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Éditorial

Un an et demi après la publication de la *Déclaration Dominus Iesus*, le père **Claude Geffré, o.p.**, dans son article *L'avenir du dialogue interreligieux après Dominus Iesus*, réfléchit sur la condamnation prononcée à l'endroit de certains théologiens et examine la manière dont la Déclaration comprend l'absolu de la Révélation faite en Jésus-Christ et la manière dont on oppose la foi chrétienne et la religion des autres traditions. En dernier lieu, il se penche brièvement sur l'adéquation faite entre Église catholique et Église de Jésus-Christ.

Beaucoup s'interrogent sur la mission de l'Église aujourd'hui. Dans *Contemporary Mission*, **Frank Regan, S.S.C.**, nous livre sa réflexion sur le sens de la mission, de la proclamation, de la solidarité avec les pauvres. Il évoque l'impact de Vatican II, les grands changements culturels des dernières décennies et ce que cela implique comme défis missionnaires.

Dans le précédent numéro du *SEDOS/Bulletin* (vol. 34, n. 4, avril 2002), nous avons publié la première partie de l'article du père **Frans Bouwen, M. Afr.**, intitulé *Christianisme palestinien et le dialogue interreligieux* et portant sur le dialogue avec les musulmans. Dans le présent numéro, vous trouverez la seconde partie de cet article, qui concerne les relations judéo-chrétiennes.

Monseigneur **Julio D. Botia Aponte**, dans *Missionary Formation in the Seminaries*, examine ce que doit être la formation missionnaire dans les séminaires. Ayant rappelé les lignes directrices du magistère universel, l'auteur s'attarde ensuite sur l'apport des Églises d'Amérique latine. Il fait ressortir les objectifs, les critères, la théologie et la spiritualité missionnaires, le soin pastoral, qui doivent faire partie du programme de formation missionnaire dans les grands séminaires.

Yvon C. Elenga, S. J., dans *African Descriptive Christologies on Naming Jesus*, cherche à présenter, dans une optique africaine, la personne de Jésus, ses actions, ses images et comment le peuple le comprend. Il analyse la description et les résultats de la recherche africaine sur Jésus et montre l'influence de l'anthropologie culturelle africaine.

Bonne lecture !

Bernard East, o.p.
Directeur exécutif de SEDOS

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Claude Geffré, o.p.

L'avenir du dialogue interreligieux après Dominus Iesus

La Déclaration *Dominus Iesus* publiée en septembre 2000 par la Congrégation de la Doctrine de la foi a suscité de nombreux commentaires.¹ Surtout à cause de sa section IV sur l'unicité et l'unité de l'Église, elle a été très mal reçue par les Églises de la Réforme, par l'Église anglicane et par l'Église orthodoxe. Mais l'ensemble du texte a provoqué aussi un étonnement douloureux chez la plupart des théologiens catholiques engagés soit dans le dialogue interreligieux, soit dans le dialogue œcuménique. On a été surpris par le ton même du Document qui est particulièrement dur et abrupt : il rappelle le style autoritaire du Syllabus ou de l'encyclique *Humani generis*.

On peut certes découvrir l'occasion de ce Document. Les autorités romaines sont inquiètes de l'engouement actuel de beaucoup de fidèles catholiques pour le dialogue interreligieux. Certains en effet semblent avoir mal compris le jugement positif de Vatican II à l'égard des religions non chrétiennes. Ils en viennent à penser que toutes les religions se valent et que le christianisme n'est qu'une voie de salut parmi d'autres. Ils sont donc tentés aussi de méconnaître l'urgence permanente de la mission de l'Église.

Mais plus directement, même s'ils ne sont jamais cités, il est certain aussi que la Congrégation dirigée par le Cardinal Ratzinger avait hâte d'adresser un avertissement solennel à un certain nombre de théologiens catholiques qui se seraient rendus coupables de dérives difficilement conciliables avec la foi de l'Église. On savait par exemple que le livre du jésuite Jacques Dupuis *Vers une théologie chrétienne du pluralisme religieux* qui a connu plusieurs éditions en anglais, en italien et en français² et qui est devenu déjà un classique dans beaucoup de facultés de théologie et de séminaires avait été mis en examen par la Congrégation pour la doctrine de la foi dès le mois de juillet 1999. Le Père Dupuis semble bien directement visé, mais le plus étrange consiste en ce que l'on semble lui prêter des thèses que lui-même critique.

Personnellement, j'ai reçu le texte de la Congrégation de la foi comme une mise en garde très sérieuse contre les excès de certains théologiens qui pour favoriser le dialogue interreligieux remettent en cause l'universalité salvifique du Christ. Et en cela, je me sens proche des

positions du Père Dupuis. Mais par ailleurs, j'estime que le texte ne réussit pas à concilier l'universalité du mystère du Christ avec la pleine reconnaissance de la valeur positive des religions non chrétiennes. Certains commentateurs ont répété que *Dominus Iesus* ne faisait que reprendre l'enseignement de Vatican II. C'est vrai mais avec des nuances importantes et dans un esprit différent. En effet, le jugement positif de Vatican II sur les autres religions est réinterprété dans un contexte de christianocentrisme et d'ecclésiocentrisme qui rappelle à bien des égards une théologie préconciliaire. En fait, tout le Document trahit une véritable obsession du relativisme et ne parvient pas à concilier la plénitude de la vérité dont l'Église catholique aurait le monopole avec un certain pluralisme. Plusieurs se demandent encore pourquoi cette Déclaration qui vise en premier lieu les dérives actuelles de certaines théologies des religions comporte une section qui concerne les rapports entre l'Église catholique et les Églises séparées. C'est d'autant plus regrettable que cela risque d'entraîner une confusion inacceptable entre le dialogue interreligieux et le dialogue œcuménique. Mais en même temps, je constate une profonde cohérence de tout le Document qui obéit à une logique d'absolutisation. Le magistère romain a horreur du pluralisme. De même qu'on ne peut concevoir une ouverture positive de l'Église aux autres religions qu'en absolutisant le christianisme comme religion historique, de même on ne peut reconnaître des éléments d'ecclésialité dans les autres communautés ecclésiales qu'en absolutisant l'Église catholique.³

Le titre même de la Déclaration "L'unicité et l'universalité de Jésus-Christ et de l'Église" semble parfaitement acceptable par les chrétiens de toutes les Églises si par "Église" on entend le mystère biblique de l'Église comme corps du Christ. Mais à lire le texte, on découvre que le mot "Église" désigne la seule Église catholique. Comment alors accepter une telle équivalence entre l'unicité et l'universalité de Jésus-Christ et celles de l'Église ?

Dans un premier temps, j'envisagerai le dialogue interreligieux. Je commencerai par réfléchir sur la condamnation qui est faite des théologiens qui

distinguent un pluralisme religieux de fait et un pluralisme religieux de principe. Je voudrais ensuite étudier la manière dont la Déclaration comprend l'absolu de la Révélation faite en Jésus-Christ. On pourra aussi s'interroger sur la manière dont on oppose la foi chrétienne et la religion dans les autres traditions religieuses. Dans un second temps et de manière beaucoup plus brève, il conviendra d'évaluer l'interprétation qui est faite de l'adéquation entre l'Église catholique et l'Église de Jésus-Christ.

I. Le dialogue interreligieux

1) *Le pluralisme religieux*

Comme je l'ai déjà suggéré, la Déclaration a le mérite incontestable de tracer une ligne rouge, un Rubicon, qu'il est difficile de franchir si on veut être cohérent avec la tradition de la foi apostolique telle qu'elle s'exprime depuis les origines. Il est vrai que "Dieu seul sauve", mais on ne peut en conclure que le salut en Jésus-Christ n'est qu'un chemin de salut parmi d'autres. L'enseignement du Nouveau Testament, en particulier saint Paul, atteste clairement que dès l'instant de la création, Dieu a voulu lier son dessein éternel de salut de tous les hommes à Jésus-Christ qui est à la fois l'*Alpha* et l'*Omega*. Or il semble bien que plusieurs théologiens — pour éviter une certaine forme d'impérialisme chrétien — sont prêts à franchir cette ligne rouge. Ce n'est pas seulement le cas du philosophe et théologien presbytérien John Hick⁴, c'est le cas de théologiens catholiques américains comme Paul Knitter⁵ et Roger Haight⁶ et de théologiens asiatiques comme Raimon Panikkar⁷ et Michaël Amaladoss⁸. Certes, Dieu seul sauve... Mais c'est Jésus-Christ qui est la réalisation même du vouloir divin quant au salut de l'homme. Et donc s'il y a d'autres médiations de salut dans l'histoire, en particulier au sein des religions, c'est toujours en vertu de la présence cachée du mystère du Christ qui est au centre de l'histoire. Si depuis le concile, la théologie catholique est prête à reconnaître une valeur salutaire aux autres religions, elle maintient selon les termes mêmes de l'encyclique *Redemptoris missio* (n. 5) citée au n° 14 de la Déclaration que "celles-ci tirent leur sens et leur valeur *uniquement* de celle du Christ". On peut parler à la suite de J. Dupuis de "médiations dérivées". Ou bien selon l'expression de la Déclaration dans ce Numéro 14 de "médiations participées".

En termes plus techniques, cela veut dire qu'en théologie des religions, on ne peut se contenter d'une christologie inclusiviste *normative* ou exemplaire comme c'est le cas chez R. Haight. Il faut défendre une christologie inclusive *constitutive*. Même si on ne se réclame pas d'une christologie haute ou ontologique, c'est la seule qui soit compatible — me semble-t-il —

avec la confession de l'unicité de la médiation du Christ. Mais je crois pouvoir ajouter aussitôt qu'une telle position n'est nullement incompatible avec ce que j'appelle un *pluralisme inclusif*, c'est-à-dire la reconnaissance de la valeur irréductible des autres traditions religieuses. En d'autres termes, nous ne sommes pas condamnés à choisir entre un inclusivisme christologique et un pluralisme qui coïnciderait nécessairement avec un théocentrisme indéterminé à la manière de John Hick. Et le maintien d'un christocentrisme constitutif ne conduit nullement à un exclusivisme du christianisme ou de l'Église dans l'ordre du salut.

Or c'est précisément cet équilibre délicat — que l'on retrouve dans l'encyclique *Redemptoris missio* et dans le Document *Dialogue et annonce* (Il est surprenant que ce Document ne soit jamais cité dans la Déclaration) — qui ne me semble pas respecté dans le texte de *Dominus Iesus* signé par le cardinal Ratzinger. On doit en tout cas se poser la question quand on découvre la manière dont sont condamnés au n. 4 les théologiens qui acceptent de distinguer un pluralisme religieux de fait et un pluralisme religieux *de jure* ou de droit, sous prétexte que ce serait déjà céder à l'idéologie du pluralisme qui désespère de toute vérité absolue.

De nombreux théologiens catholiques comme Schillebeeckx, Duquoc, Dupuis, moi-même acceptent comme une hypothèse théologique féconde la distinction entre un pluralisme religieux de fait et un pluralisme de principe sans considérer pour autant comme dépassées les vérités fondamentales qui sont énumérées au n. 4, en particulier le caractère définitif et complet de la révélation chrétienne, l'inspiration des Écritures, l'unité personnelle entre le Verbe éternel et Jésus de Nazareth, l'unicité et l'universalité du mystère du Christ etc... Sans prétendre connaître le pourquoi de la pluralité des voies vers Dieu, dans la perspective d'une théologie herméneutique, nous sommes invités à interpréter un pluralisme historique apparemment insurmontable à la lumière de ce que nous savons de la volonté universelle de salut de Dieu. Ce pluralisme ne peut être seulement le résultat de l'aveuglement coupable des hommes au long des siècles, encore moins de l'échec de la mission de l'Église depuis vingt siècles. Il est donc théologiquement légitime de l'interpréter comme un pluralisme qui correspond à un dessein mystérieux de Dieu. L'histoire religieuse des hommes n'est pas seulement l'histoire de la quête tâtonnante et même parfois aberrante de l'homme à la recherche de Dieu. Elle est aussi en même temps, l'histoire des dons de Dieu à la recherche de l'homme. Les traditions religieuses peuvent ainsi être considérées comme des objectivations de la volonté universelle de salut de Dieu. C'est toute l'histoire humaine qui est à sa manière une histoire du salut. Nous savons en effet que cette histoire n'est jamais abandonnée de Dieu : elle peut être le lieu des illuminations du Verbe et des visites

de l'Esprit de Dieu. En d'autres termes, il est permis de considérer l'économie du Verbe incarné comme le sacrement d'une économie plus vaste qui coïncide avec l'histoire humaine tout court. C'était déjà la position de Karl Rahner qui ne faisait qu'actualiser la théologie vénérable des Pères de l'Église dite théologie des *semina Verbi*.⁹

Il semble finalement que le texte de la Déclaration demeure dans la continuité d'une simple théologie du salut des infidèles qui légitime une possibilité de salut en dehors de l'Église en fonction d'une interprétation moins restrictive du fameux adage : "Hors de l'Église point de salut". Or aujourd'hui, la théologie des religions chez ses meilleurs représentants devient une théologie du *pluralisme religieux* qui s'interroge sur la signification du pluralisme religieux à l'intérieur de l'unique dessein de Dieu. C'est l'intention proprement théologique de Jacques Dupuis dans son livre *Vers une théologie chrétienne du pluralisme religieux*. Personnellement, je m'inscris dans cette démarche quand je parle du "pluralisme religieux" comme *nouveau paradigme théologique* et quand je propose que cette théologie du pluralisme religieux devienne une *théologie interreligieuse*.¹⁰ Quand on opte pour un pluralisme inclusif, on veut dire que les autres religions, en dépit de leurs limites peuvent être porteuses d'éléments de vérité, de bonté et même de sainteté qui ont été suscités par l'Esprit de Dieu. Cela ne conduit pas à remettre en cause l'unicité de la médiation du Christ. Mais cela nous invite à désabsolutiser le christianisme comme religion historique et à ne pas confondre l'universalité du mystère du Christ et l'universalité du christianisme qui est une religion contingente parmi d'autres.

C'est le principe même de l'incarnation, c'est-à-dire la présence de l'Absolu de Dieu dans la particularité historique de Jésus de Nazareth qui nous conduit à ne pas absolutiser le christianisme comme religion particulière. On sait combien au cours des siècles, la tendance de la théologie dominante fut de conférer au christianisme et à l'Église une universalité qui n'appartient qu'au Christ.¹¹ Et comme le montre le Père Dupuis, on peut maintenir un inclusivisme christologique sans compromettre les chances du dialogue interreligieux comme le craignent les théologiens surtout asiatiques. On peut en effet respecter les autres religions dans leur différence irréductible. Affirmer un pluralisme religieux de droit, c'est reconnaître la pluralité des dons de Dieu bien au-delà des frontières de l'économie chrétienne. La nouveauté de Vatican II dans le texte de *Nostra aetate* dans son numéro 2 fut d'affirmer que les semences du Verbe sont répandues non seulement dans les membres des religions non chrétiennes mais dans les éléments constitutifs de ces religions elles-mêmes. Je rappelle ici ce texte décisif dont on n'a pas fini d'explicitier les conséquences : "L'Église catholique ne rejette rien de ce qui est vrai et saint dans ces religions. Elle considère

avec un respect sincère ces manières d'agir et de vivre, ces règles et ces doctrines qui, quoiqu'elles diffèrent en beaucoup de points de ce qu'elle-même tient et propose, cependant apportent souvent un rayon de la Vérité qui illumine tous les hommes". Finalement, le Concile applique aux traditions religieuses la théologie des semences du Verbe que les Pères de l'Église réservaient à la sagesse des nations, c'est-à-dire la tradition philosophique considérée comme un reflet de la sagesse du Verbe de Dieu.

2) Le caractère complet et définitif de la Révélation chrétienne

La Déclaration s'en prend au n. 6 aux théologiens qui sont tentés de nier le caractère complet et définitif de la Révélation chrétienne. Là encore, les rédacteurs de la Déclaration me semblent demeurer prisonniers d'un dilemme insurmontable entre relativisme et absolutisme. En tout cas, il apparaît tout à fait injuste de soupçonner certains théologiens de nier le caractère complet et définitif de la révélation dont Jésus est le témoin sous prétexte qu'ils rappellent que cette révélation est encore une révélation limitée qui ne prétend pas épuiser la plénitude de la vérité qui est en Dieu. Refuser une telle limite, ce ne serait plus prendre au sérieux la pleine humanité de Jésus même s'il est l'accomplissement définitif de la Révélation et tomber déjà dans une certaine forme de *docétisme*. La révélation en tant que contenu de vérité a la limite de tout ce qui est historique. Du point de vue qualitatif, la révélation dont Jésus est le témoin est incomparable du fait même de sa proximité avec Dieu. Mais du point de vue quantitatif, il s'agit encore de la Parole de Dieu à l'état d'un discours humain. Et d'ailleurs, c'est l'enseignement même de Jésus dans le Nouveau Testament qui nous invite à souligner le caractère eschatologique de la vérité que le Père lui a confiée. "Lorsque viendra l'Esprit de vérité, il vous *fera* accéder à la vérité toute entière" (Jn 16, 13). Il est curieux de constater que les rédacteurs qui citent ce verset de saint Jean au n. 6 transforment le futur en présent comme si l'Église était déjà en possession de la vérité toute entière.

Il me semble donc théologiquement légitime d'affirmer tout à la fois que la révélation en Jésus-Christ est définitive quant à la connaissance du vrai Dieu et du véritable rapport religieux de l'homme à Dieu mais que le christianisme n'a pas la prétention de totaliser tous les éléments de vérité d'ordre religieux qui se trouvent disséminés dans l'infinie diversité des traditions religieuses. D'ailleurs, le voudrait-il, cela risquerait de compromettre le génie religieux propre du christianisme. Il faudrait qu'à l'encontre d'une logique d'absolutisation, notre théologie comprenne que le fait de considérer au nom de la foi le christianisme comme

la vraie religion n'entraîne pas comme conséquence nécessaire que toutes les autres religions sont fausses. La vérité chrétienne n'est ni exclusive, ni même inclusive de toute autre vérité d'ordre religieux. Une telle prétention rendrait tout dialogue impossible dès le départ. Disons que la vérité qui nous est confiée est relative, mais pas au sens où relatif s'oppose à absolu mais au sens de *relationnel*. Disons que la vérité de la révélation chrétienne est relative à la part de vérité qui se trouve dans les autres religions. Il s'agit d'une absoluité relative.

Il est conforme à toute la tradition chrétienne de reconnaître en Jésus-Christ l'accomplissement de toutes les semences de vérité qui peuvent se trouver dans les autres traditions religieuses. Mais il les accomplit de manière non totalitaire, en respectant leur part d'irréductibilité qui peut avoir été suscitée par l'Esprit de Dieu. Et ce qui est vrai du Christ lui-même ne peut être étendu au christianisme lui-même. C'est pourquoi il est insuffisant de parler des valeurs positives des autres religions comme des valeurs implicitement chrétiennes qui trouveront leur accomplissement dans cette religion parfaite qu'est le christianisme. Pour autant que ces valeurs positives coïncident avec les valeurs du Royaume et peuvent favoriser l'ouverture à Dieu et conduire à la justification, je préfère parler de valeurs *christiques* qui trouveront leur accomplissement à la fin des temps dans le mystère du Christ.

Dans le temps de l'histoire, il faut endurer intellectuellement l'énigme de la pluralité des religions et ne pas en faire trop vite soit des dégradations, soit des préparations lointaines de la vraie religion qui serait incarnée dans le christianisme. Le texte de la Déclaration a raison de refuser l'idée d'une sorte de *complémentarité* entre la vérité dont témoignerait la révélation en Jésus-Christ et les autres vérités dont les religions sont porteuses. Et là on peut faire état d'un certain correctif qui est justifié à l'endroit de certaines affirmations du Père Dupuis.¹² L'idée de complémentarité risque d'induire l'idée que la Révélation chrétienne a besoin d'être complétée par la vérité des autres religions. Il faut accepter l'idée d'une différence difficilement surmontable avec laquelle il faut vivre dans le temps de l'histoire. Mais il reste vrai qu'une meilleure connaissance des richesses des autres traditions religieuses peut nous aider à mieux déchiffrer et mieux expliciter les virtualités dont la vérité qui nous est confiée est porteuse. C'est justement la chance du dialogue interreligieux de conduire chaque interlocuteur à une meilleure compréhension de sa propre vérité. Nous ne sommes les propriétaires ni de Dieu, ni de la vérité et c'est dans un dialogue sincère que nous sommes conduits à la célébration d'une vérité plus haute que la vérité partielle dont nous nous réclamons. Je suis tenté de reproduire ici le propos si juste de l'évêque d'Oran Pierre Claverie qui a poursuivi au risque de sa vie un dialogue loyal avec les

musulmans d'Algérie : "Je suis croyant, je crois qu'il y a un Dieu, mais je n'ai pas la prétention de posséder ce Dieu-là, ni par Jésus qui me le révèle, ni par les dogmes de ma foi. On ne possède pas Dieu".¹³

3) *La foi théologique et la croyance dans les autres religions*

Le texte de la Déclaration demande de tenir fermement la distinction entre la foi théologique et la croyance dans les autres religions. La foi théologique est un assentiment à la vérité révélée par le Dieu Trinité et la croyance est simplement une expérience religieuse à la recherche de la vérité absolue (cf. n. 7). Cette distinction classique entre la foi surnaturelle et la croyance entendue comme religion naturelle est en soi légitime. Mais est-ce qu'elle est compatible avec le jugement positif porté par le Concile sur les religions non chrétiennes ? On pourrait rappeler à la suite de Paul Tillich que toutes les religions se ressemblent en tant que *Trust*, c'est-à-dire la foi-confiance en un certain absolu et qu'elles divergent en tant que *Beliefs*, croyances. Si la théologie catholique est prête depuis le Concile à reconnaître une valeur salutaire aux autres religions, c'est bien en tant que, en dépit de leurs imperfections et de l'assentiment explicite au Dieu de Jésus-Christ, elles peuvent favoriser une ouverture à Dieu qui coïncide avec ce que nous appelons la justification. Autrement dit, en conformité avec le chapitre 25 de saint Matthieu, nous savons que la possibilité de salut n'est pas liée à un contenu explicite de connaissance. Dans l'Évangile, le salut dépend de l'intensité de la droiture du cœur dans l'ordre de la charité. Même si elle doit être resituée dans son contexte, on peut légitimement s'interroger sur la résonance chrétienne de cette affirmation du numéro 22 de la Déclaration (p. 34) : "Dieu veut le salut de tous par la connaissance de la vérité. Le salut se trouve dans la vérité".

Si on allait jusqu'au bout du raisonnement de la Déclaration, il faudrait dire que les incroyants de bonne foi sont dans une meilleure situation du point de vue du salut que les fidèles des diverses traditions religieuses. Rien ne nous permet d'affirmer que les membres des traditions religieuses soient incapables de faire une expérience proprement théologique même si cette expérience ne trouve pas une thématization adéquate dans l'ordre de la connaissance. Même dans une religion sans Dieu comme le bouddhisme, il n'est pas interdit de penser que l'expérience du *Nirvana* qui est une illumination sans proportion avec les efforts ascétiques de l'homme peut coïncider avec une expérience proprement théologique. L'Esprit de Dieu souffle où il veut et l'Église n'a pas le monopole de la grâce. Selon la formule audacieuse de Jean Paul II dans son discours aux cardinaux de la Curie après la

rencontre d'Assise d'octobre 1986 : "Toute prière authentique procède de l'action de l'Esprit-Saint".¹⁴ Il est sans doute légitime de répéter que l'Église seule a "la plénitude des moyens du salut", à condition de préciser que cela n'entraîne pas une profusion de grâces obtenues *ex opere operato*. En tout cas, cela ne peut signifier que l'Église aurait le monopole de l'Évangile et des valeurs du Royaume. Le Royaume de Dieu ne cesse d'advenir dans le secret des cœurs et dans l'histoire des hommes bien au-delà des frontières de l'Église.

À cet égard, il est regrettable et inutilement provocant pour les membres des autres traditions religieuses de reprendre une formule de Pie XII concernant "la situation de grave indigence"¹⁵ dans laquelle se trouvent les fidèles des autres religions par rapport aux membres de l'Église qui sont les seuls à bénéficier de la plénitude des moyens du salut. Il est d'ailleurs étonnant que nulle part dans le texte, il ne soit fait mention du statut unique du judaïsme parmi les religions du monde. Il semble pourtant que le Concile et Jean Paul II à sa suite aient insisté sur le fait que les frères aînés des chrétiens étaient toujours l'objet des promesses de Dieu et pouvaient faire leur salut dans la fidélité au Dieu de l'Alliance. La foi du juif pieux n'est-elle qu'une *croiance* et non pas une expérience théologique ?

On pourrait faire des remarques similaires à propos de l'*inspiration* qui est strictement réservée aux textes canoniques de la Bible chrétienne (cf. n. 8). Certes, la Révélation en tant qu'événement de la part de Dieu est close avec la venue du Verbe fait chair. Mais si on accepte de dire à la suite du Concile que les religions, en dépit de leurs erreurs et de leur caractère incomplet, peuvent être porteuses d'un reflet de la vérité du Verbe de Dieu, qui nous permet de décréter que certaines Écritures sacrées ne peuvent pas être inspirées par l'Esprit de Dieu ? Certes, il ne s'agit pas de révélations au sens fort. Mais elles ne sont pas seulement des expressions du génie religieux de l'homme sur Dieu. Elles peuvent être aussi des paroles de Dieu adressées à l'homme. Le Coran par exemple, en dépit de ses divergences fondamentales avec la révélation chrétienne, peut être reçu comme une certaine parole de Dieu par les juifs et les chrétiens dans la mesure où il confirme la révélation fondamentale de l'unicité du Dieu créateur. Il peut être un avertissement prophétique contre toute idolâtrie dans le sens d'un monothéisme radical.

II. Le dialogue œcuménique

C'est évidemment la section IV de la Déclaration, en particulier le n. 16, qui a provoqué la consternation aussi bien chez les responsables des Églises séparées que chez tous les théologiens engagés dans le dialogue œcuménique. L'archevêque de Cantorbéry, Mgr Carey a déploré que le document de la Congrégation pour la

doctrine de la foi ne prenne pas en compte "la compréhension plus profonde qui s'est développée ces trente dernières années au travers d'un dialogue et d'une coopération œcuménique entre catholiques et protestants". Et il ajoutait que quoiqu'en dise Rome, l'Église anglicane considère appartenir à une "même sainte, catholique et apostolique Église du Christ". De son côté, le président de la Fédération protestante de France, le pasteur Jean-Arnold de Clermont a estimé que cette Déclaration *Dominus Iesus* contraste singulièrement avec les invitations à l'humilité et l'ouverture aux autres entendues de l'Église catholique pendant l'année jubilaire. Cette initiative du Cardinal Ratzinger est donc particulièrement inopportune alors que le Pape Jean Paul II voulait faire de l'année jubilaire une célébration commune par toutes les Églises des deux millénaires de christianisme.

Le théologien orthodoxe Olivier Clément exprimait son trouble à l'Agence de presse internationale catholique : "Je pense que c'est un blasphème contre l'Église de dire que l'Eucharistie célébrée par les anglicans et les protestants est vide. Peut-on affirmer que les orthodoxes sont plus proches des catholiques ? Certes, j'en suis persuadé. Mais on aimerait qu'un pas de plus soit fait, un pas qui montrerait que le rapprochement entre les orthodoxes et les catholiques a des incidences positives pour les anglicans et les protestants. Or on ne le voit pas". Le Père Jean-Marie Tillard qui fut vice-président du Département Foi et Constitution du Conseil œcuménique des Églises (COE) depuis 1994 me confiait à Ottawa en septembre 2000, deux mois avant sa mort, que ce Document était "un retour à la case départ" après trente ans de dialogues œcuméniques qui ont abouti à des accords très substantiels entre l'Église romaine et l'Église anglicane. On sait avec quelle énergie et avec quelle efficacité J.-M. Tillard a travaillé dans le cadre de la commission internationale anglicane catholique (ARCIC).

J'ai déjà noté que dans tout le Document, le mot "Église" désigne en fait l'Église catholique qui conformément au titre de la Déclaration jouit de la même universalité que le Christ lui-même. Cela est cohérent avec l'interprétation qui est donnée du fameux *subsistit in* du n. 18 de la Constitution *Lumen gentium* de Vatican II. C'était déjà celle qui avait été proposée par le Cardinal Ratzinger en 1985 à l'occasion d'une notification de la Congrégation de la Doctrine de la foi concernant un livre de Leonardo Boff. Selon la note 56 du texte de la Déclaration, le mot "subsiste" aurait été choisi "précisément pour mettre en lumière qu'il existe une seule subsistance de la véritable Église, alors que hors de son ensemble visible, existent seulement des éléments de la même Église". Or si on se réfère aux Actes du Concile, on constate que cette interprétation est contraire aux intentions des rédacteurs

de la Constitution sur l'Église. En dépit de sa facture scolastique, cette formule doit être comprise dans un sens faible, non ontologique, pour éviter justement une identification pure et simple de l'Église du Christ et des apôtres avec l'Église catholique. Tel était en effet le cas dans une ecclésiologie préconciliaire que l'on voulait dépasser. Le Père Congar estimait que la formulation "exprime le positif de la conviction catholique sans exclure de la qualité d'Églises chrétiennes d'autres communautés ecclésiales".

On sait qu'un premier projet de rédaction disait : "L'Église catholique romaine est le Corps mystique du Christ ... seule celle qui est catholique romaine a le droit d'être appelée Église". Le Cardinal Liénart de Lille la critiqua vivement : "je demande expressément que l'on supprime l'art. 7 qui equipare de façon absolue l'Église catholique et le Corps mystique".¹⁶ Selon cette nouvelle interprétation autoritaire de la Déclaration, alors que Vatican II avait laissé ouverte la possibilité de parler soit d'Églises, soit de communautés ecclésiales, à propos des Églises protestantes, il est affirmé qu'elles ne sont pas des Églises au sens propre même si on concède que "les baptisés de ces Communautés sont incorporés par le baptême et se trouvent donc dans une certaine communion bien qu'imparfaite avec l'Église" (n. 17). Il est remarquable à cet égard que l'Église anglicane ne soit même pas mentionnée et soit assimilée aux autres Communautés ecclésiales, c'est-à-dire celles qui n'ont pas conservé "l'épiscopat valide et la substance authentique et intégrale du mystère eucharistique". C'est pratiquement méconnaître tous les accords auxquels catholiques et anglicans étaient parvenus sur le chemin de l'unité.

Les Églises orthodoxes sont considérées comme des Églises particulières dans la mesure où elles sont "des éléments de la véritable Église" pour reprendre une expression de la note 56.¹⁷ Même si elles ne sont pas en communion parfaite avec l'Église catholique, elles ont conservé la succession apostolique et l'Eucharistie valide. Mais on sait que depuis la Note confidentielle adressée par le Cardinal Ratzinger en juin 2000 aux présidents des conférences épiscopales, elles ne peuvent être considérées comme des Églises-sœurs. La Note déplorait en effet que "l'usage de l'expression Églises-sœurs ait malheureusement été étendu pour désigner l'Église catholique d'un côté, et de l'autre l'Église orthodoxe".

En fait, cette Note veut réagir contre le Document dit de Balamand de 1993 consacré à l'Uniatisme et qui justement pour dépasser l'Uniatisme affirmait au n. 14 : "L'Église catholique et l'Église orthodoxe se reconnaissent mutuellement comme Églises-sœurs, responsables ensemble du maintien de l'Église de Dieu dans la fidélité au dessein divin, tout spécialement en ce qui concerne l'unité". Or la Déclaration *Dominus Iesus* au n. 16 va insinuer à partir d'une citation du Décret sur

l'œcuménisme n. 3 que "la force des Églises particulières séparées de Rome dérive de la plénitude de grâce et de vérité qui a été confiée à l'Église catholique". On est en plein ecclésiocentrisme catholique alors que le texte de l'original est profondément christocentrique : "tout provient du Christ et conduit à lui". En fait, *Dominus Iesus* voudrait nous convaincre que c'est l'Église catholique dans sa forme actuelle qui est la source exclusive de la grâce ecclésiale qui peut se trouver dans les autres Églises. On comprend l'émotion des membres des Églises séparées. Pourquoi la déclaration *Dominus Iesus* n'a-t-elle pas respecté la très heureuse formulation de Jean Paul II dans le n. 11 de l'encyclique *Ut unum sint* : "les éléments de sanctification et de vérité présents dans les autres Communautés chrétiennes constituent la base objective de la communion qui existe entre elles et l'Église catholique. Dans la mesure où ces éléments se trouvent dans les autres Communautés chrétiennes, il y a présence active de l'unique Église du Christ en elles".

Finalement, les Églises orthodoxes ne peuvent être des Églises-sœurs pour l'Église catholique car celle-ci est la mère de toutes les Églises. Cette idée de maternité de l'Église universelle par rapport aux diverses Églises particulières conduit nécessairement à dévaloriser la catégorie pourtant traditionnelle d'Églises-sœurs. Or selon le Décret sur l'œcuménisme de Vatican II, il était clair que l'unité entre tous les chrétiens ne serait pas un retour pur et simple à l'unité déjà acquise par l'Église catholique mais l'avènement d'une unité inédite enrichie des richesses propres dont témoigne chaque Église chrétienne.

Il s'agit là d'une *correction* proprement historique de la lettre et de l'esprit du Concile de Vatican II trente-cinq ans plus tard. La Curie romaine, même par un acte spécifiquement approuvé par le Pape, n'a pas la compétence pour corriger un Concile œcuménique qui demeure l'autorité suprême dans l'Église. Nous n'avons plus qu'à attendre un prochain Concile pour savoir si cette correction doctrinale est légitime ou non... Ce qui est sûr en tout cas, c'est que c'est l'avenir même de l'œcuménisme qui est en jeu.

Il est incontestable que la section consacrée à l'œcuménisme est la partie la plus controversée de la Déclaration *Dominus Iesus* alors que les Églises protestantes pouvaient être les premières à se féliciter de voir rappeler par l'Église catholique l'unicité et l'universalité de la médiation du Christ dans l'ordre du salut. Mais il faut insister sur la cohérence de tout le Document qui nous ramène à une conception absolutiste et préconciliaire de l'Église catholique.

Dans le dialogue interreligieux, on concède une certaine valeur salutaire aux autres religions. Mais on ne peut la reconnaître qu'en rappelant à satiété que seule l'Église catholique a la plénitude des moyens du salut. De même, dans le dialogue œcuménique, on peut

reconnaître certains éléments d'ecclésiologie dans les communautés ecclésiales mais en affirmant avec vigueur que l'Église du Christ ne subsiste adéquatement que dans la seule Église catholique. À titre de symptômes, il est frappant de constater combien les mots *Évangile* et *Royaume* se retrouvent peu dans la langue du Document romain. On se complait à redire que l'Église catholique est la seule à disposer de la plénitude des moyens du salut. Mais on serait en droit de se demander si cela est une garantie quant à la perfection d'une vie évangélique qui conduit justement à la justification devant Dieu. Tous les chrétiens sont les témoins par pure grâce du Royaume de Dieu, mais ils savent que ce Royaume advient dans les cœurs et dans l'histoire bien au-delà des frontières des Églises que voient les hommes.

Notes

¹ Dans le texte qui suit je renverrai aux numéros et aux pages de l'édition française publiée aux Éditions du Cerf, *Le Seigneur Jésus. Déclaration Dominus Iesus sur l'unicité et l'universalité salvifique de Jésus Christ et de l'Église*, introduction par le Cardinal Eyt, Paris, 2000.

² J. Dupuis, *Vers une théologie chrétienne du pluralisme religieux*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, ("Cogitatio Fidei" 200), 1997.

³ J'ai fait référence à cette logique d'absolutisation dans ma Préface à l'ouvrage de M. Aebischer-Crettol, *Vers un œcuménisme interreligieux*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, ("Cogitatio Fidei" 221), Paris, 2001.

⁴ Cf. J. Hick, *God Has Many Names*, Philadelphie, Westminster Press, 1980.

⁵ Cf. P. Knitter, *No other Name. A critical Survey of Christian Attitudes toward World Religions*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1985.

⁶ Cf. R. Haight, *Jesus as Symbol of God*, MaryKnoll, Orbis Books, 1999.

⁷ Cf. R. Pannikar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism: Towards an Ecumenical Christophany*, Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1981.

⁸ Cf. M. Amaladoss, *Vivre en liberté. Les théologies de la libération en Asie*, Novalis - Cerf - Labor et Fides, 1998.

⁹ Je renvoie volontiers au ch. IV : "Le pluralisme religieux comme paradigme théologique" de mon livre, *Croire et interpréter. Le tournant herméneutique de la théologie*, Paris, Éd. du Cerf, 2001.

¹⁰ Cf. C. Geffré, "Le pluralisme religieux et l'indifférentisme ou le vrai défi de la théologie chrétienne", *Revue théologique de Louvain*, 31, 2000, 3-32.

¹¹ J'ai pris en compte cette dérive historique dans mon intervention au Colloque de Missiologie de l'Université Urbana en octobre 2000 : "La prétention du christianisme à l'universel : implications missiologiques" dans *Cristologia e Missione oggi*, Urbana University Press, Rome, 2001, p. 47-65.

¹² Je me suis permis d'exprimer cette réserve lors

de la présentation officielle de l'ouvrage de Jacques Dupuis à l'Institut catholique de Paris. Cf. "Le pluralisme religieux comme question théologique", *La Vie spirituelle*, septembre 1997, p. 580-586.

¹³ *Le Monde*, 4-5 août 1996.

¹⁴ *La Documentation catholique*, n° 1933, 1^{er} février 1987.

¹⁵ *Dominus Iesus*, n° 22, p. 33.

¹⁶ Je renvoie ici à l'étude extrêmement précise de Hervé Legrand qui justifie, références à l'appui, cette affirmation préliminaire : "Vatican II a voulu affirmer la non-identification exclusive de l'Église du Christ et de l'Église catholique". Cf. H. Legrand, *Dominus Iesus et l'œcuménisme*, dans *Unité des chrétiens*, n. 122, avril 2001, p. 10-20.

¹⁷ Selon la Déclaration *Dominus Iesus*, en dehors de l'Église catholique on ne trouve que des éléments d'Église ou des Églises particulières. H. Legrand observe que Vatican II ne nous oblige pas à tirer une telle conclusion. En effet, s'il est vrai que *Lumen gentium* reste discret sur l'ecclésiologie des autres Églises chrétiennes, cette réserve est surmontée dans le Décret sur l'œcuménisme, *Unitatis Redintegratio*. Celui-ci reconnaît clairement dans son chapitre III qu'il y a des Églises séparées de Rome. (Cf. H. Legrand, *art. cit.*, p. 13).

Réf. : Texte de l'auteur.

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Contemporary Mission

One of the signs that the Spirit still blows where it wills is the continued interest in the mission of the Church today. The malaise, the abandonment, ageing congregation, post-modern scepticism, the fossilization and centralization of Church structures, the “accidentalism” of the Church, etc., have had a positive impact. They have provoked once again the old question: what is the mission of the Church today?¹

We all have an implicit missiological paradigm. We do not call it by that name. We would rather say: “This is the way I do it”. I feel the need to highlight some of the elements of my own way of doing mission so that you will know where I am coming from.

For me, mission is about proclaiming, from a stance of solidarity with the poor, the Good News of peace (fullness of life), justice (right relationships) and holiness (indwelling). This implies doing the Good News, which suggests to me now — as it did when I lived in Peru — finding ways of making effective and visible in community the Good News I tried to proclaim. Out of that flowed my experience trying to be Good News and taking seriously my own personal spiritual journeying and growth in company with those I journey with on mission.

I understand that mission is about evangelization, proclaiming from a stance of solidarity with the poor the Good News of peace (fullness of life), justice (right relationship with all of creation), love (grace of intimacy with God), and holiness (indwelling in God’s trinitarian life).

The word we proclaim is a transforming word and so must have an effect on how society functions economically, politically, culturally, etc., especially regarding the poor and victimized. It is an incarnate word and so immerses the Christian community in society and world. There it seeks reconciliation and justice, builds up the human/ecological, shares the story of Jesus Christ and convokes to communion. It is an eschatological word and so celebrates the Eucharist until all of humankind can eat and drink at the same table in the Reign of God.²

Facing Turbulent Change

The prophetic Martin Luther King was fond of referring to the legend of Rip Van Winkle.³ Rip Lived in Sleepy Hollow. Returning to his cabin one fine day, he stopped off at the local inn for a few pints of ale. He drank his fill and left for his cabin. The last thing he noticed was the sign above the inn’s

door. It was painted with a picture of George III, the then ruling British monarch. Rip, a little tipsy, lay down by the side of the road and fell asleep. When he awoke he found he had grown a long grey beard and felt stiff in his bones. He hurried back down the mountain and came to the inn. There he found a different sign painted. It was a picture of George Washington, first President of the newly independent United States of (North) America.

The point that King used to make was that Rip had slept through a revolution. Big changes had occurred and he had slept soundly on without being in the least disturbed.

Our culture and Church have gone topsy turvy. Points of reference have been lost and webs of meaning have been torn. In the last forty years or so we have been in the midst of two tumultuous cultural transitions.

In the first we passed from being a Church relatively insulated from the modern world and its Enlightenment culture to a post-Vatican II Church in dialogue with that secular culture and at the service of the world shaped by that culture.⁴

In the second transition we find ourselves going from a modern culture to a post-modern one. This is the culture born from the ashes of two World Wars, the economic depression and the holocaust. The post-modern milieu is darkly pessimistic and distrustful of the notion of progress without limit, and rationality as a basis for truth and knowledge. It spurns all metanarratives be they Marxist, Christian or capitalist. It tends to be more group orientated and finds truth in the community. It is holistic and open to the spiritual, but not to institutional religion. The post-modern is relativistic and pluralist. It does not mind combining elements from traditions thought to be incompatible. The “right thing” or “right answer” is a matter of social context.⁵

In his book, “The Post-Modern Condition”, Jean-Francois Lyotard laments the loss of narrative as a source of meaning. For the post-modern person, he says, there are only facts, bytes and data. We who come from a religious tradition grounded in certainty can feel ill at ease in this type of a cultural situation. We have our own story generated by the founding impulse in the broader context of mission history, and rooted in God’s mysterious plan of salvation.

But two cultural transitions in the space of thirty years or

so is a huge jump to have to make. Cultural change takes four or five generations. So many of us have been living in Sleepy Hollow. In our semi-dormant state we do not know how to take the tensions of letting go, of acquiring a new cultural idiom. We wonder if we are still sleeping. Will the nightmare ever end; when will the breakthrough to certainty occur?

Indeed the rumbles and quakes of culture shock, the birth of new mission paradigms and the trial-and-error remapping the way of mission were not felt in many missionary Sleepy Hollows. The revolution happened while many slept.

The Impact of Vatican II

Vatican II was a freeing yet tension-laden, chaotic experience. Enda McDonagh in a recent article reminds us that the “ecclesial view of Vatican II overturned many clerical privileges and prejudices with its emphasis on Church as primarily people, its recognition of separated Christian communities as Sister Churches, its openness to dialogue with non-Christians and its ringing endorsement of religious freedom for all” (McDonagh 2000). Overseas missionaries felt the tension and lived the chaos.

A few years after Vatican II the bishops held a Synod in Rome on the subject of “Justice in the World”. They concluded that “action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel” (#5).

Very quickly the challenge of the irruption of the poor onto the stage of history made itself felt. They protagonized their own development and liberation projects with all of their contradictions and ambiguities. Missionaries in Latin America and the Philippines were caught by the ebullience of sometimes revolutionary energies. The march of the poor questioned to the core their understanding of the vocation to evangelize. The documents of Medellín, the Encyclicals *Populorum Progressio* and *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and the theology of liberation — all prior to the synodal document on Justice in the World — set the missionary scene and orientated the remapping of the missionary path.

Inevitably the forces of imperial reaction and ecclesiastical fear set in. How to control the newly released energies? How to re-establish law and order? How to re-impose discipline and strict orthodoxy?

Missionaries had to rethink mission in the midst of a world undergoing accelerated change, instant communications, revolutionary cultural movements, neo-liberal globalization, the emergence of the Asian tigers and the Chinese juggernaut, the winning of the Cold War with the USA remaining as sole imperial power, a trillion dollar a day currency transfers, ethnic strife, ecological devastation and so on.

The renewing understanding of mission continued to

expand. The experience of reaching out to the poor of Asia and the South Pacific opened the ears and hearts of missionaries to new insights and intuitions. They began to perceive a message coming from the religious wisdom of our peoples. It was a message coloured and flavoured by the experience of abject poverty and adherence to millennia-old religious traditions.

As the newer understandings of mission began to grow there were misunderstandings. Some missionaries articulated their understanding of mission in a more liberationist mode. They came out of an experience of political oppression, social upheaval, confrontation with Marxism and neo-fascism. Others spoke of a dialogue of life and faith. Their experience was of the non-Christian cultures surrounding them. They discovered the Spirit of God speaking through their people’s experience of life and struggle. Mission was to the poor and to their culture of poverty. Paradoxically their poverty brought them nearer to God. At times there was a clash between the two missionary modes based on a perception that dialogue which implies personal narrative and shared experience, could lead to abdicating social involvement. In fact dialogue has preceded and not substituted action.

A unified vision is appearing. The vision finds its far horizon in the reign of God announced by Christ. Nearer, on the plain of the “terrible ordinary” of everyday mission, the missionary seeks to announce the Gospel from a stance of solidarity with the poor, in an attitude of dialogue of life and faith which seeks to understand the religious and cultural experience of the surrounding community. Thus we share the abundance of God’s holiness, justice and life with the local church and with men and women of good will.

Paradigm Shift

There has indeed been a shift in the tectonic depths of mission understanding. With glacier-like slowness the Church on mission is revising its understanding of mission *Ad gentes*.

For many people the world mission has negative connotations. The modern history of mission is a story of conquest of souls taking place within a wider project of empire building, monopoly trade and cultural imperialism. The indigenous peoples of North and South have barely survived after a genocidal assault. African slaves were baptized by the hundreds before being loaded onto the ships or shortly after disembarkation. Japan closed its ports upon finding out that Spanish missionary activity was in function of trade. And China received the Christian West’s religion only after two humiliating wars.

More recent mission practice and theology has come to esteem the way missionaries relate to the people to whom they go. Relationship has become a core value in the doing of mission. Community is its vehicle. The sharing of life and faith is its dynamic.

The approach of the missionary has become more

incarnational and less removed from the people's everyday lives. Many have been surprised by God's Spirit present and active in the people's values and aspirations, and in the simplicity and solidarity of their daily living.

The experience of relationship as foundational of mission has prompted a rediscovery of Trinitarian mission. In the beginning was the relationship and it is through the prism of Trinitarian relationship that our Christian tradition contemplates the oneness of God. God relates as community. The fruit of that relationship is life and creation which God has made for union and indwelling with him.

The Trinitarian relationship is a dynamic (Let us create...) relationship. The early theologians called the dynamics of the relationship mission, i.e. sent. Each person is sent to the other as Father, Son, Spirit or Mother. The Trinity embraces all of life and invites us all to "perichoresis" which is to say indwelling or intimacy. Or, more literally, to dance, which is the literal meaning of the word.⁶ Dance was the first act of worship and we are all children of the beat which we first heard in the maternal womb, the maternal heart beating with love.

God gives to all of creation the gift of peace, shalom, the fullness of life and blessing. The first fruit of peace is justice. Justice is the practice of right relationship in a loving, freeing, nurturing and growthful way. This extends to all levels from the family through society including the environment. Justice is the first sign of God's love in our midst just as joy is the first sign of God's presence in our hearts. That is the good news of a God who wants to relate to creation in a loving, freeing, creative and fulfilling way.

And so mission is about how the Church relates to the world and its peoples. Thus she is sign and sacrament of how God relates to her world. Such a church will be a servant of all peoples' search for God, giving witness of her own experience and being enriched by others' experiences. She is confident that a loving God is calling all peoples to know him. Theologians call that *Missio Dei*. God wants all of creation within her embrace. The sent Church is the servant of that embrace. Consequently we are baptized not for the Church but by the Church for the life of the world. There is no salvation outside the world (Schillebeeckx). God's Spirit is present blowing and giving life where it will, usually in the most unexpected places and people. The sent Church points to that life, nurtures it and denounces any attempt to suffocate it.

That is what Jesus was about. He was sent at baptism for the life of the world, anointed to bring to the poor good news of peace and never-ending Jubilee. He was an expression of God's mysterious purpose for the world. His fidelity to God's will made possible the creation of a new humanity, men and women who would do even greater things than Jesus did because God's Spirit urges, empowers and emboldens them. Not all these are Christians, but, knowingly or unknowingly, they are God's.

Mission is about what Jesus did: healing and building up the human as a sign of God's gift of peace, the reign he longed for and died for. To do that he engaged the powers and domination whose gods are mammon (wealth), Mars (war, arms dealing, nuclear deployment, etc), Venus (heedless sexualization of human relationships), etc. Our engagement gives witness of a reign whose hallmarks are love, peace and life in abundance.

Missionary Challenges Now

1. Globalization is the most conspicuous example of cultural change today. We are in a process whereby a naked capitalism, driven by profits, bottom line totals and investors' greed is becoming universal. Bill Clinton and Tony Blair repeat the same *canard*: there is no alternative!

The process has five fundamental features: it is based on finance, which means non-productive capital; it operates mostly in cyberspace; it produces wealth without the poor, that is, it needs literate, easily trained workers be they in the Philippines or Taiwan; its dynamic is marketing, everything is merchandise, even ideas, body parts and human gene material; it feeds off the earth, devouring material and human wealth.

The onward march of that process is being challenged by more than 10,000 NGO's and individuals concerned. They have made themselves heard and felt at Birmingham, Cologne, Seattle, Prague, etc. These protests mark the birthing of a global civil society in which missioned Christians can be the salt of the earth, the leaven in the dough. Over against globalization we can build an ecumenical missionary witness.

2. The Church is universal but not yet ecumenical and inclusive. Our Church excludes from communion or alienates people who are divorced and remarried, those who seek annulments, women who have had an abortion, those who are using contraceptives, non-practising Catholics, AIDS victims, homosexuals, laicized priests, etc.⁷

We are a far cry from the scene in Mt 22:10 where the servants "went out into the streets and gathered everyone they found, good and bad alike, so that the hall was filled with guests". The invitation list gets shorter and shorter with the passing of time. How to do mission to a world of sinners in the midst of structural injustice and invite to communion those sent out from a Church which seems to be only for the pure?

We do not recognize the ministerial gifts of women. We have never said that women do not, cannot, receive a vocation to ministerial priesthood. We have said that we will not ordain them. What is our missionary response? How can we build a truly inclusive Church?

An ecumenical Church can no longer cluster around Rome. The Church is one yet diverse, with a potential for

speaking in thousands of languages and clothing herself in thousands of cultures. Indeed new Romes and Canterbury's are springing up where different experiences of Christian life, praxis and faith are being translated into worship, spirituality, ethics, theology and Christian formation.

Many centuries ago Christianity brought to fulfilment the religion of Israel. Today ecumenism has appeared to bring to fulfilment the religions of the world as they search gropingly for the one God.

Never before have they met on so many different fronts. There are wonderful instances of dialogue and collaboration, but also sad ones of sectarian hatred and ethnic cleansing. Dialogue can open to us the universe and sanctuary of other people's experience of God and transcendence. We need to learn the language of a broader, more inclusive ecumenism which can communicate with other faiths. This can lead us to join together in the sphere of social ethics and world peace, of base human communities, of projects which build up and nurture the human and protect the planet's life systems and of worship of the one God who has created us all and who has destined us all for life together.

3. We live in an age of the laity. They share in the baptismal priesthood and missionary call of Jesus. Somehow we must recover the lay roots of Jesus' priestly identity — he was a lay man — and the baptismal call to mission of both clergy and laity. We are blessed with a cloud of witnesses who are lay saints of our time: Dorothy Day; Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Oscar Romero, Thomas Merton, Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi, Simone Weil and others. They have gone out to God's world and have challenged a post-modern, post-Christian culture already in crisis. They inspire the birth of an ecumenical world culture and are the pioneers in invoking the formation of a global civil society.

The experience of laity on mission raises questions about where the flow of missionary life lies, and hence the future of the Church's cross-cultural mission.

The Chilean theologian Pablo Richard speaks of a Church of ants and spiders. The ants build community for the Church and the world. The spiders weave networks for communication, coordination and exchange. Every once in a while they become visible and audible as for example at Cologne and Seattle and Prague. There they joined their voices with those of other faiths and to denounce prophetically economic and political structures like the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) whose policies inflict death on 60,000 powerless and hungry every day.

4. One of the largest groups of ants and spiders are our migrant workers, legal and illegal. The church has spread around the world much more as a consequence of migrancy than of overseas mission. Before it was the wave of Irish, Italian,

German, Greek, etc., nowadays it is a bigger wave of Filipinos and Latin Americans. (The same goes for Islam.) They build up communities and networks based on solidarity, defence of the illegal and relief of the unemployed. They bring their religious values and beliefs with them and gradually, over many years, permeate their surroundings with them. Mission is happening as it did 2,000 years ago. The faith is carried abroad by refugees, the persecuted and people on the run. What does that say to us?

The mission is of God, not the Church. God will carry it to fruition whether the Church joins in it or not. Where there is healing, solidarity, justice, liberation, empowerment and loving encounter there is God in mission, in a relationship with a humanity he loves and with which he seeks union.

5. The traditionally mission sending regions are now places for mission. We have never before done mission in the "belly of the beast". The experience, too recent for a detailed evaluation, is putting us in touch with missionary issues which we saw only from the south. These issues are the plight of migrant workers, asylum seekers, refugees and illegal immigrants. Another issue being faced is the growth of urban poverty with its inevitable social consequences. We are also in touch with the process of globalization through our activism in the Jubilee 2000 Campaign. International networking among missionary groups is now a reality.

But there are newer challenges that face us. Doing mission in the centres of empire brings us face to face with the issue of peace and non-violence. We live in huge arms factories (USA and Britain). Recently arms exports have affected situations of religious and ethnic conflict. Cross-cultural mission must say a resounding "no" to war, arms sales, bombing of civilian populations, the laying of landmines and nuclear stockpiling. Reconciliation has acquired increased relevance on the mission agenda.

Mission in the so-called first world regions allows us to speak of missionary interchange between Churches and of making local churches more missionary. It also recognizes a Church on mission everywhere she is, which is here as well as there.

6. Mission is now "on-line". We are now attempting to announce the good news in cyberspace. Thousands have visited our websites even though we are a small cluster among millions.

We have a double challenge to face. There is a new gap, that between the "knows" and the "know-nots". The need to think about mission there is obvious. There is something else going on, much less tangible yet thought-provoking. Teilhard wrote years ago about humankind becoming conscious of itself, a process which would produce his neo-logistic "nosphere", the sphere of self reflective planetary mind. The internet, despite all the muck and trivia that it carries, is one of the early manifestations of the human planetary mind groping for self consciousness. We may not know what to

make of this so early on, but we do sense that there is a missionary challenge being laid down.⁸

7. As missionaries we need a renewed sense of the symbolic dimensions of our lives. We handle symbols every time we celebrate liturgy, but we have reduced them at times to the merely literal and dogmatic. We miss their suggestive potentialities found in their ability to convey ever wider and ever deeper realities. Take for example, the bread we put upon the altar. Have we forgotten that the bread is for the life of the world, not just for the life of the community gathered around the altar? The bread is for those 60,000 who die each day of hunger and disease. The bread has local significance as well, not just the significance assigned to it by our Western theological manuals. The symbolic in our lives is there to “draw together” the various strands and layers of our existence which usually do not find integration or unity. The symbolic is there to help us get in touch with the spiritual, with the God-self in each of us. They remind us of our weak humanity, but also that we are destined for transformation and transfiguration. We need not insist on our meaning for the symbols we use, but rather invite others to find their meanings for those same symbols. I am speaking of the inculturation of the faith, a long process which only the missionary, open to the mysterious and symbolic of the people, will be able to facilitate.

Long Term Missionary Tasks

I do think there are missionary tasks which will be transcendent of our short term vision and action. There are at least three very exciting challenges which deserve the dedication of our imagination, creativity and thrust.

The first is the question of religious pluralism which is coming out of our experience of dialogue with other faiths. The document from Vatican II, *Ad gentes*, recognizes the salvific value of other religions. That means that the question of Christian superiority, and Christ's uniqueness are questions to be newly explored.

To take one example, for the last 2,000 years or so Buddhism and Christianity have existed on the same planet without any form of interaction. Both were sovereign in the hearts of their adherents and formed independent and unique religious traditions.

When Buddhism first came to the West and when Western missionaries went out to Buddhist peoples, they condemned Buddhism as demonic and Buddha himself as evil. Now many thousands of seekers of the transcendent have gone to learn the methods of Buddhist meditation. Indeed many Christians have gone to Buddhist worship services because they find there an ethic of peace and non-violence respectful of all of life, open to everyone in a non-proselytist, non-dogmatic way, and seeking harmony in contrast to war-like, crusading Christianity.

Indeed Buddhism is a religion which most easily takes root in other cultures because it does not insist on the assimilation of grand doctrinal systems, but rather invites to a non-intrusive, non-violent relationship with all of creation. Christian mission could learn a lot about the inculturation of the faith from Buddhism.

In Asia, Aloysius Pieris speaks of the encounter of Christian faith with Asia's poor and with the poor's wisdom traditions. From that encounter has emerged the experience of base human communities integrated by men and women of good will, whether Christian or of other faiths. The experience is speaking of a God of history, of a God of human longing and seeking, of a God hidden in the depths of the human soul, a God who gives life, who loves and shows to every seeker of the truth the way to that truth. This experience is pointing in the direction of religious pluralism, to an array of different religious traditions which seek, point to and converge on the same God.

The Asian Bishops are very aware of that great challenge as we can see from the recent Synod for the Church in Asia. It is clear that the bishops know who the subject of mission is and what is the content. The big question is the “how” of mission. It is evident that bishops are listening and gradually attuning themselves to the Spirit as it blows through Asia.

The Vatican Curia has difficulty listening. In the post-Synodal document, *Ecclesia in Asia* (EA), the Pope quotes himself 68 times, and makes not even one reference to any intervention by any Asian Bishop (Chia 2000).

For Cardinal Darmaatmadja, President Delegate of the Synod for Asia, a “new evangelization” will mean that the Churches in Asia will take on “the face of Asia” so that it is “specifically characterizing Asia” and “at the same time becomes the more meaningful for Asian society, particularly for the poor and underprivileged”.

The Cardinal looks on other religions as “partners in dialogue” who can “enrich us in return in the way we live our Christian lives”. To do that the Church must adapt, bend over, change and be open to learning.

Another great millennium challenge will be the evangelization of China. China wants to play a preponderant role in the emergence of Asia as an economic power. It looks set to be a major player in the World Trade Organization. It will be the USA's great rival in that country's project of globalization, a process described by Henry Kissinger as “just another word for American domination”. Thousands of Christian communities gather silently and discreetly. Their experience will ask questions of our models of Church and mission, especially in the area of Christian presence.

Perhaps the greatest gift cross-cultural mission can give is

to seek to facilitate the liberation and emergence of women, especially poor women, as agents of their own liberation and evangelization. Already we are aware of how women are assuming ministerial roles in the Church. Today more than 50 per cent of Catholic Sunday Liturgies in Brazil are presided over by women. And women in the 2/3 world are assuming weightier roles in local politics.

Women's voices are the "soft voices" scarcely heard in the clamour of the poor for justice and liberation. The history of their freedom and struggle is only now being recuperated.

One of those "soft voices" now being heard is that of Sojourner Truth. She was born in Ulster County, New York State. She was freed by her Quaker owner and became a conspicuous campaigner for the abolition of slavery and for women's rights. She was a Christian and knew how to read the foundational story from her experience of life.

She had the opportunity of addressing a mostly White suffrage gathering in Akron, Ohio, in 1852. She said in part: "That little man in black there say a woman can't have as much rights as a man cause Christ wasn't a woman.

"Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with him! If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down, all alone, together women ought to be able to turn it rightside up again".

Sojourner Truth, does not question the story of original sin, but rather the storyteller and theologians. She does not question the myth of the eternal feminine. Rather she questions the myth-makers.

Her story, one of slavery, struggle and poverty, is different. Her experience of being woman, poor and Black, is different. And so she reads the foundation story in the light of her experience and becomes herself the teller of a new story and singer of a different song. As Jean Vanier puts it: "Each person is a sacred history".

A Peruvian woman of Villa El Salvador, Peru, by the name of Maria Elena Moyano was another "soft voice" that roared like a lioness in defence of the rights and autonomy of her woman's organization. So formidable was she that the Shining Path terrorists not only assassinated her, but returned to dynamite her corpse!

Sojourner Truth, Maria Elena, Aung San, Suu Kyi and so many others are part of a "chorus of whispers" not yet heard as a global movement. Theirs is a dangerous memory, a subversive hope and a revolutionary theology. That is why they are rarely welcome in the spheres of responsibility and decision of our Churches.

Men, too, have to learn to reread their institutional history. One painting of the scene in the upper room of a lord

of history washing the feet of his friends and that of missionaries was repainted to depict an imperial court, an emperor with priestly assistance, with divine right and sanction, sending out men under the sign of the cross, a cross which in the dreams of the indigenous of Latin America, became a sword to transfix their souls.

Both women and men can learn to reread and reinterpret the story of Mary, the woman in whom mission began.

Mary received the Word sent by God. Her "yes" gave flesh to that Word sent for us and all the nations. She is the first priest because she mediates God's Word to us and transforms the Word into her flesh for the life of the world. Her "yes" sends her to Elizabeth whose words celebrate the virginity of Mary — not a physical state — but a symbol of power. Mary sings her *Magnificat* and celebrates her virginity, a sign of liberation by which God in her wills to overthrow the plans and thrones of the arrogant, to send the rich away empty and to exalt the poor. Mary, missionary sent to the nations, priest of a new humanity and virgin fecund of life in abundance announces God's revolution with the "soft voice" of a woman of the poor.

The mission continues through the Magi, pagan stargazers from the East. They go to Jerusalem to announce the Good News of the birth of a star-crossed Saviour. The East in the persons of the Magi finds its God in the humility of a fragile baby and pays homage.

Mary contemplated all her lived experience and conveyed it to Jesus as he grew in wisdom and age. At Cana, in the midst of nuptial joy and celebration she launches his mission to all of Israel and then to the world.

The icon of Mary reminds us that mission began in the kitchen where Mary first fed Jesus, nourished his growth and nurtured his future vocation. Mission happens wherever we relate to others in a loving, creative, growthful, just and holy way. We have been reflecting on cross-cultural mission, but we cannot forget that the beginnings of mission are lived there in the midst of a nurturing and growthful relationship.

Mission today will facilitate, awaken and articulate the "soft voices" of women to play their role in Church and world for the liberation of all humankind as a sign of God's reign of peace and justice.

A Missionary Paradigm for the World of Today

The missionary goes out with empty hands to cross boundaries of culture, religion, race, gender, class and nationality (at home or abroad) to enter a dialogue of life, i.e. presence, solidarity, friendship, community, etc., and a dialogue of faith, i.e. to share the experience of God and the transcendent present mysteriously in everyday life, in the living out of val-

ues and ideals, in building together the human and in nurturing the life of the earth, etc. The missionary does this in a perspective of Jesus' announcing the coming reign of God, and experience of God's holiness (totality) in a love which does justice (right relationship), a justice which brings peace (blessing and fullness). That peace is a blessing and gift to all of creation.

Mission embraces the totality (holiness, wholeness) of God's creation: the universe, our planet, our human life in all its depths and dimensions. Mission responds to the need of humanity to recover God's gift of wholeness lost when humankind forgot its vocation to nurture the creation and began instead to devour it. And in devouring it devours also human victims, the poor of the earth.

The mission of God will go on whether we join in it or not. The *Missio Dei* expresses God's embracive love of all creation in the life of the Trinity. Ours is a deceptively simple task: to find ways of reminding others that God is near and that God has promised fullness of life to all without exception. We do all this in memory of what he did for us in Jesus the Christ. We need not worry about the future because the future is God's. In the words of Oscar Romero, "We are prophets of a future not our own".

Notes

1. New publications are still appearing. For example Yates 2000 and Nissen 1999. I find this latter excellent.

2. Psalm 105 sums up the three "words" beautifully: "Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name make known his works among the nations" (v. 1).

3. This story can be found in the writings of Washington Irving.

4. Since the inception of Enlightenment culture the Church has been at odds with its most conspicuous elements. The Copernican revolution unseated her from the chair of scientific knowledge. Enlightenment philosophy disdained her clerical obscurantism, and the French Revolution ostracized her from society. The process of distancing continued in the face of the rise of modern democracy, revolutionary Marxism, agnostic Darwinism, irreligious Freudianism, atheistic existentialism, etc. Since before Pope Pius IX, declared the Church infallible at the age of 78, it had lived in a reactionary and hermetic mode, shunning dialogue and interaction with all of secular culture.

5. In her book, "Metaphorical Theology", Sally McFague talks about postmodern assumptions. They are: "a greater appreciation of nature, a recognition of the importance of language to human existence, a chastened admiration for technology, an acceptance of the challenge that other religions present to the Judaeo-Christian tradition, an apocalyptic sensibility, a sense of the displacement of the White, Western male and the rise of those dispossessed due to gender, race, or class, perhaps most significantly, a growing awareness of the radical interdependence of life at all levels and in every

imaginable way".

A very useful tool for understanding postmodernism is the book, *A Primer on Postmodernism* by Stanley J. Grenz, from Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

6. One of the philosophers of our postmodern condition Friedrich Nietzsche (d.1900), once wrote, "I could not believe in a God who did not know how to dance".

7. This list was compiled by the Dublin Diocesan Women's Forum. See *The Furrow*, February 2000. I have reproduced most of it.

8. See the book, "The Internet: A Philosophical Inquiry" by Gordon Graham, from Routledge Publication.

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*Christianisme palestinien et dialogue interreligieux**

II. Relations judéo-chrétiennes

En ce qui concerne la deuxième partie de cette présentation des relations qui existent entre la communauté chrétienne de Palestine et les Juifs, cet article sera peut-être encore plus délicat et l'exposé plus complexe. La raison principale est évidemment la situation politique en général avec ses multiples conséquences. Il est certain que le conflit israélo-palestinien est essentiellement politique et non pas religieux ; de nombreuses ramifications et implications religieuses y sont cependant inextricablement liées. Par exemple, au cours du siècle dernier, les proportions numériques entre les trois principales communautés religieuses de ce pays ont radicalement varié, eu égard à l'arrivée massive de Juifs venant de l'étranger : au début, les Juifs étaient une minorité relativement restreinte ; ils sont devenus une majorité importante. En conséquence, le type traditionnel de relations entre ces différentes communautés a été profondément modifié. Ceci est particulièrement vrai en ce qui concerne les relations entre chrétiens et Juifs. L'adaptation à un tel bouleversement prend assurément du temps.

À cause de la complexité actuelle du cadre politique de ce pays, les différences dans l'état des choses et dans les relations entre Juifs et chrétiens seront encore beaucoup plus accentuées entre Israël lui-même et les territoires palestiniens. Ma connaissance personnelle de la situation à l'intérieur d'Israël étant plutôt limitée, ce que je vais dire s'appliquera donc plus directement aux territoires palestiniens.

Développer les relations

Pour l'Église catholique, le concile Vatican II (1962-1965) fut un changement radical dans les relations entre chrétiens et Juifs. D'autre part, le décret *Nostra Aetate* de Vatican II est devenu une référence incontournable bien au-delà de l'Église catholique et le point de départ vers des développements prometteurs. On peut cependant dire, sans heurter ni critiquer personne, que de telles réflexions théologiques sont moins évoquées dans la communauté chrétienne de Palestine. Les raisons en sont variées.

D'abord, le développement théologique du décret est marqué au coin du contexte historique et culturel de l'Occident européen et nord-américain. L'approche

historique et critique, un héritage de l'âge des Lumières, n'a pas eu le même effet sur la culture et la société du Moyen-Orient, à laquelle la société palestinienne appartient foncièrement. Ceci est aussi vrai pour les études bibliques et théologiques. Si l'on désire être ouvert à la diversité et au pluralisme, on doit accepter cette différence entre eux et nous, sans pour autant appeler cette distinction rétrograde ou vieux jeu. D'autre part, le terrible événement de la *Shoah*, qui a tant impressionné l'histoire et la pensée occidentales, en étant en même temps au cœur du dialogue judéo-chrétien durant des dizaines d'années, n'appartient pas au même degré à l'expérience de la société moyen-orientale. Le Moyen-Orient a besoin de temps et de réflexion pour l'approprier.

Ceci est d'autant plus vrai que la période qui a suivi la deuxième guerre mondiale a connu des changements radicaux dans cette partie du monde. Les événements qui ont conduit à l'établissement de l'État d'Israël, ainsi que ceux qui l'ont suivi, ont altéré le visage de ce pays et les relations existant entre les groupes ethniques et religieux ; ceux-ci y étant totalement plongés.

Si nous n'avons pas le courage de reconnaître cet état de choses avec clairvoyance et sérénité, tout pénible que cela soit, et si nous ne sommes pas prêts à accepter ces événements comme parties intégrantes du dialogue, il sera impossible de bâtir un futur à la nouvelle coexistence.

Au cours des événements des années 1948, de nombreux chrétiens palestiniens ont perdu leur maison et leur terre pour devenir des émigrés ou des réfugiés dans leur propre pays ou dans d'autres régions de leur patrie. Certains de ces faits ont été occasionnellement exorcisés et justifiés religieusement. Certaines revendications sur cette terre ont été justifiées au nom de la bible hébraïque, un texte que les chrétiens lisent aussi et appellent l'Ancien Testament. Donc, pour beaucoup de chrétiens palestiniens, ces événements conduisent à une sorte de crise de leur identité religieuse et de leur foi. Comment ces chrétiens palestiniens peuvent-ils continuer à lire la bible hébraïque si ce même texte est utilisé pour justifier le fait qu'on les a dépossédés de ce qu'ils considèrent comme leur droit dans leur propre pays ? Il me semble impossible de comprendre les attitudes des chrétiens palestiniens envers le judaïsme et les Juifs si l'on ne prend pas sérieusement en considération ce point fondamental. Ce n'est qu'en le reconnaissant que de sérieux efforts peuvent être faits pour une nouvelle réflexion, un

nouveau dialogue et de nouvelles relations.

On a essayé à plusieurs reprises de surmonter ces obstacles dressés devant la communauté chrétienne de Palestine. L'une des initiatives les plus connues dans cette direction fut la lettre pastorale écrite par le Patriarche latin de Jérusalem, Michel Sabbah, en 1993, sous le titre :

"Lire la bible, aujourd'hui, sur la terre de la bible".

Les événements passés cependant, ainsi que la situation présente dans ce pays, rendent vraiment difficiles les relations entre chrétiens palestiniens et Israéliens. Une fois de plus, il nous faut voir la situation telle qu'elle se présente, même si nous refusons de condamner qui que ce soit. Dans les territoires palestiniens, les Juifs que les musulmans et les chrétiens rencontrent la plupart du temps sont des militaires israéliens et des forces de police. Ceci est loin de favoriser une approche positive. Bien sûr, il y a des rencontres plus constructives : des Palestiniens peuvent rencontrer des médecins et des infirmiers dans des hôpitaux et centres médicaux, des contacts peuvent être pris dans le cadre de groupes de paix ou de rencontres culturelles. Une collaboration peut s'établir dans le domaine de la musique, du théâtre et parfois du sport. Dans de tels contacts, cependant, la dimension religieuse n'est guère présente.

Parallèlement, les chrétiens palestiniens manifestent beaucoup de bonne volonté. Il n'y a pas d'hostilité de leur part pour la religion juive ou pour les Juifs en tant que croyants, bien qu'en fait il y ait encore beaucoup d'ignorance personnelle. Dans de nombreux cas, on peut trouver un désir sincère de mieux connaître le judaïsme. De sérieux efforts ont été faits dans ce sens. Par exemple : la religion juive est enseignée au séminaire de Beit Jala, où se forment les futurs prêtres du Patriarcat latin. Dans ce même cadre, des professeurs juifs ont été invités et des réunions avec des étudiants juifs organisés. La nouvelle compréhension catholique de la religion juive a également soigné la préparation des nouveaux manuels en arabe, utilisés pour l'éducation religieuse dans les écoles catholiques. Il existe aussi un cours sur le judaïsme à l'Université catholique de Bethléhem. Certains événements culturels à cette Université, comme des concerts et des expositions, ont rassemblé Juifs israéliens, chrétiens palestiniens et musulmans, mais ces réunions ont presque cessé au cours des événements récents.

Possibilités de dialogue

À part ces différents efforts de rencontre, y a-t-il un type de dialogue possible entre les chrétiens palestiniens et les Juifs ? Le dialogue direct reste très épineux tant qu'il n'y a pas d'initiative réelle de paix, précisément à cause d'ambiguïtés toujours possibles. Avant que ne fussent établis des contacts officiels entre Palestiniens et Israéliens, chaque effort de dialogue direct pouvait être méjugé et vu comme une initiative politique donc interdite. Avec le début d'une

reconnaissance mutuelle et de contacts directs entre Palestiniens et Israéliens, de nouvelles voies de rencontre et de dialogue se sont ouvertes.

Quelques chrétiens palestiniens ont commencé à prendre part au dialogue déjà existant avec les Juifs, un dialogue dans lequel presque uniquement des chrétiens occidentaux étaient engagés. La méthodologie cependant et les principaux sujets de dialogue furent souvent jugés comme étrangers aux soucis réels des chrétiens palestiniens. Ainsi, petit à petit, le besoin d'un dialogue spécifique entre chrétiens palestiniens et Juifs israéliens s'est fait sentir ; prenant en considération à la fois les questions théologiques et aussi les expériences concrètes proches de la vie de ces deux communautés. Différents groupes se sont lancés dans cette direction à divers moments et en plusieurs lieux. Certains ont réussi à se maintenir même durant cette seconde période d'intifada. Certains groupes comprennent des rabbins et des ministres ordonnés de différentes Églises chrétiennes. La plupart du temps, ces rencontres ont lieu sans publicité et sont bâties sur une confiance mutuelle entre les participants, lesquels se connaissent les uns les autres depuis plusieurs années. Ces conjonctures sont les conditions fondamentales pour une possibilité de travail sérieux dans les circonstances actuelles. Cependant, on doit reconnaître que ces réunions ne constituent qu'un humble début et on espère qu'un jour elles pourront être officiellement adoptées par les autorités religieuses des deux bords : les chrétiens et les Juifs.

Conclusion

Laissez-moi terminer par une remarque importante. J'ai présenté séparément les relations de la communauté chrétienne palestinienne avec les musulmans et avec les Juifs. Il fallait le faire si nous voulions aboutir à des analyses sérieuses. Néanmoins, pour les chrétiens palestiniens de ce pays, il est extrêmement important que ces deux types de relations et de dialogues ne soient pas séparés l'un de l'autre, et, surtout, que l'un ne soit pas privilégié par rapport à l'autre et à son détriment. Le vrai dialogue et la compréhension mutuelle ne peuvent jamais être exclusifs, spécialement à Jérusalem et dans ce pays, précisément à cause de leur signification religieuse pour les trois religions monothéistes. Si nous voulons vraiment que Jérusalem et ce pays puissent jouer pleinement leur rôle symbolique de promesse et de rencontre pour toute l'humanité, il nous faut admettre que nous n'y arriverons qu'en coopérant tous ensemble.

Note

* This article and its previous part (in english version) are both on SEDOS Web Page.

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Missionary Formation in the Seminaries

Introduction

The Seminary, as a basic ecclesial community and we as pastors are challenged by Jesus' command: "Go, therefore, make disciples of a nations" (Mt 28:19) because "God ... wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth" (1 Tm 2:4). In the face of this missionary command and the growing missionary needs in the whole world, we cannot flee; we have to take on enthusiastically "this supreme duty: to proclaim Christ to all peoples" (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 3).

With the universal Church, we recognize that "the moment has come to commit all of the Church's energies to a new evangelization and to the mission *ad gentes*" (*ibid.*, n. 3). Therefore, for our Seminaries and our particular Churches the option is: "(a new evangelization) also beyond our own borders: missionary Latin America" (Santo Domingo, n. 302). In this way there will be a special missionary springtime (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 3; *Novo Millennio inuente*, n. 58) with the fruits that the world needs.

On the other hand, the mission is providential for the renewal of the seminaries and all the ecclesial communities: "For missionary activity renews the Church, revitalizes faith and Christian identity, and offers fresh enthusiasm and new incentive. Faith is strengthened when it is given to others!" (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 2). Missionary formation is decisive for the renewal of evangelization and of the ecclesial communities.

Our goal is to discern ways and means for missionary formation in the Seminaries. For this purpose, we will consider first the universal, the Latin American and the Colombian ecclesial guidelines as a whole; then we will analyze other significant elements of the pastoral care in this regard; lastly, we will choose ways for an authentically missionary Seminary and for a missionary formation project in the major Seminaries.

1. Ecclesial guidelines

1.1. From the universal magisterium

Let us analyze the following texts chosen from among the most significant ones regarding the missionary formation of candidates to the priesthood.

"The spiritual gift which priests receive at their ordination prepares them not for a sort of limited and narrow mission but for the widest possible and universal mission of salvation 'even to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8), for every priestly ministry shares in the universality of the mission entrusted by Christ to his apostles" (Second Vatican Council, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 10).

"Priests represent Christ and are the collaborators of the order of bishops in that threefold sacred duty which, of its nature, pertains to the mission of the Church" (Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, n. 39).

For the missionary formation of candidates to the priesthood, the Council recommended:

"Let them [the candidates to the priesthood] be imbued with that truly Catholic spirit which will accustom them to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation, or rite, and to help the needs of the whole Church, being prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere" (Second Vatican Council, *Optatam totius*, n. 20).

"The circumstances of various regions being duly considered, students are to be brought to a fuller understanding of the Churches and ecclesial communities separated from the Apostolic Roman See, so that they may be able to contribute to the work of re-establishing unity among all Christians.... Let them also be introduced to a knowledge of other religions which are more widespread in individual regions, so that they may acknowledge more correctly what truth and goodness these religions, in God's providence, possess, and so that they may learn to refute their errors and be able to communicate the full light of truth to those who do not have it" (Second Vatican Council, *Optatam totius*, n. 16).

"University and seminary professors will instruct the young as to the true condition of the world and the Church, so that the need for a more intense evangelization of non-Christians will be clear to them and feed their zeal. In teaching dogmatic, biblical, moral and historical subjects, they should focus attention on their missionary aspects, so that in this way a missionary awareness will be formed in future priests" (Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, n. 39).

The Basic Norms for Priestly Formation, *Ratio Fundamentalis*, 1970, in taking up the Council's direc-

tives, states: “The theological disciplines should be taught in this way with attention to their different aspects (ecumenical, missionary, etc.)” (n. 77). Further on it states: “The students are to be brought to a fuller understanding of the Churches and ecclesial communities separated from the Apostolic Roman See, so that they may be able to contribute to the work of re-establishing unity among all Christians keeping in mind the Decree on Ecumenism and the *Directorio Oecumenicum* published by the Holy See. Let them also be introduced to a knowledge of other religions which are more widespread in individual regions, so that they may acknowledge more correctly what truth and goodness these religions, in God’s providence, possess, and so that they may learn to refute their errors and be able to communicate the full light of truth to those who do not have it” (*Ratio Fundamentalis*, n. 80).

In the great Encyclical *Redemptoris Missio*, the Church recalled the former Council’s directives and pointed out that “As co-workers of the Bishops, priests are called by virtue of the Sacrament of Orders to share in concern for the Church’s mission.... All priests must have the mind and heart of missionaries — open to the needs of the Church and the world, with concern for those farthest away, and especially for the non-Christian groups in their own area. They should have at heart, in their prayers and particularly at the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the concern of the whole Church for all of humanity.... Priests will ‘not fail to make themselves readily available to the Holy Spirit and the Bishop, to be sent to preach the Gospel beyond the borders of their country. This will demand of them not only maturity in their vocation, but also an uncommon readiness to detach themselves from their own homeland, culture and family and a special ability to adapt to other cultures, with understanding and respect for them’” (n. 67).

Special evangelical courage is shown in the steps which the Church has taken in interpreting the incardination of priests: “In his Encyclical *Fidei Donum*, Pope Pius XII, with prophetic insight, encouraged Bishops to offer some of their priests for temporary service in the Churches of Africa, and gave his approval to projects already existing for that purpose. Twenty-five years later, I pointed out the striking newness of that Encyclical, which ‘surmounted the territorial dimension of priestly service in order to direct it towards the entire Church’” (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 68; cf. *CIC*, canon 271).

In this regard, in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, it is reaffirmed that “Membership in and dedication to a particular Church does not limit the activity and life of the presbyterate to that Church: a restriction of this sort is not possible, given the very nature both of the particular Church and of the priestly ministry” (then it recalls the Conciliar text of *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 10): “It thus follows that the spiritual life of the priest should

be profoundly marked by a missionary zeal and dynamism. In the exercise of their ministry and the witness of their lives, priests have the duty to form the community entrusted to them as a truly missionary community”. Then it recalls the guidelines from *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 67 (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 32).

Afterwards it recalls the Conciliar directive for us: “Let priests remember then that they must have at heart the care of all the Churches. Hence priests belonging to dioceses which are rich in vocations should show themselves willing and ready, with the permission or at the urging of their own Bishop, to exercise their ministry in other regions, missions, or activities which suffer from a shortage of clergy” (*Presbyterorum Ordinis*, n. 10) (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 32).

Moreover, the Church indicates to us some required content for specific missionary formation: “Theological training cannot and should not ignore the Church’s universal mission, ecumenism, the study of the great religions and missiology. I recommend that such studies be undertaken especially in seminaries and in houses of formation for men and women Religious, ensuring that some priests or other students specialize in the different fields of missiology” (John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83c).

In this task, the responsibility is shared: “Such formation is entrusted to priests and their associates, to educators and teachers, and to theologians, particularly those who teach in seminaries and centres for the laity” (*ibid.*, n. 83).

In the Apostolic Exhortation *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 18, we are reminded of the Council’s directive and this is added: “Furthermore, precisely because within the Church’s life the priest is a man of communion, in his relations with all people he must be a man of mission and dialogue. Deeply rooted in the truth and charity of Christ, and impelled by the desire and imperative to proclaim Christ’s salvation to all, the priest is called to witness in all his relationships to fraternity, service and a common quest for the truth, as well as a concern for the promotion of justice and peace. This is the case above all with the brethren of other Churches and Christian denominations; but it also extends to the followers of other religions; to people of good will, and in particular to the poor and the defenceless, and to all who yearn, even if they do not know it or cannot express it, for the truth and salvation of Christ...” (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 18).

In giving its guidelines regarding the pastoral formation of candidates to the priesthood, in that same document the Church points this out to us: “... Awareness of the Church as a ‘missionary’ communion will help the candidate for the priesthood to love and live the

essential missionary dimension of the Church and her different pastoral activities. He should be open and available to all the possibilities offered today for the proclamation of the Gospel, not forgetting the valuable service which can and should be given by the media. He should prepare himself for a ministry which may mean in practice that his readiness to follow the indications of the Holy Spirit and of his Bishops will lead him to be sent to preach the Gospel even beyond the frontiers of his own country” (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 67) (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 59).

In the Directory for the Ministry and the Life of Priests of 1994, the Church indicates to us: “It is important for the priest to have a deep, full and keen awareness of this missionary reality of his priesthood, in complete syntony with the Church which today like yesterday, feels the need to send her ministers to the places where the priestly mission is more urgent and to make efforts to achieve a more equitable distribution of the clergy” (n. 15).

Now it is very interesting to analyze some other elements proposed by the Church in Latin America and in our country.

1.2. From the Latin American ecclesial magisterium

The Fourth Conference of the Latin American Episcopate in Santo Domingo made the diagnosis that the root of the lack of missionary projection in many of our brothers lies in the seminaries: “The root of what has been said previously is the lack of an explicit missionary formation programme in most seminaries and houses of formation” (Santo Domingo, n. 127).

For this reason, it adopted the following as a pastoral guideline: “We invite every particular Church in the Latin American continent to integrate specific missiology courses into the priestly and religious formation programmes, and to teach the candidates the importance of the inculturation of the Gospel” (Santo Domingo, n. 128).

In brief, the ecclesial magisterium has stated precisely for us that:

— The Church and the ecclesial Communities are by nature missionary.

— The particular Church participates in the universal mission of the Church of which it fulfills: a part within itself and another part outside of its borders.

— A priest has a very broad and universal mission of salvation until the ends of the earth (1).

— The meaning of incardination has been renewed by going beyond the criterion of exclusive territorial service to one particular Church.

— The needs of the mission *ad gentes* are growing, urgent and priorities, and all Christians, their ecclesial communities and Institutions have to help to respond to them.

— Every priestly vocation is missionary by its very nature. The priest we have to train must be a missionary for the whole world.

— In order to form such priests, the Church has requested that specific missionary formation be offered in the Seminaries for which it has offered sufficient criteria and other elements through which an explicit missionary formation programme can be integrated.¹

On the basis of the ecclesial guidelines and in pastoral practice, let us go on to consider:

1. The profile of an authentically missionary seminary
2. A missionary formation plan for our major Seminaries.

2. The authentically missionary seminary

The Seminary is a:

— **Community** of persons (seminarians, formation leaders, families, others who serve);

— Ecclesial community in and at the service of the particular Church; and

— Community to be evangelized and to evangelize, “**School of the Gospel**” (cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis*).

Because it is an ecclesial community, the Seminary is by nature missionary (cf. *Ad gentes*, n. 2), a **missionary community**. “The evangelizing activity of the Christian community, first in its own locality, and then elsewhere as part of the Church’s universal mission, is the clearest sign of a mature faith.... The effectiveness of the Church’s organizations, movements, parishes and apostolic works must be measured in the light of this missionary imperative” (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 49). Therefore, we can state that if the seminary is not missionary, it is not Christian. Its missionary quality must penetrate its structures, its services and its members.

Its members are missionaries, starting with the Rector and the Formation leaders.

It promotes and helps to grow, both in and outside

the seminary, small, living, dynamic, missionary ecclesial **communities** (cf. Preferential choice in Santo Domingo).

It offers **four missionary services** to its Members (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83).

Missionary Animation: It awakens, enlivens and maintains the universal missionary spirit in every one of its members and in community life.

This is done through prayer for the missions; by sharing the Word; by presenting the testimony of missionaries and other missionary figures; through missionary information and motivation offered continuously by means of billboards, the missionary corner, reviews, videos, etc.; by holding meetings, retreats, cultural events, etc., in which the universal missionary spirit is spread; in prayer or a weekly celebration for the missions; and by personally following up missionary vocations. Such missionary animation is intensified on the occasion of the Missionary Days: Missionary Childhood on the first Sunday of May; St. Peter the Apostle, June 3rd; Propagation of the Faith, the next to last Sunday of October; and the Missionary Union, December 3rd.

Missionary Formation: This trains priests for pastoral care, the new evangelization and the first evangelization of the Non-Christians in his own Diocese and toward all people (cf. Mt 28:19-20).

For this purpose, he helps each of his members to have a missionary mentality, criteria and knowledge (missionary theology); a missionary heart and life (missionary spirituality), and sufficient training to carry out his mission with Jesus and like Jesus (missionary methodology and practice) (cf. *Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83). Such formation requires a specific programme of missionary formation that adequately fulfills these three areas of formation we have mentioned. One part of this programme is developed academically; another part through apostolic activities; another through different community activities, and still another through each student's personal activities.

Missionary Communion and Organization: The Seminary promotes Missionary centres, Committees for the Missions, missionary groups or other community missionary expressions that will encourage the academic group, the community of life and the Seminary in general from the missionary viewpoint. In this way we incarnate the Pontifical Missionary Union and take advantage of its services.

In the seminary's institutional programming it adopts the corresponding missionary activities. These include: missionary academic activities; the preparation

and celebration of the four missionary Days; the missionary celebration of the liturgical time: Christmas, the Epiphany, Easter and Pentecost; the feasts of the Apostles and of missionaries; Missionary October; periodic meetings of the missionary groups.

It has on-going contact and cooperation with the diocesan Delegation for the Missions and the Pontifical Mission Societies. It appropriately uses the available resources and helps to integrate well the life and services of the seminarians and their formation leaders into the ecclesial community.

It provides the missionary Animators and the necessary resources for missionary formation and missionary projection "beyond its borders".

Universal Missionary Cooperation: The Seminary carries out its local and its universal mission. In this area, the seminary promotes and channels the aid of all its members to the missions of the whole world:

— It foments daily **spiritual** assistance to the missions through the offering of prayer, sacrifice and Christian life witness.

— It promotes **material** assistance through frequent economic offerings (the missionary poorbox) and sharing other material goods for the sake of the missionaries and the missions of the whole world. In this way it promotes universal missionary cooperation especially on the occasion of the annual Missionary Days.

— It encourages assistance **with missionaries:** through its own missionary services to universal evangelization; through the promotion of and support to missionary vocations for life and to the other missionary vocations of the seminarians and the other members of the seminary community; through services from the different Pontifical Mission Societies (Propagation of the Faith, St. Peter the Apostle, Missionary Childhood and the Missionary Union) and by encouraging the missionary readiness to "go and send" missionaries, especially for the evangelization of Non-Christians (mission *ad gentes*). It maintains a "missionary bridge" for communion and support with missionaries who are beyond their own borders.

The seminary carries out its evangelizing **mission** "beyond its borders":

— It lives in **missionary communion** with the Diocese and the universal Church.

— It **supports** the Seminarians and the Formation leaders so that they will carry out their whole local and universal mission.

— It promotes **missionary vocations** and cooperates in the formation and sending of missionaries, especially to the mission *ad gentes* (cf. *Ecclesia in America*, n. 74).

— It evangelizes “beyond its borders” in the communities entrusted to it for the apostolic practices, in the Particular Church, and by making disciples for Jesus “beyond its borders”, to all people, with priority for Non-Christians.

— It promotes generous spiritual and material **missionary cooperation** and with missionaries in the Seminary and in the Communities as far as possible.

3. Missionary formation programme in the major seminaries

3.1. Objectives

1. To understand the fundamental elements of Missiology and to assimilate the missionary aspects of all theology.

2. To progressively assimilate the missionary spirituality of the priest in order to consolidate our missionary life and commitment better.

3. To be capable of working in the mission *ad gentes* (the first evangelization of Non-Christians), the New Evangelization (of distant Catholics), and Pastoral Care (of good Catholics), and to support one another in progressively fulfilling our local and universal mission.

3.2. Criteria

1. To shape an explicit missionary formation programme for the Major Seminary.

2. To encourage the entire Seminary, in its life and structure, to be an authentically missionary community.

3. To carry out missionary formation in its three, complementary areas that make up only one programme: an area of missionary theology, an area of missionary spirituality, and an area of missionary methodology and practice.

4. To succeed in making missionary formation permanent and progressive during the cycles of philosophy and theology.

5. To integrate the missionary formation programme, as far as possible into the academic activities; to develop the rest separately through specific missionary activities (workshops, seminars, spiritual retreats, etc.).

6. To train the seminarians through practical activities (workshops, apostolates, popular missions, missionary services at Easter and Christmas, missionary mail, participation in diocesan and regional missionary activities, etc.).

7. To offer complementary formation to those who may feel especially called to serve in the “mission *ad gentes*”

(the first evangelization of Non-Christians).

8. To use the Missionary Formation Course at a distance (by the Pontifical Mission Societies) as a basic reference for basic missionary formation.

9. To have missionary formation leaders who have sufficient knowledge and experience.

10. To organize the Missionary Union of the Clergy in the Seminary and take advantage of its services.

3.3. Content and activities

The description is proposed in reference to the three areas of missionary formation: the missionary theological area; the area of missionary spirituality; the area of missionary methodology and practice.

3.3.1. Area of missionary theology

Missionary formation is offered, on the one hand, based on the different treatises of theology and, on the other, through other specific contents that require separate activities.²

Based on **treatises of theology**:

“In teaching dogmatic, biblical, moral and historical subjects, they should focus attention on their missionary aspects, so that in this way a missionary awareness will be formed in future priests” (*Ad gentes*, n. 39).

“The theological disciplines should be taught in this way, giving attention to its different aspects (ecumenical, missionary, etc.)” (*Ratio Fundamentalis*, n. 77).

Specific programme of Missionary Theology:

The principle **ecclesial guidelines**:

— Specific Missiology courses (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83c), (Basic Norms for initial priestly formation in the major seminaries of Colombia, Bishops’ Conference, 1998, n. 312).

— The universal mission of the Church (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83c). The mission *ad gentes*, the new evangelization and pastoral care.

— Inculturation of the faith and evangelization of culture (Basic Norms for initial priestly formation in the major seminaries of Colombia, Bishops’ Conference, 1998, n. 312).

— Ecumenism (*Ratio Fundamentalis*, n. 80) (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83c).

— Training for a more intense evangelization of Non-Christians (Second Vatican Council, *Ad gentes*, n. 39).

In harmony with the previous ecclesial guidelines, the **Content and Activities** should be:

— Missionary reflection on the different **treatises of theology**.

— **Missiology**: Trinitarian foundations of the mission. Ecclesiological foundation of the mission. Anthropological foundation of the mission.

The mission of Jesus, the mission of the Church, the universal mission of the particular Church, the mission of the Christian, the universal mission of the priest.

The mission: We are sent. Where are we sent? For whom are we sent? Why are we sent? To whom are we sent? Until when are we sent? For what reason are we sent? Who is sent? When are we sent? How are we sent? Paths of the mission: Proclamation, inter-religious dialogue, Witness, Inculturation, Liberation and Human Promotion.

Study of the universal missionary magisterium.

3.3.2. Area of missionary spirituality

The principal **ecclesial guidelines**:

— “Let them [the candidates to the priesthood] be imbued with that **truly Catholic spirit** which will accustom them to transcend the limits of their own diocese, nation, or rite, and to help the needs of the whole Church, prepared in spirit to preach the Gospel everywhere” (Second Vatican Council, *Optatam totius*, n. 20).

— Training so that priests will learn to establish **in all their relationships** ... fraternity, service and a common quest for the truth, as well as a concern for the promotion of justice and peace. This is the case above all with the brethren of other Churches and Christian denominations; but it also extends to the followers of other religions; to people of good will, and in particular to the poor and the defenceless, and to all who yearn, even if they do not know it or cannot express it, for the truth and salvation of Christ...” (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 18).

— Teach them **to love and live the essential missionary dimension** of the Church and of the different pastoral activities (cf. *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 59).

— Teach them to be open and willing regarding all the possibilities offered today to proclaim the Gospel (*ibid.*, n. 59). Let them be prepared for a ministry that may require them to be concretely well-disposed to the Holy Spirit and to the Bishop to be sent to preach the Gospel outside of their country (cf.

Redemptoris Missio, n. 67), (*Pastores Dabo Vobis*, n. 59).

Therefore, the **Contents and activities** should be:

- Missionary spirituality
- Trinitarian foundation of missionary spirituality.
- Fidelity to the Holy Spirit.
- The figure of the Good Shepherd and his Apostles. Missionary figures.
- Missionary vocation.
- Radical following of Christ.
- Fraternity and community life. Spirituality of communion.
- Pastoral charity. Missionary readiness. Spirituality for evangelization.
- The holiness of the missionary. Missionary virtues. Other spiritual activities of the missionary.
- Missionary dimension of the Word, the Sacraments and prayer.
- Mary on the missionary way of the Church. Marian dimension of the mission.
- Synthesis of the spirituality of the missionary.

3.3.3. Area of missionary pastoral care

The situation of the mission:

- History of the mission.
- Presentation of the real world situation (Second Vatican Council, *Ad Gentes*, n. 39)
- Study of the major religions (*Ratio Fundamentalis*, n. 80), (*Redemptoris Missio*, n. 83c).
- Presentation of the situation of the Church.
- Current Missiology (*Ad gentes*, n. 39).

Evangelization

- Mature, process and means.
- Inculturation of the faith and evangelization of culture.
- Situations and forms of evangelization: pastoral care, new evangelization and first evangelization.

Missionary Pastoral Care

- Theological foundations of Missionary Pastoral Care
- Missionary Pastoral Care services in the community (foundations, criteria, contents, methodology):
- Missionary animation
- Missionary formation
- Missionary communion and organization
- Missionary cooperation
- Organization and animation of the Pontifical Mission Societies: Propagation of the Faith, St. Peter Apostle, Missionary Childhood and Missionary Union.
- Methodology for special missionary services:

Formation of missionary animators, formation of lay missionaries, Missionary Formation Course at a distance (PMS). Year of missionary service. Popular missions.

Ecumenism.

Dialogue with and proclamation to Non-Christian Religions.

Methodology for the Mission *ad gentes* (it is presumed that the methodology for Pastoral Care and for the New Evangelization are taught in the other assignments of pastoral care).

3.4. Missionary practice

Both missionary Theology and missionary spirituality, and even more Missionary Pastoral Care require practical activities that will aid understanding of the contents, renewed attitudes and training for carrying out the mission. Below we will describe some of those activities:

— Workshops and other activities of missionary pastoral care carried out in reference to each of the previous academic units.

— Supervised services of missionary pastoral care in the external “apostolates”.

— Training and practice to promote the Pontifical Mission Societies of the Propagation of the Faith, St. Peter Apostle, Missionary Childhood and Missionary Union.

— Missionary practice carried out during vacation time.

3.5. For a curriculum of missionary formation

Lastly, by way of example, we propose a distribution of the contents and activities described for the academic programme of missionary formation in the major Seminary. Naturally, another part of the programme will be carried out through individual and extra-scholastic activities. Moreover, the title and number of Units or missionary assignments depend on the way in which the contents and activities in each one of them are grouped together.

PHILOSOPHICAL CYCLE:

- Presentation of the real world situation.
- Study of the major Religions.
- History of the mission.
- Presentation of the situation of the Church.

- Current Missiology.
- Study of missionary documents: *Ad gentes* and *Redemptoris Missio*.
- Synthesis: missionary profile of the seminarian.

THEOLOGICAL CYCLE:

Missionary Theology:

— Missionary reflection within the different **treatises of theology**.

— **Missiology**: with the contents described earlier.

— **Missionary Spirituality**: with the contents described earlier.

— **Missionary Pastoral Care**: with the contents described earlier.

— Evangelization

— Missionary Pastoral Care

— Ecumenism

— Dialogue with and proclamation to Non-Christian Religions

— **Methodology for the Mission** *ad gentes* (it is presumed that the methodology for Pastoral Care and for the New Evangelization are taught in the other assignments of pastoral care).

Conclusions

— The Gospel of the mission, the charity of Christ, the ecclesial guidelines, the missionary needs of the world and the universal mission of the Seminary as an ecclesial Community are urging us to reaffirm our choice to be an authentically missionary Seminary.

— The responsibility to train priests according to God’s heart requires us to give them formation that makes them capable of going with Jesus to “make disciples of all nations” (cf. Mt 28:19-20).

— We recognize that it is necessary, possible and urgent to draw up and apply a specific programme of missionary formation in our major Seminaries. We have sufficient elements to strengthen this formative service in our Seminaries right away.

— Through the application of an adequate missionary formation programme, our Seminaries will be the first beneficiaries; they will be renewed in their Members, in their community life, and in the fruits of their service.

— God wants to make each Seminary a **missionary heart** for the Diocese and for the whole world.

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Notes

¹ In this regard, in the article “*The Missionary Formation of Priests in the Light of the 1990 Synod and Pastores Dabo Vobis*”, H.E. Card. José Saraiva Martins analyzes the priest’s essential missionary dimension and the elements for the missionary formation of priests in the post-conciliar magisterium until *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (*Misión para el Tercer Milenio*, P. Missionary Union, ed. PMS, Bogotá 1992, pp. 209-224).

² In this regard, the guidelines are interesting of the Spanish Bishops’ Conference concerning the missionary formation of the theological formation in: *Misionología Hoy*, Varios, 1980, Ed. Guadalupe, 1987, pp. 593-599. See also the guidelines of Card. Saraiva in the article cited earlier.

Ref.: OMNIS TERRA, n. 324, February 2002.

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Yvon C. Elenga, SJ

African Descriptive Christologies on Naming Jesus

A Jesuit from Congo-Brazzaville, who did his graduation in the Weston School of Theology in the USA, gives a summary account of the various aspects of African Christology, the principles used to develop it through a simultaneous attention to African anthropology and culture and the data of revelation, and how this theology enriches and relates to the received formulations of faith.

Over the past three decades, much has been said and written about the development of an African theology.¹ The desire to create it has shown the need to outline the so-called African Personality. African theology as a contribution to Christian theology has shown an interesting quality of insight as it has approached new themes in new contexts. After an initial age of claim and contestation clearly aimed at self-affirmation,² constructive work is now being done in various areas. Systematic theology is now being presented in more specific areas. Be it in Christology, ecclesiology, biblical theology or other areas, African theology offers material for discussion and reflection which cannot be neglected.

In this essay, I want to address the issue of African descriptive Christologies. The essay is about the recapture of Jesus, his deeds, his images and the understanding people have of him. The problem here is to analyze the “description” and the results of the African Jesus research and to show how and why these attempts are so inspired by African cultural anthropology and do not really question the ontological reality of a man whose “friends” claimed that he was Christ, Son of God. Most of African Christologies work in a frame that is characterized by contextualization, relation, re-appropriation. In so doing, they take the traditional presentations of Jesus for granted, and do not face the tension between the humanity and the divinity of the man of Galilee.

I will treat this in three sections. First, I will relocate the manifestation of the Jesus research. This will allow me in the second section to define the conditions and methods generally used in African Christologies. Then, the third section will propose a defining parallel between these Christologies and the loci of credibility and relevance as suggested by R. Haight.³

1. Jesus Research in African Theology

In an article published in the late 1980s, E. Mveng mentioned what he regarded as the main sources of African theology, namely, the Bible, African anthropology, African traditional religions, Christian traditional theology, and the historical experience of the African

Independent churches.⁴ His basic argument concerning the use of anthropology was that it is a helpful tool because it gives a fundamental meaning of the relation of man/woman with others, man/woman with the universe, man/woman with God. The appraisal of the “cosmotheandric” dimension of the human being is of utmost importance to elaborate an accurate theology. In fact the quest of African identity is intrinsic to any discipline, and even more so to theology.⁵ This being said, we can draw the substance of the cultural elements used in theology. This will allow us to focus upon the ground of the reformulation of African Christologies in the naming of Jesus and show how it determines the way Africans mainly recapture him.

1.1. African Social and Cultural Anthropology

Before undertaking the complex question of the use of anthropology by theology, let us dispel a common misunderstanding. Whenever one speaks of African cultures, one must remember the fact that Africa is multi-cultural and should not be easily enclosed into a single pattern. This being said, the question here is how one can draw from Africa and its cultural legacy inspiration to construct a Christian theological discourse. For to approach African cultural elements, one has to state that there are some common structures and a world-view shared by Africans in general. I do acknowledge that there are interconnections or interrelations that prove that African ethnic groups have more in common than in difference. But this fact should not lead us to an easy and general conclusion that there is a single African culture.⁶

The impact of African religious culture is obvious in African Christologies. It covers the conceptions and definitions of God⁷ and the perception of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus as C. Nyamiti writes: “An African theology based on cultural elements common to the majority of African communities is better suited for teaching purposes in theological institutes.”⁸ Accordingly, cultural anthropology is one of the foundations of African theology, and particularly of African Christologies.

These reflections induce me to point out some considerations on the images and names given to Jesus as they represent Christ in the African context.

1.2. *Historical Jesus: Images and Names*

The accounts of Jesus' life in the Gospels are the first material from which one draws images and assigns names to the central character of these many stories. Usually, what is called "process of christological inculturation" functions first as an effort to "re-name" Jesus in order to bring him closer to the African reality. On this line, much has been written.⁹ Given the relational characteristic of Jesus' personality, a number of attributes and qualifications are underlined. Nyamiti has focused his Christology on God's generative power. As Father, God is *Genitor/Ancestor*. Therefore, Christ becomes our *Brother-Ancestor*.

B. Bujo uses the same concept but he has a quite dynamic approach since, for him, Christ is the source of energy and life from the beginning. He calls him a *Proto-Ancestor*. Following this example, F. Kabasele, J. Pobee, and A. Sanon have mentioned other qualities of Jesus, namely Jesus *Ancestor par excellence*, *Ancestor-who-gives-life*, *Great Ancestor*, *Unique Ancestor*. This leads me to point out the main results of giving Jesus such names. (1) Jesus' person is more concrete. His presence is felt in people's life. (2) Jesus' person is brought to his relation with life. He is called in Ewe-Mina (Togo), *Djoto-Ancestor* (Ancestor-who-is-the source- of-life), *Brother* (Kikuyu, Kenya), *Elder Brother par excellence* (Luba, D. R. Congo). (3) Jesus' person has authority. People see him as *Chief of Chiefs* (Luba, D. R. Congo), *King* (Akan, Ghana), *Victor of Death* (Sukuma, Tanzania). (4) Jesus is a bearer of life. He is *Chief Diviner* (Luo, Kenya), *Deliverer* (Akan, Ghana), *Healer* (Kirundi, Burundi), *Supreme Healer* (Luo, Kenya/Tanzania).¹⁰

Undoubtedly such onomastics help know the vital qualities of names in Africa. A person is in his name and is more than body and soul. Names are projects of one's life and they design a programme transmitted from generation to generation. Once this is applied to Jesus, the question is to know his attributes and functions, and the impact of his names on believers.

1.3. *Characterization*

What I intend to do now is to present the major themes used by African Christologists when they are inspired by the Gospels and the Christian traditional theology. Their Christologies are influenced by the places where they are formulated and must be relocated in those places if one wants to comprehend their inner significance.

1.3.1. Contextualization: To preserve the relevance of inculturation and to make the correct theological discourse from Africa, theologians argue that the consideration of

places and time is of utmost importance. For the current problems prevailing in Africa give much opportunity to relocate faith language.¹¹ Being the only true Ancestor, perfect Healer, unique Brother — since Unique Son — incomparable Being, and so on, Jesus is given specific attributes in specific situations. He is one of us, but still beyond the models.¹² In order to be meaningful and adequately professed, African Christology cannot escape an effort to bring the substance of the Christian message to the communities of believers.

1.3.2. Relation: African Christologies define Jesus as being always in relationship with God and with the Christians. This is a fundamental characteristic of African anthropology: I am because we are. The attainment of the fullness of a person is conditioned by the relationships that make a community. A person is son/daughter of, brother/sister of. In the case of Jesus, he is mediator because he is related to God and to humankind at the same time.¹³ That is why the encounter with Christ, Son of God, is the only way to enter God's mystery. Such a mediation deeply participates in the African world-view. Thus the intercessional role played by Jesus confirms his being among us as God-with-us.

1.3.3. Re-appropriation: In fact, the attempt to present an African Christology is a consequence of an extended debate on whether or not there is/will be an African theology. Years ago, when the question emerged, the main effort was to prove that there were seeds of theology in Africa. The application of biblical and theological basic insights to African contexts became then the evidence for the possibility of an African Christology. Themes, language, and even the philosophical background were assumed to convince anybody still in doubt. Though such an effort deserves respectful consideration, a question still remains: why should African Christology follow unchangeably the same development as non-African Christology? By doing so, it fails to take the necessary distance from what has been framed and shaped abroad. In other words, non-African Christology was taken almost as the obvious standard. This influenced the reformulation of Jesus' images and names.

1.3.4. Liberation and Salvation: These two themes are probably the soil on which African Christologies grow up. They are the aim of life, and they represent the final glorification in God's Kingdom. It is well known that the understanding of life as struggle between Life and Death is at the centre of what I have called the cosmotheandric dimension of the person. African anthropology makes available various ways in which the recapture of the Christian doctrine of resurrection can help to grasp the quintessence of liberation and salvation. In presenting Jesus as victor over death, there is actually no gap between Christology and African cultural elements.¹⁴ That is why the doctrine of Jesus' resurrection appears to be accommodated without serious misunderstanding. For the strug-

gle of Life and Death ends with the victory of life. This is a belief that cannot allow for any apposition.

2. Conditions and Methods

I should now like to assess the conditions and the methods of African Christologies in the light of the early descriptions I have given. They follow the way of contestation and claim for an authentic African Theology about which we spoke at the beginning. With this in mind it will probably be easier to assess the stakes involved in these Christologies.

2.1. Contestation and Claim

In the post-colonial era, the claim and contestation were against the general trends of “hegemony” and “imperialism” of Western theology. One can distinguish at least three groups that found themselves operating as intellectual circles. The so-called Kinshasa School¹⁵ wanted to spell out some “specific values” which can legitimize the Africanness of theology. The quest for an authentic Christianity passes through a reappropriation of theological and cultural values. In the Yaoundé School, theologians opted for a more historical and political approach.¹⁶ They were sensitive to the “afflicted social memory” of the victims of history. That is why the option for a total liberation seems to be more functional. In Abidjan (Côte d’Ivoire), fundamental theology operates with the concept of “inculturation”.¹⁷ The methods used in these schools and the conditions in which theologians addressed various issues could correct the opinion that African theology first took place by way of self-affirmation. It does not suffice to argue that one can “theologize” or has to “theologize” to affirm that one does effectively “theologize”.

2.2. Adaptation and Correlation

What are then the traits of the methods of African Christologies? Basically, there is a tacit agreement on the legacy of Nicaea and Chalcedon.¹⁸ The doctrines and the definitions of these two Councils are adapted and correlated in order to prove the “feasibility” of Christology in the African context. Thus did Nyamiti, thus also did most of the contributors of the volume edited by R. Gibellini, *Paths of African Theology*.

To my knowledge, the only African author who has examined the ontological aspect of Jesus and called for a recapture of a Jesus beyond the dogmas is F. Eboussi Boulaga. His stirring book *Christianity without Fetish* suggested a re-reading of the person of Jesus in the light of the history of religions. In a section entitled “The Christic Model”, Eboussi Boulaga presents the religionist historical background which is the framework of any messiah, hero, divine saviour. In his words:

The hero is not a god. Jesus Christ is not simply God and nothing more. He is the child of the Mother, the son of Man, before he is Son of the Father or Son of God. He is the figure of fulfilled humanity for us. But humanity is fulfilled only in identifying with the life of the Spirit animating the community, for the Spirit is Life. Jesus is not everything. He is not the Father, in an everlasting being-together-with the Father. The communion of Father and Son has not yet appeared. Christ in glory is yet to come, at the consummation of the ages, according to the faith that is hope.¹⁹

This is one of the key statements of the book. The interpretation made about it shows clearly that according to Eboussi Boulaga Jesus’ humanity is prior to his divinity and it cannot be otherwise. As one could imagine, Eboussi Boulaga did not transpose in African language any keyword which confirms the correlation or adaptation of Western theology. Rather, he questioned the very being of Jesus as God, Son of God, the Christ.

3. Location in Traditional Theology

What is therefore the consistency of African Christologies in respect to traditional theology? I will here use the framework drawn by R. Haight as criteria for Christology. This tool offers a helpful way to approach theology in relation to its tradition and its usefulness for today’s world.

3.1. Humanity and Divinity

Though both the humanity and the divinity of Jesus are recognized, the employment of various superlative, exceptional, and phenomenal attributes qualify the figure of Jesus. Being *Brother*, *Ancestor*, *Proto-Ancestor*, *Healer*, *Diviner*, Jesus is portrayed as a Super-human. That is why Jesus’ divinity overshadows his humanity and shrinks his historical insertion.²⁰ The model of incarnate God follows the Chalcedon Christological doctrine of two natures (human and divine). C. Nyamiti whose anthropological background appears clearly in his Christology, is still marked by the scholastic and the Chalcedonian doctrines, to say the least.²¹

3.2. Resurrection

That we pass from death to new life is a common belief in African traditions. People do usually believe that the fundamental value of life is that it has no end. It has been often said that the African value of life and the vital force is the crux of the African world-view.²² In his Christology, B. Bujo holds that the Proto-Ancestor is the unique source of life and the “One From Whom

All Life Flows".²³ God's Risen Son brings the plenitude of life as a consequence of his journey through death. To witness to new life in Christ, the Paschal Mystery is lived through struggle and suffering that are overcome by life without end.²⁴ Thus change and transformation are the means of overcoming obstacles. The Christian adaptation of these beliefs in an African Christian context follows quite easily: the resurrection of Jesus is then the glorification of the "Powerful hero".

3.3. Trinity

Considering what matters in Christian theology, namely the data of revelation, an attempt has been made to find correlations between the Trinity and African beliefs or relationship with God. The trinitarian ancestral relations, for instance, provide some cultural elements to define an analogous relationship in God as Triune. They involve kinship, the superhuman sacred status, the mediating role, exemplarity, and the right to sacred communication.²⁵ But in an early work, C.A. Diop, a historian and scientist from Senegal, presented an overview of African cultures. Defining the origin of some beliefs, he stated that:

We know that, according to some archaic beliefs, rain corresponds with the fecundation of the Earth (Goddess-Mother) by Heaven (God-Father, heavenly god). Vegetation which grew after that union was considered as a divine product. Hence, the idea of Trinity took place in a successive incarnation process and became central to the Christian Trinity of Father, Son, and Virgin-Mother, replaced by Holy Spirit, as imitation of the triad Osiris, Isis, and Horus.²⁶

Such explanation based on myth cannot stand by itself. But it discloses a preliminary frame of reference to appropriate the doctrine of Trinity. However, one has to be careful not to reduce the question of God and the Trinity predicated of God to a question of one and three. It is not a numerical doctrine.

3.4. Intelligibility

The coherence and the readability of African Christology rely on the knowledge one has of both Christology and African cultural elements. In my opinion, these two points make possible the intelligibility of today's African Christologies. In this perspective, their relevance and credibility are strong.

But an objection can be raised about the possibility of a contemporary critical interpretation of the Nicaea and Chalcedon Councils, since they still are the fixed references in Christology. In Haight's words:

They [Nicaea and Chalcedon] represent the first major inculturation of the Christian message regarding Jesus Christ into Greek and Roman cultures in the early centuries of the Common Era... Because they have be-

come and remain classics of the Christian faith, these doctrines have to be interpreted.²⁷

The interpretation of Jesus as divine and human as armed in both Nicaea and Chalcedon is not yet a serious issue. Yet one should address such a problem in order to redefine the fundamentals of Christian faith in particular contexts. In sum, the descriptions of Jesus in African Christologies are an effort to re-appropriate the central figure of Christian faith in a context that entails new visions. Probably this vision could be more suitable in reinterpreting the legacy of Nicaea and Chalcedon. Unlike many of today's Christologies,²⁸ African Christologies are adaptations in African tools and languages of traditional declarations. In raising this point, I do not intend to call for a radical rejection of what we believe. The point is that if Nicaea and Chalcedon have to be meaningful for us, they should be read with new eyes — in a new language.

Notes

1. Among many others, the most powerful books are: *Des prêtres noirs s'interrogent*, Paris: Cerf, 1956; O. Bimwenyi Kweshi, *Discours théologique négro-africain*. Paris: Presence Africaine, 1981; F. Eboussi Boulaga, *Christianity without Fetishes*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984; J.-M. Eta, *My Faith is African*. Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis Books, 1988.

2. This age is brilliantly studied by H. Derroitte, "Le christianisme en Afrique entre revendication et contestation. Etude analytique a partir des revues africaines de theologie et de pastorale", *Revue théologique de Louvain* 24 (1993), 38-69.

3. See R. Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1999, 47-51.

4. The details of these sources are in "La théologie africaine de la libération", *Concilium* 219 (1988) 31-51.

5. One can here mention J. Mbiti, *Concepts of God in Africa*. London: SPCK, 1970, and *The Prayers of African Religion*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1976; E. Bolaji Idowu, *Olodumare — God in Yoruba Beliefs*. London: Longmans, 1962; C.C. Baëta, *Christianity in Tropical Africa*. London: Oxford University Press, 1968; E. Fashole-Luke, ed., *Christianity in Independent Africa*. London: Rex Collins, 1978.

6. C. Nyamiti, in "Some Methodological Considerations on the Use of African Cultural Elements in Today's African Theology", *African Christian Studies*, Vol. XIV/2 (June 1998): 30-40, justifies this contribution of cultures only if they are complementary to "non-African positive findings, e.g., those of classical Thomism and of other ancient or modern Western or non-Western theologies, philosophies or other sciences".

7. Besides the books by J. Mbiti and B. Idowu already cited, see J. M. Agossou, *Gbeto et Gbedoto. L'homme*

et le Dieu créateur selon la mentalité des Sud-Daboméens, Paris: Beauchesne, 1972) O. Bimwenyi-Kweshi, "Le Dieu de nos ancêtres", *Cahiers de Religions Africaines*, Vol. IV/8 (July 1970) 137-51 and 9 (January 1971) 59-112; Samuel G. Kibicho; "The Continuity of the African Conception of God into and through Christianity: A Kikuyu Case", in E. Fashole-Luke, ed., *Christianity in Independent Africa*. London: Rex Collins, 1978.

8. C. Nyamiti, "Some Methodological Considerations", 33.

9. See for example, among many, C. Nyamiti, *Christ As Our Ancestor. Christology from an African Perspective*. Gweru: Mambo Press, 1984; B. Bujo "The Two Sources of Life. The Eucharist and the Cult of Ancestors in Africa", *African Christian Studies*, 2/I (1986); R. Gibellini, ed., *Paths of African Theology*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1994; J. Healey and D. Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology*. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1995; Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, "A Perspective of African Christology", in E. Ikenga-Metuh, ed., *African Christian Theology: Africanizing Christianity*. Onitsha: IMICO Books, 1996): 152-68.

10. For a list of some African names for God and Christ, see Healey and Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology*, 80-3 and Gibellini, *Paths of African Theology*.

11. See E. Mveng, "African Theology: A Methodological Approach", *Voices from the Third World*, Vol. XVIII/1 (1995) 106-16; and B. Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*. Nairobi: St Paul Publications Africa/Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1992).

12. In fact, this contextualization of Jesus into African models raises the question of which criteria can one use to propose an appropriate Christology since Africa is complex and the typology of one situation may not be adapted elsewhere without qualification.

13. Healey and Sybertz insist on this particular aspect to show the suitability of traditional Christology with the African definition of person, never isolated but always in relation.

14. For more details of conceptions of death in African perspective, read G. Parrinder, *African Mythology*. London: The Hamlyn Publishing Group, Ltd., 1975; Jude Onyong'a, *Life and Death — A Luo Christian Dialogue*. Eldoret: Spearhead, No. 78, 1983.

15. Whose representatives are V. Mulago, *Un visage africain du christianisme*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1965; O. Bimwenyi-Kweshi, *Discours théologique négro-africain. Problème des fondements*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1981; Tarcisse Tshibangu, *La théologie africaine. Manifeste et programme pour le développement des activités théologiques en Afrique*, Kinshasa: Ed. Saint Paul, 1987. One can also make a cautious link between this school and the research done by the Catholic University of East Africa (Nairobi, Kenya).

16. See for example M. Hebga, *Emancipation d'Églises sous tutelle. Essai sur l'ère post-missionnaire*, Paris: Présence

Africaine, 1976; J.M. Ela, *Le cri de l'homme africain. Questions aux chrétiens et aux Églises d'Afrique*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1980; F. Eboussi Boulaga, *Christianity Without Fetishes*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1984; E. Mveng, *L'Afrique dans l'Église. Paroles d'un croyant*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985; and more recently A. Mbembe, *Afriques indociles. Christianisme, pouvoir et État en société post-coloniale*, Paris: Karthala, 1988.

17. A survey done in 1994 confirms this orientation. Cf. ICAO, *Sur les chemins de l'inculturation à l'ICAO: 1977-1993. Mémoires et Thèses*. Abidjan: ICAO, 1994. See also Medewale Jacob Agossou, *Christianisme africain. Pour une fraternité au delà de l'ethnie*, Paris: Karthala, 1987.

18. I will indicate in the next section the location of these Christologies *vis-à-vis* traditional theology.

19. Boulaga, *Christianity without Fetish*, 144.

20. Some even argue that Jesus' human constitution is "beyond the models" of humanity and that the strict comparison with heroes or prophets has its limitations. One wonders whether such adaptation would not raise the question of an inculturation beyond cultures.

21. For a retrospective of African Theology in English-speaking contexts, see Elochukwu E. Uzukwu, "Le devenir de la théologie catholique en Afrique anglophone depuis Vatican II", *Transversalités* 68 (Oct-Dec 1998) 61-90.

22. This is the fundamental argument of Placide Tempels, *Banta Philosophy*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1959.

23. Bujo, *African Theology in its Social Context*, 115-29.

24. I have to be cautious in my generalization because the Maasai, ethnic group, for example, are among those who do not believe in an after-life. For them, death is the end. Cf. Healey and Sybertz, *Towards an African Narrative Theology*, 233.

25. For Nyamiti these characteristics offer a good parallel to search basic structures of the human person and the inner life of God. Read his article, "The Trinity: An African Ancestral Perspective", *African Christian Studies*, 12/4 (1996) 38-74.

26. C.A. Diop, *Nations nègres et cultures. De l'antiquité nègre égyptienne aux problèmes culturels de l'Afrique noire d'aujourd'hui, II*, Paris: Présence Africaine, 1979.

27. Haight, *Jesus Symbol of God*, 297.

28. I have in mind those of John Cobb, *Christ in a Pluralistic Age* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1975); Schubert M. Ogden, *The Point of Christology*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1982; John Hick, *The Metaphor of God Incarnate*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993.

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in Chicago

President of the *American Society of Missiology* and
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Enrique Marroquín, C.M.F.

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Tuesday, 7 May **Bible and Mission Group** 15:30 hrs at **SEDOS**

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