to build real sewers, or to share the joy of a visitor, or the sorrows that reach into all human lives, the barriers that separate us are breaking down and the bonds of human friendship are growing. We share prayer when we can, and I know now because of those moments of sharing that experience of God is not limited to one mode, one set of words or one rite. God is among us in prayer, not described, not limited by definitions, but known and touched in the depths of the heart, the Christian heart and the Muslim heart. There is a Japanese Haiku which expresses this religious experience - it says:

I do not know who dwells here
But because of the sacredness of the atmosphere,
I bow deeply.

In summary, I see the future of mission as in some way touching these three trends: accompanying the poor, the chosen of God; continuing the struggle for justice; and entering into dialogue with the religions and cultures of the world. I expect that you and I will be engaged in these tasks well into the next century. And why do we do it? I think first of the example of St. Paul who constantly claimed through his letters and his life that "the love of God impels me." (2 Cor. 14) We, too, are impelled to share this God of love and of joy and of justice. And I think of Jeremiah, wonderful, crabby, complaining, faithful Jeremiah! And I hope in my heart of hearts that you and I will continue to be urged forward in mission as he was, as he cried out in the face of all the difficulties and burdens of God's chosen speakers:

There is a fire burning in my heart, in my bones;
the effort to restrain it wearied me! I could not
bear it. (Jer. 20:9)

Let us, each one of us, recommit ourselves this day to the spreading of this fire over the face of the earth.

 REVERSING AFRICA'S DECLINE

Lester R. Brown and
Edward C. Wolf

(At the 1985 Villa Cavalletti Seminar and later at the Annual General Meeting a number of SEDOS members asked for guidance on the wider issues affecting world poverty. The Executive Committee decided to further this study. As a first step in this study we are printing an excerpted chapter from the Worldwatch Institute publication State of the World 1986. Report on Progress Toward a Sustainable Society. The Report which was recommended in Time magazine as a significant contribution to understanding complex and interrelated world issues will be published in nine languages and find its way into 122 nations. The Report has become a text in 170 American colleges and universities.

Worldwatch Institute, an NGO founded ten years ago is plugged into 70 research institutes around the globe and has access to computer data from the United Nations, the World Bank and the U.S. Government.

This excerpted chapter entitled "Reversing Africa's Decline" focuses exclusively on Africa. The chapter does not focus on the debt or refugee problems of Africa as these are dealt with in other parts of the report in an international context.

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Although essentially agrarian, Africa is losing the ability to feed itself. In 1984, 140 million of its 531 million people were fed entirely with grain from abroad. In 1985, the ranks of those fed with imported grain may have reached 170 million-two thirds as many people as live in North America. In February of 1985, the United Nations reported that some 10 million people had left their villages in search of food, many of them crowded into hastily erected relief camps. Starvation deaths had passed the 1 million mark.

During the two decades after World War II, grain production per person in Africa either remained steady or increased slightly, peaking in 1967 at 180 kilograms. This level, roughly one pound of grain per day, is widely viewed as the subsistence threshold, below which malnutrition begins to erode human development and labour productivity. Since 1967, per capita grain production has been declining. In 1983 and 1984-years in which low rainfall depressed the harvest-118 and 120 kilograms of grain were produced per person, down more than a third

from the peak.

Lower Per Capita Income: As per capita grain production has declined in this agrarian society, so has per capita income. The policymakers responsible for economic development and planning are now painfully aware of this development. At a ministerial-level meeting in late April 1985 they drafted a memorandum to the United Nations Economic and Social Council, which was in effect a plea for help. They observed that "as a result of sluggish (economic) growth and a high rate of population growth, per Capita income which was growing at negligible rates during the seventies, has consistently declined since 1980 at an average annual rate of 4.1 percent and average per capita income is now between 15 and 25 percent less than 15 years ago".

Failure of Traditional Financial Criteria : The crisis has prompted a few laudable initiatives, such as World Bank efforts to raise an additional \$1 billion for long-term economic assistance and the appointment of an Emergency Relief Coordinator for Africa by the U.N. Secretary General. But these actions deal largely with the symptoms of Africa's decline, not the causes. An economic assistance strategy dictated by traditional financial criteria-the rate of return on project investments-is destined to fail. Indeed, it is already failing. Continuing a "business as usual" policy toward Africa amounts to writing off its future. Without a massive mobilization of resources, the prospect of reversing the decline in per capita grain production is poor, suggesting that famine will become chronic, an enduring feature of the African landscape.

Reversing Ecological and Economic Decline: At issue is whether national governments and international assistance agencies can fashion new, environmentally based development strategies to reverse the ecological deterioration and economic decline that is inflicting such suffering on the people of Africa.

This raises several questions: Are the political leaders of Africa prepared to make the tough decisions needed to reverse the decline? And is the international community prepared to mobilize to help Africa save itself? Can African governments and the international development community adopt a development strategy based on environmental rather than narrow economic goals, one that restores and preserves natural support systems-forests, grasslands, soils, and the hydrological regime-rather than meeting a specified rate of return on investment in a particular project?

With environmental deterioration undermining economic progress all across the continent, the only successful economic development strategy will be one that restores the natural systems on which the economy depends. Reversing Africa's decline will require carefully orchestrated national efforts to organize millions of people to do ecologically sound farming, build soil conservation terraces, and plan smaller families. An environmentally oriented effort to change the situation in Africa will, of necessity, be people-based rather than capital-based. To be sure, more capital will be needed-much more.

But the heart of the strategy will be the mobilization of people.

BREAKING POPULATION GROWTH

In the late twentieth century, the increase in human numbers has shaped the destiny of Africa far more than it has any other continent. Not only is its population growth the fastest of any continent in history, but in country after country, demands of escalating human numbers are exceeding the sustainable yield of local life-support systems, croplands and forests. Each year Africa's farmers attempt to feed 16 million additional people, roughly 10 times the annual addition in North America or Europe.

According to U.N. projections, Africa's 1980 population of just under 500 million will reach 1.5 billion by 2025, a tripling within just 45 years. Virtually all governments will have to contend with the momentum of growth that results when populations are dominated by people born since 1970. In some African societies, children under age 15 constitute almost half the total, far higher than in most of the world. All of these young people will reach reproductive age by the end of the century.

If African governments take a serious look at future population/resource balances, as China did almost a decade ago, they too may discover that they are forced to choose either a sharp reduction in birth rates or falling living standards and, in some cases, rising death rates as in Ethiopia.

Public Discussion: Concern about Population growth appears to be growing. Over the last 18-24 months, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities and the World Bank have received numerous requests from African governments for family planning assistance. Although these requests will not immediately translate into couples having smaller families, they are a step in the right direction.

As recently as 1974, when the U.N. Conference on World Population was held in Bucharest, only 2 countries in sub-Saharan Africa had policies to reduce population growth—Kenya and Ghana. By mid-1984, 13 had such policies. The additional countries were Botswana, Burundi, The Gambia, Lesotho, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

At an early 1984 conference on population convened in Arusha, Tanzania, by the Economic Commission for Africa, the 36 assembled countries observed that "current high levels of fertility and mortality give rise to great concern about the region's ability to maintain even (those) living standards already attained since independence". Conference attendees adopted the Kilimanjaro Program of Action on Population,

which called on Commission member-states to "ensure the availability and accessibility of family planning services to all couples or individuals seeking such services freely or at subsidized prices." After a long silence on the population issue, key African leaders are now making it a matter of public discussion.

Zimbabwe: Among the countries with family planning programs, Zimbabwe's may be the most vigorous. Discussions with Zimbabwean officials and farmers suggest at least three reasons for the soaring interest in limiting family size. First, since local communities are responsible for educational services beyond primary school, they finance secondary school education largely by assessing student educational fees. For parents who want a good education for their children, the incentive to reduce family size is strong. Second, in rural areas, where most Zimbabweans live, people are increasingly aware that growth in family size will no longer be matched by growth in cropland area. Third, family planning services are readily available through community-based centers now operating throughout Zimbabwe. People can now consciously weigh the advantages of planning their families, and do something to have a smaller family if they so choose, whereas in the past they could not. In effect, the supply of family planning services is generating its own demand.

Grass-roots Programs: Experience has repeatedly shown that grass-roots family planning programs - those staffed and led by local people, are the most successful ones. The advice locals give is always more acceptable than that of someone brought in specifically to promote a program. Convenience and cost are also important. Surveys show that couples are unlikely to travel more than an hour to reach family planning service centers. If services are too costly, they go unused.

Given the unprecedented numbers of young people who will reach reproductive age in Africa within the next two decades, the adoption of the two-child family as a social goal may be the key to restoring a sustained improvement in living standards. Success in striving for two children per couple will bring problems of its own, including a severe distortion of age-group distribution. But it may be the price many societies will have to pay for neglecting population policy for too long.

GETTING AGRICULTURE MOVING

By almost any standard, agriculture is not doing well in Africa. Declining per capita food production, abandoned cropland, rising food imports and famine are among the most visible failures. This dismal record stems in part from the record population growth described earlier and the associated deterioration of the agricultural resource base. Agriculture also suffers from low priority and prestige, national food price policies that discourage investment, and declining rainfall.

Within Africa, agriculture is widely neglected. International aid programs have focused on specific projects rather than overriding issues such as food pricing policy. Too often this assistance has been directed at the symptoms of agricultural stresses rather than the causes.

Fortunately, awareness of these shortcomings is slowly spreading. World Bank Senior Vice-President Ernest Stern describes the situation thus: "We, along with other donors, I think it is fair to say, among all our achievements, have failed in Africa. We have not fully understood the problems, we have not identified the priorities, we have not always designed our projects to fit the agroclimatic conditions of Africa and the social, cultural and political frameworks of Africa...we, and everybody else, are still unclear about what can be done in agriculture in Africa".

Problems More Acute in Africa : A 1981 report from International Institute of Tropical Agriculture in Nigeria summarized the dilemma: "In Africa, almost every problem is more acute than elsewhere. Topsoils are more fragile, and more subject to erosion and degradation. Irrigation covers a smaller fraction of the cultivated area....leaving agriculture exposed to the vicissitude of an irregular rainfall pattern. The infrastructure, both physical and institutional, is weaker. The shortage of trained people is more serious. The flight from the land is more precipitateIn one respect, namely the failure to develop farming systems capable of high and sustained rates of production growth, the problems of Africa have reached the stage of crisis".

As the continent's population approaches 600 million, centuries-old agricultural systems of shifting cultivation that were ecologically stable as recently as 1950, when the population was only 219 million, are breaking down. The new agricultural technologies and inputs needed to offset land productivity losses either have not been developed or are not being applied.

Difference in Asian and African Agriculture: One reason for Africa's agricultural disappointment is the expectation that the dramatic advances in grain production in Asia that began some two decades ago could be duplicated. Unfortunately, differences between the two continents make it impossible to transfer the Asian formula. For example, Asian agriculture is dominated by wet rice cultivation. A single package of successful yield-raising rice technologies could be easily adapted for use throughout the region. Indeed, essentially the same approach was used for Asia's second food staple, wheat, most of which is also irrigated. Africa, in contrast, depends on several staples - corn, wheat, sorghum, millet, barley, and rice among the cereals, plus cassava and yams - and a highly heterogeneous collection of farming systems.

Even more important, much of Africa is semiarid, which limits the profitable use of yield-raising inputs such as fertilizer. In Asia and elsewhere, dramatic gains in food production have been achieved in large part because abundant moisture enables crops to respond strongly to chemical fertilizer. In this respect, Africa more nearly resembles semiarid Australia, which despite a technologically advanced farm system has raised grain yields per hectare only 13 percent over the last 30 years. By comparison, African agriculture does not fare too poorly, since grain yield per hectare is up some 38 percent. Yet North America, East Asia, and Western Europe have more than doubled grain yields during that time.

The use of Irrigation Fertilizers Concentrated

in a few Countries: The key to raising cropland productivity in Asia has been the interaction of irrigation, fertilizer, and high-yield dwarf wheats and rices. In Africa, the use of irrigation and fertilizer has been growing, though from a small base. Even though irrigated area has increased - from 5.8 million hectares in 1963 to 8.6 million hectares in 1981 (about 7 percent of cropland) - it still leaves the continent, a region with 11 percent of the world's people, with only 4 percent of its irrigated area.

Within Africa, irrigated area is highly concentrated in three countries: Egypt, South Africa and the Sudan. These three countries account for 66 percent of the continent's irrigated land; the remaining 33 percent is widely scattered through the rest of Africa.

The pattern of fertilizer use is similar to that of irrigation. South Africa and Egypt account for 55 percent of the continent's total. With only a modest amount of fertilizer used outside of Egypt, Sudan and South Africa, it comes as no surprise that since 1950 Africa has increased output more from plowing new land than from raising land productivity. This contrasts sharply with the rest of the world, where more than 80 percent of production gains have come from boosting yields.

Holistic or Systems Approach to Farming: In all more than 40 percent of Africans live in countries where grain yields per hectare are lower today than they were a generation ago. Much of African agriculture once consisted of a complex, interactive mixture of crops, livestock and trees - a system that contrasts sharply with the monocultures on which most world agricultural research is based and which African farmers have been encouraged to adopt in recent years. What is needed in large areas of the continent is a holistic or systems approach to both research and project design for farming.

Cultural and Climatic Roots: Savanna Agriculture: The envisioned revolution in farming systems will take African agriculture back to its cultural and climatic roots - a savanna agriculture patterned on the natural growth found there.

- a) Agroforestry: Reintroducing agroforestry in its various forms could rebuild African traditions in which crops, livestock, and trees are integrated as a matter of course. On savannas, trees and grasses grow together. There is no closed forest or unbroken prairie. The new agricultural methods known collectively as agroforestry mimic this natural relationship by combining useful tree crops with cultivated food crops. Agroforestry systems can be tailored to the desiccated Sahel and to the moist farmlands of equatorial and coastal West Africa. Their universal appeal is reduced soil erosion, increased nutrient cycling and biological activity in the topsoil, and resilience to drought. The trees used in agroforestry can help secure terraces on sloping land. By emphasizing the role trees

play in soil fertility and stable farming systems, rural families can be brought into the agroforestry efforts which restore the ecological balance of nature.

- b) Alley - Cropping: For humid areas, International Institute for Tropical Agriculture and the Nairobi-based International Council for Research in Agroforestry are investigating a technique called alley cropping. Rows of crops are grown between headgerows of trees or perennial shrubs. Prunings from the trees mulch the crops, returning nutrients to the soil. Fast-growing, nitrogen-fixing trees like leucaena work well in this system, improving the soil and providing the farmer with fuelwood and fodder. Alley cropping recovers soil fertility in the same way that traditional bush-fallow methods do, but it permits continuous cultivation.

In parts of the semiarid Sahel where cash crops have replaced traditional agroforestry methods based on the native acacia trees, seasonal grazing lands have been converted to cropland. Many valuable trees and perennial grasses have disappeared from the landscape. Research in Senegal reveals some of the advantages of reintroducing native nitrogen-fixing trees to agriculture in this area: "Yields of millet and groundnuts grown under *Acacia albida* trees on infertile soils increase from 500 kilograms per hectare to 900 kilograms per hectare. In addition to increased crop yields, there are 50-100 percent increases in soil organic matter, improved soil structure, increased water-holding capacity, and a marked increase in soil microbiological activity beneath the trees." As with alley cropping in wetter lands, agroforestry in the Sahelian countries can shorten fallow intervals, enrich soils, and reduce the pressure to expand farming onto marginal land.

- c) Reforestation and Rainfall: Restoring Africa's woodlands and forests is essential to the recovery of agriculture, on which the continent's economic prospects depend. The 380 million people in the countryside constitute the only labour force large enough to turn Africa's forest decline around.

More than 5 percent of the moist forests of coastal West Africa (the countries from Guinea through eastern Nigeria) were being cleared by commercial loggers and subsistence farmers each year in the early eighties. At this rate, these forests have a "half-life" of just 13 years. Well over half the outright deforestation in Africa takes place in these coastal states. Though small by comparison with the vast remaining forests of the Zaire Basin, this coastal greenbelt of rain forests may play a critical role in recycling the moisture from the Gulf of Guinea that provides summer rains from Senegal to Sudan. The effects of deforestation on overall climatic conditions needs further research.

Food Pricing Policies: Of all the steps that governments can take to raise agricultural productivity in Africa, a reorientation of food price policies is most important. Too many governments have followed policies designed to placate urban consumers. Ceiling prices for foodstuffs discourage agricultural investment and modernization. A better policy would offer government-backed price

supports to provide the assurance that farmers need to invest. In some cases, average prices for farm commodities after the adoption of price supports are little changed from before. But the assurance of guaranteed prices removes market uncertainty, thus encouraging investment at planting time.

In Zimbabwe, one of the few countries with effective price supports, both the farmers on large commercial holdings and those on tribal lands are responding enthusiastically to price incentives. With a return to near normal rainfall for the 1985 crop, Zimbabwe will have a large exportable surplus of corn. Farmers on the tribal lands alone have produced a record marketable surplus of corn estimated at 800,000 tons. Indeed, Zimbabwe indicated in April 1985 that it was providing 25,000 tons of grain to Ethiopia as food aid.

Price supports can partly offset other constraints, such as extensive illiteracy and the lack of effective agricultural extension systems, as they have, for example, in India over the past two decades.

Africa's Diverse Agricultural Systems: African governments and the Agricultural community must recognize the need for numerous technological packages for the continent's agriculture. These include technologies developed elsewhere for irrigated agriculture or for dryland farming, as well as new technologies oriented toward bush fallow cultivation, nomadic pastoralism, agroforestry, and integrated crop-livestock farming. Given the enormous diversity in the agricultural systems of the continent, no one package will work for more than a small segment of the continent's farm sector. As a result, the research investment needed to achieve a given advance in farm output in Africa may be far greater than in Asia or in North America and Europe.

MORE THAN A MARSHALL PLAN

A mammoth effort is required to avert economic collapse in Africa. In many ways, it is similar in spirit to the Marshall Plan that revitalized Western Europe after World War II, but it will be far more demanding. Africa's population, at over a half billion, is more than double that of Western Europe at the end of the war. The Marshall Plan was designed to rebuild war-devastated economies rather than ecologically devastated ones.

Europe had the basic institutions in place; most of the damage was physical - the destruction of cities and of industrial capacity. Africa does not yet have all the institutions and skills needed to reverse its decline. Europe was geographically compact, with well-developed communication and transport systems. Africa is vast, with only most rudimentary transportation network. The cost of transporting food from surplus to deficit areas, whether by truck or draft animals, can be prohibitive.

Leadership: Leadership will be needed to coordinate the international effort: In the past few years, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, directed by a Nigerian, Adebayo Adedeji, has taken the lead among African institutions in assessing long-term economic and development trends. The African Development Bank,

the continent's key development institution, recently convened a workshop on desertification, signaling its recognition that environmental deterioration diminishes the effectiveness of its lending programs.

At the international level, only the World Bank appears to be institutionally strong enough to lead such an effort, but it is not ideally suited for this role. The Bank's experience lies primarily in financing large-scale development projects, not in fostering local mobilization of the kind needed in Africa. But despite the need for a philosophical reorientation, the Bank seems destined to fill the leadership role simply because no other international group has the capability.

National Assessment and Projections: As a start, national assessments and long-term projections of environmental, resource, demographic, and economic trends are needed. A similar effort undertaken in China in the late seventies provided the foundation for reorienting that country's population, environmental, and agricultural policies. Without a better understanding of where existing trends are leading, it will be difficult to mobilize support to reverse them, either within or outside Africa.

Most important, explicit projections of ecological trends will facilitate the analysis of how changes in natural systems affect economic trends. Trend projections would also help define the thrust and scale of a successful reversal strategy. Such projections can help national political leaders inform themselves, and they can provide the information to help people understand the need for, and accept, dramatic new initiatives.

Environmentally Based Development Strategies: If the economic decline affecting Africa is to be reversed, each country will need an environmentally based development strategy. The World Bank, given its research capacity and its experience in formulating policies and establishing priorities, is best equipped to assist individual countries in outlining a national development strategy to reverse the broad-based ecological deterioration and set the stage for the resumption of growth in per capita food production and income. If events confirm that land use changes and soil degradation are altering the hydrological cycle and reducing rainfall, a continental strategy will be needed to reverse the drying out of Africa's land. Given the scale of climatic process, only a coordinated, continent-wide reversal strategy will have much prospect of success.

Once national strategies are outlined, and goals and timetables are established for such things as planting trees and lowering birth rates, it would be up to each national government to mobilize its own people and integrate assistance from abroad into the national strategy.

Third World Success: Many of the lessons most relevant to Africa's crisis have been learned not in the industrial world but elsewhere in the Third World. South Korean and Chinese successes in national reforestation, Indian and Nepalese experiences with village woodlots, and community-based family planning programs in Thailand and Indonesia, where population growth has been halved

within a decade, suggest potential partnerships that African leaders might pursue.

Africa faces difficult choices. Success in saving the continent hinges on whether political institutions are strong enough to make the corrections needed to reverse the decline without coming apart. The economic consequences of continuing ecological decay are clear. The social costs - the human suffering and loss of life - could eventually approach those of World War II.

The greatest risk is that there will be a loss of hope. However bleak the deteriorating situation may appear, it is of human origin and can yield to human remedy. How African leaders and the international community respond to the challenge will reveal much about the human prospect over the remainder of this century and the beginning of the next one.

- end -

ECUMENISM, A MISSION OF THE CHURCH

In a certain sense, the unity of Christ's disciples is a condition for fulfilling the mission of the Church; not only that, it is a condition for fulfilling the mission of Christ himself in the world. It is a condition for effectively proclaiming and consolidating faith in Christ. Thus Jesus prayed: "that they may all be one...so that the world may believe that you have sent me...that they may become perfectly one so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17:21,23).

The unity of Christians is vital for the proclamation of the Gospel. For evangelization depends on the convincing witness of the Christian community and not only on the words which are preached. How can non-believers come to believe in the love of God revealed in Christ if they do not "see how these Christians love one another"? Love cannot reveal itself or enter into hearts except through the testimony of unity. The very longing for unity and union constitutes the beginning of this testimony.

Ref. From the homily of Pope John Paul II given at Goa during his recent visit to India.

JUSTICE CRITERIA FOR MINISTRY

(The following criteria were developed as guidelines for persons seeking a new ministry in which working for justice is an integral component. For those already engaged in ministry the Justice Criteria can serve as tools for evaluating the justice dimension of current ministries.)

1. Ministries that enable fulfillment of basic needs (food, water, housing, clothing, education)^{1/}
2. Ministries that enable fulfillment of human rights (social, economic, political, cultural and religious) within the context of a given culture.
3. Ministries based on a tool of social analysis that brings people's understanding of a situation into a larger context, is on-going, and promotes efforts to change unjust structures.
4. Ministries that work for the development of persons (self-esteem, self-determination, personal and spiritual growth).
5. Ministries that empower the poor, oppressed, and alienated to control their lives.
6. Ministries that allow people to participate in decisions that affect them.
7. Ministries that enable people to have effective involvement in their social milieu.
8. Ministries that foster local people's involvement in service outreach to others.
9. Ministries that promote local leadership.
10. Ministries that foster faith and spiritual values.
11. Ministries that promote just interpersonal relationships.

Ref. Maryknoll Sisters' Research and Planning Dept.

^{1/} In April, 1981, the World Bank defined a minimum criteria for Basic Human Needs as: 5 years of schooling, adequate nutrition, primary health care not more than one hour away, Family Planning Services, 20 liters of water per day, per person within 100 yards of home, a pit latrine.