

73 n. 28

Rome, 21 September 1973

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1. A TRULY LOCAL CHURCH IN AFRICA: 552

We draw your attention to a pastoral letter of an African Bishop on "A truly Local Church in Africa". Since the SEDOS-members have been discussing this matter among themselves, it will be of interest to know what an African Bishop has to say about it.

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Coming events:

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	20 - 9 - 1973	SEDOS	16.00
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ASSEMBLY OF GENERALS	9 - 10 - 1973		16.00
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Sincerely yours,

Fr. Leonzio BANO, fscj

A TRULY LOCAL CHURCH IN AFRICA by Patrick Kalilombe, Bishop of Lilongwe, Malawi.

After the study made by SEDOS groups on the Local Church, this document by Bishop Kalilombe of Lilongwe, Malawi, will prove of particularly interest to all concerned. We print the main passages of his pastoral letter in the original English. Photocopies of the French translation can be had from the SEDOS Secretariat.

The Existential presence of the Church in the World

The Church is Christ's Body, she is his presence to the world. But then how exactly is she present in and to the world? We should distinguish, as it were, several levels or "modes" of the Church's existence in the world.

She exists first of all as the world-wide Catholic communion, grouping in the unity (not uniformity!) of faith, hope and love, all the local Churches of the world, presided over and led by their pastors, the College of Bishops, successors of the Apostles. The source and effective sign of this unity is the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, successor of St Peter. As head and source of unity in the Episcopal College, he effectively "strengthens his brothers" (Lk. 22, 32) and leads them in "shepherding the flock of God entrusted to them" (1 Pet. 5,2). Thus is assured in the Church the presence of Christ the Head, as teacher, sanctifier and leader. And the unity of the whole Body becomes real and operative - harmonious communication and mutual strengthening and support runs through the Churches in spite of their diversity of tongues, customs, and cultures and their dispersion in space and time.

This Catholic unity is basic and real. Thanks to it, the Church is present in and to the world as the Sacrament of Christ's saving presence. But this presence is rendered concrete and operative through the other level of the Church's existence.

The Local Church

The Church exists concretely in local communities grouping members of Christ's Body as they live and work in their natural, geographical, cultural and human milieux. Just as Christ was present to the world through incarnation in a particular people, culture, place and time, so also the Church is present by being incarnated in given human situations. The Church universal subsists in and through these local Churches. As Vatican II says: "This Church is truly present in all legitimate local congregations of the faithful which, united with the pastors, are themselves called churches in the New Testament. For in their own locality these are the new people called by God, in the Holy Spirit and in much fullness. In them the faithful are gathered together by the preaching of the gospel of Christ, and the mystery of the Lord's Supper is celebrated "that by the flesh and blood of the Lord's body the whole brotherhood may be joined together". L.G. n. 26.

"The local Church is not simply a fragment - as though we had to add together all the fragments before we could arrive at the "Church". The local Church is the Church for and in this place, whether it be Camden Town or Haarlem. This is the Church which is within our range, our experience, within our grasp. It is here that Christ is present, in the gospel read and expounded, in the Eucharist which is shared and in the love which results from both" (P. Hebblethwaite S.J., Theology of the Church, p. 17. Theology today series n. 8, Mercier Press).

Dimensions of the Local Church

Existential incarnation is the criterion of the Church's "locality". Wherever and to the extent that the Church is structurally inserted into a valid and identifiable human society, to that same extent she can be called local. It is clear therefore that we can speak of "local Church" at various dimensions because natural human society exists locally also at varying dimensions. We have the nation dimension, the culture dimension, the tribe, the clan, the village, and the family society dimension. All these are valid and identifiable human societies, but they exist at different dimensions. And yet each one of them possesses a realistic factor: language, culture, administration, geographical proximity, kinship, etc. that commands its unity and identity. It is possible thus to have wider or narrower societies.

And yet there is a law whereby the vitality and functioning of the wider society is in proportion with the vitality and functioning of its narrower or component sub-societies. A country cannot function properly at a national level if its regional or district levels are ineffective or non-existent. At best it would be a theoretical "nationality" corresponding to nothing that really exists.

In the same way the Church becomes localised on different levels. When Vatican II speaks of "local Churches", it may be referring to different levels of locality: Patriarchates, larger groupings of Episcopal Conferences according to geographical or cultural homogeneity, National Episcopal Conferences, Dioceses, or Parishes. In the last analysis "local Church" means any stable group of Christians assembled around the Eucharistic table; in our case here in Lilongwe Diocese, this can mean the Parish community, but more realistically so the out-station or sub-parish communities. It is legitimate to refer to the SECAM (Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar) as the local Church in our case. But even so could the AMECEA region be called local Church. Similarly the ECM region (the Church in Malawi) has all the right to be called the local Church in Malawi since its unity is based on the Church's insertion in the Malawian nation. Our diocese of Lilongwe is part of the wider Malawian local Church, because by reason of geographical and national homogeneity it is necessarily in fraternal inter-communication, collaboration, mutual support, and unity with the sister-dioceses in Malawi.

The Diocese of Lilongwe our Local Church

But the locality that concerns us immediately in the Diocesan Pastoral Planning project we have here in Lilongwe is the one on the diocesan level. It is a real and authentic

locality since it is based on the bond linking the bishop with his presbyterium and the whole people of God living in the geographical and administrative part of the country that is ours. Vatican II reminds us that "a Diocese is that portion of God's people which is entrusted to a bishop to be shepherded by him with the cooperation of the presbytery. Adhering thus to its pastor and gathered together by him in the Holy Spirit through the gospel and the Eucharist, this portion constitutes a particular Church in which the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church of Christ is truly present and operative" (Christus Dominus n. 11).

But here again we must realise that the diocese itself is "local Church" in a wide sense. The diocese is made up of parishes, and these are usually still subdivided into smaller church entities (out-stations, sub-parishes, etc.). These are also "local Churches" at a more basic and real level. What we are saying about local Church applies more, in fact, to these basic local Churches, than to the wider levels of parish and diocese.

All that has been said in the foregoing pages may sound like vain and idle theory, an exercise in empty theologising that has no practical import for our project of Diocesan Pastoral Planning. But it is not! It was necessary for me to share at some length with you the vision I have of the Church and her role in the world. It was important too that I let you see how I look at the presence and operation of the Church. Because now you will be able, I hope, to understand, from my point of view, where our project comes in.

The Aim of our Project

As far as I am concerned, the purpose of the Diocesan Pastoral Planning project is to enable us to make of Lilongwe Diocese a living and effective local Church.

The underlying conviction is that, unless we work - and immediately! - towards the building up of a really dynamic local Church, we are not answering God's call to us today; we are not preparing for the Church of tomorrow, and we are rendering useless the heroic work of the pastoral workers who have preceded us.

What is our objective?

What do we mean by saying "a living and effective local Church"? We mean exactly what Vatican II says in its decree on "the Church's missionary activity" (Ad Gentes).

"The Work of planting the Church in a given human community reaches a kind of milestone when the congregation of the faithful, already rooted in social life and considerably adapted to the local culture, enjoys a certain stability and firmness. This means that the congregation is now equipped with its own supply, insufficient though it be, of local priests, religious, and laymen. It means that it is endowed with those ministries and institutions which are necessary if the People of God is to live and develop its life under the guidance of its own bishop". A.G. n. 19.

In other words, the local Church becomes living and effective in the measure in which she becomes basically self-reliant in her internal life and her external mission; when all the basic structures and resources for her life and work are found in her, even if a measure of reliance on external help may still continue.

It is extremely important that we today realise that it is high time our Church reaches this stage. Events all over the world, and especially in parts of our Continent, should serve as a timely warning that perhaps time is not on our side. We owe it to the Church and to our people to do all we can in the time that Providence may still kindly grant us to build up a Church that stands the chances of survival and growth even in the worst imaginable hazards. Such a Church will have to be:

- self-ministering,
- self-propagating,
- self-supporting.

A self-ministering Church

"For the nurturing and constant growth of the People of God, Christ the Lord instituted in His Church a variety of ministries, which work for the good of the whole Body". L.G.n.18.

In a broad sense these ministries are those "services" that need to be present and active in the Christian Body for the two functions of the Body:

- 1) that of living and growing: keeping the Body healthy and increasing it with living, new members. This is done through preaching (faith), and feeding (Sacraments and liturgy), and ordering of the community (government).
- 2) that of witnessing to and serving the world (apostolate). This is assured through all sorts of Church involvement in the world whereby she is called to serve as Leaven. Light and Salt of the world and to bring about God's Kingdom among men.

We can say that in this broad sense all Christians are called to be "ministers" since through Baptism they participate in the Christ's own Mediatorship as Prophets, Priests and Leaders. In this sense there is indeed a great variety of service and ministers, and all members are called to exercise their own "ministries", each one according to his calling.

A local Church is self-ministering when all the essential services needed for the life and work of the Church are actively assumed by members of that local Church, and not mainly by helpers from outside. As long as these services are heavily dependent on missionary or external aid, the Church is not yet self-ministering; and this is a situation that has to be changed as soon as possible if the Church is to feel secure in facing the hazards of history.

Our Diocesan Pastoral Planning project has to aim at setting up realistic structures whereby such self-ministering will be hastened and facilitated. This is a priority.

An adequate and adapted local Clergy

When we talk of ministry we usually refer, in a rather narrower sense of the term, to the Ordained Ministry: Bishops, priests, deacons. And this is quite correct, for as Vatican II

says: "With their helpers, the priests and deacons, bishops have therefore taken up the service of the community, presiding in place of God over the flock whose shepherds they are, as teachers of doctrine, priests of sacred worship, and officers of good order". L.G. n. 20.

There can be no thriving Church without the leadership of the clergy. The hierarchical service, which re-presents the feeding, coordinating and animating leadership of Christ, is a most basic service in the Church. All the rest depends on it.

Our project has to take the question of Clergy as a major priority. The question is not simply that of making sure that today we have enough priests to serve the Church. It rather is to find out ways and means of assuring a realistically planned availability of priests from local resources. As it is, we are still relatively well off as far as priests are concerned, even if we already feel the pinch. But then the main assurance comes from an overdose of missionary personnel: the kind gift of our elder Sister Churches from overseas. The local clergy is just a handful, and the immediate prospects (number of seminarists, rate of ordinations, proportion of perseverance up to priesthood) are not reassuring. The more so as the priest's work is increasing rapidly in quantity (v.g. growth of Christian communities) and complexity.

I know that the solution here will not be simply in heroic efforts to increase the number of local priests. For one thing, whatever our efforts, there is a sort of inbuilt ceiling to the increase of the type of priests that we are striving to produce. Could there be ways of making conditions such that a greater production of priests than is actually the case is rendered possible without lowering standards? What standards are we talking about? These are questions that we are to face courageously. The Church has to be assured of an adequate supply of ordained ministers; that is certain. Any rethinking or adjustment in methods to make this possible is capital for the survival of the Church.

Strengthening Non-Ordained Ministries

On the other hand, what we might tend to forget is that the real objective is not as large a number of priests as possible. The objective is adequate ministry in the Church to meet the needs that are there. By itself an increase in the number of priests would not automatically solve our problems. The ordained ministry is just one (the most basic, I grant) of the indispensable ministries in the Church. There are many other ministries needed for the proper functioning of the Body of Christ. And these ministries are not necessarily "ordained"; they can be exercised by lay-people - often even better by them! Thus we have ministries of teaching religion, organising and executing liturgical functions and prayer, leading and ordering christian communities, sanctifying Christians in all sorts of ways, including the celebration of some sacraments, taking care of the material side of Church administration, etc. For these and other ministries, the clergy is admittedly mainly responsible because of their role in the Church. But Christ's will is such that the clergy alone cannot fulfill them adequately. And that, not just due to their small number, but because the proper

running of these services calls for a variety of charisms and gifts that are not found among the clergy alone. And so "the laity can also be called in various ways to a more direct form of cooperation in the apostolate of the hierarchy... Further, laymen have the capacity to be deputed by the hierarchy to exercise certain church functions for a spiritual purpose". L. G. n. 33

Is it not true that to a large extent, the shortage of priests is felt more acutely, due to the fact that a large number of non-ordained ministries tend to fall on the shoulders of priests alone? An enormous reserve of potential non-ordained ministers lies untapped among the lay people. If we are to accelerate the advent of the self-ministering Church, it is imperative that a realistic redistribution of ministries, ordained and non-ordained, be established. We must stop the trend whereby the ordained ministry has tended to swallow up other ministries in the Church. We should revalorise these ministries and associate as many trained people as possible in these ministries.

The Charism of Religious Life

In the Church there is an extremely important charism that should not be confused with either the ordained ministry or those non-ordained ministries to which I have just been alluding. This is the charism of "religious life".

In a way, we are fully entitled to call it a "ministry", a "service" within the Church, because religious life exists, not primarily for the proper good (sanctification and salvation) of the Christian members who are called to embrace it, but for the good of the whole Church. The Church, and indeed the whole world, needs this service.

We tend to value the religious mainly because of the admirable help they give in all sorts of service undertaken by the Church: education, health, social services, catechetics, etc... While we are grateful that different religious communities take a lion's share in these essential services, we might forget that these services are not the aims of the religious life, but means whereby the specific aim of religious life is rendered. The religious charism is essentially one of Prophetism and witness. Their service in the Church is precisely this "witness".

Religious should render visible the real aim of Christ's Church as light of the world (showing visibly the full plan of God for the world: a plan of love) and as salt of the earth (showing visibly that this plan is realistic, possible, already realized in a certain way). The life and work of the religious are meant to show visibly what salvation in Christ really means: liberation from the slavery of sin, and full liberty to live a life of love, and invite all people to it.

The service of the religious consists therefore in rendering visible and understandable, challenging and inviting, the Plan of God which the whole Church is called upon to realize.

All members of the Church are to be light, salt, leaven, of the world. But this is not always very visible and challenging. We need a group of "professionals" whose role is to render this visible in the name of the whole Church. This especially through witnessing communities, visible and concrete images of the saved mankind.

Thus the concrete services that religious render in all sorts of ways are a means for them to render their service of witness. If this witness is not visible anymore, these concrete services have to be reviewed.

You are well aware that a major part of the religious (both male and female) consists of missionaries from overseas. They have implanted in our Church the seed of religious life, active and contemplative. But their sincere aim has been that local Christians will join them and become the nucleus of a future local religious life. Indeed, already, a good number of future local young men and women have embraced this religious life.

Our efforts must be to increase the number of these dedicated persons, so that the religious vocation becomes really part and parcel of our Church. Our Church will be very much the poorer if religious life dies down.

But one thing that needs stressing is that, if religious life is to be the kind of "service" that the Church needs, it has to be "localised". By this I do not just mean that more and more local Christians come forward to join the ranks of the religious. By itself this is not enough. What I mean is that the way of living religious life in this country should be such as to meet the real needs of the people. If indeed religious life is meant to be a witness, then this witness must be such that it is rightly understood by the normal local man and affects him in the right way. There are ways of living religious life that may be valid witnessing in other parts of the world, but that would not be effective witnessing in this country. We do not need them. Our religious must tailor their life to speak to us and to prophesy to us. This is a challenge thrown to the religious communities. It asks for a courageous rethinking and reform.

A Self-propagating Church

A Church that is self-ministering is by the same token a self-propagating one. She is equipped to assure the growth of the Church by the acquisition of new members. By its very nature the Church is missionary. She should not become a sect or a ghetto, closed in on herself, and not concerned about those many others whom God may be wishing to call into the Church. Were she to become a ghetto, she should be vowed to slow extinction and a weakening of her vitality through lack of new blood. A living and effective local Church should possess the outgoing dynamism to attract new members. A self-propagating Church is one that does not rely for this attracting of new members only or mainly on outside missionaries, but on her own members, her own initiatives, her own methods and means.

Our Christians have been trained in this spirit since the beginning. We know that many new members have been attracted to the Church through the missionary spirit of the neophytes.

But our project must devise ways and means of strengthening and organizing this apostolic energy. We must learn more and more to entrust to our faithful the responsibility of the Church's growth. It would be a pity if, with the waning of the missionary personnel, the missionary spirit of our Christians were to decrease too.

A Self-supporting Church

"A Church which depends for its existence and essential services upon the continuous charity of other Churches is not a healthy, properly established Church. Basic economic self reliance is as much part of the establishment of the Church, which is the specific purpose of missionary work, as is the indigenisation of its hierarchy". I do not think that anyone of us would dispute the truth of these words of Fr. A. Hastings (Mission and Ministry, p.15 Sheed and Ward Stagbook 1971). We all have had ample proof of what he says earlier; "The People of God are an earthly, eating, drinking, buying, selling people. It is not only practically advantageous, it is theologically necessary that a local Church be itself an economically viable unit" (ibid.).

Let me repeat; we all agree with this - theoretically! But do we take seriously the logical consequences of such principles? By tradition, our Church has depended for her economic viability on continuous outside help. For a long time this was both inevitable and beneficial. We have to acknowledge with sincere gratitude all the outside help that has been forthcoming. It is thanks to this help that we were able to build our missions, initiate and run essential but expensive services like hospitals and schools, maintain a large number of pastoral workers, quite a few of whom have been living well above the standards of the majority of the local population. The material organization and network of services in our Church is clearly such that it can continue, let alone develop, only with an ever increasing flow of outside help. How many buildings, means of transport, instruments of work, schools, hospitals, and dispensaries, etc. have been rendered possible only through kind grants from Rome or other international or national organisations, and from the generous sacrifices of individual missionaries, their Congregations, or their relatives and friends from abroad. We have grown accustomed to taking all that for granted, and to act in a way that seems to presume that these grants will always be forthcoming. But suppose the grants stopped or dwindled; suppose these generous missionaries left us, what would become of our admirable structure? I tremble when I ask myself such questions.

A really strong local Church cannot afford to bask in such a false assurance. We can sit back and look to the future with a sense of security only when the situation is such that our Church can feel she is realistically self-supporting. Our diocesan Pastoral Planning project will be valuable only if it can devise ways and means of bringing about a sufficient measure of self-support. What does that involve?

Training towards Finding Local Resources

It involves, in the first place, a bold plan to train local members of our Church towards supporting their own Church; finding money and other material goods to maintain and run

her essential services, to support and maintain her pastoral workers, and to expand and develop those services that need developing.

To achieve this, everything must be done to make the Christians realise that the Church is theirs; they are the Church. The feeling that the priests or missionaries own the Church must stop. A new sense of responsibility should grow whereby everybody feels that the life and work of the Church depends on him or her. We have made untiring efforts to create such a feeling through involvement of our Christians in "Mtulo" and others systems of Church support. And in quite a few parishes this sense is growing. But are we really far? Do we take this question seriously enough? Do we realize that here too perhaps time is not on our side? Perhaps our way of doing gives the impression that the contribution of our people is not indispensable; we can do very well without it. Perhaps we often want to achieve grandiose projects and are not ready to wait for participation and involvement from our people. The Catholic Church has created for herself the reputation of infinite economic possibilities. Are we sometimes loath to fall short of people's expectations on this point?

From now on, let the rule be that the running of the Church is not done without a serious involvement and participation of the local people. No new projects should be initiated without the direct involvement of the people. We have indeed inherited, through no faults of ours, establishments and services that are expensive and complicated to run. In all fairness we have to maintain and run them. But wherever possible, let us rather hand these over to those (v.g. Government) who can run them efficiently. We may dare to start new projects of grandiose magnitude only when and where we are sure we shall be able to hand them over when we feel the Church is unable to run them. You will pardon me for saying this so bluntly, we have no right to start anything to day that involves the Church in the future, without making certain that it will continue with reasonable local resources. Doing otherwise is being unjust to the local Church which may later on be left with an impossible task.

Realistic Standards of Living

If we are serious in wanting to build a self-supporting Church, and want our people to take us seriously, then there is a basic condition. We must be prepared to come down to a realistic standard of living and working. Our people are what they are: a basically poor community, just emerging from the subsistence level of economy. Even if they are heroically generous, there is definitely a limit to what they can contribute towards the support of their Church. It is not realistic to make giant projects and then expect them to realize them with their limited resources. It would not be fair to ask them to support a Church tailored to fit opulent overseas standards!

You will realise that this is a challenge to all of us. Are we prepared to come down to a standard of life and service that is within reach of the ordinary man in Lilongwe Diocese? This will be very demanding, the more so as we have been used to living on an "expatriate level". But if we really want our Church to work towards self-support, we have to pay the

price! I grant that we cannot come to the ideal overnight. We are still victims of systems that are not easily modified. But may I hope that our Pastoral Planning project generously takes this into account?

Building up a Committed Laity

I need not point out that the program just described (a self-ministering, self-propagating, and self-supporting Church) is a very ambitious program indeed. There will be people who will think that it is an unrealistic one. It is my conviction, however, that there can be no hope for the future of our Church unless this program is seriously implemented.

May I be allowed to go on here and say something of extreme importance to my way of thinking. If we really want to realise what has been described, then there is a condition; our Church must be de-clericalised. I hope I shall be rightly understood here. What I mean is that the vision of the Church presented here cannot materialize unless we arrive at building up a Committed Laity. As you can see, the essential in this plan depends on the involvement of the layman. And that is just as it should be.

The Church is first of all the Lay People. They are the Church; they are by far the majority. The tonality of Church life and work is determined by the tonality of the lay man's presence in the Church. The hierarchy, the clergy, and even the religious are a minor group in the Church, and what is more: their "raison d'être" is service of the larger Church membership. Any plan for the Church has to take the laity into first-place consideration...

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE will be held on Thursday, September 20, at 16.00 at the SEDOS Secretariat with the following agenda:

1. Minutes of previous meeting (July 3rd) - Bulletin n.25 p. 73/493/5
2. Agenda of the Assembly of October 9, 1973
 - Election of new **Councillor**: Nomination list.
 - Reports on - Pro-Mundi Vita - Seminar
on - Missionary Week Namur
- other suggestions ?
3. Staff of the Secretariat
 - present situation
 - contracts (copies annexed)
4. Future relations with the C.M.C. (letter annexed)
5. SEDOS Commitment to work with USG-VI on the practical side of the Synod study on Evangelisation today.

Other suggestions for working groups.
6. Financial Statement.
7. Other matters.

Sincerely yours,

Theo Van Asten
President

MISSION SURVEY 1972

Missionary Institute London
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I. Please mark (x) the statement you consider to be true in each section:

A. The presence of missionaries (priests, Brothers, Sisters, lay missionaries)

- will be urgently needed for the foreseeable future.
- will be welcome for the foreseeable future.
- seems to be hindering the real development of the Church.

B. The most urgent need is for:

- general pastoral missionaries
- specialists in various fields

II. Please indicate three priorities in each section. (1) (2) (3)

A. Specialists are needed for:

- training priests, catechists, teachers, nurses
- schools, especially
- medical work, especially
- social work, especially among
- community development
- special development projects, e. g.
- mass media, especially
- linguistics new theological thinking

B. The human qualities most needed in missionaries are:

- dedication to the people ability to learn the language
- ability to work with others willingness to work in the background
- stability patience optimism sense of humour

C. The spiritual qualities most needed in missionaries are:

- strong faith piety living with God sound theology
- love of prayer

THE NEED FOR MISSIONARIES

Some months ago, this questionnaire was sent to 188 Bishops in different parts of the developing world, covering Africa, Asia and Latin America. The very high response of 103 replies was received. Many of these replies, besides answering the questions, contained additional comments which, at one and the same time, showed our questionnaire to be lacking and made up for that lack.

This article is concerned with section "A" of the first part of the questionnaire, i.e. with whether or not the presence of missionary priests, Brothers, Sisters and laity will be urgently needed or just welcomed in the foreseeable future, or whether they are a hindrance to the work of the local Church.

A CAUTION

In reading the replies, one has to bear in mind that Africans and Asians are polite in what they say, and most of the replies are from African and Asian Bishops. We have, therefore, from time to time, to try and read between the lines and catch the overtones and undertones of what they are saying. We have not concentrated too much on percentages, but have considered it wiser and sounder to indicate what, in each question, was the general trend of opinion in each of the three main parts of the missionary world, Africa, Asia and Latin America. The greatest number of replies came from Africa (45), while there were (58) from Asia and from Central and South America. In each case, the replies represented a high proportion of the letters sent out.

THE GENERAL PICTURE

Two-thirds of the replies stressed the urgent necessity of sending missionaries, the Bishops of South Africa expressing this sentiment the most forcefully of all. Almost two-thirds added that, as far as they were concerned, the missionaries were welcome, this part of the question being especially underlined by the Bishops of East and Central Africa.

The reaction of the Asian Bishops to this question was more or less the same. Two-thirds replied that missionaries were urgently needed both now and in the foreseeable future, while about forty percent said they were welcome in the countries requiring them. The Bishops from Sri Lanka (Ceylon) and Malaysia, while admitting that they like to have missionaries, pointed out that their governments do not allow them in.

From Latin America, half of the replies made it clear that missionaries are urgently required, and three-quarters that they are welcome if they come.

DO MISSIONARIES HINDER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH ?

To this question, one or two Bishops replied that missionaries did retard the development of the local Church and were a hindrance. These, however, were lone voices when set beside

the overwhelming majority of replies to the contrary. In spite of this, it should be noted that many Bishops stated, and many more implied, that missionaries who do not behave themselves, who do not adapt themselves to the situation they find and the way of life in these countries, are, indeed, a hindrance and not a help to the local Churches. These drawbacks apart, a large majority rejected the idea that the missionaries were in any way an embarrassment to the local Church.

REPLIES IN DETAIL: AFRICA

The Archbishop of Salisbury, Rhodesia, writes that, "The missionaries will be needed for the foreseeable future - but that needs qualification". The qualification is concerned with the kind of missionary required, which will be discussed later. Another Bishop in Rhodesia states: "What we want are diocesan priests. We want our people to see in front of them what a diocesan priest is and how he lives".

The Bishop of Wa, in Ghana, Bishop Dery, emphasises the point made by Bishop Verdzekov about missionaries moving down. "The definition of a missionary must change", he writes; "he must no longer be seen as the man who comes to evangelise a people new to the Faith, establish the Church and then move off to another area. There are so many aspects to be seen in missionary work, and the needs of the Church may demand new missionary concepts, new methods and techniques. Those with the old conceptions are those who leave their work behind to go back home very much dissatisfied and spread the alarm, the false alarm, that there is no need for missionaries to go on staying in Africa when the African himself can do it better now... It may be true to some extent, but there is very much need for more labourers in the mission work of the Church today, more than yesterday; and the African does not, and should not, pretend that he can handle it alone."

The Bishop of Bukavu, in Zaïre, writes about Christian leadership as a whole. "In Africa", he says, "we cannot hope to train sufficient apostolic workers in the near future". He admits that there have been changes in Africa, and that the structures and Hierarchy have been Africanised, but adds that this does not alter the harsh reality that enough apostolic workers cannot be produced. He goes on to say: "It is a fact, however, that here and there, certain native Bishops are not in favour of having foreign priests in their dioceses and would be happy one day to let them go. But this attitude is far from general."

A Bishop from Malagasy writes: "We have urgent need of missionaries to maintain the posts. Three-quarters of the missionaries are more than fifty years of age, and can no longer do all the work they want to do, and which is indispensable. Our need is urgent because huge centres and entire regions are without priests and even without Christians. The population is pagan; they are open to the Gospel message, but there is no one to take it to them. The native clergy are too few in number, six altogether, and, if all goes well, there will be ten in 1980."

This problem of ageing missionaries is also stressed by the Bishops of South Africa.

One African Bishop, who wishes to remain anonymous, writes: "Although the local Bishops say that they need missionaries, they do little or nothing to make them welcome or to hold on to them. To be accepted by the African, the missionary must have real competence, but he must accept the fact that he will never be the one in charge."

From Zaïre comes the comment: "It is our wish that missionaries remain. They are still necessary or, at least, very useful. They are absolutely necessary in countries where the first steps of evangelisation must be made. In countries where the young Churches have got off the ground and arrived at a certain maturity, the presence of missionaries could be a hindrance to the true development of the local Church, especially where missionaries are more numerous than the local clergy." This point, about the possible effect a larger body of missionaries may have on a much smaller group of local clergy, is also made by a Bishop from Dahomey, in West Africa, but they are the only two who make it.

One Bishop of the Sudan reacts strongly in favour of the need for missionaries. Missionaries had to withdraw from there in 1964. There are eighteen priests for a million people, with 80,000 Catholics.

REPLIES IN DETAIL: ASIA

The Archbishop of Colombo, Sri Lanka, formerly Ceylon, makes the point that they want missionaries but that the government will not allow them in. Some local priests, he says, think that the missionaries have no longer any part to play in the country, but those local priests are confined to a limited circle. He thinks that these priests feel like this because they think that the presence of the missionaries could be a reflection on their competence as priests.

From another part of Asia, the Cardinal-Archbishop of Seoul, the capital of Korea, makes an interesting point. He says it is not just a question of help with the volume of work, but that the very presence of missionaries from other lands lends a new dimension to the local Church. Since the war, much development has taken place, and, today, there are nearly twice as many Korean priests as foreign priests. But he still wants missionaries. "These missionaries," he writes, "are still very much needed. They bring to the Korean Church aspects of the Universal Church, be it French, German, Dutch, or whatever, which keep the local Church aware of its international nature." He feels that the presence of missionaries adds important elements to a local Church already established.

With the exception of one, all the Bishops of the Philippines regard the presence of the missionaries as urgently necessary. Half the Catholics of Asia live in the Philippines, but they have by no means half the priests.

LATIN AMERICA

The general opinion of the Bishops of Latin America is that they will need missionaries for the foreseeable future. As the Bishop from Ecuador puts it: "They are like the yeast in the Gospel". He adds, however: "We need quality more than quantity."

IN SUM

A fair summary of this part of the questionnaire would be that the general opinion of the great majority of the Bishops who answered it is, that missionaries are both urgently needed and widely welcomed. The proviso is that they be of the right kind.