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Peace on earth....

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IN THIS ISSUE

The assembly hall was full for the morning session of the 1990 annual meeting of SEDOS and the afternoon session was the best attended AGM to date. In the evening, Mass was celebrated according to the Zairean rite, Fr. Kasanda being the chief celebrant assisted by a small choir of Zaireans living in Rome. A spirit of prayerful solemnity marked the celebration and indicated the possibilities of inculturation in the liturgy even in the confined Roman surroundings.

Fr. Kasanda's conference was followed by a lively discussion. His replies to questions are in this issue following the text of his address. He spoke in French. There was simultaneous translation into English, Italian and Spanish.

His address dealt with four main areas:

- a realistic analysis of some characteristics of past mission in Africa;
- new ways of being in mission and the demands these are making on African churches;
- the peculiar challenges which confront African missionaries when they cross cultural and racial boundaries in their own continent and even more so when they enter rich "Western" societies;
- how missionary institutes can be catalysts in the missionary growth of African churches today.

Fr. Kasanda focused on the place of missionary institutes in the developing outreach of African churches. Those churches were reminded forcibly of their missionary character by the famous address of Pope Paul VI at Kampala. It has been reiterated again and again by the present Pope John Paul II in his many visits to that continent.

The speaker's experience in Zaire, in Nigeria and now in Rome as a member of the General Council of the Scheut Missionary Society ensured he was well-placed to give this excellent survey. Africa's missionaries are growing in number. Growth does not take place without its share of tensions and strains and African missionary growth is no exception. Fr. Kasanda identified some of these tensions and raised pertinent questions about them.

This issue also contains the 1990 SEDOS Annual Report.

There is a brief interview with Bishop Agré of the Ivory Coast on the coming Synod for Africa.

We include a few significant mission experiences from the many that come into our documentation centre each day.

And there are important notices of coming events.

SEDOS Secretariat will re-open on January 3, 1991.

We wish all our members and readers peace and joy as we remember and rejoice at the birth of the Son of God among us. May we put no obstacle to his 'peace on earth' in this coming year.

THE OUTREACH OF AFRICAN PARTICULAR CHURCHES TO THE UNIVERSAL MISSION:

THE ROLE OF THE MISSIONARY INSTITUTE

L. Kasanda Lumembu, CICM

(L. Kasanda Lumembu, CICM comes from Zaire. He is a member of the General Council of the Scheut missionaries' Generalate in Rome. He has specialised in initial formation of young Scheut missionaries in Zaire and was Master of Novices in the novitiate there. He was himself a missionary for some years in Nigeria where he was principal superior. He is a well known speaker and writer).

A norm which each christian community should consider essential to its very existence is to send every disciple on mission. The Second Vatican Council was quite clear on this point and the Synod of Bishops held in 1974 further stressed it (1). Mission is not an appendage of the old established churches, nor of the Christian communities which have plenty of personnel and material means. The young churches too, despite their own internal needs, must contribute, in however small a way, to the proclamation of the Gospel (2).

The churches of Africa have existed now for a little over thirty years as hierarchically instituted units. These churches which are the result of the missionary effort of the old churches of the West, will not retain their creative impulse if they evade the universal call to mission. A church which closes in on itself, without a missionary dimension, is either an incomplete or a sick church according to John Paul II. The churches of Africa have understood the Pope's observation. In fact, they are already opening up to mission. Here it is appropriate to quote from Fr. Omer Degrijse's book entitled "L'éveil missionnaire des Eglises du Tiers Monde" published in

1983 (3). Fr. Degrijse, a former Superior General of the Scheut missionaries, deals in the second chapter of his book with the missionary awakening of the churches of Africa. In considering the vitality and dynamism of the small christian communities, the author notes the presence of a favourable climate for the growth of vocations and the promise of a greater openness to mission. He writes:-

"By increasingly opening up to the exterior, these communities are also becoming missionary. The universal missionary dimension of the church, communion with other churches and evangelization ad extra challenge them" (4).

The response of the churches of Africa to universal mission is a movement which is gaining ground. African missionaries are already at work today in churches both within and beyond their continent.

These missionaries belong to different groups. Some are members of international missionary institutes, some belong to missionary institutes of African foundation, some belong to diocesan religious institutes and some to the diocesan

clergy. This courageous response of the African churches to mission proves the existence of a new consciousness of being fully evolved churches. Accepting mission, they express their own internal vitality prompting them to respond to all the missionary requirements of proclaiming the Good News (5). Nevertheless, a readiness to go on mission beyond their frontiers must not be to the detriment of mission within those frontiers.

Mission is global. It is truly fulfilled in its two complementary aspects, - within, *missio ad intra* and beyond, *missio ad extra*. These two expressions are not parallel or successive commitments. They are bound together from the start, the one containing the other, the one acknowledging the other. A true missionary dimension of a particular church is not to be estimated therefore, by the presence of its members in another particular church. It is to be recognised rather by a living internal reality which spreads out through mission. On this point one might ask whether the churches of Africa are not mission-oriented, or at least partly so, in spite of themselves. In this reflection I propose a deeper examination of this question, and I propose also to question the missionary institutes about their role in awakening the churches of Africa to mission. It is an essential, a catalytic role, which brings to completion the work they have already begun.

My paper deals with the four following points:-

1. Pragmatic definition of mission in Africa.
2. New mission orientations and challenges to the particular African churches.
3. African missionaries challenged by mission.
4. The catalyzing role of the missionary institutes working in the churches of Africa.

1. PRAGMATIC DEFINITION OF MISSION IN AFRICA

Africans' notion of christian mission inevitably derives from their experience of how they saw European missionaries carry out the service of mission. It was an ambiguous notion. They saw mission as an enterprise of the old christian churches directed at the pagan regions of the world. The aim was "the conversion of the infidels". It had a military connotation and just like the colonial movement of that time it aimed at a great conquest. Like the division of Africa at the Berlin Conference, the church had divided up and portioned out the pagan world entrusting its conquest to the missionary institutes. Statistics were drawn up each year showing the results obtained with an estimate of the amount of work still to be done. An even less fortunate aspect accompanied the military one. Rightly or wrongly mission was associated with colonialism and in fact, missionaries had often appeared beside the political conquerors (6). Their action was not always distinct from that of the latter and some conversions were indeed the result of their joint action.

One can understand therefore, the hostile reaction to the christian mission at the time of political independence. Mission suffered the fate reserved to all the components of the colonial enterprise (7). In practice the idea underlying the above mentioned aspects implied that mission was an activity addressed to pagans in the colonized countries. This idea continued up to the time of political independence, but it was just about that time that the local hierarchy was instituted in the old apostolic vicariates of these same countries. The coincidence of these events was at the origin of the question regarding the presence of foreign (Western)

missionaries in the young churches of Africa and the proposal of a "moratorium" (8).

This concept of mission is certainly not quite the same today. Nevertheless, despite the corrections made by the Second Vatican Council's reflection on mission, some vestiges of the old concept persist. Mission for most Christians is always linked to the conversion of pagans and to work in less privileged countries. It continues to be confused with the enterprise of promoting civilization and development. It presupposes significant financial resources for the material assistance of the poorer churches. This factor was not uncommonly the reason for preference being given to one missionary institute rather than to another. One was chosen because of better financial resources and the ability to set-up material infrastructures necessary to the poorer dioceses. In brief, one may say that the definition of mission was based on what was seen to be done - conversion of pagans, setting-up of big projects for human promotion and the endowment of particular churches with essential infrastructures.

2. NEW MISSION ORIENTATIONS AND MISSION IN AFRICA

Vatican Council II and the missiological reflection which followed it gave rise to a new understanding of the universal mission of the church. In the first place, the universality of mission was stressed. Mission is not the prerogative of mission institutes alone. It is a duty of the church as a body and of all its members (9). The particular church is the expression, the 'coming to be' of the universal church. It carries within itself the intimate demands of its catholicity and must obey the commandment of its Founder (10). The Decree *Ad Gentes* (20) states: "It is

very fitting that the young churches should participate as soon as possible in the universal missionary work of the church. Let them send their own missionaries to proclaim the Gospel all over the world even though they themselves are suffering from a shortage of clergy."

The Council's affirmations were deepened, thanks to the 1974 Synod of Bishops on Evangelization, and by the repeated appeals of Popes Paul VI and John Paul II. One can never appreciate adequately the importance of Paul VI's appeal launched in Kampala in 1969: "You Africans are now missionaries to yourselves: in other words, you Africans must now continue, upon this continent, the building up of the church. An impulse arising from the heart of Africa itself must now be associated with, and follow on, the impulse given to the faith by the missionary action of foreign countries. The church, by its very nature, is always a missionary church". (12)

This statement made the churches of Africa aware of their missionary duty, a duty to be undertaken as indivisible, - the mission *ad intra* and the mission *ad extra*, as the same Pope was to develop six years later in his admirable Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.

On each of his apostolic journeys to Africa John Paul II has returned to the same theme. In Kinshasa he said to the bishops: "Try to be missionary in your turn, not only in this country where the Gospel is still awaited, but also outside it, especially in the other countries of Africa. A generous church, even though its resources be limited, will always be blessed by the Lord, because one inevitably meets someone poorer than oneself".

To the bishops of Ghana he expressed the same anxiety. "I would like to stress another dimension:

the missionary dimension of your churches in the face of the needs of other churches in Africa and beyond. I understand your worry because of the needs of your own christian communities. These must be led by the priests chosen by God from among your own people. But the church, by its very nature, is always a missionary church". (13)

The message was heard. Some missionary institutes of African foundation appeared. The Apostles of Jesus were founded in 1968 by the Comboni missionaries to proclaim the Gospel to non-christians and to carry out tasks in indigenous mission churches. In 1977 the Evangelizing Sisters of Mary a female branch of the Apostles of Jesus were founded. In 1969 the bishops of Nigeria founded the Missionaries of Saint Paul to send missionary priests to where the church had most need of them. The Apostles of Jesus already work in several dioceses in East Africa. After making foundations in Liberia, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, and a foundation for an apostolate among African-Americans in the United States, the Missionaries of St. Paul have opened a mission in Botswana. The missionary movement has spread to diocesan institutes and to the *fidei domum* priests who leave their own dioceses to go to other more needy ones in Africa. One can therefore join with Pope John Paul II when he said to the Nigerian christians at Lagos: "I rejoice deeply that you have begun to send missionaries to other lands, even before you have labourers enough for your own vineyard". (14)

In their Message about consecrated life (17.11.1986) addressed to the catholics of Zaire, the bishops of that country express their joy at their church's opening to mission. "We rejoice in the Lord to see that our particular church has already given birth to several missionary vocations: the sons and

daughters of our country have begun to be missionaries inside and outside of Zaire" (15).

It is true that the churches of Africa already have more missionaries than those that they have themselves sent out. But an increasing number of the sons and daughters of Africa, members of missionary and religious institutes, are already present in different countries and continents. Zaire alone counted 112 missionaries at the beginning of 1990 (16).

These missionaries however, who should bring even greater joy to their churches of origin, are unknown to those churches. When one asks christians at times, "Who are your mission-aries?", their reply is. "We do not know who they are" (17). Some of these missionaries have been recruited by institutes and sent out without the knowledge of their churches of origin and even despite reluctance on their part. This intriguing situation cannot go on. In the future there should be co-operation between the institutes and the churches of Africa from whom these institutes receive their vocations.

Can we be courageous enough to answer the following question frankly? These men and women of Africa - whose missionaries are they? In the name of which community do they find themselves outside their country and their church? Who has sent them? This question is addressed even more urgently to those institutes which have no association with a particular church in Africa but who go there just to seek vocations. It is quite simply a question of giving a frame of reference to these missionaries and of giving credit to those who deserve it. The present state of affairs reveals the necessity for dialogue between the particular churches and the institutes for concerted action.

3. AFRICAN MISSIONARIES CHALLENGED BY MISSION

African Missionaries are still searching for their own place and identity. They face many questions - about their frame of reference, about the quality of their missionary presence, about the expectations of the people to whom they are sent, and many others. In their present situation they are tempted to imitate others rather than to be themselves. This is all the more true in the case of members of institutes where the life style and behavioural patterns are so well established that any deviation from the traditional norm is not allowed. The same problem is found in the institutes of African foundation whose reference points are taken from the missionaries whom they have seen working.

The aim of mission is to proclaim the Gospel as the Good News which liberates from servitude in order to establish the Kingdom of God in the whole world (18). In order to help realize this objective the missionary takes Jesus, the first evangelizer, as his or her model. At the same time he or she must be attentive to the signs of the times and to the actual circumstances of place and mentality. This requires that missionaries be integrated with their people without thereby forfeiting the prophetic character of their presence (19).

Integrated/Prophetic

The first difficulty the missionary encounters is how to put this fine theory into practice. Certain types of missionary, well-known in Africa are the cause of this difficulty. They were the kind who lived amongst-but-not-with the people, who carried out their work diligently but were careful not to spend themselves nor to become indigenous. They were good benefactors

of the poor and of children thanks to the gifts they received from their families or from their home country. They had considerable financial means at their disposal enabling them to build churches, schools, dispensaries and maternity units for human advancement. This kind of missionary work made them into men and women who were "passers-by" who came from outside to do good but who remained detached, who kept their own orientation.

Compared with their European colleagues, African missionaries have nothing but the Gospel and their richness of personality. What does mission mean to them in the various situations in which they find themselves?

In the churches of African countries

More and more the churches of Africa are sending priests and religious men and women to other churches which are short of personnel. So also African members of missionary institutes are being sent to join their co-religious in the churches of their continents. The transition from one's own church and country to another church and country does not cause bewilderment at first but gradually, as contacts increase problems arise. Differences of mentality appear, different types of ecclesiastical organization are encountered, political relations between the home and host countries may be difficult, but above all, inability to meet the material expectations of the people emerges.

It is not pleasant to hear oneself compared to a European missionary who was known for his or her generosity. The tendency then is to prove that one is not a second-rate missionary. One looks for self affirmation in what can be seen. One tries to build! And yet the African missionary was thought to be the most suitable person to bring about

a change in the people's mentality by breaking the link which associates mission with material achievements.

African missionaries in these situations should work to convert themselves. They should be faith-oriented persons who agree to become members of their new christian and human communities, walking with the people, imparting the Good News to them and offering their talents as their personal contribution to the building of a better world.

Africa already has great missionary figures who can serve as examples. One of them was Abbot Simon Mpecke (1906-1975), an admirable priest of the Douala Archdiocese in Cameroon and apostle to the Kirdis in the most northerly part of that country. He came from the relatively well-developed south of the country and from a particular church in full expansion. Of his own accord he requested to go to evangelize his fellow-country people in the north. He first got to know the mountain peoples. Then he was accepted through his efforts to integrate with them. By making their difficulties his own he succeeded in motivating these people to improve their lot. The Kirdis have retained an unforgettable memory of him because they say 'he chose people'. His deep faith inspired his missionary commitment. "Incarnation" he said is God joining human nature... For me, Jesus Christ is not only a Jew. Jesus Christ is man. If it were not for Jesus Christ, God made man, I should have returned home long since" (20). Or again: "I went to take them a friend. ... Here below over and above religion there is first a message of loyalty: Emmanuel, God-is-with-us, Jesus Christ, the sublime manifestation of God's fidelity to mankind" (2). Or again: "Jesus Christ is the real man, the one who is alive" (21). This requires no commentary. The love he bore these peoples and the

depth of his identity with them made him share their destiny. He was known by the affectionate title of "Baba" (Papa), by all, young and old, instead of by his own name, Simon Mpecke. (22)

In the churches of other Third World Countries

It is relatively easy for an African to be a missionary in an African church, but this does not apply to Third World churches in other continents. Admittedly peoples' histories differ but still the discovery of poverty, exploitation and human oppression in those countries sickens the African. Africans believed they alone were condemned to this sort of human humiliation by others. Their tendency is then, to sit in judgement on these situations, to consider their own situation as bearable by comparison and to present themselves as being different. This tendency is especially manifested in the temptation to import their own familiar ecclesial and cultural realities and to present these as models to be copied. Also, the mere fact of being strangers creates the desire to make themselves a world apart for their own self-protection. This leads to the wish to protect their own identity by exalting their own culture. All this points to an urgent need to help them to regain the awareness of being "sent", of being detached from their own people and of being destined to share the riches of the Gospel with others. This awareness will help them to enter new situations just as they are, and to accept the shocks brought about by this insertion. At the same time they must be allowed enough leeway to express themselves in accordance with their African sensitivity. If their missionary presence is confined to prototypes it will kill individual creativity and shut the door on alternative models.

In wealthy countries and old Christian countries

The challenges which face African missionaries sent to rich countries and to those of old-established Christianity are even greater still.

Wealthy countries test severely the values of integration and co-operation, the spirit of community and the joy of bringing the Good News. In these countries, consumerism, materialism, self-sufficiency, individualism and religious indifference are writ large. What does "integration" mean in this context, for someone who comes from a background of general poverty, from a way of life based on family solidarity and a culture in which reference to the divine is the norm? How far is integration to be recommended? Furthermore, these countries have attained such a degree of development and their social laws are so well applied that the church has little to offer. In what then, does co-operation for a better world consist?

The shock is no less great in countries where christianity is well established. The impressive number of churches and parishes, vestiges of a faith of the past, contrast strongly with the number of practicing christians. It is a far remove from the situation of African churches where the meagre infrastructures are not able to satisfy the needs of their members. The initial impression is one of uselessness. Is there any real reason to be sent there as a missionary?

Father Amaladoss stated in his reflection given on the 25th anniversary of SEDOS (1989) that countries of the "First World" constitute the greatest challenge to mission today. If one takes into account the present vocation trends in the church one must agree that it is precisely the churches of the Third

World which will supply tomorrow's missionaries. How should these missionaries be prepared to absorb the shocks of the above situations so that they can provide a missionary and prophetic presence? How reply convincingly to the African churches which see the acceptance of such a mission as escape from the poverty of one's own people and as indifference to the pressing needs of one's native church? Furthermore, if these missionaries return to their own countries, how can they reintegrate without undergoing further shocks? These questions show that one should not underestimate the challenges which African missionaries face. They are serious and need to be taken into consideration during the training of young missionaries, prior to their departure on mission, and during the first years of their mission experience (23).

Some further questions

Other more general questions can be added to these specific ones. Missionary institutes cannot avoid them because they are put regularly to their African members.

1) The Second Vatican Council stresses the responsibility of the particular church for universal mission. Latent disagreement exists between the bishops and the superiors of mission institutes as to who sends the African members of international missionary institutes on mission. Is it their particular church or their institute without any reference to that church? We have only the testimony of the African missionaries to the reality of this question.

2) Mission is to all six continents. But what is the wisdom which lies behind the departure of missionaries from poor countries to rich ones? Here there is question of taking care to prevent frustration and harmful disillusionment.

3) Being a missionary does not signify loss of one's culture. In the context of modern mission the missionaries must be primarily a bridge between two cultures. They are not expected to identify with another people. They should rather identify with the people's needs, while remaining themselves. Only a truly exceptional personality can achieve the "all things to all" relationship. As far as an ordinary person is concerned, it is already an enormous challenge to succeed in understanding and living in a culture different from one's own (24). To what extent do African missionaries remain Africans in their missionary life? This is a question of authenticity and complementarity. As Mons. P. Kalilombe rightly said: "We are prepared to send you our christians. They have no money. But by living amongst you they will help you to discover a new dimension of your personality, a new approach to problems, a new ecclesial sensitivity and a deeper understanding of the missionary task (25).

4. CATALYTIC ROLE OF THE MISSIONARY INSTITUTES WORKING IN THE CHURCHES OF AFRICA

The above considerations show that the churches of Africa are opening-up more and more to universal mission. However, this initiative appears somehow to be a private decision. The real opening-up of the churches will come about once mission becomes the concern of all the people of God. Short of that, mission will still continue to be reserved to certain categories of christians such as priests and religious men and women. But lay people are also called to mission. An immense work remains to be done to create this new attitude. The missionary institutes have not therefore completed their work in and for the particular young churches. The task remains for them of breathing the missionary spirit

into the ranks of the ordinary people.

The Complaint of the Bishops

Bishops watch with anxiety the construction of houses of formation by missionary institutes. Some of these institutes are badly in need of vocations. One could say that this is the real reason why those institutes establish themselves in a given particular church. Others recruit young people and move them out of the country to train them far from the reality of their country and their people. And what about some of the methods used to attract vocations? ! In the eyes of the bishops, missionary institutes continue to be seen as conquerors and as kidnappers of vocations. The bishops are not mistaken in their complaints. In their capacity as pastors have they not a right to know what is happening in the midst of the people for whom they are pastorally responsible? St. Paul said: "God loves those who give themselves joyfully". In our day, African bishops do not oppose missionary vocations in their dioceses. They do claim, however, their right to offer these missionaries to the church. The missionary institutes have nothing to lose by being open and sincere in welcoming vocations. The anxiety which they have for their own institutes should not prevent them from cooperating equally with the bishops in fostering and accompanying diocesan vocations. In fact the mission *ad extra* cannot jeopardise the mission *ad intra*.

Encouragement of African Projects

Missionary foundations of African origin already exist. It is to be hoped that others will come into being in the future. Our faith in the active presence of the Holy Spirit nourishes and sustains this hope. Missionaries who come from outside must join in this hope and

participate sincerely in promoting such institutes when they begin. If today, the Apostles of Jesus and the Missionaries of St. Paul exist and thrive it is thanks to the active cooperation of the Comboni missionaries and the missionaries of St. Patrick who provided them with personnel and funds. Other churches will be grateful to missionary institutes who encourage similar projects. Let us stop making little of African missionary projects. Every institute in existence today was considered to be a folly at the outset. These projects are really a sign of the fertility of that missionary activity which led to the foundation of these churches.

The missionary spirit of the whole people of God

The duty which devolves on all missionaries, especially when christian communities begin to manage their own future, is to foster the missionary spirit of all the people of God so that these communities may be wholly christian, that is, both indigenous and universal (26). This task should take priority even over social promotion. The latter, although it is necessary, has a temporary and secondary character.

What is essential to missionaries is that they communicate their infectious enthusiasm and dynamism to priests, to religious men and women and to lay people. As christians they have come from outside to live in another christian community to share the riches of their faith with it. They must be distinguished for their zeal to eliminate the barriers which separate men and women and human groups in order to establish a new world of universal fellowship (27). Their commitment then will be to help christian communities to play their role fully by providing for their own internal needs and by responding to appeals from outside.

The 1987 Synod of Bishops stressed the fact that the place of the laity in the church is of vital importance for the future of christian faith (28). But the laity has often been neglected in favour of traditional missionary categories. The Synod opened the way to an integral ecclesiology which rejects the laity-clergy duality, in favour of a vision of the communion of all the baptized in the plan of salvation. In the post-synodal Exhortation Christifideles Laici, the Pope emphasised the role of the laity in mission. Several passages of this document are remarkable. Here are some examples:

"At this point communion begets communion: essentially it is likened to a mission on behalf of communion. ... Communion and mission are profoundly connected with each other, they interpenetrate and mutually imply each other, to the point that communion represents both the source and the fruit of mission". (29)

... "The Lord entrusts a great part of the responsibility to the lay faithful, in communion with all other members of the People of God" (30).

"At present the missionary concern is taking on such extensive and serious proportions for the church that only a truly consolidated effort to assume responsibility by all members of the church, both individuals and communities, can lead to the hope for a more fruitful response" (31).

"Younger churches are finding that an essential and undeniable element in the founding of churches is the formation not only of local clergy but also of a mature and responsible lay faithful. In this way the community which itself has been evangelized goes forth into a new region of the world so that it too may respond to the mission of

proclaiming and bearing witness to the Gospel of Christ". (32).

Formation of lay people

These passages stress the importance of the formation of lay people regarding their missionary duty. If they are true to their vocation missionaries will not complete their work unless they communicate their evangelical zeal to the laity. In the last analysis, the spread of the Gospel into the fabric of both national and international society depends on this. Normally, this formation should take place on the spot and with the available materials. Peoples' cultures offer a whole range of channels to illustrate the meaning of mission and the possibilities of mission. Time and funds spent on awakening the missionary spirit in lay people are an irreplaceable investment for mission. Those whom the Lord calls to go and witness in other countries will come from the families of these lay people (33).

"The prior necessity for the evangelization of the world is people who will evangelize". Everyone, beginning with the christian family, must feel responsible for fostering the birth and growth of vocations, both priestly and religious as well as in the lay state, specifically directed to the missions. One should use every appropriate means to do this but never neglect the privileged means of prayer". (Christifideles Laici, n. 35).

A second step in formation is to create bonds between the laity of the different particular churches. Foreign missionaries are the persons best able to forge these links between their churches of origin and of mission. The late clergyman

Martin Luther King, jr., lamented the fact that christian brotherhood and sisterhood was still a utopia even as the geographical proximity of nations was coming about (34). Perhaps too much emphasis is placed on material assistance from the richer churches to the poorer ones. Exchange of experiences and aspirations between christians touches the very heart of christian mission today; it contributes to the realization of communion.

CONCLUSION

In this lengthy survey I have attempted to show the awakening of the churches of Africa to mission, to describe the difficulties which African missionaries meet on mission, and to indicate the part that missionary institutes can play in the heart of the christian communities. It is fitting now to express a wish. The churches of Africa, like all other churches, have the duty to carry out universal mission. They are opening-up more and more to this missionary dimension despite their own internal needs and poverty. They ask the mission institutes to help them to carry out this mission with dignity and not to smother them. The wish is that missionary institutes revise their recruiting methods, their way of training candidates and of preparing them to go on mission. These very institutes actually have the duty to complete their mission to the particular churches by making them able to acquit themselves of their mission responsibilities in their own area and beyond.

The churches of Africa expect the missionary institutes to co-operate sincerely with them so that they themselves may become increasingly missionary.

/more

NOTES:

- (1) Lumen Gentium, 17: Ad Gentes, 7
- (2) Christus Dominus, 6; Ad Gentes, 20
- (3) Omer DEGRIJSE, *L'éveil missionnaire des Eglises du Tiers Monde*, Coll. OPM, Le Sarmant-Fayard, Paris, 1983.
Ed. Néerlandaise: *De Dierde Kerke wordt missionair*, Tabor-Brugge, 1983;
Ed. Anglaise: *The Rise of Missionary Consciousness in Third World*, Maryknoll, Orbis, 1984.
- (4) Op. cit. p.41
- (5) Ad Gentes, 20; Evangelii Nuntiandi, 15
- (6) They accompanied the explorers and colonisers
- (7) L.P.NGONGO, *Pouvoir politique occidental dans les structures de l'église en Afrique*, in *Civilisation noire et Eglise catholique*, Colloque d'Abidjan 1977, Présence Africaine, Paris, pp. 19-21; Valentino SALVOLDI & Renato Kizito SESANA, *Africa, The Gospel belongs to us*, Mission Press-Mdola, 1986 pp.22-23
- (8) Moratorium, a term first used in 1974 to indicate a period during which material aid and personnel from overseas would be suspended, cfr AFER XVI, (1974), p.331; P.A.KALILOMBE, *Self-reliance of African Church*, in *Bulletin of African Theology I* (1979), p.206
- (9) Ad Gentes, 1; Evangelii Nuntiandi, 14, 59
- (10) Ad Gentes, 1; Mc 16, 15; Ev. Nunt.13, 62
- (11) Ad Gentes, 20
- (12) PAUL VI, *Allocution au Symposium des Evêques d'Afrique*, Documentation Catholique, n.1546 (1969), p.764
- (13) Jean Paul II, *Discours en Afrique*, Ed. Missionaria Italiana, Bologna, 1981, p.43
- (14) Jean Paul II, *Homélie à Lagos*, Documentation Catholique, n.1825 (1982), p.234
- (15) La Conférence Episcopale du Zaïre, *Message aux catholiques du Zaïre sur la vie consacrée*, du 17.11.1986, voir DIA du 5.12.1986, pp.968-969
- (16) *Envoyés à tous les peuples-Missionnaires zairois*, Ed. Epiphanie, 1990
- (17) Op. cit. p.3
- (18) Ad Gentes, 1; Evangelii Nuntiandi, 8-9
- (19) Ev.Nunt., 63
- (20) Jean-Baptiste BASKOUDA, *Baba Sima, le Père des Kirdis*, Cerf, Paris, 1988, p.39
- (21) Op. cit. p.8
- (22) Op. cit. p.9
- (23) See W.ZIFFER, *Missionary pre-service training; Some observations*, in *International Review of Mission (IRM)*, n.18 (1969), pp.292-301: *Préparation professionnelle et culturelle des missionnaires qui vont à l'étranger*.
- (24) Cf.V.SALVOLDI & R.K. SESANA, *Africa, The Gospel belongs to us*, p.28 et surtout note 26.
- (25) Citation par F.BALBONI, *La missione della Terza Chiesa*, in *Nigrizia*, Nov.1984, p.55
- (26) D. KITAGAWA, *The rôle of foreign missionaries and missionary agencies vis-à-vis the mission in the six continents*, in *IRM*, n.18 (1969), p.264
- (27) D. KITAGAWA, *Article cité*, pp.264-267
- (28) J.GROOTAERS, *Le chantier reste ouvert - Les laïcs dans l'Eglise et dans le monde*, Centurion, Paris, 1988, p.166
- (29) Jean-Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, Libr.Ed. Vaticana, 1988, n.32
- (30) Ibidem
- (31) Document cité; n.35
- (32) Ibidem
- (33) Jean-Paul II, *Christifideles Laici*, n.35
- (34) D. KITAGAWA, *Article cité*, p.265

FR. KASANDA'S REPLIES TO QUESTIONS IN THE OPEN FORUM

African contribution to mission Specifically it is the sense of community, not just fraternal community but recognising the presence of God in everything, being in communion with creation, with the universe. Sadly many Africans returning to their countries from lengthy periods in Europe and elsewhere need to be re-inculturated into their own true sense of community. This is something quite different from being in communities like youth movements or basic christian communities.

Formation African missionaries in countries of long standing christianity face the problem that their formation has in no way prepared them for this unusual situation. They should be conscious of their own culture and aware also of the culture of the peoples to whom they are going. Many difficulties arise from the lack of this preparation - not from the culture of the receiving country. African missionaries need a preliminary preparation, an immediate introduction to the new culture on their arrival and to be accompanied for some time in the new culture.

African Synod Based on the Lineamenta the coming Synod for Africa seems to have little interest in missionary situations. Only 2 of the 81 questions refer to mission. Again the Lineamenta refer to priests - not to the whole people of God and see mission depending totally on the hierarchy. Dom Ivo Lorscheiter last month in his SEDOS Conference emphasized the charism of the missionary institutes - to lead, be prophetic, go ahead of the bishops who have another charism.

Co-operation and mutual respect Missionaries must practice co-operation and collaboration among themselves if they are to be genuine in calling for co-operation among churches.

There must also be mutual respect between bishops and superiors of institutes. This is often lacking. I cite some examples:

Many superiors of religious institutes do not even send greetings to the bishop at Christmas;

Changes of personnel are carried out without even informing the bishop;

Bishops are not told of new arrivals in their area;

Many religious institutes recruit in secret without telling the bishop, and worse still send their recruits quickly overseas to Europe apparently to avoid dialogue with the bishop!;

Local missionaries are sent overseas on mission without informing the bishop;

Bishops are asked to ordain members of the institutes but they do not even know the candidates for ordination nor where or how they were trained. In fact they may have been trained overseas, become de-culturated, do not even know their bishop or how to approach him. Would it not be more ecclesial if the bishops had been involved in sending the candidates overseas through the council of the institute.

No bishop likes to see womens' convents and mens' seminaries full while his are empty! I seem to insist on relations with bishops but in my paper I have deliberately emphasized the whole People of God.

Laity We must give a lot more attention to awakening the missionary spirit in the laity if the churches of Africa are to become more truly African and less foreign churches brought into Africa.

Sensitivity We must be sensitive to the cultures of African peoples. It is inexcusable that in our culture a young ordained priest address elderly men and women, 70 years of age and more, with the liturgical "My sons and daughters!" Or that a young newly ordained priest act and behave as if he has the plenitude of the Spirit!

Or that the style of dress of priests or religious be completely contrary to the cultural customs of the people.

Pastoral commitments? Whether missionaries stay in their own country or go elsewhere it must be always quite clear that they go to situations of mission and not to fill up pastoral gaps in parishes.

ANNUAL REPORT

to the GENERAL ASSEMBLY

"LORD MAY WE BE OPEN TO THE
CREATIVE NEWNESS OF YOUR SPIRIT"

This Report is for the period December 1, 1989 to November 30, 1990. In December, 1989 we celebrated the Silver Jubilee of SEDOS. Silver Jubilees are significant events. Ours in SEDOS was no exception. It lit up the December days of 1989 with a special aura of grace and thanksgiving. We celebrated the joy of being a community of different institutes dedicated, however imperfectly, to making known the life and teaching of Jesus Christ across boundaries of culture, nation and race during 25 years.

Inspired largely by the stimulating conference of Fr. Michael Amaladoss with which the celebration began we chose as the theme of our celebration - "Lord, may we be open to the creative newness of your spirit". That creative Spirit is continuing to challenge us to new ways of promoting Gods Reign, which Jesus said, is already among you. During the year we tried to read the signs of the times: the fall of the Wall, Latin America 1992, Europe 1994, Hong Kong 1997, The Gulf, Intifada, post-Apartheid, Gorbaciov's 'Nobel', Bhutto, Ayodhya, "Third World" debts, celibate Synod, laity leadership, creation's integrity, 15 million refugees, "We are poor because you are rich", consumerism and generosity, Yamousoukrou, global village, materialism and spirituality, Roman Mosque.....

As we read the signs of the times we shared information and ideas, collaborated in mission initiatives, supported and affirmed one another, reached out to the world and invited in from the world people who could help us and inspire us to be more open to God's creative spirit.

SOME ENDEAVOURS:

1. MISSION FROM VATICAN II INTO THE COMING DECADE

Michael Amaladoss challenged us at our Silver Jubilee: "If one can read the signs of the times and discern priorities I wonder whether the privileged place and the most challenging for mission today is not the First World?" His conference, re-published in many reviews and translated in many languages has initiated much debate. It will be the

theme of the SEDOS Research Seminar in May 1991 - "Prophetic mission in a changing world".

2. PRACTICES AND THEOLOGIES OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

In March at our ANNUAL RESEARCH SEMINAR ON MISSION we tried to be open to the gift of the creative Spirit speaking through our invited speakers on this topic. Sister Ivone Gebara of the Canonesses of St. Augustine, Fr. Efoé Julien Penoukou, Secretary of the Episcopal Theological Commission of the West African Region, Sister Teresita Weind of the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur and Fr. Felix Wilfred of St. Paul's Seminary in Tiruchirapalli introduced us to the extraordinary variety and richness of practices and theologies in the churches of Brazil, Ivory Coast, the United States of North America and India. The diversity of histories, cultures, social, political and economic developments, races and peoples, meta-religions and traditional religions, revealed by the different speakers, challenged us to examine the core of God's revelation in the person of Jesus Christ. Three speakers came from the so-called "third world". The fourth, Sister Teresita Weind, an African-American, gave us rare insights into aspects of a "First World" church - the U.S.A.

3. HEALTH IN A SEARCH FOR WHOLENESS

In June, two Medical Mission Sisters, Sarah Summers, Superior General, and Mary Pawath, Vicar General, told the fascinating story of how their medical ministry changed over the years. Dialogue with successive generations of their membership gradually led them to a painful critique of their medical work and into territory previously uncharted by them. They realised the basic need to help create caring communities in which people themselves became the subjects of their own future. This led them on to examine public life and politics, investment policies, alternative health care systems, social analysis, inculturation and stewardship of monetary resources. The most recent generation, the 'now' people in their institute, look to the integrity of creation, internationality, non-violence, reverence for all life, and wholeness as essential elements of their medical ministry. "Maybe we have been slow learners!" they said, for peoples all over the world who live in communion with nature have been trying to teach us this for years. As their medical ministry evolved, they said they had learned from "ordinary" people, from developing ministries, from other religions, from traditional health systems and traditional healers, from basic communities and action groups, from environmentalists and world health organisations and from the Church.

If you have missed the account of their search for wholeness we recommend you read it before the Annual General Assembly. (SEDOS Bulletin of July '89).

4. MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CHURCH.

Two significant coming events influenced the planning of your Executive Committee during the past year. The first is THE FIFTH CENTENARY OF LATIN AMERICA. The difficulty begins with the title! It is the fifth

centenary of the "discovery " for some, for others the "invasion" of Latin America which they knew was always there. The beginning of an era of evangelization for some, for others it marked the rejection of potential indigenous christianity. For some it was the beginning of a liberation of the people, for others the spoliation of the indigenous peoples and a desecration of their culture which continues even to this day. Fr. Vergilio Elizondo of San Antonio, Texas, speaking on the significance of the apparition of the Virgin of Guadalupe to Diego the Indian just at that time, sums up the feelings of the people: "You have killed our warriors, you have destroyed our cities, you have raped our women, you have taken our gold and now you tell us our gods are useless. Let us die!"

And so we held the one day seminar in October on the Missionary outreach of the Latin American Church today. Dom Ivo Lorscheiter and Fr. Romeo Ballan, MCCJ, were the speakers. It is reported in the October, 1990 SEDOS Bulletin. We published also the article of Carlos Pape, SVD, on the fifth centenary of Latin America in the May issue of the Bulletin.

5. SPECIAL ASSEMBLY OF THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS FOR AFRICA.

This was the second event which influenced us. The preparatory "Lineamenta" only became available late in the year. We will do our best to collaborate in the widespread preparation called for by Pope John Paul II in his important address at Yamoussoukro in the Ivory Coast to the General Secretariat of the Synod of Bishops responsible for the preparation of this Special Assembly. It will probably take place in 1993 but there is no decision yet about where it will be held. Pope John Paul II speaking at Yamoussoukro, saw it as "a decisive hour" for the Church in Africa, and he went on to call on African priests, missionaries from other countries and religious to work together for this Assembly in close collaboration with catechists, pastoral councils, movements, basic ecclesial communities and parishes, in union with the Bishops so as to portray the African face of the Church. In this context we chose THE MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF THE AFRICAN CHURCHES as the topic for the Conference of Fr. Leonard Kassanda, CICM, at the Annual General Assembly, 1989.

6. "COMMITMENT TO ACTION"

During the year SEDOS gave much attention to the idea of covenanting or committing ourselves to act together. This is on the lines of taking a corporate stance on given situations. The idea is in some ways a new one but is becoming more common. The proposal was explained in detail at last year's 1989 Annual General Assembly, where it was agreed to in general in the midst of the Silver Jubilee celebrations. The General Assembly decided to examine the proposal in more detail during the following SEDOS Research Seminar at Cavalletti in March '89. The participants at that Seminar established a committee to examine the proposal. This committee proposed six "Commitments to Action" which were agreed upon unanimously. Two were addressed to your Secretariat, the other four to SEDOS members. They appear on your agenda for the 1990 Annual General Assembly.

We report now on what progress has taken place on these Commitments to Action.

(a) Commitments by the Secretariat.

i. Translations. We committed ourselves to have SEDOS Conferences translated into Italian, Spanish, French and English and made available to all members. We wrote to all members requesting them to indicate which translations they wished to have. 40 members requested French; 38, in Spanish; 27, Italian; all receive the English versions in the Bulletin. Comboni Missionaries committed themselves to translate the texts into Italian, Missionary Sisters of Africa into French and Holy Family of Bordeaux into Spanish. We pay tribute to these three members for keeping their commitment! The translations were done with great care and promptly and have been sent out to those members who requested them.

We then sent out a request for information from members on the follow-up to the proposals agreed to at Villa Cavalletti. We asked: Have you disseminated the texts to your membership? To which members? Have you sent a covering letter explaining the Commitment to Action? We received 33 responses to this request for information, all positive and detailing the use that was being made of the translations. Practically all replies indicated that they were being sent to Regional Superiors with an explanatory letter on the COMMITMENT TO ACTION.

ii. "Spanish edition of selected articles from the Bulletin". Your Executive Committee discussed this at its meeting on May 4, 1990. The Committee thought that more information was needed before making a definite decision.

(b) Commitment to Action by SEDOS Members

The commitments, agreed upon at Cavalletti, regarded selective use of the Bulletin, regional organisations of major superiors and pastoral planning in Africa, preparation of the special meeting of the Synod for Africa and support of AFJN, the African Faith and Justice Network at Brussels.

We believe the Annual General Assembly will wish to comment on these initiatives, which break new ground for SEDOS membership in response to the increasing need for communitarian action today.

7. SEDOS BULLETIN

We continue to receive very encouraging comments on the usefulness of the SEDOS Bulletin especially from missionaries far afield. An increasing number of members send it or have it sent by your Secretariat to selected personnel in situations and areas of mission.

8. SEDOS SILVER JUBILEE BOOK

The book to mark the 25th Anniversary of SEDOS will contain an edited version of the main Conferences given at SEDOS Research Seminars on Mission since the RESEARCH SEMINAR in 1981. It will be published in

September, 1991. We will advise you on the special pre-publication price to SEDOS members as soon as we receive the information from ORBIS BOOKS.

9. THE HAITI GROUP

The group monitored the situation in Haiti throughout the year, meeting regularly under the guidance of Jan Hanssens, CICM. A recent letter from the Conference of Haiti religious, with whom the group is in contact, states starkly that many live under the constant threat of death and asks for support and affirmation.

10. THE MUSLIM-CHRISTIAN DIALOGUE GROUP

They also met regularly throughout the year. The members propose to the 1990 General Assembly that this group which began in a small way through the initiative of Bernard Maes, CICM should now be constituted as a SEDOS commission open to all SEDOS members. The group sees the growing importance of this dialogue in mission situations. There are many indications that Islam will replace Marxist Communism as the great opponent of the "Right". This would be a great tragedy. SEDOS members will wish to continue the dialogue with Islam in mutual respect and openness, learning from each other in our search for God.

11. THE DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

This is a source of exciting information about new developments in Mission. It contains a useful library. We are at your service.

12. COLLABORATION ON EASTERN EUROPE

We collaborate with many other organisations committed to the coming of Gods' Reign. Arising from our recent participation in a meeting between the PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY and the COUNCIL FOR WORLD MISSION AND EVANGELISM held at the World Council of Churches in Geneva we have put a proposal on your Agenda for this year's Assembly: "That SEDOS Members having personnel in Eastern Europe meet to monitor developments there". Such a group meeting regularly would share information on developments in Eastern European countries where religious and ethnic rivalries re-appear. The group could examine possible sharing of personnel in specific projects. It could also liaise with a group in the CWME Geneva which is deeply concerned about religious and ethnic clashes in Eastern Europe reminiscent of pre-communist times.

SEDOS MEMBERSHIP

We welcomed four new institutes to membership of SEDOS during the year:

DAUGHTERS OF MARY AND JOSEPH (DMJ); MARIST SISTERS (MS); BENEDICTINES OF SUBIACO (OSB); and MISSIONARY SISTERS OF THE SACRED HEART (MSC)

14. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The membership of your Executive Committee is as follows:

President: Francesco Pierli, Superior General of the Comboni Missionaries (MCCJ). Elected President Dec. 1988.

Vice-President: Mary Slaven, Superior General of the Holy Family of Bordeaux Sisters (SFB). Elected Dec. 1988.

Treasurer: Sean Fagan, Secretary General of the Society of Mary (SM). Elected Dec. 1988.

		<u>elected</u>
Maria Teresa Andant,	La Sainte Union (SUSC)	Dec. 1989
Leonard Kasanda,	Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Scheut) (CICM)	Dec. 1989
Carlos Pape,	Society of the Divine Word (SVD)	Nov. 1986
Patricia Stowers,	Missionary Marist Sisters (SMSM)	Dec. 1988
		<u>appointed</u>
Helene O'Sullivan, MM	Associate Executive Secretary	Jan. 1986
William Jenkinson, CSSp	Executive Secretary	Jul. 1980

Maria Teresa Andant, Superior General of La Sainte Union is from Argentina; Leonard Kasanda, a member of the General Council of the Congregation of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Scheut Missionaries) is from Zaire. Both were elected to your Executive Committee at last year's General Assembly.

Sr. Helene O'Sullivan MM, Associate Executive Secretary completed her services with SEDOS at the end of July. Helene is at present doing sabbatical studies at Columbia University, New York, in preparation for her return to Hong Kong. She brought a fresh and creative spirit to the Secretariat and contributed greatly in a team spirit to all its departments. During her years in the Secretariat the equality of men and women in partnership became a manifest and much appreciated characteristic of SEDOS membership. We remember her with respect and affection, respect for her professional expertise and her creative contribution to the study of mission today, affection for her good humour and welcoming presence, which was a joy to those of us who worked with her and those who visited the Secretariat. We still seek a successor to Sr. Helene.

Ms. Patricia Cosgrave and Ms. Antigone Lloyd continued their dedicated services on the staff of the Secretariat to which they are very committed. Ms. Philippa Woodrige continues on a part-time basis. Antigone will complete almost ten years of dedicated service at the end of January.

We in the Secretariat pay tribute to the splendid co-operation we received from the dedicated members of the Executive Committee, four of whom are Superiors General. All have many commitments and responsibilities in their own institutes. We thank also all the SEDOS members for their constant support.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



Francesco Pierli, MCCJ
ITALY



Mary Slaven, SFB
ENGLAND



Seán Fagan, SM
IRELAND



Maria Teresa Andant, SUC
ARGENTINA



L. Kasanda Lamembu, CICM
ZAIRE



Carlos Pape, SVD
CHILE



Patricia Stowers, SMSM
SAMOA



Helene O'Sullivan, MM
USA



William Jenkinson, CSSp
IRELAND

We pay a special tribute to the staff at the Secretariat for their dedication and hard work. They are always willing to make the extra effort in times of need. Their spirit of good humour is pervasive and constant. It is a privilege and a joy to work in the atmosphere of friendship and support which characterises the office and indeed the whole SEDOS membership.

We pay a special tribute to the kindness and collaboration of the Divine Word Missionaries. They are always ready to help us in every possible way. They showed this to an exceptional degree by the warmth of their welcome last December at the celebration of our Silver Jubilee. We thank them sincerely.

And as we come the end of another year, recalling our Jubilee theme of last year we pray that SEDOS may continue to remain open to the creative newness of the Spirit.

Bill Jenkinson CSSp

William Jenkinson, CSSp

Director
SEDOS

AFRICAN SYNOD

 AN INTERVIEW WITH BISHOP AGRÉ

Valentino Salvoldi

(An interview with Bernard Agré who is bishop of Man diocese, in the Ivory Coast. Chairman of the Regional Episcopal Conference of French speaking West Africa and member of the General Secretariat of the African Synod, he is one of the most outstanding leaders of the Catholic Church in Africa).

The announcement of the Synod has taken many people by surprise. What are the expectations of the African bishops?

First of all it will be an occasion to stay together and share our ideas, our problems. We want to study the results of the missionary activity, that so far was for us an external fact, in the sense that it came from Europe. Now we want to be the makers of our own Christian history, living and announcing the Gospel.

We are well aware that we have a lot of work to do in order to help our people understand how relevant is Christ's message for Africa today, and prepare enough people to announce God's word to everybody.

The Synod will have to tackle the theme of a cultural and economic independence for the Church in Africa. It is true that no diocese, no church will ever be independent; we must have reciprocal bonds. But we have to grow in awareness, so that our people will freely participate in their own integral development.

Another important theme will be dialogue with all other religions: traditional religion, Protestant churches, and especially Islam. In our area Islam is spreading, supported by money coming from Saudi

Arabia. They can afford to build everywhere huge and beautiful mosques and they try to spread the conviction that Africa is naturally Muslim just as Europe is Christian. It is an easy slogan, appealing to people's imagination. And from Iran and other Arab countries is coming a wave of dangerous fundamentalism and fanaticism. With Islam we do not want confrontation, but dialogue, so that we can live together in mutual respect.

You mentioned different problems. What is their focus?

Evangelisation. Deep, serious evangelisation. We must do this with all possible means: personal contacts, communities, associations, all traditional and modern means of social communications, like radio, television, video cassettes... We should not miss any occasion to announce Jesus Christ to all the people we meet.

The Synod will most probably submit to the Pope some analysis, propositions, orientations, guidelines, so that the Pope will be able to make his decisions. Do you think this Synod will succeed in changing something for the Catholic Church in Africa?

I grew up in a mountain village. I know from experience that mountains

cannot meet... but people can. A well prepared and conducted Synod - not guided from Rome or from Europe - should be able to present to the Pope some real common African aspirations and propositions. The Pope is not an emperor or a dictator: he will be able to understand us. The Gospel says that if somebody is asking for bread, you do not give him a stone; if he is asking for a fish, you do not give him a snake... If the Pope sees that our requests are reasonable, he will not pretend he did not hear anything. He is listening to people.

Going around Africa one hears a lot of talk about inculturation and africanization. But then one sees many bishops acting as if the Vatican Council never happened, many priests imitating everything coming from Europe and, in fact, going to Europe and North America and staying there longer than needed by their studies... Worst of all one detects a fear of making mistakes, maybe of being brought to task, resulting in stagnation...

Not all churches are following the same path. In the same Ivory Coast there are remarkable dif-

ferences between North and South. There are also changes going on: come and see how we celebrate a priestly ordination. I am trying to find, step by step, my way.

There is a right to be different. We are not a carbon copy of Europe. We need time. Here in the Ivory Coast the Church is not even one hundred years old. We have had no time to develop a theology answering the problems posed by our culture.

I will continue to defend our right to be different. Last year I visited Latin America and I became aware of the great differences found inside that continent. I heard and saw in Brazil that they have developed liberation theology, no doubt a great intellectual achievement, suited for that part of the world. Here we have the right to look for and to say other things, more in tune with our cultural identity. We do not need to copy what others are saying in Latin America or Europe. The cultural context is different. What is good for them is not necessarily good for us.

Ref. New People, November 1989.

MISSION MOMENTS

LAITY AND THE LIVING WORD

(INDONESIA)

Some years ago, Fr. Thomas Michel, a Jesuit Missionary, went to celebrate the Christmas morning Eucharist in a small mountain village 10 km from the town of Kediri in East Java, from where it could be reached only by a footpath. The 300 Catholics used one of the larger houses for the monthly Mass, removing the interior walls and an outside wall to make more room. Fr. Michel writes:

'During the Eucharist, conducted in the Javanese language, I noticed that the first two readings of Scripture were not read by the lecturers from the lectionary but proclaimed accurately from memory. Afterwards one of the old men told me the story of the Catholic community in the village.

Before World War II, only two or three families had been baptized by Dutch missionaries who could come only occasionally. Between them the Christians owned only one copy of the Javanese Bible. Only a few people in fact could read, so one of them who could, served as leader and catechist of the few Catholic families. With the coming of war, the Japanese invaded what was then the Dutch East Indies and all the Dutch, including the clergy, were imprisoned. It was not until the early 1950s that a priest made the long trek on foot to the village,

wondering whether anything remained of the tiny Christian community of 1938.

What he found was an active, enthusiastic community of about 120 Catholics. While they had no priests, the few faithful had continued to meet and pray, and they gradually attracted others to their community. They gave instruction to their fellow villagers and baptized those who felt called to be Christians. They met on Sundays in each other's homes to read and reflect on the Bible and share their insights.

Scared lest their one copy of Holy Scripture might be lost, destroyed by rain or worn out by constant use, they set about learning as much as they could by heart. Those who could read taught long passages to others, so that when the first missionaries returned after 15 years, they found that the community had memorized the whole New Testament, the Psalms, the book of Genesis and the prophecy of Isaiah; they were then working on the other prophetic books. Even when other copies of Holy Scripture and other books became available, the custom of proclaiming the Word of God by heart remained'.

The old man who told Fr. Michel all this had himself been baptized by the catechist in 1942. He ended his story by saying: 'Father, it seems to us that God's message doesn't have the same force when it is simply read from a book; it

should come from the heart of the one who proclaims it after he has made it his own through study and prayer'.

Ref. Arnoldus Nota (SVD)
December, 1990

THE PROMOTION OF JUSTICE: AN INTEGRAL PART OF EVANGELIZATION

(LOYOLA)

(Excerpt from the opening address of Fr. Kolvenback, SJ at the special meeting of all Jesuit Provincials at Loyola, September, 20, 1990 on the occasion of the 450th anniversary of the Society).

"Provincial Congregations (of the Society) record progress in the attempt to integrate the promotion of justice and the proclamation of the Gospel. But a certain number of Jesuits, particularly among those most directly concerned, speak of a falling-off from the enthusiasm of the 1970s. It is possible that the promotion of justice has today lost something of its spectacular character and has become more ordinary. Yet, if our present situation is compared with that of ten years ago, it must be recognized that the promotion of justice is today more widespread and more deeply rooted in the consciousness of the Church and the world, as also in that of the Society.

The progress of our commitment has received its "confirmation" in the totally unprovoked and cruel assassination of our six fellow-Jesuits in El Salvador, to speak only of the last Jesuits to have suffered death for justice' sake. This crime reveals how a university institution of teaching and research can become an instrument of justice in the name of the Gospel, to the point that its activity becomes unbearable for the agents of injustice.

This murder has shocked the Society and many people within the Church and outside. It could not be otherwise. The central question could be put like this: in the name of the Lord's Church the Holy Father in his social teaching has strongly denounced the structures of sin, committing the Church and men of good will to promote the justice of the Gospel with all the consequences that this entails at the socio-economic level. This appeal is made to all human person, in their hearts, pervaded with selfishness, and in their possessions. To this appeal there is an almost instinctive resistance in each one's heart. Since the name of "Christian" implies a sharing in the passion of Christ on behalf of the poor and for justice's sake, we attempt to dodge this obligation by putting a series of questions which make it possible to evade the challenge of promoting justice.

Even in the Society there are those who think that the promotion of justice demanded by the Gospel is the affair of the laity and not of priests and religious. The example of our companions in El Salvador

who lived out the apostolic priorities of the Society to the limit, in their university work, is a call to all of us to live and promote justice in keeping with the Gospel, and to be ready, as becomes the disciples of Jesus, to be persecuted and to give up our lives for others."

Ref. Jesuit Documentation,
November, 1990.

GENOCIDE OF THE YANOMAMI

(BRAZIL)

The intrusion of gold diggers into their territory, and a constant situation of malnutrition caused by the loss of their traditional hunting and fishing grounds may soon bring Yanomamis their total extinction. Nowadays it is getting very rare for visitors to Roraima to see any Yanomami who has not painted his face black, a sign of bereavement and mourning for dead relatives and dependents.

Diseases, unknown before, have been introduced into Yanomami territory by the gold diggers. This has accelerated the death rate of the indigenous. Abandoned by FUNAI (the government agency originally destined for their protection) and no longer able to count on the help of CIMI (the missionary agency founded by the Brazilian bishops' conference, banished in 1987 from Indian territories by government decree), Yanomamis have been totally dependant on the good-will of gold diggers. As they can no longer cultivate their own fields, they take recourse to begging for food.

Two months ago there was still a spark of hope that indigenous people would eventually be allowed to return to their former life style in peace, when on August 17, the government allotted means for "Operation Free Forest" to airlift thousands of gold diggers out of Yanomami territory, while promising at the same time a health programme and the distribution of foodstuffs among the indigenous. Three months earlier, the government had already announced the planned demolition of 63 illegal landing strips used by gold diggers. However, only 13 of these were actually bombed. Then, at the beginning of the rainy season and for lack of financing, the operation was stopped. Meanwhile gold diggers have returned to their former activities, while bombed landing strips have been restored.

Subsequently, the government's lack of real interest in the fate of the indigenous became quite evident. Only one day before Alcení Guerra, the responsible minister for the affairs of the indigenous people visited Paapiu, one medical doctor and one nurse were sent to the region to investigate the consequences of disease and malnutrition. In Surucucus the dilapidated hospital is constantly overcrowded by the desperately sick. Furthermore, the lack of food has caused hostilities among indigenous families who in their search for food start to invade each others fields.

If the Brazilian government continues to let the situation deteriorate further, renowned anthropologists already foresee the extinction

of the Yanomami people in two years' time. In Germany, people are requested to write to the chairperson of the German-Brazilian group of Parliamentarians and to insist that the credit, worth 250 million DM promised Brazil as an aid for the conservation of the rain forests in the Amazon region, should be suspended if nothing is done to remove gold diggers definitely from the region and to better the lot of the Yanomami.

Ref. Missionszentrale Der
Franziskaner E.V.
October, 1990.

Apartheid and Immigration from East European Countries to South Africa

Is the present move of immigrants coming from mainly Eastern European countries a good thing? The Catholic Bishops of South African have written a joint letter on this theme. They recognise the right of individuals and

families to emigrate from their own countries and do not intend to hinder in any way the free movement of people in the world, but in their opinion immigration into South Africa at present does not contribute towards the good of all the inhabitants. They refer in particular to immigrants from Eastern European countries.

Recalling that, Pope John XXIII in "Pacem in terris" (n.25) pointed out there must be "just reasons" for emigration to another country, the bishops underline that the new arrivals from Eastern Europe, being white, will probably benefit from the economic injustices which apartheid has caused for so long. They may be offered accommodation, instruction, health assistance, and other facilities such as, for example, large areas of land and the land's resources, which are not yet enjoyed by the black people who were born in the country.

The bishops remind white immigrant workers that for

over 50 years blacks were not allowed to be trained as mechanics, carpenters, plumbers etc. And still today, although there is no legal prevention, very little is done for the professional training of blacks. The arrival of more white immigrant workers means that those jobs will continue to be reserved for whites only. Many people regard the immigration of whites as part of an attempt to preserve the apartheid system, seeing that immigrants from other African or Asian countries are not encouraged to settle in South Africa.

"We all hope - conclude the bishops in their letter - for a new South Africa, in which the black workers have equal opportunities of work and in which new arrivals are not classified according to race. Then we will be in a better position to welcome other components of the human family to our beautiful land".

Ref. Fides Service, Rome
November 21, 1990

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HAITI UPDATE MEETING

SEDOS Secretariat - 3.30 p.m. January 14, 1991

UISG/USG JUSTICE & PEACE PUBLIC MEETING

Speaker: Fr. Seán McDonagh, SSC.
Brothers of the Christian Schools
January 22, 1991 9.15 - 17.30

SOUTH AFRICA UPDATE

Speaker: Fr. Kevin Polson, CMM
SVD Collegio - 4.00 p.m. February 11, 1991

MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF THE ASIAN CHURCHES

SVD Collegio - 4.00 p.m. February 26, 1991

MISSIONARY OUTREACH OF THE OCEANIAN/AUSTRALIAN CHURCHES

SVD Collegio - 4.00 p.m. April 17, 1991

SEDOS RESEARCH SEMINAR: PROPHETIC MISSION IN A CHANGING WORLD

Speakers:
Bryan Hehir, SJ - Edwina Gateley, VMM
Villa Cavalletti, Frascati May 17 - 21, 1991

PROPHETIC MISSION IN A CHANGING WORLD

SEDOS RESEARCH SEMINAR
VILLA CAVALLETTI, ROME, MAY 17 - 21, 1991

RESOURCE PERSONS:

BRYAN HEHIR, SJ. U.S.A.

EDWINA GATELEY, VMM. ENGLAND/U.S.A.

No one who looks at the world today can ignore the problems posed by modernity, the impact of science, industrialisation and urbanisation, rapid and mass communication, exploitative economic and trade structures manifested in such problems as international debt, consumerism secularisation, dechristianization.

From a global point of view the epicentre and the key to the solution of most of the problems are in the First World. This is because of its economic and political and, in many places its cultural dominance due to the mass media. The élite of the First World also inspire and control, not to say corrupt, the economic and political élite of the Third. If one reads the signs of the times and discerns priorities, one wonders whether the privileged place and the most challenging for mission today is not the First World.

This SEDOS Seminar will study the impact of the First World on Mission today. Early registration is adviseable.
